



# B'nai Mitzvah Handbook

Rabbi Alan B. Lucas

Rabbi Cara Weinstein Rosenthal: Associate Rabbi

Cantor Ofer S. Barnoy

Donna Bartolomeo: Executive Director

Sharon Solomon: Religious School Director - Family and Youth Engagement  
& Makom High School Director

Silvia Kogan: B'nai Mitzvah coordinator:

## GREETINGS FROM RABBI ALAN B. LUCAS

Dear Parents,

Your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be one of the great moments in your life. We know that you are looking forward to it with much excitement. We at Temple Beth Sholom are doing everything we can to ensure that it will be a joyous and meaningful experience for everyone involved.

It is our utmost desire that the basic religious significance of the occasion be emphasized over everything else. Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a religious ceremony which symbolizes the intentions of parents and child to assume the full obligations incumbent on a Jewish child who reaches the age of communal responsibility. Bar or Bat Mitzvah marks an inauguration into dedicated Jewish living and most specifically, a reaffirmation of a powerful and meaningful bond with the synagogue.

We are pleased to provide you with this booklet explaining most of the details of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah procedure before, during and following the event. We also want to take this opportunity to share with you our requirements and expectations that we feel are necessary to have a meaningful Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

Please read this booklet carefully. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. The Associate Rabbi, Cantor, our Executive Director, our B'nai Mitzvah coordinator and our Religious School Director are also available to answer any questions.

We trust you will find this booklet helpful as you begin to make plans for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We certainly hope that it will make a contribution to the dignity, the beauty and the lasting significance of your simcha.

Warmest regards,



Alan B. Lucas

## MESSAGE FROM TBS B'NAI MITZVAH COORDINATOR

Dear families:

Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is an important and wonderful life-cycle milestone for a Jewish child and his or her entire family. It is also a significant event in the life of our synagogue community.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony and celebration represent many months and years of Jewish learning and experiences – within the synagogue, at your home, and in the world. It is important to note that the process of preparing for Bar/Bat Mitzvah is as meaningful as the day itself; in fact, the more engaged and involved the pre Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and family are in the months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the more fulfilling the actual “day” will be to all who are present.

The process of planning this type of Jewish family event can be complex and intense. This booklet will help you answer the questions you may have about how Temple Beth Sholom views the process of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah – what happens before and what happens after – as one step in Jewish life-long learning.

If after reviewing this booklet, you still have questions, contact me. Together with the TBS team, we will do everything we can to make sure you, your family, and your proud Bar/Bat Mitzvah child have an experience you will always remember.

Silvia Kogan



B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator

## Meet the Team



**Alan B. Lucas**  
**SENIOR RABBI**  
[alucas@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:alucas@tbsroslyn.org)



**Cara Weinstein Rosenthal**  
**ASSOCIATE RABBI**  
[croenthal@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:croenthal@tbsroslyn.org)



**Ofer S. Barnoy**  
**CANTOR**  
[cantorbarnoy@gmail.com](mailto:cantorbarnoy@gmail.com)



**Sharon Solomon**  
**Religious School & Makom Director**  
[sharonsolomon@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:sharonsolomon@tbsroslyn.org)



**Donna Bartolomeo**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
[dbartolomeo@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:dbartolomeo@tbsroslyn.org)



**Silvia Kogan**  
**B'nai Mitzvah coordinator**  
[skogan@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:skogan@tbsroslyn.org)

# B'nai Mitzvah Journey

Exciting learning opportunities for the entire family.



שְׁמַעוֹן הַצַּדִּיק הָיָה אוֹמֵר, עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד:  
עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הָעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת הַסְּדִים

Rabbi Shimon the Righteous was one of the last of the men of the great assembly.  
He used to say: the world stands upon three things:  
the Torah, the Temple service, and the practice of acts of piety.

Pirkei Avot 1:2

## TORAH תורה

- **Torah workshop**

Under Cantor Barnoy's tutelage, our 6th-grade students will attend special Torah reading classes where they will study trope and other synagogue skills. As a culmination, the students will be invited to lead Mishapacha Minyan and read a few verses of the Torah portion of the day.

- **Tutoring**

Your child's assigned teacher will contact you by phone to schedule 25 weekly half-hour lessons. Please make every effort to find a time that will be kept on a regular basis. If at any point, you feel that your child is in need of extra lessons, please call Cantor Barnoy to discuss. It is expected that your child will prepare his/her assignment at home between lessons. The lessons serve to evaluate the progress and assign additional portions to be studied at home.

Please note that If your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date is in September or October, your child may need to begin lessons two months early to compensate for summer vacation. If your child will be away for the whole summer, we strongly urge you to arrange for a summer tutor for him or her, either privately or through his/her camp so that they may rehearse what they have already learned and be readily prepared when they continue their lessons after the summer.

If extra tutoring is required you must arrange for the lessons at your own expense.

The Board of Education's policy is that Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons may not take place when the child is scheduled to be in Religious School or Makom-High school classes.

- **D'var Torah**

Three months before the Bar/bat mitzvah ceremony, your child will start the process of writing the D'var Torah with a member of the clergy. In the D'var Torah your child will be encouraged to incorporate a Mitzvah project of his/her choice.

- **B'nei Mitzvah Family Programming**

During the 6th grade year you will be invited to participate in special family programs. These programs revolve around the meaning of the day of Bar or Bat Mitzvah and what it means to be a Jewish adult.

These programs, are often held during Religious School hours. They offer families an opportunity to think more deeply about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience and ultimately, enhance the meaning of the day.

These programs are for all of the Bar and Bat Mitzvah families in a given year. Whether you receive your Jewish education in our Religious School or at the Solomon Schechter Day School or any other approved religious education institution, you are all “children of Beth Sholom” and we want to make sure that each of you takes advantage of these wonderful opportunities.

## **AVODA עבודה**

- **Participation in our Mishpacha Minyan**

We strongly encourage students, once they have learned their Trope to put their skills to use in our Mishpacha (Family) Minyan that occurs once each month. We will help you prepare a short Torah reading and you and your family will have an Aliya to the Torah. It is a special moment and a window into your future experience as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

- **Attending services regularly**

Attendance by your family at Shabbat Services at Temple Beth Sholom prior to your simcha is required and encouraged. We want you to feel more comfortable in our sanctuary and with our service. The frequency of this requirement is prescribed by Temple Beth Sholom’s Board of Education. It is our hope that you and your child attend weekday morning services during the week prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, put on the traditional Tallit and Tefillin and have an aliyah to the Torah.

## **G'MILUT CHASADIM גמילות חסדים**

- **The Mitzvah Project**

We are very much concerned that the Bar/Bat mitzvah process reflects the ethical and communal responsibility incumbent on a Jewish adult. To this end, we require each Bar/Bat mitzvah student to design and complete a Mitzvah project during the Bar/Bat mitzvah year.

During the “Vav” (sixth grade) year students will start participating in different Mitzvah projects. Projects vary according to students’ interest, in light of current events or opportunities that arise in our community. Each family event will have a mitzvah component to encourage families to get involved as well. We encourage creativity and whole family involvement. Each of us has something to offer and we can all learn and get inspiration from one another.

- **Family component**

We would like to encourage each one of the families to take upon themselves a mitzvah to be performed during the year of their child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

## EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS FOR BAR AND BAT MITZVAH

- Attendance in Temple Beth Sholom Religious School, Solomon Schechter Day School, or a school affiliated with the United Synagogue Commission on Jewish Education or its equivalent for a minimum of five years prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Current enrollment in such a school at the time of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is mandatory. Regular attendance and passing grades are required.
- Yav students are expected to attend twelve Minyanim services this year.
- Serving as a Greeter at Shabbat Services will help our families feel more comfortable with the rhythm and flow of the service. It is also a wonderful addition to make all of our guests feel welcome. You will be asked to serve as greeters for the Saturday morning service prior to your simcha.
- Selection and completion of a Mitzvah Project which reflects the ethical and communal responsibility incumbent on Jewish adults.
- The Board of Education and Religious Affairs Committee reserves the right to postpone the ceremony of students who fail to meet any of our requirements.

## CHOOSING A DATE FOR THE CEREMONY

- Three Years before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah you will receive a form with the date of your child's Hebrew birthday and a calendar for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year. Please fill out the form indicating 3 possible dates. You will be notified of an assigned date after careful consideration by the committees involved.
- Please note that due to the large number of Bar/Bat mitzvahs, it is possible that Shabbat morning services will be shared between two families.
- We will do our best to meet your requests, however they are not guaranteed and should not be considered definitive until you receive a written confirmation from our office.

## INCLUSION PROGRAM (TIKVAH) AT TBS

Temple Beth Sholom is an inclusive Conservative, egalitarian congregation that provides a sense of home to all, regardless of physical, cognitive, behavioral, or emotional abilities. We seek to accommodate the needs of our members and guests ensuring full access to our temple community. We try to accommodate children and families with special needs whenever possible. We urge families with children who have special needs to discuss their individual child's accommodations with us.

## **PLANNING THE CEREMONY**

### **OPTIONS FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONIES AT TBS**

The ceremony for Bar/Bat Mitzvah occurs during the following worship services that are led by our Rabbis and Cantor.

- **Saturday Morning – 10:00 AM (Single or Double Bar/Bat Mitzvah)**

In addition to the Haftarah portion, a child may be eligible to chant from the Torah if he/she has had Torah Trope training. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah may read additional Hebrew and English prayers and will present an introduction to the Torah or Haftarah reading (D'var Torah)

The music accompaniment has always been a part of our TBS Shabbat service and a part of our history as a congregation. In response to the evolving nature of our community, the accompanist's schedule is determined based upon a number of factors including the availability of the accompanist, schedule, special programming, etc. There will be no fee for use of the accompanist.

*Honors: Three Torah honors (not including the Bar/bat mitzvah) and three Ark openers per family.*

*Kiddush: Please check with the office about different options for the celebratory kiddush.*

- **Weekdays When Torah is Read – 10:00 AM (Single Bar/Bat Mitzvah)**

Besides Thursday mornings, we include here Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah, Labor Day Monday, Thanksgiving Thursday, Memorial Day Monday, Martin Luther King Monday, etc.

On this occasion, the child will read only from the Torah since the Haftarah is not chanted. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah may read additional Hebrew and English prayers and will present an introduction to the Torah reading (D'var Torah). The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is also encouraged to lead the Hallel where possible.

*Honors: Three Torah honors, six Ark openings and four other honors*

*Kiddush: The luncheon must be a Colbeh catered function at our synagogue.*

- **Saturday Mincha, Maariv and Havdalah (Single Bar/Bat Mitzvah)**

This service begins at sunset on Saturday afternoon. Since the Haftarah is not chanted Saturday evening, the child will read from the Torah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah may lead additional Hebrew and English prayers and present an introduction to the Torah reading (D'var Torah). In addition, he or she may lead the brief Havdalah Service at the conclusion. The family is invited to participate in the Havdalah ceremony.

*Honors: Three Torah honors (including the Bar/Bat Mitzvah), ten Ark openings and four other honors.*

*Kiddush: The evening celebratory meal must be a Colbeh catered function at our synagogue.*

- **Honors:**

You will receive a form from our B'nai Mitzvah coordinator to assist you with Aliyot (honors before the Torah) and Ark openings. There is a policy as to how many honors each family is given which depends on the type of service in which you are participating. This form will reflect the aliyot and ark openings for your particular service. Please fill out the form to the best of your ability and bring it to the final rehearsal with the Cantor. The Cantor will provide this form to the usher at your event, who will be responsible for gathering your honorees at the appropriate time.

Please note that in addition to the Aliyot of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and their families, honors are offered to Temple members, some of whom may be observing a yahrtzeit, celebrating an aufruf (pre-wedding honor) or the naming of a baby girl, or other significant life event.

All men called to the Torah are required to wear Tefillin except on Chol HaMoed.

- **Participation in the Service:**

The Religious Affairs Committee of Temple Beth Sholom has established the following sequence for those who are willing and capable to perform the following on Shabbat morning:

- o Blessings for the Aliyah to the Torah
- o Haftarah and its blessings
- o Maftir (last portion of Torah reading)
- o Ashrei and concluding hymns
- o Additional Torah reading
- o Kabbalat Shabbat (The Friday Night Service)
- o Psukei D'Zimra (The Preliminary Service)
- o Shacharit (Shabbat Morning Service)

## THE BIG DAY

The Shabbat morning service begins at 9:00AM. Please note that the other services have different starting times. Please be at the synagogue on time. Shabbat morning services are usually completed by noon. Our custom is that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family sits in the front section of the Sanctuary.

- **The Tallit Ceremony**

Our congregation is egalitarian and thus we encourage all our boys and girls to begin wearing a Tallit when they become B'nai Mitzvah. There is a Tallit ceremony at the service during which the parents will place a Tallit on their child's shoulders, followed by the child's recitation of the Blessing for Wearing the Tallit and the parents' recitation of the blessing of gratitude - Shehecheyanu.

### **She-He-Che-Ya-Nu**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁחַיֵּינוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-Nai e-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, she-he-che-ya-nu ve-ki-ye-ma-nu ve-hi-gi-a-nu laz-man ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this moment.

At the conclusion of this ceremony the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will ascend to the bima for the balance of the service and the parents will return to their seats.

- **Family Participation**

We encourage the members of the family to become involved but please remember the focus should be kept on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It is his/her special day. It does add to the special feelings of the day when members of the extended family participate in the Torah reading. Opportunities for family involvement include:

1. Post Bar/Bat Mitzvah – Reading Torah (please talk to Cantor Barnoy )
2. Pre Bar/Bat Mitzvah – Siblings can be called up to participate in Ein Keyloheynu or Adon Olam.
3. English readings at Shabbat Mincha or weekday Bar/Bat Mitzvahs.

For more information, please consult the Rabbis or the Cantor.

- **Traditions**

While we encourage you to provide kippot and head coverings for your guests, in order to maintain consistency, the office has the display materials needed. We print a Shabbat brochure every Shabbat that includes all pertinent information relating to both the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as well as the Shabbat service.

## **DEDICATION OPPORTUNITIES TO HONOR THIS OCCASION**

In the spirit of Mitzvot, it is customary to make a donation in honor of the Simcha. For more information, contact the synagogue office.

- **Haftarah Scroll**

Our synagogue commissioned the writing of a beautiful Haftarah scroll which is on display in the lobby and is read by the congregation every Shabbat and Holiday. It is a wonderful opportunity to mark your child's simcha by dedicating a word, a verse or the entire Haftarah that your child will chant.

- **Tree of Life**

The Tree of Life, located in the Gallery, is for joyful events. It is a way to remember the day in a permanent way. Think how meaningful it will be for your child to be able to see his/her name on a leaf on the tree in the years to come. There are both small and large leaves available, as well as rocks beneath the tree, which are available for sponsorship.

- **Brick in the Early Childhood Center**

Create a lasting legacy of your family's connection to Temple Beth Sholom with the purchase of an engraved brick for the Courtyard in our new Early Childhood and Lifelong Learning Center.

- **Tzedakah (Charity)**

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrates your child's entrance into Jewish religious responsibility in many ways. By means of his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, your child will express his/her involvement in the other areas of Jewish responsibility such as Tzedakah – the Jew's responsibility for the welfare of people. We encourage your child to use his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah as an opportunity to support a worthwhile cause of your child's choosing. The cause and amount should be a family decision.

## KAVOD – DECORUM

### SPECIAL REMINDERS AND HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS SAFEGUARDING THE DIGNITY OF THE SERVICE

We are very proud of the warm, friendly and inspiring atmosphere that we have created in our synagogue. The most important aspect of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience is what takes place in the Temple at the service. It is certainly appropriate to celebrate the happy event with a festive social gathering. However, we encourage you to seek ways to incorporate the religious message of the moment in the social celebration.

Care must be taken that the social event does not overshadow the religious event itself. As part of your child's religious education we seek to impart a sense of values which reflect Judaism's rich heritage. We try from the beginning to inculcate the ability to distinguish between what is essential and what is trivial, between the essentials in life and the merely glittering. We would like to partner with you in helping us transmit to your child the values inherent in the ceremony and rituals rather than the party celebration. We encourage you to combine your celebration with the transmission of lasting Jewish values.

#### **The following are certain things you can do to help us sustain this atmosphere, especially on Shabbat:**

1. Please remember that your Shabbat Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a feature of the regular Shabbat service. The regular service is the standard and your affair must conform to its guidelines and practices. Your sensitivity in this area will be appreciated.
2. To keep with Shabbat practices please refrain from bringing packages to the synagogue during Shabbat. Please advise your friends to bring gifts to you instead.
3. Photographing and videotaping are not permitted on the premises on Shabbat. Families may choose to have professional photographs taken in the sanctuary either during the week before or after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please arrange a mutually convenient time to do this with your tutor to schedule a one-hour photo session. Your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor or a member of the clergy must be present if you need the Ark opened.
4. The use of cellphones is prohibited on Shabbat. Please advise your guests that in case of emergency they should speak to our ushers who will direct them to a phone in the synagogue office.
5. Please advise all Jewish adult males that they will be required to wear a Tallit during our service. Adult Jewish women have the option of wearing a Tallit as well. In addition, all male guests must wear a kippah which are available at the entrance to the Sanctuary.
6. A Word About Modesty: Modesty is always in good taste at Temple. To help us preserve the dignity of synagogue worship, you and your friends are urged to dress appropriately. Strapless dresses and/or extremely short skirts are inappropriate during services. Jeans and sneakers are also inappropriate. We leave it up to you to use good judgment in selecting appropriate attire for the synagogue service.

## CATERING YOUR AFFAIR

Temple Beth Sholom is proud to recommend the services of our exclusive in-house caterer, Colbeh Caterers. Colbeh is available to help you plan your celebration. Colbeh can be contacted at the synagogue at (516) 801-0800. Please remember that those planning to have a Shabbat Mincha Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a Rosh Chodesh Sunday Bar/Bat Mitzvah or a special Holiday Bar/Bat Mitzvah are obligated to have a Colbeh affair at the synagogue. You are encouraged to speak to Colbeh as soon as possible as dates fill up quickly. The affair with Colbeh Caterers must be booked at least 18 months in advance. The Caterer has the right to book an event if they have not received a booking in this time period.

- **Kashrut and Shabbat Observance**

We strongly encourage you to affirm the spirit and traditions of our people as you decide on the particulars of your affair. The appropriate collation at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be Kosher. Your affair should not require your guests to violate Shabbat by having to travel unnecessarily to an off-premise location following the service.

- **How to plan your Kiddush at TBS**

Contact the main office for catering offerings, prices and room set-up.

## THE NEXT STEP...AFTER THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH

### **Makom - “the place” for teens to forge their own identity.**

You’ve worked hard to accomplish the skills necessary to be called for an aliyah to the Torah as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. When you have finished, you breathe a sigh of relief and say to yourself, “Whew, that’s done!” But are you really “done”? Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah actually marks the **beginning** of your adult Jewish journey. What is it that awaits you **after** the Bar Mitzvah? At TBS, the continuation of your journey can be found in the Makom Hebrew High School, a three-part higher level of learning that is paired with hands-on social action and community service. The classes led in the Machon Beth Sholom Institute provide a solid foundation in the philosophy, ethics and values of Jewish living. It is an incredible opportunity to forge a close relationship with our clergy and our incredible staff. These class sessions morph into ACTIV8! offering hands on social action and community involvement. Madrichim training brings a more precise and focused involvement into our own religious school community. There is something for everyone in Makom whether it is Torah discussions or social action or becoming a madrich - it’s up to you to choose **your Jewish path...**

### A NOTE FROM THE TBS OFFICE

1. Please make sure that your account is in good standing.
2. The required Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee check w office for current fees

All dues, school tuitions and fees must be paid up within six months of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please contact our Executive Director, Donna Bartolomeo to discuss your account at 621-2288 x113 or **[dbartolomeo@tbsroslyn.org](mailto:dbartolomeo@tbsroslyn.org)**. This fee covers the normal teaching and preparation necessary for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child.

3. For Havdalah and any Weekday service, this fee covers the necessary extra maintenance facility costs.
4. To beautify your day... Bima flowers (fresh flowers): \$180