

IV. Honors

Your simcha is both a family affair and a regular Shabbat service for the congregation. Some of the honors are therefore reserved for your family and guests, while others are reserved for the general congregation.

How can we honor family and friends?

You may assign the following ritual honors to your family members and other guests. Because these particular honors are ritual actions performed on behalf of the congregation, all of the people performing these honors must be Jewish. For information about including family members of different faiths or no faith, please see the later section entitled "How can my family members or other faiths participate?"

1. Opening and closing the ark when the Torah is removed or returned. Two people are needed to open the ark when the Torah is removed and again when it is returned. Ark openers may be younger than 13, but should be tall enough to reach the door handles on the ark. You may choose two different pairs of people to have this honor (one pair for removal of the Torah, another pair for returning it).
2. Being called to the Torah for an aliyah – reciting the blessings before and after the reading. The simcha family may assign up to *five aliyot, including any for the parents*. In addition to the five aliyot, one aliyah is reserved for your child. Aliyot are individual honors for people over the age of 13, although a married couple is considered as a single unit and may share an aliyah if both spouses are Jewish (and married to each other).

For the five aliyot, there are traditions guiding the order, depending on those from whom the people being honored with an aliyah are descended. Please ask those you have chosen to receive aliyot if they are a Kohen or Levi. When you fill out the Torah honors form, you will need to indicate if any of your honorees receiving aliyot is a Kohen or a Levi. (If anyone is a Kohen or a Levi, please speak to the Rabbi four weeks in advance, in addition to submitting the honors form. Changes to the Torah reading on the day of your simcha may be necessary, and congregants reading Torah on that day will need advance notice of the changes. This will not add or subtract to the number of honors you will receive.)

3. Hagbah--lifting the Torah after it has been read. This individual must be over 13 years of age *and physically capable of lifting a 40-pound scroll*.
4. Gelilah--binding and dressing the Torah after it has been read and after the Hagbah has held up the Torah. This individual must be over 13 years of age.
5. Holding the Torah during the D'var Torah and chanting of the Haftarah. This individual may be of any age.
6. Reading the Prayer for the Country in English (page 148). The congregation will join the reader for the final paragraph.
7. Reading the Prayer for Israel in Hebrew (page 149).

8. (optional) Leading the responsive Prayer for Peace (page 149).
9. Because it is a congregational honor to serve in any of the roles listed above and there are relatively few for the entire congregation, it is considered inappropriate to assign more than one to any particular person.

Can we give an aliyah to someone who doesn't read Hebrew?

The people you honor with aliyot should be able to pronounce the Hebrew blessings before and after the Torah reading. At the end of this section are sheets with the blessings both in Hebrew and transliteration, as well as instructions on when to say each blessing. You may send copies of these pages to your honorees so they can review them in advance. There will be a large card with the same blessings and transliteration on the reader's table during the Torah readings. You may also get an MP3 file of the Torah blessings from the synagogue Web site (www.congbethel.org) to help with practicing the chant. Additionally, there is a video on the Web site which demonstrates how to have an Aliyah at Beth El (<http://www.congbethel.org/rabbis-video-how-to.html>).

Is anything different for women?

A female who acts as a Sh'lachat Tzibbur (prayer leader), has an aliyah, opens the Ark, or has any other honor must wear a head covering. Women should wear a tallit if it is their custom to do so.

When do I tell the Rabbi about the honors?

You will need to provide the completed Torah honors form (available at the end of this section) to the Rabbi three weeks before your simcha. The form should identify the Hebrew names and parents' Hebrew names of those receiving aliyot. If you plan to give a Torah honor anyone (male or female) who is a Kohen/Bat Kohen or Levi/Bat Levi, please let the Rabbi know at least 4 weeks in advance.

Can other family members read Torah?

If you wish to have a family member read from the Torah, please consult with the Rabbi well in advance of the simcha date.

May other family members or friends lead part of the service?

If you wish to have a family member or fellow congregant lead a portion of the service—Pesukei d'Zimra (the opening blessings) or Shacharit—please consult with Rabbi Paskind well in advance of the simcha. These roles are assigned in advance and are reserved for those who know how to lead.

How else can my family participate?

Beth El encourages immediate and extended family, and even friends, to participate in a number of other ways that have become customary at Beth El.

1. The parents may present and hold the tallit while the Bar or Bat Mitzvah recites the blessing for the first time and then drape the tallit around the shoulders of their child. Some assign this to grandparents. Parents are also encouraged to speak *briefly* (no more than 30 seconds) to their child before presenting the tallit, should they choose.
2. The parents should follow their child around the sanctuary while the Bar or Bat Mitzvah carries the Torah both at the beginning and at the end of the Torah service.
3. Young family members or friends may distribute candy to the congregants for tossing at the Bar or Bat Mitzvah after the Maftir Torah reading, as a wish for a sweet life ahead.
4. All family members, both immediate and extended, are included in the invitation to rise for the recitation of the *Shehecheyanu*, the blessing of thanks for reaching this special occasion. Close friends who consider themselves family may also participate. A copy of the prayer—in Hebrew, transliterated, and translated—is at the end of this section. We encourage you to distribute copies to family members in advance.
5. Siblings, relatives and/or friends may recite Ashrei, if the Bar or Bat Mitzvah is not leading the prayer.
6. Siblings and/or friends may join the Bar or Bat Mitzvah at the lectern to sing *Adon Olam*.
7. Parents and siblings of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah may come to the wine table at the end of the service when the blessings over the wine, the washing of hands, and *Hamotzi* are recited.

How can family members and friends of other faiths participate?

A Bar or Bat Mitzvah is an opportunity to celebrate the commitment of the entire family to a child's Jewish education. When there is a parent of a different faith, or of no faith, tradition is part of everything and they should attend all of the family meetings and seminars, and are welcome to ask questions and be involved in discussions. There are a number of ways and times this parent will participate in the service:

1. Offering brief words to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah before presenting the tallit.
2. Standing with the child at the Ark during the Torah service and accompanying the child for the Torah processions through the sanctuary at the beginning and end of the Torah service.
3. Rising and reciting *Shehecheyanu*.
4. Joining the Bar or Bat Mitzvah and the Rabbi at the wine table at the end of the service for the recitation of the blessings over the wine, the washing of hands, and *Hamotzi*.

Additionally, you may want honor relatives and friends of a different faith or no faith tradition in any of these ways:

1. Rising and reciting *Shehecheyanu*.
2. Passing the candy to the congregation.
3. Leading the Prayer for Our Country.
4. Leading the Prayer for Peace.

Most of the religious honors, however, represent an affirmation of faith that should be performed by someone Jewish. For this reason, there are some limitations on the level of participation in the Shabbat service by a parent or other family member of a different faith or no faith.

1. All people opening the Ark and carrying the Torah must be Jewish.
2. Although married couples may be called up together for a single aliyah, each spouse must be Jewish.

We encourage you to honor family members, regardless of faith, with presentations, speeches, or other roles, during your private celebration outside of services. This is also addressed in the family seminars.

For questions or concerns not addressed here, please request an appointment with the Rabbi to seek individual assistance or guidance.

Honors Form (Turn in to office 3 weeks before simcha)

Kibbudim/Honors for Bat/Bar Mitzvah of _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben/bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

Provide the English names of those who will open and close the Ark.

Removing Torah (page 139): _____ and _____

Returning Torah (page 153): _____ and _____

Please provide the names of those who will have Aliyot (individuals or married couples):

A English name/s: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben _____ Kohen/Levi?

Hebrew name: _____ bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

B English name/s: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben _____ Kohen/Levi?

Hebrew name: _____ bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

C English name/s: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben _____ Kohen/Levi?

Hebrew name: _____ bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

D English name/s: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben _____ Kohen/Levi?

Hebrew name: _____ bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

E English name/s: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben _____ Kohen/Levi?

Hebrew name: _____ bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

Candy distributor/s: _____

Hagbah (lifting the Torah)—English name: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben/bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

Gelilah (dressing the Torah)—English name: _____

Hebrew name: _____ ben/bat _____ Kohen/Levi?

Torah Holder (optional): _____

Provide the English names of the *individuals* who will lead the following readings:

Prayer for the Country (English), page 148 _____

Prayer for Israel (Hebrew), page 149 _____

Honors Instructions: Opening the Ark—Beginning of the Torah Service

Provide a copy of these instructions to two people who will open doors and curtains of the Ark at the start of the Torah service. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering.

Prior to the Torah service, a gabbai will invite you to the back of the sanctuary. At the start of the Torah service (page 139 in the Siddur), walk down the aisle and up the bimah steps and stand near the Ark. Bring your Siddur with you.

When the service reaches the paragraph in the middle of the page (*Vaheyi Binsoah Ha'aron*), each person slides open one of the doors of the Ark. One person pulls the string (marked with green) to open the curtains.

Both people move to the sides of the open Ark until the Torah has been removed from the Ark.

Immediately after the Torah is removed from the Ark, the other honoree closes the curtain by pulling the string (marked with red). Leave both wooden doors open.

Follow the reader off the pulpit, and return to your seats. PLEASE WATCH THE STEPS!

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Removing/Returning the Torah

These instructions are for the parent(s) or other person who will remove the Torah from the Ark and give it to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering.

You will already be on the bimah after presenting your child with his/her tallit. When your child approaches the Ark, stand on either side of him or her. Bring your Siddur with you.

The Rabbi will show you which Torah to remove. There are several times each year when two Torah scrolls are used.

Remove the designated Torah from the Ark and carefully hand it to the child so that the Torah leans on the child's right shoulder. If we will read from a second Torah, hand the scroll to the appointed carrier.

When it is time to return the Torah to the Ark, follow the reader to the pulpit and stand on his or her left. When told to do so, take the Torah from the person carrying it and very carefully return it to the Ark. Make sure the Torah sits behind the raised wooden lip of its resting place.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Opening the Ark—End of the Torah Service

Provide a copy of these instructions to two people who will open the curtains of the Ark at the end of the Torah service. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering.

Walk up to the Ark toward the end of the *Ashrei* (pages 151).

Open the curtain when the reader begins the prayer to return the Torah (*Y'hal'lu et shem Adonai*), page 153.

Each person steps to the sides of the open Ark until the Torah has been returned to the Ark.

After the last lines on page 154, close the curtain. Leave the doors of the Ark open.

Follow the reader off the pulpit, and return to your seats.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Aliyot (Blessings before and after Torah readings)

Provide a copy of these instructions to five individuals or married couples (including parents) who will receive aliyot. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering. Men must wear a tallit; women should wear a tallit if to do so is their custom.

You will be called up to the Torah to recite the Hebrew blessings before and after the reading. A card on the reader's desk has the blessings in Hebrew and also transliterated into English letters. Nevertheless, we STRONGLY recommend that you review the blessings in advance. The blessings are on the following page in Hebrew and English transliteration. A YouTube video of how to have an aliyah at Beth El is available on the synagogue website, <http://www.congbethel.org/rabbis-video-how-to.html>.

When you are called by your Hebrew name for your aliyah, walk up to the *shulchan* (reader's table) and stand to the reader's right. You do not need to bring your siddur with you.

The reader will point to the spot in the Torah where the reading will begin. Touch this spot with your tzitzit (the long fringe on the corner of your tallit), and then kiss the tzitzit. If you are a woman who is not wearing a tallit, you will be given the Torah binding to use to kiss the Torah.

Roll the Torah closed with both hands (one hand on each *etz chayim*, or spindle), and recite the first blessing while holding onto the rollers.

After the blessing, let go with your left hand. Roll the right side of the Torah open. Throughout the reading, hold onto the right *etz chayim* and follow the reading.

After the reading, touch the spot in the Torah where the reading ended with your tzitzit or the Torah binding. Then kiss the tzitzit or binding, roll the Torah closed, and recite the blessing after the Torah reading.

Move to the left side of the reading table and remain there until the next person called to the Torah completes the same cycle. Return to your seat after the next person finishes the blessings.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Torah Blessings

Before the Torah reading, touch the fringe of the tallit to the spot shown to you by the reader. You then kiss the fringe and say:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ:

Barchu et Adonai Hamvorach

The congregation will respond with the following line. Repeat it, then continue with the following lines:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Baruch Adonai hamvorach le'olam va'ed.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל

הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech haolam, asher bachar banu meekol ha'amim venatan lanu et Torah.

Baruch atah Adonai, notain haTorah.

After the Torah reading, again, touch the spot shown to you by the reader and kiss it before reciting the following:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת

אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech haolam, asher natan lanu Torat emmet, vechayay olam nata betochaynu.

Baruch atah Adonai notain haTorah.

Honors Instructions: Habgah (Lifting the Torah)

Provide a copy of these instructions to one person who will lift the Torah at the end of the Torah readings. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering.

When you are called by your Hebrew name for your aliyah at the conclusion of the Torah reading, go up to the *shulchan* (reader's table).

Open the scroll until 3 columns are visible. Grasp the *atzei chayim* (wooden spindles) and pull the Torah toward you until it is approximately halfway off of the *shulchan* (table). Using the edge of the table as a fulcrum, push down until the Torah is completely vertical. Lift the Torah and turn around to display the open scroll to the congregation. Hold it there for a few seconds while the congregation chants "V'zot haTorah....", then sit down in the designated chair.

The person doing Gelilah will grasp the *atzei chayim* or spindles at the top of the Torah and help you to roll it shut. Keep the Torah steady as the wrapper binds it with the strap and places the cover and breastplate over the Torah.

Return to your seat after the Torah is dressed.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Gelilah (Dressing the Torah)

Provide a copy of these instructions to one person who will dress the Torah at the end of the Torah readings. People who receive this honor must wear a head covering.

When you are called by your Hebrew name for your aliyah at the conclusion of the Torah reading, go up to the *shulchan* (reader's table).

The lifter will lift the Torah scroll and display it to the congregation while the congregation chants, "*V'zot haTorah...*" When the lifter sits down, grasp the *atzei chayim* or spindles at the top of the Torah and roll it shut.

When it is rolled tightly, bind it with the strap provided by the gabbai in the front, which is the side of the Torah that opens (the side facing the lifter). Merely stretch the fastener around the scroll and secure the buckle. The gabbayim will give assistance if needed.

Place the cover over the Torah, keeping the front of the cover to the front of the scroll. Place the breastplate over both wooden *atzei chayim* (spindles), the yad over the right spindle, and a crown over each spindle. The gabbai will guide you.

Return to your seat after the Torah is dressed.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Reciting Shehecheyanu

Provide a copy of these blessings to all family members who will rise to say Shehecheyanu.

After reciting a blessing over the Bar or Bat Mitzvah, the rabbi will ask the extended family to rise to recite the blessing of thanksgiving for having reached this special occasion. This applies to all members of the family, from parents to distant cousins. Close friends that are “like family” may also rise. Non-Jews are included in this honor as well. Please let your family know in advance so they know what to say.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah Adonai Elohaynu melech haolam,
shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

Praised are You, Adonai, Ruler of the universe,
Who has enabled us to reach this joyous occasion.

Honors Instructions: Passing Candy

Provide or explain these instructions to two or three children who will distribute the candy during the Torah service. The children passing the candy are not required to be Jewish.

The parents are to provide the candy to be distributed. The candy generally tossed are Sunkist gems.

Begin passing the candy after the sixth Aliyah. The gabbai will signal the candy passers when to begin passing the candy.

Walk down the outer aisles and pass a handful of candy at each row.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Torah Holding

Provide a copy of these instructions to one person who will hold the Torah during the chanting of the Haftarah. A man must wear tallit and kippah. A woman must wear a head covering, and should wear a tallit if to do so is her custom. A child younger than 13 is not required to wear a tallit but must wear a head covering.

Hold the Torah during the reading of the Haftarah, which follows the binding. Hold the Torah so it rests on your right shoulder, not across your arms like a baby nor resting on the arm or the back of the chair. Return to your seat after the Rabbi takes the Torah at the conclusion of Ashrei.

If the congregation rises while you are holding the Torah, you may stay seated if you are more comfortable that way. If you are strong enough to rise while continuing to hold the Torah, you may do so.

Note: A gabbai will guide you throughout your participation in the service.

Honors Instructions: Prayer for Our Country

Feel free to provide the text of this prayer to whoever will read it. The reader is required to wear a head covering (kippah for men, kippah or other head covering for women).

A gabbai will escort you to the bimah (stage) shortly before you lead this prayer. The congregation will join you for the final paragraph.

Please remain on the bimah until after the Prayer for Peace, then return to your seat.

Our God and God of our ancestors: We ask Your blessings for our country—for its government, for its leaders and advisors, and for all who exercise just and rightful authority. Teach them insights from Your Torah, that they may administer all affairs of state fairly, that peace and security, happiness and prosperity, justice and freedom may forever abide in our midst.

Creator of all flesh, bless all the inhabitants of our country with Your spirit. May citizens of all races and creeds forge a common bond in true harmony, to banish hatred and bigotry, and to safeguard the ideals and free institutions that are the pride and glory of our country.

May this land, under your providence, be an influence for good throughout the world, uniting all people in peace and freedom—helping them to fulfill the vision of your prophet: ‘Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they experience war any more’ (Isaiah 2:4). And let us say: Amen.

Honors Instructions: Prayer for Israel

Feel free to provide the text of this prayer to whoever will read it. The reader is required to wear a head covering (kippah for men, kippah or other head covering for women).

A gabbai will escort you to the bimah (stage) shortly before you lead this prayer.

Please remain on the bimah until after the Prayer for Peace, then return to your seat.

אָבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים, צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ,
בְּרַךְ אֶת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, רֵאשִׁית צְמִיחַת גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ.
הֲגוּ עָלֶיהָ בְּאֲבֵרַת חֲסִדֶיךָ וּפְרוֹס עָלֶיהָ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ,
וּשְׁלַח אוֹרְךָ וְאַמְתָּךְ לְרֵאשִׁיָּהּ, שְׁרִיָּהּ וַיּוֹעֲצֶיהָ,
וּתְקַנֵּם בְּעֵצָה טוֹבָה מִלְּפָנֶיךָ.
חֲזַק אֶת יְדֵי מְגַנֵּי אֶרֶץ קְדִישְׁנוּ,
וְהַנְּחִילֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְשׁוּעָה, וְעֲטֹרַת נְצַחֵן תְּעֲטֹרֵם,
וְנַתֵּן שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ, וְשִׁמְסַת עוֹלָם לְיוֹשְׁבֶיהָ, וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן.

Honors Instructions: Prayer for Peace

Feel free to provide the text of this prayer to whoever will read it. The reader is required to wear a head covering (kippah for men, kippah or other head covering for women).

A gabbai will escort you to the bimah (stage) shortly before you lead this responsive prayer. When you finish the reading, you may return to your seat.

May we see the day when war and bloodshed cease,
When a great peace will embrace the whole world.

Then nation will not threaten nation,
And mankind will not again know war.

For all who live on earth shall realize
We have not come into being to hate or to destroy.

We have come into being
To praise, to labor, and to love.

Compassionate God, bless the leaders of all nations
With the power of compassion.

Fulfill the promise conveyed in Scripture:

I will bring peace to the Land,
And you shall lie down, and no one shall terrify you.

I will rid the Land of vicious beasts
And it shall not be ravaged by war.

Let love and justice flow like a mighty stream.

Let peace fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.

And let us say: Amen.