



B'NAI MITZVAH HANDBOOK

Seattle, WA | 206-525-0915



(Revised for 2020)

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Copies of this handbook and other paperwork is available on the Temple Beth Am website, www.templebetham.org.

BECOMING B'NAI MITZVAH AT TEMPLE BETH AM

Welcome,

We are profoundly excited to share Temple Beth Am's B'nai Mitzvah manual. It is our hope that as your child becomes Bar or Bat Mitzvah it will be a meaningful process for the whole family, a joyous sacred experience with our congregation, and a powerful commencement for your child on a lifelong path of Jewish learning and living.

B'nai Mitzvah recognizes the poignant stage when a child transitions into a young adult. Upon becoming B'nai Mitzvah, students accept the responsibilities of coming of age within the Jewish tradition; that is, the practice of *mitzvot* (sacred obligations), the continuation of Jewish learning, and the role modeling of Jewish values. As such, we expect and look forward to your student continuing on through Covenant Renewal (10th grade) and Am Yisrael High (11th and 12th grade) when they will deepen their commitment and connection to our heritage.

We celebrate our children becoming B'nai Mitzvah by offering them the privilege to help lead our congregational Shabbat morning service. Students read and chant *tefillot* (prayers), read from the Torah and Haftarah, and give an original *D'var Torah* (literally, "word of Torah," or short teaching). This handbook is intended to help guide and explain the B'nai Mitzvah process.

At Temple Beth Am, we pride ourselves on our communitarian spirit. In all areas of synagogue life, we strive to be egalitarian and to cultivate a soulful connection to Judaism. Given these communal values, we encourage understanding the B'nai Mitzvah experience as a congregational celebration (as opposed to a private life-cycle event) that embraces our culture of inclusion, social justice and community engagement.

Putting God on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah by Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin (available in the Temple Beth Am Library) has been enormously helpful to families embarking on this experience. Also, while Rabbi Zlotnick and Rabbi Levine will oversee the service itself, please know that all of us are here as resources for you throughout the process.

We wish you a hearty *mazel tov* and hope it is an exciting and transformative journey!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Ruth A. Zlotnick
Rabbi Jason R. Levine

Rabbi Dana A. Benson

REQUIREMENTS

We deeply value bringing our youth closer to Torah. As a congregation, we take this communal process very seriously and want each family to understand that the accomplishment of something holy requires all of us working together.

In order for students to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Beth Am, students and families must:

- Be members in good standing with Temple Beth Am. This means financial commitment and tuition are both paid in full.
- Be enrolled in and attend Temple Beth Am's Religious School, specifically Hebrew studies, for two years prior to beginning their tutoring for Bar/Bat Mitzvah and for the entire 7th Grade Class, including attending after their service date
- As a new member (only applicable for students and families joining Temple Beth Am when the student is in 6th grade or older), commit to an individual tutoring plan in order to ensure Hebrew language is at grade level
- Understand that B'nai Mitzvah dates are assigned two years in advance and we accommodate to the best of our ability
- Attend services regularly until the B'nai Mitzvah date, starting in 4th grade
- Hire a private tutor 7 months prior to the B'nai Mitzvah date utilizing one the tutors on Temple Beth Am's approved tutors list (some students begin before 7 months)
- Attend six meetings and two rehearsals with clergy who will officiate at your service
- Complete a Mitzvah Project
- Invite his/her Religious School homeroom classmates to the service
- Host a light Kiddush lunch after the service for the congregation, choir and guests to celebrate our students

The following pages will go in-depth into each of the above requirements. Please utilize the Temple Staff Contacts page if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

INTRODUCTION

B'nai Mitzvah preparation presents an opportunity for spiritual growth for the whole family. We hope that you will attend services together. You may find that taking time for prayer and meditation with the community on Shabbat can be a powerful way of opening new pathways of meaning in your life. This portion of the handbook will help answer questions related to membership and Religious School enrollment, tutoring, and service attendance requirements.

BEING A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

In order for a student to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Beth Am, your family needs to be in good financial standing with the temple, whatever this might mean for your family. Please be in contact with temple staff if any financial needs come up so that we can work with you.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

B'nai Mitzvah students are required to be enrolled in and attend Religious School, specifically Hebrew studies, and attend class for a minimum of two years prior to beginning their tutoring for becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah, except in the case where they have transferred from another synagogue. Children who fall into the latter category will be evaluated by the clergy and given an appropriate Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

B'nai Mitzvah students are required to be enrolled in and attend 7th grade with the expectation that they will continue attending Religious School after their service date as well. The 7th graders have a schedule that allows them to meet more students, choose classes of interest to them, and learn from different teachers. This enhances peer-to-peer socialization, gives them opportunities to be inspired by various teachers, and allows them to move from class to class as they do in middle school.

Temple Beth Am believes strongly that Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not the culmination of a child's Jewish education, but a milestone in an ongoing Jewish journey. It is also our expectation that all students will continue their Jewish education after the B'nai Mitzvah experience, maintaining enrollment attendance in 8th grade and continuing through 12th Grade.

TRANSFER STUDENTS' COMMITMENT TO PRIVATE TUTORING

Children who have transferred to Temple Beth Am from another synagogue after 5th grade will be evaluated by the rabbinic team and given an appropriate Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

If a child has started attending Religious School in 6th grade or later, parents will need to meet with the Director of Education to understand the extra work involved in becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This includes a commitment to regular, private Hebrew tutoring in addition to attendance at Religious School. The family will also need to agree that the ceremony will need to be in 8th grade or later if the child has not begun learning Hebrew.

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

DATE SETTING

The size of our Religious School means that most B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies are shared. Our clergy and other staff work together to carefully take the students' skills and each family's needs and preferences into account when assigning Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates. We begin this process in 5th grade by asking families to fill out and return a form indicating date preferences in order to help us understand each family's requests in priority order. An effort is made to assign dates close to birthdays, but ability and compatibility are also considered in assigning two students to share this experience. Families must confirm dates ***in writing*** with our staff in order to continuing moving forward in this process.

CHANGING DATES

We are happy to make changes for Bar/Bat Mitzvah that are more than a year out if our schedule allows us to accommodate the change request. During the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year, we will only change dates if there is a family emergency. *Extracurricular activities do not count as a reason to change B'nai Mitzvah dates that are a year or less away.* There are no exceptions to this rule.

SERVICE ATTENDANCE

Students wishing to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah are required to attend Temple Beth Am services prior to their assigned service, including Friday night Shabbat services and/or Saturday morning services. Attending services helps families become comfortable with a typical Temple Beth Am service.

Starting in 4th grade, 4th graders attend four services, 5th graders attend five services, 6th graders attend six services and 7th graders attend seven services. In addition to these services, B'nai Mitzvah students attend services at least twice a month in the six months prior to his/her assigned Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. This means that 7th graders are asked to attend 12 services in the six months leading up to his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah in addition to the seven services required of all 7th graders.

Tracking Service Attendance:

In order to keep track of each student's service attendance, Temple Beth Am asks each student to check-in with the rabbi at each service by following these instructions:

1. Take the index card corresponding to your grade from the black box.
2. Write your name and date in clear print on this card.
3. Keep this card with you during services.
4. After services, go up to the clergy, shake their hand, and say "Shabbat Shalom."
5. Hand this card directly to the clergy. Don't bring this card home! This card verifies that you have attended a service and will help our office staff keep accurate track of each student's requirements.

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

TUTORING

Approximately 7 months before the B'nai Mitzvah service, families should identify an approved Hebrew tutor to begin weekly studies. Please refer to the Approved Tutor List maintained by the Temple Beth Am office. Some students may need to begin working with a tutor before 7 months. Please speak to any Temple Beth Am clergy if there is a concern.

The tutor will teach the Torah and Haftarah portions in Hebrew, with trope, if desired, the blessings before and after the readings, and refine their knowledge and delivery of the prayers that they will be leading during the service, including Friday night Kiddush. Families are responsible for scheduling tutoring, for transporting their child to tutoring, and for paying the tutor. We suggest that you request the current edition of the tutor list, and consult with any member of the clergy team to determine the best match for your child.

Each tutor has different preferences for where tutoring sessions occur. Temple Beth Am allows tutors to use our facility for B'nai Mitzvah students that are part of the Temple Beth Am community. Tutors book facilities directly with our office staff. As a parent, you are only required to schedule sessions with your tutors. Please allow the tutor to contact us for room requests.

MEETINGS WITH THE CLERGY

B'nai Mitzvah students meet with their assigned clergy approximately once a month for the 7-8 months prior to the service, including 6 times with the clergy, and 2 rehearsals. Meeting topics include studying the content of the Torah and Haftarah portions, writing their D'var Torah, the Mitzvah Project, music, and more.

Appointments to meet and work with students must take into consideration the clergy's busy schedule, and your child will be scheduled accordingly. Families will be contacted by our Temple Beth Am staff approximately 7-8 months prior to the B'nai Mitzvah service to schedule all 6 meetings and 2 rehearsals. Please prioritize these meetings when conflicts arise.

Meetings are generally scheduled during the Religious School calendar year on the following days:

- Sundays from 12:30 to 2:00 pm
- Tuesdays between 3:00 – 6:00 pm
- Wednesdays between 3:00 – 6:00 pm
- First rehearsals are scheduled the Thursday nine days before the B'nai Mitzvah from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
- Final rehearsals are scheduled for the Friday right before the B'nai Mitzvah from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

We work very diligently to best accommodate each family and ask for your flexibility in scheduling these meetings.

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

MITZVAH PROJECT

A Mitzvah Project is designed and carried out by each individual Bar/Bat Mitzvah student as a way of engaging in mitzvot that help others, which is a central message of Torah and Judaism. The project must be:

- Hands-on:** Do a project where you perform tasks that assist those in need. Raising money and babysitting do not qualify.
- Designed to bring direct benefit to an agency or recipient:** Whenever possible, have contact with the people you want to help. Visiting shut-ins, serving food to homeless people, preparing meals for someone who is ill, are all examples of direct benefit. If there is a cause that is deeply important to you, for which it is not possible to do direct work, you may contact their volunteer services and find a way to do some volunteer work that will ultimately benefit its clients.
- Designed in a realistic manner to be carried out and completed in advance of the ceremony.** Pick something where you can really be helpful within the time frame of your other life commitments. Even a short-term, concrete project can have a greater impact than you realize.
- Time invested is sufficient to make a difference.** Most B'nai Mitzvah students go 2-6 times, for a total of around 13 hours, to engage in one specific volunteer project.
- Where to find a project:** Projects are best designed by students (sometimes with a little help from parents) around their own personal concerns and talents. The project can be with an agency or with individuals. Be aware that many animal shelters have a minimum age of 16 to volunteer.
- Where to get more information:** This is a condensed version of the mitzvah project description. You can find more information on the TBA web site under life Cycle or ask a member of the clergy team.

Additional Comments:

B'nai Mitzvah preparation should be a positive and meaningful experience, but is also a very serious commitment. If, during the months leading up to the service you are unable to make time to attend tutoring sessions regularly and to practice, and if you and your family are unable to make time to attend Saturday morning services regularly, we will work with you to reschedule the date for a time period when you can make this commitment.

Have Fun! Getting prepared and leading the service will be more special and enjoyable than you may realize. You usually only become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah once, so enjoy!

Teen Feed

Provides meals and support to homeless teens.

www.teenfeed.org

volunteer@teenfeed.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: preparing, delivering and serving meals to homeless teens, serving as Allies (youth) and Advocates (adults), sitting with the guests and talking to them. The Allies handed out items from the supply closet while the Advocates dined with the homeless youth.

WestSide Baby

Collects and distributes free diapers, clothing, cribs and safety gear for babies and children.

www.westsidebaby.org

Shana Allen, Volunteer Manager, (206) 686-6659

shana@westsidebaby.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: processing orders for social workers and putting together packages of infant clothing and gear for distribution.

University District Food Bank

A walk-in food bank servicing families from across Northeast Seattle.

www.udistrictfoodbank.org

(206) 523-7060

volunteer@udistrictfoodbank.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: repackaging bulk items into single servings and stocking shelves for customers from supplies in storage/intake area.

Tree House

Provides support and services for foster children.

www.treehouse4kids.org

(206) 267-5117

volunteer@treehouseforkids.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: sorting items in the warehouse for the Tree House Store and working at the holiday carousel in downtown Seattle (all proceeds from the carousel went to the organization).

Jewish Family Services

Helps vulnerable individuals and families in the Puget Sound region achieve well-being, health and stability.

<http://www.jfsseattle.org/>

Jane Deer-Hileman at (206) 861-3155

volunteer@jfsseattle.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: stocking shelves, repackaging bulk items into single servings, asking vendors of the Capitol Hill Farmers Market to donate produce that didn't sell to the food bank, packing lunches, grocery bags or boxes for delivery, and occasionally delivering food once it had been sorted.

Compass Center

Develops and provides essential services and affordable housing for homeless and low-income people in the greater Puget Sound region.

www.compasshousingalliance.org

(206) 474-1067

volunteer@compasshousingalliance.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: preparing food for Operation Sack Lunch.

Friendship Circle

Bridges the gap between special needs and typical youth through shared experience, empowers special needs youth with the skills they need to live a productive and independent adult life, gives parents and families much-needed respite, and nurtures a sense of awareness and communal responsibility in our teens.

www.friendshipcirclewa.org

(206) 374-3637

Mary's Place

Provides meals, hygiene facilities, showers, laundry, medical care, support groups and resources for housing, employment and benefits to homeless women and children.

www.marysplaceseattle.org

Erin McKay (206) 621-8474

erin@marysplaceseattle.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: Helping out with kids' activities (supervising coloring book time, helping with video dance parties, serving snacks), sorting and organizing clothing donations and cleaning.

Ballard Food Bank

Provides access to nutritious foods and services that support self-sufficiency through the food bank, home delivery, and weekend food for kids program, as well as emergency financial assistance.

www.ballardfoodbank.org

(206) 789-7800

peggyb@ballardfoodbank.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: stocking shelves and serving clients.

Summit at First Hill

Independent and assisted living facility.

www.klinegalland.org/the-summit-at-first-hill

Michael Thygerson Director of Life

Enrichment (206) 456-9717

michaelt@summitatfirsthill.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: helping residents with any computer needs (accessing email, printing documents, accessing online information) and helping with other miscellaneous tasks ("parking" walkers) when there was down time in the computer room.

Special Olympics

Provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

www.specialolympicswashington.org

www.specialolympicswashington.org/volunteer/become_a_volunteer/interest_for_m

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: helping with administrative duties in the downtown office, participating on the Eckstein Unified soccer team which pairs disabled kids with able-bodied kids for practices and games and helping out at the spring Special Olympics by timing events.

Earthcorps

Provides environmental restoration and service education locally and globally.

www.earthcorps.org

(206) 322-9296 x-217

volunteer@earthcorps.org

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: working at local parks, beaches, forests and open spaces to remove aggressive weeds, maintain areas where aggressive weeds have been removed, and plant trees and shrubs.

Seattle Parks and Recreation

www.seattle.gov/parks/volunteers/default.htm

(206) 684-8028

parksvolunteer@seattle.gov

Duties of former B'nai Mitzvah volunteers from TBA included: cleaning up trash at parks in the area.

Additional ideas from former B'nai Mitzvah families:

- Volunteer as a family to foster animals through PAWS
- Make quilts to donate to the neonatal unit at Children's Parents who volunteer along with children, check with your employer to determine whether they provide corporate matching for volunteer hours (for example, Microsoft donates \$25/hour for every hour of volunteer service).

(With thanks to Kara Whelan-Abramowicz)

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

TEMPLE BETH AM MELODIES

Temple Beth Am can provide you with a recording of Mishkan T'filah in order to practice and prepare for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and the Friday Night Kiddush. The page numbers correspond to pages in the Shabbat Version of Mishkan T'Filah.

1. Barechu – B. Siegel (p.108)
2. Barechu – Craig Taubman (p.108)
3. Yotzer Or (p. 110)
4. Ahava Rabah – traditional (p.112)
5. Sh'ma – traditional (p.114-115)
6. Sh'ma – Tzvika Pik (p.114-115)
7. V'ahavta – traditional (p.116)
8. Avot V'Imahot – traditional (p.126)
9. Gevurot – traditional (p.128)
10. Kedusha – Bonia Shur (p.130)
11. Kedushat HaYom (Eloheinu) – traditional (p.134)
12. Torah Blessings – traditional (p.250)
13. Haftarah Blessings – traditional (p.254)
14. Shehecheyanu, Shabbat Candle Blessing, short Kiddush, Friday Night (full) Kiddush, Motzi (Blessing over Challah) (p.344, 2, 5, 5, 302)

INVITATIONS

In the spirit of community and inclusivity, we ask that your student invite his/her entire homeroom class to the service and kiddush lunch. We strongly encourage families to invite the entire B'nai Mitzvah class. This is because we require students who are approaching Bar/Bat Mitzvah to attend a minimum of two services per month or 12 services in the six months leading up to the service and our hope is that many students would be attending the service anyway. However, we have found that more students attend if they receive an invitation from their peers.

Your family may choose to email invites to the class/grade rather than mailing printed invitations. Some people have been sending invites to all the students in the grade and mail separate printed invites (or a separate email) to those invited to a party afterwards. We do leave that decision in your hands and trust you will handle the matter appropriately and respectfully.

Our Administrative Assistant for Education and Membership can provide you with the e-mail addresses and home addresses for all of the students. Please note that the list sometimes includes two listings for a single student who has multiple households. In that case, please be sure to contact both households so the invitation is properly received.

SPIRITUAL AND EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

HOST A KIDDUSH LUNCH

The Talmud states that it is a mitzvah and an honor to feed guests at a holy and significant occasion. We ask B'nai Mitzvah families to provide a light lunch after the service for the congregation, choir and guests. Families may choose a caterer in advance from our approved catering list on page 21. We ask that the Kiddush lunch be modest, reflecting the egalitarian and communal values of our congregation.

Kiddush Lunch Logistics:

The following practical information about the lunch is derived from the Temple Beth Am policy developed by the Religious Practices Committee over the years. Temple-approved caterers from the list on page 21 are familiar with Temple Beth Am policies and practices. Please note that the Social Hall is automatically reserved for your Kiddush lunch when your date is confirmed.

- ❑ **Guest List:** Plan for 80 additional guests so as to include the choir and members of the congregation who attend services regularly or have come to say Kaddish. If you are having a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah, please order lunch for 80 additional guests, and Temple Beth Am will pay the caterer directly for the cost of 40 of the 80. Please inform Alexis Kort, the Director of Community Engagement at Beth Am, if this is the case, with the information of which caterer you are working with and the cost for the 40 individuals that TBA will be covering.
- ❑ **Food:** The food at the luncheon must be vegetarian, but can include fish. We recommend that families serve approximately four dishes, beverage, and dessert. Food can be served buffet style or in stations, but not with waiters/servers. We encourage you to consider traffic flow in the Social Hall as you work on the room's set up with your caterer. Examples of luncheon food include:
 - Bagels/spreads, fruit plate
 - Green salad, pasta salad, bagels and lox, and fruit
 - Kugel, quiche, green salad, cheese tray/crackers
 - Tuna salad, potato salad, marinated vegetables, fruit plate
 - Poached salmon, relish tray, fruit salad, rice salad
 - Some families like to bake, or ask friends and family to bake cookies and bars for dessert
 - No pork or shellfish may be served at the temple, at any time or for any event
- ❑ **Drink:** Families are expected to provide fair trade coffee through their caterers for the luncheon.
- ❑ **Set-up:** At least five days prior to the event, you or your caterer should contact Alexis Kort to finalize the room set up. As noted, please consider traffic flow when planning your set up. The temple custodial staff will set-up tables and chairs

according to the room set-up developed among the families, caterer and Beth Am facilities manager.

- Temple Beth Am can provide the following items for the luncheon (as space allows):
 - i. 18 large round tables (60" diameter)
 - ii. 11 Stand-up café tables (36" diameter; 30" or 42" high)
 - iii. 18 6' long rectangular tables
 - iv. 8 8' long rectangular tables
 - v. Dishware and flatware for approximately 300 people
 - vi. Serving trays, utensils and punch bowls
 - Please note that Temple Beth Am does not provide table linens.
 - If you expect more than 350 guests, we ask that you rent a weather-appropriate tent so that guests can eat comfortably in the courtyard.
- Additional comments:
- In keeping with our congregational culture, presentation of the lunch should be simple
 - Given our communal values, we do not allow any specially prepared or printed napkins with the child's or family's name
 - Please arrange in advance with the Facilities Manager if your caterer is using the Temple Beth Am kitchen for food preparation and storage
 - It is the responsibility of caterers and families to clean dishes, glasses and flatware and return them to the appropriate cabinet or cart
 - Any non-compliance with our cleaning requirements that require our custodians to finish the work will be billed at \$65/hour
 - Temple Beth Am is committed to using compostable plates, cups, and utensils at temple dinners or events. If you are considering using paper plates, glasses, and utensils please check page 27 in this handbook for suggestions on how to host a greener event

Since most B'nai Mitzvah services are shared, it is important that families work together to make decisions about invitations, flowers/food basket, Kiddush lunch and music, etc. If there is difficulty coming to agreement on certain aspects of the day, please seek assistance in working out a compromise.

GIVING TZEDAKAH

(Gifts/Contributions to the synagogue) in honor of your Bar or Bat Mitzvah

A note from Temple Beth Am Executive Director, Davida Sims

Mazal tov! When your child becomes Bar or Bat Mitzvah, it is an exciting time not only for your family, but for our entire temple community. Each time our congregation sees a young person hold the Torah for the first time as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, surrounded by his or her family, it is a moment of pride and rejoicing for our congregation; a moment of renewal and an understanding that our community will continue to not only survive, but *thrive*, for generations to come. In choosing to engage in this process with your child, you are a part of

this living legacy, and our Board, clergy and staff thank you for helping to ensure the future of our community.

Among the many traditions associated with this important lifecycle event is the tradition of *tzedakah*. The word *tzedakah* is often translated as “charity” or “giving,” though its Hebrew roots are best translated as “justice” or “righteousness,” as though, by giving what we can to sacred institutions, we help make the world more a bit more just. I would like to share with you a few of the traditions around giving *tzedakah* at the time of your child’s Bar or Bat Mitzvah so that you may be well-informed of what is typically done here at Beth Am, as well as at other synagogues during the time of Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Should you have questions about any of these opportunities, please reach out to me, Davida Sims, at davida@templebetham.org. My door is always open, and I look forward to chatting with you about any way you’d like to support Beth Am—big or small, all contributions are truly valued and vital to the sustainability of our community.

- **Contributions to the Clergy Discretionary Funds.** Once your child’s Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony has concluded, it is customary to make contributions to the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund as a gesture of appreciation to both for their assistance in helping your family prepare for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. It is traditional, though by no means required, to give in multiples of 18 (the *gematria*, or numerology, of the Hebrew word for “life.”) Some families might give \$180 or \$360; others, \$1,800—this is dependent on each family’s individual circumstance. Tribute forms are available online at templebetham.org/giving, or by calling Temple Beth Am at (206) 525-0915.
- **Oneg sponsorship.** Many B’nai Mitzvah families choose to sponsor the *oneg* (the food and beverage provided before or after Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday evening) in honor of the B’nai Mitzvah. At Temple Beth Am, it is our custom that the oneg is sponsored in honor of both of the B’nai Mitzvah., even if only one family elects to sponsor. The suggested donation is \$180, and may be split between both families. It is also common for grandparents or other family members to sponsor the oneg. If you would like to sponsor the oneg in honor of your Bar or Bat Mitzvah, please contact Sara Bernson at sara@templebetham.org. You are encouraged to contact your B’nai Mitzvah partner’s family to ask if they would like to join you in sponsoring.
- **Other giving opportunities.** Sometimes, families would like to recognize the occasion of a bar or bat mitzvah with a special contribution to the synagogue. Past contributions have included gifts of ritual objects, capital campaign gifts, endowment gifts, etc. If you would like to recognize your child’s Bar or Bat Mitzvah with a special gift, please contact Davida at davida@templebetham.org.

TIMELINE

Time Prior to Date	Tasks for Success	Responsibility of:
Starting in 4 th grade	Begin completing service attendance requirement	Family
22-24 months	Read "Putting God on the Guest List"	Family
22-24 months	Complete date preference sheet and turn into office	Family
22-24 months	Receive date information and confirm date in writing with office staff. This requires turning in a signed Date Confirmation Letter to our Administrative Assistant for Education and Membership	Family
22-24 months	Communicate with your extended family and friends about assigned date	Family
12 months	Attend 6 th Grade B'nai Mitzvah Meeting	Family
7-8 months	Receive and confirm via e-mail all 6 meetings and 2 rehearsal times with your assigned clergy	Family
7 months	Identify and set schedule with an approved tutor	Family
6 months	Study prayers and Torah portion/Haftarah portion	Student
6-9 months	Discuss Kiddush Luncheon with Facilities Manager and provide your caterer's information to temple staff	Family
6-9 months	Discuss, plan and participate in an independent Mitzvah Project	Student
3-6 months	Discuss/divide honors with sharing family	Family
3-6 months	Discuss D'var Torah with the Rabbi and begin writing first draft	Student
1 month	Turn in Bimah Participation Opportunities Worksheet at the 5 th Meeting, and the Family Blessing to Rabbi at the Wrap Up Meeting	Family
3 weeks	No later than 3 weeks before the service, contact JFS to order a food basket if desired	Family
2 weeks	Contact our Administrative Assistant for Education and Membership to discuss photography at the temple	Family
9 days	Attend First Rehearsal with the clergy	Family
1 day	Attend Final Rehearsal with the Rabbi and entire family	Family
1 day	Attend Friday night services with your family	Family
Day of	Arrive no later than 9:45 am (this does not include time for photography, please contact the office to arrange any photo needs no later than 2 weeks out)	Family
Day of	Relax and enjoy!	Everyone

FINANCES

COSTS

We know that having a child become Bar/Bat mitzvah involves extra costs. Our policy states that “membership dues and Religious School fees must be current at least two months prior to the B’nai Mitzvah service.”

The table below reflects the fees and payment schedule for your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please note that the cost helps cover facilities, administrative and musical costs the temple incurs.

	B’nai Mitzvah Dates Beginning September 1, 2017
First Payment	\$225 when your child’s B’nai Mitzvah date is set
Second Payment	\$225 approximately 4 months prior to the B’nai Mitzvah
Third Payment (if applicable)	
Total B’nai Mitzvah Fee	\$450

We work hard to ensure that no family will be denied a Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience because of financial constraints. At the same time, please know that your dues, tuition and the B’nai Mitzvah cost are vital to the survival and sustenance of our community. If your family has financial needs please speak to our Executive Director.

REFUNDS

If for whatever reason your family needs to cancel your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Beth Am, our refund policy states that any cancellations:

- More than 6 months before the scheduled date will receive a full refund on costs paid
- 6 months – 3 months before the scheduled date will receive a 50% refund
- Less than 3 months will not be eligible for a refund

PRACTICAL MATTERS

EXPENCES TO CONSIDER

- Educational:
 - Tutoring (approximately \$1,350 to \$2,550 depending on the tutor. For more information on our approved tutors, please contact our Administrative Assistant for Education and Membership for our most updated tutor list)

- Service-related:
 - Kiddush Lunch, please see page 11 for more details
 - Bimah and/or table centerpieces, please see page 12 for more details

- Optional:
 - Photography
 - Music at the luncheon (you can set up a CD or iPod or hire a band to play Jewish music after the first 15 minutes of the luncheon)
 - Tallit and kippah for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child (recommended)
 - Donation to Temple Beth Am

Special Note: Temple Beth Am does not allow any specially prepared or pre-printed items, such as kippot/yarmulkes, handouts, service supplements or napkins, with the child's or family's name.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Temple Beth Am will automatically announce the B'nai Mitzvah in our bulletin.

BIMAH (PULPIT) AND TABLE DECORATIONS

Families may provide a flower arrangement or food basket as a Bimah decoration as well as small centerpieces for the luncheon tables. Please follow these guidelines to make sure all arrangements are within Temple Beth Am policies.

Arrangements should:

- Not be extravagant
- Be 2 1/2' tall or less (specifically, the Bimah basket must be no taller than 2 1/2')
- Not have heavily scented flowers in order to accommodate allergies
- No personal corsages or boutonnieres

Jewish Family Services (JFS) can provide a Bimah decoration basket for an approximately \$90 donation. Please contact JFS at 206-461-3240 no less than three weeks before your date. You are also welcome to create your own arrangement and/or choose to use the food bank of other tzedakah baskets for Bimah and table decorations.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

DONATIONS

It is a mitzvah, when you celebrate and eat a meal of joy, to share your blessing with those who are hungry. Mazon, a Jewish Response to Hunger, shares your blessing with the needy in an effective and holy way. Families are encouraged to donate 3% of the cost of the event to Mazon (1990 South Bundy Drive, Suite 260, Los Angeles, CA 90025-5232) or other Jewish hunger relief organizations. This extends the blessing of the event by sharing with others. Families are also encouraged to make a donation to the temple in honor of those who helped their child with B'nai Mitzvah preparation.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Formal photographs may be taken either during the final rehearsal or prior to the B'nai Mitzvah morning service. If you plan to take photos during the rehearsal, please advise the clergy so they can dress appropriately.

We ask that your family arrive no later than 8:30 am on Saturday morning and ask that all photography end by 9:30 am as well. If you plan to take formal photographs in the building before Saturday services, please schedule this with our staff. We suggest you allow at least an hour for photographs and are finished by 9:30 am.

Please be advised that on the 4th Saturday of the month, Tot Shabbat Services meet in the sanctuary from 9:00 – 9:50 am and we will work with you to accommodate photography.

No cameras or other recording devices are allowed in the sanctuary during services. Temple Beth Am provides a DVD-R so the service can be recorded by the temple on the wall-mounted, wide-angle camera at the rear of the sanctuary without disturbing the service. Please note this camera was designed as a security camera and the picture quality is reflective of this, often at a lower resolution that some families prefer. Please note as well that the sound through the DVD will be different than the sound in the sanctuary itself, as our sound system records various levels from different microphones and removes some of the ambient noise.

We will provide two copies of the DVD. Families can pick up their copy of the DVD at the temple on the Wednesday after the service but please call or email to ensure the DVD is ready. No other photography or videography is allowed during the service.

30 HOURS: THE B'NAI MITZVAH SHABBAT

APPROPRIATE DRESS

When entering a house of worship it is traditional to dress respectfully. Appropriate clothes for males mean no cut-offs or tank tops. For females, this means shoulders covered and skirt hems below fingertips. We caution against students wearing high heels.

FRIDAY MORNING BEFORE THE B'NAI MITZVAH

You will have the final rehearsal with the Rabbi in the sanctuary for approximately 2 hours. Deliveries to Temple Beth Am should be made as follows:

- Flowers, linens and luncheon table centerpieces on Friday during office hours.

FRIDAY EVENING

B'nai Mitzvah families attend Friday evening services just prior to the B'nai Mitzvah. Although they do not take part in the service, the B'nai Mitzvah students lead the Kiddush and Motzei at the end of the service. This enhances the spirit of community at Temple Beth Am and includes the family in the overall religious life of the temple. As always, guests are welcome. The temple supplies ceremonial challah and juice for Kiddush.

Please note that erev Shabbat evening services start at different times. Please consult our bulletin or online calendar at <http://templebetham.org/calendars/monthly-calendar> for service times and make dinner plans accordingly.

SATURDAY MORNING: BEFORE THE SERVICE

Families should arrive no later than 9:45 am. If your family would like to take photos on Saturday morning, please coordinate the time and logistics with our Administrative Assistant for Education and Membership.

Temple Beth Am provides a table outside the social hall that can be used to collect gifts for the B'nai Mitzvah. Some families bring baskets or receptacles for this purpose.

About 10 – 15 minutes before services start the Rabbi will meet with the B'nai Mitzvah families in the temple office for a blessing and to put on tallitot, if they choose to wear them, and kippot.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

The service begins with a blessing in the Rabbi's office. After the blessing, the B'nai Mitzvah students and their families proceed with the Rabbi to the sanctuary. The B'nai Mitzvah students sit on the Bimah and parents, grandparents, and siblings sit in the front row.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE CONTINUED

Torah Service: Parents and grandparents ascend the Bimah to pass the Torah from generation to generation and participate in the *hakafot* (Torah processions). The weekly Torah portion (*parsha*) is divided into five sections and Torah blessings are recited before and after each section is read. Typically members of the congregation at large are given the honor of the first *aliyah* (Torah blessing) and the reading of the first Torah section. Each B'nai Mitzvah family receives one aliyah and they may honor up to four adult Jewish family members or friends with that responsibility. Each B'nai Mitzvah has an aliyah in addition to their readings from the Torah, Haftarah, and their D'var Torah.

Family Honors: In addition to the aliyot, B'nai Mitzvah families may assign a limited number of honors to family and/or friends. This includes opening the ark doors, *gelilah* (undressing and re-dressing the Torah), and *hagbah* (lifting the Torah). A detailed description of these honors is in the appendix (Participation Opportunities). Some of these honors need to be discussed with the sharing family. Please consult each other when filling out the Bimah Participation Opportunities Worksheet and see the Rabbi if you have questions. The clergy should receive the form at the 5th Meeting.

Family Blessing: Parents are given a brief opportunity to say a blessing over their child. Blessing must be limited to one paragraph, double-spaced, as encouraged by the Religious Practices Committee, and must be submitted to the officiating rabbi at the Wrap Up Meeting.

Kiddush: After the service, parents will find a challah and tray of juice behind the Bimah. The temple supplies ceremonial challah and juice for Kiddush. You should pass out the juice to the B'nai Mitzvah students who are called up for the blessings at the conclusion of the service.

We do not allow announcements or thank-yous from the Bimah, although the B'nai Mitzvah family can thank people at the Kiddush luncheon.

Music: Families may arrange for live or recorded music with a Jewish theme to begin 15 minutes after the end of the service.

Please don't forget to gather your gifts (Kiddush cup, book and certificates) from the gift table when you leave the temple.

With our emphasis on inclusiveness and modesty we are always juggling our community values with individual family preferences. Overall, please remember that this is a communal Shabbat service and not a private life-cycle event. We understand the desire for a unique experience, but must fit this into the big picture of our whole community. Please discuss all arrangements for the day with the Facilities Manager, especially if they are out of the ordinary.

APPENDICES

CATERERS

The following caterers either have provided services for, and received favorable comments from, Temple Beth Am families, the Board, or staff, or have come recommended from outside sources. You are not required to use any of these caterers; this list is provided for your information only.

*(If you do choose a caterer not listed here, **please let the Facilities and Events Director in the temple office know** because there is documentation we require.)*

MADISON PARK CAFE CATERING

Karen Binder

(206) 324-4411

madisonparkcafe@aol.com

ERIC GORBMAN CATERING

egorbman@hotmail.com

ON SAFARI FOODS

(206) 932-9497

inquiries@onsafarifoods.com

www.onsafarifoods.com

NOURISH CATERING

events@nourishcatering.com

www.nourishcatering.com

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CATERING,

Al Starkenburg

(425) 478-6179

(206) 499-1228

pnw_catering@hotmail.com

www.pacificnorthwestcatering.com

MANGIA BENE CATERING

(206) 548-4994

deb@mangiabenecatering.net

www.mangiabenecatering.net



B'nai Mitzvah Bimah

Participation Opportunities Guidelines

*This guide is to be used in conjunction with the Bimah Participation Worksheet.
Please return the worksheet to the clergy, by mail, in person, or by email
Keep these descriptions and return the worksheet to the rabbi at the sixth Meeting.*

Please speak to your rabbi about any individual questions or needs that you may have. We are looking forward to celebrating with you. Mazel Tov.

Shabbat morning at Temple Beth Am is a community experience. Together we celebrate your child's coming of age. As is customary, we welcome having various participants celebrate your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* by giving you the chance to share ritual honors with those who are close to you. Beth Am also strives to be participatory and leaves some honors open to members of the Temple community.

Parents:

Parents participate in the passing of the Torah, the *hakafah* (promenading of the Torah stand with their child for the final section of their reading – and their last *aliyah*, and then are invited to give a short personal blessing to their young adult while standing on the *Bimah*. The blessing should be a maximum of one paragraph, double spaced, 12 pt. and is described in the Family Prayer Guidelines. This blessing must also be submitted for approval at your “BM Wrap-Up” meeting. Longer speeches should be saved for your celebration. If you keep them short, you may also read the *B'nai Mitzvah* blessing to your child.

Grandparents

Grandparents and Great-grandparents are invited to come up to the Bimah when the Torah is first taken from the Ark. They participate in passing the Torah down through the generations, as they're able. The Grandparents and Great-Grandparents shall immediately return to their seats following the *hakafah* so that they can see and hear their grandchild.

Ark Opener / Closer

Each family may have two participants, Jewish or not, of any age, open the Ark when we return the Torah to the Ark. They remain at the Ark through *Etz Hayyim Hi* and then close the curtains and doors. They then return to their seats in the congregation.

Undressing the Torah

One family may invite two people (must be Jewish) to join in the *hakafah*, promenade with the Torah and then come up to the *Bimah*. They unwrap the Torah, placing the crowns and breastplate on a chair, and the *yad* on the Torah reading table. The Torah is placed by the rabbi on a small table and they cover it loosely with the Torah cover. They then return to their seats in the congregation.

Torah Blessing / Aliyah

Each family may have one to four (1-4 adult) Jewish participants join in a single *aliyah* together, chanting the prayer both before and after the reading in Hebrew. They remain on the *Bimah* after their second blessing to follow in the Torah as the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* leads and reads a second *aliyah*. They then go back to their seats after the parents' blessing.

Dressing and Returning the Torah / Hagbah & G'lilah

One family can invite one person (must be Jewish) to perform *Hagbah*, the lifting of the Torah before wrapping it; another person to do *G'lilah*, the dressing of the Torah. *Hagbah* needs to know how to lift the Torah correctly and must be Jewish. After lifting the Torah, *Hagbah* takes a moment to turn around, show the scroll as it is lifted up high so the congregation can see the reading, and then sits with the scroll while it's being wrapped and afterwards, until the Torah is returned to the Ark and the Ark doors are closed. *Hagbah* then returns to their seat in the congregation.

Mi Shebeirach Prayer:

During the service we will pause to say a prayer for those who are sick in body, mind, and spirit. The officiating rabbi will invite anyone in the congregation to share a name aloud.

Kaddish List:

In addition to the weekly congregational *yahrzeit* list, the officiating rabbi will read the names of any family members (from as far back as you would like to go) who are no longer with us. Bar and Bat Mitzvah students often share the names of grandparents, family friends, and other relatives. Please provide your rabbi with the relationship between the deceased and the bar/bat mitzvah student.

Please remember to give honors out evenly, trying to avoid any undue hurt among your family members. We limit the number of honors in order to maintain a public worship service, and keep our worship service at a reasonable length.

Today Rabah u'Mazal Tov!



B'nai Mitzvah Bimah Participation Opportunities Worksheet

This form should be returned at the 6th Meeting with the Rabbi

Student's Name _____

Student's Hebrew name _____

Student's BM Date _____

Parents Names: (English Name)

(Hebrew Name)

Will grandparents participate in the passing of the Torah? Yes No

How many grandparents from your family will participate? _____

Are there any mobility issues? _____

Undressing the Torah (2 participants—must be Jewish) – ONE FAMILY

Name

Relationship

Blessing over the Torah / *Aliyah* (EACH FAMILY up to 4 participants – must be Jewish)

English Name

Hebrew Name

Relationship

Ark opener – ONE from EACH FAMILY

Name

Relationship

Returning the Torah – ONE FAMILY

Lifting the Torah / *Hagbah*: (*Hagbah* participant must be Jewish and able to lift Torah)

Name

Relationship

Dressing the Torah / *G'lilah* (Participant must be Jewish)

Please list any family members to be mentioned in the reading of the Kaddish List

Name

Relationship to BM Student

GUIDE TO HOSTING A GREENER EVENT

PLATES

Consider using china rather than paper. Temple Beth Am has china to serve 300 people. Some caterers also have their own china, and china can be rented from any party rental company. Check websites for current prices.

The preferred alternative to china is a compostable paper plate (such as Chinet). See “Where to buy” below.

UTENSILS

In addition to being easier to use, metal utensils are the environmentally friendly choice. Temple Beth Am now has service for 300, or you may rent utensils. Compostable utensils are also available. See “Where to buy” below.

Use of non-compostable plastic utensils is strongly discouraged because they negatively impact the environment. Also, we fear that some plastic would find its way into our compost receptacles, thereby causing contamination.

CUPS/GLASSES

China and glass are preferable to disposable cups and glasses, though these would need to be rented. Compostable hot and cold cups are available. See “Where to buy” below. Temple Beth Am has china mugs for about 300 people.

NAPKINS

Paper napkins of any color are compostable. Those made from recycled paper will have a lower environmental impact.

TABLECLOTHS

If you are not renting tablecloths, consider using plastic, which may be cleaned and reused, rather than paper.

WHERE TO BUY COMPOSTABLE PAPER PRODUCTS

Compostable paper products are advertised on the Costco, Sam’s Club, and Office Depot websites, as well as www.ecoproducts.com and www.greenhome.com.

Examples of prices by size and quantity:

Ecoproducts.com	9”plate	500 for \$50.88
Office Depot	8.5”plate	125 for \$17.99
Sam’s Club	8.75”	225 for \$12.47
Green Home	8.75”	500 for \$48 (made from sugarcane stalk)

Temple Beth Am B'nai Mitzvah Contacts

206-525-0915

www.templebetham.org

Shabbat Service Schedule

Kabbalat Shabbat	1 st Friday	Kinder Kabbalat Shabbat	6:15 PM
		Choir Shabbat	8:00 PM
	2 nd Friday	Jazzy Shabbat	8:00 PM
	3 rd Friday	B'Yachad Shabbat	6:15 PM
	4 th Friday	Klezmer Shabbat	6:15 PM
	5 th Friday	Kabbalat Shabbat	6:15 PM

Saturday

Services are held at 10:30 AM every week.

Minyan Services (weeks without a Bar/Bat Mitzvah) are followed by a potluck lunch.

On weeks where there is a B'nai Mitzvah service there is a Kiddush lunch hosted by the B'nai Mitzvah families.

Services are always preceded by Torah Study at 9:15 AM.

On the 4th Saturday of the month there is a Tot Shabbat Service at 9:15 AM.