



HANDBOOK FOR BAR AND BAT MITZVAH FAMILIES

Mazal Tov to you and your families!

Revised February 2024

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THOUGHTS FROM RABBI ORNSTEIN

Dear Bar and Bat Mitzvah Families,

Mazal tov upon your child becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah!

Reaching this milestone in your lives has deep spiritual significance for your family and is a time of great joy for you! I 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 this special event for your child and family 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**. 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 various 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 a charity such as Mazon, or a self-tithing against the cost of the entire affair. Students may choose a volunteer project related to their 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**, they should learn that "Jewish adulthood" requires us to support those in need, as we practice the Jewish value of **Tikkun Olam**

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED MITZVAH/TZEDAKAH PROJECT REVIEW SHEET BELOW. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THIS SHEET COMES BACK TO ME FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN TWO MONTHS BEFORE YOUR CHILD'S CEREMONY.

4. **Learn, Learn, Learn!** Ohav Shalom is a community of learners. We emphasize the importance of every person continuing to learn and teach throughout their 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. As parents,

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 **B'nai Mitzvah** to continue their participation and learning by leading **davening** (worship services) and reading **Torah** and **Haftarah** 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 me, 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 information with your guests about appropriate ways to honor Shabbat and to maintain the sacred atmosphere of our worship services 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, writing, cameras, or smoking are permitted on synagogue premises at any time on Shabbat. Use of cellphones 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 **HaMotzi** 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.

Mazal tov again! We at Ohav look forward to sharing this wonderful milestone with you. We are firmly committed to helping you make this rite of passage a joyous and 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 (ohavrab@gmail.com)

TIMELINE OF *SIMCHA* TASKS AT A GLANCE

- 18 months** ~ Read the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook and begin thinking about the components of your *simcha*.
- 1 year** ~ After consultation with Marci Galinkin, Director of Religious Life and Programming, begin studies with your assigned Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor.
~ Begin attending Shabbat morning services with your child at least monthly, and ideally twice monthly. When possible, Marci Galinkin will include your child in leading some part of the service when s/he is attending.
- 6-8 months** ~ Plan the Kiddush and/or reception. Review Kiddush options, catering requirements and facility fees with Nancy Pandolfo, Executive Director.
~ Discuss with Marci Galinkin any learning needs for family or guests who want to participate in the service. (See the “4 months” section below.)
- 4 months** ~ Design and order invitations and *kippot*. Select and order *tallit* and *tefillin*. Contact Rabbi Ornstein for *tallit* and *tefillin* information.
~ Schedule the first of the two family sessions with Rabbi Ornstein to be held beginning 2-3 months before the *simcha*. (Please email Rabbi Ornstein if you do not hear from him within four months of your event: ohavrab@gmail.com)
~ Begin meeting with the *d’var Torah* (Torah speech) mentor. (Please inform Marci Galinkin if you have not been assigned a mentor within three months of your event). If you will be mentoring your child, please let Marci know.
PLEASE NOTE: Family or friends who wish to read Torah or lead a service MUST contact and review with Marci Galinkin at least four months ahead of time.
- 3 months** ~ Contact Marci Galinkin to schedule a Shabbat morning (prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Day) for your child to lead the Torah service.
~ If desired, confirm the photo session with Rabbi Ornstein for the Friday morning prior to your *simcha*, from 10:30-11 AM.
~ Send your child’s mitzvah project review sheet to Marci Galinkin. (See attached)
- 2 months** ~ Begin scheduled study sessions with Rabbi Ornstein.
~ Review your child’s mitzvah project with Rabbi Ornstein.
~ If relevant, submit Facility Rental and Kiddush contracts and deposits to Nancy Pandolfo, our Executive Director.
- 1 month** ~ Submit Shabbat Planner to Marci Galinkin, finalize participation of guests in parts of the service and inform her if anyone needs review of taking an *Aliyah*, lifting, or rolling the Torah. PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE PLANNER TO RABBI ORNSTEIN.
- 2 weeks** ~ Remit full payment for facility rental and Kiddush

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ROLES

Rabbi Dan Ornstein ohavrab@gmail.com 518-421-4539

Provide guidance for general moral and spiritual issues

Conduct two study sessions within a few months of Bar/Bat Mitzvah event (Please email Rabbi Ornstein directly to schedule these, especially if you do not hear from him within three months prior to the *simcha*.)

Marci Galinkin, Director of Religious Life and Programming:

(ritualassist@ohavshalom.org) 518-489-4706 x14; 518-495-2611.

Review and approve guests who will be reading Torah or leading a service.

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

Oversee tutors, tutoring assignments, and any special needs issues.

Schedule student leadership of Torah service for a prior Shabbat.

Issue, modify and finalize all Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration dates.

Assign mentors for *d'var Torah* writing.

Nancy Pandolfo, Executive Director: execdirector@ohavshalom.org 518-527-1163

Provide Kiddush and reception options.

Coordinate all facility rental arrangements.

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

Answer all general logistical questions.

Cecelia Soloviev assistant@ohavshalom.org 518-489-4706 x10

Answer all financial questions and coordinate payment arrangements.

Saul Kattleman skattleman@gmail.com 518-439-5545

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

Guest Torah readers must first be approved by Marci Galinkin. Note timeline.

Laurie Abelson laurie33154@gmail.com

Assigns *Haftarah* in conjunction with the Rabbi and Marci Galinkin.

Neil Piper neilp@aol.com 518-475-1200

Assign *Shacharit* and *Musaf* leaders, at least 3 months prior to the event.

Guest prayer leaders must first be approved by Marci Galinkin.

David Levine, Religious Life Committee Chair (dlevinedds@aol.com) 518-489-5018

Address religious life policy questions in coordination with Rabbi Ornstein

Please remember that if your child is leading one of the services, he or she must learn the entire service, including the full repetition of the *amidah*. It is our responsibility to allow the child to do the full service on the morning of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah

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

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SHOULD **NOT** BE CALLED OUTSIDE OF BUSINESS HOURS

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR BECOMING A BAR OR BAT MITZVAH

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, either in person, online, or a hybrid. Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction is scheduled at a time which does not interfere with the student's regular Hebrew School, Hebrew Academy, or other classes. It is the tutor's responsibility to ensure that your child does at least some practice and review in person, in the sanctuary, from the Torah scroll or at the prayer leader's stand. Please discuss all arrangements for tutoring and review with your tutor.

The tutor prepares the student for all parts of his or her participation in the Shabbat service other than the ***d'var Torah***.

The extent of participation by the student in the Shabbat service depends upon his or her abilities and interests. We make every effort to make this process a substantive learning and religious experience, while also honoring each student's needs. The recitation of the blessings, leading the Torah service, chanting a Torah reading and sharing a ***d'var Torah*** or 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 more ***Torah*** or the ***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 their ceremony.

At the time of the writing of this book the cost to the synagogue for the tutor is \$1,400. To defray part of this expense, a fee of \$1,000 will be assessed to each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. Please note that these costs are subject to increase.

As part of the preparation, each student is required to lead a Torah service prior to his or her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, when the tutor and Marci Galinkin think the child is ready. In addition, the tutor will arrange for your child to have *at least* one run-through "rehearsal" in the sanctuary, chanting from the Torah scroll and/or leading a practice service prior to the ***simcha***.

PLEASE NOTE: As a Shabbat morning worship community, we expect our students to become bar or bat mitzvah within the setting of Shabbat morning services. We will work flexibly and closely with you to do this in a way that will be meaningful and achievable for your child. If your child has significant special needs requiring a smaller, more private service on a Sunday or a weekday, please speak with Marci Galinkin so we can work on this with you.

FAMILY & STUDENT AT SERVICES

No amount of tutoring can replace the learning that occurs when you attend 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, as well as to strengthen your connection to the Ohav community.

It is critical for your child's success that you be in regular Shabbat morning attendance during the year of preparation for your **simcha**. Beginning at least one year before your event, we expect and strongly encourage students and families to attend Shabbat morning services as regularly as possible, at least once a month, and preferably twice a month.

THE D'VAR TORAH

Study of the Torah portion (weekly **parsha**) and the writing of the **d'var Torah**, Torah speech, are important components of your child's Bar/ Bat Mitzvah preparation. Our congregation offers a wonderful learning experience for our students and families, members volunteering to study with Bar/Bat Mitzvah students and assist them in the preparation of their **divrei Torah**.

In addition to your child's summary of the **parsha** they will also offer their 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 **d'var Torah** is five to ten minutes in length.

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

Rather than utilizing one of the Ohav mentors, some families may 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 this with Marci Galinkin. Resources for Torah study are available for you, but please let us know what you need as early in the study process as possible.

Marci Galinkin will contact you 3 months prior to your **simcha**. If you would like **d'var Torah** study to begin sooner, or if you have someone specific with whom you would like your child to work, please inform Marci at any point.

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. We educate all our B'nai Mitzvah students, boys and girls, towards 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**. Anyone (of any gender) who leads a major service, such as **Shacharit** or **Musaf**, is obligated to wear a **tallit**.

All Bar and Bat Mitzvah students must own a **tallit** and preferably have access to a pair of **tefillin**. 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. Marci Galinkin can provide you with suggestions about where they can be purchased.

RABBI ORNSTEIN'S PARTICIPATION IN BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRAINING

Rabbi Ornstein is your resource for religious and spiritual support and guidance throughout the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process.

Rabbi Ornstein generally meets twice with each family to study Torah, to review the student's **d'var 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, either in person or on ZOOM, directly with Rabbi Ornstein.

When the student's tutor feels that the student is ready, parents should schedule a date with Marci Galinkin 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. Rabbi Ornstein or Marci Galinkin will be on the bimah to assist your child with leading this service.

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

THE SERVICE

Families and guests of the Bnai Mitzvah are encouraged to participate fully in the Shabbat worship service. This participation may include accepting **aliyyot** 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 Rabi Ornstein as quiet meditation. 9:15-9:40 AM

2. **Shacharit** (main morning service) - led by a qualified Jewish individual who is at least the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. 9:40-10:00 AM.

3. Torah Service (Includes introductory and concluding prayers, chanting of the weekly

portion from the Torah scroll and chanting of the **Haftarah** portion). The introductory and concluding prayers are mostly led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student. Only trained Jewish individuals may read from the Torah, chant the **Haftarah** or recite the Torah blessing.
10:00-11 AM.

4. **Musaf** ("Additional" service) - led by a qualified Jewish individual who is at least the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. 11:15- 11:45 AM.

It is natural to want to greet and visit with your guests when they arrive in the sanctuary. However as much as possible, we ask that you refrain from doing so 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.

To maintain the sanctity and decorum of our religious services, please let your guests who will be attending, **especially those coming up to the bimah during the service**, about our Shabbat morning dress code:

Short pants of any kind (except those being worn by very young children) are not appropriate attire for being on the bimah and/or taking an honor.

Jeans and tee shirts are not appropriate attire for being on the bimah and/or taking an honor.

Mini skirts, strapless and shoulder less dresses are not appropriate attire for being on the bimah and/or taking an honor. Please let your guests coming up in this kind of attire know that they will be asked to wear a synagogue Tallit or shawl which is provided by the synagogue.

We will make every effort to work with any of your honored guests who might be coming up to the bimah in inappropriate attire in a way that does not embarrass them, you, or our congregation. However, reminding your friends and family ahead of time about how they should be dressed for Shabbat services is the best way to avoid such concerns.

Rabbi Ornstein 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** to the Torah. A copy of this prayer is found at the end of this handbook, this is the only authorized version of this prayer to be used at our services.

During the Torah service, two **gabbaim**, (Torah reading assistants) preside over the readings. Rabbi Ornstein or a trained designee 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.

PLEASE NOTE: It is *not* the practice of our congregation to throw candy as part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

NON-JEWISH FAMILY AND GUESTS AT THE SERVICE

We welcome everyone to our worship services, Jewish or non-Jewish, and we seek within the bounds of Jewish law to make everyone feel included and comfortable in our sacred community.

While there are certain prayers and rituals that are performed only by members of the Jewish faith, we work sensitively and respectfully to see to it that non-Jewish parents and other relatives of the student are appropriately included in the celebration. We welcome both parents to the **bimah** during Rabbi Ornstein's blessing of your child, and both parents are encouraged to recite the parent's blessing for their child on the **bimah**.

Please speak with Rabbi Ornstein and Marci Galinkin as early as possible about any concerns you might have about inclusion of non-Jewish family in your child's celebration.

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 blessing) when their child receives their **aliyah** to the Torah and is blessed by Rabbi Ornstein.

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 Marci Galinkin four weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. They 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, for honorees of the Jewish faith, include:

- ** Five **aliyot** (*Torah blessings*) in addition to the Bar/ Bat Mitzvah's **aliyah** (see **Aliyot** section)

- ** Three supplementary/English prayers. Prayers for our Country, for Israel and for Peace. The Prayer for Israel is 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. The prayers for the country and for peace provide excellent opportunities for inclusion of non-Jewish family members.

- ** **Hagbah** and **Gelilah** (Lifting and binding the Torah scroll) The individual assigned to lift the Torah scroll **MUST** have 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 9:15 AM, and the Torah service begins at approximately 10:00 AM.

PLEASE NOTE: It is our longstanding policy 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 your 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. Please do not request more **aliyot** for your family. Please also understand that the two **aliyot** reserved for the congregation **cannot** be given to an additional guest of yours who might also happen to be a congregant. Please do not request such accommodation.

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 the **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 be respectful and mindful of this religious policy.
- ** 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 Marci Galinkin in advance as we plan the honors.
- ** All adults must wear a head covering while on the **bimah** and must be dressed appropriately. (See details above.)

- ** 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.)
- ** **Please provide English and Hebrew names of *aliyah* honorees in writing, on the Shabbat Planner, in advance. Please do not expect your guests to provide their names to the gabbais on the day of the simcha.**

PROCEDURE FOR TAKING AN ALIYAH

1. The honoree(s) approach the **bimah** at the instruction of the **parnas** (floor **gabbai**) *after being called to the Torah by the first gabbai*.
2. The **tallit** or the 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. If the honoree has COVID or other health related concerns, that person may refrain from kissing the tallit or Torah binding.
3. After the second blessing is recited, the honoree moves to the right side and remains at the reading table until the next **aliyah** is completed.

NOTE: Marci Galinkin and other volunteers are 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. They can assist in preparation through coaching or by providing online assistance and review sessions. A terrific website for practice and review of **aliyah** is: www.sidduraudio.com

Please also note that our congregation uses the traditional Torah blessings ONLY.

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 your 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 Marci Galinkin at least 4 months ahead of time. He or one of his designees will review the participant's skill level and appropriateness. Please speak with him if you have questions or need 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.

Please explain to your guests and family members who might be leading parts of the service that they **MUST** review and receive approval from Marci Galinkin or Rabbi Ornstein.

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 a minimum of 75 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. Please see our Catered by Ohav Kiddush options.

NO HOME PREPARED FOODS MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE. ALL FOODS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE RABBI OR A KITCHEN KASHRUT SUPERVISOR. CATERING STAFF OR FAMILY MAY NOT ENTER THE KITCHENS WITHOUT THE SUPERVISOR, OR WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF RABBI ORNSTEIN AND OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

Celebrating your simcha! Catered by Ohav Shalom

Shabbat Morning Kiddush	Price
Estimate # of Guests 125-150 Challah and Kiddush Wine Assortment of Fine Pastries Bagels and Cream cheese (Plain/veggie) Fruit Displays Coffee/Tea/Water and Assorted Seltzers Cloth Linens and Centerpieces Disposable Paper products	\$600.00
Labor for food prep, set up, buffet service and clean up	\$350.00
A la Carte (please circle your selections)	
Roasted Vegetable Display	\$75.00
Tuna Salad	\$150.00
Egg Salad	\$100.00
Whitefish Salad	\$150.00
Rolled Lox Display w/ Lettuce/Tomato/Onion	\$175.00
Pasta Salad (garden rotini, red, yellow, green peppers, broccoli & cherry tomatoes)	\$125.00
Sweet Noodle Kugel	\$150.00

Savory Noodle Kugel	\$150.00
Orzo Pasta Salad (orzo, tomato, basil, mozzarella w/balsamic dressing)	\$150.00
Pizza Bagels	\$100.00
Macaroni and Cheese	\$225.00
Israeli Station (Israeli Salad~ Pita/hummus/baba ganoush~ stuffed grape leaves~falafel with tahini & tzatziki sauce)	\$250.00
Baked Ziti with Pesto Cream Sauce	\$150.00
Fresh Veggies with Sesame Noodles & Tofu	\$175.00
Roasted Potatoes/Roasted Sweet Potatoes	\$150.00
Fresh Broccoli Salad	\$75.00
Honey Roasted Carrots	\$75.00
Yogurt Bar with Fruit/Granolas	\$125.00
Ice Cream Bar	\$100.00

All receptions and events in the Ohav building must first be discussed with the Executive Director, Nancy Pandolfo, to ensure that the appropriate space will be available.

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 45 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. Please arrange this with Nancy Pandolfo, Executive Director, the meal is generally a dairy 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 our Executive Director, Nancy Pandolfo, before printing any invitations. Your family must confirm with the Executive Director 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 spring and summer when Shabbat ends late, some families choose to begin a Saturday night reception with **Seudah Shlishit/Third meal of Shabbat** (Hors d'oeuvres, for example), followed by 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.

USE OF ALCOHOL

We must always be careful 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.

These mandatory guidelines for alcohol consumption **must** be followed:

1. The bartenders working at your reception must be instructed to refuse beverages to anyone who has clearly had too much to drink.
2. 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.
3. It is a good idea to stop serving alcoholic beverages prior to serving dessert.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES and CONSIDERATIONS

All synagogue financial responsibilities including dues, fees, tuition, b'nai 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 Office Manager or Executive Director.

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

Social Hall Facility Usage Fees

- | | |
|---|----------|
| - Small Social Hall – up to 100 people | \$150.00 |
| - Large Social Hall – up to 175 people | \$300.00 |
| - Use of both social halls for up to 250 people | \$400.00 |

Maintenance Fee

- | | |
|--|----------|
| Set up, break down, clean up and waste removal | \$300.00 |
|--|----------|

Chair Fee	\$ 2.00 per chair
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Chair Cover Fee	\$ 2.50 per chair
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Real Dishes, flatware and glassware	\$350.00
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Kitchen Fee (\$500.00 cap)	\$180.00 per day
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Mashgiach Fee	\$ 15.00 per hour
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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 our Ohav Youth Congregation programs. Jewish summer camping and Israel experiences are rich, varied and well run. Let us know how we can help you with making choices about such experiences for your child.

Children who will become Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the eighth grade are expected to be enrolled in the first-year program of Mifgash, Hebrew Academy, or a comparable, accepted course of Jewish learning approved by Rabbi Ornstein and Marci Galinkin. Students who become Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the sixth grade are expected to be enrolled **for sixth and seventh grade** Jewish studies or a comparable accepted program. Students who become Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the seventh grade are expected to be enrolled **for seventh grade** studies or a comparable accepted program.

If your child will not be enrolled in a formal Jewish education program during the year of your **simcha**, please consult with Rabbi Ornstein and Marci Galinkin. Please note that weekly tutoring sessions cannot replace enrollment in an approved education program.

PLEASE NOTE:

An excellent book that may be purchased online as you begin your planning process is: **Putting God on the Guest List**, by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin. It offers rich, spiritual guidance for families preparing for Bar/Bat Mitzvah, as well as additional ways to introduce **tzedakah** into your **simcha**.

LOTS MORE TO KNOW...

**** INVITATIONS:** The proper format is to invite guests to participate in the service of Shabbat worship at which your child will be called to the Torah as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please note the correct name of the synagogue: **Congregation Ohav Shalom, 113 New Krumkill Rd., Albany, NY 12208**

**** Rabbi Ornstein** is available to participate in photo sessions on the **bimah** at 10:30AM on the Friday morning preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please confirm this with him 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 online for the occasion.

**** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family** should be prompt in coming into the sanctuary on Shabbat morning, preferably arriving by 9:00 AM, but no later than 9:15 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. **Assume that our services run from 9:15-11:45 AM.**

** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah and immediate family should be seated towards the front of the sanctuary on the side of the Torah table (right side facing the **bimah**). If alternate arrangements need to be made, please consult with Marci Galinkin before your simcha.

** Use of cameras, video and audio equipment, cell phones and any other 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 PM 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, Executive Director.
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.

** Once again: tossing candy is not permitted during services at Ohav Shalom. It may be done at the reception or at the Saturday night party.

** 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.

** Rabbi Ornstein will only announce the Kiddush you are sponsoring for the congregation. If you are sponsoring a private luncheon after the Kiddush, please make certain that your invited guests know this.

** 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.

.....

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 !!

SAMPLE LETTER TO GUESTS:

(It is highly recommended to include this or something similar in your invitations)

Dear Family and Friends:

We are delighted to have you join us for Shabbat services at our synagogue, Congregation Ohav Shalom and for the celebration of our child's **simcha**, our joyous lifecycle event. 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.

When you enter the building, please prepare to enter the main sanctuary quickly and quietly. You're welcome to sit anywhere you like, as well as to leave the sanctuary and return when you need to. (There may be times when the usher asks you to wait before leaving or coming back, but our congregation is flexible about accommodating the needs of guests.)

When you are seated, you'll find two red books in the pews: a smaller siddur (prayer book) and a larger **chumash** (Bible). Both books contain English translations, Hebrew and Hebrew transliterations, and commentaries, for your edification and convenience. In observance of Shabbat (**Sabbath**), Ohav does 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 phone is always permitted. Please step into a private area, such as the comfort room or outside, while on the phone.

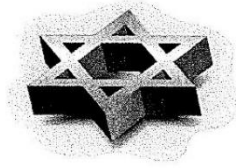
In accordance with Jewish law and state regulations, smoking is prohibited in our building and on our grounds.

In the interest of good taste, modesty, and the sacredness of worship, we appreciate your respectfully following the synagogue's dress code. Please refrain from wearing jeans, tank tops, sleeveless or spaghetti strap shirts/dresses, shorts, or very short skirts. Shoulders are to be covered at all times during the worship service. All men are required 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**, (the worship and reading platform) both men and women are required to wear a head covering. When on the **bimah**, men are required to wear a **Tallit** (prayer shawl), while women are encouraged to do so. Please note that if you are not appropriately dressed and you are called for an honor to the **bimah**, the synagogue might not be able to accommodate the honor being given to you. Please plan ahead and plan appropriately.

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

Sincerely,

BAR AND BAT MITZVAH PARENTS PRAYER



FOR BOYS:

יְשׁוּעָה אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וּכְמִנְשֶׁה.

Y-simcha Elohim k-Ephrayim v-chee-Menashe

May God bless you as God blessed Ephrayim and Menashe.

FOR GIRLS:

יְשׁוּעָה אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה, רִבְקָה, רָחֵל וְלֵאָה

Y-simech Elohim k-Sara, Rivka, Rachel v-Laya

May God bless you as God blessed Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

FOR SONS AND DAUGHTERS:

יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ.

יֵאָר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּנֶךָ.

יֵשָׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּשֵּׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

Y-va-re-che-cha Adonai v-yish-me-re-cha

Ya-eir Adonai panav ei-lecha vi-ye-chu-ne-ka

Yee-sa Adonai panav ei-lecha vi

May Adonai bless you and protect you.

May Adonai's face shine on you with grace and kindness.

May Adonai be with you and grant you peace.

PARENTS of a DAUGHTER BECOMING A BAT MITZVAH

We thank you, God, for the wondrous privilege of seeing our daughter grow day by day, week by week, year by year. For the gifts with which you have endowed her: health and strength, mind and spirit and for the ability to elicit and return love - for all these precious gifts, we thank you.

Watch over her, O God, on this special day and every day. We pray that she will be accompanied by Your protecting and loving care throughout life. Help her become all that she is capable of being. Give her the strength to do the good things that are within her reach and to strive for those things just beyond it. Keep her loyal to the best that she has been shown and may the teachings of our heritage guide her throughout life.

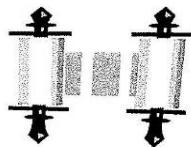
May _____'s deeds find favor in the eyes of all who know her and may she be worthy of your blessings. Amen.

PARENTS of a SON BECOMING A BAR MITZVAH

We thank you, God, for the wondrous privilege of seeing our son grow day by day, week by week, year by year. For the gifts with which you have endowed him: health and strength, mind and spirit and the ability to elicit and return love - for all these precious gifts, we thank you.

Watch over him, O God, on this special day and every day. We pray that he will be accompanied by Your protecting and loving care throughout life. Help him become all that he is capable of being. Give him the strength to do the good things that are within his reach and to strive for those things just beyond it. Keep him loyal to the best that he has been shown and may the teachings of our heritage guide him throughout life.

May _____'s deeds find favor in the eyes of all who know him and may he be worthy of your blessings. Amen.



SHEHECHAYANU

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחַיְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַיּוֹם הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai , Eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-heh-cheh-yanu, v-kiy-manu,
v-hee-gee-yanu la-ze-man ha-zeh.*

With gladness and thanksgiving, we thank you God, for having kept us alive, sustained us and enabled us to reach this day.

SHABBAT PLANNER: CONGREGATION OHAV SHALOM BAR/BAT MITZVAH
PLEASE GIVE THIS COMPLETED FORM TO MARCI GALINKIN
AT LEAST ONE MONTH BEFORE YOUR SIMCHA

CHILD'S NAME: _____ PARSHA _____

HEBREW NAME: _____ SON/DAUGHTER OF _____

HONORS

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

TORAH SERVICE: PART 1

Walking in procession _____

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 and mother's Hebrew names.

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 Ornstein or Marci Galinkin. Please review ahead, and bring your copy to the service.**

HAGBAH (lifts Sefer Torah) _____ GELILAH: _____
(Must be physically able to lift – please confirm with Rabbi Ornstein or Marci Galinkin.)

ENGLISH READINGS:

PRAYER FOR COUNTRY _____

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL (IN HEBREW OR ENGLISH) _____

PRAYER FOR PEACE _____

ASHREI (responsive chanting) (No more than 1 -3 persons leading)

OPEN ARK 2 _____

CARRY TORAH 2 _____

EIN KEILOHEYNU (3 persons max) _____

ADON OLAM _____

TORAH READER REQUESTS

(Optional, must be prearranged with Marci Galinkin):

SERVICE LEADERS REQUESTS (optional, prearranged with Rabbi Ornstein and Marci Galinkin at least 3 months in advance):

SHACHARIT: _____

MUSAF _____

SPECIAL CONCERNS _____

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

Please contact Rabbi Ornstein ohavrab@gmail.com or 518 421-4539 or Marci Galinkin ritualassist@ohavshalom.org or 518-495-2611 with any questions or concerns.

!! Mazal Tov !!

MITZVAH PROJECT INFORMATION

Here are some “in-house” mitzvah projects coordinated by Ohav, in which your family can participate during the 18 months of Bar/Bat Mitzvah planning:

1. Assisting with the monthly volunteer day at Northeast Regional Foodbank:
Please contact Sharon Berko to sign up: sharonleeberko@yahoo.com.
2. Assisting with synagogue related needs and projects: beautification, repairs, organization, helping with building, decorating and removing our Sukkah, assisting us with holiday and office related projects. Please contact our Executive Director, Nancy Pandolfo at execdirector@ohavshalom.org.
3. Supporting Afghan refugee families through Ohav's Good Neighbor Teams:
Please contact Paul Shatsoff (pdennis7@gmail.com), Becky Fromer (bfromer@gmail.com), or Barbara Scher (shcerb13@gmail.com) for more information.

For volunteer opportunities at the Daughters of Sarah Community for Seniors, please contact Marcy Stryker, strykerm@dosscc.org or 518-724-3260. This can include playing music, reading with the residents, playing games with the residents, bringing residents to services, etc.

Additional project opportunities sponsored by local Jewish organizations may be found by contacting the Jewish Family Services Volunteer Coordinator, 518-482-8856 x0; info@jfsnyny.org.

Is your child working on a community service project at school or in his/her free time?
Please let us know below what that project is.

Is your family planning to make a donation to a particular charitable organization (Jewish or non-Jewish) IHO of your simcha? If your child is planning on making this his or her mitzvah project, please make certain to have your child research the organization carefully and be ready to talk about it with you and with Rabbi Ornstein or Marci Galinkin.

We encourage each of our students to speak about their projects as part of their **d'var Torah** speeches.

MITZVAH PROJECT REVIEW SHEET

Name of Child _____

Bar/Bat Mitzvah date: _____

Parsha _____

What project/s are you engaged in?

How often or how many times have you done or will you be doing this project?

What did you learn from doing this project?

What did you enjoy or not enjoy about this project?

If your project is donating to an organization, tell us about the organization.

When you meet with Rabbi Ornstein, he will discuss with you the mitzvah (Torah commandment/s) that your project is related to.

TIZKU L'MITZVOT!
KEEP ON DOING MITZVOT!!