

Congregation Beth Shalom
Policy and Handbook

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a significant Jewish lifecycle event for the student, family, and community. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah indicates that the student has grown in Jewish knowledge and is ready, through further study, to acquire a more mature understanding of Judaism and to assume the responsibilities of Jewish life. This is the mitzvah for the child, family, and our people.

At Congregation Beth Shalom, a Bar/Bat Mitzvah usually occurs during the Saturday morning Shabbat service. Dates are assigned when the student and family meet with the rabbi. It is recommended this meeting occurs no later than 12 months prior to the event.

The following policies will apply in order to celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Beth Shalom. The Board of Directors may make exceptions to these policies under **extraordinary circumstances**. Families may request consideration for extraordinary circumstances to a committee comprised of the Rabbi, Religious School Director, a member of the Religious School Committee, and a Congregation Board member. The process of consideration may include testing by the committee.

1. Students must have completed a minimum of three (3) years of Religious School which includes Hebrew or an equivalent education as determined by the Rabbi and Director of Education. Equivalent education may be either attendance at a religious school in the community that the family had recently moved from or a fund of knowledge evaluated based on Congregation Beth Shalom curriculum and testing done by the committee as stated above.
2. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah date will be set and the ceremony will be held when family membership in Congregation Beth Shalom is in good standing.
3. Students must be enrolled and in good standing in the Religious School through out the entire Bar/Bat Mitzvah year.
4. Students must attend Shabbat morning services prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Attendances at services familiarize the student and family with the elements and conduct of the service and creates a special bond between the student and the community. When the ceremony is planned for Shabbat morning, it is important that the student attend enough services to be fully familiar with all the aspects of the service. The recommended number of services to achieve this goal is 12.
5. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Bath Shalom is limited to children and adult members of Congregation Beth Shalom.
6. The format for the service is usually the Shabbat Shacharit Service (Saturday morning). The family will consult with the Rabbi on the service, choice of siddur, supplemental material, family participation, etc.
7. Bar/Bat Mitzvah students shall meet with the rabbi on a regular basis and receive training from a Congregation Beth Shalom approved tutor. In some circumstances, some self

study may be done using electronic media however there must be established progress assessment points with either the Rabbi or a tutor.

8. Candidates with special needs will have accommodations made and should consult with the rabbi as early as possible.
9. The student is expected to choose a tikkun olam/ tzedakah project and complete this mitzvah as part of the preparation of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The Rabbi, Religious School Director, and teachers can help the student choose a project.
10. Signed copy of this policy is to be returned to the office on the day of the appointment with the rabbi to establish the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Students who have fulfilled the requirements are privileged to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Beth Shalom. The ceremony represents a significant achievement but should not be perceived as the goal of Religious Education.

Additional policies and considerations:

1. If the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is participating in Erev Shabbat services prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah then they will also be responsible for the oneg.
2. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is responsible for the Kiddush following Shabbat morning services the day of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
3. The family will be responsible for appropriate clean up.
4. If there will be a Kiddush luncheon at Congregation Beth Shalom then a rental form needs to be filled out prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. There is no fee for use of 600 Greenmeadows Road (new building) for use of the building until 2 PM on Shabbat for this purpose.
5. The use of the facilities, staff and the campus will be coordinated through the Congregational Administrator.
6. The building will be available for set up the Thursday prior to that Shabbat the week of the B/Mitzvah ie the day before
7. A floor plan for the service can be left for our custodian Ralph Hester no later than Wednesday the week of the event. Any unusual floor plans need to meet the Rabbi's approval
8. The family is responsible to clean the building and return the building to its previous set up prior to the next event. The next event will either be that Saturday night or Sunday morning.
9. The family is financially responsible for any damages done to the building.
10. Congregation Beth Shalom's kashrut policy must be followed for all events held at Congregation Beth Shalom. A copy of the policy is in the Handbook.
11. Photography during the service will be restricted to non-flash and the photographer should be relatively stationary. A stationary videographer may also videotape the service. Again this is primarily a religious service and the intent is to maintain the religious atmosphere of Shabbat morning.

12. It is customary and expected that the family will make a donation of some type to the Congregation such as to the General Fund, Capital Campaign, another fund, or siddureem.
13. In the spirit of Jewish teachings, it is suggested that 3% of the money targeted to be spent on food for the event be donated to either Mazon: A Response to Jewish Hunger, Central Missouri Food Bank or another charitable organization that feeds the hungry.
14. Students are expected to continue their education through grade 12. Establishing a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date and becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is also stating the student's and family's commitment to continue with education and a commitment to being an active member of the Jewish community.

I have read and understand the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Policies of Congregation Beth Shalom.

		/		/	
Student signature			Date		
		/		/	
Parent signature			Date		
		/		/	
Parent signature			Date		

Timeline

18 - 24 months prior to the B/Mitzvah

1. The family calls the synagogue office to set up a meeting with the rabbi to select a date. The Religious School Director may attend this meeting.
2. The Administrator will start a progress folder for the student. Any discrepancies in the family's membership status will either be handled by the synagogue Administrator or referred to the membership committee at the Administrator's discretion.
3. The Religious School Director will be informed of the meeting date and submit a student progress report for the folder.
4. The Rabbi and School Director will meet 1 week prior to the Rabbi/family meeting to review the information in the folder.
5. The family and student will receive the Bar/Bat Mitzvah handbook, the Hebrew Torah portion, the English translation of the Torah portion, and Haftorah in Hebrew and English.
6. Once the date is assigned the family will be charged \$400. This fee must be paid in full no later than four months prior to the event. Financial assistance will be made available to those in need.

This is the time for the student and family to plan the Shabbat morning service attendance requirements. Students and families are encouraged to attend Shabbat morning service at least twice a month but a minimum of 12 Shabbat morning services must be attended by the student prior to the event. The student who wants to lead more than the minimum expectation of a

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is required to attend Shabbat morning service no less than 18 times during the 18 months prior to the event.

18 – 12 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

1. Students and families attend a D'var workshop led by the rabbi. The rabbi may have a co-teacher.
2. Students begin to attend the Rabbi's Sunday morning Torah class held during Religious School.
3. Students select a Tukkun Olam/tzedakah project.

10 ½ – 12 months prior to the B/Mitzvah

1. Students will be working on the blessings before and after the Torah and Haftorah and start Haftorah.
2. The students will learn about the Torah portion with the guidance of the worksheets distributed at the D'var Torah Workshop. The rabbi, teachers and tutors will be available to assist with the worksheets and understanding the meaning of the Torah portion.

No fewer than 10 months prior to the B/Mitzvah

After completing the D'var Torah workshop, parents call the Religious School Director to sign the students up to work with a tutor. The sessions will be one to one weekly for 45 minutes. Over the course of nine months the students should plan to meet 20 times with the tutor. Congregation Beth Shalom will pay the tutor for the 20 sessions from the \$400 Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee. Sessions beyond the 20 are paid privately by the family. Alternative learning needs to be discussed and approved by the Rabbi and Religious School Director.

4 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Students finish Haftorah and work on Torah. The student should begin Torah sooner if they are reading more than the maftir (concluding 3 verses).

Semester preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Students who will lead more than the minimum expectation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah can begin to prepare for the service component of their B'nai Mitzvah in tefilah during Religious School and during attendance at Erev Shabbat service and Shabbat morning service. The rabbi will be made aware of the student's intentions and will facilitate the student's leading abilities during Shabbat services. Before leading more than the typical or minimum, students must have approval of the tutor and rabbi and they must attend Shabbat morning

service no less than 18 times in the 18 months preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Approval will be based on student's progress with Torah and Haftorah. (Again, all Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are expected to attend Shabbat morning service a minimum of 12 times in the 12 months preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah).

3 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Students continue with one to one tutoring, putting together components of Service, Torah and Haftorah. The tutor focuses on clarity of speech, trope, presentation, and accuracy. During the last 6 weeks the students will practice on the bimah. The student should also meet individually with the rabbi during this time and at any time during their preparation. Progress reports will be given to the rabbi from the tutor.

2 ½ months – 8 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Students submit their complete D'var Torah to the rabbi and meet with the rabbi to evaluate their progress. Parents will also be at this meeting. The family will tell the rabbi at this time who will receive honors at the service, if anyone else will be reading Torah, and submit the Worship Honors form. The student will continue to attend Shabbat morning services.

7 - 3 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

1. Students will attend Shabbat morning services and complete the service attendance form.
2. Students will continue working with their tutor.
3. Students will practice service portions they will be leading at tefilah and at Shabbat morning services.
4. Students will continue to meet with the rabbi.

1-2 weeks prior to the B/Mitzvah

Students and family typically meet with the rabbi as often as deemed necessary by the rabbi. These times are established through the congregational office and coordinated with the rabbi's schedule.

Rehearsal in the sanctuary with the rabbi will occur during this time. The student will be expected to chant Torah, Haftorah, blessings, and give the D'var. The student's ability to lead a service component will have already been determined by this time through attendance and leadership at tefilah and Shabbat morning service.

Checklist to bring to all rehearsals

- _____ The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook
- _____ Speeches
- _____ List of Honors
- _____ Tallit (if one will be worn)
- _____ Kippah (if one will be worn)

Day of Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Times may vary if the beginning of the service time is later or earlier as determined by the rabbi

9:30 Arrival time if you plan to take pictures prior to the service. Please remind your photographer that there are no flash pictures taken during the service and all pictures taken during the service should be done from a distance to not disrupt the religious nature of the service.

10:00 The service begins. It is important the service starts on time so please be sure you and all your guests are seated and ready for worship at this time.

12:30 The service will conclude with Kiddush and motzi. Reciting the Kiddush and motzi in the sanctuary may provide a smoother transition to the Kiddush luncheon if you are having one.

Options for Leading the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service

Students can chose from multiple options for leading the worship service on the morning of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This section outlines the Shabbat morning options. Students with special needs or circumstances that seem to prohibit Option 1 should consult with the rabbi as early as possible for accommodations. All students must attend a minimum of 12 Shabbat morning services but higher requirements are expected for those who will lead greater portions of the service. There is a form included in the Handbook to help keep track of service attendance.

Option 1

The student will read the blessings before and after the Torah and Haftarah. The student will chant the maftir (concluding 3 verses) of the Torah. The student will chant the Haftarah and give a D'var Torah.

Option 2

The student will do Option 1 plus lead the Torah service. Some of the prayers the student may lead in this option may include: Ein Kamocha, Av Harachamim, Ki Mitzion through Gadlu L'Adonai , and Etz Chayim. Students choosing this option, who are prepared may chant more Torah than the maftir up to all of the Torah.

Option 3

The student will lead Options 1 & 2 plus lead the Amidah.

Once the tutor approves the student's progress to lead more of the service the student needs to meet with the rabbi to discuss the plan. This cannot be accomplished without attendance at Shabbat morning services.

Option 4

The student will lead from Hatzi Chadish through the Torah service (Options 1-3)

Shabbat Mincha Service

On occasion the need may arise for an afternoon Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This option is available based on need through discussion with the rabbi. The service and student expectations will be arranged with the rabbi. Haftorah will not be read but the student will read from the Torah and may lead some prayers. The student will also give a D'var Torah and is still expected to meet the student's service attendance criteria of all Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Shabbat morning Service structure

Below is a list of prayers that may be recited on a typical Shabbat morning service:

Mah Tovuh
Psalm 150
Hatzi Kaddish
Bar'chu
Shema
V'ahavta
Mi Chamocho
Tzur Yisrael
Amidah
Oseh Shalom
Ein Kamocha
Av Harachamim
Ki Mitzion through L'cha Adonai
Torah Blessings
Mishebeirach
V'zot HaTorah
Haftorah Blessings
Hado al Eretz
Eitz Chayim
Aleynu/V'ne'emar
Kaddish
Adon Olam
Ein Keloheyenu

B/Mitzvah Progress Sheet

Student's Name _____

Hebrew Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Parents' Names/ Addresses and contact numbers

Office Use:

Membership status:

Current yes ____ no ____

Dues current yes ____ no ____

If no to any of the above write action taken here:

Office follow up every 3 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to check membership and dues status;

Date Current y/n

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If no, document any actions taken:

Student Progress Report

Religious School Director summary prior to first meeting with the rabbi:

Years of attendance at Religious School _____

Attendance rate of 80 % or greater _____

Special needs anticipated yes ____ no ____

If yes, describe below

Tutor Progress report:

12 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah

9 months prior

6 months prior

5 months prior and recommendation for expanded leadership role in Shabbat Service

4 months prior

3 months prior

2 months prior

1 month prior

2 weeks prior

Summary

Rabbi Report:

Initial meeting/date set

Special accommodations

Attendance at D’var class

Attendance at Sunday morning Torah class during Religious School calendar year

Follow-up progress meetings and report

Doing Mitzvot: Worshipping with your community

	1	2	3	4	5
January					
February					

March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					

December					
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Doing Mitzvot: Worshipping with your community

	1	2	3	4	5
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					

October					
November					
December					

D'var Torah Worksheet

Name _____

Hebrew Name _____

Date of Bar/Bat Mitzvah _____ Torah Portion _____

Haftorah _____

D'var Torah means word of Torah and your D'var is an opportunity to teach the congregation about your Torah portion. On the day you stand before the congregation you should be somewhat an expert on your Torah portion

Learn something new, and then teach it to the Congregation in your D'var. Tell the congregation how an ancient or modern Torah commentator spoke about your portion. Relate the portion to today.

These steps will help you prepare your D'var

List 7 -10 comments that you find interesting about your portion. Include the source of the comments and a short summary

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

D'var Torah Worksheet

Of what section of the Torah do you want to do a more in depth study?

Name of the Book _____

Chapter _____ Verse _____ through Chapter _____ Verse _____

Does your portion seem to speak directly to us today? Some portions don't, which category do you think your portion fits into? Why?

What is at least one connection that you can make between your Torah portion and today?

Things to consider when writing your D'var:

Rabbinic Commentary, ancient and modern, Story, quotes, questions

Worship Honors Worksheet

Please fill out completely and return to the rabbi one month prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Name and Hebrew Name of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Names and Hebrew names of parents

B'nai Mitzvah and their families are invited to participate and lead portions of the Erev Shabbat service (Friday night). Will the family lead Kiddush and accept this honor? ____

Who will participate and how?

Shabbat morning greeters

Two people to distribute printed material. They do not need to be Jewish. May be children or adults

1. _____ 2. _____

Ark openers

Up to two people each time the Torah is taken out. Need not be Jewish

Taking the Torah out of the Ark

1. _____ 2. _____

Returning the Torah to the Ark

2. _____ 2. _____

Opening and closing the Ark for Aleynu

1. _____

2. _____

Passing the Torah for generation to generation. Non-Jewish grandparents and great grandparents do not participate, while non Jewish parents do.

Aliyot/Torah Blessings

All people called to the Torah must be Jewish and over the age of 13. A non-Jewish person may accompany a Jewish person to the Torah. The Jewish person will recite the blessing. Each Aliyah can have up to two people ascending to the Torah at the same time.

Names and Hebrew names

First Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Second Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Third Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Fourth Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Fifth Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Sixth Aliyah

1. _____
2. _____

Seventh Aliyah/Maftir

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Student

Hagbah (person lifting the Torah)-must be Jewish

1. _____

G'lilah (Torah dressing and undressing)-must be Jewish

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Gabbai Aliyot (calls persons receiving the aliyot)-must be Jewish, the rabbi can suggest someone if you are uncertain.

Gabbai Torah (ensures that the Torah is read correctly)-must be Jewish, the rabbi can suggest someone if you are uncertain.

Tikkun Olam/Tzedakah Project Worksheet

What kind of project should you do?

What are you good at?

What do you like to do?

What bothers you so much about what is wrong with the world that you want to do whatever you can to change it?

Who can help you?

Possible Projects

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

TikkunOlam/Tzedakah Project

Name:

Submit this completed form to the rabbi no later than 2 weeks prior to the B/Mitzvah.

The name and description of the tzedakah project that I am going to do is:

This is what I accomplished in my Tzedakah project:

This was important to me because:
