Guidelines for B’nei Mitzvah Students and Families

5783

We Are Building a House of Friends, One Family at a Time, to Make a Welcoming Jewish Home for a Diverse Community.
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Let’s Begin With A Check List!

1-2 YEARS IN ADVANCE (during 6th grade and, for some, 7th grade year)
- Attend the three B’nei Mitzvah Workshops at Religious School (parents and student)
- Ensure that your family is current in all financial obligations to BCRC (parents).
- Increase family involvement at BCRC (supporting social/worship/education/fundraising events through attendance and assistance; committee leadership or membership; Board membership; financial support) (parents).
- Attend Erev Shabbat (5) and Shabbat Morning (5) services this year as an act of communal responsibility and to familiarize yourselves with the services. Attendance at High Holy Day services partially fulfills the service attendance requirement (parent and student).

1 YEAR IN ADVANCE
- Reserve/rent BCRC Social Hall for luncheon if desired (parents).
- Attend and actively participate in at least 80% of Religious School sessions (student).
- Attend Erev Shabbat (5) and Shabbat Morning (5) services for this year as an act of communal responsibility and to further rehearse and internalize the prayers. (parents and student)
- Have your child start on their Chai (18) Mitzvah Project
  - 6 Hours of “doing Jewish” with your peer groups
    (Attend BCRC social events; help plan a class event; attend the Bar/Bat Mitzvah services of your classmates. Note: Attendance at all three B’nei Mitzvah workshops in 6th grade meet this requirement and if any were missed, should be made up in 7th grade)
  - 6 hours of being involved in a Mitzvah
    (At this point, brainstorm what your mitzvah project will be) 6 hours of volunteering around the Temple
    (Participate in High Holy Day organization; participate on BCRC’s mitzvah; help out at Friday and Saturday Services, get involved in Temple clean-up or repair days, etc).
- Make sure you have received your invoice for your simcha. Please contact the temple office if you have not received this (see Financial Requirements).

9 MONTHS IN ADVANCE
- Conduct research to put the Mitzvah of your Chai Project in place (parents and student).
6 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

☐ Check on your standing with the synagogue Administrator regarding payment in full of the B’nei Mitzvah fee (parents see Financial Requirements)

Once in good standing:

☐ Set up initial meeting with Rabbi (the presence of all parents is strongly encouraged at the initial meeting). Meetings will occur monthly from then on out until the rehearsal to be scheduled the week of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Parents may but are not required to sit in on these monthly meetings.

☐ Make the rabbi aware of how many people you would like to honor with a Torah aliyah (minimum 3, maximum 6; parents will receive the second to last Aliyah; the Bar/Bat Mitzvah receives the last aliyah). The rabbi will further explain this if you have any questions.

☐ Obtain the Rabbi’s blessing at your first meeting before you begin your Mitzvah Project by describing orally or in writing on the form found in these Guidelines what you are planning on doing (parents and student), and begin! (student)

☐ Contact the family of the B’nei Mitzvah student whose service is immediately after your own Bar or Bat Mitzvah and confirm they know they are your Helper Family. Arrange swaps between families if necessary.

5-6 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

☐ Begin attending weekly tutoring sessions, practicing daily and making satisfactory progress.

☐ Monthly meetings with the rabbi to work on Torah, Haftarah, and Thank you speeches, choose English readings of service, and to track service attendance, and progress of the wimple and Chai Mitzvah project.

☐ Prepare any desired service supplements and submit to Rabbi for review (parents).

☐ Invite all classmates of B’nei Mitzvah student to service and any Kiddush (parents)

☐ Plan for Shabbat Morning Kiddush food, refreshments and supplies (parents).

☐ Contact Temple Administrator if you require a special setup of the Social Hall or sanctuary for an estimate of additional cost one MONTH IN ADVANCE

☐ Notify administrator of any special Sanctuary set-up requirements (parents).

☐ Email the Helper Family explaining the setup and cleanup for your celebration (parents).

2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE

☐ Submit any program booklet text to the Rabbi for editing and review prior to your printing and publication (parents).
1 WEEK IN ADVANCE
- Finalize Honors with the rabbi (parents and student)
- Parents write parent blessing and submit to rabbi for review
- Attend the B’nei Mitzvah Service Rehearsal with the Rabbi (student and one parent is required, other parents, siblings, and any other available family members are welcome).

FRIDAY BEFORE THE BAR OR BAT MITZVAH
- Complete any necessary Social Hall set-up, unless there is a special event on the Friday night before, in which case other arrangements must be made (parents).
- Attend Erev Shabbat service where family will light candles, and student will lead certain prayers and blessings.
- Bring all your materials and place in the Rabbi’s Study (these can also be brought the morning of the service) – Prayer Book, Torah Blessings (optional), Haftarah Blessings, Haftarah Text, Torah Speech, Haftarah Speech, Thank You Speech, Parent Blessing, Tallit, Kippot (optional), Service Programs (optional), Family Kiddush Cup or yad (optional), (parents and student).

THE DAY OF THE BAR OR BAT MITZVAH
- Arrive at BCRC at 9:15 if no photographs will be taken before the service; arrive earlier if photographs are desired (parents, student, any siblings, and any other family members to be photographed). Special arrangement with the board greeter must be made in advance if temple is to be opened prior to 9:15 am. (parents)
- Meet in Rabbi’s study at 9:15 am (parents, student and any siblings).
- Celebrate this milestone! (Everyone!)

MAZAL TOV! NOW YOU ARE A JEWISH YOUNG ADULT... SO YOU HAVE SOME RESPONSIBILITIES!!!
- Continue attending Religious School through to Confirmation! (student)
- Become involved in youth group or other opportunities offered to Jewish teens in NOVA. (student)
- Consider becoming a Madrich/Madricha in our Religious School! (student)
- Accept and perform adult responsibilities at BCRC and in the local and global community!! (student)
Introduction

You and your family are about to celebrate a significant milestone. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks the time when the Jewish community begins to view a young person as an adult. In the Jewish tradition a person is now capable of assuming more responsibilities for their ongoing learning and practice of Judaism, participating in religious rituals, and being counted as part of a Minyan (prayer quorum).

We know that the journey toward becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is exciting and sometimes even a little frightening. Planning for this event can seem overwhelming. The information in this booklet describes our temple’s policies and aims to answer any of the questions that you or your family may have.

The satisfaction and pride that your family will experience as you come before the Ark on the day of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be nothing short of amazing. We all feel privileged and honored to serve as your guides on this sacred journey. Please be in touch with us anytime you need anything. We certainly are here to help.

Let us be the first to wish your family a hearty Mazal Tov!

Sincerely, Rabbi Amy Sapowith, BCRC
David Waldman, Board President
Jonathon Burstein, Worship VP
Dr. Carol Currer, Education VP
Neil Frank, Temple Administrator General Information
General Information

What It Means To Be a Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks the transition in a person’s life from childhood into young adulthood. Post B’nei Mitzvah are expected to be responsible members of the Jewish community, capable of participating in and observing various traditions and rituals associated with being a Jewish adult.

After your Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we look forward to having you as a Madrich/Madricha in our Religious School, studying with you through Confirmation, and watching your growing involvement in Jewish programs offered to teens in our area and nationwide.

Setting the Date

We will be in contact with you during your child’s 5th Grade year to arrange a date for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a calendar of available dates. Your child should have already celebrated or be within a week of celebrating their 13th birthday by the date of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. You will be asked to select several alternative dates from those available, in preferential order, and we will do our best to accommodate you. Once your date has been finalized it is placed on the Temple calendar.

Should your family have extenuating circumstances regarding your date, you are welcome to make a request to consider your exception. Please submit your request detailing your reasons in writing (letter, e-mail) to the Worship Vice President and the Rabbi.

**A family not in good standing with BCRC (e.g. past due balances) will not be offered a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date until arrangements are made to bring the membership back into good standing.

Rabbi and Soloist

Our Rabbi and a Cantorial Soloist will be at your Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Our Soloists are extremely talented and each brings their own personality to a service. Because they are contracted, we are unable to give you a choice of Soloists. Rest assured, whoever is with
you on the day will do a beautiful job!

**Event Publicity**

It is our BCRC custom to publicize your Bar/Bat Mitzvah in several places.

- The date and time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah appears on our website through the Temple Calendar, and closer to the occasion in our section on Upcoming Events.
- It is announced from the Bimah a week before, and the evening before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Parents, please let us know if you have privacy concerns and wish us to not publicize your event in any of these means of communication.

**BCRC Themed Shabbats**

Due to the many themed Shabbats at BCRC, some Friday night services the eve of the B’nei Mitzvah service may coincide with congregation-wide celebrations. Some examples of holiday themed Shabbats include ‘Simchat Torah Shabbat’, ‘Chanukah Shabbat’, and ‘Purim Shabbat’.

Other (non-holiday) themed Shabbats include ‘Shabbat in the Park’, ‘Blessing of the Pets’ or a class service. Choose your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date with these calendar events in mind. If there is concern regarding a themed Shabbat coinciding with your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date please contact the Worship VP ([worshipvp@bcrcva.org](mailto:worshipvp@bcrcva.org)), the rabbi ([rabbibercva.org](mailto:rabbibercva.org)), and/or the office ([office@bcrcva.org](mailto:office@bcrcva.org)).
Preparing for Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Programs in Our Religious School

During 6th and 7th Grades, you will be invited to Parent and Child B’nei Mitzvah Programs as preparation for your celebration. The workshops generally address the following:

- RAISING THE "BAR" OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH
  - What is the meaning of Bar or Bat Mitzvah and how to make it meaningful?
  - Review the Bar/Bat Mitzvah checklist
  - Exploring the choreography and music of the service (including an overview)

- TURN IT AND TURN IT
  - Introduction to your Torah and haftarah portions
  - Best Practices for learning Torah and Haftarah. Learning from the experience of those who have “been there and done that!”
  - Designing a Torah wimple
  - A Mitzvah Mall of options for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah child

- AVODAH: THE WORSHIP SERVICE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
  - Explore the structure of the service
  - Revisiting the choreography of the service
  - What is a Mitzvah project?
  - Complete Torah wimple

Individualized Study (Tutoring and Torah Study Project)

Not every tutor is available for every mitzvah date. In any case, all of them are wonderful and will work with your child to help them shine on their special day.

Six months prior to your Bar or Bat Mitzvah, you and your child will meet with the Rabbi to discuss the B’nei Mitzvah study process and to receive your tutor assignment and your Torah Portion booklet. (Make sure you look after all this material... if you lose the Torah Portion booklet we are going to have to ask you to be responsible for the purchase of a replacement copy.

After you meet with the Rabbi, your tutor will be in contact with you to set up a tutoring schedule. At the five month mark, tutoring should begin. Included in your Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee are 20 sessions with your assigned tutor.
Tutoring sessions will last 45 minutes to an hour. Sessions are usually held at BCRC, though sometimes another location is established, or some sessions take place over zoom. For all in-person sessions, a parent or adult over the age of 18 is encouraged to be on-site.

If the need arises for additional tutoring beyond 20 sessions, you should pay the tutor a fee for their extra work with you. The current rate for our tutors is $35 per hour. The tutor is not required to provide make-up lessons for sessions you have missed. The tutor keeps the Rabbi up to date with your child’s progress to make sure that everything is going smoothly!

In parallel with tutor sessions, the student will meet monthly with the Rabbi to think through and structure a presentation for their Torah and Haftorah portions. Parents may wish to join these meetings with the student, but after the initial meeting, are not required to.

Finally, during the week prior to your big event, the Rabbi will arrange a two hour block of time to rehearse your role in the Friday night service and your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, so you feel prepared and comfortable for your big day.

Special Needs

Please note that Beth Chaverim sees itself as a place where all are welcome to worship. We are welcoming of and sensitive to children (and adults) with special needs. Parents with children who have special needs can make arrangements for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah by speaking with the Rabbi, tutor and Education Vice President to arrange for an individualized education plan and tailored Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

When The Best Laid Plans Go Awry...

Like you, Beth Chaverim wants your child to shine on the day of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Sometimes, however, life circumstances change, and there are challenges which impede your child’s study and preparation. Our B’nei Mitzvah tutors are instructed to keep the Rabbi informed of your child’s progress. We ask that you, also, keep us informed of any challenges that your child, or you as a family, are experiencing. If the best laid plans are going awry, either you, the Rabbi or tutor can request a meeting to strategize the best new strategy to ensure your child’s success.
Requirements for Bar/Bat Mitzvah

**Service Attendance**

BCRC is your spiritual home. The more parents and students can attend services, the more familiar they will be with worship and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. We want you and them to feel comfortable in our sanctuary and for your child to feel that they have competency on the day of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In order to achieve this, we have a service requirement throughout their Religious School years.

In Grades 6 and 7 we ask our students to attend

- 5 regular (not Tot Shabbat) Friday night services and/or Festival Services
- 5 Saturday morning and/or Festival services

**each year.** If you can come to more services the better and easier it will be for your child to lead the congregation in prayer because of their familiarity with worship. Festival services, such as High Holiday services, may be used to partially fulfill either the Friday night or Saturday morning service requirement.

When your child comes to services, we ask them to fill in a service attendance card (these are found in the foyer and also in this handbook) and to hand it to the Rabbi with a “Shabbat Shalom!” or “Chag Sameach!” or a “Shanah Tovah!” These are collected and counted and at the end of each year those students who have met their minimum service attendance requirement receive a reward. Your child may also have these cards filled out and signed by an official of another synagogue, should they attend a service there. If they attend a Reform Jewish camp, retreat, or attend a youth group event which has services as part of the experience, those services also count towards our BCRC service attendance and they should also fill out a card, have it signed by a leader at those venues and submit it to our Rabbi.

**The Chai (18) Project**

Our Chai Project is designed to help each Bar/Bat Mitzvah understand the meaning of being part of the Jewish community and the importance of repairing the world. Chai is the Hebrew word which means “life” and its letters add up to the number 18. Our Chai Project consists of 3 activities, each of which take a minimum of 6 hours of
commitment in the year prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

1 Activity 1 (minimum of 6 hours) = Getting involved with your Jewish Peers

We want your child to make Jewish friends and socialize with Jewish friends. Attending Jewish Camp is an ideal way to make this happen. RSVP or book your child in to participate during their year prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah! Attending the three B’nei Mitzvah workshops also fulfills this requirement. Taking advantage of BCRC social events organized throughout the year also strengthens relationships both among the kids and the parents.

2 Activity 2 (minimum of 6 hours) = Volunteering your time at BCRC.

We provide opportunities during the year for your child to volunteer their time including helping out at High Holy Days, setting and cleaning up for services, giving out Torah Commentaries at Bar/Bat Mitzvah services, participating in BCRC’s Mitzvah Day. Keep your eye on the Temple Email Blast to see how your child (and you) can help out!

3 Activity 3 (minimum of 6 hours) = A Mitzvah Project

Each child is asked to complete a Mitzvah Project in the Jewish community, their local community or the world community.

In the Forms Section of these guidelines, beginning on page 43, you will find forms on which you can log your volunteer time at temple (Activity 1); let us know how you have gotten involved with your Jewish peers (Activity 2); and propose and report on your Mitzvah Project (Activity 3).

These forms may be filled out on an ongoing basis and reviewed at your monthly meetings with the Rabbi. Families can also report verbally on these communal activities.

Education Requirements

We wish to ensure that our Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are not only well prepared, but also understand that they are part of a synagogue community. Our policy is that students must attend a Jewish Day School or Religious School for three consecutive years prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. These years ideally are spent at BCRC, but exceptions are made for educational experiences that meet the definition of a Jewish day school or religious education. During the two years prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah, in order for your child to feel
comfortable and confident on their special day, it is our policy that they attend school 80% of the Sunday sessions prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

If your child requires special consideration because they cannot meet these requirements, please present your concerns to our Worship Vice President and Rabbi. Together we will try to compose an alternative plan.

Part of your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah Education includes parent and child attendance at all B’nei Mitzvah workshops in our Religious School and completion of all Bar/Bat Mitzvah assignments and practice. Once your child begins tutoring, we recommend they practice 30 minutes each day--split up into smaller ten minute sittings if necessary.

Your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah studies and projects are monitored by our tutors and our Rabbi. Your child should be able to demonstrate service competency, knowledge of their Torah and Haftarah, have completed their Chai Project and have created Torah and Haftarah presentations and a thank you speech prior to the day of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Prayer recordings for most of the prayers your child will lead can be found on the BCRC website under the “Pray” tab. If there is a challenge with any child, the Worship Vice President and Rabbi are notified and we will meet with you to create a plan of action moving forward.

**Financial Requirements**

All our B’nei Mitzvah must be children of members in good financial standing with the Temple, unless special arrangements are made. This means that families must be current on all financial obligations to BCRC prior to receiving a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date and up to the time of Bar/Bat Mitzvah (if you need to make special financial arrangements this should be discussed with the VP of Finance as early on as possible).

Approximately one year prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date you should receive a payment notification email and accompanying bill which is due in full prior to meeting with the Rabbi at the six (6) month mark prior to your date. If you do not receive this bill, please contact our office. Please contact the office if you would like to schedule the fee on an automatic payment plan.

An additional email will be sent 6 months prior to your date as a reminder that your
financial payment must be in good standing prior to engaging the tutors or Rabbi with formal study. Tutoring will not begin until the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is paid in full.

**The current Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is $1,050 and includes:**

- Tutoring (20 sessions)
- Rabbinic Officiation & consultation
- Cantorial Soloist
- Torah portion booklet and materials
- Use of gathering area outside the sanctuary for Kiddush
- Setup and Cleanup costs
- administration fees

Beth Chaverim does not profit on B’nei Mitzvot! All Bar/Bat Mitzvah fees apply directly to the above services provided for a successful B'nei Mitzvah. Please contact the Vice President of Finance with any questions.

If you are not holding your service at Beth Chaverim (e.g. if you are traveling to Israel) but will be utilizing any of our services such as tutoring, please discuss the appropriate fee with us.

**Community Requirements**

BCRC is a hands-on community, a House of Friends, where we help each other out! Your family is asked to help the family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah on the **Saturday before** your child celebrates their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah with Kiddush and service set-up and clean-up.

Six months before your celebration date, check in with the family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah that is scheduled to take place after yours to confirm they will be at your celebration and know that they are your helper family. Helper families are asked to assist with clean-up of the sanctuary after the service (re-stocking prayer books and Torah books), and set-up/clean-up of any light Kiddush (such as cookies, cakes, fruit, cheese, crackers). **Helper families are not required to assist with luncheons after the service (though assistance is often offered and very much appreciated).** Helper families may also choose to assist Board Greeters with guests (giving out prayer books if necessary, service programs, kippot).

If you are unable to fulfill your date to help another BCRC family, you are responsible to
switch dates with another Bar/Bat Mitzvah family and let all families involved with the switch know of that change. To find out which family is after your event and who will be helping you with yours, refer to the class list distributed at the first B’nei Mitzvah workshop or check the BCRC Calendar on our website www.bcrcva.org.
The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service and Celebration

Rehearsal

In the week of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah the Rabbi will schedule a two-hour rehearsal with you in the Sanctuary to run through every aspect of the Friday night and Saturday morning program. This is designed to make everyone comfortable with the service and its choreography.

We require that the student and at least one parent be present, though it is preferable, if possible, for all parents to attend. It is also the ideal time for anyone else who has been given an honor in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to practice their part if they are in town.

Your child should bring to the rehearsal the following items:

- Their own prayer book
- The copies of Torah and Haftarah Blessings they are reading from
- The copy of the Haftarah they are reading from
- Their Torah Speech
- Their Haftarah Speech
- Their “Thank You” Speech
- Parent Blessing (though parent doesn’t have to share it at this time)
- Tallit for practicing the blessing

Friday Night

Because BCRC is largely a Friday night worship community and being Bar/t Mitzvah is a declaration of one’s responsibility in community, we ask that our students share their celebration by partaking in the Friday night service prior to their Saturday Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

Students are given the honor of lighting the shabbat candles accompanied by their family. They lead the congregation in the chanting of certain prayers as well as reciting the blessing over wine and challah at the conclusion of the service.
On Friday nights when a Tot Shabbat is held, the candles, wine and challah blessings are recited in our foyer area prior to the adult service, at 7 pm. On Friday nights when there is no Tot Shabbat, the entire service takes place in our Sanctuary and is followed by blessings over the wine and challah.

We ask that you arrive at Temple no later than 6:45 pm so that you are on time for your child’s participation in the service. When you arrive at 6:45 pm, you may bring with you items for the setup of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah the next day, and place all those items in the Rabbi’s Study.

These items include:

- Prayerbook
- Torah Blessings (optional)
- Haftarah Blessings
- Haftarah Text
- Torah Speech
- Haftarah Speech
- “Thank You” Speech
- Parent Blessing
- Tallit
- Kippot (optional)
- Service Programs (optional)
- Family Kiddush Cup (optional)
- Yad (optional)

The assigned Helper Families provide the Friday night Oneg or Oneg/Preneeg for the service, and the Temple provides two challot. If you are expecting a big Friday night attendance, you are welcome to supplement with extra food, drink or challah. Just let the Board Greeter know that this is your intention (their name is in the weekly email Blast or you can click on the Shabbat entry on the congregational calendar and it will list the names of the Board Greeter and the Helper Families for any specific Shabbat).

**Saturday Morning**

Given our Openpath app, you, as a temple member, will have access to the building beginning at 9 am. If you need the building open prior to this time, in order to set up a Kiddush, a
Luncheon, or to take photographs, please contact the office and our admin will see that the proper permissions are granted so that you may enter using the app. Please make sure you have downloaded Openpath onto your phone and that it is working for you.

We ask that you as a family are present in the building no later than 9:20 am. At that time, the immediate family (parents, siblings, Bar/Bat Mitzvah) will be asked to come into the Rabbi’s Study. The Rabbi and the family spend some moments processing the meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah for the family. These calming moments are helpful in centering your child before they take on their role as leader of prayer and teacher of Torah.

Our service at BCRC begins promptly at 10 am.

Each of our students is well prepared by their tutor and the Rabbi. They will lead the congregation in:

- Introduction of the Service
- Shema and its Blessings
- Amidah ~ Some of the blessings
- Torah and Haftarah Teaching and Reading
- Conclusion (Optional involvement)

The service concludes with your child helping with the blessings for Kiddush and Motzi. Please note that a bar/bat Mitzvah service is a public worship service. Each family is asked to either invite all service-goers to the luncheon immediately following, if in the social hall, or to provide an oneg of challah, pastry, and juice for worshippers in the foyer.

**Assigning Honors**

**Types of Honors**

There are various honors that can be assigned to honor your family and other guests. A form with the possible service honors for you to complete is found in the “Forms” section of this booklet. Honors include tallit presentations, Aliyot, reading from the Torah, ark openings, dressing/undressing of the Torah, and lifting the Torah. Occasionally English readings are assigned as an honor.

At BCRC, the average number of Aliyot (blessings before and after the reading of the Torah)
is three or four; the last Aliyah always is reserved for the student and the Aliyah directly before is granted to the parents. You may have up to six aliyot if you wish to honor more people with an Aliyah, but the student must chant a minimum of three verses for each Aliyah. Thus, six aliyot would require a minimum of 18 verses. If you would like to honor a family member or a friend by their chanting one of these aliyot, please let the rabbi know at the Six Month Meeting, and provide the rabbi with their contact information so she and the tutor can inform them of the verses that they will need to learn.

- Your friend or family member can learn their assigned Torah verses through the following web resource: [http://www.pockettorah.com](http://www.pockettorah.com)

**Role of Non-Jews in the Service**

At Beth Chaverim Reform Congregation we try to be as inclusive as possible. Non-Jewish parents help write and read the Parent Blessing and offer an alternative Aliyah blessing in English found on p. 369 in Mishkan T'filah. Non-Jewish parents and grandparents as supporters of raising a Jewish child are included in the Torah pass from generation to generation. Non-Jews are welcome to open and close the ark, undress or dress the Torah, and read from certain interpretations of prayers. There are also honors which we reserve specifically for Jewish members of the congregation such as Torah aliyahs and the lifting of the Torah. For a greater understanding of the Role of the Non Jew in our Synagogue refer to the policy document [here in this handbook](#).

**The Parent Blessing**

Shortly after the opening of the service, you have the opportunity to say a few words in the form of a Parent Blessing. This is not meant to be a speech about your child’s accomplishments and achievements (please save those for the party!), but rather a short blessing for your child emphasizing the Jewish values, hopes and dreams you wish them to carry forth from this day. Your blessing should be written at least one week in advance of the celebration and submitted to the Rabbi. For more guidance on how to write this blessing turn [here in this booklet](#).

**The “Thank You” Speech**

After the congregational announcements and gift giving, your child will be asked to say thank
you to those who have helped bring them to the day of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. A suggested outline on how to do this is found here. Your child will also share their thank you speech with the rabbi during their meetings.

**Service Programs**

**Creating a Service Program**

Some of our families elect to create a service program for the day of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah explaining the synagogue rituals and outlining the honors for the day and offering some words of thanks. The temple does not provide these programs and will not print them for you. As you attend various Bar and Bat Mitzvah services at our Temple and other synagogues, you may collect programs and ideas for your own service program.

Because different synagogues celebrate this ceremony in various ways, and editing errors can happen on documents we are working on, we ask that you run the text of your program by our Rabbi at least two weeks in advance for approval before publication.

**Service Etiquette**

The following service etiquette may be helpful in designing your service programs.

**Smart Phones and other electronic devices.** Your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is a sacred occasion. We therefore ask that you and your guests refrain from using smart phones and other electronic devices during the service and place them in the mute or off position.

**Kippah and Tallit.** At Beth Chaverim, the wearing of kippot/yarmulkes is optional for men and women. We ask that those who are called to the Torah wear a Tallit onto the Bima.

**Sitting, Standing and Leaving the Sanctuary.** It is Jewish custom to rise and sit with the congregation where indicated. We stand during the most sacred parts of our service. It is therefore customary not to leave or enter the sanctuary when the congregation is standing.

**Clapping.** A Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a sacred service, not a performance – therefore, we request that there be no clapping to show approval, as it places undue emphasis on
the prayer leaders and contributes to the sense of individual performance rather than communal worship. Clapping is at other times welcome as part of the song or prayer.

**Welcoming the Congregation to Your Simcha**

Here at Beth Chaverim, our House of Friends, we strongly believe that it is important to teach our children the importance of inclusion and the value of being part of a synagogue community.

All BCRC services are open to our congregants and to the community. Therefore, at your Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and Kiddush there may be attendees that were not on your invited guest list.

We ask that all Bar/Bat Mitzvah families invite their child’s Religious School classmates to celebrate with them at the ceremony and the Kiddush immediately following. Also, if you elect to have a luncheon at the Temple following your Simcha, you should plan for a few extra guests (usually about 10) to join you in our Social Hall, as it is our custom that such luncheons are open to the community.

**After The Service Kiddush**

Following the service it is our custom as a warm and friendly congregation to make sure that food is served. On Friday and Saturday morning, the Temple provides for the basic Kiddush: one cup of Kiddush Wine and two Challah after each service. For Friday Kiddush the assigned Helper Families provide for the Friday night Oneg or Oneg/Preneeg. If you are expecting a big Friday night attendance, you are welcome to supplement with extra food, drink or Challah. For Saturday Kiddush, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is asked to supply light food and beverages for the Kiddush. Often people will make or buy items such as cookies, cakes, fruit, cheese, crackers. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family who follow your own celebration, are assigned to help you with Kiddush set up and clean up.

**Luncheon**

If you are holding a luncheon following the service at BCRC to which all service attendees are invited, there is no need to provide a separate Kiddush for the congregation. For
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Luncheons, families should provide:

- Tablecloths
- Plates
- Utensils
- Napkins
- Cups
- Ice/Ice bucket
- Food
- Food Set-Up
- Food clean-up
- Coffee urns
- Please remove leftover food from the temple after lunch on Saturday. There is no storage of food allowed in the BCRC kitchen.
- Wash and replace all kitchen items used.
- Deposit all trash in the dumpster in the back of the building.
- Lightly sweep the floor.
- If you choose to donate leftover paper products to the Temple, please store in the appropriate cupboards in the Kitchen. Thank you for your generosity!

It is very important to read our congregation's Food Policy in the Policy Section of this manual, so that you are aware which foods are prohibited on our Temple grounds because of Kashrut or allergies.

Although BCRC stores items for our own use in the kitchen and storage areas, you are not permitted to use these for your personal use without paying a rental (deposit, usage and cleaning) fee - these include the popcorn machine, drink containers, and tablecloths. If you would like to rent these items, please contact our Facilities VP.

**Helper Family Guidelines**

Normally, the Helper Family will be the family who is having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah following yours, unless families have made a swap (which they should inform you about).

Each Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration is different, some are catered with staff, some families buy platters of food and use paper goods, some families love to bake, Therefore it is really helpful for you to provide a written outline via email regarding what you would like your
helper family to do for your particular celebration. We suggest that you do this one month in advance of your celebration.

Here are some suggestions of things you may ask of the family to alleviate you of the organizational responsibility on your family’s special day:

- Pour Kiddush wine into wine cups, put challah on challah plate, cover challah and place under the table in the Bimah area.
- Welcome all guests to our congregation prior to the service, along with the Board Greeter.
- Encourage guests to take a Siddur/Kippah/Program along with the Board Member.
- Along with the Board Greeter, invite guests to enter sanctuary and be seated beginning at 9:55 am.
- Before the service, place food in the fridge or on a counter and place paper goods and any decorations on the cart in the kitchen.
- Lay Kiddush food out on the back table in the foyer/social hall prior to the end of the service.
- Uncover the food while the congregation is reciting blessings over wine and challah at the end of the service.
- Clean up the Kiddush.
- Remove wine and Challah from the sanctuary/social hall/foyer. Please wash and dry wine cup and challah plate and leave in the Copy Room in the Ritual Cupboard above the sink.

**NOTE:** Helper Families are not required to help with luncheons after the service. Please make sure that you have friends or have hired someone to assist you with the clean up.

**The Mitzvah of Tzedakah**
Throughout the ages, it has been Jewish tradition to mark a joyous celebration by making a donation to the synagogue. Customarily monetary donations are given in multiples of 18 (the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word “Chai” meaning “Life”). Here at BCRC we have many funds to which you can direct your donation specifically. You might also consider buying a leaf on our Tree of Life in the foyer to mark your celebration. Another opportunity for Tzedakah, is to donate an object that is on the congregational wish list in honor of your special occasion. A form for Tree of Life donations has been attached for your use in the Forms section. For more information on donating to our Temple see our website, www.bcrcva.org.
BCRC Policies

**Kippot**
Wearing of kippot is optional in our sanctuary. Some families order customized kippot (yarmulkes) for their celebration. This is not required. BCRC has many kippot that are available for your use. Should you order kippot special for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, each family is expected to take the remaining kippot home with them. Unfortunately, we do not have the space to accommodate these extra kippot from each B’nei Mitzvah family.

**Wearing of Tallit**
It is our custom at Beth Chaverim for service leaders and those called for an Aliyah to the Torah to wear a Tallit. Tallitot can be found on special racks in our foyer. You are, of course, welcome to bring your own.

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the first opportunity for Ashkenazi children to receive their own Tallit. Sephardi children also often receive a new Tallit for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. There are many designs online and in some local synagogue shops, or you may choose to pass a Tallit from generation to generation.

**Photography, Videography and Online Streaming**
We ask to preserve the sacred nature of our service that no photography happens during worship. You are, however, welcome to take photos before the service itself (remember though, you need to be in the Rabbi’s Office by 9:20 am and must pre-arrange to open our building earlier than 9 am) or after the service.

You are allowed to set up a video camera or a device to Zoom the service on a tripod and stand at the back of our Sanctuary, and leave it unattended but running to preserve memories of the day or to share those memories with family or friends who could not make the occasion in person. If you need our wireless access code to set up a Zoom, the Administrator or Rabbi will be happy to share it with you. No extra sound equipment or lighting may be brought into our sanctuary.

**Food Policy**
Beth Chaverim Reform Congregation’s food policy is designed for the comfort and safety of
our members. Here are some points to remember as you are preparing for your Kiddush or Luncheon:

- No Treif animals – all meat must come from animals which chew cud and have cloven hooves, all fish must have had fins and scales (e.g. no ham, bacon or other forms of pork, no shrimp, clams, mussels or other shellfish).
- No mixing of dairy and meat in the same dish (e.g. no meat and cheese sandwiches or meat and cheese lasagna).
- No nuts or nut products on our Temple grounds (we have many members and guests with severe nut allergies).

**Building Set Up**

Generally, our Sanctuary, Foyer and Social Hall will be set up in the usual fashion. Our Sanctuary customarily seats approximately 125.

Our Social Hall is available for Saturday Luncheons for no additional fee if BCRC members of the congregation who happen to attend services are invited to join you for lunch. However, you will need to fill out a rental form to request the use of the Social Hall for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah (found in the Forms section of this Handbook). Generally, approximately 5-10 members of the congregation may stay for such a luncheon.

If you wish to hold your luncheon in the Social Hall and need a different setup to our regular BCRC set up, or you wish to deviate from our regular sanctuary setup, we ask that you contact the Office with your requests two months prior to the event, and they will inform you of any additional costs this setup may incur and that you may be financially responsible for.

**Building Rental**

If you wish to rent the Social Hall for just your own guests, for a Luncheon or a separate function, there will be an additional charge. A rental form should be filled out with this request (found in our Forms section of this Handbook). Please submit this request at least six months in advance of your date. We ask that our Kashrut policy is also observed at private functions.

**Facility Usage**

You are welcome to use the kitchen to stage catering events. Please remind kitchen help to keep disruptions in the social hall to a minimum while services are in progress.
**Gifts for Classmates**
Beth Chaverim, our House of Friends, encourages you to attend and invite every member of your child’s Bar/ Bat Mitzvah class to the service and Kiddush or Luncheon.

Attending the Bar/Bat Mitzvah of every child in the B’nei Mitzvah year can be an expensive endeavor. We therefore highly recommend that in lieu of gifts, the class parents get together and pool an agreed upon amount or amounts to purchase an item for the synagogue, or to make a donation to an agreed upon charity, in honor of your children’s special day.

While not every family may wish to participate, this is a lovely gesture which teaches your children the value of community and Tzedakah.

**Special Requests**
Sometimes a family desires something different to occur at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah which deviates from our usual BCRC custom. All special requests will be considered by our Worship Committee who will determine whether the request can be honored or a compromise reached. They will discuss their deliberations with you.

If you have a special request, please write to our Worship Vice President and Rabbi, at least three months prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.
BCRC is a Reform Jewish congregation and an affiliate of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). The BCRC Mission Statement is that the members of BCRC will provide the Jewish community with a forum for experiencing the religious, cultural, and celebratory aspects of Jewish life, offering this experience in an organized, open, egalitarian environment where all members are comfortable with their diverse beliefs and Jewish heritage. BCRC will foster the viability of the Jewish people by providing Jewish religious education to our children and providing our members with an active Jewish community in Loudoun County, Virginia.

Members of our congregation are Jewish families, and many of our families include spouses and/or children who either practice or have a heritage of other faiths. While variety brings wonderful new ideas and energy into our BCRC family, there is the need to qualify and clearly articulate our position on how people of different faiths can participate and hopefully feel a part of our reform Jewish traditions and spirituality. We believe that clarity and openness in our ritual policies will foster an atmosphere of respect and avoid unnecessary ill feelings about participation in our worship services.

Overall, it is the policy of BCRC to welcome and respect people of all faiths who choose to belong and participate in BCRC services and activities. However, we are a Jewish congregation and, as such, we must observe certain guidelines set forth in Reform Judaism, as they relate to roles for our non-Jewish family members. After some research, we discovered that although there are common practices (see Background and Research section below), each Jewish congregation is different in the policies it adopts for the role of non-Jews. There are no hard and fast rules. Hence the BCRC Worship Committee has discussed, debated, and arrived at words which we hope reach the delicate balance of both allowing maximum involvement of our non-Jewish congregants while maintaining the spiritual integrity of our Jewish worship services and offering a house of prayer, tradition, and community for Jews who come to pray and celebrate our faith.
The following are preexisting policies that the BCRC Worship Committee has reaffirmed with some revisions:

A non-Jew may:
- Open and close the Ark.
- Dress and undress the Torah.
- Recite non-liturgical readings (poems, non-liturgical blessings, the shehechiyanu) that do not overtly presume the speaker is Jewish.
- In the case of the L'Dor V'Dor ("Torah passing") ceremony, the non-Jewish parent who presumably supports and has had a role in the raising of their Jewish child stands together with the Jewish spouse/family and participates in the actual passing of the Torah.
- Touch the Torah with their siddur (prayer book) as it passes in procession, which shows a sign of honor and respect.
- Any adult congregant may stand and recite the Kaddish for a loved one on the anniversary of their death, or stand in memory of the many innocent people whose deaths have had an effect on them.
- May serve as a musical accompanist at any service.
- May wear a kippah (head covering) and tallit (prayer shawl for Shabbat morning services), but this is not required or expected.

A non-Jew may not:
- Serve as the Sheliach Tzibur (prayer leader).
- Recite an Aliyah (blessing over the Torah) as this is a Mitzvah or commandment. In the case of a Shabbat Bar or Bat Mitzvah Service, a non-Jewish parent may stand with their Jewish spouse, who accepts the honor of an Aliyah, on the Bimah, and is invited to offer the alternative aliyah blessing on p. 369 in Mishkan T'filah. The program should say that the Aliyah is given to the Jewish parent "with" the non-Jewish parent.
- Mitzvot such as lighting candles, blessing the lulav and etrog, blowing the shofar, reading from and/or raising the Torah in procession are expected of Jewish members. Non-Jewish members may participate in fulfilling these mitzvot in addition to, but not instead of, their Jewish family members.

- There are five basic CCAR ritual principles which BCRC follows:
  1. No non-Jew should offer a prayer that contains the formula “who has commanded us” or “who has chosen us”. As a non-Jew, it simply does not make sense because non-Jews are not commanded as are the Jews.
  2. Non-Jews should not be asked to say or do anything that compromises their religious integrity.
3. Jewish worship contains acts and prayers that are the responsibilities of Jews to perform or say. Some of these actions may be performed by another Jew as expert ritual stand-in (e.g., one rarely finds Jewish parents willing to perform the circumcision of their own son.) Non-Jews, no matter how learned or sincere, are not afforded that responsibility.

4. The Religious obligations of Jews cannot be fulfilled by non-Jewish proxy, though non-Jews may wish to participate as part of a family creating Jewish life.

5. Participation in life-cycle events is a recognition of support and commitment by both parents to raise a child to be Jewish, a vital component of a child’s healthy religious life. Family members are encouraged to participate in appropriate ways during these celebrations.

Note: These principles are in keeping with opinions expressed by the numerous Reform Responsa, published in the context of answering questions about the extent of participation of non-Jews in the synagogue.

The above policies address mainly “ritual” involvement of non-Jews in our synagogue. Clearly, our policy leaves several areas unanswered for non-Jews such as voting, governance, clubs and a host of other issues. These will be addressed in other congregational documents such as the BCRC Constitution and By-Laws.

Background and Research

The mission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) is to “preserve and promote Judaism and to encourage all efforts for the dissemination of its teachings in a Liberal spirit; to advance the cause of Jewish learning; to foster fellowship and cooperation among Rabbis and other Jewish scholars; and to serve the welfare of its members.” The CCAR has published several volumes of its responsa literature over the years. Recently, it has made many of these teachings available on-line (www.ccarnet.org).

Closing Thoughts

This policy document is a living document which will change based on the sense of the people in leadership positions at BCRC. A review of this document should occur at least annually and we suggest that it come before the BCRC Board to be re-approved at least every other year to ensure it is current and supported by the congregational leadership. We therefore set out here to minimize any misconception or confusion about our policy and hold it up as a banner to welcome people of all faiths into our Reform Jewish congregation.

Questions on this document should be directed to the BCRC Worship Committee at worshipvp@bcrcva.org.
Beth Chaverim Reform Congregation offers families the opportunity to address your child with a personal Parent Blessing during the tallit presentation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. The purpose of this personal Parent Blessing is to briefly communicate to your child your Jewish hopes and dreams and the significance of this day in their life. It is not meant as a biography or to review their academics or sports achievements or relate “inside family anecdotes.”

We respectfully request that parents limit their remarks to no more than 150 words per parent. We encourage parents to offer words of Torah or even a D’var Torah to their child within these words. The rabbi would be happy to meet with you to help you with these remarks and to guide you in preparing for them. The Parent Blessing must be submitted and reviewed with the Rabbi at least one week prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

If you are not comfortable writing your own blessing, you may use a Parent Blessing from examples listed below. Please note, more examples might be found with a web search or in the highly recommended book by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin: Putting God on the Guest List.

1. A Blessing Danny Siegel, inspired by Talmud Berachot 17a

May your eyes sparkle with the light of Torah, And your ears hear the music of its words.
May the space between each letter of the scrolls Bring warmth and comfort to your soul.
May the syllables draw holiness from your heart, And may this holiness be gentle and soothing to the world. May your study be passionate,
And meanings bear more meanings.
Until life itself arrays itself to you As a dazzling wedding feast. And may your conversation, Even of the commonplace, Be a blessing to all who listen to your words. We pray that this service may long echo in our child’s memory. May it engrave on the table of his/her heart the understanding that this day initiates a life more
firmly dedicated to the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvot, to deeds of justice and kindness and support for the People of Israel. O God, make each of us a worthy example to our children. Let nothing estrange us from them and from You, the Source of all goodness and compassion. Help us again and again to renew our attachment to the Covenant of Israel, to walk hand in hand with our child in the ways of righteousness and truth. Amen.

2. (Insert Child’s name), you have brought great joy to our lives. We give thanks for the privilege of seeing you grow day-by-day and year-by-year. You are growing up to be an incredible young man/young woman. You are intelligent and compassionate. You have a strong sense of right and wrong and the courage to stand up for your beliefs.

You are very creative and we hope you will continue to be an independent thinker. Remember that when someone comes up with an idea that others think is impossible, they may be on to something really important. We hope that you find something you are passionate about, follow your own path, and use your talents to do something remarkable that will make a difference. Remember to live each day to the fullest. Get the most from each day of your life… then you can look forward with confidence and look back without regrets. Time is a non-renewable resource. Take time to appreciate the moment, to find peace and faith within you. Continue to use your great sense of humor to keep things in perspective. Look for something good in each day and each person. Remember to laugh and enjoy life. May you grow to be strong in body and mind, to love what is good and true, may you never forget how much we love you.

3. For A Daughter/Son, We are very proud of the person that you are becoming. On this your Bar/Bat Mitzvah day we have special hopes for you: We hope that you always remember that you are part of a wonderful heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. You are connected to the Jewish people, to God and to Torah. You need the Jewish community and the Jewish community needs you. We hope that you will continue to learn and mature. You will find that the world is not always a fair place, but do what you can to make it better. Do not let others sway you from
what you know to be right and just, and most important thing is to be the best that you can be.

We hope that you always know that no matter what problems you face you will always have the help, the support and the love of your parents. You have brought more joy and happiness to your mother and me than you will ever know just in being yourself and giving us the pleasure of watching you blossom into the beautiful young lady/man who stands before us today.
Writing the “Thank You” Speech

Before the closing song of your service each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is asked to offer a “Thank You” speech, double spaced, 16 point font to thank those people who have helped them on their Bar/Bat Mitzvah journey. Here is a chart for you to fill out to help you consider who you might like to thank, and why.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>THANK YOU TO PARENTS</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
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<td>THANK YOU TO SIBLINGS</td>
<td>WHY?</td>
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<td>THANK YOU TO OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS</td>
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<td>THANK YOU TO MY TUTOR</td>
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<td>THANK YOU TO RABBI</td>
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<td>THANK YOU TO SOLOIST</td>
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<td>THANK YOU TO MY TEACHERS</td>
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<tr>
<th>THANK YOU TO OTHERS (SPECIAL GUESTS, COACHES, FRIENDS ETC.)</th>
<th>WHY?</th>
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Forms Section

Please feel free to use the forms on the following pages, or convey the content in a letter or an email to us.

Financial Requirements Checklist

❖ One year prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date
  - payment notification email and accompanying bill for $1,050 due in full prior to meeting with the Rabbi at the six (6) month mark prior to your date

❖ Six months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date
  - email reminder that financial payment must be in good standing prior to engaging tutors or Rabbi with formal study
Service Attendance Card

Child’s Name: _____________________________________________

Attended (Circle the appropriate time and place)

➢ Friday night
➢ Saturday morning
➢ Festival services
  On _________________________________ (date)
➢ At BCRC
➢ At (Name of other Synagogue and its location) _______________________________

*** If at another synagogue signature is required of a synagogue official:

(Circle the appropriate title)
President     Board Member     Rabbi     Cantor
THE CHAI (18) PROJECT: (ACTIVITY 1)

**Involvement With Jewish Peers Record**

Due: 1 month prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Involvement with Jewish Peers</th>
<th>Time Spent</th>
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Total Amount of Peer Time →
THE CHAI (18) PROJECT: (ACTIVITY 2)

BCRC Volunteer Record
Due: 1 month prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date

| Date | Volunteer Activity at BCRC | Time Spent Volunteerin |g |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------|
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |
|      |                           |                        |

Total Amount of Volunteer Time →
THE CHAI (18) PROJECT: (ACTIVITY 3)

Mitzvah Project Proposal
Due: 6 months prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Date Name: ____________________________________________
Phone: _____________________ Email: _____________________
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date: __________________________________

MITZVAH PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Write a summary of your proposed Mitzvah Project)
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

GOALS/TANGIBLE RESULTS (Explain who will benefit and how they will benefit from your project)
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

ORGANIZATIONS (Include the name of organization/s you will support or work with)
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

PARTICIPANTS (List the people you will need to work with. Think about the friends and grown-ups)
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
MATERIALS NEEDED (List each material and quantities needed to complete your project).

NOTE KEY MILESTONES AND DATES
I will begin my project on: ________________________________

My project will be done by: ________________________________

PERSONAL GROWTH (Explain how you will learn and grow by completing this project) I’ll feel great when:

   ________________________________

   ________________________________

   ________________________________
Mitzvah Project Report

Due: 1 month prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date

Name:__________________________________________
Phone:_________________________ Email:__________________________
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date:__________________________________________
Let me tell you about my Mitzvah Project:
In a nutshell, I:__________________________________________
This bettered the world by:__________________________________________
This is what I learned and what I want you to know:__________________________________________
Child’s Signature__________________________
Parent’s Signature__________________________
**B’nei Mitzvah Honors**

The honors that must be filled are **bolded**. All other honors are optional. Honors that require at least one member of the Jewish faith are shaded.

- Ark Attendants for presentation of Tallit and Parent blessing (2 people, cannot be parents or grandparent involved in presentation of Tallit or Parent Blessing)

- Presentation of Tallit (Usually by parents or grandparents)

- Parent Blessing (Parents)

- **Optional Reading**

- Ark Attendants for the Torah service (2 people who are not involved in Torah pass; if many people are involved in the Torah pass then for the sake of space, we do not have ark attendants)

- Generations of immediate family involved in the passing on of Torah: great-grandparents, grandparents, parents

- Lifting of Torah (Hagbah) (1 person, strong arms)

- Dressing of Torah (G’lilah) (1-2 people, may include a child)

- Ark Attendants for returning the Torah to the Ark (this can be performed by the hagbah and g’ililah mentioned above)

- Ark Attendants for Aleinu (1-3 people)
Aliyot (Minimum of 3, Maximum of 6). If 3 aliyot:

❖ The First Aliyah (Those reciting Torah Blessings- Can be individual or group)

❖ The Parent Aliyah (Traditionally a Parents’ Honor to recite these Torah Blessings.)

❖ The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Aliyah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Child recites their Torah Blessings.

Aliyot (Optional)

The student is taught his or her Torah portion according to the number of aliyot. If a family wishes to have up to six Aliyot, please list the added honorees below. For example, if there is an older sibling who has already celebrated their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, it is common that they would have an Aliyah.

❖ Optional Aliyot (those reciting Torah Blessings) (Can be individual or group)

If your family wishes to have guests be Torah readers, please alert the Rabbi at your initial meeting. Your appointed readers will be assigned their portion at that time and will be asked to be responsible for learning their own reading.

The website http://www.pockettorah.com contains audio of every verse in the Torah chanted, and the Hebrew text with vowels which, with the swipe of a mouse, can be changed to Torah text. The assignment of the specific 3-8 verses for your additional readers will be sent by the Rabbi via email to the readers after consultation with your child’s Tutor. If your reader wishes to practice from our Temple’s Torah scroll (every scroll’s calligraphy varies slightly) a photo of that section can be emailed and they will have an opportunity to rehearse at the Rabbi’s rehearsal with your child the week of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Name of Torah Reader: ________________________________________

Torah Reader’s email: ________________________________________
Facility Reservation Request

Today's Date ___________________________

This contract is made between Beth Chaverim Reform Congregation (hereafter referred to as the Congregation) and:

Name
___________________________________________________________

Hereafter referred to as Renter

Phone
(______) ___________________________

Email
___________________________________________________________

Address
___________________________________________________________

City _____________________________ State ________

Zip _____________________________

Event Coordinator or Alternate POC

Phone (______) _____________________________

Email
___________________________________________________________

Address
___________________________________________________________

City _____________________________ State ________

Zip _____________________________
This contract contemplates use of the following Congregation facilities (check all that apply):

- □ Social Hall
- □ Half Social Hall
- □ Library
- □ Lobby
- □ Kitchen
- □ Classroom Number (circle): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

On____________________20____, from the hours of__________am/pm to

__________am/p

m (date of event)

Purpose of event:

__________________________________________________________

Number of attendees:______________________________

Catering:

__________________________________________________________

Kitchen requirements:

__________________________________________________________

Tent (Location and Size):______________________________(per Beth Chaverim
Guidelines)

Music:__________Photography:__________Decorations: __________

Flowers:__________

Miscellaneous support needs:

__________________________________________________________

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES ON BCRC RENTALS PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE

http://www.bcrerva.org/resources/rental
Tree of Life Donations

Many families find that they would like to commemorate their simcha by purchasing a leaf or stone on our Tree of Life wall. Please fill out this form and return it along with your contribution to the BCRC Office.

Name: ________________________________________________________________
Address: ___________________________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: ______________________________

I would like to purchase a:
_____ Stone ($1800) – permits 100 characters
_____ Leaf ($180) – permits 50 characters

Inscription:
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
## Additional Resources

### Relevant Temple Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
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</table>

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Background Materials

Planning and Understanding The Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- For Kids – Putting God on Your Guest List: How to Claim Spiritual Meaning of Your Bar or Bat Mitzvah, by Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin
- Mitzvah Chic: How to Host a Meaningful, Fun, Drop-Dead Gorgeous Bar or Bat Mitzvah, by Gail Anthony Greenberg
- Puting God on the Guest List: How To Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child’s Bar or Bat Mitzvah, by Rabbi Jeffrey K Salkin
- Surviving Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah, by Cantor Matt Axelrod

Mitzvah Projects
- Be Like God: God’s To-Do List for Kids, by Ron Wolfson
- The Mitzvah Project Book: Making Mitzvah Part of Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Your Life, by Liz Suneby and Diana Heiman

Torah Commentaries
- Text Messages: A Torah Commentary for Teens, by Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin
- About the B’nei Bagels, by E. L. Konigsburg
- Bar Mitzvah Lessons, by Martin Elsant
- My Basmati Bat Mitzvah, by Paula Freeman
- Pink Slippers, Bat Mitzvah Blues, by Ferida Wolff
- Prince William, Maximilian Minsky, and Me, by Holly-Jane Rahlens
- Sons of the 613, by Michael Ruben
- The Truth About My Bat Mitzvah, by Nora Raleigh Baskin
- We are So Crashing Your Bat Mitzvah, by Fiona Rosenbloom
- 13: A Novel, by Jason Robert Brown (this book is also the basis of a Musical called “13”)
- The Hebrew Kid and the Apache Maiden, by Robert Averech
- Turning Thirteen, by Susan Beth Pfeffer
- You Are So Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah, by Fiona RosenbloomFilms
- Eli’s Coming
- Hey, Hey, It’s Esther Blueberger (Australian)
- Keeping Up With the Steins
- Praying With Lior (Documentary)
- Sixty Six (British)

Websites
- **BCRC** - www.bcrcva.org
- **General Jewish Knowledge**
  - www.ReformJudaism.org
  - www.MyJewishLearning.com
  - www.interfaithfamily.com
- **Torah Study** - www.G-dcast.com
- **Torah Reading** – www.pockettorah.com
- **Mitzvah Projects**
  - www.areyvut.org
  - www.themitzvahbowl.com
  - www.rac.org

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