



THS B'nai Mitzvah Quick Resource

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Whom to Contact:
THS Main Number: 732-356-8777
These contacts are current as of September 2022

Questions Regarding	Please contact:
Mitzvah Projects <i>D'var Torah</i> Parent(s)' Blessing Students with Special Needs Honors Final Rehearsal	Rabbi Musnitsky Ext. 105 rabbimusnitsky@templeharshalom.org
Lessons Tutoring Torah Blessings	Cantor Benrey ext. 104 cantorbenrey@templeharshalom.org
Financial Matters	Josh Greenbaum, Executive Director Ext 142 joshg@templeharshalom.org
<i>B'nai Mitzvah</i> Lesson Appointments Facility Rentals Photography/Video in Sanctuary <i>Oneg/Kiddush</i> <i>Bimah</i> Basket Order or other <i>Bimah</i> Décor Tree of Life leaf	Karen Anolick, Executive to the Clergy ext. 100 karena@templeharshalom.org
Religious School/ <i>Chai School</i>	Lynn Anne Cutler, Director of Congregational Learning ext. 106 lynnannec@templeharshalom.org or Stephanie Canning, Education Administrator stephaniec@templeharshalom.org Amy Greenbaum, Interim Education Administrator amyg@templeharshalom.org

Expectations of Students:

B'nai Mitzvah are expected to chant four *Aliyot* from the *Torah* (typically 12-15 verses) and to chant 3-5 verses of *Haftarah*.

The prayers the *B'nai Mitzvah* will lead at the Friday *Ma'ariv* (Evening) Service are:

- **Candle Blessing**
- ***Shema***
- ***V'ahavta***
- **Kiddush**

The list of prayers the *B'nai Mitzvah* will lead at their Saturday *Shacharit* (Morning) or *Mincha* (Afternoon) Service are included on a separate sheet containing the order of Service, with the prayers they are leading designated in **Bold**. Be sure to look to the "Notes" column for specific commentary as well.

Tachlis (Yiddish word for important information):

- In lessons and at home using Cantor Benrey's recordings, students will learn and/or review the Blessings Before and After the Chanting of *Torah* and *Haftarah*. The *B'nai Mitzvah*'s recordings can be located in a consecutive text thread so as to be able to practice both with and without internet access. It is important that they consistently sing along with recordings, not just listen, in order to create muscle memory.
- The prayers, blessings, and trope recordings are also accessible to anyone on the Temple website (<https://www.templeharshalom.org/learning/the-bnai-mitzvah-experience/>). There is a link titled "Prayer & Music Downloads" that will lead you to the recordings in Cantor's Dropbox. The trope and blessing recordings are available in several keys to ensure singing that is in a range that is comfortable.
- **NOTE:** The students' homework assignment will **ALWAYS** be written on the assignments page of their *Parashat Hashavua* Booklet. Students should look there at the start of each study session.
- Students are to log the number of minutes studied each day consistently so that Cantor might help assist them in maximizing their study time and making their studying both effective and efficient.
- Students should aim to study around **5 days a week for about 20-25 minutes/session** or **4 days a week for about 25-30 minutes/session**, accomplishing whatever goal they have set for themselves that day. As the students get closer to their date, their study

time will increase slightly because there is more material to review. Of course, students are always encouraged to continue learning new material beyond what was assigned.

- Repetition, isolation of problem spots, goal-based studying, and focus are key to ensure productive studying.
- It is advisable for students to pick a consistent time that they can study each day and then to set a calendar event on their phones for studying that repeats daily with two alerts in order to ensure they see the notification. Personal accountability and self-regulation are a huge skill learned through the *B'nai Mitzvah* process.

Order of materials to be learned (all cumulative and reviewed each week in lessons):

1. ***Torah Blessings*** (1-2 weeks)
2. ***Haftarah Blessings*** (4 weeks)
3. ***Torah Cantillation/ Trope*** (If learning, up to 5 weeks)
V'ahavta (learned alongside *Torah* cantillation)
4. ***First Aliyah*** (2-3 weeks)
5. ***Second Aliyah*** (2-3 weeks)
First *Aliyah* chanted on *Torah* side without vowels or trope
6. ***Third Aliyah*** (2-3 weeks)
First two *Aliyot* chanted on *Torah* side without vowels or trope
7. ***Fourth Aliyah*** (2-3 weeks)
First three *Aliyot* chanted on *Torah* side without vowels or trope
8. ***Haftarah* cantillation** (at Cantor's discretion – up to 4 weeks)
Entire *Torah* Portion chanted on *Torah* side without vowels or trope
9. ***Haftarah*** (4 weeks)

Students ideally should have completed learning any new *Torah* and/or *Haftarah* one month prior to the date of their *B'nai Mitzvah*. The final few weeks leading up to their ceremony should be reserved for fine-tuning and review.

Kabbalat Shabbat Service (Friday Night Service)

Our Friday *Kabbalat Shabbat* Service starts at 7:00 PM, with the exception if there is special programming taking place on the *Shabbat* of your child's *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Please check our website calendar to confirm the Service time. Each *B'nai Mitzvah* family should plan to arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the Service.

Role of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* – Candle Blessing and *Kiddush*:

The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will be seated with his/her family at the beginning of the Service. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* family will be invited to join the Rabbi and Cantor on the *bimah* for the blessing and lighting of the *Shabbat* candles. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will chant the *Kiddush*. Afterwards, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will sit with his/her family in the Congregation. During the Service, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will join Rabbi and Cantor to read selected prayers.

Blessings can be found on our website (www.templeharshalom.org). Click on the "Get Involved" tab and then look for the Resources tab.

***Oneg Shabbat*:**

The *Oneg Shabbat* celebrates *Shabbat* with refreshments at the conclusion of the Friday night Service and the entire Congregation is invited. The parent(s) or family of each *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* sponsor the *Oneg Shabbat*. If a special event or other lifecycle even occurs on the same evening, there may be co-sponsors for the *Oneg Shabbat*.

The Temple will arrange for the *Oneg Shabbat* refreshments, and the maintenance sets up and cleans up afterwards. The Executive to the Clergy will contact you in advance of your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* to get an idea of how many family members and friends will be attending the Friday night Service. This will allow for the Temple staff to plan appropriately.

Saturday *Shabbat* Services

Role of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*:

The Saturday *Shabbat* Morning Service starts at 10:30 AM and the *Mincha* (Afternoon) Service begins at 5:00 PM. Each Service lasts approximately an hour and a half. We recommend that your invitation list the Service as starting 15 minutes earlier than the Service times (10:15 AM for a Morning Service and 4:45 PM for the Afternoon Service).

There are three area of participation for a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at a *Shabbat* Morning or a *Mincha* Service: to be a *Shaliach Tzibur* (leader of worship); to chant from the *Torah* and the *Haftarah*; and to offer a *D'var Torah* (a teaching on the week's *Torah* portion).

Sanctuary Etiquette and Dress Code

Sanctuary Etiquette:

It is a good idea to let guests know in advance the length of the service and the appropriate decorum. At this time (Fall 2022), following the Temple's COVID precautions, masks are optional when entering the Temple.

When you and your guests enter the Temple and Sanctuary, you may be welcomed with one of our traditional *Sabbath* greetings, either *Shabbat Shalom*, which means "a peaceful *Sabbath*," or Good *Shabbos*, which means "a good *Sabbath*." It is appropriate to respond with either of these phrases. As our Sanctuary is a sacred place for prayer, we appreciate you and your guests following these etiquette guidelines:

- All mobile devices should be turned off or placed on do not disturb or silenced
- Please do not eat, drink, or chew gum in the Sanctuary
- There is no photography permitted during the Service, including by mobile devices
- We ask that you avoid entering and exiting the Sanctuary while the *Torah* is being read or when the Ark is open
- The wearing of a *kippah* (head covering) and *tallit* (prayer shawl) is optional for both men and women
- Hearing devices to enhance the worship experience are available. A Temple Har Shalom staff member can provide them
- We welcome children of all ages into our Sanctuary. Please take this special time to guide your children in proper behavior and respect during your worship experience. To assist you in this endeavor, Jewish children's books are available outside the Sanctuary in a special bookcase.

Dress Code:

It is the responsibility of the family to advise those attending that attire consistent with the dignity of a religious worship service be worn, The Jewish value of *tzniut*, modesty and restraint in dress and behavior, is one that helps us focus on the sacred dimension of Shabbat and of a very special day in the life of a young person, his/her family and our community. With this in mind we have the following guidelines for appropriate dress by adults, teens, and all others:

- **Women and girls** may wear a dress of modest length. We require shoulders to be covered and therefore strapless and "spaghetti" strap dresses are not appropriate unless shoulders are covered by a sweater or jacket. Miniskirts are unacceptable.
- **For a *Bat Mitzvah***, the dress or skirt must not be shorter than finger-tip length. Dresses should be no longer than tea length. Clothing must not be tight, revealing, or suggestive. Backless, halter, strapless and "spaghetti" strap dresses are not appropriate unless shoulders are covered by a sweater or jacket. **A *Tallit* may not serve as a shawl.**
- **Men and boys** may wear a suit or jacket with a collared shirt and ties, or similar attire. Those called to the bimah should wear a suit or sport jacket.
- **For everyone**, casual attire such as jeans, tee shirts, shorts, baseball caps are not appropriate.

Mitzvah Project:

Many of us think of *Mitzvot* (plural of *Mitzvah*) as good deeds, and indeed, *Mitzvot* are good deeds, but they are more than this, too. A *Mitzvah* is an action commanded by God. According to Jewish tradition, there are 613 *Mitzvot* found in the *Torah*.

The Rabbis of the *Talmud* taught that the world stands upon three broad categories of *Mitzvot*: *Torah* (study), *Avodah* (worship), and *G'milut Chasadim* (loving deeds). As our students prepare to become a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and to take adult roles in the Jewish community, they engage in many *Mitzvot* related to *Torah* and *Avodah*.

For this reason, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* experience at THS requires students to fulfill the *Mitzvot* of *Tzedakah* and *G'milut Chasadim*, making charitable donations and undertaking charitable activities with participation in a physical project. We want our students to select a *Mitzvah* Project that is something that they enjoy and speaks to their interests. We believe that if they find volunteer opportunities that interest them, this increases the likelihood that they will continue volunteering, perhaps well beyond the time that they become a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

Mitzvah Project Guidelines:

- May begin up to 18 months prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* but must begin at least 12 months in advance.
- Should be completed by the time of the Service, but, if necessary, it can be completed within 3 to 4 months after the Service.
- Something hands-on. A form of “direct-service.”
- An opportunity to interact with people and perhaps those who will be impacted by your help.
- An opportunity to create greater awareness and education about a cause.
- Participation in an individual or group of *Tzedakah* project(s) of a least 4 hours of your time.
- Either completed by yourself OR done with a friend, while equally sharing the work.

Please contact the Rabbi, Cantor, or Director of Congregational Education for help in selecting a rewarding *Mitzvah* Project. All projects must be approved by the Rabbi.

Sharing Your Completed *Mitzvah* Project:

You will be asked to share your *Mitzvah* Project experience at your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, as well as in writing for future THS *B'nai Mitzvah* students. If applicable, you should include a brochure, and/or publication of the organization, an explanation of why you chose the organization, pictures of your project, and the result of your efforts and/or donations you may have made. In your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah D'var Torah* (speech), tell us about why this is an important organization and how you felt about your participation in this project. You can even make a poster, and have it displayed at the entrance of the Sanctuary before your Service.

If you have further questions, please contact Rabbi Musnitsky at rabbimusnitsky@templeharshalom.org.

Mitzvah Project Suggestions:

Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger: <https://mazon.org/>

Yad Vashem -The World Holocaust Remembrance Center: <https://www.yadvashem.org/>

Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest: <https://www.jfedgmw.org/>

Jewish National Fund: <https://www.jnf.org/>

A Few Additional Items of Importance:

The purpose behind this quick resource package is to help answer many of your questions. You should always feel free to reach out to us with any and all questions at the numbers listed on the “Whom to Contact” page.

- The *Bimah* is usually decorated on Friday evening and Saturday with baskets that you can order by talking with Executive to the Clergy, Karen Anolick. There are four philanthropies that are supported by the purchase of the Bimah Baskets: Knead to Feed; Friends of the Israeli Defense Force; Jewish Family Service of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren; The Blue Card Fund.
- Still photography is permitted in the Sanctuary prior to the start of your Service. Photographers may arrive at 9:30 AM for a Morning Service and at 4:00 PM for a *Mincha* Service. If you want photographs taken at an alternate time and date, please talk with Executive to the Clergy, Karen Anolick.
- Extremely important note about your pre-Service photographs: There will be a member of the Temple staff present to remove the Torah from the Ark for your photographs. You can let the staff person know when you are ready for those pictures.
- Please do not move anything on the *bimah* (including microphones) during the photographs. This may delay the start of the Service if Rabbi or Cantor need to reposition the microphones.
- Videography is permitted during the Service. Our Temple staff will let the videographer know where they can stand.
- You can bring your *kippot* and/or programs with you to your rehearsal. The Temple staff will make sure that they are set up for you on Saturday.
- You can rent the Temple space for a *Shabbat* Dinner or a *Kiddush* Luncheon by contacting Executive to the Clergy, Karen Anolick. You should notify Karen at least six months in advance.
- The Temple does have a food policy for events and celebrations. All event menus must be Kosher, Dairy-only, Vegetarian or Kosher-style.
- If you are renting the facility, Maintenance Manager, Alex Hermes, will be the main contact with your caterer and any other vendors to discuss room layout and set-up as well as delivery and pick-up of supplies.