



*May God bless and*

יברכך יהוה

*watch over you.*

וישמרך

*May God's face shine*

יאר יהוה פניו

*on you and be gracious to you.*

אליך ויחנך

*May God show you kindness*

ישא יהוה פניו אליך

*and grant you peace.*

וישם לך שלום.

# B'nai Mitzvah Handbook

Dear Parents! Mazel tov!

Whether you are anticipating a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah for the first time, the second or even the third time, each one is a wonderful and unique occasion for you and your family. It is the joy and pleasure of our staff, clergy, educators and tutors to train and prepare your child for this important milestone in their Jewish life. It is our goal to make the experience an enjoyable one for you and a source of great joy and satisfaction for your friends, family, and guests.

We hope that you will take the time to carefully read this handbook. It contains valuable information about the preparations for your family and for your child. Please keep in mind that we will be here throughout the process to explain, to simplify and to infuse meaning throughout the entire process.

Your child's simcha may still be a few years away though we begin the process of planning early. Our hope is that through study, discussion and preparation, you will feel prepared and be able to celebrate your simcha in a way that will be inspiring and create wonderful memories for you and your family.

We look forward to working together and to celebrating together.

Shalom,

Rabbi Ethan Witkovsky & Hazzan Eugene Rosner

The B'nai Mitzvah Committee  
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## Timeline

- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Attend **Orientation** and **Select Date/s** for your service and celebrations. Contact Sarahann Goldstein at x118 or [sgoldstein@tbhbe.org](mailto:sgoldstein@tbhbe.org) if you want to make any changes after that time.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:** **5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Shul-In**  
**Attend Journey Programs**
- 18 months prior:** **Reservations are due** – There is no additional cost to the congregant for the use of TBH-BE facilities for services, meals, or celebrations. Reservations for space need to be made at this time. Contact Sarahann Goldstein at x118 or [sgoldstein@tbhbe.org](mailto:sgoldstein@tbhbe.org).
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** **Journey** family education programs throughout the year, including **5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Shul-In + mitzvah project idea session.**
- 1 year prior:** **Meet with Cantor Rosner:** Confirm the child meets educational standards, review expectations, and set up timing for lessons.  
*(If your child attends summer camp, please inform Cantor at the 1 year meeting)*  
**Work on completing expected hours of a mitzvah project.**
- 6 - 9 months prior:** Most children **begin lessons**. If you know your child may need additional time, please plan accordingly with the cantor in planning extra preparation time.
- July 1 prior:** B'nai Mitzvah Fee is Assessed. Fees are now assessed in 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 3 months prior:** **Initial meeting with officiating Rabbi\*** to discuss honors, D'var Torah and any questions, concerns or special circumstances.
- 6 weeks prior:** **Draft of D'var Torah** is sent to the Rabbi.
- 1 month prior:** **Honors** sheet submitted to the Rabbi.
- 2 weeks prior:** 1<sup>st</sup> of two lessons in the Sanctuary, primarily designed to get the student comfortable to the setting and the d'var torah delivery.
- 1 week prior:** **Rehearsal with the cantor & final meeting with the Rabbi.**
- Friday Night of** **Attendance of Friday night Services with family.** You may choose to lead services or light candles if Shabbat time coincides with services.

**\*If you would like to meet with the Rabbi prior to 3 months with any questions, he is happy to! Please feel free to reach out to Sarahann at [sgoldstein@tbhbe.org](mailto:sgoldstein@tbhbe.org).**

### **Your Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El Staff is here to assist you**

For questions regarding available dates, fees, planning Kiddush, ordering flowers, booking facilities, and the list of accepted caterers, contact Sarahann Goldstein at x118 or [sgoldstein@tbhbe.org](mailto:sgoldstein@tbhbe.org).

For questions regarding the mitzvah project requirement, journey programs and general education eligibility for becoming Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah, contact Hallie Chandler at x128 or [hchandler@tbhbe.org](mailto:hchandler@tbhbe.org)

For assistance with Torah readings or blessings for you or your family, contact Hazzan Rosner at x132 or [erosner@tbhbe.org](mailto:erosner@tbhbe.org).

For questions regarding those who may receive honors at your ceremony and how to include your family in the service, contact Rabbi Witkovsky at x130 or [ewitkovsky@tbhbe.org](mailto:ewitkovsky@tbhbe.org).

### **Inclusion / Gender Identity**

Being an egalitarian based organization we first and foremost treat everyone's identity with honor and respect and therefore – in conversation with parents and students, our Rabbi and Hazzan will work out appropriate language for every child's simcha.

Our current language:

Bar/B'nai Mitzvah (son(s) of the commandments): For those who identify as Male

Bat/B'not Mitzvah (daughter(s) of the commandments): For those who identify as Female

Gil Ha-mitzvot: (the time of the commandments): For those who identify as nonbinary

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

Historically, at the age of 13 (by the Hebrew calendar), a boy was called to the Torah at a public worship service to mark his becoming a Bar Mitzvah, coming of age in the Jewish religion. This meant that, immediately thereafter, the child was afforded rights and responsibilities for Jewish observances as an adult member of the Jewish community.

As a Conservative synagogue, under the auspices of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El preserves and extends that tradition to all our children. Everyone is educated together and equally prepared to participate in the coming-of-age ceremony. This ceremony, usually part of the Congregation's regular Shabbat morning or Shabbat afternoon services, allows each young person to participate in that service demonstrating their skills and abilities as a *Shaliach Tzibbur* (prayer leader), a Torah and/or Haftarah reader, and by sharing personal insights into the Readings.

Temple Beth Hillel - Beth El seeks to create an educational environment for the student and family that will help them to:

1. **Appreciate** what it means for the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah student to come of age within our synagogue and the broader Jewish community;
2. **Inspire** the student to take seriously their new responsibilities and privileges within Jewish tradition;
3. **Encourage** a sense of connection with their Jewish past and fluency in the skills needed to participate in an adult prayer service;
4. **Deepen** the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah student's understanding of their role in connecting past and future generations of Jews;
5. **Accept and welcome** the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah student's individuality and particular needs; and
6. **Cultivate** opportunities for the student to continue to practice Judaism in the adult community of Temple Beth Hillel - Beth El and to participate in our teen programming.

# **BECOMING A Bar/Bat/GIL MITZVAH**

## **CONGREGATIONAL STANDARDS**

The following standards have been set to meet the goals stated in our philosophy:

1. In keeping with Jewish tradition, a Jewish child reaches the age of Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah at 13 for boys and 12 or 13 for girls, according to the Hebrew calendar. At this age, the child may be called to the Torah for an Aliyah at a congregational service when the Torah is traditionally read.
2. Central to the theme of the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah is the value of a Jewish education. The child must currently be enrolled in his or her fifth (or more) year of Jewish education, generally in Jewish Day School or in Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El's Religious School. They must be able to fluently and accurately read and decode Hebrew text from the Siddur.
3. The family must be a full and current member in good standing of Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El to be entitled to Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah privileges.
4. Approximately 6-9 months prior to your child's simcha individualized training will begin. At that time all financial obligations must be current. Special arrangements may be discussed with the Executive Director. See timeline above. If your child attends summer camp, please inform the hazzan at your one year conversation as your child may begin lessons earlier.
5. Shabbat services are a key time when our community gathers each week for reflection, learning, and prayer. It is also the time when we join in celebration of communal and individual milestones. Families find that attending services regularly helps to:
  - Deepen their own celebration of Shabbat
  - Connect to the Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El community
  - Create more meaningful moments at their own family celebrations (baby-naming, Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah, etc.)

We look forward to seeing all of our students and their families regularly at Friday evening and Shabbat morning services. **We strongly recommend attending services as a family at least once a month in the year immediately preceding a child's simcha** to ensure that everyone is able to participate comfortably on the day of your celebration.

6. During the year prior to the celebration, the child is required to plan and complete an activity which fulfills a particular Mitzvah (Jewish responsibility). Families often participate in these activities as well. **The Mitzvah Project** is discussed in detail at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family workshop during the spring of the fifth-grade year.
7. It is a mitzvah to use tallit and tefillin during weekday morning services. As an egalitarian congregation, we encourage everyone to wear tallit and tefillin. As a part of our Religious School program, beginning in February of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, all boys

are expected, and all girls are encouraged to wear tefillin during the Religious School service each Sunday.

Some families own heirloom tefillin that the children may use. For those who do not own tefillin, we have an arrangement with a Sofer (scribe) to purchase reasonably priced Kosher tefillin. Please arrange for the purchase of tefillin through the Cantor's office.

### **ASSIGNMENT OF DATE**

Prior to the assignment of a date, the Executive Director will verify that the child is enrolled in a Jewish educational program and that the family is a member in good standing.

Approximately three years prior to the simcha, the Rabbi and Chairs of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee will meet to discuss date assignments. The date will correspond as closely as possible to your child's **Hebrew** birth date. Once assigned, **any requests to change a date must be made with Sarahann Goldstein sgoldstein@tbhbe.org**. (Any changes in date must be confirmed in writing from Sarahann before the change becomes effective.)

### **TRAINING OF STUDENTS**

Approximately one year before your child's simcha, your child's Jewish educational status and your family's membership status will be reviewed. The Cantor will send you a letter inviting you to meet with him and discuss your plans for your child's simcha. At this time, it will be important to let him know of any special needs your child may have or any special requests you may have for the day of the simcha. He will also give you a scheduling form for individual training sessions. The scheduling of these private lessons will be mutually convenient for parents, student and teacher. Lessons (for religious school students) will not be scheduled during Religious School classes, or during scheduled school vacations. The Rabbi or Cantor should be consulted regarding outside or non-Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El staff teachers.

Most families will begin individual training approximately six months prior or eight months before excluding July and August. These sessions will meet for about one half-hour weekly up to the time of the service.

If your child has a special educational need, please contact the Rabbi or Cantor in advance and we will try to accommodate this need. Should your child require additional tutoring, we will help to arrange a tutor at an additional hourly fee.

Prior to the ceremony, the child and family will meet with the Cantor for two final reviews in the Sanctuary. The family and student will also be contacted by the officiating Rabbi about 4 months before the service to arrange to meet, discuss and prepare for the service.



## **FAMILY EDUCATION**

Throughout the two – three years prior to your child's simcha, the synagogue offers a series of family workshops called "Journey to Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah." The Journey program is designed for both Day School and Religious School families – parents and children are strongly encouraged to participate in these enriching sessions. In addition to the specific topics covered, these sessions help build community among families and provide an opportunity for the families to spend time with and learn from the Rabbis. A highlight of the program is our 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade shul-in, which is attended by students both years.

\*Please note, students having a Bat Mitzvah at age 12 or during their 6th grade school year, are invited to participate in both the 5th and 6th grade Journey programs during their 5th grade year.

## **ROLE IN SERVICE**

At Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El, a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah candidate participates in the service to the extent of their ability and level of comfort. The determination of the level of participation will be made by the Rabbi and Cantor in concert with the parents of the student.

The following outline describes the opportunities for a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah candidate to participate in leading services:

### **Shabbat Morning**

Typically, a student will:

- Receive an Aliyah
- Chant Maftir Torah Reading
- Chant Haftarah and  
accompanying blessings
- Deliver a D'var Torah

In addition, some students will:

- Chant Additional Torah reading(s)
- Lead Torah service
- Lead Shacharit or Musaf

### **Mincha/Ma'ariv/Havdalah**

Typically, a student will:

- Receive an Aliyah
- Chant the Torah portion
- Deliver a D'var Torah

In addition, some students will:

- Lead Torah service
- Lead Mincha and/or  
Ma'ariv
- Lead Havdalah

Students who have learning difficulties, anxiety or other concerns that may make participation more challenging are encouraged to speak with the clergy to determine an alternative plan. We are committed to working out solutions for each student to be able to celebrate this milestone in a meaningful manner.

We are proud and happy to welcome all interfaith families and honor them in as many capacities as we are able, if you have any questions, please contact Rabbi Witkovsky, [ewitkovsky@tbhbe.org](mailto:ewitkovsky@tbhbe.org)

## **MONDAY AND THURSDAY MORNING MINYAN**

During the week of the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah, the Shabbat afternoon reading is repeated at the morning minyan on Monday and Thursday. Students whose simcha takes place at Mincha/Ma'ariv/Havdalah are invited to return on the following Monday or Thursday morning in order to read their Torah portion. The Monday service begins at 6:45 AM. The Thursday service begins at 7:30 AM and usually concludes by 8:30 AM. Please coordinate with the Cantor.

## **FRIDAY EVENING KABBALAT SHABBAT**

Students who will celebrate becoming a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah on Shabbat are encouraged to attend the Kabbalat Shabbat service on Friday evening. Many families will sponsor light “hors d'oeuvres” at 5:45 PM, followed by services at 6:00 PM, which conclude around 6:45 PM. Students may participate in these services by leading the Kiddush, leading Yigdal, doing a responsive English reading or leading other portions of the service.

## ***Bar/Bat/Gil MITZVAH SERVICE PROCEDURES***

### **SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE**

1. Shabbat morning services begin promptly at 9:30 AM and end at noon.
2. The Family receives Torah honors during the service. Five Aliyot (individuals or couples) may be assigned for blessings over the Torah. Additional honors include lifting the Torah (Hagbah) and dressing the Torah (Gelilah). Also, four people may be honored by opening and closing the Ark. Honorees should arrive at the synagogue by 10:00 AM. TBH - BE reserves two aliyot for congregants.
3. If two families decide to share a B'nai Mitzvah service, each family receives 3 Aliyot. The rest of the honors will be divided equally as described above.

### **MINCHA/MA'ARIV/HAVDALAH SERVICE**

1. The time at which the Mincha Service will begin one hour and 15 minutes before Havdalah start time. The service will last for about an hour and fifteen minutes. Check with Sarahann Goldstein in the office for the exact time for your assigned date.
2. There are three aliyot (which include the recitation of the Torah blessings) to the Torah, which may be given to individuals or couples. Two people may lift (Hagbah) and tie the Torah (Gelilah). Additionally, 4 people may be honored by opening and closing the Ark.

## **ALL SERVICES**

1. We encourage family members to participate in the service. Honors in the service that involve technical skills, such as Aliyot (reciting the blessings before and after each Torah reading) and Hagbiah (lifting the Torah), should be assigned to family members who know how to perform them correctly. Family members who you wish to honor who are not familiar with these practices may be given other roles, such as opening the ark or helping to dress the Torah.

It is important that family members who are given Aliyot practice ahead of time so that they are comfortable reciting them in accordance with our practices. The text and a recording of the blessings are available by contacting the Cantor.

2. If you have family members and/or friends who wish to read Torah, please ask the Cantor to arrange the assignments, and allow plenty of time for preparation. The Cantor will review these readings and it is expected that those who read will be proficient in reading the non-vocalized text a week before the simcha. The Cantor will provide readers with texts and recordings for those who need them.
3. The list of honorees (including full Hebrew names, English name, and relationship to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah) is to be reviewed at the meeting with the Rabbi during the month prior to the service.
4. Everyone should wear a head covering and wear appropriate synagogue attire when on the bimah. People who identify as male, who receive an Aliyah, should wear a Kippah and a Tallit. People who identify as female who receive an Aliyah should wear a head covering. Everyone in the synagogue is encouraged to wear appropriate synagogue attire (shoulders covered in the Sanctuary), as well as to wear a kippah and tallit.
5. The front Bimah is equipped with a ramp, making it accessible for those with physical disabilities. A table may also be placed on the floor in front of the reader's table to allow people with disabilities to read from and have aliyot to the Torah.
6. The Sanctuary is equipped with a wireless assistive listening system. Ear sets are available from the ushers for congregants and guests to use during services.
7. Immediate family members who are not Jewish may participate in the service. Please contact the rabbi to determine which honors are available for them.

## **SPEECHES**

### 1. **Speech by Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah (*D'var Torah*)**

The Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah student's delivery of a *D'var Torah*, a short speech relating to either the Torah or Haftarah reading, is often a highlight of the service. The purpose of this speech is two-fold:

- a. To demonstrate an understanding of the Torah or Haftarah for that service. The speech should very briefly summarize the part of the passage on which the student will comment, as a way to introduce the reading for the congregation. (A full "re-telling" of the entire weekly portion should not be given.)
- b. To find a personal connection to the passage that relates to the student's interests or activities and suggests that the student understands the Jewish significance of the day.

The speech is delivered before the Torah or Haftarah reading (depending on which passage the student has chosen.) The speech should be no more than **500 words in length**. We ask if students are to include a list of thank you comments to consider condensing them or offering such comments at the private reception.

In order to assure that the tone and message of the speech are appropriate, the student should send the speech to the officiating Rabbi six weeks before the service. This will allow the Rabbi time to review the text and to discuss any necessary revisions when he meets with the family.

There will be a "**D'var Torah Workshop**" held for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents where the Rabbi will introduce the process for preparing a D'var. Students will receive materials specific to their parashah at that time. This process is an opportunity for parents and students to learn and work together. Please support each other and carve out specific time to work on this.

### 2. **Parental Blessing: Parent's Speech and the *Shehechianu***

Parents may deliver a speech during the service. In the morning service, this speech follows the reading of the Haftarah and the Rabbi's charge. For Mincha/Ma'ariv/Havdalah services, the parent's speech may be given at the beginning of the service if there is a tallit presentation. Otherwise, the speech will be given directly after the rabbi's words to the B'nai Mitzvah Student.

The purpose of the parental speech is to enable you to bestow a special blessing upon your child. You may share the special meaning that this day has for your family. This is not the time to list the many virtues and accomplishments of your child – such remarks of affection are more appropriate for the reception or some other private occasion. To ensure brevity and precise wording, speeches must be written and submitted to the Rabbi before the family meets with the Rabbi. Parent speeches should be no more than **250 words**.

Following the parent's speech, the Rabbi will invite the entire extended family to stand at their seats and recite the *Shehechyanu* prayer. The purpose of this prayer is to enable the parent/s and family to thank God for the special blessing of their child reaching this day. Parents who are unfamiliar with the words of this blessing may request a copy from the Cantor or Rabbi.

**SYNAGOGUE DECORUM:**

**Please inform your guests regarding the following synagogue policies:**

- Out of respect for the sanctity of the synagogue service, all beepers, cell phones, electronic games, etc., must be turned off at all times while in the Sanctuary. The use of cell phones, cameras or other electronics anywhere inside the synagogue building (including Bathrooms) is prohibited on Shabbat.
- No photography is permitted during Shabbat inside or outside the building.
- Guests are requested not to bring gifts to the synagogue on Shabbat.
- All guests are requested to dress in appropriate and modest synagogue attire for all services. All males in attendance, Jewish and non-Jewish, are required to wear kippot in the Sanctuary. All men who are receiving honors are required to wear a tallit. All men and women who will have an honor or participate in the service must wear a head covering. Those who will come in contact with the Torah should also be wearing a Tallit.
- In accordance with synagogue regulations, there is no smoking at any time within the synagogue building. In keeping with Shabbat observance, smoking anywhere on synagogue grounds is also prohibited.
- Young children and invited friends of the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah child are requested to be supervised by a parent or a designated adult at all times during the service to ensure proper decorum and safety. It is the responsibility of the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah parents to designate those supervisors. We welcome guests to utilize our Shabbat morning babysitting and youth services.
- It is now an option at Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El to throw candy. The synagogue will provide the candy. If your family would like to opt out of this, please contact Sarahann Goldstein.

## **OPTIONS: PERSONALIZATION AND ENHANCEMENT** **IDEAS**

Below is a list of suggestions to make your simcha more meaningful and more personal for you and your family. This list is by no means complete. We encourage you to think creatively and to use our community and synagogue staff as resources.

### **KEHILLAH**

In the spirit of Kehillah (Community), **we strongly encourage you to invite your child's entire Religious School or Day School class to the child's Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah service and celebration.** This enhances the children's sense of connection to each other and avoids hurt feelings which arise from being excluded from a classmate's simcha. The only exception to this is if you are planning a smaller celebration, where you are only inviting a handful of close friends.

Please note: For those who attend the religious school, we ask that students refrain from wearing Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah Day swag in Religious School after the event.

### **SERVICE PROGRAM**

Each Shabbat the synagogue prepares a standard, folded program which includes scheduling information pertaining to that Shabbat and the following week. You may create a personalized program supplement to distribute with our program. Sample supplement programs are available by contacting Hallie Chandler in the office. Printed booklets must be delivered to the office by the Wednesday prior to your simcha.

### **TZEDAKAH**

A meaningful and most appropriate way of marking the feelings of blessing associated with a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah is through an act of Tzedakah, sharing our good fortune with those less fortunate. We encourage the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah to make a personal contribution independent of their parents' contribution. Some ideas for tzedakah contributions are as follows:

1. **MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger.** For details of how MAZON works and how you can participate, please call (310) 442-0020 or write to MAZON, 1990 S. Bundy Drive, Suite 260, Los Angeles, CA 90025-5232.
2. **A Synagogue Fund:** Contributions can be made to the synagogue or one of its many funds, including but not limited to: Holocaust Torah Education Endowment Fund, Tree of Life, prayer books, Bibles, the Religious School Endowment Fund, Equipment and programming. Contact the Executive Director for further information.
3. **Jewish Federation Mitzvah Food Pantry and Jewish Relief Agency:** Contributions of non-perishable foods are distributed to the Jewish community at large. For more information, contact the synagogue office.
4. **Make Centerpiece Baskets of Canned Food.** Following your celebration, you can distribute the baskets to community food banks. You can make your

own or arrange through Because We Care, a program sponsored by the Jewish Federation.

### **AFTER THE Bar/Bat/Gil MITZVAH**

The synagogue recognizes that one of the responsibilities of becoming a Jewish adult is the lifelong commitment to continue Jewish study. Becoming Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah is an important step in the process of lifelong Jewish learning but is not an endpoint. Rather, it begins a Jew's obligation to study Torah as an adult. It is our expectation that our children will complete their studies in Religious School or Day School in the year of their simcha, and will continue their studies the following year and beyond whether through the **Saligman Middle School of Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy** or **Lower Merion Area Hebrew High, LMAHH**. Information pertaining to these (and other) programs is available through the school and synagogue office.

## ***CELEBRATION PROCEDURES***

### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR SYNAGOGUE FACILITIES**

Our synagogue is an excellent venue for your celebration. On dates that a Mincha-Havdalah Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah is assigned, the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah family with a Mincha-Havdalah service has first choice for use of the Cherry Auditorium and/or Coslov Auditorium on the night of their child's simcha for a private celebration. Please note that the Cherry Auditorium must be available Shabbat mornings for the congregational Kiddush or a morning celebrant's luncheon.

If you are considering the use of synagogue facilities for a private celebration, you must reserve the room by contacting Sarahann Goldstein. Moreover, if you plan to use the synagogue facilities on Friday evening and/or Sunday, please reserve the desired space. Due to space limitations and the demands of congregational programming, the synagogue is unable to hold an auditorium without your reservation.

Your reservation for use of synagogue facilities must be made 18 months from the date of your child's Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah date. If there are two B'nai Mitzvah scheduled on the same date (i.e. Shabbat morning and Mincha-Havdalah), the family with the Mincha-Havdalah service has the first option for evening use of synagogue facilities. However, this priority only lasts until 18 months prior to the event. After that date, if a reservation has not been received, the room will become available to other families or groups.

In the event that there is a Shabbat morning Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah scheduled, the synagogue facilities may be held for you 18 months prior to the date. If the reservation is not received at that time, the facilities will be made available for other families and/or groups.

When you choose to have a Kiddush lunch for your guests as well as the congregation, there is additionally no fee for the use of the auditorium. (See below.)

**Hallie Chandler or Sarahann Goldstein will contact you at least six months prior to your simcha** to discuss your celebration plans for use of the synagogue

facilities. If you are having something more than a basic Kiddush, you will need to meet with Sarahann Goldstein again about two months prior to the simcha to review all details and to ensure that all rules and regulations pertaining to use of the facility will be followed.

Use of our facilities for a private celebration requires a signed contract, and insurance certificates from all of your service providers.

Security Guards are required at all private events. Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El will make security arrangements for you and assess you for the fee.

You may select any caterer from our catering panel. In addition, our house rules require that the caterer, florist, photographer, musicians and any other service providers you hire to work at Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El must have a current Certificate of Insurance on file at the synagogue, for limits not less than \$1,000,000.

### **BIMAH FLOWERS**

Two floral arrangements adorn the Bimah. Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El orders these flowers for you, but if you have special requests on colors, types of flowers, etc., you may let Sarahann Goldstein know (at least a month in advance). The flowers will remain in the synagogue. If you would like to make other kinds of baskets related to your tzedakah project you may feel free to do so.

### **KIPPOT**

Providing kippot for your guests is lovely but not required. Personalized or plain kippot can be ordered online.

### **KIDDUSH ARRANGEMENTS**

For those celebrating with a Shabbat morning Service, families are required to sponsor a Kiddush for the entire congregation as well as their guests. Including the whole community is one way that we honor Shabbat and share the joy of your simcha together. Over the last few years, TBH-BE has worked hard to create a kiddush culture that invites the entire congregation to connect after Shabbat services. We thank you in advance for allowing the community to continue this initiative during your simcha.

We expect families to use an approved Kosher caterer from our list on page 19 and work with them on an elevated Kiddush. Some families choose to host a private luncheon for invited guests at our facility. In such cases, the family is still responsible to provide a Kiddush for the entire congregation starting at our Basic level found on page 19.

Kiddush arrangements can be discussed with Sarahann Goldstein. She can help you think creatively about how to plan your special day in a manner that works for your family and your budget.



## **TIMING FOR SATURDAY NIGHT CELEBRATIONS**

In accordance with the rules for Shabbat observance in the Conservative Movement, instrumental music and picture-taking may not begin until Shabbat has ended. The ending of Shabbat may be figured by adding one hour to the candle lighting time for that Shabbat. Check with Sarahann Goldstein to determine the correct time for your guests to arrive.

No deliveries of food, materials or equipment may enter or exit the synagogue on Shabbat. All pick-up and delivery arrangements should be scheduled with the office in advance. Valet Parking, if desired, may **not** begin prior to the conclusion of Shabbat.

## **INVITATIONS**

The variety of invitations from which you may choose is expansive. Should you choose to create your own in conjunction with your child, you are only limited by your own imagination. Invitations should feature the Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah as a religious ceremony and the celebratory party as an enhancement. Please make sure that your invitations reflect the proper starting time for the service. Examples of the proper wording on the invitation is: "(child's name) will be called to the Torah as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah." or "(child's name) will become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah." or "(child's name) will participate in the service as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah."

Directions to the synagogue are available on our website: [www.tbhbe.org](http://www.tbhbe.org)

## **SISTERHOOD GIFT SHOP**

Ritual items, including tallit and tefillin and B'nai Mitzvah gifts may be purchased through our Sisterhood Gift Shop. Special and personalized items are also available. Contact the synagogue office for Gift Shop hours.

## **Shabbat APPROPRIATE ENTERTAINMENT**

A cappella groups, Israeli folk dancing and group singing at a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah luncheon are encouraged because they lend festivity to the occasion. However, we do not permit instruments or electronic music on Shabbat, from sunset on Friday until one hour after sunset on Saturday. Flames, candle lighting, and writing are not permitted on Shabbat.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

Families may arrange for photographers and/or videographers to come to the synagogue during the week before the simcha in order to take “set shots” and/or to videotape parts of the service. These arrangements should be made several weeks in advance with Sarahann Goldstein.

Photography sessions involving Religious School students should not be arranged during Religious School hours.

Our Torah scrolls may not be removed from the Ark for the purpose of using them in photographs. A fully dressed *pasul* (not fit for reading) Torah is available for use in the Sanctuary for photo sessions.

Those wishing to videotape the chanting of the Torah reading may use the *Etz Hayim Chumash* as the text. (Red bound Bible found in the pews.) Upon completion of photo-taking or video, the custodian must be contacted so that the premises may be locked and secured.

**Photography, audio taping or videography are not permitted at any time during services or at Shabbat celebrations.** At services which take place on Shabbat afternoon, however, photographers/videographers may come into the Sanctuary for the *Havdalah* portion of the Mincha-Havdalah service only.

## **KASHRUT OBSERVANCE**

The reception and celebration of a Bar/Bat/Gil Mitzvah following the service is considered a *seudat mitzvah*, an extension of the ceremony itself. For receptions or meals held in the synagogue, all food must be prepared and served according to the kashrut standards set by Rabbi Witkovsky. A current list of preferred caterers is provided below. If you are using a different caterer they must be approved by the Rabbi prior to any contractual agreements.

If a reception is to be held away from the synagogue and a caterer is employed who is not under rabbinic supervision, we strongly request that only dairy or pareve food be served, with absolutely no pork, shellfish, or mixing milk & meat.

## ***APPROVED KOSHER CATERERS***

KIDDUSH BY KARI	215.266.9851
DELUXE KOSHER CATERING	215.214.9859
A LA KARTE CATERING	484.278.4101
FOOD DESIGNS, INC.	215.843.2292
LESLIE ROSEN CATERING	610.660.0680
NANA'S KITCHEN	703.586.3103
MY CATERER KOSHER Paul Spangler	215.244.9700

## **Bar/Bat/Gil MITZVAH RELATED FEES**

***(As of January 1, 2024\*)***

For those celebrating with a Shabbat morning Service, families are required to sponsor a Kiddush for the entire congregation as well as their guests. Over the last few years, TBH-BE has worked hard to create a kiddush culture that invites the entire congregation to connect after Shabbat services.

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fee** \$1500.00

Billed over 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade: \$400 (5th), \$500 (6th), \$600 (7th)

**B'nai Mitzvah Fee** \$2700.00

Two siblings on the same date

**Basic Kiddush Fee\*** \$2400.00

Designed for those who are having an off site lunch

Basic Kiddush for the congregation and guests

includes bagels and spreads, challah, dips, and salads.

\*Co-sponsorship is available with Sisterhood, for \$1800.

Please speak with Ken Krivitzky to discuss further.

**Security Guard\*** \$150.00

For Mincha-Havdalah service, private Shabbat

Luncheon and Friday Night dinner.

This charge is per 4 hours of coverage, charged post event.

\*Events with 50 or more children require an additional security guard

***\*Please note: All fees and policies listed in this Handbook are subject to change. Call the synagogue office for current information.***

## **RECOMMENDED READING FOR Bar/Bat/Gil MITZVAH**

### **A. LITERATURE FOR PARENTS**

***Bar Mitzvah, Bat Mitzvah: The Ceremony, the Party, and How the Day Came to Be*** by Bert Metter and Joan Reilly, 2007

This book describes a typical ceremony and explains how this custom began for boys during the Middle Ages and how it was adapted for girls beginning in 1922.

***The Bar And Bat Mitzvah Book: Joyful Ceremonies and Celebrations for Today's Families*** by Linda Burghardt, 2004.

Bar and Bat mitzvahs mark milestones for Jewish children, but for their families, stressful celebration planning can outweigh the joy. This commonsense guide to the preparation, service and party should ease the process.

***Danny Siegel's Bar and Bat Mitzvah Mitzvah Book: A Practical Guide for Changing the World Through Your Simcha*** by Danny Siegel, 2004

A great resource to help you consider how to make your celebration into an opportunity to help others.

***The Mitzvah Project Book: Making Mitzvah Part of Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ... and Your Life*** by Diane Heiman, 2011.

A superb resource for young people and parents beginning preparation for B'nai Mitzvah. This book will help you find an idea for a mitzvah project.

***Putting God on the Guest List 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah*** by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin, 2005.

An invitation to all families to link the sacred act of 'going up' to the Torah with the sacred process of 'growing up' in faithfulness to God and community.

***Surviving Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah: The Ultimate Insider's Guide*** by Cantor Matt Axelrod, 2012.

An easily accessible guide for both parents and kids that will help anyone to have a successful Bar or Bat Mitzvah experience with the least stress possible.

***The Ultimate Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebration Book*** by Jayne Cohen and Lori Weinrott, 2004.

A guide to inspiring ceremonies and joyous festivities

B. **LITERATURE FOR AGES 9-12**

***About the B'nai Bagels*** by E.L. Konigsburg, 1975.

The adventures of a Jewish little league team and its teen members. Told with humor & insight.

***Bar Mitzvah*** by Howard Greenfield, 1981.

A short explanation of the origins of Bar Mitzvah customs.

***The Bar Mitzvah Lessons*** by Harry Squires, 1980.

A short story about the Bar Mitzvah of a refugee who was trained for his Bar Mitzvah by U.S. Army soldiers.

***Bar Mitzvah Lessons*** by Martin Elsan, 1993.

A short novel whose hero, David, fears his approaching Bar Mitzvah which causes him to alienate five rabbis who try to help him. However, a deep relationship develops between 12 year old David and his Bar Mitzvah tutor.

***A Bar-Mitzvah of a Different Kind*** by Esther Adler, 1990.

A story about an American boy's Bar Mitzvah celebration in Israel.

***Coming of Age: Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah*** by Benjamin Efron & Alvan Rubin, 1977.

A slim text for students age 11-13 introducing the ritual of Bar Mitzvah: history, customs and significance.

***Does Anyone Here Know the Way to Thirteen?*** by Stephen Kaufman, 1985.

A novel about the trials and tribulations of a pre-Bar Mitzvah adolescent.

***Good If It Goes*** by Gary Provost & Gail Levine Provost, 1990.

A humorous novel about one boy's efforts to cope with the pressures of Bar Mitzvah and adolescence (for ages 11-13).

***The Narrowest Bar Mitzvah*** by Steven Schauer, 1986.

A tale about a Bar Mitzvah ceremony that almost wasn't but turned out to be a very significant event.

***Pink Slippers, Bat Mitzvah Blues*** by Freida Wolff, 1989.

A novel which deals with decision making for a busy, concerned eighth grader right after her Bat Mitzvah.

### **RECOMMENDED Questions to think about as a family.**

**What's the point of being Jewish or becoming active in Jewish life?**

**What do you like about being Jewish/being part of a Jewish family?**

**What is one thing you are excited about for your or your child's simcha?**

**What is one thing you may be concerned about regarding your or your child's simcha?**

**What is one hope for the Bar/Bat/Gil mitzvah process and ceremony?**

**What are your priorities/goals of the experience?**

**What might be my child's strengths, challenges and preferences throughout this process?**

**Can you have a Bar/Bat/Gil mitzvah if you don't believe in God?**

**Are there places we should see or experiences we should have before becoming a Bar/Bat/Gil?**

