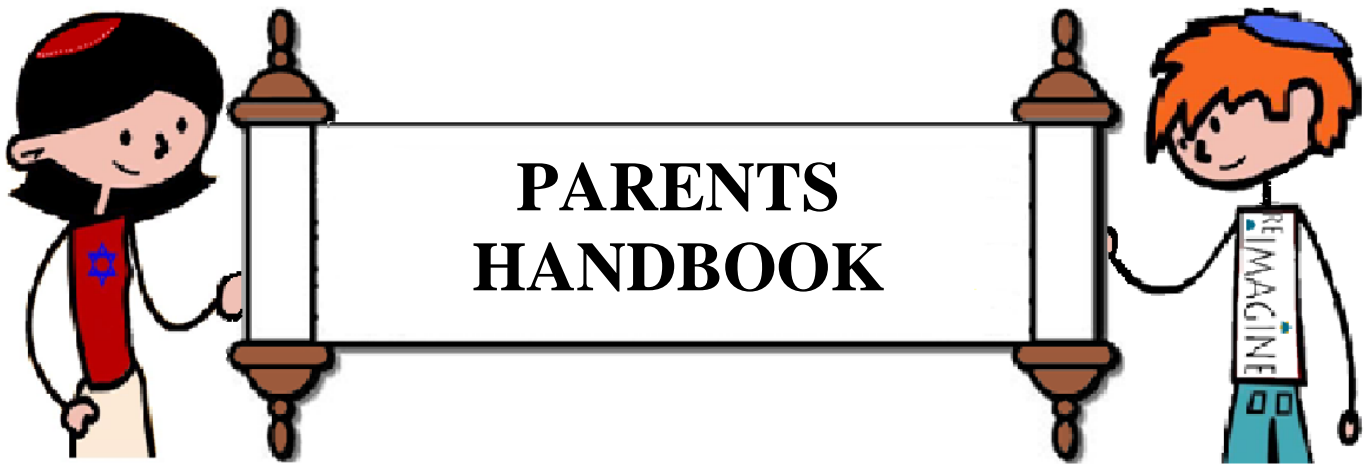


THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROGRAM



TEMPLE ISRAEL OF GREAT NECK

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INTRODUCTION

Mazal Tov on your upcoming simcha! We are delighted to share with you the excitement of seeing your child attain the status of a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. The planning of the actual Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony always brings up many questions, such as; when will I receive my date; when do we meet with the clergy; how do we arrange for family aliyot; and many others. This Handbook is intended to answer many of these questions as well as guide you through the B'nai Mitzvah program. We hope to facilitate your family's involvement with Temple Israel and to enhance the experience of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO BAR/BAT MITZVAH

ALIYAH (Plural: aliyot) – Literally, “going up” – The ascent to the Bimah to recite the blessings over the Torah reading.

AMIDAH – Literally, the “standing” prayer. The Sh'ma and the Amidah form the central prayer elements in Jewish liturgy. The Amidah is also referred to as *T'fillah*, “the prayer,” and *Sh'moneh Esreh* (“18”, referring to the 18 blessings originally recited in the weekday Amidah).

ARON HA-KODESH – or simply Aron: the Holy Ark in which the Torahs are kept.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH (plural: *B'nai Mitzvah*) – One who has attained the age of responsibility to observe the commandments as an adult Jew and to be held accountable for Jewish ritual and ethical behavior. (Traditionally 12 years for girls and 13 years for boys, but at Temple Israel we mark *B'nai Mitzvah* for both boys and girls at 13.)

BIMAH – The raised dais at the front of the sanctuary from which services are conducted.

CHUMASH – The Hebrew name of the Five Books of Moses, printed in book form. The word *Chumash* means ‘five’, encompassing the books of *B'reishit* (Genesis), *Sh'mot* (Exodus), *Vayikra* (Leviticus), *B'midbar* (Numbers), and *D'varim* (Deuteronomy). Temple Israel uses the official *Chumash* of the Conservative movement, *Etz Hayim*, which contains the Hebrew and English texts of the weekly Torah portions and *Haftarot* (selections from the Prophets), as well as traditional and modern commentaries

D'VAR TORAH – Literally, a “word of Torah”; a brief commentary on the Torah portion for the week.

GABBAI – One of the people responsible for giving out honors at Shabbat services, or for checking to ensure the Torah is read correctly.

G'MILUT HASADIM – Deeds of loving kindness incumbent upon all Jews.

HAFTARAH (plural: *Haftarot*) – literally, “completion”: the reading of a selection from the Prophets for a given Shabbat or festival, which “completes” or concludes the Torah reading. Usually, the *Haftarah* reading is connected thematically to the weekly Torah reading.

KAVOD – “honor”: generally referring to a bimah honor such as opening the *aron* (ark), removing from or returning a Torah to the *aron*, reading from the Torah, or carrying a Torah.

MA’ARIV – The evening service for weekdays and Shabbat.

MACHON – The pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah family Shabbat service for children in the Hay, Vav, and Zayin (5th, 6th and 7th grade) classes in Temple Israel; derived from the work *Mechinah*, which means preparation. The weekly *t’fillah* or prayer group for the oldest Religious School students is also referred to as “Machon.”

MAFTIR – Last section of the weekly Torah portion. The person called up to recite the blessings for the reading the *Maftir* usually chants the *Haftarah* (reading from the Prophets).

MINCHAH – The afternoon service for Shabbat, festivals and weekdays.

MITZVAH (plural, *mitzvot*) – A commandment or obligation the Torah places upon all Jews from the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

MUSAF – The “additional” service in the traditional liturgy of Shabbat, festivals, and the New Moon, which follows the Torah service.

PARASHAH – The Torah portion of the week, sometimes referred to as the *sedra*. The more complete term is: *parashat hashavua*

PARASHAT HASHAVUA – Literally “the portion of the week.”

SHACHARIT – The morning service for Shabbat, festivals, and weekdays.

SIMCHA – Literally “joy,” *simcha* refers to a happy occasion, especially a life-cycle event.

T’FILLAH – Prayer.

TIKKUN OLAM – Literally “repairing the world,” this term, originally applied to the performance of any mitzvah with the intention of redeeming sparks of divinity trapped in everyday objects, is now more broadly understood to apply to actions taken to improve society or redress social, economic or ecological problems.

TORAH – Literally, “teaching” or instruction. Narrowly, Torah refers to the Five Books of Moses. Broadly, Torah includes all Jewish sacred literature.

TROPE/TA’AMEI HA-MIKRA – The notes and cantillation for Torah, *Haftarah* and the *Megillot*, which enable a student to read any section of these texts throughout the year.

TZEDAKAH – Literally, “righteousness.” It is the Mitzvah of giving time or money to a worthy cause. (B’nai Mitzvah and their families traditionally give Tzedakah in honor of the occasion.)

BECOMING A BAR OR BAT MITZVAH

Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a spiritual rite of passage. It is not a single event, but a milestone in the process in a child's ongoing religious education and lifelong engagement with and commitment to living as a Jew. Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in Jewish tradition indicates that a child is now recognized as an adult Jew. This status carries with it certain privileges, obligations, and responsibilities. While becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is attained automatically by virtue of age, this change in legal status only becomes meaningful in the context of adequate preparation and study.

To that end, Temple Israel offers rich classroom learning, engaging family prayer services, and ongoing opportunities for our children and their families to participate in *Tikkun Olam/Mitzvah* projects, as well as individual Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction. Temple Israel provides multiple opportunities for life-long Jewish education through our outstanding Beth Hagan early childhood program; our innovative, "Re-Imagined" Religious School; the dynamic Waxman High School and Youth House; and a rich array of adult learning programs through the Temple Israel Institute for Life-long Learning (TILL).

Once your child has become Bar or Bat Mitzvah, the next step in the lifelong process of learning and living Jewishly is to continue his or her Jewish education at the Waxman High School, which serves to reinforce his or her Jewish identity both socially & academically. In addition to the Waxman High School, there is a strong youth activities program at the Youth House, including many retreats, social, religious and *Tikkun Olam*/social action programs.

HOW DATES ARE CHOSEN

Parents and families will be notified about B'nai Mitzvah dates two to three years prior to the ceremony, at the Parents' B'nai Mitzvah Orientation. The B'nai Mitzvah Committee Chairperson, in consultation with the Rabbis, the Cantor and the Religious School Director, assigns the dates. Every effort is made to schedule B'nai Mitzvah to take place on, or as soon as possible following, your child's thirteenth birthday according to the Hebrew calendar. *However, due to the large number of B'nai Mitzvah students, occasionally B'nai Mitzvah are scheduled prior to the students' Hebrew birth dates. If it is important for you that the bar or bat mitzvah not take place prior to your child's Hebrew birthday, please contact B'nai Mitzvah Committee Chairperson, Marc Langsner, 718-707-0377; mlangsner@verizon.net.*

Unless specifically requested, dates are generally not assigned in the summer, or over long weekends such as Memorial Day, Labor Day or Thanksgiving weekend, as we can't guarantee that the clergy will be present on those occasions. Furthermore, dates are not assigned during school breaks, on Shabbat Shuvah (the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), on the Shabbat between Yom Kippur and Sukkot, or on the *Shabbatot* that fall during Sukkot, Pesach, and Shavuot.

Because of the number of B'nai Mitzvah students, it is often necessary to "pair" two students together on a Shabbat morning. The date is selected well in advance. If your child is paired with another student, we recommend that you contact and/or meet with the other family. There are many instances where cooperation between the paired families is mutually beneficial, including thoughts about the service, pre-date photographs and Kiddush. We will provide the name and phone number of the other family.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH TIMELINE OF INSTRUCTION AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- 5-7 years before:
- ♦ Families begin attending *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah* and Jr. Congregation services.
 - ♦ Students enroll in Religious School, Gahalet or Day School.
- 2-3 years before:
- ♦ Bar/Bat Mitzvah date is assigned at a parent orientation session.
 - ♦ If sharing assigned date, families are encouraged to call one another.
- 2 years before:
- ♦ Trope lessons begin during Religious School classes.
 - ♦ 1st contact by “Buddy” from B’nai Mitzvah Committee.
- 1-2 years before:
(during 6th Grade)
- ♦ Student has the opportunity to participate in Cantor Frieder’s *T’Fillah Enrichment Program*, which will prepare him/her to lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service on the Friday night before his/her Bar/Bar Mitzvah (parent participation required).
 - ♦ Student researches and executes Mitzvah project.
- 1 year before:
- ♦ Temple sends letter explaining all B’nai Mitzvah-related fees, a complete bill and payment plan.
 - ♦ 1st contact by Mentor.
- 8-10 months before:
- ♦ Student begins practicing reading of Haftarah with Haftarah reading coach, Sherry Husney (parents are required to attend first session and encouraged to attend additional sessions).
 - ♦ Student and parents attend Family B’nai Mitzvah Workshops on 2 Sundays.
 - ♦ Mentor contacts family to invite them to join him/her on a Shabbat morning to be personally guided through the service, the *Siddur* (prayer book) and the *Chumash*.
- 6-8 months before:
- ♦ Student begins lessons with Torah and *Haftarah* instructor (parents are required to attend first session and encouraged to attend additional sessions).
 - ♦ Family decides on roles for family participation in Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony (including if any other family members will read from the Torah). Arrangements are made for tutoring of other family members, if necessary.
 - ♦ If sharing a ceremony with another family, contact each other to coordinate efforts (Kiddush, leading prayers, Torah reading).
 - ♦ Temple office will send information about the different kiddush options and pricing. Family decides on Kiddush options and informs Temple office.
- 4 months before:
- ♦ Student begins preparing D’var Torah (parents are required to attend first session and encouraged to attend additional sessions).
- 2 months before:
- ♦ Receive information and forms regarding Honors.
 - ♦ Receive informational form to be completed for the *Voice*.
 - ♦ All forms (including a photo of the student) to be returned to Main Office at least four weeks prior to the ceremony.

- 4-10 weeks before:
- ♦ Group “run-through” with Cantor Frieder in the sanctuary, including overview of structure of service, practice of Aliyot, instructions on *Bimah* procedures, etc.
- 4-6 weeks before:
- ♦ Family meeting with the Senior Rabbi. Child should bring *D’var Torah*.
 - ♦ Contact Main Office to arrange payment of Kiddush.
 - ♦ Contact Main Office to schedule family photo shoot (optional) in the main sanctuary (family provides photographer).
 - ♦ Order personalized kippot and doilies (if desired).
 - ♦ Send contribution toward bimah flowers to Sisterhood. If you desire to augment the weekly floral arrangement, contact Sisterhood.
 - ♦ Return forms for Honors and the *Voice*.
- During week before:
- ♦ Family “run-through” of service in sanctuary with Cantor Frieder, including practice reading from the Torah.
 - ♦ Drop off kippot (and/or doilies and framed invitation) to the Main Office (by Thursday)
 - ♦ The *Gabbai* will contact you regarding assignment of Honors.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL/JEWISH EDUCATION **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

TEMPLE ISRAEL STANDARDS OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Temple Israel of Great Neck remains steadfast in its commitment to the Jewish education of all its members, as outlined in the Temple Israel Vision for Education. We take to heart our mission to educate the next generation of Conservative Jews. To this end, Temple Israel member families with Religious School aged children are invited and encouraged to enroll in Religious School; engage in the synagogue community, and participate in the numerous Shabbat, holiday, and family education opportunities outlined in the TIGN Passport to Jewish Family Life.

As of September 2008, Temple Israel of Great Neck implemented an innovative, compelling educational model for Religious School education, a culmination of the synagogue’s extensive participation in the UJA Project ReImagine. We emphasize classroom learning; shared family Shabbat and holiday experiences, as well as other family education opportunities; students’ *t’fillah* (prayer) experiences; professional development for teachers; and ongoing evaluation of all aspects of education. In order to prepare our students to be knowledgeable Jews, and to engage in Jewish community life as they grow, we expect our students to participate in at least six continuous years of Jewish education.

Programs of Jewish Education Endorsed by Temple Israel:

In order for your child to be eligible to receive Bar/Bat Mitzvah training and celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel, you must be a member in good standing at Temple Israel, and your child needs to be enrolled in and attending one of the following programs:

- Temple Israel Religious School;
- An accredited Jewish Day School or Yeshiva;
- The Gahalet Israeli School;
- Private tutoring (only for students with demonstrable special needs);
- Any of the above programs through the sixth grade, and either the Waxman Hebrew High School or the JTS Ivry Prozdor program during seventh grade.

All of our students, regardless of the program of Jewish education in which they enroll, are expected to participate in our congregation's Shabbat and Family education opportunities as set out in the TIGN Passport to Jewish Family Life - e.g. attending a minimum of 8 *T'fillah* (prayer) encounters and 5 Family Education experiences with a parent during the year.

TEMPLE ISRAEL GUIDELINES FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Eligibility for Bar/Bat Mitzvah training calls for a minimum of six years of uninterrupted formal Jewish education, including the year of Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction. Educational requirements may be fulfilled through any of the programs specified in the "Temple Israel Standards of Jewish Education" found in the Parents' Handbook and in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook.

All students enrolled in Temple Israel's Religious School need to satisfy school attendance requirements in order to be eligible for Bar/Bat Mitzvah training. Additionally, students who:

- Complete the *Zayin* (7th grade) class prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah must be officially enrolled in and attending the Waxman Hebrew High School program, Prozdor or a Jewish Day School or Yeshiva at the time of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, even if they have already completed six or more years of Jewish education;
- Have celebrated their Bar/Bat Mitzvah prior to the completion of the *Zayin* grade are expected to complete the *Zayin* year in a formal program of Jewish study, even if they have already completed six or more years of Jewish education;
- Leave a Jewish Day School or Yeshiva at any point prior to the completion of 7th grade are expected to continue their Jewish education, in a format to be determined with the Religious School or Waxman High School administration on a case-by-case basis.

Cooperation and Communication:

In an effort to foster communication, participation, and accountability in keeping with our shared Vision for Education, the Religious School, Youth House and Temple Israel agree that, where appropriate, the synagogue and school will undertake to communicate with families, including when issues of concern arise. After communicating with families, recommendations may be made to:

1. Call students' homes where patterns of absenteeism from school and/or Shabbat and family programs are noted;
2. Request a conference with the student and family;
3. Withhold assignment of Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony dates until/unless discernible good faith efforts are made to meet educational expectations;
4. Delay or suspend Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparatory tutoring;
5. Withdraw and/or reassign a previously assigned date for Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

SHABBAT PROGRAMS

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS

The *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah* (Family Shabbat) Program is an essential component of the restructured Religious School since the launching of Project ReImagine. It incorporates lively, interactive services that allow children and parents to both learn about and experience engaging prayer and Torah; individual grade-level learning for students through discussions and games; meaningful adult learning for parents; and the opportunity to build community over meals or refreshments. Frequently there is a separate service for “Machon” aged students (e.g. 5th-7th graders) and their families, and Machon students experience separate and more sophisticated learning sessions than the younger students.

Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah services occur once a month, either on Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon or Friday night. This is a family program, and children must be accompanied by a parent. The goals of these services are to help acquaint children and their families with the essentials of Jewish prayer in preparation for not only the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience, but also for full participation in Jewish life as teens and adults; to help families connect to the synagogue and the larger Jewish community; and to provide a joyful, inviting context for prayer that will encourage ongoing participation.

The program is open to all Temple Israel families, regardless of whether they attend the Religious School. Gahalet, Day School or Yeshiva students, and those receiving private tutoring are also expected to participate. The schedule of the *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah* services can be found in the Religious School calendar and in the “TIGN Passport to Jewish Life.”

“**Machon Alone**” services (meaning a stand-alone Machon service when there is no *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah*), for students in *Hay-Zayin* (5th-7th grades) and their parents, are held once a month. These services, led by Rabbi Adelson, provide excellent preparation for main sanctuary services. Students receive credit for these services if one parent attends with them (see below). The schedule of Machon Alone services can be found in the TIGN Passport to Jewish Life and the Religious School calendar. Reminders are e-mailed to parents regularly.

Other Services: In addition, as members of the Youth House, 7th graders are welcome and encouraged to attend all Youth House Shabbat and Holiday services and dinners. On weeks when there is neither a *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah* nor a “Machon Alone” service, Machon-aged students (those in grades 5-7) may attend Jr. Congregation (usually for grades K-4) and receive credit. Students are always welcome to attend main sanctuary services at the synagogue, and can earn credit for each of those services.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Students in grades K-7 are expected to fulfill the minimum service attendance requirements as described in the TIGN Passport to Jewish Family Life and the Religious School Parents’ Handbook (at least 8 services each year). At least one parent or grandparent must attend services with their children in order for the children to receive credit. Attendance binders are available at each service, and awards are given at the end of the year to all students who meet or exceed the synagogue’s service attendance standards. Parents should be aware that their children’s

knowledge of and comfort with traditional Jewish prayer will be dramatically enhanced by frequent Shabbat and holiday attendance. The only successful way for a child to learn the melodies and words of Jewish prayers is by actively and regularly participating in them.

In addition, all students through grade 7 are also expected to attend at least five Family Education programs with a parent or grandparent each year.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROGRAM OF STUDY

TROPE/TA'AMEI HA-MIKRA CLASSES

During the Hay and Vav (5th and 6th grade) years of Religious School, your child will study the Torah trope and Haftarah trope respectively. By mastering these skills, students will be capable of chanting any Torah or Haftarah portions during the year. Our goal is to teach our children these skills before they start their individual tutoring. Torah and Haftarah cantillation is not only an important feature of our Middle School curriculum; it is also a significant synagogue skill that your child will be able to use throughout his or her life.

In order to give students additional practice and confidence prior to their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, Vav and Zayin (6th and 7th grade) students who have mastered Torah trope will be invited by the Associate Rabbi (Rabbi Adelson) to read Torah in the *Shabbat Ha-Mishpachah* or Machon service. Students who learn to chant the first *Aliyah* of their torah portion for their b'nai mitzvah will also have the opportunity to read that *Aliyah* during the week before as part of the minyan. Please speak to the Cantor if you are interested in this option for your child.

Gahelet, Day School or Yeshiva students, and students receiving private tutoring, are welcome to participate in the trope classes. Simply contact the Religious School Director at 482-7800, ext. 1110, to make arrangements.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH FAMILY WORKSHOP

During their Zayin (7th grade) year, all Temple Israel students, regardless of whether or not they attend the Religious School, participate in a series of workshop that takes place over two Sundays. The workshops are taught in two or more cycles, and students are assigned to attend a workshop cycle based on their bar or bat mitzvah date. Parents are urged to attend the workshop together with their children in order to experience shared parent-child learning, and to be better prepared for their child's bar or bat mitzvah. If at least one parent attends these workshops with their child, the student will receive Family Education credit.

In this course, students will learn and discuss the following:

- Why thirteen?
- The role of Mitzvot in our lives and the meaning of Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah.
- How to navigate our synagogue's *Chumash*, and an overview of other great Jewish books.

- Explanation of the Torah reading cycle.
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah technical terms, e.g. Torah, *maftir*, *haftarah*, *aliyah*, *kavod*, etc.
- Understanding God.
- Conservative Judaism in comparison to Orthodoxy and Reform.

SCHOOL T'FILLAH SESSIONS, TEACHING TALLIT AND T'FILLIN

The Director of the Religious School and the clergy lead weekly *T'fillah* (prayer) sessions for all students during Religious School to familiarize them with the key prayers of the Shabbat and weekday services, as well as the structure and meaning of the prayer service. Zayin (7th grade) students participate in weekly *T'fillah* sessions at the Youth House.

Since Temple Israel is an egalitarian Conservative synagogue, both male and female Zayin students are instructed in wearing *Tallit* and *Tefillin* during these sessions. Vav (6th grade) students also receive instruction on *Tallit* and *T'fillin* as part of the regular Religious School program in the spring.

T'FILLAH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

During their Vav (6th grade) year, interested students may participate in a class on the prayers of the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service, taught by Cantor Frieder. The class takes place from 11:45 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. on Sunday mornings, and is open to all 6th graders who are members of Temple Israel and receiving some form of formal Jewish education. A parent must accompany each participant. Students who complete the class conduct a *Kabbalat Shabbat* service for the synagogue at the end of their 6th grade school year, have the opportunity to lead *Kabbalat Shabbat* and *Kiddush* on the eve of their B'nai Mitzvah, and are invited to participate in future *Kabbalat Shabbat* services at Temple Israel. In addition, they receive a special certificate at their Bar or Bat Mitzvah service. Students who complete this program with a parent will receive two Family Education credits.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

TRAINING TO CHANT TORAH AND HAFTARAH

Temple Israel provides approximately seven months of individual instruction in Torah and Haftarah chanting. Depending on the date of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony, training may begin as much as ten months in advance to account for vacation time. The Cantor oversees this program and is responsible for assigning tutors. Individual training will proceed as follows:

- 1) The Haftarah reading coach, Sherry Husney, will contact parents 8-10 months prior to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah and schedule 3-6 weekly sessions with your child to help him/her gain proficiency in reading the *Haftarah*. At least one parent is asked to attend the first session with his/her child.
- 2) Sherry Husney will provide the parents with the name of their child's Torah and *Haftarah* tutor.

- 3) The Torah and *Haftarah* tutor will then contact the parents to schedule weekly lessons.

Students will receive training in the following skills:

- 1) Each student will learn both the *Haftarah* and the *Maftir* portion of the Torah, as well as the Torah and *Haftarah* blessings. We additionally encourage our students to learn to read as much Torah as possible.
- 2) Students may have additional opportunities to lead selected prayers or sections of the service, depending on their level of training and preparedness. Additional prayers or sections may include the chanting of *Shema* and the 1st and 3rd biblical paragraphs following it (*V'ahavta* and *Vayomer*); and the recitation of *borei p'ri hagafen* over the wine, the blessings *n'tilat yadayim* (for hand washing) and/or *hamotzee* over the challah at the conclusion of services. Students who participated in the T'fillah Enrichment Program during their Vav year will also be offered the opportunity to lead the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service and *Kiddush* on the Friday night preceding their bar/bat mitzvah. For any role the student plays in the service s/he will need to demonstrate to the Cantor proficiency with the readings and prayers in advance.

The following guidelines will pertain when two *B'nai Mitzvah* share the service:

- 1) We teach the entire *Haftarah* to each student, since we strongly believe in the value of studying the full text.
- 2) The *Haftarah* is divided between the two students. The first Bar or Bat Mitzvah will read the blessings before the *Haftarah* and the first half of the *Haftarah*, and the second Bar or Bat Mitzvah will read the second half of the *Haftarah*, and the blessings that follow it. Both *B'nai Mitzvah* will conclude by chanting the last paragraph of the blessings together.
- 3) The Cantor, in coordination with the *B'nai Mitzvah* tutors, will determine the order of the chanting.

PREPARATION OF D'VAR TORAH

Every student will begin *D'var Torah* preparations on an individual basis with either Youth House Director Danny Mishkin, or Jennifer Khoda, who will contact you about 4 months before the Bar or Bat Mitzvah to schedule meetings with your child. Each student will study his/her Torah and *Haftarah* portions in English, and will answer questions pertaining to the Torah and *Haftarah* with his/her instructor, in order to develop an initial outline of a *D'var Torah*. At least one parent is asked to attend the first *D'var Torah* session with his/her child.

There are multiple educational and spiritual goals of the *D'var Torah* preparation process:

- To teach the student a fundamental understanding of the contents of the readings.
- To teach the meaning and significance of the readings in their biblical context and in later rabbinic interpretation.

- To help students find personal spiritual meaning and connection between their own lives and the themes, teachings, or insights of the readings.
- To effect spiritual growth and elevation in the student.

While we encourage you to work actively with your child, the *D'var Torah* ideas and language must come from the student. You may offer guidance, but the *D'var Torah* must reflect the student's own work, not the parent's.

TZEDAKAH AND G'MILUT HASADIM

We encourage our B'nai Mitzvah to accept their new responsibilities as Jewish adults, paving the way for them to be committed to a lifetime of *G'milut Hasadim* (deeds of loving kindness). During the Vav year, Religious School students research and execute a mitzvah project, focusing primarily on a hands-on activity involving them in direct delivery of services to those in need. Additionally, each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is encouraged to research and then select a meaningful *tzedakah* project to which s/he will contribute specifically in honor of his/her upcoming *simcha* (monetary contributions can be made to the same organization with which the student does the mitzvah project).

Students are also encouraged to inform their guests of their project and invite them to participate in it. B'nai Mitzvah may provide fliers and information about their selected *tzedakot* to be placed on the tables outside the sanctuary on the day of their ceremony.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY

ALIYOT AND OTHER HONORS

About 2 months prior to the ceremony, the Synagogue office will mail you a complete list of instructions regarding the *ALIYOT* and other HONORS your family may receive during the service. There will also be a general information form, and a form to fill out for the VOICE (includes a request for a photo of your child). Please return the list of potential honorees to the synagogue at least four weeks prior to the ceremony. Please understand that the service includes the entire congregation, whose members with *yahrzeits*, baby namings, *ufrufs*, etc., have a right to individual honors as well. The Synagogue reserves two Torah blessing *Aliyot* per family (in addition to the honors for our B'nai Mitzvah students). Usually, parents or grandparents receive these honors, but, of course, you may select other family members. Other honors, such as Ark openings, carrying the Torah, *hagbahah* (lifting the Torah) and *g'lilah* (rolling and wrapping the Torah) may be given to your family members. Family members who are called to the Torah must be Jewish and be capable of reading their *b'rachot* properly.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION IN SERVICE

We encourage parents, older siblings and other relatives to read from the Torah. Younger (as well as older) siblings may participate by leading designated prayers (*Ashrei*, *Ein Keloheinu*,

Aleinu, Adon Olam). Family members may also join with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to lead the recitation of *borei p'ri hagafen* over the wine, the blessings *n'tilat yadayim* (for hand washing) and/or *hamotzee* over the challah at the conclusion of services. If family members wish to participate, please contact the Cantor as early as possible, but no later than when your child begins studying with the Torah and *Haftarah* tutor. Please remember that any family members who wish to participate in the service will need to demonstrate proficiency with the readings and prayers to the Cantor in advance.

KIPPOT

To honor the sanctity of the synagogue, all males are required to wear *kippot* in the sanctuary (it is customary to do so at all times everywhere in the building), and females are encouraged to cover their heads, especially inside the sanctuary. Many families choose to order personalized *kippot* to be placed outside the sanctuary for their guests to use. Please contact the synagogue office for names of suppliers. The inscription should contain only the English/Hebrew name of the child, the English/Hebrew date of the service, and, if you choose, "Temple Israel of Great Neck." The *kippot* must be given to our Executive Director in a basket by Thursday afternoon. The basket will be placed on a table outside of the sanctuary on Friday afternoon. You may supply your own tablecloth if you wish. The office will provide a sign with your child's name to help identify your *kippot*.

TALLITOT

Jewish males age 13 and above are expected to wear a *tallit*, and Jewish females age 13 and above are encouraged to wear a *tallit*, during all morning services. While the synagogue provides *tallitot*, it is customary and desirable for each adult Jew to own his or her own *tallit*. To that end, all Religious School students design their own beautiful silk *tallitot* during their Hay (5th grade) year. Students may choose to wear their own *tallit* at their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, or else parents or other family members may purchase a *tallit* for their child to wear on this special occasion, and in the future. The synagogue's Sisterhood gift shop has a wide selection of beautiful *tallitot* and is happy to order additional ones to suit your needs.

INVITATIONS

Please include the following information in your invitation:

- The starting time of the service, which is 8:45 A.M.
- The name of the Torah portion as well as your child's Hebrew name. As a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a Jewish/religious occasion, the invitation should reflect the spirit of the day.
- Printed information cards with rules about decorum on one side and directions on the other can be obtained from the synagogue office. You are encouraged to include these with your invitations. Please request them from the office about 2 weeks prior to mailing your invitations.

SYNAGOGUE DECORUM

The entire synagogue building is a "MAKOM KADOSH" – a holy place. Please encourage your guests (especially teenagers) to dress and behave appropriately in the synagogue and to remain in the sanctuary as much as possible.

- **Dress:** Examples of attire that is inappropriate for the synagogue are bare shoulders and midriffs, extremely short skirts or revealingly low-cut dresses or blouses, as well as blue jeans, sweat pants, tee shirts, shorts, flip-flops and tennis shoes.
- **Electronic Devices:** Please turn off your cell phone before entering the synagogue, and ask your guests to do the same. Cell phones, pagers, cameras, games and other electronic devices may not be used in the building on Shabbat or Jewish holidays.
- **Applause and Conversing During the Service:** The Bar or Bat Mitzvah takes place in the context of a worship service. It is not a performance. We therefore ask our congregants and guests to please refrain from applauding during the service. We ask that you wait until after the service to greet friends and relatives, and otherwise refrain from talking during the service.
- **Bringing In or Removing Items on Shabbat:** Packages, gifts, cameras, food and liquor are not to be brought into or taken out of the building on Shabbat.
- **Smoking:** Smoking is not permitted in our building at any time. Smoking is not permitted on Shabbat or Jewish holidays anywhere on our grounds.
- **Throwing Candy:** We ask that the congregation not throw candy at the Bar or Bat Mitzvah during the service. Instead, the rabbi tosses a few candies towards the B'nai Mitzvah at the conclusion of their chanting of the *Haftarah* and its blessings. This eliminates the risk of injury.

We request that all guests respect our Synagogue, our rituals and our property. If you can convey this message to your guests, we are sure your ceremony will be more meaningful. These rules are all enumerated in the decorum cards (mentioned in under “Invitations” above) that the synagogue will be happy to supply.

FLOWERS

The Sisterhood of Temple Israel contributes the flowers that beautify the sanctuary each week. B'nai Mitzvah families are asked to contribute to the bimah flowers for their child's simcha. Sisterhood will send you a reminder note several weeks before the service asking for a donation to the Sisterhood Flower Fund. You may augment the weekly flower arrangement if you so choose, but all arrangements must be made through The Sisterhood of Temple Israel. Please contact Jamie Cooperman, 482-4009, to order flowers, or if you have any other questions regarding flowers in the sanctuary. See page 19 for 2010-11 fees, including flowers.

FAMILY PICTURES

If you want to have your photographer take family pictures in the sanctuary, please contact the synagogue office *at least* one month ahead of your ceremony to make an appointment for an appropriate day, as *halakhah* (Jewish law) precludes photography on Shabbat. If you wish to take pictures with the Torah, please inform the synagogue office at the time you make your

photography arrangements and we will do our best to accommodate you. Please be aware that the ark is kept locked and arrangements must be made with the office to open it.

KIDDUSH

Temple Israel and its congregation is celebrating this most beautiful and meaningful event in your life with you and your family. The entire congregation is invited to attend the Kiddush after every Shabbat morning service. Therefore we require all Bar/Bat Mitzvah families to make a contribution to our weekly congregational Kiddush Fund. In the announcement section of the weekly Shabbat pamphlet, we will mention that your family has made a contribution in honor of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. If your family and guests are staying for the Kiddush, the bar/bat mitzvah family is expected to sponsor the entire Kiddush. Several levels of sponsorship with a variety of upgraded menu options are available. Please contact Marion Stein in the synagogue office, 482-7800, ext. 1106, for details and a menu of choices: For the 2011-12 fees, see p. 19.

SERVICE REHEARSALS

Four-ten weeks before your child's bar or bat mitzvah, your family will be invited to come to a group "run-through" with the Cantor in the sanctuary, which will include an overview of the structure of the service, practice of *aliyot*, instructions on *bimah* procedures, etc.

In the week prior to the ceremony, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and parents will meet with the Cantor in the Main Sanctuary where the order of the service and Torah service will be reviewed. During this practice session, the child will chant part of his/her *Haftarah* and practice chanting from the Torah scroll. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will also have the opportunity to practice the *D'var Torah* aloud into the microphone in a clear and slow manner so that he/she will be prepared for the actual delivery during the Shabbat service.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION

KASHRUT

Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks a young Jew's assuming of the responsibility to follow the *mitzvot* and traditions of Judaism. Hence, it is only fitting that the celebration following the ceremony remains in keeping with Jewish tradition and values, including *kashrut* (the dietary laws).

SHABBAT OBSERVANCE

We also ask our members and their guests to be respectful of the sanctity of Shabbat, and to refrain from activities that would diminish that sanctity. Such activities include the use of phones, pagers, PDA's, cameras and sound or video recording devices, as well as candle lighting ceremonies, cash bars or caricature artists during Shabbat (e.g. before dark on Saturday night).

OMER

During the period of counting the *Omer*, from *Pesach* until *Shavuot*, certain restrictions may apply to celebrations. If your child is assigned a bar or bat mitzvah date that falls within this period, you should consult with the Senior Rabbi at your earliest convenience.

BUSSES

Because of the limited amount of space in the Temple Israel parking lot, busses cannot be accommodated on Shabbat or Sunday mornings. Please instruct any bus company with whom you contract to park on Old Mill Road.

CATERING YOUR SIMCHA AT TEMPLE ISRAEL

It is Temple Israel's sincere hope that, should you choose to cater a party or festive meal of any kind as part of the celebration of your *simcha*, you will choose to do so at the synagogue. Hopefully, our Temple's role in your family's life leading up to his *simcha* was significant, and choosing to celebrate your *simcha* at the synagogue will enhance the meaning of your celebration for your family.

Lederman Caterers is the exclusive caterer at Temple Israel for all private functions, parties or affairs held anywhere in our Temple. While Lederman Caterers is prepared to supply a wide range of catered foods and/or beverage service to accompany the celebration of your *simcha*, they do so in the context of established agreements between with Temple Israel. In planning your *simcha* celebration at Temple Israel, we'd like you to be aware of the following:

- Only Lederman Caterers is permitted to supply catered food for any private party or function held at the synagogue, regardless of whether your party or function is held in the Main Ballroom, Reception Room, Crystal Ballroom, Blue Room, or any other room. Please do not ask the synagogue's staff, clergy or other Temple representative for permission to bring food in from any outside source to be served at your function or party at the synagogue.
- Lederman Caterers is a separate, private, for-profit legal entity that has contractually been granted a license to use the synagogue's facilities. The synagogue's staff and clergy are not to be involved in your individual contractual discussions and negotiations with Carlton, regarding the cost or other aspects of your party or function.
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah families have a ninety (90) day exclusive period from the time they receive notification from the synagogue of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah date in which to engage the Caterer's services for their date. However, this period only bars non-Temple members from booking with the Caterer for that date.
- Be aware that often two (2) families are given the same Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, which means that two (2) children will share that date for their respective B'nai Mitzvah. The Caterer will book parties for Temple members on a "first come, first served" basis. Therefore, you are encouraged to speak with the Caterer as soon as possible after you have been notified of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Nevertheless, to try to accommodate the desires of Temple members who wish to celebrate their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a private Kiddush immediately following the Shabbat service, the Caterer may try to book one private Kiddush in the Main Ballroom, while a separate private Kiddush is served in the Reception Room for another party. It is also possible to sponsor the Congregational Kiddush in the Crystal Ballroom.

- Temple members who have been granted a non-Shabbat morning Bar/Bat Mitzvah service should be aware that the use of the synagogue's Sanctuary for such an occasion is not permitted unless the services of the Caterer are used for a party or function following thereafter.
- The synagogue has a standing Catering Committee to assist Temple members with any questions or difficulties that may arise in the dealings between the Caterer and the synagogue and its members. If such assistance is desired, please call the synagogue office for the name and telephone number of the Committee's Chairperson.

TO HELP YOU

- **Buddy:** Temple Israel strives to make the bar/bat mitzvah process as meaningful and as streamlined as possible for our families. We know you will have questions beyond the scope of this Parents' Handbook. Therefore, the B'nai Mitzvah Committee has instituted a buddy system whereby committee members who have been through the bar/bat mitzvah process are assigned several families who are beginning the process, to contact them periodically, answer their questions and help guide them through the process. You should expect your first call from your "buddy" about two years before your child's bar or bat mitzvah.
- **Mentor:** To help families feel more comfortable in the service, we are also grooming a cadre of knowledgeable mentors who will be happy to sit with the bar/bat mitzvah student and his/her parents during a Shabbat service to provide explanations, guidance and answer questions. A "mentor" will contact you about a year prior to your child's bar or bat mitzvah to invite you to select an upcoming Shabbat service to meet.
- **Sharing:** If you are sharing a ceremony with another family, please contact that family in order to coordinate efforts; such as co-sponsoring the congregation's Kiddush, dividing up prayers which younger siblings can lead, sharing adult Torah reading responsibilities, etc. Please contact the Cantor regarding any participation in the service.

2010-11 BAR/BAT MITZVAH FEES

Note: A bill including all of the bar/bat mitzvah fees will be sent to you approximately 1 year prior to your child's simcha. Various payment plans will be offered. 2010-11 fees are:

- A \$1,500 preparation fee for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah training during the Vav and Zayin years.
- A contribution of a minimum of \$500 to co-sponsor the congregational Kiddush when the bar/bat mitzvah family is holding a private luncheon for their guests. In the event that the family and their guests will be attending the congregational Kiddush, the family will be asked to sponsor the Kiddush in its entirety, starting at \$1,800 for a basic Kiddush. Contact Marion Stein in the synagogue office, 482-7800 ext. 1106, for information about the various options and pricing.
- A \$100 donation to Sisterhood for the pulpit flowers on the day of your ceremony.
- Additional fee of \$750 for a non-Shabbat Morning Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.
- Recommended donation of \$613 to the Temple Israel Education Resource Fund.

Please be aware that all fees are subject to change.

LIST OF CONTACT NAMES

CLERGY

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Rabbi Howard Stecker | 482-7800 ext. 1116 | rabbistecker@gmail.com |
| Cantor Raphael Frieder | 482-7800 ext. 1118 | rafri@aol.com |
| Rabbi Seth Adelson | 482-7800 ext. 1113 | rabbiadelson@tign.org |

SENIOR STAFF

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Leon Silverberg, Executive Director | 482-7800 ext. 1103 | lsilverberg@tign.org |
| Rabbi Tracy G. Klirs, Director, Religious School | 482-7800 ext. 1110 | rabbiklirs@tign.org |
| Danny Mishkin, Director of the Waxman High School and Youth House | 482-7800, ext. 2106 | dmishkin@tign.org |

COMMITTEES

B'nai Mitzvah Committee:

Marc Langsner, Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date Coordinator, 718-707-0377; mlangsner@verizon.net

Religious School Education Committee (RSEC):

Miriam Kobliner, 829-3444; kobliner@optonline.net and Rachel Geula, 466-0667; Rokhsar@aol.com, Co-Chairs

Waxman High School Committee:

Dr. Sandy Ratner, Chairperson; 487-3665; SMRatnerMD@aol.com

CATERING

Laura Lederman, Lederman Catering, 466-2222; laura@ledermancaterers.com

For questions or issues regarding catering, please contact Marion Stein in the synagogue office, 482-7800, ext. 1106; mstein@tign.org

SISTERHOOD GIFT SHOP

Laura Bardash; 466-4297

TEMPLE ISRAEL OF GREAT NECK MISSION STATEMENT

Temple Israel is an innovative, egalitarian, Conservative synagogue. We exist to create and strengthen a community that preserves and fosters Jewish identity through prayer, education, community service and social activities, and to provide for the needs of congregants in every stage of the life cycle from generation to generation.



Temple Israel of Great Neck