

B'NAI MITZVAH GUIDE

5778

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Contents:

Prerequisites	2
Tutoring Info	2
Honors	3
Expectations	3
Financial	4
Celebration Standards	5
Green Kiddush	5
Guests	6
Honoring your Child	6
Deadlines	7
Meetings	7
Tzedakah	8
6th Grade	8
FAQs	9
D'var Torah	10
Minyan Letter	
Meaningful Bar/Bat Mitzvah	10
Contacting Us	11

Mazal Tov!

מזל טוב!

THE TIME OF a child's celebrating becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is one of the most meaningful experiences in a family's Jewish life.

THE BETH SHALOM COMMUNITY has structured our Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation to engage adults and teens in a spirited, meaningful learning environment. To that end, there are several critical elements of our program in which your child will participate in preparation toward becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In addition to continuing his or her learning at Religious School or a day school, your child will attend Prozdor, receive one-on-one tutoring, supervised by our Bar/Bat Mitzvah Coordinator, and work directly with Rabbis Borodin and Rubin. As a family, you will participate in the Shab-

bat Prozdor Program. In this packet you will find explanations of these program components, along with associated costs and guidance for different questions in celebrating this simcha.

IN ORDER TO PROCEED with a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, your child must be in good educational standing and your household must be current on all synagogue financial responsibilities, including membership dues, sustaining fund or other financial obligations, Religious School and/or Prozdor tuition, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah fees. All financial questions should be directed to our Executive Director, Carol Benedick. This requirement safeguards the sustainability of our program



and we thank you in advance for honoring it.

WE LOOK FORWARD to taking this journey with you.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions and request our help as you prepare for this exciting milestone.

The B'nai Mitzvah Coordinating Team

It takes a team to help plan your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Rabbi Borodin will meet individually with each student and their family. She will answer questions and begin exploring the many ways to create lasting meaning and deepen synagogue connections through the B'nai Mitzvah Process.

Rabbi Rubin will have an initial meeting with students and their families and then continue assisting your child on writing his or her D'var Torah.

Marci Greenberg, B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator will work with you in all aspects of b'nai mitzvah preparation, including setting up a tutor, regularly checking progress and running the rehearsals. .

A trained tutor (either an adult or teen) will coach your child in trop, the blessings, and leading services.

Heidi Piel, Rabbi's Assistant & Life Cycle Coordinator will work with you on planning your Kiddush, finalizing your honors and many other event logistics. She also keeps Rabbi Borodin's calendar. Please contact her to make or change any appointments with a rabbi.

Educational Prerequisites

Students are expected to be enrolled in an approved Jewish educational program from 3rd through 8th Grade.

To celebrate a Bar or Bat Mitzvah under the auspices of the synagogue, a child is expected to be enrolled in the CBS Religious School or a Jewish day school by the third grade and maintain enrollment in one of these programs through the eighth grade. Our hope is our students will also be involved in Jewish Education through high school, and that they will join our new Jewish high school program, the Livnot Chai project.

Congregation Beth Shalom recognizes that individual children may have special needs, which necessitate developing a special program of study. All alternative arrangements need to be worked out in advance with the Education and Youth Director. In some cases educational delays and inability to fulfill requirements may require

It is recommended that each family purchase the *Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary* published by the Jewish Publication Society.

delaying the Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sixth and Seventh Grade Religious School Requirement

Sixth & Seventh grade Religious School students are required to attend classes at Beth Shalom on **Saturdays and Tuesdays**. Additionally, approximately one year prior to your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, he/she will begin **individual skill tutoring**, focusing on their chosen service format and assigned Torah and Haftarah readings.

Eighth Grade Prozdor Commitment

During the eighth grade year, stu-

Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring is NOT a replacement for participation in any Religious School class and should not be scheduled during Religious School or Prozdor hours.

dents are expected to honor their commitment to completing the Prozdor program on Saturdays.

FORMER DAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sixth Grade Religious School Requirement

Incoming sixth graders who completed 5th grade at a day school and enrolled in a public or independent secular school for 6th grade **have the same educational obligations** as Religious School students.

Former day school students are required to attend **Saturday and Tuesday** sixth-grade classes.

CONTINUING DAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

In the **sixth, seventh and eighth grades**, day school students are required to attend the **Prozdor Middle School program on Saturday Mornings**.

Refusal to continue Jewish Studies after Bar/Bat Mitzvah is grounds for not scheduling a communal Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration at Beth Shalom.

Involvement of Younger Siblings

Younger siblings, upon mastering the skill, are welcome to lead Ein Keloheinu, Ashrei, and/or read Torah. To join the Ashrei Club or the Young Readers Club, please contact Rabbi Borodin or Marci Greenberg to become a "certified" club member.

Information about Tutoring

At your first meeting with the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, your child's Hebrew level will be assessed, goals for training will be determined and a list of several tutors will be provided. Most of the tutors are 9th through 12th graders who have been trained in our peer tutor program. The B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator will also have names of adult tutors if you want a trained adult.

You may interview tutors and choose the tutor that best suits your child's schedule and needs. Please schedule an initial meeting and establish a regular weekly schedule with your tutor right away (tutoring must begin no later than 8 months before the service, otherwise the service will be rescheduled). The duration of tutoring varies,

although we have found that most students need about 25-35 one-hour sessions to learn the set of skills needed for the service.

Tutoring costs vary depending on whether you use a teen or adult tutor. Teen tutors submit a timesheet to the office for payroll. The tutor will ask you to sign the timesheet. The hours submitted by the tutor are covered by the B'nai Mitzvah program fee. Adult tutors are paid directly by the family at the rate you negotiate. The B'nai Mitzvah fee is discounted when an adult tutor is used. Teen tutors are supervised by our B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator.



General Expectations: All Congregation Beth Shalom b'nai mitzvah services take place on Shabbat and in the CBS sanctuary

- **Participation in Shabbat Prozdor.** Students and their parents study t'filla and trope from 9:30—12:30 which includes supporting classmates as they become bar or bat mitzvah.
- Every B'nai Mitzvah student also participates in a weekday minyan where he/she leads part of the service and performs the Mitzvot of Tallit and Tefillin as a Jewish adult. This is usually the Thursday morning before being called to the Torah on Shabbat.
- Every B'nai Mitzvah child is expected to have a personal Gemulit Hasadim Tovim project and make a personally significant donation to tzedakah.
- Regular Shabbat attendance is expected by both students and parents during the 6th & 7th grade year. Minimum service attendance is 18 Shabbat mornings. If the student plans to lead Kabbalat Shabbat services, he or she is expected to attend Kabbalat Shabbat services a minimum of 10 times. More attendance is always encouraged.
- Students are expected to reflect on the services they attend, using the form "Reflections on Shabbat Services." They will periodically review this log with the Religious Practices Committee Representative.
- Families are expected to extend a Bar/Bat Mitzvah invitation to ALL Prozdor classmates in their grade.
- Families host a *Seudat Mitzvah* (festive meal) for the congregation immediately following the ceremony at the synagogue.
- All private parties should be Shabbat friendly and kosher (or vegetarian). Ask the rabbi's assistant for a list of Beth Shalom approved caterers.
- Continued participation in Jewish education in Prozdor through the end of 8th grade at Beth Shalom and through the Livnot Chai Project.
- Learning with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor.
- Participate in regular Group and Individual meetings with the Rabbi and B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator.

Distributing Honors, Assigning Torah Readers

We are delighted to honor your guests during the service. You will discuss the selection of honors with the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator at the 5-month check in. The B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator has an honors form for you to complete and return to Heidi in the office one month prior to the ceremony. Below is a summary of honors available:

Shabbat Morning:

Aliyot assignments:

Maftir (usually for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah), Cohen, Levi, and three Yisrael aliyot. Two Yisrael aliyot are always left to be assigned to worshippers from the congregation. If it is easier, any honors can be assigned by the office.

Service leading honors: Torah readings.

Other honors: Opening and Closing the Ark, Congregation or Hebrew communal

readings, Hagbah, Gelilah, Ashrei, and Ein Keloheinu.

Assigning Torah Readers & Service Leaders at a Shabbat Morning Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Beth Shalom's services are led by lay volunteers who participate on a rotating basis. Because the celebration of B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies is an integral part of our regular communal worship, several members of the congregation not connected to the family will have roles in the service. Any service or readings not done by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah are assigned to our volunteers.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family may invite skilled family members and friends to read Torah in place of lay volunteers with sufficient notice. The names of proposed Torah readers should be submitted to the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator four months from the bar/bat Mitzvah. Otherwise, volunteer leyners will stand as assigned.

Shacharit and Musaf are reserved for a member of the CBS Shatz rotation

(unless led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or by special permission of the rabbi).

Extending Honors to Non-Jewish Family or Friends:

Non-Jews may be invited to read a prayer for the country or a prayer for peace in English from the Bimah. Please arrange this honor with the rabbi in your meetings with

A skilled Torah reader is defined by the CBS Religious Practices Committee as someone who:

- Reads Hebrew clearly and correctly, and understands what is being read.
- Does not rely on a tape to memorize the reading, but rather knows how to chant the cantillation notes and can read them without error from the Torah Scroll.
- A leyners should conduct him/herself in such a way to honor the Torah and the congregation. This includes wearing modest clothing, kippah and tallit when reading from the Torah.



Paying for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah



The Beth Shalom Board of Directors has a strict pre-payment policy for all events at Beth Shalom. All events require a 50% deposit to hold the date and the remaining 50% must be paid 60 days prior to the event. Events not meeting deadlines are subject to cancellation— even if the invitations have already gone out! This is not something we ever want to have happen, please, speak to us about any potential problems far in advance.

How much does it cost?

We have developed an average, aggregate fee that covers most B'nai Mitzvah expenses. This fee is \$1,500.

What Payment Plans does Beth Shalom offer?

Beth Shalom offers you a choice of 3 payment plans:

- 1) pay the entire deposit at the one year meeting, prior to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah date,
- 2) pay \$137 per month for the 11 months leading up to the event, so that the full deposit is paid 30 days prior to the event,
- 3) pay 50% at the one year meeting and the additional 50% 60 days prior to the event.

How will it appear on my Beth Shalom account?

Your pre-paid deposit will sit on your account and appear as a pre-payment. All fees are entered as they accrue and will sit on your account – do not be surprised if you see charges and credits. Once the event is complete, we will apply your payments to the actual charges to see your account status.

In order to guarantee your child's date, a deposit and pre-payment plan are required.

What does the fee cover?

- B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator's time
- Administrative support for the B'nai Mitzvah Process
- 6th Grade Family T'fillah and Trope
- Up to 35 hours of peer teen tutoring
- Rehearsals
- Basic Kiddush costs
- Copy of *Siddur Sim Shalom* for the student

What is not included?

- Adult tutors (If you are using an adult tutor, please contact the Lifecycle Coordinator)
- Overages for tutoring (over 35 hours)
- Food or catering costs
- Private parties
- Flowers and decorations
- Thursday morning Seudah
- Other costs incurred by the synagogue for your child's preparation.

Your fee will be adjusted after your simcha.

What would cause me to spend more than average?

- Using an adult tutor
- Tutoring exceeding 35 hours
- Cancelling tutoring session without 24 hours notice
- Using extra tablecloths or colored cloths
- Having over 250 family, friends and congregation members in attendance

If you have any questions about whether or not something is included, please do not hesitate to call the Lifecycle Coordinator.

Also, keep in mind that Beth Shalom never discriminates against families for true inability to pay; scholarships are always available to guarantee equal access to all children. Scholarships must be arranged upon securing your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date by contacting the Executive Director or Rabbi Borodin.

What is covered in the basic Kiddush costs?

- Logistics planning with the family
- Tea and coffee service
- Use of the Social Hall
- Up to 8 hours of kitchen time
- Rental of 20 white table cloths for the most often used Kiddush set up
- Compostable plates, napkins, cups and flatware

My child missed a tutoring session, what happens?

Tutors will be paid for all scheduled lessons not cancelled at least 24 hours in advance. In the case where the cost of tutoring is covered by the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, the family will pay the cost of missed sessions out of pocket.

I am behind on dues and other synagogue financial obligations. Will this impact my child's ability to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Unfortunately, yes. Members must be up to date on their obligations to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please call the synagogue bookkeeper, Emma Shusterman, to develop a payment plan, (206) 524-0075.



Standards for Meals and Private Celebrations

Seudat Mitzvah: The Kiddush

Following Shabbat morning services in honor of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the family hosts a Seudat Mitzvah, a festive meal, at the synagogue for the congregation and their guests. The meal is concluded with Birkat Hamazon led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This meal can be prepared by one of our approved caterers or by the family in the Shul kitchen after going through the Beth Shalom kitchen and kashrut orientation. Speak with the Lifecycle Coordinator for more details.

Kiddush arrangements need to be finalized with the Lifecycle Coordinator at least one month before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

In some cases, the Seudat mitzvah may present a financial hardship. In such cases, we urge parents to speak to the Rabbi or the Executive Director who will help the family to celebrate their simcha with dignity and joy.

Optional: Kippot & Benchers

It is a custom in Jewish communities for families to enhance the holiness and joy of the Seudah and other celebratory feasts with purchase of personalized kippot or benchers. Kippot can be personalized with your child's name imprinted in English and Hebrew, along with the Hebrew date. These make a wonderful keepsake for guests.

Families keep multiple copies of the benchers for their home celebrations and give them to guests as a reminder of the simcha. The covers of the benchers can be embossed with the

"Greening" Your Shabbat Kiddush

We recognize the events at Beth Shalom have a direct impact on the local and regional environment. We are committed to reducing waste and making our events eco-friendly.

YOU CAN DO YOUR PART! To make your kiddush eco-friendly please speak with the rabbi's assistant. We are happy to work with you and your caterer to create a zero-waste event. Beth Shalom will furnish compostable

name of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the Hebrew date, and a verse from Scripture. Benchers can be ordered through the USCJ Book service.

Private Bar/Bat Mitzvah Parties and Respect for Shabbat and Kashrut

Please consider the following recommendations when planning your private party:

Considerations in Scheduling the Private Party

Please plan the private party after Shabbat, on Sunday during the spring and summer months, or in a manner that is Shabbat friendly, such as a Friday night dinner or Saturday evening in the synagogue that would include Seudah Shlishit (third Shabbat meal) and Havdallah. You can follow this with the non-Shabbat oriented part of the party after Shabbat has concluded.

Making Your Private Party Kosher

Celebrating the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a kosher or vegetarian meal makes the celebration a statement that it is more than just a party— it is a celebration of our Jewish tradition.

Respecting the Religious Observance of Other Members

Keep in mind that, in our Beth Shalom community, there is a broad spectrum of observance. We ask our less observant members to respect the observance of our more traditional members and create celebrations comfortable for the whole community. We urge everyone to plan a kosher or vegetarian party that respects Shab-

supplies—i.e., plates, cups, utensils, etc.—and provide them for your use making the event zero-waste. Please encourage your caterer to make this event "green".



bat. Our staff can help you plan an appropriate celebration which honors Jewish practice and standards.

Respect for Shabbat

Please remind guests and caterers of Shabbat practices and restrictions. Concerning deliveries and removals, all foods, flowers and other supplies must be delivered no later than 2:00PM on Friday. No deliveries of any kind can occur on Shabbat and nothing other than food can be removed before the end of Shabbat. All other items cannot be removed until after Shabbat concludes. The kitchen closes on Fridays at 2:00PM—all cooking must be completed by that time. There is no cooking on Shabbat. A list of Beth Shalom Shabbat practices is available for you to give to your guests.



Volunteer and help strengthen your family's experience

We'd love to have parents step forward to a few social opportunities for students and parents to get acquainted in 5th & 6th grade.

We are urging 6th Grade families to do a group *Gemilut Hasidim Tovim* project and a volunteer project to benefit CBS,

Helpful Information for Guests & Non-Shabbat Regulars

Our services are participatory and joyful, and we invite guests to take part in this spirit. Prayer in the synagogue is a holy experience. Respect for the synagogue and our worship service is expected from all who enter Beth Shalom. Therefore, we request that guests be informed about, and respectful of, the worship traditions and practices in addition to the Shabbat observance of our congregation.

In respect for Shabbat, we kindly ask that cell-phones, cameras, and other electronic devices and writing implements not be used in the building.

Please be sensitive to the impact that large numbers of guests, unfamiliar with traditional Jewish worship practices, has on those who regularly attend our services. We seek to maintain the highly participatory nature of our services even

when many guests join us for simchas.

Please inform your guests, particularly those who are unfamiliar with the Hebrew service, that while our doors open at 9:30 am, it is also permissible to come later. We recommend they arrive by 10:15am to be present for the Torah service. Please let the Lifecycle Coordinator know how many guests you expect at least 2 weeks in advance to enable us to plan to set up enough chairs and have appropriate custodial coverage.

Please remind your guests that they are part of a regular religious service. We encourage families to include a guide for guests with their invitations that will acquaint them with the traditions and customs of Beth Shalom. The congregation has available a few prayer books with transliteration and explanation.

Ask the Ushers for copies.

All materials intended for guests such as kippot and programs, must be brought to the synagogue by Friday at 2:00PM.

Guests with young children need to be informed that they are responsible for their children during services. Babysitting is available for our members on Shabbat morning from 10:15am-12:15pm. Please let us know if you expect to have children requiring babysitting, and we will hire additional sitters at your expense. Beth Shalom also offers weekly Shabbat programming for children from 10:45am—12:15pm. Choose between FDI for ages 3-6 and Kids Kehillah for ages 7-11 yrs.

Multiple Simchot — Sharing your Bar/Bat Mitzvah

In honor of your child's becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the child, family, and friends have important roles in leading the service or receiving an aliyah. At the same time, other members of the congregation may also celebrate a simcha (joyous occasion) such as a baby naming, Aufruf, or significant anniversary.

On Shabbat morning two Yisrael aliyot are always reserved for the congregation. If there is another simcha to take place on the Shabbat of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the office will inform you of the simcha as soon as we know.

Ways for Parents to Honor their Child at the Bar or Bat Mitzvah

All parents will give their child a blessing during the service and usually will have an Aliyah to the Torah. The following are additional ways to honor your child at the ceremony:

- **Teach Torah** —share words of Torah in the form of a brief D'var Torah (3-5 minutes) at the meal or at Friday Night Kabbalat Shabbat service. It is also a lovely tradition to invite family members and friends to deliver Divrei Torah in honor of the child at the private party during the weekend.
- **Read Torah** — Learning to read the Torah is a lovely way to honor your child and to honor the Torah. This is recommended for parents who already know or have the time and Hebraic knowledge to commit to learning the cantillation skills.
- **Give Tzedakah** — Gifts of tzedakah in honor of your child are a very special way to honor this milestone.



Important Meetings and Deadlines

Individual Meetings and Activities

One Year Meeting with B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

Assess Hebrew reading skills & provide Torah and Haftarah readings
Determine what the student will lead
Arrange for Tutor
Cohort meeting to answer emerging questions and provide timing specific information

Six Month Meeting with Lifecycle Coordinator

Discuss Kiddush sponsorship, catering and kitchen use
If younger siblings are in Ashrei Club or are approved Torah readers, schedule time for them to lead Ashrei or read Torah

Five Month Meeting with B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

Evaluate progress and revise preparation schedule as needed
Hand out Honors form and discuss honors
Let B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator know the names of guest Torah readers

Four Month Meetings with our Rabbis

Rabbi Rubin: Read Parsha in advance of meeting and bring 3-4 questions to begin writing the D'var Torah

Rabbi Borodin: Family meets to explore ways to deepen understanding and increase meaning of the process and service
Family will meet with Rabbi Borodin again at the one month marker

*Let Lifecycle Coordinator know who your caterer is or whether you plan to self cater.
Call office to reserve kitchen time for you or your caterer*

Two Month Meeting with the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

Last evaluation of skills
Answer questions about ceremony, rehearsals, etc.
Set dates for rehearsals

One to Two Months Prior

Submit Ruach announcement with photographs to office (by the 10th of the previous month)
Let Lifecycle Coordinator know how many guests to expect

One Month Prior—Final Family Meeting

Meet with Rabbi Rubin to finalize D'var Torah
Submit final D'var Torah
Meet with Rabbi Borodin to share insights for charge
Family shares written reflections with each other
Submit honors distribution sheet

One-Three Weeks Prior

Two rehearsals with the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

Thursday morning prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah, 7:00AM

Attend morning minyan with Tallit and Tefillin
Have an Aliyah and deliver the D'var Torah
Host a light breakfast after the minyan, typically coffee and bagels



Group Meetings and Activities

- ◇ 5th Grade Parent Orientation with Rabbi & B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator
- ◇ 5th Grade Family social event—dependent on parent volunteers
- ◇ 6th Grade Family social event — dependent on parent volunteers
- ◇ 6th Grade Prozdor classes - T'filla and Trope
- ◇ 6th Grade Gemilut Hasadim Tovim project—dependent on parents
- ◇ 6th Grade group CBS volunteer project—dependent on parents



Don't forget to have a great picture to accompany your Ruach article

Tzedakah and the B'nai Mitzvah Celebration

It is a Jewish tradition to give tzedakah in honor of the milestone of a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Here are some of our favorite organizations to support:

- A Contribution to the [Campership or Youth Funds](#) of Congregation Beth Shalom. Each year Beth Shalom provides scholarships for students to attend Camp Solomon Schechter, Camp Ramah or other Jewish camps during the summer and to attend regional and national USY and Kadima events during the year. Contributions to either of these funds provide financial resources to meet real needs of our students each year.
- [Jewish Family Service](#): Beth Shalom is a strong supporter of Jewish Family Service in Seattle. JFS provides various means for B'nai Mitzvah families to support the invaluable social services it provides to Jews in need in our community. Please contact the food basket project coordinator at JFS at 206-461-3240 to learn how your gift of tzedakah can help feed the poor.
- [Mazon - the Jewish Response to Hunger](#) - offers grants to nonprofit organizations working to ease the suffering of hungry people in the United States, Israel, and around the globe. Beth Shalom is a long time and strong supporter of Mazon. Families might consider donating 3% of their catering costs to Mazon or make an outright contribution. Please contact their office at 12401 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 303; Los Angeles, CA 90025-1015;
 - 310-442-0020;
 - Email: mazonmail@aol.com.
- The [Masorti Foundation](#) for Conservative Judaism in Israel is the best way to support efforts to bring about the advancement of our movement and the spread of religious pluralism in Israel and offers a special program to allow for the training and celebration of special needs Israeli youth for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Contact Masorti for a longer list of potential tzedakah and volunteer opportunities. Contributions should be sent to 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832; New York, NY 10115-0122; (212) 870-2216 or 1-877-287-7414; Email Masorti@Masorti.org; website: www.masorti.org.
- [American Jewish World Service](#) - a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing nonsectarian humanitarian assistance and emergency relief to people in the developing world. Website: www.ajws.org
- The [Mitzvah Heroes Fund, Inc.](#) administers efficient and direct tzedakah to further philanthropy

and tzedakah education. You can contact them at 12300 Carroll Ave, Upper Level, Rockville, MD 20852; (301) 335-6278; www.mitzvahheroesfund.org.

- We also encourage you to do a project of Gemilut-Hasadim Tovim, *act of loving kindness*, in honor of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The rabbi is happy to help you explore possible projects.



Shabbat Prozdor Program



Shabbat Prozdor is a special teaching and participatory class for families with children preparing for Bar and Bat Mitzvah at Beth Shalom. Families will study T'filla and trope together. Focus is also placed on building community. Our hope is that all participants will become more comfortable and knowledgeable about the unique approach to worship at Beth Shalom and will form closer relationships with other families whose children are preparing for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration.

Shabbat Prozdor is designed for all 6th grade pre-B'nai Mitzvah students (both day school and religious school) and their parents, and is a prerequisite for having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony at Beth Shalom.

Shabbat Prozdor offers students and their parents a unique opportunity to learn from a variety of different scholars and educators including, Rabbi Borodin, Rabbi Rubin, Marci Greenberg, Rabbi Lauren Kurland and more.

~ Frequently Asked Questions ~

My child has a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date set. What now? The synagogue B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, Marci Greenberg, is here to help you navigate the steps toward successful training and the upcoming B'nai Mitzvah. Marci will contact you to set up 1 year, 5 and 2 month meetings, as well as rehearsals.

Whom do I call to change the date? Call the Lifecycle Coordinator in the office at (206) 524-0075.

Is there someone in the Beth Shalom office whom I can call with all B'nai Mitzvah related questions? Yes, both the Lifecycle Coordinator and the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator are happy to answer any questions you have or point you in the right direction. They work closely with Rabbi Borodin and all service coordinators.

I missed the group meeting. How do I get the information? Call the Lifecycle Coordinator at (206) 524-0075.

How do we get a tutor? Talk to Marci Greenberg. She will recommend an appropriate match. Marci can be reached at (206) 914-1229 or bmitzvah@bethshalomseattle.org

Who will be the Gabbai Rishon and what does that person do? The Gabbai Rishon maintains the integrity of the Torah reading, calls people to the bimah for aliyot and says the Mi She'berakh. Beth Shalom has a Gabbai Rishon rotation, which is organized by volunteer, Nance Adler. Should you have questions regarding the Gabbai Rishon, call the Lifecycle Coordinator.

What if I want someone other than the Rabbi to give the charge? Rabbi Borodin looks forward to speaking to your children personally during the charge from the bimah. Please arrange with her individually if you want to make alternative arrangements for another approved Jewish educator or rabbi to deliver the charge.

Who will coach my child on their D'var Torah? Each student will write and present a 5 minute D'var Torah. Rabbi Ruben will meet with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family approximately 4 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to work on the D'var Torah. Some families also opt to hire a Jewish educator or work with a family friend on the D'var Torah.

Who will be the Shatz (service leader)? The Torah Leyner (reader)? The synagogue has a regular Shatz rotation, organized by volunteer, Linda-Jo Greenberg. It also has a regular Torah Leyning rotation, organized by Alison Sands. These trained members will serve as Shatzim and Torah Leyner(s) on your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Day. For the Shatz and Leyning schedule, please call the office at 206-524-0075. For other questions please contact Marci Greenberg at (206) 914-1229. Special requests for shatzim need to be made 4 months in advance to Linda-Jo Greenberg at greenljo@hotmail.com.

I have a skilled friend/family member who I'd like to read Torah. Is this ok? The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family may invite skilled family members and friends to serve as Torah readers. Their names should be submitted to the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, Marci Greenberg, no later than five months prior to the event.

What will the Bar/Bat Mitzvah be able to do during services? We encourage our students to learn as much as possible in coordination with their tutors and the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator. Bar/Bat Mitzvah students begin with learning the Haftarah, Torah Reading, Kiddush and Torah Service. After mastering these skills, we welcome them to learn Shacharit (including P'sukei D'zimra), Kabbalat Shabbat and Musaf (after having already mastered Shacharit).

Whom should I contact regarding honors for our family and friends? What are they? Beth Shalom will provide your family with an honors form for you to fill out and return to the office. The selection of honors is discussed at the five month meeting with Marci. The completed Honors Form

should be submitted to the Lifecycle Coordinator at least two weeks prior to your event.

Whom and when do I call to plan the kiddush? We recommend you begin planning the kiddush at least six months prior to the event. All planning for the kiddush must be completed at least one month prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, with the Lifecycle Coordinator.

Which dates are Generally not available for B'nai Mitzvah? Shabbat Hazon (Shabbat prior to Tisha B'Av), Rosh Hashanah, Shabbat Shuvah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Pesach, Shavuot, Shabbat Shirah, Shabbat which is followed immediately by Purim. Children whose Bar or Bat Mitzvah dates fall on these occasions are moved to the next available Shabbat.

What happens if the Rabbis are away? The rabbis considers their participation in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah of primary importance. However, the rabbis have conferences, vacations, and camp duty during the year which involve being away. They will try to inform affected families of these dates as soon as possible to enable you to consider the option of re-scheduling at a time when Rabbi Borodin and/or Rabbi Ruben can be present.



Guidelines for Writing a D'var Torah

We anticipate that all of our B'nai Mitzvah students will write and deliver a D'var Torah. The d'var Torah is delivered after the Torah service and should be approximately five minutes in length. Its purpose is to teach Torah. Most commonly it is on the weekly Torah portion, but it may also be on the haftarah, an upcoming holiday, a specific prayer or a theological question. The d'var Torah should introduce the community to some rabbinic teaching on the subject as well as the student's own insights on this topic.

To help students navigate writing a D'var Torah, prior to the four month meeting with Rabbi Rubin, students should have read their Torah and haftarah portions and come with a list of questions and subjects from their Torah and haftarah portions which interest them and about which they might want to write a d'var Torah. Following

this meeting, Rabbi Rubin will research different rabbinic insights to support the student's questions. Most of this material is written for adult readers. We recommend our teenagers read through the material and prepare their d'var Torah in partnership with an adult. For some families it works well for the helping adult to be a parent; for other families it works well to have a relative, friend or a tutor help prepare their d'var Torah. Rabbi Rubin is happy to spend additional time helping families with this process. He is also able to provide you with names of community members who enjoy working with students on their divrei Torah. All divrei Torah need to be approved by the Rabbi at least three weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. For students who are not prepared for a full d'var Torah, there is also the possibility of them giving a 2-3 minute

introduction to the Torah or haftarah before they are read on Shabbat morning.

Suggested d'var Torah Outline:

- 1) Introduction to the subject and question to be explored
- 2) Sharing of 1-3 Rabbinic Commentaries on the subject
- 3) Own Personal Insights and answers to the question being explored
- 4) What does this mean for you and/or our lives today?



Suggestions on How to Make the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as Meaningful and Enjoyable as Possible

- 1) Be a Shabbat regular—it's never too late to become a regular. Students and parents who come regularly are usually better prepared, more comfortable and more motivated. Have your child be with you in the sanctuary, following the service with an open siddur.
- 2) Get to know the other families. Think of ways to increase the cohesiveness of your cohort, both parents and students. Be the first to reach out!
- 3) Create a standard routine for practicing. Have a regular place and time. Be a positive parent.
- 4) Communicate regularly with tutors, B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator, Educational & Youth Director as well as Rabbi Borodin and Rabbi Rubin about how the process is going. Tell us about snags before they become problems so we can help.
- 5) Read the weekly Torah portion with your child and engage with the text, asking questions is learning. (There are great resources for families to study).
- 6) Increase exposure and involvement in the synagogue and different mitzvot, (i.e. attend a weekday Minyan and Kabbalat Shabbat, join teen feed or help the Shabbos Chefs).

Mazel Tov! We look forward to celebrating this important milestone with you

How to reach us, who to ask!

Marci Greenberg: B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator
(206) 914-1229
bmitzvah@bethshalomseattle.org

Heidi Piel: Rabbi's Assistant & Lifecycle Coordinator
(206) 524-0075 x2508
heidipiel@bethshalomseattle.org

Rabbi Jill Borodin
(206) 524-0075 x2501
rabbiborodin@bethshalomseattle.org

Rabbi Adam Rubin
(206) 524-0075 x2518
rabbirubin@bethshalomseattle.org

Emma Shusterman: CBS Bookkeeper
(206) 524-0075 x2505
emmashusterman@bethshalomseattle.org

Carol Benedick: Executive Director
(206) 524-0075 x2502
carolbenedick@bethshalomseattle.org

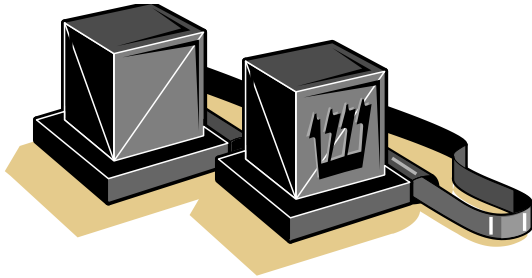
Rachel Wachtel: Education & Youth Director
206-524-0075 x2503
rachelwachtel@bethshalomseattle.org



Congregation Beth Shalom is a participatory egalitarian congregation affiliated with the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism. We provide a warm gathering place and a caring community for our members where we come together to nourish our spirituality through worship, to increase our understanding through study, to educate our young and to better our world through acts of loving kindness.

L'dor Vador

by Josh Nelson



We are gifts and we are blessings, we are history in song
We are hopes and we are healing, we are learning to be strong
We are words and we are stories, we are pictures of the past
We are carriers of wisdom, not the first and not the last

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּתְךָ

(From generation to generation, we will tell of Your greatness)

L'dor vador...we protect this chain
From generation to generation
L'dor vador, these lips shall praise Your name



Looking back on the journey that we carry in our heart
From the shadow of the mountain to the waters that would part
We are blessed and we are holy, we are children of Your way
And the words that bring us meaning, we will have the strength to say...



לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּתְךָ

(From generation to generation, we will tell of Your greatness)

L'dor vador...we protect this chain
From generation to generation
L'dor vador, these lips shall praise Your name