

## Overview for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a snapshot of the learning that a Jewish young adult has acquired. It is also a time to link the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to family and community. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is not a mitzvah - it is not "required". However, the community recognition of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is valuable inasmuch as we honor the young adult and welcome him/her into our minyanim.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah must acquire knowledge and skills in tefillah, text, and mitzvot. There are, as well, logistical issues for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah event. The following chart may help to put the process in perspective. (Items are grouped by type, not chronological order).

### 0-Things to Identify

- Birthdate
- Date of event
- Hebrew names (bar/bat mitzvah, parents, olim, honorees)

### 1-Specific learning for the event

- Attending trope/Torah class: chanting, understanding service and Chumash
- Attending tutoring sessions
- Meeting with Rabbi: parasha, mitzvot, parents' responsibilities
- Meeting with Hazzan: mitzvot, service leadership

### 2-Discussion and Writing

- Family discussion regarding the event
- Family discussion regarding mitzvot
- Writing d'var Torah
- Writing invitations
- Writing thank yous
- Parents' ethical charge

### 3-Practice

- Leading prayer
- Torah
- Haftarah
- Blessings
- Delivering speech
- Laying tefillin
- Mitzvah project

#### 4-Things to buy

- Tallit
- Tefillin
- Clothes for the event
- Useful books/resources

#### 5-Logistical Decisions and arrangements

- Type of event (T2K, traditional)
- Location
- Kiddush
- Celebration
- Reservations and ordering
- Invitations and follow-up
- Honors: choosing and inviting

#### 6-The week of the event

- Attending Thursday minyan/receive aliyah
- Rehearsal
- Friday night service
- Shabbat Shacharit, Musaf
- Kiddush
- Shabbat Mincha/Maariv

#### 7-Post Bar/Bat Mitzvah

- Scheduling to read Torah
- Leading services
- Thank yous
- Recording the date

### **Some Considerations**

1. Planning for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah event must be done in conjunction with the Ritual Office. This includes virtually everything involved with the services, such as the musicians and the choice of honorees.
2. Tutors must be arranged through the Hazzan.
3. Consider carefully the style of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service you desire. Discuss the choices with the Rabbis. There are significant differences in the Tefillah 2000 service and the traditional service, and those differences will impact the learning as well as the logistical planning.
4. The liturgical decisions as well as the decisions regarding service leadership (gabbaim, board representation, clergy) are made by the Ritual Office. However, specific requests should be discussed with the clergy.

5. There are numerous options which should be considered for the service, including:
  - a. selecting Torah readers
  - b. identifying 4 speaking aliyot (not counting the maftir for Bar or Bat Mitzvah)(3 are reserved for congregational needs)
  - c. identifying who will raise and wrap the Torah
  - d. identifying who will read the prayers for country, Israel, peace
  - e. identifying two sets of Ark openers
  - f. choosing whether you would like a tallit ceremony
  - g. choosing whether you will give an ethical charge
  - h. choosing whether you would like candy tossing
  - i. choosing whether you would like Torah passing ceremony