



Congregation Ohav Shalom  
אוהב שלום

A Conservative/Egalitarian Synagogue



# HANDBOOK FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH FAMILIES

Revised January, 2018

## **THOUGHTS FROM THE RABBIS:**

Dear families,

Mazal tov upon your child's becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Reaching this milestone in your lives has deep spiritual significance for your family. We would like to share with you some ideas, suggestions, and synagogue policies that help you to be a partner with God and the Jewish community in "growing your child's soul" during this time.

1. **REMEMBER THE MEANING OF THE DAY:** While your child's and family's special event is very important, the focus of our service is on worship, community, and the holiness of Shabbat. Your family is a special part of Shabbat morning services, even as we remember that the Shabbat day belongs ultimately to the community and to God. Our structure for your participation is intended to balance your specific needs with the needs of the larger community and our ongoing customs of worship.

2. **RECOGNIZE YOUR ROLES:** These include your involvement in your child's religious training, your regular worship with the congregation, attendance at family education programs, and your decision with your child to engage in mitzvah projects and to give tzedakah. All of these things send your child the positive message that preparation for becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not just about getting ready for a ceremony, but for a full adult Jewish life. The more you do together as a family in a Jewish context, the more your child will understand the role that Judaism can play in his or her life.

3. **OUR THANKS SHOULD LEAD US TO GIVING:** Your special day marks a significant celebration of life and family. Jewish tradition teaches us that the best way to celebrate is to remember others who are less fortunate than we are. We suggest that you and your child research a number of worthy causes, make a significant donation to one or more of them, and engage in mitzvah work in order to place your *simcha* in its most meaningful context.

Tzedakah might involve collecting and donating food to the local food pantry or allocating a portion of gifts to charity (such as Mazon), or a self-tithing against the cost of the entire affair. Students may choose a volunteer project related to his/her interests. Many agencies in our community offer opportunities for student volunteers, including animal shelters, food security programs and groups which support the ill or seniors. As your child "comes of age" with regard to mitzvot, he/she should learn that "Jewish adulthood" requires us to support those in need.

4. **LEARN, LEARN, LEARN!** Ohav Shalom is a community of learners. We emphasize the importance of every person continuing to learn and teach throughout his or her life, no matter how old or young. Jewish education is not only for kids! Every Jewish person and family should be learning throughout life. Take advantage of our excellent post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah and adult education within the congregation and the larger Jewish community. When you engage in your own learning, you send a message to your child that Jewish education after this important time is an obligation and a wonderful opportunity.

We encourage our Bnai Mitzvah to continue their participation and learning by leading *davening* and reading Torah and Haftorah for our weekly cycle of Shabbat services. We are happy to welcome your Bar/Bat Mitzvah graduate as an active participant in our religious observance. We always need and encourage new leaders at every level of experience. For further information, speak with the rabbis, or with the appropriate volunteers mentioned in this handbook.

#### 5. HONORING SHABBAT:

We are very proud of the spiritual beauty of Shabbat observances at Ohav. We ask that you consider and share with your guests information about appropriate ways to honor Shabbat and to maintain the sacred atmosphere of our worship services and throughout your celebration. Please see the sample letter for guests in this handbook for guidelines on the use of electronics and on proper attire. Remember that no electronics, cameras, smoking or writing are permitted on synagogue premises at any time on Shabbat. Use of telephones is fully permitted in the event of a medical or other emergency.

6. KOSHER IS KOOL: Making your reception kosher and in conformity with the laws of Shabbat will add meaning to your child becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. On the day of the ceremony, you and your child will be declaring publicly the importance of Judaism and Jewish identity in your lives. Whether in the synagogue, at your home or elsewhere, a party which conforms to the dietary and Shabbat laws of our faith shows that you are extending this commitment to every aspect of your celebration. This is especially so since the party or luncheon is a seudat mitzvah, a meal of religious celebration. A kosher meal, Jewish music, Jewish rituals (such as reciting Motzi and Birkat Hamazon) all help to make the celebration a genuine part of this life cycle event and a positive Jewish experience.

Some people feel that it would be hypocritical to do this when they do not practice these aspects of Judaism regularly. When you show allegiance to Jewish practice in your public celebration, you are not being hypocritical at all: you are showing deep respect for Jewish ideals and their meaning in our lives.

Please note that, while we respect the right of every family to make the choices which are best for them, the rabbis cannot attend a party which is not kosher and/or in conformity with the rules of Shabbat.

Mazal tov again! We look forward to sharing this wonderful milestone with you, and are firmly committed to helping you make this rite of passage a meaningful way to start your child on a meaningful path toward Jewish adulthood. It is our hope that the above reminders will be helpful to you in preparing for that special day, and for the rest of life with your family. Please contact us if we can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Dan Ornstein



Rabbi Rena Kieval

**SAMPLE LETTER TO GUESTS: (you may choose to include this in your invitations)**

Welcome to Congregation Ohav Shalom!

We are delighted to have you join us for Shabbat services and for the celebration of a *simcha*, a joyous event. In order to help you feel comfortable in our community, please note the following guidelines of our congregation which honor the spirit and holiness of the day and our religious practices.

In observance of Shabbat (Sabbath), we do not permit the use of cell phones or any other electronic devices, cameras, or writing instruments in the building or on the grounds, from sundown on Friday afternoon until Saturday evening after sunset.

\*\*\*In the event of a medical or other emergency, use of a cell or synagogue phone is always permitted.

Smoking is always forbidden in and near our building, in accordance with Jewish and state regulations, and is prohibited on the grounds throughout Shabbat.

If you are participating in our service, please refrain from wearing jeans, tank tops, sleeveless and spaghetti strap dresses, shorts or very short skirts. You are encouraged not to wear them, or to cover them, when you are in our congregation for worship services.

All men are required to wear a *kippah* (skullcap), when in the synagogue building. Women are encouraged to do so. There is a supply of head coverings in the main lobby. When receiving an honor on the *bimah*, both men and women are required to wear a head covering.

We hope you will enjoy your time with our community. Thank you for joining us for worship and helping us to celebrate!

## **TIME LINE OF *SIMCHA* TASKS AT A GLANCE**

- 18 Mos. Read Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook and begin thinking about the components of your *simcha*.
- 1 year Begin studies with assigned Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor. Contact person: Rabbi Kieval
- 6-8 months Plan Kiddush and/or reception. Review Kiddush options, catering requirements and facility fees with Nancy Pandolfo, Synagogue Administrator.
- Discuss with Rabbi Kieval any learning needs for family or guests who want to participate in the service.
- Reserve block of rooms at a hotel for out-of-town guests if necessary.
- 4 months Design and order invitations and kippot. Select and order tallit and tefillin.
- 3-4 months Schedule family sessions with rabbis to be held beginning 2 months before the *simcha*. (Please call our office if you do not hear from us within three months of your event)
- Begin meeting with Dvar Torah mentor. (Please inform Rabbi Kieval if you have not been assigned a mentor within three months of your event)
- 3 months Contact Rabbi Kieval to schedule a Shabbat morning (prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah day) for student to lead the Torah service.
- Confirm photo session with the rabbis, if desired, for the Friday prior to your *simcha*, usually at 10:30am.
- 2 months Begin scheduled study sessions with Rabbi Ornstein and Rabbi Kieval.
- Submit Facility Rental Contract and deposits, if relevant
- 1 month Submit Shabbat Planner to Rabbi Kieval, finalize participation of guests in parts of the service and inform her if anyone needs review of taking an *aliyah*, etc.
- 2 weeks Submit floor plans for kiddush/reception to Nancy Pandolfo.
- 1 week Remit full payment for facility rental and Kiddush.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend: please bring in all kippot, programs and any other items for Shabbat by 2 p.m. on Friday.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION and ROLES

Rabbi Dan Ornstein [ohavrab@gmail.com](mailto:ohavrab@gmail.com) or (518)489-4706 x12

General moral and spiritual guidance

Two study sessions within a few months of Bar/Bat Mitzvah event (contact Nancy in the office to schedule)

Rabbi Rena Kieval [ravrena@gmail.com](mailto:ravrena@gmail.com) or (518) 489-4706 x14

General moral and spiritual guidance

Assist in planning family/guest honors and participation in the Shabbat service

Oversees tutors and any special needs issues

Schedule student leadership of Torah service for a prior Shabbat

One study session within a few months of the event (contact her directly to schedule)

Nancy Pandolfo, Synagogue Administrator: [Nancy@ohavshalom.com](mailto:Nancy@ohavshalom.com), (518) 489-4706 x13

Kiddush and reception options

Facility rental arrangements

Verify correct times (end of Shabbat) for invitations and evening celebrations

General logistical questions

Marci Galinkin, Dvar Torah Coordinator: [mgalinkin@jewishfedny.org](mailto:mgalinkin@jewishfedny.org) or (518) 489-1059

Assigns mentors for dvar Torah

Patty Marcinkowski, Finance Coordinator: [patty@ohavshalom.com](mailto:patty@ohavshalom.com) (518)489-4706 x15

- Financial questions and payment arrangements

Saul Kattleman [skattleman@gmail.com](mailto:skattleman@gmail.com) (518) 439-5545

Arranges Torah readers each Shabbat. He will contact you 4-6 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat mitzvah for the Torah readers (Bar/Bat mitzvah children and/or guests).

**Guest Torah readers must first be approved by Rabbi Kieval.**

Adam Edwards [adam18@nycap.rr.com](mailto:adam18@nycap.rr.com) or (518)861-5587

Assigns *shacharit* and *musaf* leaders, at least 3 months prior to the event.

**Guest prayer leaders must first be approved by Rabbi Kieval.**

David Levine, Religious Life Chair: [religiouslife@ohavshalom.com](mailto:religiouslife@ohavshalom.com) or 489-5018

Addresses policy questions

PLEASE DO NOT CALL ANY OF THE INDIVIDUALS ABOVE ON SHABBAT OR  
JEWISH HOLY DAYS.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SHOULD **NOT** BE CALLED AT HOME.

## **BAR/BAT MITZVAH INSTRUCTION AND PARTICIPATION**

Approximately one year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a tutor will be assigned to your child. The tutor will contact you to set up a schedule for lessons. Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction is scheduled at a time which does not interfere with the student's regular Hebrew School or other classes.

The tutor prepares the student for all parts of his/her participation in the Shabbat service other than the dvar Torah.

The extent of participation by the student in the Shabbat service depends upon his/her abilities and interests. We make every effort to make this process a substantive learning and religious experience, while also honoring each student's individual needs. The recitation of the *aliyah* blessings, leading the Torah service, chanting a Torah reading and sharing a dvar Torah (Torah commentary) are customary for every Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Upon completion of those basic Bar/Bat Mitzvah skills, based on the assessment of the tutor, the student may train to chant *haftarah*, and/or to lead the *Shacharit* or *Musaf* service. Any child who is leading *shacharit* or *musaf* must learn the entire service and be prepared to lead it on the day of his or her ceremony.

At the time of the writing of this book the cost to the synagogue for the tutor is \$1,050. To defray part of this expense, a fee will be assessed to each Bar/Bat Mitzvah child. Please note that these costs are subject to increase. The actual cost will be determined at the start of your child's tutoring sessions.

As part of the preparation, each student is strongly encouraged to lead a Torah service prior to his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, when the instructor thinks the child is ready. In addition, the instructor will make arrangements for your child to have at least one run-through "rehearsal" in the sanctuary, chanting from the Torah scroll, prior to the *simcha*.

### **FAMILY & STUDENT AT SERVICES**

No amount of tutoring can replace the learning that occurs when attending services. Familiarity with the service allows all family members to raise their level of comfort and participation in the service. This is an opportune time for your family to deepen your understanding of and appreciation for Shabbat and for the Shabbat service.

Beginning at least one year before your event, we strongly encourage students and families to attend Shabbat morning services as regularly as possible, and at least once a month. Of course, attendance at Friday night and holiday services, as well as weekday morning minyan, is also encouraged.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are welcome and encouraged to attend morning *minyan* on the Thursday prior to the scheduled Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. The student will be offered an *aliyah* and may lead a brief portion of the service.

## THE D'VAR TORAH

Study of the Torah portion (weekly *parsha*) and the writing of the Dvar Torah (Torah lesson / speech) are an important component of your child's Bar/ Bat Mitzvah preparation. Our congregation offers a wonderful learning experience for our students and families as member volunteers study with Bar/Bat Mitzvah students and assist them in the preparation of their Dvar Torah.

In addition to your child's summary of the *parshah*, he/she will also offer his/ her own interpretation of one or more topics presented in the reading. This is also the time that "thank you's" are usually given. Typically, the Dvar Torah is five to ten minutes in length.

In order to effectively study the *parshah* and write a meaningful Dvar Torah, three or more sessions are generally needed. The volunteer will meet you in a mutually convenient location to work on the Dvar Torah and will help ensure that it is ready to be presented the day of the *simcha*. In family meetings with Rabbi Ornstein, the dvar Torah will also be reviewed and edited as needed.

Rather than utilizing one of the Ohav mentors, some families choose instead to have their child work with a family member, friend or parent(s), who are comfortable guiding this process. If this is your preference, please confirm with Rabbi Kieval. She can also offer resources for study.

## TALLIT AND TEFILLIN

*Tallit* and *tefillin* are the "sacred clothing" which a Jew wears as reminders of the importance of following God's *mitzvot* and as hallmarks of Jewish adulthood and commitment. *Tallit* and *tefillin* also serve as the uniform of a Jewish adult during worship, indicating that the person is part of the community of worshipers. A *tallit* is worn at all morning services. *Tefillin* are worn only at weekday morning services, excluding Yom Tov (festivals).

In our congregation, men and women participate equally in religious life. Therefore we educate all of our Bnai Mitzvah students, boys and girls, towards the ideal of wearing *tallit* and *tefillin*. In addition, we strongly encourage all adult Jewish women who participate in Shabbat services on the *bimah* to wear a *tallit*. If a girl or woman leads a major service, such as *shacharit* or *musaf*, she is obligated to wear a *tallit*.

All boys must own a *tallit* and preferably have access to a pair of *tefillin*. Girls are strongly encouraged to do the same. Beautiful *tallitot* and *tefillin* sets are available through our Sisterhood Gift Shop. We recommend that you plan your purchase of these sacred objects several months prior to the *simcha* to allow time for special orders and shipping.



## RABBIS' PARTICIPATION IN BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRAINING

**Rabbi Dan Ornstein** and **Rabbi Rena Kieval** are your resources for religious and spiritual support and guidance throughout the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process. In addition, in conjunction with the Talmud Torah and the Hebrew Academy, they create and run family education programs for Bar/Bat Mitzvah families in the sixth and seventh grades.

Rabbi Ornstein generally meets twice with each family to study Torah, to review the student's dvar Torah, and to discuss the meaning of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah and other topics of Jewish life. At least one parent/guardian **MUST** attend these sessions with the student so that the spiritual aspects of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah can be shared as a family. Please schedule these sessions through the synagogue office.

Rabbi Kieval generally meets once with each family to study Torah and traditions related to becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah, specifically *tallit* and *tefillin*.

She will also help you plan *aliyot* and other honors for families and guests. One month before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the family should return the Shabbat Planner to her and discuss any questions and plans for the service. (see HONORS section for further details)

When the student's tutor feels that the student is ready, parents should schedule a date with Rabbi Kieval for the student to lead a Torah service on a Shabbat morning. This is an extremely helpful "practice" experience which accustoms students to chanting before the congregation and helps them learn the choreography of the Torah service.

***Family situations requiring special consideration should be raised early in the planning process with one of the rabbis. Every effort will be made to resolve your particular concerns and needs while preserving halacha (Jewish law) and our congregation's policies.***

## ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROCESS

**Marci Galinkin**, a member of our Religious Life Committee, serves as the **Dvar Torah Coordinator**. (See The D'var Torah for further explanation.) Marci will contact you 3-4 months prior to your *simcha*. If you would like Dvar Torah study to begin sooner, or if you have someone specific with whom you would like your child to work, please inform Marci or Rabbi Kieval at any point.

Two volunteers, **Adam Edwards** and **Saul Kattleman**, are currently responsible for assigning prayer leaders, and Torah and Haftarah readers for each Shabbat morning. Saul Kattleman will contact you regarding Torah reading assignments to ascertain what arrangements have been made.

Rabbi Kieval will communicate with Adam Edwards regarding your requests for prayer leaders, if any.

**David Levine, Chair of the Religious Life Committee**, The Religious Life Committee, in conjunction with the Rabbis, is responsible for formulating and implementing all Bnai Mitzvah policies and procedures and those relating to religious life at Ohav Shalom.

## THE SERVICE

Families and guests of the Bnai Mitzvah are encouraged to participate fully in the Shabbat worship service. This participation may include accepting *aliyot* to the Torah, reading Torah, carrying the Torah, opening the Ark, leading portions of the Shabbat service, or reading prayers in English.

Each section of the Shabbat morning service is led by a qualified individual. There are four basic sections of the Shabbat morning service:

1. Pesukei d'Zimra (Introductory Psalms and Prayers)- led by one of the rabbis.
2. *Shacharit* (main morning service) - must be led by a qualified Jewish individual who is at least the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
3. Torah Service (Includes introductory and concluding prayers, chanting of the weekly portion from the Torah scroll and chanting of the Haftorah portion). The introductory and concluding prayers are mostly led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student. Only trained Jewish individuals may read from the Torah or chant the Haftorah.
4. *Musaf* ("Additional" service) - must be led by a qualified Jewish individual who is at least the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### **MORE ABOUT THE SERVICE:**

**It is natural to want to greet and visit with your guests when they arrive in the sanctuary. However, we ask that you refrain from doing so as much as possible, and wait to greet your guests fully at the end of morning worship. This promotes a more respectful atmosphere when the congregation is at prayer throughout the morning.**

Our synagogue clergy and/or educational staff will address the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student as well as present designated gifts. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah charge is a time for our spiritual leaders to offer each child meaningful religious insight on this important day.

The parents' blessing is given just after the student's *aliyah*. Copies of the parents' prayers are included in this handbook.

During the Torah service, two *gabbaim* preside over the readings. One of the rabbis generally serves as *Gabbai Rishon* (first *gabbai*). The individual serving as *Gabbai Sheni* (second *gabbai*) is generally experienced in this role in our congregation and must be proficient in reading Hebrew.

## HONORS

Each family has the privilege of assigning honors to family and friends. Each of these honors carries with it an obligation to the sanctity of our tradition and to the congregation.

Parents of each student are invited to be present on the *bimah* (and to recite the parent's prayer) when their child receives his or her *aliyah* to the Torah and is blessed by the rabbi.

For all honors, individuals should be properly prepared for their particular responsibility and should be dressed respectfully and modestly.

Please look carefully at the Shabbat Planner sheet in this packet.

It will assist you in planning the assignment of these honors. Please submit a completed planner to Rabbi Kieval four weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. She will be happy to help you answer any questions and help you complete the worksheet

**Please know that a fully completed Shabbat Planner will help avoid last minute misunderstandings and confusion.**

Honors available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family include:

**Five** *aliyot* (*Torah blessings*) in addition to the student's *aliyah* (see *Aliyot* section)

**Three** supplementary/English prayers. Prayers for our Country, for Israel and for Peace. The Prayer for Israel generally should be read by a person of the Jewish faith. It may be read in English or Hebrew, although we encourage the reading of it in Hebrew when possible.

**Hagbah** and **Gelilah** (Lifting and binding the Torah scroll): The individual assigned to lift the Torah scroll preferably has experience doing so, and must be capable of lifting a substantial weight.

Two opportunities to **open and close the ark**: at the beginning and ending of the Torah service. In each case this may be shared by more than one individual.

Two opportunities to **carry the Torah** through the congregation, at the start and close of the Torah service.

Opportunities to lead individual prayers in Hebrew: **Ashrei**, **Ein Keloheinu**, and **Adon Olam**. These are especially appropriate for younger family or friends who share the *simcha* with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

During the service, the *parnas* (floor *gabbai*) for that morning will inform each person when it is time for him or her to go to the front of the room and be ready to take the honor. These guests should arrive at the synagogue on time and make themselves known to the *parnas* or the family. Shabbat morning services begin at 9:00 am, and the Torah service begins at approximately 9:40 a.m.

PLEASE NOTE: It is our longstanding tradition to mark other life cycle celebrations that might coincide with the day of your family's Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. If this is the case, every effort will be made to inform you ahead of time, and to arrange this with minimal inconvenience to you family.

## ALIYOT

During the reading of the Torah portion, individuals are called to the Torah for *aliyot*. The honored individual reads aloud in Hebrew the blessings over the Torah. Five of the seven *aliyot* are reserved for the family or guests of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. An additional *aliyah* is reserved for the Bar/Bat/Mitzvah student.

The family may assign their five *aliyot* to individuals of their choice, according to the following rules:

- \*\* *Aliyot* are reserved for Jewish individuals over the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. A non-Jewish parent of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is welcome to stand with his or her family on the *bimah* when the child takes their *aliyah*.
- \*\* The first *aliyah* is assigned to a *kohen* or the daughter of a *kohen*
- \*\* The second *aliyah* is assigned to a *levi* or the daughter of a *levi*
- \*\* An *aliyah* is assigned to only one individual for each section. Two people may come to the *bimah* together, but only one will be called by name and only that person recites the blessings.
- \*\* Please check with those being honored with an *aliyah* to determine if anyone is a *kohen* or *levi* as this may affect the order of the Torah reading. If you or your guests are *kohanim* or *levi'im*, please be sure to inform Rabbi Rena in advance as we plan the honors.
- \*\* All adults must wear a head covering while on the *bimah*.
- \*\* Men taking an *aliyah* must wear a *tallit* (prayer shawl). Women are strongly encouraged to wear a *tallit*.
- \*\* Please be sure that those being honored are familiar with the text and procedure of the *aliyah* blessings. (See below for procedure.)
- \*\* Those honored with an *aliyah* should share their Hebrew names and the Hebrew names of their parents.

**Please provide English and Hebrew names of *aliyah* honorees in writing, on the Shabbat Planner.**

### PROCEDURE FOR TAKING AN ALIYAH

1. The honoree(s) approach the *bimah* at the instruction of the *parnas* (floor *gabbai*) and the person chanting blessings provides his/her Hebrew name to the *gabbai* on the *bimah*.
2. The *tallit*, or Torah binding is used to touch the Torah on the line indicated by the reader, and is kissed, prior to reciting the blessings, before and after the Torah reading.
3. After the second blessing is recited, the honoree moves to the right and remains at the reading table until the next *aliyah* is completed.

**NOTE:** Rabbi Kieval is available to review the Hebrew and the procedures for taking an *aliyah* with you and with those to whom you would like to offer this honor. She can assist in preparation through coaching or by providing an audio tape and review sessions.

## OTHER GUEST PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

The individual leading a service represents the congregation before God. This person, known as a *shaliach/shlichat tzibbur* should have the skills and maturity to represent and express the *kavanah* (spiritual intensity) of the congregation of worshippers.

If the family wishes to designate a qualified family member or friend to lead a part of the service or to chant from the Torah, you must inform Rabbi Kieval at least 4 **months** ahead of time. She will review the participant's skill level and appropriateness. Please speak with her if you have questions or need for training and review. This review may involve a simple phone call or email. In some instances, a "rehearsal" (by phone or in person) may be requested.

Those individuals who chant Torah for the congregation are expected to read directly from the scroll and to be appropriately prepared.

## SPECIAL NOTES

Jewish education does not end on the day of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We encourage all students to continue learning in our communal high school program, Mifgash, as well as through Jewish summer camps, Israel programs and USY year-round and summer programs.

A child who will become Bar or Bat mitzvah in the eighth grade is expected to be enrolled in the eighth grade program of Ohav Shalom, Hebrew Academy, or a comparable, accepted course of Jewish learning. Students who become Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the sixth grade are expected to be enrolled for seventh grade Jewish studies.

Putting God on the Guest List, by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin, offers rich, spiritual guidance for families as well as additional ways to introduce tzedakah into your *simcha*. The book is available online.

## LOTS MORE TO KNOW...

\*\* INVITATIONS: The proper format is to invite guests to participate in the service of Shabbat worship at which the son/daughter will be called to the Torah as Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please note the correct name of the synagogue: CONGREGATION OHAV SHALOM.

\*\* The rabbis are generally available to participate in photo sessions on the *bimah* at 10:30 a.m. on the Friday morning preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please confirm a specific time with the office prior to arranging a photo session.

\*\* *Kippot, tallitot,* and lace head coverings are provided at the entrance to the sanctuary. All males are required to wear a *kippah* in the building and anyone (male or female) going up to the *bimah* must wear a head covering. If desired, *kippot* for guests may be ordered through the synagogue Gift Shop or online.

\*\* The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family should be prompt in coming into the sanctuary on Shabbat morning, preferably arriving by 8:50, but no later than 9 am. You may wish to prepare your guests who are not familiar with our services for the length of the service, and to guide them to arrive a little later.

\*\* The Bar/Bat Mitzvah and immediate family should be seated towards the front of the sanctuary on the side of the Torah table.

\*\* Use of cameras, video and audio equipment, cell phones and any electronics is not permitted during the service or anywhere on the synagogue property on Shabbat. Pictures may be taken on a weekday prior to your *simcha*, and after the conclusion of Shabbat on Saturday night.

\*\* **Nothing may be delivered to or taken out of the synagogue on Shabbat.** Any items for your *simcha* must be delivered to the synagogue by 2 p.m. on Friday. Please be sure to inform bands / DJ's, florists and others involved with your reception of the hours they are permitted to bring items and to set up their equipment. Please confirm in advance the timing of Shabbat with Nancy Pandolfo.

After the event: Items belonging to the family, such as the student's gifts, leftover *kippot* and centerpieces, should be picked up by close of business hours on the following Monday. If necessary, other arrangements may be made with our office.

\*\* Tossing candy is not permitted during services at Ohav Shalom. It may be done at the reception.

\*\* Children of your guests are invited to join the regular service or any youth programming for that day. During the return of the Torah to the Ark, all young children are invited to join in the Torah procession, and adults are welcome to accompany them.

\*\* The rabbis do not announce any kind of private luncheon or reception on the *bimah* at services. They will announce only the Kiddush that is sponsored for the congregation.

\*\* If you have a bus picking up children on Shabbat, the bus **MUST** be parked in the back of the building due to Shabbat regulations.

## **BEYOND SERVICES: CELEBRATING YOUR *SIMCHA* WITH OHAV SHALOM!**

Celebrating a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a special moment in time for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student, and for family, friends and the entire congregation. As we celebrate a life cycle milestone in the embrace of community, our general practice is that everyone present at services is invited to share a communal *kiddush*, with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family as identified hosts. As a rule, you should plan for approximately 150 congregant attendees in addition to your guests.

In keeping with the standards of Conservative Judaism, all meals must be prepared and served under strict guidelines of kashrut.

**NO HOME PREPARED FOODS MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE. ALL FOODS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE RABBIS OR MASHGIACH/MASHGICHAH. CATERING STAFF OR FAMILY MAY NOT ENTER THE KITCHENS WITHOUT THE MASHGIACH/CHA.**

*All receptions and events in the Ohav building must first be discussed with the Synagogue Administrator to ensure that the appropriate space will be available.*

Please see the next page for Ohav-catered Kiddush options.

# Celebrating your simcha!

<b>Shabbat Morning Kiddush</b> *Kiddush will be served immediately following services, approx. 12pm. *Kiddush will be served buffet style, all at once *Light cleaning of the dining room will begin approx. 1pm *A full clean-up of the dining room will begin at 1:30pm *Any remaining food will be reserved to be served for the seudah shlisheet following mincha maariv services that afternoon. *Labor for food prep, set up, buffet service and clean up included in the total	Price
<b>PLEASE NOTE: SYNAGOGUE DUES MUST BE CURRENT AT THE TIME OF THE SIMCHA</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Est. # of Guests 200-250  Assortment of Fine Pastries Challah and Kiddush Wine Bagels and Cream cheese <i>(Plain   veggie)</i> Fruit Displays Cloth linens Disposable Paper products Coffee/ tea/ water/ assorted seltzers	\$600.00
<b>A la Carte</b> <i>(please circle your selections)</i>	
Vegetable Display-----	-----\$150.00
Tuna Salad-----	-----\$200.00
Egg Salad-----	-----\$150.00
Whitefish Salad -----	-----\$250.00
Rolled Lox Display w/ L T O-----	-----\$350.00
Pasta Salad (Garden Rotini, spinach, feta, black olives, dressing)-----	-----\$150.00
Peach Noodle Kugel-----	-----\$150.00
Savory Kugel-----	-----\$200.00
Orzo Pasta Salad: (tomato, basil, mozzarella, olive oil, garlic, balsamic) -----	-----\$150.00
Pasta Salad (garden rotini, spinach, feta, black olives, dressing)-----	-----\$150.00
Pizza bagels-----	-----\$250.00
Mac & Cheese-----	-----\$300.00
Ice Cream Bar-----	-----\$200.00
Labor for food prep, set up, buffet service and clean up	\$800.00
<b>TOTAL</b> -----	



## OUTSIDE CATERERS

The following caterers are currently approved to work at Ohav Shalom. Since this list changes periodically, we strongly suggest that you contact the synagogue office for verification prior to contracting for your *simcha*:

Risa Carr	489-1446	423-5369
Saati's - Chris Sawtelle	788-1436	
As you Like It (Agudat Achim)	382-7671	
Divine Catering - Tina Leiberman-Cohen	489-5496	

## OTHER SIMCHA EVENTS: CELEBRATION INFORMATION

### Private Reception/ Luncheon

Following the sponsored Kiddush for the congregation, a family may choose to host a private reception/luncheon for invited guests. If you choose to have a private luncheon in addition to the congregational Kiddush, that luncheon begins at least forty five minutes after the end of services, using one, but not both, social halls, as one social hall is used for the congregational Kiddush. A facility rental fee will be applied for a private luncheon.

### Other Gatherings

Families may choose to host a Friday night Shabbat dinner, or a Saturday evening or Sunday reception in the Ohav Shalom social hall(s).

**SATURDAY NIGHT RECEPTION: The hour for a reception or dinner to be held at the conclusion of Shabbat varies with the season of the year and must be checked carefully with the Synagogue Administrator before printing any invitations.** The family must confirm with the Synagogue Administrator the exact time on Saturday evening that items related to the reception party (decorations, musical instruments, photographic equipment, etc.) may be brought into the building.

In the late spring and summer when Shabbat ends late, some families choose to begin a Saturday night reception with mincha, followed by Seudah Shlishit (Hors d'oeuvres, for example), a Havdalah service, and finally, a party with music. This arrangement can make for a lovely celebration and can heighten the positive Jewish experience of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. Until havdalah, while it is still Shabbat, proper decorum should be observed (i.e., no food or beverages in the Sanctuary) and no music or photography is permitted. Families might also consider scheduling their receptions on Sunday.

## FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

All synagogue financial responsibilities including dues, fees, tuition, bnai mitzvah costs and facility usage costs must be current and/or paid in full one week prior to your *simcha*. Payment may be made by personal check or credit card to the Finance Coordinator or Synagogue Administrator.

Additional facility fees to consider which apply to a Saturday night or Sunday private reception, private Kiddush or Friday night dinner:

**Maintenance Fee:** \$2.00 per chair for set up.

**Mashgiach (Kosher Supervisor) Fees:** \$15.00 per hour. Families will be provided with an estimate of hours needed to supervise any food preparation in advance of their *simcha*.

**Social Hall Facility Usage Fees:**

Small Social Hall – up to 150 people \$150.00

Large Social hall – up to 200 people \$300.00

Both Social halls – up to 330 people \$450.00

**Kitchen Fees:** \$180.00 per day, per kitchen with a cap of \$500.00. This fee allows your caterer full access to either kitchen including all equipment and contents.

## SOME WORDS OF CAUTION: ALCOHOL

We must always be discreet regarding the consumption of alcoholic beverages at events planned around a Bar/Bat Mitzvah *simcha*. The consumption of alcoholic beverages should be kept within reasonable limits. There is always the very real potential for adults to drink too much and for teens to gain access to drinks which they should not have. It is not our goal to prohibit alcoholic beverages at your reception. It is our intention to emphasize the biblical commands to prevent people from unwittingly hurting themselves or others, and to preserve life. Jewish tradition strongly encourages moderation, and New York State law demands it. Therefore these suggestions:

1. The bartenders working at your reception should be instructed to refuse beverages to anyone who has clearly had too much to drink.
2. It is a good idea to stop serving alcoholic beverages prior to serving dessert.
3. The bartenders should be reminded prior to the reception that alcoholic beverages must not be served to any minors. A non-alcoholic beverage stand should be set up for younger guests.

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*Please be in touch if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to sharing this special time with you and your family.*

**Mazal Tov!**

**SHABBAT PLANNER: CONGREGATION OHAV SHALOM BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

**PLEASE GIVE COMPLETED FORM TO RABBI KIEVAL ONE MONTH BEFORE YOUR SIMCHA**

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PARASHA \_\_\_\_\_

HEBREW NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SON/DAUGHTER OF \_\_\_\_\_

**HONORS**

**Note: you are not obligated to fill all of the honors- congregants will fill roles as needed.**

**TORAH SERVICE: PART 1**

Walking in procession \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: "Generations" ceremony (optional) occurs at this point in the service

OPEN ARK 1: \_\_\_\_\_ CARRY TORAH 1: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALIYOT: BLESSINGS FOR THE TOAH READINGS**

THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH FAMILY MAY ASSIGN UP TO 5 ALIYOT (**in addition** to the student's aliyah)

PLEASE NOTE: While 2 people may come up together for an Aliyah, only one person chants and only that person is called by name. Please share this information with your guests as needed

English name

Hebrew name Son/daughter of (ben/bat)  
father's name (mother may be included as well)

1. (Kohen or Bat Kohen)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Levi or Bat Levi

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

MAFTIR ALIYA (and HAFTARAH:) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Note: Parents' prayers will occur just after the student's aliyah. Please discuss with Rabbi Kieval. Please review ahead of time and please bring your copy to the service.**

HAGBAH (lifts Sefer Torah) \_\_\_\_\_ GELILAH : \_\_\_\_\_  
(must be physically able – please confirm with Rabbi Kieval.)

ENGLISH READINGS:

PRAYER FOR COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL (IN HEBREW OR ENGLISH) \_\_\_\_\_

PRAYER FOR PEACE \_\_\_\_\_

ASHREI (responsive chanting) (1 -3 persons leading) \_\_\_\_\_

OPEN ARK 2 \_\_\_\_\_

CARRY TORAH 2 \_\_\_\_\_

EIN KEILOHEYNU (3 persons maximum) \_\_\_\_\_

ADON OLAM \_\_\_\_\_

**TORAH READER REQUESTS** (optional, must be prearranged with Rabbi Kieval):

\_\_\_\_\_.

**SERVICE LEADERS REQUESTS** (optional, prearranged at least 3 months in advance):

SHACHARIT: \_\_\_\_\_

MUSAF \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL CONCERNS** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORIALS:** Family members you wish to have remembered publicly at the Shabbat service

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**Please contact Rabbi Kieval at (518) 489-4706 or [Ravrena@gmail.com](mailto:Ravrena@gmail.com) with any questions or concerns, or check the handbook, online at [Ohavshalom.com](http://Ohavshalom.com) under Life Cycle.**

**!! Mazal Tov !!**

Revised December, 2017