

**HANDBOOK**  
**FOR BAR/BAT**  
**MITZVAH FAMILIES**

Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County  
8215 Old Georgetown Road  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814  
(301) 652-2606  
[www.bethelmc.org](http://www.bethelmc.org)



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## Congregation Beth El

8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814  
(301) 652-2606

Dear Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family,

We know this is an exciting time in the life of your family as your child is preparing to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. All of us at Congregation Beth El are looking forward to celebrating this special day with you.

This handbook has been written to assist in the lead-up to and the day itself. Whether this is the first such simcha in your family or one you've celebrated before with older children, we hope you will read this material carefully since there are occasionally changes in our procedures. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Included in this handbook are samples of the forms needed by the professional staff in order for everything to work smoothly on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. Please familiarize yourself with them so you know what information will be needed. When you receive the actual forms from Beth El electronically, please complete them and return them to the synagogue office by the deadlines noted on the forms.

We look forward to assisting you in making your simcha a special occasion for everyone. Mazal Tov!

Sincerely,

Gregory Harris  
Head Rabbi

Fabián Werbin  
Associate Rabbi

Asa Fradkin  
Hazzan

Sheila Bellack  
Executive Director



## Congregation Beth El

8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814  
(301) 652-2606

Dear B'nai Mitzvah Family,

I'd like to start by wishing you all a mazal tov as you and your family take the remarkable journey towards your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It is an extraordinary step in their life as a Jew and their Jewish education.

In addition to my Youth Director duties, I am Beth El's B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator. Just what does that mean?

In feedback from families, it came to the synagogue's attention that many parents and kids could use a more personal touch while navigating the B'nai Mitzvah process. At times it can be confusing who you're supposed to talk to along the way. This is where I come in.

As the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, I am here to help answer questions you may have. I can either provide the answer or quickly get you the answer you need. I will also be sending gentle reminders when different deadlines are approaching like scheduling with the Rabbi or a tutor.

Another part of the job is to help your family and child gain the most meaning from your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. I have developed a Mitzvah Project resource bank. When you're ready, please get in touch with me so we can find the right project for you. We hope you will use this resource to make the Bar/Bat Mitzvah even more meaningful than it already is. Information is also available on our web site, [www.bethelmc.org](http://www.bethelmc.org), under Spiritual Life, and then click on B'nai Mitzvah.

All of us at Beth El want to make sure your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah is as joyous as possible. Please count on me as a resource so we may meet that goal.

L'Shalom,

Adam C. Zeren

Youth Director/B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

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## THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY IN PERSPECTIVE

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is a public acknowledgment that a boy or girl has become a responsible adult member of the Jewish community. It is an important step in the transition to adulthood and the acceptance of responsibility for one's own actions. As a public acknowledgment, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony takes place in the context of a normal worship service. During the course of that service, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is given the opportunity to demonstrate that he or she has acquired the skills to fulfill the important role of leading the congregation in prayer as a Jewish adult.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah brings honor to himself or herself by the manner in which he or she participates in the service. Students are expected to be well prepared before participating in the service. Beth El is an egalitarian congregation and participation in the service is not dependent on the gender of the student.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at Beth El is an event for the congregation as well as for the family. The congregation looks forward to sharing the joy as our children become young adults. *It is important to keep in mind that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is part of the regular service of the congregation. It is not, and should not be thought of as, a separate, private ceremony only for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. Posters of a personal nature and/or displays of items to be contributed as a family tzedakah project should be displayed at your private party but not as part of the congregational service or kiddush.* Beth El encourages celebration following the service to be consistent with the occasion and in keeping with Shabbat traditions.

## SUGGESTED BAR/BAT MITZVAH SCHEDULE

### *12–18 Months*

- Attend group meetings with rabbis, hazzan, and executive director
- Secure facility for reception through the Beth El office if using the synagogue
- Select caterer for Kiddush (if not using Beth El Sisterhood) and private reception
- Select photographer and band for private reception
- Monitor your child's knowledge of Hebrew and prayer
- Consider making a tallit with or for your child in the Sisterhood Tallit Workshop

### *9–12 Months*

- Prepare preliminary guest list
- Attend Shabbat services regularly if not already doing so
- Expect tutor assignment from the hazzan; begin lessons

### *6–8 Months*

- Order invitations
- Attend preliminary meeting with the hazzan; D'var Torah study process begins at this meeting.
- Meet with the hazzan to discuss the possibility of the child leading additional parts of the service, such as Kabbalat Shabbat, P'sukei D'zimra, Shacharit, or Musaf.

### *3–4 Months*

- Continue D'var Torah process with the rabbi.
- Purchase tallit and tefillin
- *Finalize guest list*

*Please be aware that the permanent seating capacity of the Sanctuary is 400 and about 450 if extra chairs are added in the aisles. Our regular attendance when there is no bar/bat mitzvah is approximately 150, which leaves 250-300 seats for b'nai mitzvah family and guests. Whether you have a single or double, be sure to keep this information in mind when creating your guest list.*

- Order kippot if planning to do so
- Select florist

### *6–8 Weeks*

- Meet with the officiating rabbi to review child's preparations, discuss honors, and D'var Torah
- Mail invitations
- Order flowers
- Sisterhood Catering will contact you to discuss Kiddush menu if Sisterhood is catering
- Request recording of Torah Blessings if needed

#### *4 Weeks*

- Assure the rabbi that honorees have been contacted and are prepared
- Meet with the hazzan; review Haftarah, Torah, and prayer nusach
- Provide estimated guest count and menu to Sisterhood Catering; sign and return contract
- Contact synagogue office to schedule photo session in sanctuary
- Order leaf on the Beth El Tree of Life (if desired) through the main office.
- Final review: hotel reservations, music, flowers, party equipment, food and wine, and additional help

#### *3 Weeks*

- Arrange Bar/Bat Mitzvah rehearsal with the synagogue office.
- Complete Bar/Bat Mitzvah Shabbat Information Sheet (Form A) and return it to the synagogue office
- Ensure that your synagogue dues, security and tuition are current (paid through the end of the most recent quarter).
- Provide final guest count for Kiddush to Sisterhood Catering

#### *2 Weeks*

- Complete Bar/Bat Mitzvah Ceremony Information Sheet (Form B or Form C) and return it to the rabbi's office
- Send check payable to Beth El Sisterhood for kiddush/luncheon if Sisterhood is catering
- Send check payable to Congregation Beth El for wait staff

#### *1 Week*

- Have final rehearsal with the clergy in the sanctuary
- Rest and relax; enjoy quality time with family

#### *1 Day*

- Deliver kippot and other items to Beth El
- Confirm that flowers and other deliveries have been made before 1:00 pm.  
Reminder: Beth El's office closes at 3:00 pm on Fridays

## SCHEDULING THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH

- ◆ Families must be members of Beth El when the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is scheduled and must remain members through the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Members must be current in their financial obligations.
- ◆ Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates are expected to have attended an approved learning program for at least four years after third grade (that is, fourth through seventh grades) or to have attended a Jewish day school. Candidates are expected to continue their Jewish education while they are preparing for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. A candidate who is not attending an approved learning program or a Day School on a regular basis (75% attendance record) up to the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will not be eligible for the ceremony. Any deviations from the required educational background must be discussed with, and approved by, the rabbi and the education director.
- ◆ B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies are initially scheduled at least two years before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. For example, in winter 2017, we scheduled B'nai Mitzvah for the year 2019. Any subsequent changes are made by the rabbi and are subject to availability.
- ◆ B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies are scheduled by the rabbi in consultation with the Worship Committee.

### **Mincha/Ma'ariv/Havdalah, Rosh Hodesh and other weekday services:**

The start and end times for these services are different than Saturday morning. These times must be checked with the clergy.

The officiating clergy is assigned with an awareness of the fuller schedule of b'nai mitzvah that may be taking place on a given weekend. It is likely that the rabbi who has not officiated at the Shabbat morning service will have the honor of officiating at an afternoon/evening service or at another time over the weekend. The rabbi will often officiate with a lay prayer leader.



## BAR/BAT MITZVAH PREPARATION/TUTOR

At Beth El, Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring is conducted by several adult teachers and a limited number of well-qualified teenagers from the congregation under the direct supervision of the hazzan. Our tutoring program, whether taught by adults or teenagers, consistently produces excellent results in the service as well as warm and lasting relationships between tutors, students, and families.

Tutoring begins at least nine months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date with the length of time dependent on the previous preparation of the student and anticipated interruptions for summer vacation or other commitments. Lessons are usually 30 to 45 minutes per week. Lessons continue until the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Tutors are instructed to be in periodic contact with the hazzan and to keep him informed of progress or difficulties. Please note: Tutoring for any student is not to take place during religious school hours for students in the school or on Shabbat or other holy days.

The hazzan assigns all students with a tutor approximately one year before their bar/bat mitzvah. If you have a preference for a particular tutor, please contact the hazzan and/or B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator Adam Zeren as soon as possible. Both adult tutors and teen peer tutors are often available. All financial arrangements are made between the parents and the tutor. Please do not arrange for any tutor before first contacting the hazzan.

Your child's tutor will be a significant partner with you for your child's motivation and preparation. Please remember to invite the tutor to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. Some families honor the tutor by inviting him or her to read Torah. A small gift or donation to Beth El or to some other Jewish cause in honor of the tutor is also appropriate.

Preparation Materials: The tutor will have all relevant materials for the student. In addition, a large online library of helpful mp3s is available online via SoundCloud, a website that hosts groups of recordings.

The Beth El SoundCloud is accessible at [www.soundcloud.com/beth-el-melodies/sets](http://www.soundcloud.com/beth-el-melodies/sets) Included are recordings of Torah and Haftarah trope (corresponding directly to the Torah manual and CD), as well as of the Torah Service and Blessings, Shacharit, Musaf, Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat, and Ma'ariv services. All files are fully downloadable and streaming. These files are highly recommended as study aids to students, parents, and family wishing to deepen their understanding and comfort with services at Beth El.

Approximately six to eight months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, all students will schedule a first meeting with the Hazzan. This meeting serves to check in with the student, answer any questions, and to begin the D'var Torah study process. This process is begun at the meeting, and then continued via e-mail and in person with both the hazzan and rabbis. Students wishing to take on additional responsibilities in the service (such as leading the congregation in Kabbalat Shabbat on Friday evening) should also prepare to discuss this with the Hazzan at this first meeting.

About six to eight weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, the family and the student will meet with the rabbi to review the student's progress and anticipated participation in the service. In addition to the participation in the service itself, students are expected to prepare a short D'var Torah (lesson relating to the Torah or Haftarah reading) to be presented to the congregation near the beginning of the Torah service; this is not to exceed 750 words. In the final months of preparation, the rabbi and the student will discuss appropriate topics and preparation for the D'var Torah.

Four weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, the hazzan will meet with the student a second time to review the student's progress. Lessons with the tutor are to continue during these final weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony even though the student will also be meeting with the rabbi and the hazzan.

Regular attendance at Shabbat services for both students and parents is an integral part of each student's preparation. It is the most effective way of learning how to pray and enabling the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to feel at home in the synagogue and to participate comfortably in the service. Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates are required to attend Shabbat services at least once each month during the entire year preceding the ceremony and preferably more often.

The hazzan will hold a final rehearsal in the sanctuary, usually on the Wednesday afternoon prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. At this time, the rabbi and the hazzan will review details of the participation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and members of the family in the service. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity for any last minute questions to be answered or concerns to be addressed. Please contact Sara Greenbaum at [sgreenbaum@bethelmc.org](mailto:sgreenbaum@bethelmc.org) if you have questions about your family's rehearsal.

## STUDYING THE TEXTS

The first step in studying the texts that are used in the service is to ensure your home has a Siddur and a Humash—texts that should be proud possessions in every Jewish family. At Beth El, we use the *Etz Hayim Humash*, and *Siddur Lev Shalem*, the new siddur of the Conservative movement. This siddur contains not only the prayers themselves, but also commentaries, essays, inspirational poetry, and accessible English translations. This new siddur is a great spiritual companion for you and your child as you embark on this Bar/Bat mitzvah experience. Please consider acquiring one for you and your family.

You may find *A Visitor's Guide to the Shabbat Morning Service at Congregation Beth El*, the booklets in the Sanctuary seat book racks, to be helpful in beginning to understand the traditional prayers. The student is urged to continue studying the text in English and carefully read explanations and comments found in other texts. Regarding the relationship between the Torah portion and the Haftarah, sometimes there is an obvious parallel in the texts, and sometimes the connection is unclear. These are among some of the questions the Bar/Bat Mitzvah can discuss with the tutor as well as with members of the family.

Each tutor has his or her method of teaching students trope – the musical notes used in the cantillation of the Haftarah and Torah reading. Because every tutor is given the responsibility for deciding on an appropriate schedule for his or her students, we cannot recommend a specific timetable for mastery of specific parts of the service. Instead, we urge parents to check with the tutor periodically to be sure their child is “on track.” While we know some children are highly motivated, it is our experience that others may need more encouragement and diligent monitoring on a weekly basis from their parents. Reminders to “practice, practice, practice” cannot be overstated. Of course, we understand there is a fine line between parental support and nagging; everyone is eager that this time in your child’s life be a positive experience. We can assure you that the students who practice routinely will recognize their own weekly progress and will gain the confidence that, in fact, makes preparation satisfying and successful. We strongly recommend that students be completely prepared well before the ceremony. This is, perhaps, the most effective way to avoid stress as the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day approaches.

The hazzan or your child’s tutor can provide the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a photocopy of the verses that will be read from the Beth El Torah scroll. This will enable the student to see the exact placement of words as they appear in the Sefer Torah from which we generally read. Call the synagogue office for details.

Be sure your child’s tutor makes arrangements with the office for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to practice from the Sefer Torah approximately two weeks before the ceremony. This quiet time in the sanctuary when your child can read from the Sefer Torah with only the tutor present is important for instilling confidence.

## WRITING A D'VAR TORAH

It is traditional for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to give a speech, or D'var Torah (teaching dealing with Jewish content), near the beginning of the Torah Service. These talks generally relate to the weekly Torah or Haftarah portion that will be read. Personal thank-yous to family and friends should be saved for the Shabbat dinner and/or reception but not for the D'var Torah.

- ◆ Writing a D'var Torah for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah requires a partner! It could be a parent, teacher, tutor, rabbi, hazzan, or friend who will listen to your ideas and even debate them with you. Here are helpful steps, but you really need someone to help you stay clear and focused!
- ◆ Buy a two-pocket folder in which you will keep all of your notes and sections of your speech organized.
- ◆ Read a summary of the Torah portion in translation.
- ◆ Read the entire Torah portion in translation even if you are reading only part of it for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Read as much as you can of the portion in Hebrew. Also read the whole Haftarah portion in translation and Hebrew. Then figure out the connection between the Torah and Haftarah - there's always a connection.

- ◆ Try to summarize the portion aloud or in writing.  
In analyzing the text, The Ten Universal Questions taken from "Torah with Love" by Epstein and Stutman can be very helpful.
  1. What is the predicament?
  2. Who is in the predicament?
  3. What is the relationship between the people?
  4. How is God involved?
  5. How is the predicament resolved?
  6. How does the community affect the predicament?
  7. Does the predicament illuminate our contemporary life?
  8. What ethical and moral principles are posed by the manner in which the predicament occurs or is resolved?
  9. Does individual "free will" permit any other course of conduct?
  10. How can you retell the story?
- ◆ Jot down the parts of the portion that you found interesting or confusing.
- ◆ Write down any questions that you had as you read and reread the portion.
- ◆ Discuss the portion with someone else who has read it such as your tutor, parent, religious school teacher, rabbi, or hazzan. Ask them what they thought was the message of the portion and what questions it raised for them. Share your ideas and see their reactions.
- ◆ Consult the commentaries. We have a rich tradition of commentaries on the Torah and Haftarah. You should look at the traditional commentaries available in your synagogue library or through your rabbi. Modern commentaries on the Torah that might be very helpful include:

*Teaching Torah* by Sorel Goldberg Loeb and Barbara Binder Kadden, A.R.E. Publishing Company, Denver, Colorado 1997. This book has excellent summaries of each week's portion followed by a selection of interpretive and explanatory material with

questions for the reader. It also contains activities for analyzing the text, personalizing the text and suggestions for Bar/Bat Mitzvah projects.

*B'shivtekha B'veitekha-When You Sit in Your House* by Sharon Halper, Torah Aura Productions, California 1994. Designed for family education, this text includes a week-by-week study of the Torah portion including a multi-verse quote from the portion, short commentary and questions for the family members to share ways that they would have acted were they in the same situations as the Bible characters.

*Zot ha-Torah: This is the Torah* by Jane Ellen Golub and Joel Lurie Grishaver, Torah Aura Productions, California 1994. This book was developed for Bar/Bat Mitzvah students and contains a quote from each week's Torah portion, which is examined in depth. There is a focus on a mitzvah suggested by the portion, which includes relevant doable mitzvah projects.

- ◆ Check the Internet for information. Recommended sites:  
www.uscj.org  
www.urj.org  
www.torahaura.com

Write down the ideas generated from reading some of the suggested books and commentaries and decide which of all of the ideas you have written down will be the ones that will be the focus of your speech.

- ◆ Try to find ideas that speak to your heart. Look for examples in your life and or in today's world that illustrate your points. Maybe you have a favorite story about your sister or brother or one about a family relative - use those stories.
- ◆ Make an outline of the main ideas that you want to discuss and then go back and fill in details supporting your ideas. Use quotes from the sources that you studied and ideas and quotes from the people with whom you discussed your portion. Be sure to include your original ideas and interpretations too.
- ◆ Discuss this outline with your tutor, rabbi, or parent and listen to their input and revise the outline.
- ◆ Write your speech and turn it in to whoever reads it and gives you feedback. **It should be no more than 600 words.**
- ◆ Revise your speech and practice reading it aloud, slowly and clearly.
- ◆ Find an audience (parents, siblings, and/or friends will do) and give the speech, asking for their feedback on whether it was clear and easy to follow.
- ◆ Refine and practice.
- ◆ Save a copy and put it in your Bar/Bat Mitzvah album.

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## THE TALLIT

A tallit is the prayer shawl worn by men and women past the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It consists of two main parts, the garment itself and the tzitzit (the four elaborately tied fringes in the corners). It is the tzitzit that we are commanded to wear and that transform the garment from a piece of cloth to a tallit. They were a status symbol in ancient times, and emphasized the priesthood and importance of each Jewish person. They also serve as a reminder that we should keep God's commandments. The tallit is worn for the Shacharit and Musaf services on weekdays, Shabbat, and holidays.

The tallit is put on after the kippah (and before tefillin on weekdays). Before putting it on, hold the tallit spread open before you, with the atarah (a piece of embroidery or other decoration, often with the blessing or some Hebrew inscription on it) facing you and its ends held by your thumbs. Recite the blessing.

ברוך אתה ה' אלוהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להתעטף בציצת.

*Praised are You, Lord our God, King of the universe who instills in us the holiness of mitzvot by commanding us to wrap ourselves in tzitzit.*

Kiss the ends of the atarah, then bring the tallit around you (like a cape) and let it rest on your shoulders.

**CREATE AN HEIRLOOM...BUILD A LASTING BOND!**  
**CREATE AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE THAT MONEY ALONE CANNOT BUY!**  
*Sewing Experience Not Required—Motivation Is*

Beth El Sisterhood's award-winning Tallit Workshop, generally held each December – February, has established its own tradition of enabling parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and children to jointly prepare for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. This is the time to make a glorious tallit that is truly unique.

The presentation of the tallit is a symbolic welcome to adulthood, and it's so much more special if the tallit comes from the heart and includes the loving touches of family members. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah students enjoy being able to choose their own fabric and help with the design. An atarah, with an inscription in Hebrew chosen by the person who will wear it and embroidered or painted by a loved one, creates a memory that is rekindled for years to come whenever the tallit is worn. Taking turns tying the tzitzit around the four corners is the ultimate family bonding experience.

Please watch for the Tallit Workshop announcement in the *Scroll* or the listserv. This program grows more popular each year and so space is limited. Please note that priority for registration is given to Sisterhood members.

### OTHER OPTIONS FOR A BEAUTIFUL TALLIT

If you would rather not sew, you still have many other excellent options for obtaining a unique tallit for your son or daughter. At this time, you might also consider a new tallit for other members of the family. The Beth El Judaica Shop has a variety of tallitot to choose from. There are also a number of local tallit makers who welcome visits to their workshops. They will be glad to work with you in incorporating the ideas of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah into the design of the tallit. Here, as in the Sisterhood Workshop, the person who will wear the tallit may select the fabric, the trim, a custom atarah, and the design itself.

## HEADCOVERINGS

If you plan to order custom kippot inscribed with the name of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah for use during the synagogue service, we suggest you contact Marilyn Hammerman at (301) 881-0011 or [mhammerman@aol.com](mailto:mhammerman@aol.com). Marilyn has been helping families place these special orders for 37 years, and all of the profits from these sales go directly to Sisterhood. This is an easy way to support the shul because Sisterhood makes substantial contributions to Beth El throughout the year.

Some families select decorative headcoverings for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and/or the immediate family members. There is a great variety from which to choose. Kippot that match the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's tallit are generally available. Although lace kippot are always appropriate for mothers and grandmothers, many girls and women find the metallic kippot, decorated with glass beads or pearls, very appealing; Marilyn Hammerman (see contact information above) can make these for your simcha. Druse-style kippot can be made by local tallit-makers.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE SERVICE

Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates are honored in three ways (1) by being called to the Torah to chant both the Maftir and the Haftarah, including the blessings that proceed and follow each of these; (2) by learning and leading prayers, including the Friday night Kiddush (*Lev Shalem* p. 55) and the beginning of the Torah service (*Lev Shalem* p. 168-171); (3) by delivering a *D'var Torah* before the Torah reading. After these portions of the service have been mastered, the student may consider learning additional *aliyot* (verses of Torah). The chanting of the Kiddush during the Friday evening service is an especially meaningful way to begin Shabbat, especially if family members gather for the traditional Shabbat meal afterward. It is possible to have a private Shabbat dinner catered at Beth El. Please refer to the section about the Shabbat dinner for further details.

Beth El encourages motivated students to take on more prayer leadership in order to deepen their spiritual life and commitment. The extent of prayer leadership by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be discussed with the rabbi and hazzan **six months** before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Leadership opportunities include *Kabbalat Shabbat*, *Ma'ariv*, and *Shabbat Shacharit* for advanced students. In order to encourage our students to deepen their studies, *Musaf* is only available to those who have additionally mastered one of the other services (*Kabbalat Shabbat*, *Ma'ariv*, or *Shacharit*). Student leadership must work in balance with the regular spiritual life of the synagogue: For example, Friday night student leaders may require a separate service when a *Kol HaNeshama* instrument service takes place, and at least one of the major services (*Shacharit/Musaf*) on Saturday must be still led by the *hazzan* or a qualified professional or layperson. In every case, we strive to balance two values: (1) Jewish education, our desire to set a high bar and encourage Jewish study and commitment in our students; and (2) *k'vod hatzibbur*—respect for the congregation—as we endeavor to provide a weekly prayer experience of both spiritual quality and consistency.

For cases when a Haftarah is not chanted, for example a Sunday Rosh Hodesh, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah should certainly consider conducting extensive portions of the service and reading Torah. It should be noted that tefillin are worn at this service. Honors available for the family will be discussed with the rabbi at the pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah meeting.

Parents should notify the rabbi and the hazzan **two months** prior to the ceremony if family members or friends will be reading Torah on the morning of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. These Torah readers will have to be heard by the hazzan no less than two weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah by chanting their portions on the hazzan's voicemail at (301) 652-8569, ext. 317. A phone number should be included so that he can call back with any corrections that need to be made. If corrections need to be made, a second recording should be called in no less than one week before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. At that time, he can determine whether the assigned person is ready to read Torah.

After being called to the Torah for the first time, our young members of the congregation will be eligible to read Torah for the congregation on subsequent Shabbatot or on weekday mornings when there is no school. Sometime after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, we hope they will contact the hazzan for a new Torah reading assignment for the main sanctuary. These assignments are generally made two months in advance.

Realize, also, that many opportunities to read are available in the alternative Beth El minyanim. Contact the hazzan to arrange a Torah reading assignment for the Early Morning Shabbat Service that meets every Shabbat, for the Worship and Study Minyan that is held on the first Shabbat of each month, or for the Minyan Chaverim that meets on the third Shabbat of the month. Please know it's possible to sign up for a reading several months in advance when agreeing to read Torah for any of the alternative minyanim. It is our hope that our students will know the satisfaction of becoming accomplished readers, and we look forward to hearing them at future services.



## HONORS DURING THE SERVICE

During the Shabbat morning service, a number of people are given the honor of being called to the bimah for an aliyah to recite the Torah blessing, to raise or dress the Torah, or to open and close the Aron Hakodesh (Holy Ark). Honors are reserved for the families celebrating B'nai Mitzvah as well as for the members of the congregation. Because Beth El is a large and active congregation, no family can be given all of the honors at any one service.

Your selection of honorees should be discussed with the rabbi at least one month prior to the ceremony. To avoid a potentially difficult situation and disappointment, please do not make any commitments about granting honors before the rabbi has given his approval.

### TORAH HONORS

During the Shabbat morning service, many people in addition to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah are called to the Torah for an aliyah. Bar/Bat Mitzvah families may designate and assign four of these aliyot. Up to four people can be given a single aliyah. In the case of a double Bar/Bat Mitzvah, one additional aliyah is added (Hosafa) to the service to accommodate the additional family members, so that each family gets four aliyot honors. Families are advised to consult with the rabbi about the number of aliyot available if the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is to be held on a festival. As is customary in the Conservative movement, please understand that only Jews may receive Torah honors.

It is tradition, but not a requirement, that a Kohen be called for the first aliyah and a Levi for the second. Honorees usually include parents, grandparents, and older siblings; close friends and tutors may also be included. Honorees for the remaining aliyot are designated by the congregation.

Since it is understood that not everyone is familiar with the Torah blessings, we ask that the families ensure their honorees learn the blessings in Hebrew well in advance of the ceremony to avoid embarrassment. A recording of the blessings can be made available upon request.

### HAGBAAH (LIFTING THE TORAH SCROLL) G'LILAH (DRESSING THE TORAH SCROLL)

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family or families may designate the people who lift and dress the Torah. On days when two Torah scrolls are used and two families are celebrating B'nai Mitzvah, each family may choose people to lift and dress each of the Scrolls.

The honor of lifting the Torah must be given to a person with the ability and expertise to raise the Torah in a proper manner.

## **HOLDING THE TORAH**

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family or families may select a person—often, but not exclusively, a child of 8 to 13 years of age—to sit on the bimah and hold the Torah Scroll while the Haftarah is chanted. Please discuss this with the rabbi. On days when two Torah Scrolls are used, the second youngster will be chosen by the synagogue unless two families are sharing B'nai Mitzvah. In such a circumstance, a child from each family may be given this honor.

## **OPENING THE ARON HAKODESH**

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family may designate several people to come to the bimah to open the Ark before or after the Torah reading. In the event of a double ceremony, these honors will be shared by the families.

## **OTHER HONORS**

Others whom you wish to honor may be asked to lead the congregation in prayers for the country, Israel, and peace. These honorees may be of any religion. The total number of honors for a family must be decided with the rabbi.

Beth El will supply you with a card to give to each honoree. The card explains what each honoree is expected to do and includes copies of the blessings in Hebrew and in transliteration. The families should distribute these cards to the honorees prior to the service. Once the service begins, it is advisable to have a relative give the cards to those arriving later in the morning.

## **INCLUSION OF NON-JEWISH FAMILY OR FRIENDS**

While the honors related to the Torah are reserved for people who are Jewish, non-Jewish family and friends are welcome on the bimah and to participate in the service. Honors reserved for people of any faith include the English Prayer for Country and Prayer for Peace (*Lev Shalem*, p. 177 and p. 178, respectively).

## INFORMATION FOR YOUR GUESTS

A written introduction and explanation of the Shabbat Morning Service is available in the bookracks. Please advise your guests in advance about proper decorum at Beth El during Shabbat.

### ARRIVAL

- ◆ Guests should arrive after the service starts at 9:30 am. Children should be encouraged to be in their seats at 10:00 am, not the official start time. It is not realistic to expect them to sit attentively for a 2½ hour service.

### DRESS

- ◆ All women and girls must wear a head covering if they will be on the bimah.
- ◆ Women and girls may wear a tallit but are not required to do so unless they are reading Torah.
- ◆ Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrants are to wear a tallit and head covering.
- ◆ Dress should reflect the honor and dignity of the Shabbat. It is our practice to dress modestly. Clothing that is overly revealing or abbreviated is not proper in a House of God. Please be sure your guests realize it is offensive to enter our sanctuary in dresses that reveal bare shoulders or midriffs.
- ◆ In choosing a dress for a Bat Mitzvah, consider that your daughter will be sitting on an elevated bimah. It is advisable to choose an appropriate hemline so that your daughter will feel comfortable when seated.
- ◆ All men and boys, Jewish and non-Jewish, are to wear a kippah or other head covering prior to entering the sanctuary as a sign of respect before God. These are available at the entrance to the sanctuary. We ask that men and boys keep their heads covered while they are in the synagogue whether in or out of the sanctuary.
- ◆ It is customary for Jewish men to put on a tallit before entering the sanctuary. This is a requirement for a man chosen to be on the bimah to receive an honor. Non-Jewish men and boys should not put on a tallit.

### RESPECTING SHABBAT

- ◆ Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building or on the Beth El grounds.
- ◆ Picture-taking and videotaping are not permitted at Beth El on the Shabbat or other Jewish holidays. This includes the sanctuary, the entire building, and outside the building. Please inform your guests beforehand so that they do not bring cameras into the building. Gifts and other packages should not be carried into the synagogue on the Shabbat. If your guests bring gifts, ushers will show them where they may be left outside the sanctuary.
- ◆ **Cell phones and other electronic devices need to be turned off while in the building.**

### PARKING

See section on Parking Regulations.

## PARKING REGULATIONS

Our parking lot is not large enough to accommodate all the cars of those attending services. If guests find all the spaces taken, they should not park against the yellow curbs in the synagogue lot. Emergency vehicles need to pass through this lane to respond to critical situations.

When our lot is full, guests may park on alternative sites surrounding our facility. In an effort to help guests find parking for their cars and not have them park illegally, **the synagogue office has material available, including a map, which we urge you to enclose with your invitations.** Please ensure that your guests are aware of the following options:

- ◆ Subject to church activity, the upper parking lot of the Bethesda United Methodist Church at Old Georgetown Road and Huntington Parkway is available.
- ◆ Parking is readily available on the residential streets opposite the synagogue across Old Georgetown Road. Limited parking spaces may also be found on the residential streets surrounding the synagogue building. We remind everyone to be sensitive to our neighbors. Please do not park on someone's lawn or in a driveway; please do not block any driveways. Be aware that Montgomery County Police will ticket and/or tow vehicles that are parked illegally whether in our lot or on the neighborhood streets.

## **CHILDREN/BABYSITTING**

Your child has worked hard and long to prepare for this very special day and, when called to the bimah, will be eager to show proficiency in chanting the Torah and/or Haftarah portion.

The fact that babies and children are welcome at all services at Beth El is evident by the large numbers of young families who come regularly to Shabbat morning services. However, we realize that not all young children are accustomed to sitting quietly through a long service; some may be used to a different format.

If your guests choose to have their young children remain with them during the service, then that is fine! We love kids! It would be helpful to ask the parents to bring infant toys that make no noise such as favorite picture books and stuffed animals. Children's books are available in the shul library and may be brought into the sanctuary for a child. We do ask you to talk to your guests about being prepared to take a crying or noisy child out of the sanctuary or into the Quiet Room at the rear of the sanctuary before the behavior becomes disruptive. This is a courtesy to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and to others in the congregation. Parents shouldn't feel any embarrassment. Babies do cry; small children do speak loudly at times. We ask parents to return to the sanctuary as soon as the child is ready. Your guests should know in advance that they can attend to the needs of their child in the privacy of the Family Room across the hall from the sanctuary or the Quiet Room where they can also hear the Shabbat morning service.

Please inform your guests that babysitting is provided during Shabbat or Festival morning services for children ages 2 to 6. There is no charge for babysitting, but we ask you to specify on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Shabbat Information Sheet (Form A) the approximate ages of the children who are expected to use the babysitting facilities. This is extremely important so that a sufficient number of babysitters can be scheduled to assure a safe and pleasant experience for the children. Parents should be aware that the child need not be in babysitting for the entire morning but may enter or leave this supervised activity when accompanied by an adult. Ushers can direct guests to the babysitting facilities that are in Room B102 in the Preschool wing.

## FLOWERS

The family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is expected to provide flowers for the bimah. Two floral arrangements, which florists refer to as pulpit flowers, are needed; they should be delivered to the synagogue by 1:00 pm on the Friday prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day. Please note that only flowers or plants are permitted as bimah decorations. The flowers may be removed from the sanctuary after Shabbat is over. We ask that they not be carried out of the building on Shabbat after the service. Should the day(s) before the ceremony fall on a festival, realize that delivery must be made in advance of the holiday. It is advisable to convey this information to your florist so that appropriate flowers can be selected. Should the day before the ceremony fall on a day when the office is closed because of a secular holiday such as the Thanksgiving weekend, please contact the executive director to make delivery arrangements. Please realize that if a festival falls immediately after Shabbat, the flowers are to remain in the sanctuary for the duration of the festival.

Be sure to notify the synagogue office of your choice of florist no later than three weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is to occur by specifying this information on Form A. If this is not conveyed on the Form A Information Sheet, Beth El will place the order for your flowers. The shul will send you the bill and will require a check covering this cost ten days before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Tzedakah projects, while encouraged, are not to be substituted for flowers for the sanctuary.

Two possible florists that you could use (but are not limited to) are:

Suburban Florist: (301) 656-2288

Bethesda Florist: (301) 656-8200

## **SHABBAT DINNER**

Private Shabbat dinners can be catered at Beth El. This alternative to Shabbat dinner at home may appeal to families who are expecting many out-of-town guests. If this is something you would like to consider, please call the shul as soon as possible to ensure there will be an appropriate space available for your rental. Sisterhood does not cater Shabbat dinners. Beth El's chef, Kevin Trainor, is available on a limited basis to prepare a traditional Shabbat meal for you at the shul, and financial arrangements for such services are, of course, private. There also are several kosher caterers who use Beth El facilities and will be able to provide you with a Shabbat dinner. Please contact the office for a list of approved caterers and a list of related costs. Table or other decorations at the dinner should be in keeping with spirit and sanctity of Shabbat. If you have any questions in this regard, please check with Rabbi Harris or Sheila Bellack.

## SISTERHOOD MESSAGE

Dear B'nai Mitzvah Parents,

Mazal tov on your upcoming simcha. The year before a child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah is an exciting, confusing, inspiring, and demanding time. It seems that the day will never come, and then it passes by too quickly. Sisterhood is here to help with encouragement, advice, and expertly run services.

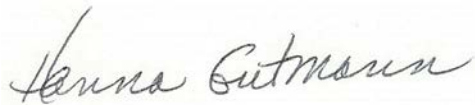
**Invitations and stationery** can be selected online and ordered from Sisterhood member Marilyn Hammerman, who has helped many Beth El members choose invitations, stationery, and kippot. With her years of experience, Marilyn can also give advice about other decisions related to your simcha. One hundred percent of the profits from stationery and invitation sales go directly to supporting Beth El and Sisterhood programs.

You may like to create a unique tallit for, or perhaps with, your child in the **Tallit Workshop**. Sisterhood offers this instructional opportunity every year beginning in early December. Many of the beautiful and original tallitot worn at Beth El were designed and handmade in the workshop. Both boys and girls have participated in the workshop with a parent or a grandparent. Creating such a personalized tallit with your child can greatly enrich the Bar or Bat Mitzvah experience. See page 10 for details.

B'nai Mitzvah families at Beth El host a kiddush or luncheon for congregants and guests following the Shabbat morning service. Sisterhood has an outstanding all-volunteer **Catering Committee** that can help you plan the event and will oversee food preparation and serving. You will find several appetizing menus in this handbook. One of our volunteers will contact you six to eight weeks before your event to help you select your kiddush menu. While you are welcome to use any caterer you wish from Beth El's approved list, I hope you will consider using Sisterhood.

There is so much to think about before a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. You can be certain that whatever you plan with Sisterhood will be done professionally and will be worry-free on your part. Please contact Sisterhood if you have any questions about your kiddush.

With best wishes on your special day,



Hanna Gutmann  
Sisterhood President



## FOR YOUR INVITATIONS

Families often enclose information for their invited guests with their invitations. A copy of the material used by one of our members is shown below and follows the synagogue's official policies. You are welcome to extract any of this material if you feel a similar enclosure may be helpful to your guests.

### ABOUT THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH

The synagogue service lasts from 9:30 am until approximately noon. Children should arrive at 10:00 am. The child's participation begins around 10:00 am and continues throughout the morning. The kiddush or buffet luncheon will last until about 1:00 pm.

Men and boys are required to wear a kippah, also known as a yarmulke. Women need not cover their heads, although they are welcome to wear a kippah or small lace headcovering available outside the sanctuary. Women who are going on the bimah must wear a head covering. Jewish men who are going up on the bimah must wear a tallit.

The usual manner of dress for men is a jacket and a tie. Women typically wear a dress, suit, skirt, or pants. Shoulders should be covered.

Children are welcome in the sanctuary. Babysitting for children two to six years of age is available in the preschool wing of the building. You can bring books for kids to read, but please no drawing or coloring because it is our practice not to write on the Sabbath.

People are permitted to walk in and out of the service. The best time to leave is when everyone is chanting in unison or when the congregation is standing, except when the Kedushah is recited on p. 161 and p. 187. The ushers can tell you when you may return to your seat.

Photography is not permitted inside the synagogue or on the grounds. We prefer that gifts be sent by mail or brought to the evening party rather than to the synagogue. Please let guests know that cell phones and other electronic devices must not be used while in the building.

### DIRECTIONS TO CONGREGATION BETH EL 8215 OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD, BETHESDA, MARYLAND

From **Baltimore**, take either Route 295 South or Interstate 95 South to **Interstate 495 West** (Capital Beltway) toward Silver Spring and Bethesda. **Take Exit 36 (Old Georgetown Road)**. From the off ramp, turn left on Old Georgetown Road toward Bethesda. In 1.8 miles, turn left at Huntington Parkway into our parking lot.

From **Northern Virginia**, take **Interstate 495 North** (Capital Beltway) to Bethesda. **Take Exit 36 (Old Georgetown Road)**. From the off ramp, turn right on Old Georgetown Road. In 1.8 miles, turn left at Huntington Parkway into our parking lot.

From **DC**, take **Wisconsin Avenue** out of the city (North). In Bethesda, stay in the left lane and make a left onto Old Georgetown Road (Route 187). Continue for about 1 mile. Turn right at Huntington Parkway into our parking lot.

Because parking spaces are limited, we encourage you to park on the other side of Old Georgetown Road. However, if you arrive early, you might be able to find parking in our lot. If you do park on the neighborhood streets, please know that cars parked in illegal spaces or blocking driveways will be towed. Please be careful and considerate of our neighbors.

Parking at the upper lot of the Methodist church across the street is generally permitted, subject to church activities.

## HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR YOUR CHILD'S GUESTS

The following letter is a sample of what you might include with your invitations.

Dear Friends,

This Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a special milestone in \_\_\_\_\_'s life. S/he has spent the past year preparing for this special day and getting ready for this celebration of becoming a Jewish adult. Not all friends are Jewish, and even those who are do not all go to Beth El. Here are a few things to which you should pay special attention during our service.

1. There are quiet times in the service when people pray silently. It is important not to talk during services; please wait until after the service or the party to do your talking. We know it is not easy, especially when you are sitting with friends, but it is not fair to the members of our synagogue who come to the services.
2. When everyone is standing, you should too. We stand for certain prayers. In the front of the sanctuary is the Holy Ark. It is where the Torahs are kept. When the doors of the Holy Ark are open, everyone is standing. When the Torah is held and paraded around, everyone stands.
3. These are the important people in our service:
  - a. The Rabbi – he will lead the service and give a sermon and give a blessing.
  - b. The Hazzan – also known as the Cantor, he will lead the singing.
  - c. The Bar/ Bat Mitzvah – \_\_\_\_\_ will lead some prayers, chant from the Torah and chant another special part from the Tanach (Bible). S/he will also give a D'var Torah (the Bar Mitzvah speech).
4. Electronic devices cannot be used in the building. This would include cell phones. Please turn off all cell phones when you enter the building. You can go outside and call your parents after the service. They can pick you up at 1:00 pm outside the front doors (or a different arrangement if there is a luncheon).
5. The invitation says that the service starts at 9:30 am. This is true, but you really should plan on being in your seat by 10:00 am, which is just before the time \_\_\_\_\_ becomes involved in the service. The service will end around 12:00 noon, followed by a light lunch.
6. Boys should wear a sports jacket or collared shirt and tie. Girls should wear a dress, skirt, or pants. No bare shoulders or flip flops please. Dress and behavior are to be those fit for a religious service.

We look forward to your joining our family on this special day.

Sincerely,



## “A Stationery Invitation”

**Order your Bar/Bat Mitzvah invitations from Sisterhood**

**100% of the profits go directly to Sisterhood and Beth El**

**We will match the price from any vendor**

**We sell invitations, stationery, kippot, business cards,  
personalized napkins, etc.**

We can offer advice about finding  
Photographers, Videographers, Disc Jockeys, Bands,  
Table Decorations, Balloons,  
Party Favors, Party Equipment,  
Hotels or Other Venues, and Caterers:

Because there's so much to consider,  
contact **Marilyn Hammerman** at (301) 881-0011  
or [mhammerman@aol.com](mailto:mhammerman@aol.com)  
Orders can now be placed online.

She has over 40 years of experience in providing our Beth El members with invitations, stationery, and kippot as well as giving expert advice about other decisions related to your simcha.

We suggest you remember to:

- ◆ refer to the synagogue as Congregation Beth El
- ◆ include the address of the synagogue
- ◆ include the 9:30 am Shabbat Morning Service starting time
- ◆ include the names of the parents
- ◆ allow sufficient time for proofing and addressing

## THE KIDDUSH

Dear Parents of B'nai Mitzvah,

Although the date of your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah is still some time away, it is not too early to begin thinking about this special event. We realize you will be faced with many decisions, one of which is the Kiddush you will host after the synagogue service. Beth El's Sisterhood Catering Committee would be delighted to help you with your upcoming simcha. Please note that Sisterhood coordinates B'nai Mitzvah Kiddushim only on Shabbat morning. If your simcha is on a different day or time, please contact the office if you require a caterer.

At Beth El, the family of each Bar/Bat Mitzvah is expected to provide a Kiddush following services. This can be coordinated by Sisterhood Catering or provided by an outside caterer who has been approved by the congregation. When an outside caterer is used, you will be charged for fees associated with the use of the social hall, kitchen, linens and equipment. These fees are waived if you choose Sisterhood Catering to provide the Kiddush. If you choose a private caterer, you must provide the Kiddush for your guests plus the entire congregation.

### **SINGLE OR DOUBLE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

If you choose Sisterhood Catering and your child is having a Single Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you will be responsible for providing the Kiddush for your guests plus 100 congregants. Congregants who are invited to your simcha **MUST** be included in your estimated guest count.

If your child is sharing this milestone with another Bar/Bat Mitzvah, each family of a Double B'nai Mitzvah is required to provide the Kiddush for their respective guests plus 75 congregants each. Congregants who are invited to your simcha **MUST** be included in your estimated guest count. Both Double B'nai Mitzvah families must choose the same type of Kiddush and the same menu for that Kiddush.

If you decide to have a luncheon outside the synagogue, you are still responsible for hosting a Kiddush at Beth El. We hope that you and your guests will remain at the Kiddush for a period of time so that all in attendance can wish your family a "Mazal Tov!" If you would like to have a private luncheon at Beth El following the Kiddush, please see page 45.

### **CHOOSING YOUR MENU**

Sisterhood Catering offers you a variety of menus and á la carte selections to enhance those menus (sample menus follow). A member of our Catering Committee will contact you 6-8 weeks prior to your simcha to help you with your menu selection and guide you through the process. If you would like to get started earlier, please feel free to contact me to find out who your Sisterhood representative will be. Please note that if you are sharing your simcha with another family, you must agree on the same menu.

Every effort is made to keep our pricing current with food costs. Prices do change and Sisterhood periodically updates our pricing schedule. The prices listed in this handbook are printed at least six months in advance of your Kiddush and may not be valid by the time of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah. All items are subject to seasonal availability and all prices are subject to change. At the time of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah you will be given a current price list.

## **TYPES OF MENUS**

We offer three different Classic Kiddush Menus. The Traditional Luncheon Menu is the most popular but we also offer an Israeli Luncheon, a Mediterranean Kiddush, and a very nice Brunch with baked salmon. We even offer a Deli Luncheon for those in the mood for meat. All menus are composed of hot and cold selections that are served on china plates with stainless flatware. You may choose additional hot and cold á la carte offerings to supplement each suggested menu. We are happy to work with you to make your Kiddush suit your style. A minimum of four to six wait staff is required to serve a Kiddush. Your Sisterhood Catering contract will indicate the final number of wait staff you will need based on your menu and final guest count. Wait staff is billed separately from food items.

## **SPECIAL CHILDREN'S MENU**

If you are having over 100 children as guests, we offer a special children's menu (both dairy and meat) that is served separately from the adults. These menu items are selected with the foods kids are drawn to. The minimum guest count for the children's menu is 100. Children are charged at the regular price when the regular menus are used without the children's menu.

## **SIMCHA BASKET OF CANDY**

Included with your Kiddush, Sisterhood will provide a basket of candies to toss at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah after the chanting of the Haftarah. For Kashrut and safety reasons, families may not provide their own candy.

## **TIMELINE**

<b>6 to 8 weeks prior to simcha</b>	<b>Sisterhood Catering contact will get in touch with you.</b>
<b>1 month prior to simcha</b>	<b>Finalize your menu and provide estimated guest count; Sign and return contract to Sisterhood Catering contact.</b>
<b>2 weeks prior to simcha</b>	<b>Provide your final guest count to Sisterhood Catering; Your final bill will be prepared and emailed to you.</b>
<b>2 weeks prior to simcha</b>	<b>Food Payment payable to Sisterhood Catering is due; Wait Staff Payment (\$112.50 per waiter) payable to Congregation Beth El is due.</b>

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a hearty Mazal Tov in advance and look forward to working with you to make this simcha a memorable one.

With Warmest Regards,

*Shoshannah Freilich*  
Sisterhood Catering

## **SERVING-YOUR ROLE IN SISTERHOOD CATERING**

### ***“30 minutes and a Smile”***

Sisterhood Catering provides a service to our synagogue families and is a fundraising source for Congregation Beth El. The committee members are all volunteers. Each family using Sisterhood Catering services is required to participate in the serving of a Kiddush. This experience is a wonderful opportunity to see how the Kiddush is prepared and to participate in the excitement of the congregation's life cycle events. Serving at a Kiddush builds our sense of community at Beth El.

You can pick your own date to do this mitzvah for other Bar and Bat Mitzvah families. Each B'nai Mitzvah student and one parent need to sign up but both parents and other family members are welcome to sign up at the same time (if they are old enough to handle food service). We encourage you to do this before the date of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah but it can be done any time in the year your simcha occurs. Signing up is easy!

Our Sign Up Genius page is at [www.bethelmc.org/groups/sisterhood/kiddush-volunteer](http://www.bethelmc.org/groups/sisterhood/kiddush-volunteer). Select a date that works for your family, provide your names and email address, and look forward to doing one of the happiest mitzvot at Beth El.

On the date you choose, you will need to arrive at the Kiddush by 11:50am. Check in with the Sisterhood Catering Volunteer who will provide you with an apron and assign you to a table. You will serve until about 15 minutes after the service ends. If you enjoy the experience, we encourage you to sign up again anytime. All it takes is “30 Minutes and a Smile!”

## **Classic Kiddush A**

Price per person \$10.30

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Mini Bagels  
Sliced Challah  
Plain Cream Cheese

Tuna Salad or Egg Salad  
Please Choose 1

Vegetable Crudities (no substitutions)  
W/Hummus or Ranch Dressing  
Please Choose 1

(Crudities may include: baby carrots, broccoli, red peppers, grape tomatoes, zucchini or other seasonal vegetables)

Kugel

Brownies, Bars, Cookies & Loaf Cakes

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China Plates & Silver Flatware

Hot and Cold Specialty items may be added for an additional charge.  
Basic Desserts maybe upgraded to Deluxe Desserts for an extra \$1.25 per person.

All items subject to seasonal availability. ~ All prices subject to change.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per Waiter.  
Depending on the guest count a minimum of 4 to 6 waiters is required.

## **Classic Kiddush B**

Price per person \$11.00

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Sliced Challah and Mini Bagels  
Plain Cream Cheese, Lox Spread or Vegetable Cream Cheese  
Please Choose 1

Kugel or Baked Ziti  
Please Choose 1

Tuna Salad or Egg Salad  
Please Choose 1

Vegetable Crudities (no substitutions)  
W/Hummus or Ranch Dressing  
Please Choose 1  
(Crudities may include: Baby Carrots, Broccoli, Red Peppers, Grape Tomatoes, Zucchini or other Seasonal Vegetables)

Tossed Salad or Caesar Salad  
Please Choose 1

Balsamic, Italian or Ranch Dressing  
Please Choose 1 for tossed salad only

Brownies, Bars, Cookies & Loaf Cakes

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China plates & Silver Flatware

Hot and Cold Specialty items may be added for an additional charge.  
Basic Desserts maybe upgraded to Deluxe Desserts for an extra \$1.25 per person.

All items subject to seasonal availability. ~ All prices subject to change.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per Waiter.  
Depending on the guest count a minimum of 4 to 6 waiters is required.



## **Classic Kiddush C**

Price per person \$11.80

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Sliced Challah  
Mini Bagels  
Plain Cream Cheese and Lox Spread

Egg Salad

Vegetable Crudities (no substitutions)  
Please Choose 1

W/Hummus or Ranch Dressing  
(Crudities may include: Baby Carrots, Broccoli, Red Peppers, Grape Tomatoes, Zucchini or other Seasonal Vegetables)

Israeli Platter  
Stuffed Grape Leaves, Kalamata Olives, Pita, Hummus, Tabbouleh, Babaganoush

Tossed Salad or Caesar Salad  
Please choose 1

With Balsamic Vinaigrette, Italian or Ranch Dressing  
Please choose 1 for tossed salad only

Brownies, Bars, Cookies & Loaf Cakes

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China plates & Silver Flatware

Hot and Cold Specialty items may be added for an additional charge.  
Basic Desserts maybe upgraded to Deluxe Desserts for an extra \$1.25 per person.

All items subject to seasonal availability. ~ All prices subject to change.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per Waiter.  
Depending on the guest count a minimum of 4 to 6 waiters is required.

## **Traditional Luncheon**

Price per person \$14.65

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Sliced Challah  
Deluxe Assorted Bakery Bagels  
Plain Cream Cheese  
Vegetable, Chive or Lox Spread  
Please Choose 1 in addition to the plain cream cheese

Tuna Salad and Egg Salad

Kugel, Blintz Soufflé, Spinach Soufflé or Baked Ziti  
Please Choose 1

Tossed Salad or Caesar Salad  
Please Choose 1

Balsamic Vinaigrette, Italian or Ranch Dressing  
Please Choose 1 for tossed salad only

Assorted Deluxe Dairy Desserts  
With Seasonal Fruit

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China & Silver Flatware

We suggest you consider adding:

Nova w/lettuce, tomato, red onion, cucumber & Swiss cheese platter.

Hot and Cold Specialty items may be added for an additional charge.

Basic Desserts maybe upgraded to Deluxe Desserts for an extra \$1.25 per person.

All items subject to seasonal availability. ~ All prices subject to change.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per Waiter.  
Depending on the guest count a minimum of 6 waiters is required.

**Children's Menu**  
**Dairy**

Minimum of 100 children as invited guests

Price per Child \$9.00

Macaroni & Cheese

Potato Puffs or Mini Pizza Bagels  
Please Choose 1

Caesar Salad

Carrot & Celery Sticks  
W/Ranch Dressing

Desserts and beverages  
Served in the Bender Social Hall  
in the Bender Social Hall is included

Minimum of 100 children required

Station Set Up in the Gallery

The required wait staff is an additional charge.  
Two Additional Waiters are required @ \$112.50 per Waiter.

**Children's Menu**  
**Meat**

Served only when the main Kiddush is a meat Kiddush  
Minimum of 100 children as invited guests

Price Per Child \$11.00

Chicken Fingers

Ketchup & Mustard

Carrot & Celery Sticks w/Hummus

Potato Chips

Tossed Salad w/Balsamic Vinaigrette

Desserts and Beverages  
Served in the Bender Social Hall are included.

Minimum of 100 children required.  
Station Set Up in the Gallery.

The required wait staff is an additional charge.  
Two Additional Waiters are required @ \$112.50 per Waiter.

## **Israeli Luncheon**

Price per person \$13.90

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Pita Pockets  
Falafel Balls  
Tahini  
Tabbouleh  
Hummus

Stuffed Grape Leaves

Israeli Salad  
(Cucumber & Tomato Salad)

Field Greens w/Balsamic Vinaigrette

Baba Ganoush

Assorted Deluxe Dairy Desserts  
With Seasonal Fruit

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China Plates & Silver Flatware

Hot and Cold Specialties may be added for an additional charge.

All items are subject to seasonal availability.

All prices and menus are subject to change.

A minimum of 6 waiters is required.  
The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per waiter.

## **Brunch**

Price per person \$15.45

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Mini bagels  
W/cream cheese

Spinach or Broccoli Quiche  
Please Choose 1

Baked Salmon

Spinach Salad

Sesame Noodles

Assorted Deluxe Dairy Desserts with Seasonal Fruits

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China Plates and Silver Flatware

Hot and Cold Specialty selections maybe added for an additional charge.

All items are subject to seasonal availability.

All prices and menus are subject to change.

A minimum of 6 waiters is required.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per waiter.

## **Deli Luncheon**

Price per person \$15.95

Ceremonial Wine  
Ceremonial Challah  
Simcha Candies

Mini Challah Rolls and Rye Bread

Deli Platter:

Corn Beef and Roast Turkey  
Lettuce and Tomato  
Russian Dressing and Mustard

Tuna Salad or Egg Salad  
Please Choose 1

Potato Salad

Cole Slaw

Marinated Cucumber Salad

Pickles

Potato Chips

Assorted Deluxe Pareve Desserts

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

China Plates and Silver Flatware

We suggest you consider adding Mini Franks in a Blanket w/Mustard.

All items are subject to seasonal availability.

All prices and menus are subject to change.

A minimum of 6 waiters is required.

The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per waiter.

## **Mediterranean Kiddush**

Price per person \$13.90

Ceremonial Wine  
Sliced Challah  
Simcha Candies

Mini Bagels  
w/cream cheese

Salade Nicoise w/balsamic vinaigrette

Sesame Noodles

Israeli Platter  
Stuffed Grape Leaves, Kalamata Olives & Feta (Feta cut in squares)  
Hummus, Tabbouleh, Babaganoush  
w/Large Pitas cut into sixths

Assorted Deluxe Dairy Desserts

Coffee  
Tea  
Punch

We suggest you consider adding a large fruit platter

Hot and Cold Specialty items may also be added for an additional charge.

All items are subject to seasonal availability.

All prices and menus are subject to change.

A minimum of 6 waiters is required.  
The required wait staff is an additional charge @ \$112.50 per waiter.



## **SPECIALTY PLATTERS**

### **Large Seasonal Fruit Platter**

\$375.00

### **Assorted Crudités Platter**

Hummus or Ranch Dressing

Seasonal Vegetables

(Carrots, Zucchini, Red Pepper, Broccoli, Grape Tomatoes)

Price per person \$1.50

### **Fish Platter**

White Fish Salad, Kippered Salmon, Smoked Trout, Nova, Assorted Cheeses, Let-tuce, Tomato,

Red Onion & Cucumbers

Price per person \$11.50

### **White Fish Platter**

Whole white fish on a platter garnished with cucumbers

Minimum 4 whole fish per station

for total guest count of 325 and above

Price \$28.00 per fish with a \$336.00 minimum

More fish can be ordered for a larger quest count

### **Sliced Cheese Platter**

Sliced Munster, Swiss, Cheddar based on availability

\$310.00 ~ 2 platters per station per 300 people, 6 platters total

### **Israeli Platter**

Stuffed Grape Leaves, Kalamata Olives, Pita,

Hummus, Tabbouleh, Baba Ganoush

Pita or Pita Crisps

Price per person \$4.90

### **Kalamata Olives & Feta**

1 large platter for each station

\$154.50

## **COLD SPECIALTY DISHES**

1. Asparagus w/ Vinaigrette (seasonal) .....Price per person \$1.80
2. Buffalo Mozzarella Balls & Tomato Salad or Skewers.....Price per person \$2.10
3. Deluxe Bakery Bagel .....Price per person \$ 1.00
4. Israeli Couscous or Orzo  
w/Roasted Seasonal Vegetables.....Price per person \$2.10
5. Israeli Couscous or Orzo  
w/Dried Cranberries, Pine Nuts, Feta .....Price per person \$2.10
6. Egg Salad .....Price per person \$2.85
7. Baba Ganoush Salad .....Price per person \$1.55
8. Gefilte Fish .....Price per person \$1.40
9. Herring in Cream sauce or Wine Sauce.....Price per person \$1.40
10. Hummus w/Pita Wedges or Crisps .....Price per person \$1.50
11. Israeli Salad.....Price per person \$2.10
12. Marinated Haricots Verts .....Price per person \$2.10
13. Nova w/Lettuce, Tomato, Red Onion.....Price per person \$6.20  
Cucumbers & Swiss Cheese
14. Pasta Primavera.....Price per person \$2.10
15. Salad Nicoise .....Price per person \$3.10
16. Sesame Noodles .....Price per person \$2.30
17. Southwestern Salad.....Price per person \$2.10
18. Spreads  
Chive Cream Cheese.....Price per spread \$31.00  
Vegetable Cream Cheese .....Price per spread \$31.00  
Lox Spread.....Price per spread \$36.00
19. Roasted Seasonal Vegetables.....Price per person \$2.85

**COLD SPECIALTY DISHES**  
**(CONTINUED)**

20. Salads

Tossed Salad .....	Price per person \$1.80
Caesar Salad.....	Price per person \$2.10
Spinach Salad.....	Price per person \$2.30

Salad Dressing

Balsamic, Italian or Ranch Dressings

Please Choose 1

21. Tuna Salad .....Price per person \$3.10

22. Whitefish Salad.....Price per person \$3.60

23. Stuffed Grape Leaves.....Price per person \$1.30

Any substitutions from our menus will be credited at the lesser amount.

## **HOT SPECIALTY DISHES**

1. Baked Salmon ..... Price per person \$5.70
2. Baked Ziti..... Price per person \$2.30
3. Blintzes w/ sour cream.....Price per person \$2.30
4. Spinach or Broccoli Quiche .....Price per person \$2.60
5. Kugel.....Price per person \$2.30
6. Potato Latkes w/ apple sauce & sour cream .....Price per person \$2.30\*
7. Macaroni & Cheese.....Price per person \$2.30
8. Mini Potato Puffs .....Price per person \$1.55\*
9. Franks in a Blanket (meat item).....Price per person \$1.80\*
10. Spanakopita.....Price per person \$1.80\*
11. Spinach Soufflé.....Price per person \$2.60
12. Mini Pizza Bagels .....Price per person \$1.55\*
13. Breaded Mozzarella Sticks with Marinara Sauce .....Price per person \$1.55\*

\* Passed Hors D'Oeuvres Require 2 Extra Waiters @ \$112.50 per Waiter

Any substitutions from our menus will be credited at the lesser amount

## **BARS**

### **Waffle Bar**

Price per person \$2.60

- a. Maple Syrup
- b. Whipped Cream
- c. Chocolate Chips
- d. Sliced Strawberries or Blue Berries

### **Ice Cream Bar**

Price per person \$3.60

- a. Vanilla & Chocolate Ice Cream
- b. Whipped Cream
- c. Chocolate Chips
- d. Crushed Oreos
- e. Chocolate Sauce
- f. Sliced Strawberries or Blue Berries

### **Yogurt Bar**

Price per person \$2.60

- a. Vanilla Yogurt
- b. Nut Free Granola
- c. Fresh Berries

All bars require 2 extra waiters @ \$112.50 per waiter.

## **Sweets by Margie Litman**

### **Basic Desserts**

A Kiddush with a basic dessert package and a guest count of 150 or less can choose from the selections listed below:

- 2 brownies or bars
- 3 cookies
- 1 loaf cake

Margie's famous chewy fudge brownies are also included.

A Kiddush with a basic dessert package and a guest count of 151 or above can choose from the selections listed below:

- 3 brownies or bars
- 3 cookies
- 1 loaf cake

Margie's famous chewy fudge brownies are also included.

### **Brownies and Bars**

1. chocolate chip blondies
2. funfetti (sprinkle) blondies
3. butterscotch blondies
4. "kitchen sink" blondies – mixed chips
5. apricot bars
6. seven layer bars - graham cracker crust, mixed chips, shredded coconut
7. funfetti (sprinkle) rice krispie treats

### **Cookies**

1. "toll house" - the original chocolate chip
2. funfetti (sprinkle) sugar
3. old fashioned vanilla sugar
4. oatmeal raisin
5. snickerdoodles
6. chocolate chocolate chip
7. white chip chocolate cookies

### **Loaf Cakes**

1. banana with or without chocolate chips
2. chocolate chip
3. cinnamon chip
4. pumpkin spice with mini chocolate chips or raisins

## **Deluxe Desserts**

A Kiddush with a deluxe dessert package and a guest count of 150 or less can choose from the selections listed below:

- 2 brownies or bars
- 3 cookies
- 1 loaf cake

Margie's famous chewy fudge brownies are also included.

A Kiddush with a deluxe dessert package and a guest count of 151 or more can choose from the selections listed below:

- 3 brownies or bars
- 3 cookies
- 1 loaf cake

Margie's famous chewy fudge brownies are also included.

### **Brownies & Bars**

1. chocolate chip blondies
2. funfetti (sprinkle) blondies
3. butterscotch blondies
4. "kitchen sink" blondies – mixed chips
5. M&M blondies
6. apricot bars
7. raspberry bars
8. funfetti (sprinkle) rice krispie treats
9. lemon bars
10. milk chocolate toffee bars \*
11. brownies with fudge icing
12. seven layer bars - graham cracker crust, mixed chips, shredded coconut

### **Cookies**

1. "toll house" – the original chocolate chip
2. funfetti (sprinkle) sugar
3. old fashioned vanilla sugar
4. M&M sugar
5. oatmeal raisin
6. oatmeal cranberry chocolate chip
7. chocolate chocolate chip
8. snickerdoodles
9. chocolate crinkle
10. old fashioned spice
11. white chip chocolate cookies

### **Loaf Cakes & Coffee Cake**

1. cinnamon coffee cake
2. loaf cakes
  - banana with or without mini chocolate chips
  - cinnamon chip
  - chocolate chip
  - pumpkin spice with mini chocolate chips or raisins

## **Gluten Free Cookies/Bars**

If you would like to add a gluten free brownie or cookie as an additional selection there is a \$43 extra charge for a minimum order of 70 pieces, and for every 70 piece order thereafter.

1. “toll house” – the original chocolate chip
2. snickerdoodles
3. funfetti (sprinkle) sugar
4. chocolate chocolate chip cookies
5. oatmeal raisin cookies
6. chocolate chip blondies
7. fudge brownies
8. chocolate crinkle cookies
9. funfetti (sprinkle) rice krispie treats  
(These are made with a specific GF rice cereal and cannot be substituted for the regular rice krispie treats.)
10. chocolate walnut meringues \*

\* Contains Nuts

\*\* Upgrading a basic dessert package to a deluxe dessert package is an additional \$1.25/ per person.

## **Margie’s Cupcake Tower**

100 mini cupcakes - \$110.00

200 mini cupcakes - \$220.00

chocolate or vanilla with vanilla and/or chocolate icing

may request colored icings – blue, pink, etc. at no additional cost



## **PRIVATE LIFE CYCLE RECEPTIONS ON SATURDAY AFTERNOONS**

The custom of having the congregation and guests come together for kiddush after Shabbat services in honor of a family life cycle event is a valued tradition at Beth El. We also recognize the diverse needs of our congregants and that some families may wish to have a private gathering as well.

Private Shabbat luncheons may take place at Beth El beginning one hour after services are over, at approximately 1:00 pm. Bar/Bat Mitzvah families are still expected to sponsor and participate in the congregational kiddush. And, of course, your guests are welcome to participate in the congregational kiddush as well. Because it is Shabbat, photography, DJs, live music, etc., are not permitted. Any decorations at the private affair should be in keeping with the spirit and sanctity of the Sabbath. Catering options for a private Shabbat luncheon are either Beth El kitchen staff or an outside kosher caterer. Financial arrangements for such services are between the family and whoever is catering the private luncheon. If this is something you would like to consider, please contact the shul office as soon as possible to ensure that the Zahler Social Hall or other appropriate space is available for your rental. The office can provide a list of approved caterers as well.

## **KASHRUT GUIDELINES AT CONGREGATION BETH EL**

We urge Bar/Bat Mitzvah families to be consistent in their celebration by observing the dietary laws at all meals associated with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah whether in the synagogue, in the home, or in an outside establishment. These meals are seudot mitzvah—meals that have strong religious overtones—because they are intimately connected with the ceremony itself. We ask families to discuss this matter in detail with the rabbi prior to the event; he will be happy to answer questions or provide advice on this matter. Please understand that Beth El clergy and professionals may not attend those celebrations that are not supervised kosher, dairy, or vegetarian.

As a Conservative congregation, Beth El adheres to the standards of kashrut as understood by our Movement and as interpreted by the rabbi as the religious authority of the congregation. Whatever the private practices of individual members may be, we adhere publicly to these standards and require that they be observed strictly at Beth El.

The following guidelines regulate our overall kashrut requirements:

- Only approved caterers using a mashgiach are allowed to use the Beth El kitchen. Beth El members may use the kitchen when properly supervised.
- Kosher meat or meat products brought into the kitchen must come from an approved kosher establishment.
- Food that is inherently kosher, whether or not it has a hechsher, may be brought into the kitchen if the ingredients are checked and approved by the rabbi.
- No prepared or cooked items, whether dairy or meat, from individual homes may be brought into the synagogue. Prepared foods from an approved kosher caterer are, of course, acceptable.
- Baked goods prepared in individual homes may not be brought in, eaten, or served in the synagogue. Only baked goods from approved establishments or under approved labels may be eaten in the synagogue.
- Wines with kosher certification are required at all times.

Should there be any uncertainties, ambiguities, or questions relating to kashrut, please contact the rabbi for a specific ruling. Thank you for your cooperation.

## **MAZON**

Beth El is a proud partner in the work of MAZON, a Jewish response to hunger. All meals in the synagogue are tied into MAZON, which asks that the sponsor voluntarily add three percent to the cost of the meal as a contribution to help feed the hungry. Beth El recommends that all Bar/Bat Mitzvah families consider becoming partners in the work of MAZON and make a contribution of three percent of the cost of celebrations associated with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah whether they occur in the synagogue building or elsewhere.

Participation in MAZON also provides an opportunity for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to receive first-hand experience with the mitzvah of tzedakah at an important time in his or her life. Contact the rabbi for further information.

## **COMMEMORATING THE EVENT**

As a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, your child will receive gifts from the Men's Club or the Sisterhood and a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Certificate. Families will also receive a recording of the Shabbat morning service if no technical problem occurs. The recording is an mp3 file on a CD which can be played on your computer or mp3 player.

Families may wish to commemorate this important event at Beth El by making a contribution to one of our restricted funds or by dedicating a leaf on our "Tree of Life" for a \$360 donation. Contact the Beth El Office for further details.

## RECEPTION

The synagogue and its remodeled social spaces are available for evening B'nai Mitzvah receptions and parties on Saturday nights, Sunday afternoons, and Sunday evenings.

We calculate the end of Shabbat as 45 minutes after candle-lighting the previous evening. When Shabbat concludes before 7:30 pm, functions may begin only after Shabbat ends. Family members may enter the building at that time. Caterers, musicians, and similar vendors who need to set up for the party may enter the building two hours prior to candle-lighting the day before. Whenever candle-lighting the day before is prior to 6:00 pm, caterers, musicians etc. must wait until 4:00 pm to enter the building. In either case, vendor trucks and vendors should use the loading dock and side entrances to the building.

Cooking is not permitted on Shabbat, meaning that no ovens can be turned on until the end of Shabbat as defined above.

If the function falls in the months of the year where Shabbat ends after 7:30 pm, the above regulations hold except that the family and guests may enter the building one hour before Shabbat ends. Up to the end of Shabbat, food that requires no cooking can be served, and kid games that are Shabbat-appropriate and require no electronic support are permitted. No photography or music (either live or recorded) is permitted until Shabbat ends. We encourage families to have a Havdalah ceremony to mark the end of Shabbat.

Specific questions about these regulations should be raised with one of the rabbis.

Families of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah have priority in scheduling their Saturday night celebrations in the synagogue until May 1 of the calendar year preceding the event (e.g., May 1, 2017, for 2018 B'nai Mitzvah). If your Bar/Bat Mitzvah is on Saturday night, you have first priority on using the building that evening. If there is a double B'nai Mitzvah and both families request use of the building prior to May 1 of the preceding calendar year, a coin toss will decide which family will have the use of the synagogue building. After May 1 of the calendar year prior to your date, other events may be scheduled on your Saturday evening. Please call the synagogue office to schedule your celebration and obtain a list of approved caterers. A signed contract and a deposit must be received in order to reserve the date.

There are two beautiful spaces available for Bar/Bat Mitzvah receptions:

1. Bender Social Hall: This lovely, fully renovated carpeted area includes a large, built-in dance floor, and allows for seating up to 200 people. Our main kitchen is adjacent to this social hall.
2. Zahler Social Hall: This space is fully carpeted, and seats up to 100 people with no dance floor. You may choose to rent a dance floor and have it installed. The size of the dance floor will determine the impact on seating capacity. Our fully equipped, smaller kitchen is adjacent to this social hall.
3. The Rudolph Gallery is available for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, etc.

Families having a reception or any private event at Beth El are required to have a security guard. This is arranged through the office and the family will be billed.

## ISRAEL QUEST

In 1993, Beth El became the first congregation in the Washington area to serve as a sponsor in the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's Israel Quest Program. Israel Quest is a simple way for the Federation and Beth El to encourage your teen to go to Israel.

While we strongly encourage all participants to be a part of our Upper School, USY chapter, and/or in Day School, that is not a requirement of Israel Quest. The only requirement is that the Israel trip be on Federation's approved list.

Israel Quest grants are awarded on the basis of financial need. Eligibility to receive its funding is now limited to those applicants where the parent or guardian can certify that the grant is financially required and would have a significant impact on their ability and decision to send the teen on the selected trip. Teens are eligible for grants of \$750 for three-week trips, \$1600 for four- and five-week trips, and \$1,850 for six-week trips based on family need.

Beth El will also provide a grant to congregant teens participating in a teen Israel trip. These grant amounts are currently being revised.

Please contact the youth director, Adam Zeren, at [azeren@bethelmc.org](mailto:azeren@bethelmc.org), for further details.

# FAMILY MITZVAH PROJECT

## MITZVOT YOU CAN DO TO PUT GOD ON THE GUEST LIST FOR YOUR BAR/BAT MITZVAH

A Family Mitzvah Project is a fun way to engage your child and, potentially, your whole family in some of the most important values of Judaism – repairing the world (*tikkun olam*) and compassion for others (*v'ahavta l'rayecha kamocho*). Here is a list of some of the types of projects Beth El families have done in the past. We *highly* recommend that you incorporate some of these ideas into your family's Bar/Bat mitzvah experience.

### **Developing a Mitzvah Project**

For help developing your own Family Mitzvah Project, our B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, Adam Zeren, has a resource bank that will be very helpful in finding a project that calls to you. On Beth El's website, look under Spiritual Life, Life Cycle Events, and you will see a link for Mitzvah Projects. There is a step-by-step guide to developing a project, ideas for specific projects, and a list of Community Partners beyond Beth El.

### ***Gemilut Chasadim: Acts of Loving-Kindness***

- Visit or call someone who is ill, fulfilling the mitzvah of bikur cholim (visiting the sick).
- Learn games, magic, clowning, or balloon-animal-making skills to do for kids in a hospital.
- Arrange to have leftover food from your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration taken to a soup kitchen that feeds the homeless and the hungry.
- Volunteer as a family at a soup kitchen for the homeless.
- Ask guests to bring canned food to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah party for distribution to the homeless.
- At Halloween, collect food for the hungry rather than candy for the well-fed.
- Give three percent of the cost of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration to MAZON.
- Write to an elected official about an important social or political issue.
- Participate as a family in a clothing drive for the needy.

### ***Tzedakah: Sacred Giving***

- Choose a tzedakah and donate a gift of money to help people.
- Set aside some tzedakah every Friday night before Shabbat. Use a family tzedakah container. Decide as a family how the money is to be donated.
- Set aside time each week for a socially redeeming purpose.

### ***Hidur Penei Zakein: Honoring the Elderly***

- Call, write, or visit an elderly relative or friend.
- Deliver flowers to a nursing home before the start of Shabbat.

### ***Zikaron: Memory***

- Know your Hebrew name and the person for whom you were named.
- Find out if your ancestors used to have a different family name. Remember it always.
- Find out the name of the town that your family was from and learn something about the town and what it gave to the Jewish world.

### ***Shabbat: Honoring the Sabbath***

- Have as many Shabbat dinners as you can in your home. Lead the family in candle lighting, Motzi, Kiddush, and Birkat Hamazon, the blessing after the meal. Invite friends to share in your Shabbat celebration.
- Help cook a traditional Shabbat or holiday dish.
- Avoid commercial transactions on Shabbat such as engaging in business and shopping.
- Attend synagogue services as a family.
- Spend Shabbat afternoons with family or friends.

### ***Kedushat Halashon: The Sanctity of Speech***

- Be careful about what you say about other people. Discuss a time when you did not observe this Jewish value. What could you have done differently?
- “Guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking guile” is a Jewish ideal expressed in our prayers.

### ***Tza-ar Ba'alei Chayim: Non-cruelty to Animals***

- Become involved with an organization that deals with animal welfare.
- Give money to the local animal shelter.
- Adopt a dog or cat.

**FORM A**  
**BAR/BAT MITZVAH INFORMATION SHEET**

Please complete this form and return it to the synagogue office at least **three weeks** prior to the date of the ceremony so that the reservation may be confirmed and all questions clarified. A check to cover the ceremony fee is to accompany Form A unless the fee has been prepaid.

1. NAME OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH
2. DATE OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH
3. FATHER'S NAME (English)  
MOTHER'S NAME (English)  
TELEPHONE NUMBER (H) (W)  
FATHER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS  
MOTHER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS

4. NUMBER OF GUESTS EXPECTED  
(This is to include guests who are members of the congregation)  
NUMBER OF CHILDREN EXPECTED AT BABYSITTING  
AGES OF CHILDREN EXPECTED AT BABYSITTING

5. KIDDUSH

**Name of Person(s) sponsoring the kiddush**

Check appropriate information

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ One of the kiddush options – Coordinated by Sisterhood  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_ Luncheon - Private caterer \_\_\_\_\_

6. FLOWERS FOR BIMAH HAVE BEEN ORDERED FROM  
PHONE NUMBER

7. CEREMONY FEE \$360.00 INCLUDED

(Note: This does not include food or waiters)

8. BALANCE INCLUDED for membership dues, security, and religious school tuition to be current through the most recent quarter:

I hereby apply for the use of the congregation facilities, as noted above, and agree to comply with Beth El's rules and regulations. I understand that only the Sisterhood Catering Committee or an approved caterer will be permitted to use these facilities. I have already paid or herewith enclose the ceremony fee. My payment for membership dues, security, and religious school is current or I have herewith enclosed the balance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE



## FORM B

### SINGLE BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY INFORMATION SHEET

Please complete this form and return it to the main synagogue office two weeks prior to the ceremony.

DATE OF CEREMONY:

NAME OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

PARENTS' NAMES:

TORAH PORTION:

#### Honors for the Torah

There are 8 aliyot this Shabbat. Your family gets 5 aliyot, 2 of which are for the parent(s) and the child. For the other 3 aliyot, 1-2 people are traditional; we can go to a maximum of 4 people if appropriate. The remaining aliyot are reserved for the Congregation.

Please fill in the columns of the chart.

On the day of the rehearsal we will inform you of the order of the aliyot.

If you have any questions or want to discuss the honors with the officiating rabbi, please contact the rabbi *before* submitting this form. **See contact information at the end of this form.**

English Names	Relationship to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah	Hebrew Name Please use transliteration	Indicate if Kohen (K), Levi (L) or Israel (I)
		Do not complete	
		Do not complete	
		Do not complete	
	PARENTS OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH		
	BAR/BAT MITZVAH		

**Other Honors**

<b>Honor</b>	<b>English Names</b>	<b>Relationship to Bar/Bat Mitzvah</b>
<b>MAGBEAH</b> (Lifting the Torah)		
<b>GOLEL</b> (Tying the Torah)		
<b>ARK OPENING/CLOSING</b> PAGE 168		
<b>ARK OPENING/CLOSING</b> PAGE 183		
<b>SITTING WITH THE TORAH</b>		
<b>PRAYER FOR COUNTRY</b> PAGE 177		
<b>PRAYER FOR ISRAEL</b> (Preferably in Hebrew) PAGE 178		
<b>PRAYER FOR PEACE</b> PAGE 178		
<b>ASHREI</b> PAGE 181		

**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SHORT BIO FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:** We need the following information (indicated with a **XX** below)

**XX** is the son/daughter of **XX**, and brother/sister of **XX, XX**, and **XX**. **XX** attends **XX** school and his/her mitzvah project is **XX** (If available, please insert website information here.)

**Contact Information**

- Rabbi Gregory Harris: (301) 652-8569 ext. 305 gharris@bethelmc.org
- Rabbi Fabian Werbin: (301) 652-8569 ext. 318 fwerbin@bethelmc.org
- Hazzan Asa Fradkin: (301) 652-8569 ext. 317 afradkin@bethelmc.org
- Adam Zeren: (301) 652-8569 ext. 308 azeren@bethelmc.org
- Ricardo Munster: (301) 652-8569 ext. 316 rmunster@bethelmc.org

## FORM C

### DOUBLE BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY INFORMATION SHEET

Please complete this form and return it to the synagogue office two weeks prior to the ceremony.

DATE OF CEREMONY:

ENGLISH NAME OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

PARENTS' NAMES:

TORAH PORTION:

#### Honors for the Torah

- There are 10 aliyot this Shabbat. Your family gets 4 aliyot, 2 of which are for the parent(s) and the child. For the other 2 aliyot, 1-2 people are traditional; we can go to a maximum of 4 people if appropriate.
- Since this date is being shared with another family, they also receive 4 aliyot.
- The remaining aliyot are reserved for the Congregation.
- Please discuss with the rabbi which 4 aliyot you would like for your family before promising any particular one to family members or friends.
- Please fill in the columns of the chart.
- On the day of the rehearsal we will inform you of the order of the aliyot.
- If you have any questions or want to discuss the honors with the officiating rabbi, please contact the rabbi before submitting this form. **See contact information at the end of this form.**

English Names	Relationship to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah	Hebrew Name Please use transliteration	Indicate if Kohen (K), Levi (L) or Israel (I)
		Do not complete	
		Do not complete	
	PARENTS OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH		
	BAR/BAT MITZVAH		

**Other Honors**

Since the date is being shared with another family, please coordinate with them how to share these honors, before submitting this form.

1) Each family gets:

Honor	English Names	Relationship to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
ARK OPENING/CLOSING PAGES 168 OR 183		
HALF OF THE ASHREI PAGE 181		

2) The two families must split these 6 honors

Honor	English Names	Relationship to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
MAGBEAH (Torah Raiser)		
GOLEL (Torah Roller)		
SITTING WITH THE TORAH		
PRAYER FOR COUNTRY PAGE 177		
PRAYER FOR ISRAEL (Preferably in Hebrew) PAGE 178		
PRAYER FOR PEACE PAGE 178		

**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SHORT BIO FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:** We need the following information, indicated with [NAME] below.

*[NAME] is the son/daughter of [NAME], and brother/sister of [NAME]. [NAME] attends [NAME] school, and his/her mitzvah project is [NAME] (with website information, if available).*

**Contact Information**

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