

B'nei (Bar/Bat) Mitzvah at Temple Emmanuel

Introduction

The B'nei Mitzvah ceremony culminates your child's Jewish education. At Temple Emmanuel's CHAI School, we educate students in Jewish history, ethics, holidays, and Hebrew. By the time students reach the age of B'nei Mitzvah (12 or 13), they are prepared to take ownership of and pride in their Jewish identities. The B'nei Mitzvah is a celebration of your child and an important milestone in their Jewish Journey. At Temple Emmanuel, we believe learning and personal growth should be consistently joyful and meaningful. This packet is designed to make your planning process as easy and smooth as possible. Please contact Rabbi Greg if you have any questions about these materials.

The B'nei Mitzvah ceremony, like all lifecycle events, is more joyful when there is maximal participation from your family, whether or Jewish or non-Jewish. Rabbi Greg will discuss how you can honor important friends and family members who can participate in the ceremony. Opportunities like presenting the tallit, passing the Torah, readings and/or blessings in Hebrew or English, opening the ark, etc., are some ways to increase inclusion.

Alternative Names for This Ceremony

Throughout Jewish history, the term "B'nei Mitzvah" has referred to either a Bar (Son of) or Bat (Daughter of) Mitzvah (good deeds and commandments). Today, we recognize that not all 13-year-olds fully identify with the binary options of male and female. To make this ceremony reflective of your child's identity, we offer the following other titles for how we can refer to this ceremony which are gender-neutral: Brit (Covenant of) Mitzvah, B or Bet Mitzvah, B'nei Mitzvah. And if you or your child has another idea for the name of their ceremony, we'd love to hear it!

Scheduling

Approximately 9-12 months before your child's birthday, please contact Rabbi Greg to schedule an informational meeting. There, you will select a date for the B'nei Mitzvah ceremony. Your child will study weekly with Rabbi Greg and all other students with a B'nei Mitzvah that year, starting in September or October. 3-4 months before the ceremony, the student begins individual learning with Rabbi Greg, in addition to the weekly B'nei Mitzvah class, where they will prepare

the student's Torah portion and sermon. Your B'nai mitzvah ceremony should be scheduled near or after your child's 13th birthday.

- Temple Emmanuel cannot accommodate B'nei Mitzvah services during the High Holiday period.
- Our Saturday morning services are typically the first and third Saturdays of each month - the best dates for B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies.
- We will always work to accommodate family schedules and will find a way to find a date and time that works well for everyone.

Fees, Payment, and Forms

The total fee for the B'nei Mitzvah package is \$1550 for Temple members and \$2050 for non-members. A \$200 deposit is required once the date is set. The remaining amount will be due 30 days before the ceremony. This fee covers:

- Weekly B'nei Mitzvah group classes for up to one year with Rabbi Greg
- Private tutoring and family meetings with Rabbi Greg, where you will receive your Torah portion text and learn more about this important lifecycle milestone from Rabbi Greg and Temple Emmanuel volunteers.
- Rental of the Temple Emmanuel sanctuary for the morning of the B'nei Mitzvah. Different locations can be used according to the student's wishes and the public health situation.
- Use of the Social Hall for a kiddush following the ceremony, pending the public health situation.
- The joy of being with family, friends, and community at Temple Emmanuel!

The rental contract **Form** tells us which rooms of the temple you intend to use and for how long. It is due one month before the child's B'nei Mitzvah year. Use of the Social Hall for Kiddush is included. Families can opt for **an extended reception at the Temple** for an additional fee, which covers building use and custodial services for one hour before and one hour after the event.

Money should never get in the way of a person's Jewish education. If the cost of tuition is prohibitive, the Function Committee Chair will work with you to adjust it.

Worship Requirements

At Temple Emmanuel, the B'nei Mitzvah student co-leads their service as much as they are able. Each child is taught their specific Torah portion and its trop (melody). The Torah portion is determined based on the date of the ceremony, and every Torah portion is rich with insights for your child to discover and interpret. Thus, the second requirement is to prepare and deliver a

sermon based on their Torah reading. Rabbi Greg will work with your child individually to help them prepare their sermon.

Educational Requirements

Religious School

Children who are studying toward their *B'nei Mitzvah* are expected to attend religious school at Temple Emmanuel for at least three years before scheduling their *B'nei Mitzvah*. For new members who have attended religious school elsewhere, a meeting with the Rabbi will be necessary to determine when the child would be ready for their *B'nei Mitzvah*. At the Temple Emmanuel Hebrew CHAI School, children learn to read Hebrew, recite and understand prayers and are introduced to interpreting and drawing meaning from the Torah. When a child begins the *B'nei Mitzvah* process, they should know the fundamentals of Hebrew, i.e., knowing the Hebrew alphabet and reading in Hebrew phonetically. The child should also know the most common songs and prayers during services.

In an effort to make sure the student is comfortable with Shabbat services, we require that they have some experience attending Shabbat service prior to their *B'nei Mitzvah*. The *B'nei Mitzvah* student is expected to attend at least 5 Friday night and 5 Saturday morning celebrations at Temple Emmanuel or elsewhere before their *B'nei Mitzvah*. Not only will they gain a better idea of what to expect for their ceremony, they'll also be uplifted by celebrating Shabbat with community. It's also an opportunity, as they get closer to their date, to practice leading one or two prayers that they know well.

Service - the *B'nei Mitzvah* Project

"Shimon the Righteous would say: 'On three things the world stands: Torah, Work, and Acts of Lovingkindness.'" We teach your children Torah and we make them work, and we also expect them to start thinking beyond themselves as to how they can help to repair our broken world. Rabbi Greg will discuss with your child how they can contribute to the welfare of others, and we will come up with a customized service project together. Minimally, it's a 3-4 hour commitment for one day, and the student is welcome to do more or multiple projects.

Rehearsal

Set at a mutually agreeable time, Rabbi Greg holds a full walk-through of the *B'nei Mitzvah* service the week before the actual date. Ideally, the immediate family can attend this rehearsal so there aren't any surprises on the day of the *B'nei Mitzvah*.

Shabbat morning and B'nei Mitzvah services

Online/Hybrid Service Considerations

Our services are hybrid and can be recorded via Zoom if requested.

Hebrew Names, Tallit, and Kippah

At the *B'nei Mitzvah* Shabbat service, the Hebrew names of the *B'nei Mitzvah* child and the child's parents are used. If the child does not have a Hebrew name, they can discuss getting one with Rabbi Greg at least 3-6 months before the ceremony. If a child's parent does not have a Hebrew name, their English name is used.

Families often choose to purchase a *tallit* (prayer shawl) for the *B'nei Mitzvah* student. The Temple also has lots available if a family chooses not to buy one.

Prayers, Blessings, Readings, and Aliyot

The Shabbat morning (*Shacharit*) service starts at 9:30 AM and typically lasts 120 minutes. The primary parts of the service include:

- **Opening Prayers:** at which time the Tallit is presented
- **Shema and Blessings**
- **Amidah:** Standing before G-d
- **Torah Service:** includes the Torah procession, blessings before and after the Torah reading, Aliyot, D'Var Torah, Parents' Blessings, and Temple gift presentation
- **Concluding Prayers:** includes the Mourner's Kaddish, Kiddush, and HaMotzi (blessings for wine and bread).

At the Shabbat morning service, your child will be seated on the bimah, and we ask the immediate family to occupy the front rows.

- Parents and grandparents (and great-grandparents) may be called to the bimah during the Torah service to participate in the Torah passing ceremony.*
- During the Torah's reading ritual, there is the opportunity for three or seven *aliyot* (honors) to recite the blessings before and after the Torah reading. Please make arrangements for the order of *aliyot* with Rabbi Greg before or during the week of the run-through. Please provide the rabbi with the Aliyah list, including Hebrew names of the parents, siblings, or other participants given that honor.
- At the *B'nei Mitzvah* service, your child will lead some or all of the following:
 - Chant from the Torah in Hebrew
 - Chant the associated blessings for the Torah in Hebrew
 - Deliver a brief *d'var Torah* (teaching) about the Torah portion
 - Assist in leading the service (All prayers the student knows four months prior to their B'nei Mitzvah, they will lead)

***Torah Passing Ceremony:** Family members and the *B'nei Mitzvah* student can participate in the “chain of tradition,” where the rabbi symbolically passes the Torah down from one generation to the next by holding the *Sefer Torah* (Torah scroll) in front of each member of the family as they stand in front of the bimah. Great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, and the *B'nei Mitzvah* child form a line along which the Torah scroll is passed *l'dor vador* “from generation to generation.” Non-Jewish family members are welcome to be included in this brief ritual.

Honors

During the service, there are several opportunities for special family members and friends to participate. These *honors* are:

1. *Tallit presentation* (any family member or family friend)
2. *Ark Opening and/or Closing* (1 to 4 people of any age or religion)
3. Torah Aliyahs (anyone over 13, any number of people on the *bimah*; the Torah blessings are traditionally chanted in Hebrew. Rabbi Greg can send a recording of how to chant the Torah blessings, with either the traditional or Reconstructionist language.)
4. *Lifting and dressing the Torah* (2 people over the age of 13 — at least one should be strong; preferably should be people who have done this before).
5. *Temple Emmanuel and Sisterhood presentations* (a designated leader from the Temple and Sisterhood leadership).
6. *Leading Motzi at the end of the service*

For *B'nei Mitzvah* services held via Zoom, honorees may offer their presentations and blessings online and are not required to be present in person.

Honors for Non-Jewish Family Members

We encourage family members to participate in Shabbat services as an important way for the student to become a *B'nei Mitzvah* to honor those whose love has brought them to this milestone. We recognize that some of these family members may not be Jewish and that their support has been equally instrumental in guiding the bar/bat mitzvah child toward this day. Therefore, we seek to include non-Jewish parents and relatives by offering ecumenical readings, such as Psalms or poems.

Parent Speeches

The goal of the parent speech is for you to have a chance to tell your child and the people assembled what this day means to you and your family. You might talk about your child's Torah portion and how it relates to your child or your family, your child's growth during this process, your hopes for your child, positive characteristics that you've seen in your child's life so far, and your child's membership in the adult Jewish community.

Some parents give a joint speech, and others choose to speak separately. Regardless of how you split it up, parent speeches should take at most 5 minutes each.

Program Booklet

Some families distribute a program booklet at the *B'nei Mitzvah* ceremony, which gives the order of the service, lists the child's Torah portion, and may provide additional readings and lyrics to songs. It is beneficial to non-Jewish attendees. The program lists the names of those participating in the service and is also a nice remembrance for people who attend the ceremony. The program can include:

- A description of what the service is
- The structure of the service, with names called out for honors or readings.
- Lyrics to any songs not in the prayer book
- Transliterations of any prayers that are not included in the prayer book
- Translation of the Torah reading
- Hebrew of the Torah reading
- Other meaningful messages that the family wishes to make

Templates (Word files) for creating a morning or afternoon service program can be provided by the Rabbi, Function Chair, or President.

Celebration

Our social hall is available for a full catered luncheon/party space for up to 100 seated people for 4 hours (this is different from an hour-long enhanced *Kiddush*). We provide the room, tables, chairs, and a warming kitchen. Any other items are expected from the caterer. We have had lots of experience working with Larry Levine's Kosher Meats in Peabody, but we do not endorse any service provider. If no meat will be served, catering is allowed from any caterer, kosher or non-kosher. Please contact the Function Chair for more information.

LOGISTICAL MATTERS

Electronic Devices

All cell phones, iPads, tablets, and other electronic devices must be **turned off or silenced** in the sanctuary. Please see the **Photography** restrictions below.

Invitation Etiquette

Good etiquette and laying the foundation for good relations between your child and their classmates is to include each child in your child's religious school class in the *b'nei mitzvah* festivities. This includes but is not limited to, inviting each child to attend the *b'nei mitzvah* and the celebration.

Photography - Still pictures: Professional photographs may be taken before the *B'nei Mitzvah* service. The entire family may attend, with all appropriate clothing, and pictures, including the Torah and clergy, may be taken. (Torahs may only be taken out when the clergy is present.)

Families should reach out to the Rabbi in advance to coordinate specific timing. **No pictures may be taken during the service.**

Service recording: *B'nei Mitzvah* services are video recorded via Zoom, and a copy will be provided to the family if requested.

Videography: Professional video recording is permitted before and after the service.

Family Responsibilities

Tallit and Kippot Resources

Tallit and Kippot can be purchased on Harvard Street in Brookline, MA, at the Israel Bookshop (<https://www.israelbookshop.com/>) or Kolbo Fine Judaica (<https://kolbo.com>), or anywhere else the family wishes.

B'nei mitzvah Resources

How best to help your child with their preparation

First and foremost, talk to your child about your family history. Who in your family has had a Bar or Bat (or *B'nei*) Mitzvah? Who has not and why? Share with them what this process of learning means to you as a family and why it is important to you that your child embarks on this sacred rite of passage. Knowing what it means to you will help your child understand better what the process can mean to them.

Help your child set aside 5 minutes every day to study

This is perhaps the most important key to the success of our program. Each week your child will be assigned a small bit of homework. We build on the progress each week. *B'nei Mitzvah* practice is much like studying a foreign language, in that progress is aided by a little work each day, rather than two hours once or twice a week. The goal is to never overwhelm your child with too much work and to have them experience the wonderful feeling of mastery all along the way. We tell students that they need to practice 5 minutes every day, but they do not have to study the day they have tutoring, and they can also take Shabbat off. Helping your child get in the habit of sitting down and studying at the same time each day will ensure that they are well prepared, confident, and feeling great when they stand on the bimah to lead the day of their *B'nei Mitzvah*.

Please let us know upfront about any special learning needs or any other circumstances that may affect your child's studying. The beauty of being part of Temple Emmanuel is that, as a small community, we can personalize the *B'nei Mitzvah* experience according to your child's needs.

Celebration Planning Tips

Here are some suggestions on how to simplify your child's *B'nei Mitzvah* celebration and reduce expenses.

Focus on the child, the ritual, and the meaning of the day. This is what your child (and your guests) will remember years from now. It's okay to forego some theme that has nothing to do with the meaning of the day. Emphasize the uniqueness of your child and the love your family has for the child to create a rich experience for everyone attending. Make sure your guests know how meaningful it is to your family that they attend.

Talk with your child. You may find that your child doesn't want a blow-out but prefers something more casual and low-key. Also, your child is old enough to understand there may be financial constraints.

Make a budget. Start with a total amount you feel comfortable spending. Create a spreadsheet of projected expenses based on the number of guests. Divide your expenses into categories like invitations, flowers, food, beverages, entertainment, photo/video, gifts, rentals, etc. Without a detailed budget, costs can soon be out of control. As you go through the process of planning, eliminate extras that are unimportant to you. There is no requirement for tropical floral arrangements or champagne toasts when something far simpler will suffice. Remember – it's not a wedding!

Use digital invitations, or make your own. There are many online services to design invitations and send them either digitally or through the mail. Try Evite, Paperless Post, or Smilebox. You can also use scrapbooking supplies to make unique invitations. Make this a craft project with your child – it is total fun.

Trim your guest list and stay on top of your RSVPs. If budget is an issue, remember each person represented can represent a cost of \$50-\$150 at a catered reception. Trim your guest list if you expect to exceed your budget if everyone attends. People tend to forget that every time they add a table of 6-10 guests, they also add table linens, a centerpiece, food, extra rentals, labor and so on. When the final bill arrives, you'll experience "sticker shock" and disbelief that the initial budget was exceeded.

Preparing the Food. This is not necessarily a practical idea, but if you love to cook and are well organized, you can certainly cut costs by preparing the food yourself with family and friends. Maybe you only prepare some of the food, maybe a special cake, and order the rest. The number of guests will determine if this is possible. Go online and look at menus to get ideas. Don't prepare overly complicated food.

Extended Kiddush or Buffet Costs. Don't order more food than you need. If you are serving a buffet, always order food for fewer guests than are actually attending. Otherwise, there will probably be a lot of food left over. At the last minute, there will always be guests who can't attend. Also, people don't eat as much as you think they will. Not every guest will eat each buffet item, especially expensive items such as fish. Order food for 15% fewer guests than the number of attendees. You will still have food left over, but you will have spent less. Food platters for 20 can really serve 25-30.

Cut catering costs. Do not hire a catering company at the last hour. Plan ahead and hire early. Keep the menu simple with fewer different types of food. Vegetarian options tend to be less expensive than ones with meat and fish. Typically, a plated lunch or dinner is less expensive than a buffet because there are fewer options and waste.

The venue determines the cost. Shop around to compare costs between hotel functions, restaurants, and catered events. You would be surprised to know that your family's favorite restaurant may be the least expensive option. There are many price points.

Beware of hidden costs. Ask your vendors if all prices are inclusive. The line “plus labor, rentals, sales tax” etc., can quickly push your budget over the limit. Make sure you know how many waitstaff your caterer is providing and what their hourly rate is. Check the gratuity rate that will be charged for the party. Gratuity should be based on food costs only, exclusive of MA food tax (6.25%).

Use what the venue has available. Get a list from your venue of what they have on hand; tables, chairs, linens and colors, staging, lighting, sound equipment and more. (See the *Event Planning Handbook* for Temple resources.) Using what is available could cut your budget dramatically. Remember to consider all of these things when making your final location choice.

Host a luncheon instead of a dinner. It’s usually less expensive. There are usually more facilities available at lunch time (and your bar bill will be considerably less). Alternately, forgo one really huge celebration and have two little ones -- a casual 2-hour oneg luncheon at the Temple and then a kids-only party in the **Entertaining out-of-town guests.** Compare prices at local hotels – if you reserve a block of rooms, the rooms are usually priced at a lower rate. (Usually guests pay for their own rooms.) If you are having a dinner for out-of-towners, have it at a Chinese or Italian restaurant that serves family-style platters -- this cuts way down on the cost of individual meals. A casual brunch or barbecue (weather permitting) at home is an easy, inexpensive way to entertain out-of-town guests. Have it the next day rather than the day before. If you love to cook, have a dinner at home, and hire teenagers to help serve and do cleanup.

Feed the kids something different that costs less than the adult menu. Kids are active, rarely sit, and are satisfied with less fanfare than the adults. They will also be finished with eating much faster than the adults. If your child’s favorite meal is fettuccine Alfredo or spaghetti and meatballs, pick that as the kid’s meal. With a Caesar salad and garlic bread, it’s a full meal for the kids. Pasta is usually not an expensive menu option.

Alcoholic beverages are not necessary. You can always serve sparkling cider rather than wine. If you decide to purchase wine, beer, etc., you can buy the alcohol yourself. If alcohol is purchased by your caterer, it will be more expensive. Very good wine can be bought for less than \$15.00 per bottle. Many liquor stores give a discount if wine is bought by the case. See if your liquor store will allow you to return unopened bottles (this is very common).

Close the bar during dinner. Some hosts choose to close the bar during dinner and pass wine instead. The bar can remain closed or, if you choose, reopened the bar after the candle lighting/memory video and/or speeches. For a luncheon, you could serve wine, beer, and a novelty non-alcoholic drink. For a dinner, you could add one specialty cocktail, rather than a full bar. It is better to have limited alcohol than have a guest pay for his drinks.

Party décor – start with your child’s favorite color and go from there. A specialty theme will cost you extra money. Color can especially set the mood. Make the party’s focus be on your child by making a picture board with pictures of your child at all ages. Or place a favorite or humorous framed photo (clear plexi-glass is inexpensive) of your child on each table. It could generate a lot of conversation.

Create centerpieces that double as favors. If you want favors for the children’s table, use candy bought in bulk. Fill baskets with candy bars or small clear bags of candy, tied with pretty ribbon. Or fill large martini glasses with jelly beans or M&Ms for a cute children’s table

Centerpieces don’t have to cost a lot. Centerpieces are not a necessity. But if you choose to have them, you can buy flowers at a local farm stand or discount warehouse and glass vases online or at a crafts center. Or use potted plants. Or maybe you have floral centerpieces only on the adults’ tables. Votives are lovely for an evening party and are very reasonably priced (no candles in our Temple). Centerpieces can be meaningful: provide each table with a basket or decorative box and ask each family or friend to bring a children’s book, crayons, markers, or a small stuffed animal that can be donated to a children’s charity. Or ask them to bring canned goods for donation to a food bank.

Share Flowers for the Sanctuary. There is a floral stand in front of the bimah. You are welcome but not required to provide flowers for the day of your celebration. We have nice (fake) flowers there year-round. Have the flowers delivered Friday before 7pm. The flowers will still be very fresh for the Shabbat morning service. Arrange to have each family take their flowers at the end of the day.

Professional photographers/videographers are not necessary. Use one or more favorite uncles, aunts, cousins or family friends to take pictures during the party or before the service. You can set up a video camera for the service at the back of the Temple. If you use a professional photographer, interview and hire a photographer who will give you digital files of your photos. You can make the album yourself online. It's a very easy process once you learn how. Making the album yourself costs about one-half to one-third of the traditional proofs-and-album route.

DJs serve more than one purpose. Music and games can be an important aspect of the child's party, and a DJ helps entertain your child and his/her friends while the adults enjoy each other. But there is a wide range of prices and activities. Try to use a DJ that is recommended by someone you know, and definitely compare prices. DJs will try to sell you expensive prizes/favors, but prizes and favors are not really necessary.

Older teenagers are a great resource. Older siblings and/or their friends can be hired at reasonable rates to do all sorts of tasks, e.g. serving and cleanup at a Friday night dinner at home, entertaining the children at the party, and/or running errands. In lieu of a DJ, an older teenager may agree to create a playlist of your child's favorite music and play it through speakers at the party.

Planning Timetable

Use this timetable as a to-do list to help you guide you on your *B'nei Mitzvah* journey.

Early Activities (9 - 24 months before)

- **Reserve a date for the service.** Work with Rabbi Greg to secure a date. The best options are the first and third Saturdays of any month. **Submit a deposit to reserve your date.**

12 months before

- **Attend Mitzvah Makers** – This is a mandatory informational meeting with the Rabbi for all signed up for their B'nei Mitzvahs and their parents.
- **Set up a payment plan** for the remaining balance of the B'nei Mitzvah Package fee. Full payment is due 30 days before your child's service date.
- **Prepare the guest list and establish a budget for the party.** Review the **Rental Form** to learn about room capacities, kitchen use, and rules for using Temple space. The Function Committee Chair has rental forms available.
- **Choose a party venue.** If you are not having your party at the Temple, your venue will require a deposit to reserve your date and time. Otherwise, if you are having your party at the Temple, let us know and you can choose a caterer.
- **Reserve entertainment for the party,** such as a band, DJ, or other activity for teens and adults.

9 months before

- **Begin B'nei Mitzvah class with Rabbi Greg.**

3 - 6 months before

- **Arrange hotel accommodations for out-of-town guests**, if applicable:
 - Reserve block of rooms or just choose a hotel you like.
 - Contact your out-of-town guests with hotel choice and any discount associated with your block of rooms.
- **Enlist a photographer** and/or videographer (professional or family member).
- **Order or create invitations**. Invitations should include:
 - Information on how to RSVP (RSVP date is typically two weeks before the event).
 - Information on how to join online, if you are having a Zoom or hybrid service.
 - Directions to the Temple and party venue.
 - Hotel information, if applicable (check-in time for out-of-town guests)

1 month before

- **Discuss Zoom and streaming options** with Rabbi Greg.
- **Get Hebrew names for anyone with an Aliyah during the Torah Service** and submit them to Rabbi Greg.
- **Set up a family meeting with Rabbi Greg for a run-through the week prior to the event.**
- **Submit Building Use Form to the Function Chair** if you are holding your reception at the Temple.
- **Create the program booklet for the service (optional)**. Examples of programs from previous services are archived in the Temple Library. The Rabbi can review your program for accuracy.
- **Decide on flowers (optional)** for the Temple sanctuary. You can share the cost with another family who may be having their service the same day.
- **Provide picture/video policies** to photographer/videographer.
- **Contact the Temple office** if you are interested in sponsoring the Oneg the Friday night before the service.
- **Write parent speech(es)** and type it up double-spaced in large print.
- **Make final payment of the B'nei Mitzvah Package Fee and all building rental fees.**

10 days before the event

- **Provide final information and permits** to the Function Chair and Rabbi Greg:
 - **Send Rabbi Greg the Hebrew names for all aliyot**. You can select between 3 or 7 different people or groups for aliyot. You may include English names if there is no Hebrew name available.
 - Set-up diagrams/information for sanctuary and/or oneg rooms if anything other than traditional seating is required or if the Temple is your party venue
 - Flower delivery information – name of florist (or yourself) and time of arrival
 - Video and/or photographer information – name and time of arrival.
- ***Purchase Kiddush Tableware - paper plates, napkins, tablecloths, plastic utensils, and plastic cups for Kiddush (not required for Havdalah service).***

1-7 days before the event

- **Participate in a final run-through of the service** with the Rabbi. Everyone in the immediate family is invited to join. This run-through lasts 30-60 minutes. There should be no surprises for anyone day-of!
- **Notify your guests of parking details**. Parking is available adjacent to the synagogue on Chestnut Street and Park Avenue. The circle in front of the entrance is reserved for Handicapped Parking.
- **Buy Challah and any fresh food for Kiddush/Motzi**

- **Purchase Friday night Oneg refreshments (optional)** - If sponsoring the Friday night Oneg, plan what to bring and pick up anything you can before that Friday. Bring the food to the Temple on Friday any time before the service.
- **Touch base with your party venue or caterer** on last-minute details.
- **Provide the full Aliyah and Honors list to the Rabbi**

B'nei Mitzvah Day

- Bring printed materials for the service:
 - Program booklets (optional)
 - Torah portion, haftarah portion, d'var Torah
 - Parent speeches
 - Extra prayers, poems, songs, etc. (optional)

Bring Special Family Judaica for service: (can also use Temple's)**

- Tallit and kippot (optional)**
- Kiddush cup and Challah Cover**

Bring Food for Kiddush:

- Challah and other refreshments. (The Temple will provide wine and grape juice.)
- *Tableware (including small cups) and tablecloths for 2 rectangular (6-foot) tables*

Relax and enjoy this special experience with your family and friends!

Websites

Behrman House: www.behrmanhouse.com/family/ This site provides online Hebrew resources.

My Jewish Learning: www.MyJewishLearning.com

This website is designed to be a resource for adult audiences of diverse backgrounds and learning objectives.

GLOSSARY

Aliyah: literally “going up;” the blessings before and after the Torah readings; it is an honor to be invited to recite these blessings

B'nei mitzvah: translated as “children of the commandments.” It’s when a person gains the ability to decipher right from wrong and to choose. Figuratively, it means the age of responsibility

Bimah: the pulpit or raised area at the front of the sanctuary/chapel

Hebrew name: a Hebrew name is used for ritual purposes. It is composed of your Hebrew name and the Hebrew name of both your parents. The word “*ben*” or “*bat*” is inserted to mean “son of” or “daughter of,” and the letter *vav* is used to mean “and,” e.g. *Yoseif Tzvi ben Mordechai v'Esther; Sara Rivka bat Hannah v'Shalom*

Kippah: *yarmulke* or head covering

Tallit: a Jewish prayer shawl once only worn by men and boys from the age of bar mitzvah. Today, girls and women wear them also. A tallit must have tzitzit on the corners.

Torah: also known as the Five Books of Moses. The Torah is the first section of the Hebrew Bible.