



TEMPLE BETH EL

**B'NAI**

**MITZVAH**

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## B'NAI MITZVAH AT TEMPLE BETH EL

Judaism is a lifelong journey. Our heritage has been passed down from generation to generation for 4,000 years, and there have always been vital moments in the life of our families. One of these is your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah – a community celebration of growing up, an important rite of passage, and a ritual to demonstrate the ongoing commitment to living a good and successful life according to Jewish values.

More than anything else, it is an exciting time, and we are here to be partners with you to make sure this entire experience is fun, meaningful, and appropriately challenging. Your child is growing up right before your eyes, and it is a beautiful thing to watch them learn and grow and take on more responsibility.

Perhaps most important is to remember that Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not a moment in time, it is a process. When your child stands up to lead the congregation in prayer, to chant blessings, and read Torah, it is the culmination of a full process ... and it is the start of a lifetime connection to their Jewish community. In addition to all the work that goes into becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah, it is our strong hope that your family will remain involved at Temple, and that your child will be a part of both our Masa Teens and our fantastic youth programs. Classes, programs, trips, retreats ... all are part of continuing to build a strong Jewish identity.

This Manual is designed to provide you with an overview of the process, answer logistical questions, and offer some guidelines for making your *simcha* everything you want it to be. Your Rabbis, Cantor, Director of Education and Temple staff are all here to help throughout the journey. Feel free to call on any one of us with questions, comments, or concerns.

Mazel Tov!



Rabbi Mark Miller



Cantor Rachel Kalmowitz



Rabbi Megan Brudney



Rachel Grey Ellis  
Executive Director



Deborah Morosohk  
Director of Education

## B'NAI MITZVAH PROCESS

### From K – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

Students in Masa begin to learn about Judaism, and to gain the early building blocks of their Hebrew language education. These early years are crucial in setting the foundation for the more intensive B'nai Mitzvah program to follow.

→Masa remains an integral part of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah through the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade ... and continued participation from 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade leads to Confirmation, before finally culminating with graduation at the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

### End of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade – Date Selection

At the end of your child's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade year, you will receive a notification from the Cantor's office about setting a date for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah. All ceremonies will be assigned to a Saturday morning, as close to each student's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday as possible. Make sure to send in any special requests, so we can assign a date that works for you.

### End of 4<sup>th</sup> grade – B'nai Mitzvah Kickoff

In the spring of your child's 4<sup>th</sup> grade year, we will hold our first official program related to B'nai Mitzvah. You'll have a chance to join our clergy and education team, along with all our 4<sup>th</sup> grade families, to learn about the upcoming process over lunch.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Hebrew Tutoring

In addition to Masa, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are assigned a Hebrew tutor that they will meet with for a half hour per week. This is the beginning of our b'nai mitzvah training program where students will focus on learning the Hebrew letters and how to read, as well as beginning to learn specific prayers that will be part of their service. **Weekly practice in addition to tutoring time is an important expectation.**

### End of 5<sup>th</sup> grade – Mattan Torah

In the spring of your child's 5<sup>th</sup> grade year, we will join together for another event for the entire class. Your family will join us for *Mattan Torah*, a ceremony when 5<sup>th</sup> graders get to attend a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at TBE and afterward are presented with the Torah portion from which they will read at their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

### End of 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Pointing the Way

At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year, we convene in order to move forward into the exciting year when the group's B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies will occur! We want to bring the whole class together with the clergy for building community as well as a special art project. The goal is to put us all in the appropriate mindset for the journey ahead.

### 14 Months Out from BM – Weekly Tutoring Begins

B'nai Mitzvah preparation continues with one-on-one tutoring. The Director of Education will be in touch to make the tutor assignment. Approximately 6 months will be spent on reading skills as well as learning and polishing the prayers that will be part of the service, and then 8 months will be devoted primarily to learning to chant the Torah portion. **Regular practice at home is very important during this time to reinforce the learning happening in the tutoring sessions.**

We know that every student is unique and learns in their own way. If you think your child will need to start tutoring earlier or will require additional help, we are available and happy to work with you.

### 10-12 months out from BM – Initial Meeting

As preparations continue, each student and their parents will have an opportunity to meet with Rabbi Miller. This is a chance to focus on the meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah in your child's life, review what will happen over the coming months, and for your student to learn more about his/her Torah portion so that they can choose the section they would like to chant for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### Between 3-9 months out from BM – Cantor Sessions

In addition to tutoring with your assigned tutor, each student and their parents will sit down with Cantor Kalmowitz on at least two occasions to review their progress, and make sure their training is on course.

### 3 months out from BM – Speech Meeting

Each student will meet with one of the rabbis to begin preparing their speech(es). First, the rabbi will help each student understand their Torah portion, so they can give an introduction during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In addition, the rabbi will give them a framework for preparing a personal statement.

### Final month – Rehearsals

During the month leading up to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah, there will be three rehearsals. Our rabbis and cantor will each be at one of the rehearsals, and by the end of three rehearsals most students are comfortable and ready for their ceremony. If, however, you would like additional time in the Chapel or Sanctuary to prepare, just check with the Rabbis' assistant to make sure we find a good time.

Part of the goal of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah is taking responsibility for this process. The clergy and staff working with your student will be available for additional meetings, to help via email, or to talk on the phone ... but it is the student's responsibility to let the rabbi, cantor, or B'nai Mitzvah tutor know what additional help they need.

## REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

### Membership

In order to celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Beth El, the family must be members in good standing.

### Education

Bar/Bat Mitzvah students must have completed a minimum of 3 years of Jewish education at Temple Beth El or its equivalent. Students must be currently enrolled and active in Masa at the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Your Jewish journey continues here at TBE through graduation in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. As Rabbi Miller discusses with every family, Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not the end of a process, but an important celebration along the way to Jewish adulthood. We value our teens' ongoing Jewish education so much that our Ruth Franklin Einstein Education Fund will pay a stipend of \$2,500 to each teen who graduates from our programs.

### Fees

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring fee of \$2,500 will be billed at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. It covers 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Hebrew tutoring, including all materials and books, as well as all tutoring and other preparation that takes place with our B'nai Mitzvah tutors and clergy. The fee can be paid up front or a payment plan may be arranged with the Finance Office. All fees must be paid in full by six months before the ceremony.

### Attending Services

Classroom learning is important, but it is also vital for any Bar/Bat Mitzvah student to become comfortable with the rhythms and experience of going to services at Temple. You are welcome to attend services any Friday night at 7pm and watching any of our B'nai Mitzvah services will help your child get comfortable with what happens during the ceremony.

### Mitzvah Projects

Part of becoming a Jewish adult is recognizing that we have a responsibility to help repair the world. *Tikkun Olam* can take place in so many different ways, and our goal is for each student to find some project, organization, or cause that interests them. We are less concerned with the specific number of hours they spend on a project, and more concerned with them finding something they might want to continue beyond Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Our 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Masa program is designed around the concept of doing Mitzvot, and the Mitzvah requirement may be completed by simply participating fully in this program. However, our ideal would be that through participation in this program, your child finds a personal project that inspires him/her to make the world a better place.

## Ceremony Logistics

### Arrival

Please make sure you arrive early enough to get settled, greet friends and family, and meet in the Rabbinic Suite no later than 15 minutes before the service is scheduled to begin. If you would like to come early to take photos, please let us know so that we can arrange for the building to be open.

### Attire

We ask parents to make sure their student and anyone who will be part of the ceremony is dressed in an appropriate manner for being on the *bima* at Temple. If you have any questions, please ask one of the rabbis or cantor.

### Guests

Please encourage your guests to sit closer to the front of the Sanctuary or Chapel, so that they can more easily take part in the service. Children are encouraged to sit with their parents; however, if they choose to sit with their peers, please remind them that they must be respectful and take part. Use of mobile devices is not allowed during the service.

### Participation

Our congregation takes great joy in participating enthusiastically through song and responsive readings. We invite all of our guests to participate with equal enthusiasm. Please note, however that applause is inappropriate during services.

### Photography and Video

If you choose to hire a photographer, please make sure to confirm these guidelines so they do not disrupt the service:

1. No flashes are allowed during services.
2. Any camera sounds (including artificial shutter sounds) should be turned off, and movement kept to a minimum.
3. Photographers are welcome anywhere in the back of the Sanctuary or Chapel, but not in the aisles.

If you would like to video the service:

- We have professional cameras installed in both the Sanctuary and the Chapel for our live streaming program. We would be happy to provide you with a copy of the service for a nominal fee of \$18. However, our recording is done for streaming purposes; as such, we cannot guarantee the production value or choices made about the video.
- You are welcome to hire any videographer you choose, but they will need to discuss our procedures ahead of time with our Executive Director.



### Planning a Party

We would love for you to plan a festive Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration at Temple. Handleman Hall, the Alpert Room, and our Foyers can be dressed up for a fantastic event. If you are interested in this option, please contact our Events Coordinator, and she will help you with details and connect you with our expert staff.

### Services

Every student at Temple Beth El will be assigned a Saturday morning for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Services begin at 11:00 am.

In addition, some families choose to deepen their family's experience by joining the regular Temple service on Friday night in order to sit on the *bima*, welcome your guests to Temple, and lead the congregation in *kiddush* and *motzi* (blessings for wine and challah).

Finally, for a variety of reasons, some families prefer a Saturday evening Havdalah service. Although we cannot guarantee specific dates or the presence of all Temple clergy, we are open to discussing this possibility. Please contact Cantor Kalmowitz if you would like to discuss this option.

### Location of Services

If a family's guest list to the service does not exceed 200 people, and if a student is not paired to lead a worship service with another student, his/her family may choose to worship either in the Maas Chapel or in the Helen DeRoy Sanctuary. Although the Maas Chapel does not offer the grandeur of our Helen DeRoy Sanctuary, it provides a beautifully intimate environment centered before the ark of our Woodward and Gladstone building. Please communicate your preference to the Cantor's office at least two months prior to your child's service date.

### Tzedakah

Many parents and other family members wish to express their joy and gratitude on the occasion of this milestone with a donation to Temple or another charitable cause. With this in mind, many families commit to donating 3-10% of the total expenditure of their reception to those in need. Similarly, many B'nai Mitzvah students choose to donate the same percentage of any monetary gifts they may receive.

## **CONTACTS**

We are here to help and support you every step of the way. If you have any specific questions or concerns about the B'nai Mitzvah program at Temple Beth El, please feel free to contact us at any time.

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**Temple Beth El**  
B'nai Mitzvah Participation Form

*Family/friends are encouraged to participate in many aspects of the ceremony, and special honors:*

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Hebrew Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Both parents' Hebrew names (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday Night Kiddush & Motzi** (A nice way to extend the joy of this special occasion – sit with us on the *bima*, as we invite your student to lead a very brief part of the service):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Torah Transmission** Grandparents, parents, & older siblings participate as we physically pass the Torah “from generation to generation” – please list names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Dressing the Torah** Often a younger sibling, but let us know who will help:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Aliyot:** It is a primary honor to be called to the Torah to read or chant the blessings before and after the Torah reading. You may include relatives or close friends here:

**First Aliyah:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Second Aliyah:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Third Aliyah:** Bar/Bat Mitzvah student with parents (and siblings over 13).

**Kiddush/Motzi at Conclusion of Service** (Usually your immediate family, but may include others): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mourner's Kaddish** (We would be happy to read the names of any family members you would like to remember at this occasion):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*We encourage flexibility in personalizing this service! If you are interested in including any additional honors, or inviting someone to add a personal touch to your service, please talk directly with the Clergy\*\**



# TEMPLE BETH EL

## CLERGY

Mark Miller, Senior Rabbi  
Rachel Gottlieb Kalmowitz, Cantor  
Megan Brudney, Associate Rabbi  
Daniel B. Syme, Rabbi Emeritus

## STAFF

Rachel Grey Ellis, Executive Director  
Deborah Morosohk, RJE,  
Director of Education  
Frank Reinstein, Chief Financial Officer  
Susie Weiner, Director of Early  
Childhood Center  
Melanie Weber, Director of  
Communications  
Nicole Jahr, Director of Community  
Engagement  
Laura Gottlieb, Director of Cultural  
Resources  
Jim Gabriel, Accompanist  
Damon Kaigler, Building Director  
Morris Collins, Director of Security

Executive Committee  
Rochelle Nelson, President  
Alicia Chandler, VP/President Elect  
Kristen Gross, Vice President  
Ray Henney, Vice President  
Steve Tarnowsky, Vice President  
Sarah Lyngaas, Treasurer  
Claude Reitelman, Secretary

## AFFILIATES

Elaine Brockman, Beth Elders  
Lenny Beigler, Brotherhood  
Joanne Lax, Carol Plisner, Elaine  
Schonberger, Cathy Segel, Sisterhood  
Kid-ish Club, Alissa VanderKooi  
Magnolia Margolis, BETY

