



CHOICES

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	Page 1
Introduction by Rabbi Rachlis	Page 2
Timeline	Page 5
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Requirements	Page 7
Miscellaneous	Page 8
The Friday Evening Shabbat Service	Page 9
The Saturday Morning Shabbat Service	Page 10
Duties of Service Participants	Page 16
The Booklet	Page 17
Tips for Putting the Booklet Together	Page 19
Cantor Braier's Tutoring Program	Page 21
Meetings with the Rabbi	Page 22
D'var Torah and Parents' Speeches	Page 23
The Mitzvah Project	Page 24
Photography	Page 27
The Friday Night Oneg Shabbat and Saturday Kiddush	Page 28
Decorating the Bimah	Page 29
Frequently Asked Questions	Page 30
University Synagogue Library Resources	Page 32
Glossary	Page 33
The Service	Page 35
Forms	Page 36
Tzedakah Opportunities (Revised 02/2010)	Page 44

PREFACE

Helen Keller once said, “Life is a glorious adventure or it is nothing at all.” The same could probably be said of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. However, there are times when we get so caught up in the minutiae of the proceedings that we lose sight of the wondrous substance of the occasion. This Handbook is an attempt to remove, or at least lessen, the distractions of worrying about the details so that you are free to appreciate the glorious adventure upon which your whole family is about to embark.

We have tried to spell out, in as uncomplicated a form as possible, the steps involved in becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We have attempted to anticipate your concerns and address common questions that have been brought to our attention. It is our hope that, with some of the mystery removed, you will be able to relax and truly enjoy your journey.

This Handbook was originally written by Rabbi Rachlis and then was updated by a committee of dedicated volunteers who have devoted countless hours to this task.

INTRODUCTION

“In the Spirit of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah”

Dear Haverim,

No day is more sacred, special, anxious and uplifting to a Jewish child than the Shabbat of his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Years of Hebrew schooling, months of preparation with a private tutor and then meetings with a Rabbi propel adolescents into the public arena in a way that gives meaning to “today I am an adult Jew.” At University Synagogue, we take our B’nai Mitzvah (plural of Bar/Bat Mitzvah) very seriously. The candidate and his/her family choose readings, songs, and innovations in order to create a unique service, one that is meaningful to the whole family and one that heightens everyone’s sense of Jewishness and spirituality.

Sometimes B’nai Mitzvah families don’t recognize the degree of their Jewish transformation until after the event and regret that they didn’t invest more time in their child’s simcha. (Liturgy tapes of the basic prayers are available from the University Synagogue office. Also, consider learning or improving your Hebrew the year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.) In addition, parents are often sorry that they didn’t plan an affair in consonance with the spirit of the day – in the spirit of Shabbat, kashrut, and spiritual simplicity.

At University Synagogue – through our services, adult classes and religious school – we try so hard to convey the importance of Jewish tradition, not as an end in and of itself, but as a path towards articulating values and sharing in the uniqueness of the Jewish people. We speak of transparent rituals – deeds that point beyond themselves to ethical action and human sensitivity. We emphasize tzedakah – living justly and giving generously – as an act that is central to Jewish consciousness. In that spirit, please consider the following values when planning a Bar/Bat Mitzvah:

1. The day is Shabbat – a day of rest, reflection and renewal. To leave services and drive far away kills much of the spirit created at the morning service. Our ancestors knew better – simplicity is elevating. Consider a luncheon at the Synagogue. It’s not that we Reconstructionists prohibit Shabbat riding, rather we emphasize the themes of rest and renewal on Shabbat. Think “simplicity and proximity.”

2. A Seudah – In Jewish tradition, the celebration that follows a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not a party, but a seudah – a religious feast. Therefore, it should be joyous, memorable and Jewish, as well. Kippot at the table, a “Motzi/Motzia” blessing over the challah and some Jewish music add so much. That is not to say that other forms of music are inappropriate; rather our goal should be to continue the Jewish “tam” (flavor) of the service through the rest of the celebration. If you are having a Saturday evening meal, consider beginning the meal with havdalah and motzi/motzia – those five minutes will make your celebration into a seudah.

3. Kashrut/Dairy – Reconstructionism emphasizes kashrut or dairy (which, of course, includes vegetarian and most “non-shellfish” fish) at all Jewish functions for a sense of K’lal Yisrael (Jewish peoplehood). Having a kosher or dairy meal also helps to recapture a sense of the holiness that our ancestors felt in their distinctive dietary mitzvot. As religious humanists, if we care so much about the way that animals are slaughtered, how much more so will we be concerned about the way that people live and die! Kashrut sensitizes us to life and its meaning. I would go a step further: a dairy, fish or vegetarian meal is even more life-enhancing than a kosher meat function. Our Talmudic sages spoke of Shabbat as a foretaste of the World-To-Come (Olam Ha-Ba), a time in which Eve and Adam’s paradise would be recreated. The Torah legend of the Garden of Eden describes Adam and Eve as vegetarians. We, too, can symbolically recreate paradise and “taste” the Olam Ha-Ba with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah meal that respects the whole of creation. A life cycle simcha need not be built on the destruction of life.

4. Gifts and Money – It is customary in Jewish tradition to give a tzedakah donation to the synagogue and various other Jewish charities at the time of a simcha like a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In addition, what better way to begin adulthood than with a mitzvah that reminds us that all Jewish adults must be responsible? A parent should explain how much he/she is giving and help the Bar/Bat Mitzvah decide where his/her gifts (ideally, 10% of the value of the gifts that he/she receives) should go. The Torah states that “you shall teach your children (mitzvot) diligently.” Many of our B’nai Mitzvah and their families give a gift to Mazon, A Jewish Response to Hunger. Mazon asks that 3% of the cost of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah be sent to the synagogue office (payable to Mazon) to feed Jews and non-Jews who suffer the pain and degradation of hunger. Now is the time to teach your children how to take responsibility for themselves by living up to the values of our people. Mitzvot should not be turned into idle platitudes. Rather, they are the foundation upon which your children’s Jewishness and adulthood will be built.

5. Jewish Education – University Synagogue begins with a Parent-Tot program and Pre-School and continues through high school. I teach Confirmation class for 10th- 12th graders. If your child would like to read Torah or Haftarah on High Holidays, please let the synagogue know at least three months before.

Jewish summer camps can be a child’s or teenager’s most meaningful Jewish experience. The best ones are Camp JRF (Reconstructionist), Camp Swig or Hess Kramer (Reform), Camp Ramah (Conservative), and Alonim/Brandeis-Bardin (non-denominational). There are excellent Zionist and JCC (overnight) camps throughout the country that your son or daughter may attend. Informal study, Shabbat and holiday celebrations, and concern for Jewish ethics and values infuse the day to day life of these camps. Please speak to the Educational Director well in advance of the summer so that we may plan such an experience for your child or teenager.

A trip to Israel can open up a teenager (or adult) to a kaleidoscope of Jewish life, language and land. To see Jews from all parts of the world familiar with Jewish history, customs and Hebrew, living as a majority in a society, expands an American Jew's vision of what Judaism is and gives meaning to all the years of Hebrew and Jewish studies that he/she learned as a child. Few gifts will be as memorable for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a trip to Israel (taken at age 13 or delayed until 15 or 16).

6. For the rest of us – Every member and friend of University Synagogue is invited to each Bar/Bat Mitzvah through our newsletter. These services give us a chance to share in a community simcha. One need not be personally invited to a Bar/Bat Mitzvah to feel joy at the achievement of one of our University Synagogue young people. **However, we ask that you invite all the children in your child's Hebrew School class so that everyone feels included.** Please come and share in the beauty of these special Shabbatot.

7. For those who wish to give presents – consider a Jewish gift. Our Gift Shop and other stores have books, records, tapes, mezuzot, posters and so much more that are most appropriate for a Jewish occasion. The synagogue also provides a number of Jewish gifts to your son/daughter.

I am happy to say that many University Synagogue B'nai Mitzvah follow the patterns outlined in this letter. In fact, many of these ideas were generated by B'nai Mitzvah and their families in my meetings with them, and I am grateful for their sensitivity and advice.

One closing note: A Bar/Bat Mitzvah gives rise to a myriad of feelings – among them the desire to impress others and a concern for giving your child “the best” by creating a memorable time. Be memorable in a different way. Avoid the ostentatious and the competitive. Donate more money to tzedakah and less to caterers. Plan a “seudah/celebration” that reinforces the Jewish joy of the morning service, the spirituality of the day and the values that we struggle so hard to teach every day at University Synagogue.

I look forward to the many B'nai Mitzvah that I will be planning with you. Please do not hesitate to call me for advice even if your simcha is a few years in the future.

B'shalom,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arnie Rachlis".

Rabbi Arnold Rachlis

P.S. If you have any ideas for improving our Bar/Bat Mitzvah program, please let me know.

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE

Feel free to fill in your own dates on the blank lines. Refer to the Handbook's Table of Contents if you have any questions regarding items mentioned in this time line.

1 YEAR BEFORE OR MORE

- ___ Be sure to read this timeline and the entire Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook so that you are aware of your responsibilities.
- ___ Obtain your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date from the office and confirm with \$600 per family non-refundable deposit.
- ___ Attend Bar/Bat Mitzvah workshops led by the Rabbi and Cantor
- ___ Begin to investigate the different options for a Mitzvah Project
- ___ Plan on attending the 12 required services
- ___ Ensure that all University Synagogue dues and tuition payments are current

6 MONTHS BEFORE

- ___ Start collecting readings to personalize your service and your Booklet.
- ___ Have your Mitzvah project submitted to the Education Director for approval.
- ___ Set up tutoring appointments with the Cantor who will give your child a copy of the whole Torah portion of the week with commentary.
- ___ Pay balance of Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee

3 MONTHS BEFORE

- ___ Call the office to arrange for meetings between your child and the Rabbi. Your child should come to the first meeting with a written D'var Torah/speech, at least one page of summary, one page of commentary and a paragraph of "thank yous." (See Page 22)
- ___ Ask the tutor for a clean copy of the Torah and Haftarah portions for the booklet.

2 MONTHS BEFORE

- ___ Begin to fill out the Bar/Bat Mitzvah information sheet (including Hebrew names, names of service participants...) so that it will be ready for the rehearsal.
- ___ Submit your selected readings to the Rabbi.
- ___ Purchase a minimum of five dozen kippot for your guests at the service.
- ___ Make sure your child has his/her own kippah, tallit and tallit bag.

Continued on next page

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE *(Cont'd.)*

1 MONTH BEFORE

- ___ Complete and confirm names of service participants.
- ___ Prepare parents' remarks, if applicable. **(Limited to 4 minutes)**
- ___ Submit and discuss special song requests with the Cantor.
- ___ Hand in completed Mitzvah Project forms to the Education Director.
- ___ If you are copying the liturgy for your Booklet from the Kol Hanesamah: Shabbat Vehagim Siddur or from a provided CD, send the \$54.00 copyright fee (payable to the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation) to the office.

2 WEEKS BEFORE

- ___ Send all your service readers an advanced copy of their readings (English and/or Hebrew) and inform your service participants of their responsibilities.
- ___ Inform the office if you will be taking photos **before** services.
- ___ Review picture-taking rules with your photographer and videographer.
- ___ Review with your child's tutor and your child which prayers he/she would like to recite alone and which he/she wants to do with the Cantor. (See enclosed form.)

AT THE REHEARSAL

- ___ Give a copy of the Complete Service Booklet or Supplement to the Rabbi, one that includes the names of your selected readers.
- ___ Deliver the Service Participants Form to the Rabbi (This is the form you filled out earlier. See Page 41).
- ___ Present the Cantor with the list of which prayers your son/daughter will do.

ON THE DAY

- ___ Arrive at least 45 minutes early to take care of last-minute details.
- ___ Ushers should arrive at least one half-hour early.

RELAX, SIT BACK, AND ENJOY THIS VERY SPECIAL DAY! MAZEL TOV!

AFTER THE DUST HAS SETTLED –

- ___ Please deliver 5 copies of your Service Booklet or Supplement to the office.
- ___ If you have an extra copy, a sample invitation would also be appreciated.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH REQUIREMENTS

In order for your child to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah, he/she must meet the following requirements:*

1. Reading knowledge of Hebrew in the Sephardic pronunciation;
2. Knowledge and experience of Friday and Saturday Shabbat services – attendance is required at 12 services (Friday night, Saturday morning, or Bar/Bat Mitzvah in any combination) beginning a year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date;
3. Knowledge of Jewish holidays, observances, liturgy, history and culture;
4. Minimum of four years of Jewish education or the equivalent prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah; special situations can be discussed with the Educational Director.
5. Completion of the academic year in religious school, in which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah takes place. We strongly encourage continuing through both Confirmation (10th grade) and high school (12th grade);
6. Attendance at a minimum of two meetings and a rehearsal with the Rabbi;
7. Ability to chant the Torah portion, the Haftarah portion, blessings and prayers;
8. Understanding the significance of his/her training, the ceremony, the meaning of the Torah and Haftarah portions and the presentation of a D'var Torah (speech) of Jewish significance at the service;
9. Completion of a mitzvah project consisting of a minimum of 18 hours of community service;

* If you have questions or concerns about these requirements, please contact the Educational Director or the Rabbi.

MISCELLANEOUS

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fee – The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee (as of January 2010) is \$1950 per child, \$2900 for siblings who are sharing a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, and \$1450 for two separate families to share the date. A non-refundable deposit of \$600 per family is required when the date is reserved. The balance is due six months prior to the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Tutoring will not be scheduled until payment is complete. Payment can be made by check or credit card. The fee covers the following:

1. Tutoring
2. Use of the synagogue for the service, Friday night Oneg and Saturday noon kiddush
3. Oneg on Shabbat eve before Bar/Bat Mitzvah
4. Kiddush on Saturday after services, if no luncheon, with wine and Challah

Simcha Tree of Life – As a way of honoring and remembering this very special day in your child's and family's life, we suggest that you may wish to purchase a leaf on our Simcha Tree of Life in the Social Hall (see the Form on Page 43). Perhaps you may also wish to honor someone dear to you.

Kippot – Replenish the kippot supply by purchasing a minimum of five dozen. Personalized kippot may be ordered locally from our Gift Shop. Please contact our Gift Shop.

Tallitot – Order from our Gift Shop and receive 10% off.

Tutoring – The Cantor will give you the name of the tutor.

Copyright Fee – If you are copying the liturgy, so that your booklet takes the place of the prayerbook rather than having a supplement, a \$54.00 donation should be made to the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation. Please make your check payable to the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation and send it to the Synagogue office at least one month prior to your date.

Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger and University Synagogue hope that you will donate 3% of the cost of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration expenses to Mazon to feed the hungry. Also, you may want to use Mazon place cards for your tables at the celebration so that others might emulate your generosity.

Meals – The Social Hall is sometimes available for Friday night dinner before services and always available for luncheons and dinners after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. **There is an additional fee to rent the Social Hall for these functions.** Please reserve as soon as possible.

THE FRIDAY EVENING SHABBAT SERVICE

(Page numbers refer to pages in Kol Haneshamah, the Reconstructionist Prayerbook)

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration officially begins on Friday night, with the Kabbalat Shabbat service to welcome the Shabbat.

The Barchu (Page 57 of the prayerbook) is chanted by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, whose parents will open and close the Ark. More may be chanted if he/she wishes. Please discuss with the Cantor.

The service is followed by an Oneg Shabbat sponsored by the family (See Page 28 of this handbook for more information about the Oneg).

The Saturday Morning Shabbat Service for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Nigun (Melody without words)

- Led by the Cantor (often with clapping)
- A universal way to involve everyone

Introduction/Welcome by the Rabbi

- Rabbi comes down from the bimah (pulpit) to begin the service and make everyone feel welcome

Donning of the Tallit and its Blessing –
(Optional) – Pg 143

*Baruch atah Adonay, Eloheinu melech ha-olam,
ah-sheer kid-sha-nu b'mitzvo-tav v'tze-vah-nu
le-heet-atef ba-tzee-tzeet*

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah wears a kippah from the start of the service and can also wear their Tallit.
- Optional Tallit (prayer shawl) Ceremony:
- Presentation can be by parents, grandparents or other designated person(s).
- Tallit is outstretched with the decorated or Hebrew-lettered side facing the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, who will take it, say the blessing, kiss each side and put it over his/her shoulders. Presenters return to their seats.

Readings (one or more)

- Readers don't need to be Jewish.
- Readings are selected by the family and reviewed with the Rabbi.
- There are opportunities here and later in the service to insert readings.
- Supplemental booklet can contain several readings but not all selections will be read aloud.

Opening of the Ark for the Barchu

- Rabbi calls up first set of Ark openers.
- The Ark Openers are selected by the family. At least two in each group of openers (one for each side of Ark) should be Jewish and over age 13.
- When giving out the honor, explain to Ark Openers that they should bring their Prayerbooks or booklets and face the Ark. Wearing kippot and tallitot is encouraged

Barchu (Call to Prayer) – chanted – Pg 247

*Barchu et Adonay hamvorah
Baruch Adonay hamvorah le'olam va'ed*

- Rabbi instructs everyone to rise
- Ark is opened. Everyone faces the Ark.
- Led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Body Movements
Barchu/Baruch – Knee Bend
(et) Adonay – Waist Bend
[after] hamvorach – Rise

← Shows humility and respect for God/Torah. Symbolic for kneeling.

Yotzer (God in Nature) – spoken

*Baruch atah Adonay eloheynu melech ha'olam
yotzer or uvorey hosheh oseh shalom
uvorey et hakol*

- Ark is closed. Attendants return to seats

The Shema, Mi Hamocha and Amidah Preparation

Additional readings

Shema (Affirmation of Monotheism)
followed by **Ve'ahavta** – Pg 277

Shema yisra'el adonay eloheynu adonay ehad.
Baruh shem kevod malhuto le'olam va'ed.

Ve'ahavta et adonay elohecha
behol levavecha uvhol nafshecha uvhol me'odecha.
Vehayu hadevarim ha'eleh asher anochi metzavecha hayom al
levavecha,
Veshinantam levanecha vedibarta bam
beshivtecha beveytecha uvlechtecha vaderch uvshohbecha
uvkumecha.
Ukshartam le'ot al yadecha vehayu letotafot beyn eynecha.
Uhtavtam al mezuzot beytecha uvisharecha.

Prayer over Tzizit – Pg 285

Vayomer adonay el moshe leymor. Daber el beney yisra'el
ve'amarta aleyhem ve'asu lahem tzizit al kanfey vigdeyhem
ledorotam venazenu al tzizit hakanaf petil tehelet. Vehayah
lahem letzizit uritem oto uzharthem et kol mitzvot adonay
va'asitem otam velo taturu aharey levavechem ve'aharey
eyneyhem asher atem zouim ahareyhem. Lema'an tizkeru
va'asitem et kol mitzvotay vihe-yitem kedoshim leyloheychem.
Ani adonay eloheychem asher hotzeyti ethem me'erezt mitztayim
lihyot lahem leylohim ani adonay eloheychem. Adonay
eloheychem emes.

Mi Hamocha (Gratitude for escape from Egyptian bondage) – Pg 291

Mi hamochah ba'elim adonay. Mi kamochah nedar bakodesh
nora tehilot osef feleh.
Shirah hadashah shibeihu ge'ulim leshimecha al sefat hayam.
Yahad kulam hodu vehimlichu ve'ameru.
Adonay yimloch le'olam va'ed.

Amidah preparation

Tzur Yisrael

Tzur yisra'el kumah be'ezrat yisra'el. Ufdey hinumecha yehudah
veyisrael. Go'aleynu adonay tzeva'ot shemo kedosh yisra'el.
Baruh atah adonay ga'al yisra'el.

- See earlier note
- Rabbi explains bringing together Tallit fringes (Tzizit) and wrapping around right index finger – symbolic of bringing together people of the world
- Rabbi explains Shema – an important statement or declaration that there is only one God
- Remain sitting (standing or sitting position is determined by what precedes the Shema)
- Close/cover eyes for Shema to achieve Kavanah (focused, centered, engaged mindset for prayer)
- Led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with Cantor

- Led by the Cantor
- Kiss fringes of Tallit each time we say "tzizit" and at the end after "emet"
- Rabbi says to release Tallit fringes then explains Mi Hamocha

- Mi Hamocha with guitar and clapping
- Led by Cantor and Bar/Bat Mitzvah

- Rabbi comments about the importance of the Amidah – everyone rises
- Rabbi, Cantor and Bar/Bat Mitzvah face Ark

Amidah (the “Standing Prayer”) – Pages 294-322

Body Movements at start of Amidah
3 steps back and 3 steps forward

Avot Ve'imot (Respect for Ancestors – egalitarian) – Pg 295

Body Movements
Knee bend/bow at Baruch atah Adonay

Baruch atah adonay eloheynu veylohey avoteynu ve'imoteynu
elohey avraham elohey sarah
elohey yitzhak elohey rivkah
elohey ya'akov elohey rahel
elohey le'ah

Ha'el hagadol hagibor vehanora el elyon gomel hasadim tovim vekoney hakol vezohar hasdey avot ve'imot umevi ge'ulah livney vneyhem lema'an shemo be'ahavah. Melech ozer umoshi'a umagen. Baruch atah Adonay magen avraham ve'ezrat sarah.

Gevurot (Divine power) – Pg 299

Body Movements
Knee bend/bow at Baruch atah Adonay

Atah gibor le'olam adonay rav le'hoshi'a.

In summer: Morid hatal.

In winter: Mashiv haru'ah umorid hagashem.

Mehalkel hayim behesed mehayey kol hay berahamim rabim someh noflim verofey holim umatir asurim umkayem emunato lisheney afar. Mi hamo'ha ba'al gevurot umi domch lah melech memit umhayeh umatzmi'ah yeshu'ah.

Vene'eman atah leha'payot kol hay. Baruch atah adonay mehayey kol hay.

Kedusha – Pg 303

Body Movements
Raise up on toes 3 times at Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh (Holy, holy, holy)

Nekadesh et shimcha ba'olam keshem shemakdishim oto bishmey marom kakatuv al yad nevi'cha vekara zeh el zeh ve'amar: Kadosh kadosh kadosh adonay tzeva'ot melo chol ha'aretz kevodo. Az bekol ra'ash gadol adir velazak mashmi'im kol mitnasim le'umat scrafim le'umatam baruch yomeru: Baruch kevod adonay nimekomo
[Abbreviated]

Ledor Vador – Pg 301

Ledor vador nagid godleha ulnetzah netzahim Kedushateha nakdish veshivha'ha eloheynu mipinu lo yamush le'olam va'ed ki el melech gadol vekadosh atah. Baruch atah adonay ha'el hakadosh.

Yismechu (Song of Shabbat) – Pg 309

Yismechu bemalchuteha shomrey shabbat vekorey oneg. Am mekadeshey shevi'i kulam yisbe'a veytanegu mituvcha. Vehashevi'i ragzita bo vekidashto. Hemdat yamim oto kirata zeher lema'asey vereyshit.

- Rabbi instructs congregation to continue reading silently and points out alternative Amidah readings.
- Rabbi, Cantor and Bar/Bat Mitvah turn to face congregation. Rabbi announces conclusion of Amidah and singing of Sim Shalom

Sim Shalom (Song of Peace) – Pg 321

- Led by Cantor with guitar

Preparing for the Torah Service

Eyn Kamoha (Introductory Prayer) – Pg 383

*Eyn kamoha va'elohim Adonay ve'eyn kema'aseha
Malhuteha malhut kol olamim umemshalteha behol dor vador
Adonay meleh Adonay malah Adonay yimloh le'olam va'ed.
Adonay oz le'amo yiten Adonay yevareh et amo vashalom.
Av harahmim hetivah virtzoneha et tziyon tivneh homot
yerushalayim.*

Ki veba levad batahnu meleh el ram venisa adon olamim.

Pg 385:

Ki mitziyon tetzey torah udvar Adonay mirushalayim.

Baruh shenatan torah le'amo yisra'el bikdushato.

- Rabbi calls up second set of Ark openers
- Prayer led by the Cantor (facing the Ark)
- Rabbi calls up Gabaim (Torah Helpers)
- Roles such as Gabaim and Torah lifter should be Jewish but there is some flexibility – e.g. a husband who is Jewish and wife is not
- Rabbi explains the history of our Torah and describes the Torah procession.
- The Ark is opened.

Torah Transmission Ceremony – (Optional)

- The Rabbi talks about the Torah then removes it from the Ark. An Ark opener removes the crowns.

- Rabbi touches the Torah to shoulders of the Grandparents and Parents then gives the Torah to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Everyone return to seats.

Shema – Pg 393

*Shema yisra'el Adonay eloheynu Adonay ehad.
Ehad eloheynu gadol adoneynu kadosh shemo.
Gadalu l'Adonay iti unromemah shemo yahdav*

↑
Bow

↑
Rise

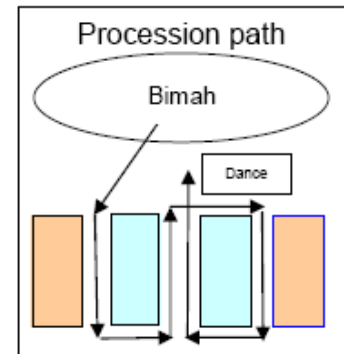
- Close/cover our eyes during Shema
- Cantor sings then Congregation repeats.
- Face the Ark. Sing together. Include bow.

Procession and dancing

(Procession is an important ritual demonstrating that the Torah belongs to the community)

*Leha Adonay hagedulah vehagevurah vehatiferet
vehanetzah vehahod ki hol bashamayim uva'aretz
leha Adonay hamamlahah vehamitnasey lehol
lerosh.*

Procession is led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Upon return to bottom of the Bimah steps, the Rabbi and a small group dance around the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.



Ki Mitziyon – Pg 385

Ki mitziyon tetzey torah udvar Adonay mirushalayim.

- Cantor leads song through the procession and preparation of the Torah

The Rabbi and Bar/Bat Mitzvah return to the bimah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah puts the crowns on the first Torah which the Rabbi returns to the Ark and removes a different Torah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah helps to remove crowns and closes the Ark. The Rabbi continues to prepare the Torah and places it on the Shulchan (table/lectern). He then invites people to look at the Torah while sharing interesting facts about it. He also ensures that the right people are on the bimah and has the Gabaim hold each Torah roller (Aytz Chayim, plural: Atzeh Chayim). The Rabbi explains that our prayers are different (more inclusive) and describes how the Aliyah process will work, then instructs everyone to rise and put their arms and Tallitot around each other.

Torah, Haftarah and Speeches

Blessing before reading of the Torah

(Aliyah – “to go up”) – Pg 399

Barchu et Adonai hamvorah

Baruch Adonai hamvorah le'olam va'ed

Baruch atah Adonai eloheyenu melech ha'olam asher

kervanu la'avodato venatan lanu et torato

Baruch atah Adonai notayn hatorah

Congregation says entire blessing for the first aliyah . Subsequent aliyot, congregation says 2nd line only.

- 1st *aliyah* is said by the congregation, last is by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, for 2nd (and others, if done) the *aliyah* is done by someone else.
- If person doing an *aliyah* prefers the traditional version of the prayer, it is OK. If it's a group, they all need to agree on one version
- For each *aliyah*, the Rabbi calls up the person or group. They start on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's right side (Cantor's side) and after they move to Bar/Bat Mitzvah's left side, then they sit down after the next *aliyah*. Before and after *aliyah* they touch their Tzitzit to Torah then kiss Tzitzit.
- Afterward, Rabbi encourages people to congratulate/greet each other then sit down

The Torah Portion

Blessing after reading the Torah – Pg 399

Baruch atah Adonai eloheyenu melech ha'olam asher

natan lanu torat emet vehayey olam nata betoheyenu

Baruch atah Adonai notayn hatorah

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah chants Torah portion three lines at a time, separated by the *aliyah* blessings as described above

Lift and Tie the Torah

Cantor sings (P. 407) – *Ve Zot hatorah etz hayim hi lamahazikim bah vetomheha me ushar*

Yisrael v'oraita chad hu, Torah orah, halleluyah
(The Jewish people & Torah are one)

- Rabbi calls up people to lift and tie Torah
- Rabbi places Torah on lecturn (shulchan)
- Lifter/Tier return to their seats
- Congregation is seated

Blessing before reading Haftarah – Pg 409

- Rabbi announces next steps
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah handles the entire Haftarah and blessing before/after
- Rabbi and Cantor are seated

The Haftarah Portion

Blessing after reading the Haftarah –

Pp 409-411

- Each time the Bar/Bat Mitzvah says, “Baruch Atah Adonai”, Rabbi and congregation say “Baruch hu u'varuch sh'mo”, then “Amen” at end of each blessing

The D'var Torah (Torah commentary)

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah gives speech including:
 - Simple explanation of Torah Portion
 - What Torah Portion means to them
 - Thank you comments
 - Optionally a description of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah project can be included

Comments from parents (Optional)

- Rabbi calls up parents. Limit to 4 minutes.

Rabbi's Speech

- Afterward Rabbi congratulates Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Concluding the Saturday Morning Shabbat Service

Shehecheyanu prayer & Mazel Tov (in booklet)

- Everyone rises, then sits afterwards

Special song by the Cantor – chosen by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family

- Rabbi and Bar/Bat Mitzvah sit during song

Returning the Torah to the Ark

Pg 433–*Hodu al eretz veshamayim vayarem keren le'amo tehilah lehol hasidav livney yisra'el kerovo halleluyah.*

- Rabbi invites up the next set of Ark openers and has everyone rise
- Everyone sings Hodu Al Eretz and Etz Hayim Hee while facing the Ark
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah places crowns on Torah
- Rabbi returns Torah to Ark
- Ark is closed and attendants return to seats

Pg 441–*Etz hayim hi lamahazikim bah vetomheha me'ushar. Deraheha darhey no'am vehol netivoteha shalom. Hashivenu Adonay eleyha venashuva hadesh yameynu kekedem.*

Gifts from the congregation

- Rabbi calls up presenter (a board member)
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah stands to receive gifts

Aleynu (Our hope for a better world)–Pg 445

Aleynu leshabe'ah la'adon hakol, latet gedulah leyotzer bereyshit shenatan lanu torat emet vehayey olam nata betohenu.

- Rabbi invites up the next set of Ark openers and has everyone rise. Ark is opened.
- Led by the Cantor
- Bow at "korim"
- Ark is closed and attendants return to seats
- Everyone remains standing

Va'anahnu korim umishtahavim umodim, lifney meleh, malhey hamelachim hakadosh baruh hu

Pg 449–*Vene'emar: Vehayah Adonay lemeleh al kol ha' aretz. Bayom hahu yihyeh adonay ehad ushmo ehad.*

Kaddish Yatom (Mourner's Kaddish) – Pg 451

Yitgadal veyitkadash shemey raba be'alma divra hirutey veyamli'ch malhutey behayeyhon uvyomeyhon uvhayey dehol beyt yisra'el ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen. Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almaya. Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal shemey dekudsha berih hu le'ela min kol birhata veshirata tushbehata venehemata da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen. Yehey shelama raba min shemaya vehayim aleynu ve'al kol yisra'el ve'imru amen. Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu ve'al kol yisra'el ve'al kol yoshvey tevel ve'imru amen.

- Rabbi reads names of deceased family members and invites congregation to call out others names

• *Note: the Kaddish is in Aramaic, not Hebrew*

Three steps backward

Sway side to side, knee bend then bow
Three steps forward

- Everyone sings "Oseh Shalom" with arms and Tallitot around each other

Blessing of Wine and Challah (in booklet)

Baruch ata adonai Eloheynu melech ha-olam bo-re p'ri hagafen

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah drinks some wine
- Congregation claps and sings "Siman Tov u' Mazel Tov"
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah & Rabbi go down to parents

Baruch ata adonai Eloheynu melech ha-olam hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz

N'varech et eyn hachayim hamotzi'ah lechem min ha'aretz

DUTIES OF SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

NUMBER PARTICIPANT DUTIES

When people ascend the bimah, we prefer that they carry their prayerbooks and wear kippot and tallitot.

- Minimum 2** **Ushers** – Ushers should be adult members of the congregation and arrive at 9:30 a.m. Wear a tallit and kippah, encourage the use of and distribute tallitot and kippot; distribute prayerbooks/supplements; enforce the no smoking rule; find the Facility Manager and quiet people, if necessary.
- 2** **Gabaim** – Always the Hebrew tutor or Cantor and one other person. These people hold the rollers (Trees of Life) of the Torah while it is being read.
- 1** **Torah Tier** – Places the securing strap around the Torah and mantle (cover) over the Torah.
- 1** **Torah Lifter** – Holds the Torah while the Tier performs above duties. Note: the Torah is heavy and, depending on the time of year, usually unbalanced on one side or the other due to the amount of text on a given roller.
- 1+ *** **Aliyot** – “Being CALLED UP to read the blessings over the Torah” – For every three verses of Torah your child reads, the person/s you have designated is/are called up to the bimah to recite the blessing before and after that 3-verse portion.
- Minimum 8** **Ark Attendants** – Open and close the ark on four separate occasions:
No Maximum **1. Barchu**
 2. Beginning of Torah Service (these people will become part of the Torah procession and will be standing longer)
 3. Returning the Torah to the Ark
 4. Aleynu
- 1+** **Tallit Presenter(s)** – Hands the Tallit to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a sign of entrance into adult responsibility and may say a few brief words (less than a minute). OPTIONAL
- 1+** **Torah Transmission Ceremony** – Refers to a moment when the Ark is opened, Torah is removed and handed from grandparents to parents to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. OPTIONAL
- 1 or 2** **Speakers** – Parents may give a Bar/Bat Mitzvah speech (not to exceed a total time of 4 minutes). OPTIONAL

* Note: It is our custom for Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates to read a **minimum** of two 3-line Torah portions. The blessings before and after the first 3-line portion are said by the congregation and the final blessings are said by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child. Every additional three verses entitles your family to one aliyah (blessing before and after the Torah portion). **We encourage our B’nai Mitzvah candidates to chant as much Torah as possible. Please send a copy in advance of our Reconstructionist Torah blessing to those who will be chanting it.**

THE BOOKLET

University Synagogue invites each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to help create a service that reflects the individual family's values. This is done by selecting readings to be used in the service. Some readings will be read aloud by friends or by family members whom you designate, others will be used for silent readings during the time of the Amidah. If you want specific readings to be read aloud or silently, please indicate that fact when you turn everything in to the Rabbi. Otherwise, he will put them in the order he feels is best.

1. There are two kinds of Booklets

- A. A Shabbat Morning Supplement that will be used in conjunction with the prayerbook.
- B. A Complete Service Booklet that contains the liturgy and, therefore, takes the place of the prayerbook.

2. Steps to follow in designing your Complete Service Booklet or Supplement Booklet

A. Gather 8 to 12 poems/readings that you want used in the service.

- 1. These can be poems, sayings, excerpts from existing works or originals. They do not all have to be written by Jews, but they should reflect something of your values and feelings about this special day.
- 2. For inspiration, look through past Bar/Bat Mitzvah booklets (available in the office), in the back of our prayerbook, or use any literary work.

B. Decide whether your booklet will be a supplement or will also contain the liturgy.

- 1. For a supplement, title it "Shabbat Morning Supplement."
- 2. Those who include the liturgy (that can be provided in hard or electronic versions) are asked to contribute \$54, payable to the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation as a copyright donation. Please send this check to University Synagogue's office one month prior to your date.

C. Optional additional inclusions in the booklet

- 1. A letter to your guests or to your child, explanations of some of the symbols and traditions appearing in the morning service, songs that will be sung or specific prayers you wish to be a part of your booklet (if you are doing a supplement).
- 2. Remember, the Rabbi **must** approve everything before your booklet is ready for final printing.

Continued on next page

THE BOOKLET – (Cont'd.)

- 3. Include a copy of your child's Torah and Haftarah portions.**
 - A. These can be obtained from the tutor.

- 4. Submit all of your readings, for your Complete Booklet or Supplement Booklet, to the Rabbi two months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.**
 - A. **Indicate whether you are producing a Complete Booklet or a Supplement Booklet.**
 - B. Keep a copy of everything you turn into the Rabbi as he will reorder your pages and may put notes or other marks on the copy you give him.
 - C. Be sure to designate any readings that you specifically want read aloud.

- 5. The Rabbi will return your copy to you.**
 - A. Included will be a few introductory pages and necessary prayers.
 - B. Everything will be in the order necessary for the final form.

- 6. You can now make sure that your booklet is camera ready.**
 - A. Add art work, borders, page numbers, etc.
 - B. Please see the "tips" section on the next page for help.

- 7. Resubmit your booklet no less than 3 weeks before the Bar Mitzvah for a final inspection by the Rabbi before sending it to the printer.**
 - A. Again, please make a copy, as Rabbi Rachlis tends to mark up your copy, if only to say "good job."

- 8. Take it to the printer for decisions on:**
 - A. The type and color of your paper
 - B. The type and color of your cover page
 - C. The type of binding that you want
 - D. The number of booklets that you think you will need
 1. The office would like a donation of at least 5 booklets to keep on file.

- 9. You're done. Congratulations!**

TIPS FOR PUTTING THE BOOKLET TOGETHER

- Use only white paper and black ink (it copies best)
 - Use some line art
 - Use a ruler to makes sure things are straight
 - Use liquid paper to cover any dirt or fingerprints
 - Leave a margin around your pages for binding
 - Use a glue stick or make certain your scotch tape doesn't show (a glue stick that works like a post-it note works best)
 - **Number your pages** (type, letter by hand or purchase self-stick numbers)
 - Call your printer to ask his/her advice
 - The booklet should open right to left, "Hebrew style."
-
- *Don't* fill every blank space with art
 - *Don't* try to "eyeball" straight
 - *Don't* put copy to the edges of the sheet – it might get cut off
 - *Don't* have any copy in light colored inks
 - *Don't* paste your pages side by side or back to back (the printer will take care of that)
 - *Don't* feel you're asking silly questions. Very few people know anything about printing until they are forced to do it.

(SUGGESTED COVER)

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE (SUPPLEMENT)

HEBREW DATE

ENGLISH DATE

BAR/BAT MITZVAH OF
(CHILD'S NAME)
(ARTWORK OPTIONAL)

UNIVERSITY SYNAGOGUE
3400 MICHELSON
IRVINE, CALIFORNIA

RABBI ARNOLD RACHLIS
CANTOR RUTI BRAIER

SUE PENN
EDUCATIONAL DIRECTOR

AFFILIATED WITH THE
JEWISH RECONSTRUCTIONIST FEDERATION

CANTOR BRAIER'S TUTORING PROGRAM

Dear Bar/Bat Mitzvah Parents,

For many years, our Bar/Bat Mitzvah training consisted of individual arrangements between tutors and our families. While this served many University Synagogue members well, we also became aware that it was educationally better for students to be part of a program housed at our synagogue that allowed us greater mentoring. We have also improved the program for your children by adding an extra five weeks of tutoring. If you want even more tutoring at any time, either because your child needs more help or because he/she wants to learn more, please let me know and we will arrange it for you (at \$20 per half hour for the tutor).

The program consists of 4 distinct parts. For those who wish, I will be glad to have a meeting with each family to discuss the program and to answer questions from families and students.

Part I: This is a four week class that I will teach on Wednesday afternoons (dates to be determined).

Part II: Tutors will be assigned to each student for approximately six months of half-hour sessions prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Meetings will take place on Wednesday afternoons at University Synagogue and you will be called to choose a time.

Part III: The final preparation for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be completed during this phase of training. I will schedule private meetings with each student to make sure that he/she is fully prepared for the upcoming simcha.

Part IV: Rabbi Rachlis will continue to meet individually with the Bar/Bat candidates at least three times to work on the D'var Torah (speech) and to talk with them about the importance of becoming a young adult in Judaism. Parents and children can have as many appointments as they want.

I am looking forward to getting to know your family better and to be a greater part of your family's simcha.

We look forward to your participation in this program.

B'shalom,



Cantor Ruti Braier

P.S. Please contact the Educational Director directly about your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah project.

MEETINGS WITH THE RABBI

HOW MANY MEETINGS WILL THERE BE?

There will be at least two meetings with the Rabbi, approximately three weeks apart. In addition, there will be a rehearsal. Call the Rabbi's secretary to schedule your appointments.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE FIRST MEETING?

The meeting is for the Rabbi and your child. It does not include the parents. This gives the Rabbi private time to get to know your child and to further enhance the whole Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience.

At this initial meeting the child should bring Rabbi Rachlis 8-12 readings for the Booklet. Also, please fill out the Bar/Bat Mitzvah General Information Form (Page 40) and give it to the Rabbi. You must also inform the Rabbi whether your Booklet will be a Supplement Booklet with selected readings only OR if you want a Complete Service Booklet that includes the liturgy for the entire service.

To prepare for the first meeting with the Rabbi, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate will have to read the **entire** Torah portion, in English and write the D'var Torah (See Page 23 for details). If you have some questions or concerns, the Rabbi will be happy to meet with you before he meets with your child or at another time. Please tell his secretary that you want to meet with him when you're scheduling your child's appointment.

If there is some information about your child which you want the Rabbi to know, please feel free to submit a note to him listing interests, awards, hobbies, etc.

Each meeting will last approximately 15 minutes with a 30-minute rehearsal.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING?

At the second meeting, the Rabbi will take the opportunity to review and finalize the details discussed at the first meeting.

WHEN IS THE REHEARSAL?

The rehearsal takes place one or two Saturdays before the candidate's Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Noon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE REHEARSAL?

There will be a brief run-through of the service with the Rabbi. **Please be sure to bring the following:**

- **A copy of the Booklet** that includes the names of your selected readers.
- **The names of all the service participants.** (The form to fill out is included in this handbook on Page 42.)
- **The list of prayers your child will do.** (This form, for the Cantor, is also included in this handbook.)
- **The completed D'var Torah.**

D'VAR TORAH AND PARENTS' SPEECHES

THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH'S D'VAR TORAH (SPEECH)

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is expected to write a D'var Torah. This will be read after he/she has chanted his/her Torah and Haftarah portions in Hebrew. A copy of this speech needs to be given to the Rabbi at the first meeting.

The D'var Torah is broken up into four parts.

First Part: This contains an English explanation, in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's words, of the Torah Portion. (1-1½ pages)

Second Part: Here the Bar/Bat Mitzvah explains what the Torah Portion means to him/her. How does this portion relate to his/her life? (1-1½ pages)

Third Part: This optional part contains information about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project. This may include things as: What was done; where done; what did you learn; how has this affected your life. "For my Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project, I ..."

Fourth Part: In this section, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah thanks those who have helped make it possible for him/her to accomplish Bar/Bat Mitzvah goals. Those thanked normally include the Rabbi, Cantor, tutor, family members, and/or others.

Besides practicing the D'var Torah at home, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be working on his/her presentation with the tutor and Rabbi.

THE PARENTS' SPEECHES

While this speech is optional, it's a wonderful opportunity to share with your child, in the presence of those in attendance, how very proud you are of her/him.

Parents often share examples of their pride in their child's values, hard work, ethics, and/or accomplishments. Some parents have even included how their child is like those after whom he/she is named or they may read a special poem to their son or daughter.

You also have choices as to who gives a speech. Both the mother and father, just one or the other, or one speech – with both parents alternating their reading. (Note: No matter who speaks, both parents may stand on the bimah with their child.)

Please keep the total speech time to a maximum of (4) four minutes. (Note: If both mother and father are giving a speech, the total time for both of them is (4) four minutes.)

There is a book available from the religious school library of sample speeches called Bar and Bat Mitzvah Basics by Cantor Helen Heneman.

THE MITZVAH PROJECT

Repairing the world, Tikkun Olam, is a central mitzvah of Judaism. Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate is expected to perform a minimum of 18 hours of community service for his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project. The type of project should be discussed among the parents and the soon-to-be Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

You should consider beginning this project 9 to 12 months in advance of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah. With all of the activities in your busy life, give yourself plenty of time to enjoy the process and not feel rushed. Submit the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project Log, at least 6 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, to the Director of Religious Education. The Director will return the approved project to you.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project Log is included in this handbook for your use. This form will be used for: writing out your project information; getting approval for the project and listing the dates and hours that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate worked on the project.

The completed form needs to be given to the Director of Education one month prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Getting started on your project may take a little brainstorming. The best way to start is to think about some of the following things and maybe even start making a little list to help you along in the process:

What are my strengths?

Examples:

If you are good at reading, perhaps you would like to tutor someone who needs some help. Or maybe you would be interested in reading to someone – in the neighborhood, at a school, in a convalescent home.

If baseball is your love – consider helping out in teaching others how to play the game – or improve in a particular area. Maybe there is team in your area for children who are disabled.

If you are a whiz at typing/computer – perhaps you could do some special typing or computer work for an individual or agency that could use your special talents. Consider typing job resumes and cover letters for people you know that are out of work and don't type.

Maybe you have a love for animals – share that love by volunteering with an appropriate organization.

Continued on next page

HOW TO GET STARTED – (Cont'd.)

Make a note of the hobbies that you enjoy – they might transfer over to a project idea:

Examples:

Gardening – painting – reading – woodwork – bike riding – cooking – shopping

Perhaps you have a neighbor who has difficulty getting around – someone who is disabled or getting up in years that you could help with grocery shopping or chores around the house.

What are some of the areas that you would like to learn more about?

Examples:

Homelessness, Literacy, Food Banking, Child Care, Visiting the Sick

Doing a volunteer community service project can be an opportunity to learn about something new!

NEXT STEP

Look over your lists and focus on an area that most appeals to you. What would you like to do, try or learn more about?

How do I find out where to go and volunteer?

There are many sources that can point you in the direction of finalizing the who, what, and where of your project.

Examples:

- The Volunteer Center of Orange County lists volunteer activities for youths at approved agencies around Orange County:
http://www.volunteercenter.org/AboutUs/index.php/sv_resources.htm
- Parents, teachers, Director of Religious Education, community leaders or other adults
- Online
- Tikkun Olam Committee of University Synagogue (Call the synagogue office for committee chair name and number.)
- The Jewish Federation of Orange County
- Heritage Pointe

Continued on next page

NEXT STEP – (Cont'd.)

What have other Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates done in the past?

Below are *examples* of just a *few* of the projects or places at which volunteering has been done in the past.

- In a public school
 - Assist in special education program
 - Assist Parents and Teachers
 - Tutor
- At University Synagogue
 - Assist with Family Shabbat Oneg helping children's programming (art projects)
 - Volunteer in the religious school
 - Volunteer in the school library
- Heritage Pointe Senior Citizens Residence
- Orange Coast Interfaith Shelter
- Senior Center of JCC
- Collecting items to be shared within the community. These items, listed below, as well as others, can be collected and handed out at places such as: homeless shelters, preschools and convalescent homes. Contact an agency to make arrangements and get approval for your project before you start your collections.
 - Clothing
 - Books
 - Socks
 - Toiletry items

Some additional considerations:

If you are working with animals, you may have to get an updated tetanus shot or show proof that you have had one.

Some agencies will welcome your child's participation in their program, but will request or need to hear that a parent will be on the agency's property while your child is volunteering.

PHOTOGRAPHY

PICTURES — Formal pictures may be taken before services until 9:30 a.m. and after the conclusion of the service at noon. (For other times, call the office.)

We have had problems with photographers and videographers in the past which have created an uncomfortable situation for everyone involved. Due to these problems, we have had to establish very specific rules that must be followed. Please, let's avoid future problems by outlining the "rules" with your photographer and/or videographer, asking for his/her assurance that these guidelines will be followed.

Still photos during the service are not encouraged. However, if you want them, then the following rules must be followed:

A tripod can be set-up in the "circle of life" walkway behind the last row of seats in the sanctuary and pictures can be taken **only** when everyone is singing during the service. The noise from the camera and movement of the photographer is distracting to your guests. The tripod must be set up without blocking entry or exit into the sanctuary. Please remind your photographer to bring a telephoto lens and not to use a flash.

VIDEO — The video camera must sit on a tripod in the back of the synagogue, as well. No lights may be used on the video equipment.

FRIDAY NIGHT ONEG SHABBAT

You are responsible for hosting the Oneg Shabbat the night before your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The cost for the Oneg is included in your fee. However, you can "trade" your night with someone else directly and then call the Oneg coordinator to inform her of your decision. **If you are trading, you must arrange it with the coordinator at least three months in advance and host an Oneg within two months of your date.**

SATURDAY KIDDUSH

If the Kiddush is informal lasting for an hour or less, there is no rental fee for the Social Hall. However, for anything formal which will extend beyond that time, there is a rental fee, presently \$525.

If you are not having a luncheon in the building, you are still required to have a small Kiddush. It can be either in the foyer or the Social Hall lasting for an hour or less with the following:

Kiddush in the Foyer or Social Hall – Without Luncheon

Our Facility Manager provides the following and is included in your fee:

- Two long tables with linens
- Cups, napkins, paper plates
- Wine/Juice, punch bowl
- Baked goods
- Set up and clean up

If you are having a luncheon in the Social Hall, you are not required to have a separate Kiddush. Your guests can go right into the luncheon.

LUNCHEON AT THE SYNAGOGUE

University Synagogue has a contract with "*Thank Goodness It's Sofia*" – a well known upper level catering company. TGIS brings loving care, warmth and a wealth of culinary expertise to the planning of special events.

Sofia will work with any family and is very negotiable on price. **This means that you will need to use TGIS as the caterer for your event.** Sofia can be reached at (562) 492-9555 and you can also visit her website at www.tgiscatering.com.

Our Facility Manager provides the following and is included in your fee:

- Tables and chairs
- Set up and take down

DECORATING THE BIMAH

Flowers are by no means mandatory either Friday night or Saturday morning. You can choose to do nothing, use potted plants, make decorations, or use flowers. If you are choosing one of these alternatives (or have come up with a creative one of your own), the following information may prove helpful:

1. Arrangements must be no taller than 3' which is the height of the lectern.
2. Arrangements may be brought to Friday night services as early as 6:00 p.m. and as late as a half hour before services begin and can be left in the synagogue overnight.
3. After your Bar/Bat Mitzvah is over, you can either take them to your celebration (or arrange for a friend to take them for you) or leave them.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need to give the Rabbi or Cantor a gift?

It's not necessary, but if you would like to do something, an appropriate gift would be a donation to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund and the Cantor's Discretionary Fund.

2. Should I send an invitation to the President of the synagogue, Educational Director, Rabbi or Cantor?

An invitation need not be sent to the professional staff or president.

3. Do I have to host the Oneg Shabbat for the Friday night preceding my Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

You are responsible for hosting the Oneg. The cost is included in the total Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee. However, you can "trade" with someone else directly. If you do this, please call the Oneg coordinator and inform her of your decision. **If you are trading, you must notify the coordinator at least 3 months in advance and host an Oneg within 2 months of your date.**

4. Do I have to give a "parent's" speech?

We encourage it, but it's not mandatory.

5. Do I have to buy a tallit and kippah for my son/daughter?

No. Your child needs to have a tallit and kippah and we encourage you to give it to him/her as a lifelong gift. However, you can make it, purchase it, borrow it, hand one down from someone special, etc.

6. Do all children start their tutoring 6 months in advance?

Six months is a good rule of thumb, but some children need additional help in Hebrew or may want to chant additional aliyot and may need 8-10 months of tutoring. The best way to determine the amount of tutoring that your child needs is to discuss it with the Cantor. Additional tutoring is available for an additional fee.

7. Must we invite everyone in our child's Hebrew school class to the service and reception?

Yes. We wish to encourage inclusiveness and friendship among our students. We want our students to develop social relationships with each other and, most importantly, we do not want any child to be left out or feel excluded. In this way, we are teaching important lessons of being part of a Jewish community.

Continued on next page

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – (Cont'd.)

8. Can my non-Jewish relatives and friends participate in the service?

Yes. Anyone, regardless of age or religion, can be an English reader. In order to participate in a traditional honor, a non-Jewish person needs to have a Jewish partner from whom he/she derives his/her “Jewishness.” You may, however, want to reserve activities that directly involve the Torah for your Jewish friends and relatives.

9. Is there a minimum age requirement for those who participate in the service?

Yes. Again, anyone can be an English reader, regardless of his/her age. However, children under 13 years of age must be accompanied by someone older in order to participate in a traditional honor.

10. Can I reserve the Social Hall for my celebration after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Yes, the earlier the better.

11. Is there a fee for using the Social Hall?

Yes.

12. If I have a celebration at the synagogue, must I use the caterer *Sofia of TGIS*?

Yes, you must use “*Thank Goodness It’s Sofia*” – a well known upper level catering company. TGIS brings loving care, warmth and a wealth of culinary expertise to the planning of special events.

Sofia will work with you and she is very negotiable on price. She can be reached at (562) 492-9555 and you can also visit her website at www.tgiscatering.com.

13. If I serve food at the synagogue, does it have to be kosher?

If you serve a dairy meal, a vegetarian meal or fish (no shellfish), it does not need to be strictly kosher. However, any chicken, beef, or lamb that is served must be kosher and cannot be served with any dairy products.

UNIVERSITY SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY RESOURCES

For your information and enjoyment, the following books are available in our Children's Library –

NON-FICTION:

Bat Mitzvah – A Jewish Girl's Coming of Age by Barbara Diamond Goldin
Bar Mitzvah – A Jewish Boy's Coming of Age by Eric A. Kimmel
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Basics edited by Cantor Helen Leneman
All That You Want to Know About the Bar/Bat Mitzvah by Stephen Rittner
Sofer: The Story of a Torah Scroll by Eric Ray

FICTION FOR PRE-TEENS:

Pink Slippers. Bat Mitzvah Blues by Ferida Wolff
Bar Mitzvah Lessons by Dr. Martin Elsant
Good If It Goes by Gary Provost
Emma Ansky-Levine and her Mitzvah Machine by Lawrence Bush

PICTURE BOOKS FOR YOUNGER SIBLINGS:

My Brother's Bar Mitzvah by Janet Gallant
My Bar Mitzvah by Richard Rosenblum
The Narrowest Bar Mitzvah by Steven Schnur

RESOURCE GUIDES FOR MITZVAH PROJECTS:

Make A Difference 101 by Sande Hart
The Kid's Guide to Service Projects by Barbara A. Lewis
The Kid's Guide to Social Action by Barbara A. Lewis
A Kid's Guide to How to Save the Animals by Billy Goodman

RESOURCE FOR PRAYERBOOK SUPPLEMENT:

Great Jewish Quotations by Alfred J. Kolatch

GLOSSARY

A list of terms that may be helpful to you are found on these pages. You may wish to include some or all of these in your Bar/Bat Mitzvah booklet. Use the information to help explain the various parts of the service, specific items found in the sanctuary, symbols or something of significance in Judaism. Feel free to select any or all as they appear or rewrite them in a way that is meaningful to you.

Aliyah – During the course of the service, certain adults will be honored by being called to the Torah for an Aliyah, which is the blessing before and after the chanting of each Torah portion.

Ark – The Ark is a type of closet or case. It is located at the front of the room and contains the Torah. The original Ark was built to hold the stone tablets which, according to tradition, Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai. Each time the Ark is opened, the congregation rises in respect for the Torah scroll that is housed within.

Bar Mitzvah – Bar Mitzvah literally means “son of the commandment.” A boy becomes a Bar Mitzvah at 13. This coming of age is rooted in antiquity and provides continuity with the past and the future. Each Shabbat, throughout the Jewish world, the same section of the Torah, the Five Books of Moses, is being read by the Jewish community. (Plural, B’nai Mitzvah)

Bat Mitzvah – Bat Mitzvah means “daughter of the commandment.” While the Bar Mitzvah dates back to the 13th Century, the Bat Mitzvah ceremony was not introduced until 1922. (Plural B’not Mitzvah)

The first girl to have had a Bat Mitzvah was Dr. Judith Kaplan Eisenstein, daughter of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionism. Both Bar and Bat Mitzvah signify the arrival of the age when, presumably, adult reason and responsibility commence.

Bimah – The bimah is the stage from which the services are conducted. To one side of the Bimah is a chair draped with a Tallit. This is a chair for the prophet Elijah. It reminds us of those who have been denied freedom and symbolically includes them in our service.

Eternal Light/Ner Tamid – The Eternal Light or Ner Tamid recalls the fire kept perpetually burning on the altar of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. Today, it reminds us of the eternity of the Jewish people and the continuous presence of the Divine.

Haftarah – The Haftarah is a selection from the writings of the prophets. It follows the reading of the Torah. It is thematically linked to the Torah portion and traditionally ends on a note of comfort.

Kippah or Yarmulke – This is the skullcap or head covering worn as a sign of modesty and reverence.

Continued on next page

GLOSSARY – (Cont’d.)

Reconstructionist Judaism – As Rabbi Arnold Rachlis has told us: “As Reconstructionists, we do not have a single definition of a good Jew. For some, the path is study, for others, worship. Still others find their way through social action, Israel, tzedakah, politics or the arts. Some people are especially fortunate to be able to find meaning in all of these manifestations of Jewish civilization.

As Reconstructionists, we define a “good Jew” as someone who identifies with the Jewish past, contributes to the Jewish present and ensures the Jewish future. How one does it is often personal, that one does it is a crucial necessity for our lives. We cannot be good Jews just for the sake of our ancestors, nor for the good of our children and grandchildren only. Rather, we must first be Jews for ourselves.

To be a Jew means to know, learn, teach, observe, criticize, improve, reject and embrace. Much of our struggle will be simultaneous – embracing one value and rejecting another. As Reconstructionists, we deem all paths potentially worthy, if they are followed with sincerity, conviction and commitment, for we are dedicated to Jewish empowerment and autonomy.”

Siddur – A Siddur is a prayerbook. The word means “order” of the service. Besides prayers, our Siddur contains readings and poetry. Reading right to left, it is written in Hebrew that links Jews around the world. Transliterations of Hebrew pronunciations are included as well as modern, gender free English translations. In Jewish tradition, we respect books and learning, therefore this book should not be placed on the floor.

Tallit – This is a fringed prayer shawl worn in accordance with Biblical law. The fringes (Tzitzit) and knots of the Tallit represent the 613 mitzvot (commandments) of the Bible. The four corners of the tallit symbolize the four corners of the earth. This serves to remind us that, regardless of which direction we take, we are always in the presence of the holy.

Torah – This is the scroll in which is written the Five Books of Moses – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. These books, which have been faithfully hand copied through generations for over 2500 years, tell the early history of the Jewish people and set forth the precepts of Jewish life. In its broadest sense, the Torah teaches us the everlasting values of the Jewish people. Each Shabbat (Sabbath), a consecutive portion of the Torah is read. It takes a full year to complete the reading of all five books.

THE SERVICE

The service consists of prayers that confirm our beliefs (Barchu and Shema), prayers for fulfillment, redemption, thanksgiving and peace (Amidah), the Torah service and the Aleynu and Kaddish which contain prayers of hope for the universal recognition of divine and human unity.

Barchu – This is the call to community prayer. The passage was pronounced in the Temple of Solomon to summon the faithful to worship.

Shema and its blessings – The Shema is one of the oldest and most important Hebrew prayers. It is recited daily and fulfills the minimum requirement for the study of Torah. The Shema is Israel's affirmation of faith, proclaiming the oneness of God.

Amidah – The Amidah is the central part of each Jewish service. It is recited while standing and comprises seven different prayers for redemption, everlasting life, holiness, restoration of Zion, the Sabbath, thanksgiving, and peace.

Torah Procession – After the Torah is removed from the Ark, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah leads a procession of the family and others wishing to join around the sanctuary.

Torah Service – This is the time the Torah is read. The purpose of the Torah reading is to fulfill the Biblical command to study the lessons of Torah and to engage us in study because in Judaism, study itself is a form of worship.

Haftarah – This is the time the Haftarah, a selection from the prophets, is read.

Mourners Kaddish – Towards the end of the service, the congregation will rise to recite this special prayer that affirms life and hope in the face of death and adversity. The names of those recently departed and the names of those whose anniversaries of death (yahrzeiten) occurred during the week will be read aloud.

Kiddush – This is the ceremony of sanctification which occurs after all Sabbath worship services. We express gratitude for the gift of wine (fruit of the vine) and bread.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

(Please make a copy for yourself and then return to the Educational Director 12 months in advance of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah)

Child's name: _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date: _____

Torah Portion: _____

Tutor: _____

Current Grade in Hebrew School: _____

Years in Hebrew School: _____

If you are not enrolled in Religious School, your alternative program must be approved by the Religious School Director.

Description of Alternative Program:

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project:

The student agrees to attend 12 services at University Synagogue during the year before his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Signature of student: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Signature of Educational Director: _____

***BAR/BAT MITZVAH GENERAL INFORMATION
AND HEBREW NAME FORM***

(Please make a copy for yourself and return this form at your first meeting with the Rabbi)

Name of Candidate _____

Tutor _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date (include year) _____

Portion (Name, Chapters and Verses) _____

You may write the Hebrew names (*) in Hebrew or in transliteration:

Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate's full name _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate's Hebrew name _____

Father's English name _____

Father's Hebrew name _____

Mother's English name _____

Mother's Hebrew name _____

Are both parents Jewish? _____ If not, which one is? _____

* If you or your child do not have Hebrew names and would like them, please call Rabbi Rachlis as soon as possible.

***LIST OF PRAYERS FOR THE SATURDAY MORNING
SHABBAT SERVICE***

(Please make a copy for yourself and return this form to the Cantor at your rehearsal)

Check the following prayers that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will lead:

Alone	With Cantor	
_____		Tallit Prayer (Page 143*)
_____	_____	Barchu (chanted) with Yotzer (spoken) (Page 247)
_____	_____	Shema with V'ahavta (Page 277)
_____	_____	Mi Hamocha (Page 291)
_____	_____	Avot Ve'imot/Ancestors (Page 295)
_____	_____	Gevurot/Divine Power (Page 299)
_____		Blessing before the Torah portion (Page 399)
_____		Blessing after the Torah portion (Page 399)
_____		Blessing before reading the Haftarah (Page 409)
_____		Blessing after reading the Haftarah (Page 409-411)
_____		Blessing of Wine and Challah (Page 465)
_____	_____	Other

* Page numbers refer to pages in Kol Haneshamah, The Reconstructionist Prayerbook

Name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah Candidate _____

Our University Synagogue Simcha Tree of Life

As of 10/2008

Judaism is a tradition of celebration. We have an incredible number of holidays when the Torah tells us to “rejoice.” We celebrate lifecycle events – births, namings, birthdays, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, graduations, weddings and anniversaries - with “mazel tov” and singing “siman tov u’ mazel tov.”

We have a Tree of Life, a Simcha Tree, situated in our Social Hall, to remind us of all the joys of our lives. We invite you to add your loved ones’ simchas to our Tree and share your nachas with our congregation or just add your loved ones’ names out of love. A leaf on our Tree of Life honors your friends and family and reminds everyone that life’s joys are not to be taken for granted. Life is short, so we need to celebrate, rejoice and feel deep gratitude for all of the blessings of our lives. L’chaim/To Life!

Several times a year, a dedication of all new leaves takes place.

DONATING LEAVES

1. \$180 for a single leaf
2. \$360 for a double leaf (larger)
3. Please complete this form and return it to the Synagogue office. Make checks payable to University Synagogue.

STYLE AND WORDING

1. Recommended maximum of 70 letters per leaf
2. Times Roman print style (same as this form)
3. For one person: In honor of: (father, mother, sister, child, friend, etc.) John Smith, (on his/her/their _____) from (a) the Cohen Family or (b) Bob and Hilda Cohen.
4. For two people: In honor of our parents, children, grandchildren, John and Judy Smith (on their _____) (a) the Cohen family or (b) Bob and Hilda Cohen.

Please complete and return to University Synagogue, Fax # 949-553-4034

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Email: _____

I will purchase a single leaf @ \$180 per leaf: \$ _____

I will purchase a double leaf (larger) @ \$360 per leaf: \$ _____

Wording for first leaf (please print clearly): _____

Wording for second leaf (please print clearly): _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Please charge my Visa MasterCard - Account # _____

Exp. Date: _____ Signature: _____

University Synagogue Tree of Remembrance

As of 10/2008

In our tradition, we are taught that love and memory are stronger than death. Judaism gives us the Kaddish prayer, Yizkor memorial services and an annual Yahrzeit to keep us connected to our loved ones. Our **Tree of Remembrance** reminds us as well, and we have the comfort of seeing our loved ones' names, as we honor their memories publicly in our congregation.

Through us, our loved ones still live. Through supporting our **Tree of Remembrance**, their values and vision, as well as our own, will live on into the future.

Several times a year, a dedication of all new leaves takes place.

DONATING LEAVES

1. \$300 for one name on a leaf
2. \$450 for two names on a leaf
4. If a leaf is purchased with one name, it can be exchanged later for a leaf with two names for an additional \$150.
4. Please complete this form and return it to the Synagogue office. Make checks payable to University Synagogue.

STYLE AND WORDING

1. Recommended maximum of 70 letters per leaf
2. Times Roman print style (same as this form)
3. For one person: In memory of my/our beloved (father, mother, sister, child, friend, etc.) John Smith, from (a) the Cohen Family or (b) Bob and Hilda Cohen.
4. For two people: In memory of my/our beloved parents, John and Judy Smith, from (a) the Cohen family or (b) Bob and Hilda Cohen

Please complete and return to University Synagogue, Fax # 949-553-4034

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Email: _____

I will purchase _____ leaves with one name @ \$300 per leaf: \$ _____

I will purchase _____ leaves with two names @ \$450 per leaf: \$ _____

Wording for first leaf (please print clearly): _____

Wording for second leaf (please print clearly): _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

Please charge my Visa MasterCard - Account # _____

Exp. Date: _____ Signature: _____

UNIVERSITY SYNAGOGUE TZEDAKAH OPPORTUNITIES

As of 02/2010

Please send or fax this form to University Synagogue,
3400 Michelson, Irvine, CA 92612; Fax (949) 553-4034

Please be generous – at the time of a simcha or a sad occasion, when honoring someone in life or memory. These tax deductible funds help us do the crucial work of sustaining and improving Jewish and general life. If you wish to endow a fund in someone's honor or memory or for a special purpose, please call the President of University Synagogue.

Donor Name: _____ Telephone #: _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____ Send card to: _____

Address (if non-member): _____

Please print name and relationship:

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

Mazel To: _____

Condolences on the death of: _____

Refua Shelema/Get well wishes to: _____

To commemorate: _____

Other: _____

Please indicate your choice of Tzedakah Fund:

- General Fund** – for all the multifaceted activities of our active congregation
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund** – a way to assist charities that the Rabbi supports, often dealing with issues of justice, peace, Jewish education and hunger. Many members give to this Fund at the time of a wedding, funeral, unveiling, naming, Bar/Bat Mitzvah. (Please make checks payable to RRDF)
- Cantor's Fund** – for concerts and other musical enrichment programs at University Synagogue for adults and children
- Brian Black Memorial Mental Health Fund** – to promote mental health programs at University Synagogue
- Building Fund** - for all the important needs of our building
- Choir Fund** – to support musical activities at services and for special programs
- Fishman Family Concert Fund** – to underwrite concerts for University Synagogue
- Lutzky Fund for the Education of Jewish Children** – for special events for University Synagogue children
- Mazon** – our participation in a national effort to feed the hungry. (Please make checks payable to Mazon.)
- Ozan Family Library Fund** - established by the Beral, Dienstag and Witkin Families – a nameplate in honor or in memory of whomever you designate will be affixed to each book that we purchase.
- Pre-School Fund** – to enrich our program
- School Fund** – for books, special education and other needed “extras” not covered by school tuition and the general budget.
- Simcha Tree of Life** – celebrate lifecycle events: births, namings, birthdays, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, graduations, weddings, anniversaries (\$180 single leaf; \$360 double leaf)
- Simon Family Fund** – for children's programs and to promote bonds between the generations
- Speakers Fund** - founded by the Metzger Family - to educate people of all religious backgrounds about Jewish values and ideas by bringing speakers to University Synagogue.
- Tikkun Olam Fund** – founded by the Grossman/Swaiman Family to promote diversity and social action in our society
- Tree of Remembrance** – engrave your loved ones' names, as we honor their memories publicly in our congregation (\$300 for 1 name; \$450 for two names)

I would like to purchase _____ packets of tribute cards at \$50 per packet of 5 cards I will pick up cards at services

Please mail cards to _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ or Please charge by: VISA Master Card Discover

Account Number: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Expires: _____

Signature: _____