



Being Mitzvah

Family Preparation Booklet

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Dear Parents and Students,

Mazel Tov! Soon your child will celebrate coming of age in our “Be Mitzvah” program. (we use this non-gendered term for the process and education.) As you celebrate your child as a Bar, Bat, or Be Mitzvah, we share in your family’s excitement. There is so much to think about, and so much to do. We created this handbook to guide you through the process at Temple Ohev Sholom. We hope that it makes your planning a little easier and a lot more meaningful. Our goal is to make this a wonderful experience for the entire family. Please feel free to contact either of us at any time with questions or concerns.

It is our job to make sure that your child is properly trained to lead the congregation in prayer and, more so, is ready to take on the responsibilities of growing a meaningful and relevant adult Jewish life.

Please read through this booklet carefully with your entire family. Make notes as you go and let us know how we can help. This information may be initially overwhelming but we are here to assist at every step.

Shalom,
Rabbi Marc Kline & Reyna Jose

What is a Be Mitzvah?

A Be Mitzvah is the name of the ceremony in which a Jewish student becomes an adult in the eyes of the Jewish community. It can also refer to the person being celebrated. The title Bar (son), Bat (daughter) or Be (gender neutral) or B'Nai (plural) Mitzvah (commandment) is bestowed upon the student along with accompanying privileges and responsibilities. Mitzvot teach us to sanctify life. They foster selflessness and self-esteem. They can bring families closer to each other, the Jewish people, all people, and to God. Preparing for a Be Mitzvah is the perfect opportunity to bring mitzvot into our lives.

At Temple Ohev Sholom, the student leads much of the Shabbat service, shares their Torah and Haftarah portions, as well as their reflections on its meaning and life application. Some of the service will be chanted, some will be read, in both the Hebrew and English languages. This sacred rite of passage is the first opportunity the student has to take on an adult role in the Temple and the Jewish community, not a culmination.

Another aspect of the Be Mitzvah is the personal mitzvah project undertaken by the student. With guidance from our Rabbi, we hope that this mitzvah becomes a regular undertaking that the Be Mitzvah continues, well into adulthood and beyond.

In our congregation the Be Mitzvah is a seminal and transitional event in Jewish growth, but only the beginning of their religious education. We strongly encourage all of our Be Mitzvot to continue their participation in Confirmation classes at the Temple, in Jewish youth group events, and community-wide opportunities for Jewish learning and gathering.

The Rabbi, principal, teachers, tutors and lay leaders are ready to guide your student and family through the process of becoming a Be-Mitzvah. Let's get started.

Basic Be Mitzvah Requirements

- Students must be enrolled in Temple Ohev Sholom's Religious School. With regular attendance and participation, students will be prepared in language, history, value, and ritual.
- The student will complete a service project prior to the Be Mitzvah.
- Parents and the student will meet regularly with the Rabbi and tutor(s).
- Students will participate in individual tutoring for Torah & Haftarah portions.
- Parents and the student are expected to attend services at least twice a month beginning the year prior.
- Students will write and present a D'var Torah, a speech/sermon that helps people use our Torah's sacred teachings to better understand and serve the wider world.

Timeline

- **Kindergarten** - Enroll your child in Religious School
- **In 3rd grade** - Your child begins receiving Hebrew instruction. Hebrew tutoring happens one on one via Zoom for a half hour each week in addition to their Religious School classes.
- **In 5th grade** – Set your Be Mitzvah date
- **In 6th grade** - Students will learn to chant prayers in religious school and begin to discuss service project ideas with the Rabbi.
- **12 months prior** to Be Mitzvah-
 - Students should start attending services twice a month. Attendance cards are to be signed at services by a parent for documentation.
 - Your child will choose their service project. Implementing this project before the Be Mitzvah is required. It is strongly suggested that the bulk of the project be concluded 6 months before the Be Mitzvah.

Bar/Bat/Be Mitzvah Service Outline



Note: This is a general template. The service is tailored to each student, both to their capacity and their personality.

Everything in **bold** is *READ/SUNG* by the **student**

Sung by the Soloist Typically done by selected Family Members

Rabbi welcomes the congregation, then the **Student**, Rabbi, and **Soloist** will co-lead the liturgical service.

Tallit presentation (optional)

Page 287 – **A, B, or C**

Page 288 – **Modeh Ani**

Page 290 – *Mah Tovu (Soloist)*

Page 291 – **Baruch**

Bottom of page

Pages 293 – 296 – **Nisim B'chol Yom**

Page 298 – **English**

Page 301 - **1st 2 lines of Hebrew minimum, & bottom in English**

Page 306 – *Halleluyah (Soloist)*

Page 313- **Barchu**

Page 314 – **The World English**

Page 317 -**English & Hebrew at bottom**

Page 318 – **Shema**

Page 319 – **V'ahavta**

Page 321 - **English**

Page 322 – *Mi Chamocha (Soloist)*

Page 323 – 325 **Adonai S'fatai/Avot v'imahot/g'vurot (with Soloist)**

Pages 326 - 328 *Kedusha (Soloist)*

Page 328 – **V'Shamru or Read English**

Page 329 – **Those who keep Yism'chu (Soloist)**

Page 330 *R'tzei (Soloist)*
"On this shabbat day"

Pages 332– 333 bottom

English & Hebrew

Page 334 – *Sim Shalom (Soloist)*

Pages 336-37 – A, B, or C

Page 337 – *Oseh shalom Yi-h'yu L'ratzon (with Soloist)*

Ark is Opened

The Torah is removed

Torah Passing

Parents bless their child

Torah Processional

Undressing Torah

Blessing before each Torah Portion

For each Torah portion an **Aliyah**

Torah Reading

Blessing after Torah Reading

Dressing Torah

Mi Shebeirach

Blessing before Haftarah reading

Haftarah portion

Blessing after Haftarah Reading

Torah is returned to the Ark

D'var Torah/Sermon

Rabbi's Response / Blessing

Page 587 – Aleinu

Page 598 – Mourners Kaddish

Congregational Gifts

Candy Offering (optional)

Final Prayers and Closing Songs

Motzi

Mitzvah Services are held Saturday Morning @ 10:30 am (-approx. noon)

FAQ's

What is the cost/fee for Be Mitzvah and what does it include? There is a \$700 Be Mitzvah Preparation Fee, which includes the Be Mitzvah specific teaching and planning that will take place with the Rabbi and a Be Mitzvah tutor so that the Be Mitzvah student is well prepared for their service. Use of the Temple's Main Sanctuary is included in the Be Mitzvah Preparation Fee as well.

What should be in my child's speech? During meetings with the Rabbi, your child will prepare a D'var Torah (a piece of wisdom/insight about what the Torah portion means to them) that makes the Torah text relevant in our 21st century lives. (guidelines to follow)

How do I rent the temple's facilities? If you would like to use the Temple's other facilities, such as the Social Hall (below the Main Sanctuary), the Kitchen or the Lehrman Chapel, you need to contact the office to reserve these spaces. Please see our Facilities Contract for details on our policies and fees.

Is there a list of resources that the Temple already has prepared that will help me get started? Yes! Our staff and families have put together this spreadsheet (it has multiple tabs) - [Resources for Be Mitzvah](#)

Does the temple have a preferred caterer? We do not. Please note that any caterer brought in must be bonded and insured.

Does the temple have a preferred photographer/videographer? We have a long-standing relationship with temple member and photographer *Sheryl Z. Photography*, and are happy to connect you with them, but anyone can be contracted.

When can the photographer shoot? Please note that only professional photography is permitted during the service. Individuals are not to use their phones to photograph or record the service. Photography during the service is allowed with the Rabbi's prior approval. Photos may begin at 9:30 in the sanctuary and must end by 10:15. Temple Ohev Sholom livestreams services and posts recordings of the services on the YouTube channel. If you want to hire a videographer you may do so, but all videography must be shot from the balcony.

Must we provide kippot/yarmulkes? Must my child wear a Tallit (prayer shawl)? Kippots are optional at Ohev. As a family, you can decide if you want to provide them. Tallits are also optional. You can decide what will be meaningful for your Be Mitzvah and for your family.

Do we need to order flowers for the Bimah? You are welcome to use the existing silk flowers that are already present (at no cost). If you would like to personalize the flowers, any florist can be used. Fran Casher typically orders flowers for events at the temple and is happy to help, if you'd like.

Will our Be Mitzvah be featured in the monthly bulletin? Cindy Lynch

cindylynch@ohavsholom.org leads the Bulletin Committee and gathers content at least 3 weeks in advance of the first of the month when the Be Mitzvah will take place.

What is the role of parents on Friday night? Parents will stand with the Be Mitzvah on the Bima for the candle lighting. They will light the candles and recite the kiddush. The Rabbi may offer other pieces of the service for the student to lead.

What are we asked to do for the Friday Night Oneg Shabbat? Families are asked to sponsor the Oneg on the Friday night before the Be Mitzvah. Doreen Evrard, organizes all of our Onegs and so she knows well what works best and how many people to plan for. You may want to cook something special, feature some of your student's favorite foods, or just ask Doreen to shop for you. Doreen will reach out, to walk you through the process.

What is the role of parents at the Saturday service? During the service parents will be called up for an aliyah. At the beginning of the Torah service parents will be called to say some words to their child and participate in blessing their child.

What is an aliyah? The word "aliyah" means to "go up." It refers specifically to being called to the Torah to recite two blessings, one before and one after your child's reading of the Torah.

Is a non-Jewish parent limited in their participation at the Be Mitzvah service? Parents of a Be-Mitvah, whether Jewish or not, are important and are invited to participate in all aspects of the service.

Are siblings able to be involved in the service? Absolutely!

Are family and friends involved in the service in any way besides aliyot during the Torah service? Other honors for family/friends can include selected readings, opening and closing the Ark and carrying, holding, or dressing the Torah.

How can my child give Tzedakah? Tzedakah is the Jewish way of thanking God for our blessings. It is customary for a Be Mitzvah to give a portion of their gifts to any of the following temple funds:

- *Rabbi's Discretionary Fund*
- *Robert Woldorf Youth Fund*
- *Brenner Sacred Music Fund*
- *Temple Fund*
- *Religious Education Fund*
- *Youth Activity Fund*
- *Prayer Book Fund*
- *Alexander White Children's Library Fund*
- *Mildred and Irving Hand Library Fund*
- *Sisterhood Altar Flower Fund*
- *Diana Sauerteig Beautification Fund*
- *Sisterhood Zaritzky Youth Fund*
- *Steven Harpster Tikkun Olam Fund*
- *Sisterhood Friedman Emergency Fun*

Checklist

- Attend Friday Shabbat Services with the Community
- Meet with the Rabbi to determine the focus of the torah portion, your service project, speech, and any other expectations of the student and family.
- Work with Hebrew tutoring on Torah and Haftarah portions. Parents oversee daily studying.
- Complete service project. Implementing this project before the Be Mitzvah is required. It is strongly suggested that the bulk of the project be concluded *6 months before* the Be Mitzvah.
- Begin to schedule regular meetings with the Rabbi. *3 months prior*
- Provide a photo and blurb to the office for the monthly temple newsletter
- Invite your family and friends *Typically 6-8 weeks prior*
- Select who will participate in the service (*see the worksheet in this packet*)
- Students and their parents should schedule rehearsals with the Rabbi.
- Confirm plans for the Oneg shabbat held after the Friday night service and order altar flowers (if desired).
- Return worksheet which will be used in preparing your service programs to the Temple Office. *2 weeks prior*
- Attend Friday night service. Parents will participate in candle lighting and kiddush and student in others ways that night.
- Remind your guests that the Be Mitzvah service begins promptly at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday.
- Be Mitzvah day** - Arrive at 9:30 for photography and to greet early arrivals.

MAZEL TOV!!!!!!!

After the Be-Mitzvah - It is our sincere hope that your Be Mitzvah is one of many meaningful steps on a lifelong journey of Jewish learning. The Rabbi runs our Confirmation program watch for more information on how to stay involved.

TOS Being Mitzvah Program WORKSHEET

Please Complete this sheet and return it to Amanda (Office@OhevSholom.ORG) in the Office

Your Full Name (Include Hebrew Name): _____

Torah Passage you will read: _____ Haftorah: _____

Which word which you prefer to use: Bat Bar Be Mitzvah

of Program Copies _____

	Full Name(s)	Relationship (ie Sister, Great Aunt...)
Ark Opener:		
Torah Passing:		
Undressing Torah:		
First Aliyah:		
Second Aliyah:		
Third Aliyah:		
Any more Aliyahs?		
Dressing Torah:		
Purveyor(s) of Candy:		
Other Honors		

Short bio for the Temple Newsletter and for your Program Cover: