

חֲנוּךְ לַנַּעַר עַל-פִּי דַרְכוֹ  
גַם כִּי-יִזְקִין לֹא-יִסּוּר מִמֶּנָּה

**“ Train children in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not depart from it.” – Proverbs 22:6**



# **Guidebook for Bar / Bat Mitzvah Shelter Rock Jewish Center**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Judaism, done right, has the power to save your life from being spent entirely on the trivial.....But it can do more than that. Its goal is not just to make your life more satisfying. Its goal is not the survival of the Jewish people. That is a means to an end, not an end in itself. The ultimate goal is to transform the world into the kind of world God had in mind when He created it.

Rabbi Harold Kushner

“Bar/Bat Mitzvah” literally means “son/daughter of the commandment.” Technically, the term refers to the child who is coming of age, and it is correct to refer to someone as "becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah." Every Jew by the age of thirteen years is a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This means that he or she counts in a minyan, may bless the Torah and is obligated to observe the mitzvot. However, the term is more commonly used to refer to the coming of age ceremony itself, and you are more likely to hear that someone is "having a Bar Mitzvah" or "invited to a Bat Mitzvah". A ceremony often marks this occasion, but is not required.

The purpose of this guidebook is to explain the procedures and requirements for Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony preparation at SRJC and to answer many of the questions that often come up during this exciting time. This guide is a work in progress. It will be updated as circumstances change and as suggestions for improvement are made. We realize that no written document can anticipate all concerns, so please feel free to contact Rabbi Cohen, or Susan Pavane for answers to any questions you may have.



## **NOTES FROM RABBI COHEN**

Almost every culture has some kind of coming-of-age ritual that reflects the values and ideals the adults in that culture hope their children will grow up to accept and transmit eventually to their own children. In some cultures, this ritual involves a test of physical strength. In others, it is a matter of testing a child's ability to survive on his or her own. For Jews, however, the ritual is deceptively simple. A child comes forward and reads a few lines from a Torah scroll, and then chants a lesson from the Prophets. With this, a boy becomes a man in the eyes of the community and a girl becomes a woman not because it is so daunting or so difficult (although it isn't that easy to learn how to do either), but because by reading aloud from Scripture, the child takes his or her place in the stream of Jewish culture and becomes a part of Jewish history. By becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, a child enters the Jewish future by embracing the Jewish past.

Rabbi Martin S. Cohen



## **BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRAINING**

What makes the Bar/Bat Mitzvah so special for young people is that it is usually the first time that they must take a real responsibility for themselves. Even with regular lessons, even if their parents sit with them and make them study, it is ultimately the student who must learn and prepare for the ceremony. It is a long-term project that requires learning new skills and improving upon those already gained. It requires learning patience and ultimately taking considerable pride in being able to master the material. Ultimately, it should inspire in the young person pride that they were able to do something on their own- something that bodes well for their future in young adulthood.

## **A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

The concept of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah did not exist in ancient Jewish times and the Torah makes no mention of it. The sage Judah ben Tema, who lived in the Second Century of the Common Era, is quoted in Mishna Avot as saying that one is ready to do mitzvot at the age of thirteen. In addition, in the time of the sages a father was responsible for the deeds of his son until he attained the age of 13.

In the Middle Ages the Bar Mitzvah became a recognizable occurrence, marking a boy's attainment of religious maturity. The Bar Mitzvah was called to the Torah on the first day the Torah was read following his Hebrew birthday.

In the 16th century, in Western Europe, it became the custom for the Bar Mitzvah to recite the Maftir aliyah (last aliyah) and the Haftarah (selection from The Prophets) at the Shabbat service following his 13th birthday.



In the shtetl, the Bar Mitzvah was a rather minor observance. On a Monday or Thursday following the 13th birthday, the boy would be called to the Torah and a meal would follow.

Contemporary observance of the Bar Mitzvah in Conservative synagogues vary. It may include being called to the Torah and reciting the blessings, chanting the accompanying selection from the Haftarah, delivering a D'var Torah (a speech explaining the Torah portion) and leading the congregation in prayer.

The Bat Mitzvah may be a relatively new observance, dating back only to the 19th century, but the concept of girls attaining religious maturity at 12 also dates from the 2nd Century of the Common Era. In the 1800's, some Jewish families held a *seudat mitzvah* (a special festive meal) on a girl's 12th birthday. Contemporary observance of the Bat Mitzvah in the Conservative synagogue varies widely.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration here at Shelter Rock will be outlined on pages [12–15](#).

### **GOALS OF THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROGRAM.**

Our most important goal is to provide a meaningful Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience for each child, one that will instill pride in our Jewish heritage and a desire to become an involved member of the Jewish community.

We hope that the time leading up to the *simchah* presents an opportunity for families to expand their Jewish involvement and knowledge. On a practical level, we teach worship and synagogue skills, including davening (leading the service, prayer) and understanding the Shabbat service and Trope (cantillations) of the Torah and Haftarah.





Our goal is to help the B'nai Mitzvah and their families feel at home in the synagogue and develop a desire to attend regular Shabbat and Holiday services. We hope that the B'nai Mitzvah will emerge with a desire to continue their Jewish education and become active in Kadima and USY groups.

## **BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRAINING AT SRJC RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

The Shelter Rock Religious School curriculum incorporates an extensive Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparatory program. Students in our Religious School are taught the blessings for the Torah and Haftarah and learn trope in class prior to beginning their formal training.

Students receive their Shabbat siddur and begin to learn the Friday night, Shabbat morning and weekday morning service in the third grade. In sixth grade, the students receive their weekday siddur to familiarize themselves with weekday prayers and a binder containing their assigned Haftarah, the Torah and Haftarah blessings as well as many of the Shabbat prayers. They also begin to learn Haftarah trope.

Use of the *tallit* and *tefillin* are also taught during class time. In the fifth grade students take part in the world wide wrap on the first Sunday in February. This is a program where each child learns how to make and wrap their very own set of wooden *tefillin*. In the seventh grade, students are taught how to put on a *tallit* and wear *tefillin* during the learner's minyan. ([see section on Tallit/Tefillin, page 19](#))

Doing good deeds and giving to charity are just two of the many values taught to your children when preparing for their special day. We strive to keep our children connected to the past and have partnered with Irving Roth and the Adopt a Survivor program, as well as the Holocaust



Center at Queensborough Community College to help the children connect with survivors of the Shoah. Each child will learn how to interview and gather the survivors' story, and help make a living history document. We encourage our students to become involved in other Mitzvah projects and to donate a portion of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah gifts to *tzedakah*. ([see section on Tzedakah & Tikkun Olam, page 22](#))

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR SHABBAT MORNING BAR/BAT MITZVAH AT SRJC**

The student must have entered SRJC Religious School no later than third grade and must complete seventh grade at SRJC Religious School. Attendance at Shelter Rock Jewish Center Religious School (or its equivalent) or a Jewish Day School for a minimum of five years prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is mandatory.

Attendance by the family at Shabbat Services prior to the *simchah* is required. Families that attend Shabbat services on a regular basis prior to the special day are more comfortable and confident when their day arrives.

The family of the student must be a member of SRJC at the time of Bar/Bat Mitzvah training as well as at the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Completion of a Mitzvah project. ([see section on Tzedakah & Tikkun Olam, page 22](#))

## **THE DATE**

Children of members in good standing who have met our Religious School requirement, or attend a Jewish Day School, are eligible for



assignment of a Shabbat date for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Shelter Rock Jewish Center..

Dates are assigned approximately three years prior to the child's 13th Hebrew birthday. Dates are distributed to families annually by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee.

A meeting for all families is held prior to the date assignment. It is designed to introduce families to the program as well as to provide an opportunity to meet with Rabbi Cohen and members of our Board of Trustees.

Boys and girls are usually assigned a Bar Mitzvah date within 30 days of their 13th Hebrew birthday.

Girls may choose to have their Bat Mitzvah after age 12 provided they have completed the first half of their seventh grade year of Religious School or are enrolled in a Jewish Day School.

The initial date assignment is Shabbat morning and all children are encouraged to have their ceremony on Saturday morning. This enables the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child to feel a part of the community and celebrate this special occasion in the midst of our regular congregation.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah services are also permissible during any regular service during which the Torah is read. This includes Shabbat afternoons, Monday and Thursday mornings, Rosh Chodesh, and during certain festivals (Chanukah, *Chol Hamoed* Sukkot, and Purim). Rabbi Cohen will assist you in the planning of the times of these services. PLEASE NOTE: There are specific requirements in regards to utilizing the synagogue caterer (DeLuxe) with many of these special services. Any non-Shabbat



morning Bar/Bat Mitzvah must be approved in writing by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah chair can answer any questions you may have about date availability and special requirements.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies are not assigned for July and August but may be requested.

We encourage families to discuss the assigned date and decide if it works well for them. The committee chair will work with you to find a more suitable date if needed.

### **THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH AT SRJC**

At Shelter Rock, Bar and Bat Mitzvah services are normally held on Saturday morning, but can also be held whenever the Torah is read in the normal course of a worship service.

Six to eight months prior to their date the student will be contacted by Shelter Rock to begin training. We expect our students to read Torah and Haftarah and encourage them to lead additional parts of the service.

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTION FOR PREPARATION. It is important for parents to make sure that students attend their lessons on time and practice at least 20 minutes daily so that all the material is mastered prior to the date. Missing multiple lessons can impact the student's ability to be prepared. The purpose of the lesson is to review and evaluate the previous week's assignment. Bar/Bat Mitzvah training is not conducive to last minute "cramming". Please note that if your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah is in the fall, they may need to begin lessons



earlier to compensate for summer vacation. If your child will be away for the whole summer, we urge you to arrange a summer tutor, either privately or through their camp so that they may study what they have already learned and be ready to continue their lessons in the fall.

Our goal is that both the parents and the student learn from, as well as enjoy, the experience of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### **The Shabbat Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service**

Every Shabbat morning service has a weekly Torah portion and an accompanying Haftarah which is a related selection from the writings of the Prophets.

On Shabbat morning, the Bar or Bat Mitzvah will:

- Be called to the Torah
- Read Torah
- Recite the blessings before and after the Haftarah
- Chant the Haftarah
- Be encouraged to participate in additional parts of the service
- Give the D'var Torah. ([see section on Speech, page 19](#))

HONORS: Please see the aliyot sheet (honors) for Shabbat morning on [page 26](#). It is a general guideline because the exact number of aliyot available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family will not be known until close to the actual Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This is because aliyot are offered to other Synagogue members who may be celebrating an aufruf, baby naming, or other life event on the same day. Our Religious Affairs Chair will be in contact with you a few weeks prior to the service to discuss this.



There are other Bar/Bat Mitzvah options available where the Haftarah is not normally read.

### **Weekdays when Torah is read**

This includes: Rosh Chodesh, *Chol Hamoed* Chanukah, *Chol Hamoed* Sukkot, Federal holidays that fall on Monday such as Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day or Thursday, such as Thanksgiving.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah reads from the Torah since the Haftarah is not chanted. They may read additional Hebrew and English prayers and will present a D'var Torah.

The time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is the usual time the service begins on that day and is not determined by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. For example, on a Sunday or holiday, morning services are at 9:00 am and on any non-holiday Monday or Thursday morning, services are at 6:45 am.

HONORS: Please see [page 29](#) for the Aliyot sheet for these occasions.

Please note the requirement of using the SRJC's exclusive caterer, DeLuxe, for many of these weekday services.

### **Saturday Minchah, Maariv and Havdalah**

The service begins at sunset on Saturday afternoon. Please consult with Rabbi Cohen for the exact time of the service. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah reads from the Torah, since the Haftarah is not chanted Saturday evening and will have the option of reading all of the aliyot from the



Torah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is encouraged to lead the Havdalah Service and may lead additional prayers and will present a D'var Torah.

HONORS: Please see the Aliyot sheet on [page 32](#).

Please note the requirement of using the SRJC's exclusive caterer, DeLuxe, for this service.



## **TIMELINE PRIOR TO THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

### **3 YEARS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

You will be invited to attend a meeting with all families assigned Bar/Bat Mitzvahs the same year. The purpose of this meeting is to acquaint yourself with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process, to meet our clergy and a representative with the Board of Trustees.

You will receive a letter with the assigned Shabbat date and *parashah*.

### **1 YEAR PRIOR**

You will be invited to attend an informational meeting of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah families for the coming year.

You should begin a discussion with your child about his/her Mitzvah project.

### **9 MONTHS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH (EARLIER IF *SIMCHAH* IN THE FALL)**

Payment of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is due. Contact the financial secretary to discuss financial arrangements, if needed.

### **6-8 MONTHS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH (EARLIER IF *SIMCHAH* IN THE FALL)**

Families will be contacted to set up an initial appointment with the rabbi and bar/bat mitzvah chair to begin the process. The student will begin weekly lessons.





### **3 MONTHS BEFORE THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

A short bio about your child and a photo needs to be sent to the synagogue office to be included in our SRJC monthly bulletin. The office will call to remind you.

### **6-8 WEEKS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

Rabbi Cohen will call you to set up a meeting to work on Bar/Bat Mitzvah speech. ([see section on Speech](#))

Once the speech is completed and approved by Rabbi Cohen, you will get a call from your child's advisor to set up meetings to begin to practice on the *bimah*. The advisor is a lay person from the congregation who donates their time and expertise to help your family with any questions or concerns as well as to make sure your child feels comfortable being on and speaking from the *bimah*. The advisor will meet with your child as often as needed until the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This is a very important time for the student and family to attend Shabbat services.

### **4-6 WEEKS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

Discuss Kiddush options with the [main office](#). Different options are available if you choose to expand on the basic Kiddush. ([see section on Kiddush](#))

Discuss *bimah* flowers with the office. Silk flowers are used on the *bimah*. If you wish to order real flowers, there is an additional charge.

### **2-4 WEEKS BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

You will be contacted by our Religious Chair to discuss aliyot (honors). [Please see pages 26 - 34](#). Aliyot often cannot be finalized until the week



of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah because of the possibility of another *simchah* that day.

We recommend that your child spend this time completely preparing for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### **1 WEEK BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

The family is encouraged to attend Shabbat services. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah child will be asked to sit on the *bimah* following the Rabbi's sermon for the rest of the service.

### **WEEK BEFORE BAR/BAT MITZVAH**

Please note that any photos that you wish to take in the sanctuary MUST be arranged by the front office and be done before Shabbat.

Additional items including *kippot*, decorations, liquor, must be brought in Friday before Shabbat (you may not bring them in on Shabbat).

### **DAY OF BAR/BAT MITZVAH!**

Bring in a water bottle.

Bring your folder with paper copies of your Haftarah, and D'var Torah (speech).

The family will be called up to the *bimah* after services to chant the blessings over the wine and challah. If you will need help, please discuss with us in advance of the service.

**Relax and Enjoy!**



## **THE SPEECH**

Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is expected to deliver a short speech to the congregation. The speech should include a D'var Torah (words of Torah). This should relate and explain some part of their Torah or Haftarah portion in its relationship to Judaism, the Jewish people or their own feelings. There is considerable latitude in what may be included, and current events, goals and aspirations may be discussed. The end of the speech should include giving thanks to the family and the advisor. We recommend that the speech be about five minutes in duration. Rabbi Cohen will meet with the student and family to assist with the speech. The final version of the speech must be approved by the Rabbi. The student will practice the speech with their advisor on the *bimah* in the weeks prior to the event.

## **TALLIT AND TEFILLIN**

All boys must wear a *tallit* at their bar mitzvah and girls are encouraged to do so. In Religious School, all children will learn about the mitzvah of *tefillin*. All seventh-grade boys are required to own a set of kosher *tefillin* and girls are encouraged to do so as well. Our educational director will facilitate the purchase of *tefillin* for those who need assistance, but families are also welcome to purchase *tefillin* on their own. Before making such a purchase, please speak to the educational director or to Rabbi Cohen regarding the specifics of what to buy and what price would be reasonable. Families are encouraged to attend a morning minyan prior to their child's *simchah* in order to familiarize the child in putting on *tefillin* in public for the first time.



Please contact Rabbi Cohen to organize such an event. Please note that *tefillin* are not worn on Shabbat.

## **THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH FEE**

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is \$1500. This fee includes Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons and the congregational Kiddush fee. Please note that the same fee applies whether you have your Bar/Bat Mitzvah on Shabbat morning or any other time.

## **THE KIDDUSH**

### **FOOD**

Each Shabbat service at Shelter Rock ends with a Kiddush (light meal) for the congregation and guests. You may want to supplement our basic Kiddush with additional platters from our exclusive caterer, DeLuxe. Items that can currently be ordered for Kiddush include Waldorf salad, chicken or Caesar salads; noodle, broccoli or potato puddings; grilled vegetables, fish platters, fruit platters and much more! Please contact the [office](#) for more information and a price list.

### **LIQUOR**

At SRJC we have a *l'chayyim* to celebrate a *simchah*. Please bring in one bottle of kosher liquor during the week prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.



## **TZEDAKAH & TIKKUN OLAM**

The ideas of *Tzedakah & Tikkun Olam* are central pillars of Jewish tradition and have many interpretations that are relevant to modern life.

*Tzedakah* literally means “righteousness.” It refers to the *mitzvah* of giving time or money to a worthy cause. There are many ways of giving to those less fortunate.

*Tikkun Olam* is a Hebrew phrase that means repairing, or mending the world. Jewish ideas that are concerned with taking action to make the world a better place can take many forms.

We encourage Bar/Bat Mitzvah to accept their new responsibilities as Jewish adults, paving the way for them to be committed to a lifetime of *G’milut Hasidim* (deeds of loving kindness). In recent years, many families have donated a portion of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah gifts to those less fortunate. The act of giving charity can be performed in several ways. A child can choose to donate money to a variety of charitable organizations. We would, however, prefer that your child become involved in something and make an extended commitment to a project. Some examples of local programs are:

[www.jafco.org](http://www.jafco.org) – a foster care village for Jewish children that is in Florida and coming to the New York area.

[www.the-inn.org](http://www.the-inn.org) – The INN (Interfaith Nutrition Network) addresses the issues of hunger and homelessness on Long Island.



[www.LIVC.org](http://www.LIVC.org) – Long Island Volunteer Center. A resource center for volunteering and community service initiatives throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties.

[www.mommashouse.org](http://www.mommashouse.org) – Mommas House is a home for young mothers aged 17 to 23 years and their babies.

[www.licares.org](http://www.licares.org) – Long Island Cares brings together all available resources for the benefit of the hungry on Long Island.

[www.ujafedny.org](http://www.ujafedny.org) – offers many local volunteer opportunities.

Some other websites of interest include:

[www.lifeline.org](http://www.lifeline.org) – Yad LaKashish: Lifeline for the Old is a wonderful organization that gives more than 300 of Jerusalem's needy elderly and disabled a sense of purpose and self-worth through creative work opportunities, essential support services and a warm community environment.

[www.globallinks.org](http://www.globallinks.org) – Global Links is a medical relief and development organization that provides medical supplies to underdeveloped countries.

[www.just-tzedakah.org](http://www.just-tzedakah.org) – *Tzedakah*, Inc.'s mission is to help raise the level and effectiveness of Jewish charitable giving by encouraging more informed giving and better managed, more open, and accountable charitable organizations.

[www.werepair.org](http://www.werepair.org) – Repair volunteers are grounded in a commitment to help improve the communities we live in and larger world around us. It is coming to NYC soon.



[www.shoesthatfit.org](http://www.shoesthatfit.org) – The mission of Shoes That Fit is to provide new shoes to children in need so they can attend school in comfort and dignity.

[www.shopinisrael.com](http://www.shopinisrael.com) – provides consumers world-wide with easy access to the best of Israeli products and services.

[www.jnf.org](http://www.jnf.org) – Jewish National Fund performs groundbreaking work to develop the land of Israel through a variety of multifaceted initiatives. They provide local opportunities.

[www.mitzvahmarket.com](http://www.mitzvahmarket.com) – a great resource for mitzvah project ideas.

The above websites offer some ideas, but there are many more options. Your child can participate in clothing drives or walks that support a cause that they have an interest in. Sit together and review the options with your child.

## **SYNAGOGUE DECORUM FOR BEHAVIOR AND DRESS**

Your Shabbat Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a part of the regular Shabbat service and must conform to these guidelines:

- All family members and guests coming up to the *bimah* should be dressed appropriately for Shabbat services. Jeans and sneakers are inappropriate. Women should have their shoulders covered and wear dresses of modest length.
- Many families provide special head coverings for their guests. Men and boys, including non-Jewish guests, are required to wear a *kippah* (yarmulke) at services and in the building. It is customary



for married women to wear some form of head covering. They are available in the synagogue lobby.

- Jewish men above the age of Bar Mitzvah are requested to wear a *tallit* to Shabbat services. Women are encouraged to do so. The synagogue will provide a *tallit* for those who do not bring their own. It is inappropriate for non-Jewish guests to wear a *tallit*.
- A *tallit* is never worn in the bathroom. All should remove their *tallit* before entering.
- Taking pictures and videos are not permitted on Synagogue premises on Shabbat or Yom Tov (holidays).
- The use of cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted on Shabbat and Yom Tov. All devices should be silenced. In the case of an emergency, please step outside.
- Guests who arrive late will be asked to remain at the rear of the sanctuary until a suitable break in the service occurs. Please respect this during the Rabbi's sermon, Torah and Haftarah reading, and the silent Amidah.
- Celebrations held outside our synagogue building should reflect the values of our faith. We expect that any celebration will include the serving kosher food. Please be respectful of Conservative Jewish practice while planning your celebration.
- Please note that friends of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be in the sanctuary for the Torah/Haftarah service and speech.
- Please discourage young children from running in the lobby and playing in the bathrooms.





## **BAR/BAT MITZVAH CHECKLIST**

- ☐ I can recite the blessings before the reading of the Torah.
- ☐ I can recite the blessings after the reading of the Torah.
- ☐ I can recite the blessings before the reading of the Haftarah.
- ☐ I can recite the blessings after the reading of the Haftarah.
- ☐ I can read the first half of my Haftarah fluently.
- ☐ I can sing the second half of my Haftarah fluently.
- ☐ I can read the Maftir portion fluently.
- ☐ I can sing my Maftir portion fluently.
- ☐ I have submitted a first draft of my speech to the Rabbi.
- ☐ I have submitted my final draft of my speech to the Rabbi.
- ☐ I can lead *Aleinu*, *Ein Kelohenu*, and *Adon Olam*.



# ALIYOT FORMS

## SHABBAT ALIYOT FORM

**Parashah:** \_\_\_\_\_ **English Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hebrew Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Full English name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Hebrew name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings' Names (English): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note: All immediate family members, including the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate, as well as people being given Honors of any sort, need to be wearing proper synagogue attire. At Shelter Rock this means jackets and ties for men as well as a tallit, and dresses or skirts and blouses with sleeves for women. Also, men in the sanctuary must wear kippot or hats. It is also the custom in our shul for married women to wear head coverings. All honors listed on this sheet need to be granted to people who are Jewish in accordance to the standards of the Conservative movement. If you have any questions about this, please contact Rabbi Cohen in advance of your simchah.**

### **Ark Opening, while removing the Torah from the Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 228)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Ark openings** do not require special skills; however please remember that there are a few steps to walk up to the bimah. Please feel free to assist honorees up the steps if needed. You can assign two or four people to each ark opening.

### **Carrying Torah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 234)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

(When there are 2 Torahs)



**Second Ark Opening, while returning the Torah to Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 266)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ 4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

On Shabbat, seven or eight people are called to the Torah. (All of them, however, are not always available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. You will be informed in advance how many aliyot are yours to distribute.) The first *aliyah* must go to a kohen or to a woman whose father is or was a kohen, the second *aliyah* must go to a Levite or to a woman whose father is or was a Levite. If you do not have an appropriate candidate for either of the first two *aliyot*, please leave them unassigned and our Ritual Chair will find a suitable individual to honor. All people given aliyot need to be able to recite these blessings in Hebrew. If someone wishes to have an *aliyah* and is unable to recite the blessings, our cantor will be pleased to assist him or her in advance. Please list the full Hebrew name of each person to be given an *aliyah* below. (The full Hebrew name includes the person's Hebrew name as well as the Hebrew name of that person's father and, if so desired, mother.) Only the parents or grandparents of the Bar Bat Mitzvah may come up together for one *aliyah*. However, even in such cases, only one person will be formally called forward. Therefore, please indicate which honoree you would like to have called up. The blessings appear in the green *Siddur Tzur Yisrael* on pages 236 – 237.

HONOR	ENGLISH NAME	HEBREW NAME	RELATIONSHIP
Kohen			
Levi			
Third			
Fourth			
Fifth			
Sixth			
Seventh			
Maftir			Bar/Bat Mitzvah



<u>HONOR</u>	<u>TORAH READER</u>
Kohen	
Levi	
Third	
Fourth	
Fifth	
Sixth	
Seventh	
Maftir	Bar/Bat Mitzvah

**Torah readers:** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be reading a portion from the Torah. If, in addition, you have guests who are able to read from the Torah and would like to do so for the congregation, please list them here. Please make sure that the Religious Services Chair knows in advance that you have Torah readers and for which aliyot. Torah readers who have not previously read at SRJC are asked to make contact in advance with our cantor to ascertain that they are ready to read in public.

### Hagbahah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 246)

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(When there are 2 Torahs)

**Hagbahah** requires that someone lift the open Torah, turn around so the congregation could see three columns of text on the inside of the scroll, sit down with it and then wind it closed. It requires someone who is physically capable of doing this. If your honoree (Magbiah) is physically capable but has never had this honor before, please check with the rabbi or cantor regarding the best way to perform this honor, correctly and safely.

### Gelilah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 246)

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(When there are 2 Torahs)

**Gelilah** requires that someone “dress” the Torah. This is not physically difficult and a nice honor to give someone who does not have Hebrew knowledge.



## WEEKDAY AND ROSH CHODESH ALIYOT FORM

**Parashah:** \_\_\_\_\_ **English Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hebrew Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Full English name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Hebrew name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings' Names (English): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note:** All immediate family members, including the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate, as well as people being given Honors of any sort, need to be wearing proper synagogue attire. At Shelter Rock this means jackets and ties for men as well as a tallit, and dresses or skirts and blouses with sleeves for women. Also, men in the sanctuary must wear kipot or hats. It is also the custom in our shul for married women to wear head coverings. All honors listed on this sheet need to be granted to people who are Jewish in accordance to the standards of the Conservative movement. If you have any questions about this, please contact Rabbi Cohen in advance of your simchah.

### Ark Opening, while removing the Torah from the Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrae Page 140)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

*Ark openings do not require special skills; however please remember that there are a few steps to walk up to the bimah. Please feel free to assist honorees up the steps if needed. You can assign two or four people to each ark opening.*

### Carrying Torah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 140)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

*The average Torah weighs about 35 pounds and is unevenly weighted. Please honor someone who will be able to manage carrying it easily.*

### Second Ark Opening, while returning the Torah to Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 152)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ 4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_



On a weekday, three people are called to the Torah (four on a weekday Rosh Chodesh). All of them, however, are not always available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. You will be informed in advance how many aliyot are yours to distribute.) The first *aliyah* must go to a kohen or to a woman whose father is or was a kohen, the second *aliyah* must go to a Levite or to a woman whose father is or was a Levite. If you do not have an appropriate candidate for either of the first two *aliyot*, please leave them unassigned and our Ritual Chair will find a suitable individual to honor. All people given aliyot need to be able to recite these blessings in Hebrew. If someone wishes to have an *aliyah* and is unable to recite the blessings, our cantor will be pleased to assist him or her in advance. Please list the full Hebrew name of each person to be given an *aliyah* below. (The full Hebrew name includes the person's Hebrew name as well as the Hebrew name of that person's father and, if so desired, mother.) Only the parents or grandparents of the bar / bat-mitzvah may come up together for one *aliyah*. However, even in such cases, only one person will be formally called forward. Therefore, please indicate which honoree you would like to have called up. The blessings appear in the blue *Siddur Tzur Yisrael* on pages 142 - 143.

Honor	English Name	Hebrew Name	Relationship
Kohen			
Levi			
Third			Bar/Bat Mitzvah on weekday or other on Rosh Chodesh
Fourth On Rosh Chodesh			Bar/Bat Mitzvah on Rosh Chodesh

<u>Honor</u>	<u>Torah Reader</u>
Kohen	
Levi	
Third	
Fourth On Rosh Chodesh	

***Torah readers:*** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be reading a portion from the Torah. If, in addition, you have guests who are able to read from the Torah and would like to do so for the congregation, please list them here. Please make sure that the Religious Services Chair knows in advance that you have Torah readers and for which aliyot. Torah readers who have not previously read at SRJC are asked to make contact in advance with our cantor to ascertain that they are ready to read in public.



**Hagbahah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 146)**

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**Hagbahah** requires that someone lift the open Torah, turn around so the congregation could see three columns of text on the inside of the scroll, sit down with it and then wind it closed. It requires someone who is physically capable of doing this. If your honoree (Magbiah) is physically capable but

**Gelilah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 146)**

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**Gelilah** requires that someone “dress” the Torah. This is not physically difficult and a nice honor to give someone who does not have Hebrew knowledge.



## **SHABBAT MINCHAH HAVDALAH ALIYOT FORM**

**Parashah:** \_\_\_\_\_ **English Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Hebrew Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Full English name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Hebrew name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (English): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *kohen* \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (Hebrew): \_\_\_\_\_ Check here if father is a *levi* \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings' Names (English): \_\_\_\_\_

*Please note: All immediate family members, including the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate, as well as people being given Honors of any sort, need to be wearing proper synagogue attire. At Shelter Rock this means jackets and ties for men as well as a tallit, and dresses or skirts and blouses with sleeves for women. Also, men in the sanctuary must wear kipot or hats. It is also the custom in our shul for married women to wear head coverings. All honors listed on this sheet need to be granted to people who are Jewish in accordance to the standards of the Conservative movement. If you have any questions about this, please contact Rabbi Cohen in advance of your simchah.*

### **Ark Opening, while removing the Torah from the Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 414)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_
4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

*Ark openings do not require special skills; however please remember that there are a few steps to walk up to the bima. Please feel free to assist honorees up the steps if needed. You can assign two or four people to each ark opening.*

### **Carrying Torah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 414)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Second Ark Opening, while returning the Torah to Ark (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 418)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ 4. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_





On Shabbat afternoon, three people are called to the Torah. (All of them, however, are not always available to the Bar/Bat mitzvah family. You will be informed in advance how many aliyot are yours to distribute.) The first *aliyah* must go to a kohen or to a woman whose father is or was a kohen, the second *aliyah* must go to a Levite or to a woman whose father is or was a Levite. If you do not have an appropriate candidate for either of the first two aliyot, please leave them unassigned and our Ritual Chair will find a suitable individual to honor. All people given aliyot need to be able to recite these blessings in Hebrew. If someone wishes to have an *aliyah* and is unable to recite the blessings, our cantor will be pleased to assist him or her in advance. Please list the full Hebrew name of each person to be given an *aliyah* below. (The full Hebrew name includes the person's Hebrew name as well as the Hebrew name of that person's father and, if so desired, mother.) Only the parents or grandparents of the Bar / Bat Mitzvah may come up together for one *aliyah*. However, even in such cases, only one person will be formally called forward. Therefore, please indicate which honoree you would like to have called up. The blessings appear in the green *Siddur Tzur Yisrael* on pages 416 – 417.

Honor	English Name	Hebrew Name	Relationship
Kohen			
Levi			
Third			Bar/Bat Mitzvah

<u>Honor</u>	<u>Torah Reader</u>
Kohen	
Levi	
Third	

***Torah readers:*** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be reading a portion from the Torah. If, in addition, you have guests who are able to read from the Torah and would like to do so for the congregation, please list them here. Please make sure that the Religious Services Chair knows in advance that you have Torah readers and for which aliyot. Torah readers who have not previously read at SRJC are asked to make contact in advance with our cantor to ascertain that they are ready to read



### Hagbahah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 418)

---

**Hagbahah** requires that someone lift the open Torah, turn around so the congregation could see three columns of text on the inside of the scroll, sit down with it and then wind it closed. It requires someone who is physically capable of doing this. If your honoree (Magbiah) is physically capable but has never had this honor before, please check with the rabbi or cantor regarding the best way to perform this honor,

### Gelilah (Siddur Tzur Yisrael Page 418)

---

**Gelilah** requires that someone “dress” the Torah. This is not physically difficult and a nice honor to give someone who does not have Hebrew knowledge.



## BLESSINGS AT THE READING OF THE TORAH

Before reading the Torah:

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ.  
בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר-בָּנוּ מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים, וְנָתַן-לָנוּ  
אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, גּוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Barkhu et Adonai ha-m'vorakh.

Barukh Adonai ha-m'vorakh l'olam va-ed.

Barukh attah Adonai, eloheinu melekn ha-olam, asher bahat banu  
mi-kol ha-amim, v'natan lanu et torato.

Barukh attah Adonai, noten ha-torah.



After reading the Torah.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן-לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וַחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָמַע  
בְּתוֹכָנוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, גּוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

Barukh attah Adonai, eloheinu melekh ha-olam, asher natan lanu  
torat emet, v'hayei olam nata b'tokhenu.

Barukh attah Adonai, noten ha-torah.



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO SHABBAT SERVICE**

ALIYAH (Plural: aliyot) – Literally, “ascent” or “going up” – The honor of being called up to the *bimah* to recite the blessing over the Torah reading. The person who receives the aliyah goes up to the *bimah* before the Torah reader and recites a blessing. After the reading, the honoree recites a concluding blessing. The honoree then stands to the side of the reader for the next reading.

AMIDAH – Literally, the “standing” prayer. The Shema and the Amidah form the central prayer elements in Jewish liturgy. The Amidah is also referred to as *Shemoneh Esrei* (referring to the 18 blessings originally recited in the weekday Amidah). The Amidah is recited silently standing, with feet together, facing Jerusalem.

ARON HA-KODESH – or simply Aron: the Holy Ark in which the Torahs are kept.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH (plural: B’nai Mitzvah) – One who has attained the age of responsibility to observe the commandments as an adult Jew and to be held accountable for Jewish ritual and ethical behavior. This is traditionally age 12 for girls and 13 for boys. At SRJC, both boys and girls are assigned dates for age 13.

BIMAH – “elevated place”. The raised dais at the front of the sanctuary where services are conducted.

BIRKHOT HASHAHAR – “Blessings of the Morning” – An introductory liturgical unit to the morning worship service.

CHUMASH – The Hebrew name of the Five Books of Moses, printed in book form. The word Chumash means five, encompassing the books of



B'reishit (Genesis), Sh'mot (Exodus), Vayikra (Leviticus), B'midbar (Numbers), and D'varim (Deuteronomy). At SRJC, we use the official Chumash of the Conservative movement, *Etz Hayim*, which contains the Hebrew and English texts of the weekly Torah portions, Haftarot (selections from the Prophets), as well as modern commentaries.

D'VAR TORAH – Literally, a “word of Torah”; a brief commentary on the Torah portion for the week.

GABBAI/GABBAIT – One of the people responsible for giving out honors at Shabbat services, or for checking to ensure the Torah is read correctly.

HAFTARAH (plural: Haftarot) – literally, “completion”: the reading of a selection from the Prophets for a given Shabbat or festival, which “completes” or concludes the Torah reading. Usually, the Haftarah reading is connected thematically to the weekly Torah reading.

KEDUSHAH – “sanctification” – A portion of the Amidah that acknowledges the majesty and holiness of G-d.

MA'ARIV – The evening service for weekdays and Shabbat.

MAFTIR – The concluding section of the portion of the Torah chanted or read on Shabbat and festivals. Also, the person who recites the blessings before and after the chanting or reading of this section and who often also chants or reads the Haftarah.

MINCHAH – The afternoon service for Shabbat, festivals and weekdays.

MITZVAH (plural, mitzvot) – A commandment or obligation the Torah places upon all Jews from the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. There are 613 mitzvot that Jews are obligated to observe. It can also refer to any



Jewish religious obligation, or more generally to any good deed.

MUSAF – The “additional” service in the traditional liturgy of Shabbat, festivals, and the New Moon. It is customary to recite the Musaf service immediately after the reading of the weekly Torah and Haftarah portions. A special abbreviated Amidah is the core of the Musaf service that is recited on Shabbat.

PARASHAH – The Torah portion of the week, sometimes referred to as the sedra. The more complete term is: *parashat hashavua*

PARASHAT HASHAVUA – Literally “the portion of the week.” See above.

PESUKEI D’ZIMRA – “versus of song” – A second, larger, more spiritually reflective set of preliminary readings following the *Birkhot HaShahar* section.

SHACHARIT – The morning service for Shabbat, festivals, and weekdays.

SIMCHAH – Literally “joy,” *simchah* refers to a happy occasion, especially a life-cycle event.

T’FILLAH – Prayer.

TIKKUN OLAM – This term, originally derived from the Kabbalah, is now broadly used to denote to actions taken to improve society and connotes social action and the pursuit of social justice.

TORAH – Literally, “teaching” or instruction. Primarily, The Torah refers to the Five Books of Moses. More generally, Torah refers to both Written Torah (Five Books of Moses, Prophets, Writings) and Oral Torah (Talmud).

TROPE – The notes and cantillation for Torah, Haftarah and the



Megillot, which enable a student to read any section of these texts throughout the year.

*TZEDAKAH* – Literally, “righteousness.” It refers to the Mitzvah of giving time or money to a worthy cause. B’nai Mitzvah and their families traditionally give *Tzedakah* or do a special *Tzedakah* project in honor of the occasion.



## **FURTHER READING**

There are many books available that will enhance your understanding and appreciation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience and make it more meaningful.

Some helpful sources are listed below.

The Observant Life: The Wisdom of Conservative Judaism for Contemporary Jews Edited by Rabbi Martin S. Cohen and Rabbi Michael Katz.

The Jewish Catalog: A Do-It-Yourself Kit Edited by Richard Siegel and Michael and Sharon Strassfeld. The Jewish Publication Society of America. This book is a great introduction to many Jewish topics and has a good section on using *tefillin*.

The Complete Book of Jewish Observance. A Practical Manual for the Modern Jew by Leo Trepp. Behrman House, Excellent introduction to Jewish law, observance and the Jewish life cycle.

Putting God on the Guest List. How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah by Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin

Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin. The title explains it all.

A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice by Isaac Klein. The Jewish Theological Seminary. A Conservative guide to Jewish practice.





Coming of Age As A Jew by Shoshana Glatzer. Board of Jewish Education. A practical guide to becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah geared to family involvement.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Basics: A Practical Family Guide to Coming of Age Together by Helen Leneman

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Survival Guide by Randi Reisfeld. Humorous and informative.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Planbook by Jane Lewit. A comprehensive, step-by-step handbook that leads parents through every detail.

It's a Mitzvah! Step-by-Step to Jewish Living by Bradley Shavit Artson. This book identifies hundreds of ways to transform daily living into Jewish living.

There are many websites that can offer guidance. There are websites that offer audio support with Haftarah trope and blessings, etc .

[www.cjvoices.org/article/understanding-the-haftarot/](http://www.cjvoices.org/article/understanding-the-haftarot/)

[www.uscj.org.il/haftarahArchive.php](http://www.uscj.org.il/haftarahArchive.php)

[www.bar-mitzva.com](http://www.bar-mitzva.com) is a comprehensive Bar/Bat Mitzvah guide with lots of information and links to many other useful sites



## **CONCLUSION**

We hope this guidebook has been helpful to you and realize that it can't answer all of your questions. Please contact us using the email/phone list that follows with any questions. The synagogue, the clergy, the advisors, the teachers and the committee members all want your family's Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience to be a happy and fulfilling one.

Let us know about your experience and what we can do to help. Please make suggestions that you think will help other families that follow.

With our best wishes,

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee



## **CONTACT LIST**

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# NOTES

