



# Temple B'nai Or

## Bar/Bat Mitzvah Manual



<i>YOUR FAMILY'S JOURNEY AND OUR PRAYERS FOR YOU</i>	2
<i>WHAT IS BAR/BAT MITZVAH?</i>	3
<i>ELIGIBILITY FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH</i>	4
<i>PREPARATION FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH</i>	5
<i>BLESSINGS FOR THE READING OF TORAH</i>	7
<i>SCHEDULE OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH FEES</i>	9
<i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i>	10

## YOUR FAMILY’S JOURNEY AND OUR PRAYERS FOR YOU

**Mazal tov** on reaching this exciting time in your family’s life! You are about to embark on a journey towards a special moment unique to the Jewish people. We will travel this sacred path with you and guide you at each step along the way. This manual will help you to understand and navigate your journey.

Your family is following in the steps of thousands of Temple B’nai Or families who have walked this same path. On your journey, we encourage you to study the ancient Jewish wisdom and deepen your own understanding of Judaism. We hope that by learning together, you will find greater meaning in the Jewish story that you are passing to the next generation of your family, as we are commanded to remember daily:

*Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience is an opportunity for personal growth, family enrichment and communal joy.*

וְהָיוּ לְךָ בְּיָמֶיךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנֶיךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנוֹתֶיךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנֵי בְּרִיתְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנוֹתֵי בְּרִיתְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנֵי בְּרִיתְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְבָנוֹתֵי בְּרִיתְךָ.  
בְּשֶׁבֶתְךָ, בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְדַרְכֶיךָ, וּבְיַעַבְדְּךָ, וּבְיַחַדְךָ.

*“Set these words which I command you today upon your heart. And teach them faithfully to your children; speak of them in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)*

As our children embark upon a life full of Jewish learning, we hope they will embrace all the words, blessings, traditions and values of כלל ישראל – *K'lal Israel* – the people Israel. We pray that our children will continue to grow in heart and mind. May the story of our people inspire them. May the truths of *Torah* guide them. And may the prophetic word of truth and righteousness enter their spirit and be for them a lasting blessing.

As is our custom when we experience a new blessing, we encourage your family to recite together the *Shehecheyanu* blessing (שְׁהֵיחַיֵנוּ "who has given us life"):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁהֵיחַיֵנוּ וְהִגַּדְתָּ עִמָּנוּ לְהֵשִׁיבָנוּ לְךָ.

*Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'olam Shehecheyanu v'Kiyemanu v'Higianu laz'man haze*

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe who has given us life, and sustained us and enabling us to reach this moment. We look forward to being on this journey with you all!

*B'chaverut*, In friendship,  
Rabbi Michael Satz, Cantor Galit Dadoun-Cohen, and Esther Benari-Altman

## WHAT IS BAR/BAT MITZVAH?

There is no mention of *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah* in the *Torah*, but *Pirkei Avot* (the ethics of our ancestors) states: “*At age thirteen, one becomes subject to the commandments.*” For generations, the age of thirteen has been considered the age of maturity for accepting and following the commandments. It was the accepted age when one would be knowledgeable enough to lead worship and count towards a *minyan*<sup>1</sup>.

In the Middle Ages in Germany, boys of thirteen began to wear *tefillin*<sup>2</sup> and read from the *Torah*. This became the central feature of the early *Bar Mitzvah* ceremony and by the 16th century, it became obligatory to call the *Bar Mitzvah* boy to the *Torah* on the *Shabbat* coinciding with his 13th birthday. In the 16th and 17th centuries in Poland, *B'nai Mitzvah* were called upon to deliver a *D'var Torah* – words of interpretation and teaching about the *Torah*. Eventually, the blessing of the *Torah* became a focal feature of becoming *Bar Mitzvah* and remained the tradition until modern times in certain parts of the world.

The first *Bat Mitzvah* took place for a 13-year-old girl in 1922. Judith Kaplan, the daughter of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, took the lead and is credited as being the first female to have a formal *Bat Mitzvah*.

Today, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* celebrations are not uniform; rather they are crafted to the individual commitment and spiritual needs of each family. Regardless of individual observance, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* in the life of Jewish people around the world is significant and is meant to awaken spiritual and moral responsibility. Rooted in Jewish values and the promise to pass Judaism from one generation to the next, becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* connects us both to our ancestors and our descendants.

*We are honored to support and embrace every family who chooses to walk this path of learning and reflection towards a deepening connection with one another and with Judaism.*

We encourage you to acknowledge this momentous occasion in your family's life with the understanding that this is your child's first step in a lifelong journey of learning that continues through confirmation and *Orim* in our wonderful [Hebrew High School Program](#). In High School, students explore many aspects of adulthood – **identity, relationships, citizenship, social issues, and much more** – all through a Jewish lens, in meaningful relationships with

our clergy, other trusted adults and their peers.

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<sup>1</sup> *Minyan* is a group of ten required for prayer in Jewish tradition.

<sup>2</sup> *T'fillin*, or Phylacteries, is a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the *Torah*.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH

To become a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, your child must be a student in good standing in the Joel and Helen Jacobs Religious School or in a Jewish Day School. The **family must be Temple members** with all *B'nai Mitzvah* fees and Temple obligations fulfilled.

### Religious School Attendance

In order to celebrate a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at Temple B'nai Or, students must attend and fulfill the requirements for Grades 3 through 7 of the TBO Religious School. For students with special needs or for students who have enrolled in the Religious School after coming to TBO from another school or from out of the area, the Director of Education, in consultation with the Clergy, will determine the appropriate educational requirements for celebrating a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at TBO.

### Shabbat Participation



*We encourage your family to attend Temple B'nai Or's Shabbat services on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings frequently*

Participation in Shabbat services is required. We have index cards to record your child's attendance. After services, please hand your card to the clergy (either Rabbi or Cantor). We may ask you what you have learned or experienced. Minimum participation at TBO Shabbat Services must include:

- 4 times in 4<sup>th</sup> grade,
- 5 times in 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- 6 times in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 3 Shabbat Morning services through all the years up to 7th grade.

Participating through Zoom is possible. Make sure your video is on and that you greet the clergy "Shabbat Shalom" and share your full name and grade in the chat. After Shabbat remember to send an email to Sarah Handler at [sarah.handler@templebnaior.org](mailto:sarah.handler@templebnaior.org) to inform us that you've attended. In the email, share one thing you've learned.

## PREPARATION FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH

### Overview of Timeline

#### **8 months before**

Your family begins journey by meeting with Rabbi and Cantor

#### **6 months before**

Your child begins weekly, private sessions to study *Torah* and *Haftarah* portions

#### **8 weeks before**

Your child meets with Cantor three times (30 min) to prepare for service on *bimah* in sanctuary

#### **1 week before**

Your family meets with Cantor for final rehearsal and choreography (90 minute)

#### ***Kabbalat Shabbat* (Friday night before)**

Your immediate family participates in the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service

#### ***Shabbat Morning Services* (Day of)**

Enjoy and celebrate *Shabbat* and your child becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* together!

### Clergy Appointments (8 months before)

Rabbi will meet with your family to discuss the meaning of this important Jewish journey. Additional appointments will be scheduled with Rabbi for your child to study the meanings of their *Torah parashah* (portion) and to write a *D'var Torah* – a teaching based on a lesson learned from the *Torah* portion.

Cantor will also meet with your family at this time to acquaint herself with your hopes and to help you to make your journey meaningful. At this time, Cantor will also discuss with you the participation of other family members in the Shabbat service. **Important Note on Educational Needs:** We take great pride in making *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* possible for **every** student. If your child has any special learning needs, please discuss with Cantor as early as possible.

### Appointments with Bar/Bat Mitzvah Tutor (6-8 months before)

Your child will have **fifteen (15) 30-minute private sessions** with a tutor to study their *Torah* and *Haftarah* portions. **Please note:** If your child's date is in September or October, please plan for tutoring during the summer months. *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* tutoring will begin only after all financial arrangements have been made.

### 7th grade T'filah Class with Cantor (8 months prior)

All 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who have not yet become *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* are expected to attend a 30-minute *T'filah* (prayer) class weekly on Monday nights prior to religious school hours with Cantor. This time is helpful for the B'nai/ot Mitzvah to become comfortable leading the service.

### Clergy Appointments (8 weeks before)

Approximately **8 weeks** before the service, Cantor will have **three (3) 25-minute appointments** with your child to rehearse the service on the bimah. At this time, **all their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* forms, including *Aliyot* and other honors, must be handed into the office.**

### Parents/Guardians and Family Participation in Service (4 weeks before)

During the service, you will address your child with words of *blessing* marking the sacredness of this moment. We encourage you to begin preparing your blessing at this time. It is wonderful to connect your personal words to the Torah portion of the week, or alternatively root in Jewish wisdom. Themes to consider in your blessing:

- What is your personal "*torah*" – the Jewish values – that you wish to pass to your child?
- What are your hopes for your child's continued Jewish journey?

**During the service, you and other family members may have the honor of an *Aliyah* - being called to chant the blessings before and after your child reads from *Torah*. Please give yourself ample time to fill in the *Aliyah* forms with your relatives full and Hebrew names as well as review and practice the blessings.**

### Clergy Appointments (1 week before)

**One (1) week** before the service, Cantor will conduct a choreographed **family rehearsal** including instructions for passing the *Torah* among family members and involvement of family members in other honors. Please plan for 90 minutes. **Parent(s)/guardian(s) must be present.**

**Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday night before)**

Your family will participate in the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service by lighting *Shabbat* candles at the beginning of the service and will participate in *Kiddush* (blessing over wine) and *Motzi* (blessing over bread before a meal) at the end of the service.

**BLESSINGS FOR THE READING OF TORAH**

To prepare to chant these blessings, we encourage you to listen to the recordings on the TBO's website or here:

<https://reformjudaism.org/sites/default/files/t10r6-torah-chanted.mp3>

**Blessing before the reading of the Torah**

Person called to the *Torah* (*Oleh/Olah*) chants:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ.

*Bar'chu et Adonai ham'vorach.*

Bless Adonai who is blessed.

Congregation responds:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

*Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed.*

Blessed is Adonai who is blessed now and forever.

*Oleh/Olah* repeats congregational response, then continues:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל  
הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

*Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed.*

*Baruch atah, Adonai*

*Eloheinu, Melech haolam,*

*asher bachar banu mikol haamim,*

*v'natan lanu et Torato.*

*Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.*

Blessed is Adonai who is blessed now and forever.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has chosen us from among the peoples, and given us the *Torah*.

Blessed are You, *Adonai*, who gives the *Torah*.

Blessing after reading Torah

After *Torah* Aliyah Chanting concludes, *Oleh/Olah* chants:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת  
אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

*Baruch atah, Adonai  
Eloheinu, Melech haolam,  
asher natan lanu Torat emet,  
v'chayei olam nata b'tocheinu.  
Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us a *Torah* of truth, implanting within us eternal life.  
Blessed are You, *Adonai*, who gives the *Torah*.



*"It is a Tree of Life for those who hold fast to  
it, and all its supporters are happy"*  
Proverbs 3:18



**SCHEDULE OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH FEES**

A flat fee of \$2,000.00\* will be billed to your account at the time of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* orientation meeting for 6<sup>th</sup>-grade families. Please contact the Temple Office to arrange a payment schedule.

\*The fee includes, most significantly, *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* tutoring sessions, the *Oneg Shabbat* on Friday evening (food, set-up, etc.), flowers for the *bimah*, and challah and wine for the *motzi* blessing.

*Bar/Bat Mitzvah* tutoring will only begin after all financial arrangements have been made. The balance of all fees, including tuition for the religious school year in which your child celebrates becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* , are **due in full three (3) months prior** to your child's *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date.

Social Hall usage, if available: A \$250.00 deposit is required to reserve the Social Hall or courtyard, with the balance **due in full three (3) months prior** to your ceremony. In addition, caterers are required to pay \$250 security deposit two (2) weeks prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date.

Linda Grandis Blatt Art Gallery .....	\$250.00*
Usage Fee for Social Hall with Kitchen use .....	\$1000.00*
Usage Fee for Social Hall for <i>Kiddush</i> Luncheon(no Kitchen use) .....	\$750.00*
Usage Fee for Social Hall and Foyer .....	\$900.00*
Usage Fee for Courtyard.....	\$500.00*
Usage Fee for <i>Beit Midrash</i> .....	\$250.00*

*\*Prices are subject to change*

**Contributions in Honor of Your Family's Simcha (Happy Event)**

In honor of your child becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, contributions may be made and are deeply appreciated to the clergy's Discretionary Funds, the Joel and Helen Jacobs Religious School Endowment Fund or any one of the other funds on the [TBO website \(https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=a013ec\)](https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=a013ec)

In gratitude b'*Todah Rabah*, Thank You!

## CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Temple Office Phone</b>	973-539-4539
<b>Rabbi</b> Michael Satz	<a href="mailto:rabbisatz@templebnaior.org">rabbisatz@templebnaior.org</a>
<b>Cantor</b> Galit Dadoun Cohen	<a href="mailto:cantor@templebnaior.org">cantor@templebnaior.org</a>
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