

**CONGREGATION HAR SHALOM
BAR/BAT MITZVAH MANUAL**

**A Guide to Becoming
Bar or Bat Mitzvah
at
Congregation Har Shalom
Potomac, Maryland**

Revised 2004

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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

Shalom.¹

Mazal tov on reaching this important stage in the Jewish life cycle when your child is poised at the brink of Jewish adulthood and you and s/he are looking forward to the celebration of your child's upcoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Bar/Bat Mitzvah is both an enormously rewarding and soul satisfying experience and at times one that can be fraught with some anxiety.

As a result, Har Shalom has developed this manual to help our families to plan and experience a beautiful and moving celebration, one that will create a lasting impression on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and family. It is our hope that this simḥa will inspire you and serve as a springboard for increased Jewish communal involvement and meaningful Jewish living.

What does it mean to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Halachically, according to Jewish law, a child becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah automatically at the age of thirteen without benefit of ceremony or celebration. At the tender age of thirteen a Jewish child becomes obligated to fulfill his/her responsibilities as a Jew.

In our modern world, we no longer send our thirteen year olds off to apprentice to acquire a trade or profession, nor do we marry them off. Instead, a modern Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration offers the family, the child, and the congregation an opportunity to recognize this important milestone in Jewish life. The contemporary Bar/Bat Mitzvah enables our children to demonstrate their acquired skills which are necessary for full participation as an adult member of the congregation. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah empowers the family to affirm its connection with the Jewish past and to proclaim its commitment to a Jewish future. Through it we proclaim our desire to maintain a tradition that we have inherited, and our expectation that the child will carry on that tradition for future generations.

The heart of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the young person's demonstration of a variety of skills that mark him/her as ready to assume adult responsibilities. First time families will marvel at the incredible and immediate spike of self confidence that follows their child's completion of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. It may sound corny but, this experience is truly transformative for the child and the entire family.

What is the role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Family in the Service?

At Har Shalom, the child is welcomed into the congregation at a communal service. The service is not designed around the Bar/Bat Mitzvah; instead the Bar/Bat Mitzvah assumes a variety of roles in an established, traditional service—roles that a child will be able to repeat through participation in future services throughout his/her life. These roles often include reading from the Torah, chanting the Haftarah, leading prayers or a reading of the service and delivering a d'var Torah. In this way the child begins a journey directed at lifelong participation in Jewish communal life.

What's in this manual?

Part 2 of the manual, "Planning for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Simḥa", provides a timeline to assist you in understanding the various milestones that your child is expected to achieve throughout the process leading up to the celebration of your child's becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It is also designed to guide you in completing the Bar/Bat Mitzvah questionnaire, which is a prerequisite to scheduling the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and date. For example, it includes a brief description of those religious services that you may choose for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and the policies that govern scheduling decisions. In addition, it outlines our educational requirements, and a summary of the financial obligations associated with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

¹ "Shalom" is the Hebrew word for "welcome." We have provided a glossary in the Appendix to this manual to translate Hebrew and Yiddish words that appear in this guide, such as "Bar Mitzvah", "Bat Mitzvah" and "B'nai Mitzvah."

Part 3 of the manual, "Preparing Your Child," describes the requisite skills expected of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, how they are taught, and the vital role of parents in the learning process.

The remaining sections of the manual will become increasingly valuable as the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony draws closer. Part 4, "Role in the Service," provides a detailed description of the role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family in the service of choice. Part 5, "Guide to Participation," reviews expectations for those participating in the service. Finally, Part 6, "Rules, Customs, and Community" describes the context for the religious service: the applicable rules and community expectations.

We know that no text can answer all your questions, and we urge you to consult with any of the people listed in the manual supplement for additional information. Another source of support is our "Buddy Program." During the 12-18 month period prior to your simḥa, you can expect a call from a Bar/Bat Mitzvah parent offering to assist you in your planning based on his/her recent experience. If you have any concerns about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program and are not sure to whom you can turn, please call the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee Chairperson who is prepared to assist you.

PART 2: PLANNING FOR THE SIMHA

First things first; a typical schedule of events

You will have many things to think of, to plan for, and to worry about; but the experience of other families that have preceded you can be used to your advantage. Not everything needs to be done at once. The accompanying table, "A Typical Schedule," can be used as a guide of what to do, and when to do it.²

A Typical Schedule

24 plus months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend planning meeting. • Begin using this manual to plan for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. • Complete the Bar/Bat Mitzvah questionnaire which is a prerequisite to scheduling a date. • Listen to your child read Hebrew and prayers. Seek help if you uncover any areas of weakness. • Consider taking course to enhance family participation. For example, Torah trop class to learn or refresh Torah reading skills.
12-18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Shabbat services regularly as a family. • Begin work on Rabbis' or Hazzan's Award. • Continue to listen to and assess your child's reading of Hebrew and prayers. • Notify the Hazzan's office of child's summer plans. • Plan for celebration events; if using Har Shalom, reserve space..
9-12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Orientation Program and skills classes (students and parents). • First family meeting with Rabbi. • Contact Sisterhood catering VP to arrange to assist in kitchen to prepare Kiddush after Shabbat morning services. • Contact Ushering coordinator to schedule ushering at Shabbat morning services. • Begin attending Bar/Bat Mitzvah University (BBMU).
6-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Hazzan to schedule tutoring and review participation of child and other family members. • Continue BBMU program. • Review Torah and Haftarah reading with child in English. • Expect to receive Sisterhood catering information and contract to plan for Kiddush following services. • Fulfill obligations to work in kitchen and usher in sanctuary.
3-4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and assist child by listening to Torah and Haftarah readings. • Prepare outline of Torah and Haftarah readings and notes for Bar/Bat Mitzvah d'var Torah. • Sign and return contract for Sisterhood-catered Kiddush. • Second joint meeting for families with shared Bar/Bat Mitzvah with Hazzan or Rabbi. • Arrange for flowers for sanctuary or select Har Shalom's silk flowers

² We have chosen not to include a timeline for party planning for several reasons. First, the timing can vary widely depending on the season/time of year of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah and the size and nature of the celebration that you are planning. For example, a Bar/Bat Mitzvah that is scheduled during prime prom, wedding or holiday party seasons may require more advance planning than one scheduled in a less popular "party" season. Second, some families feel most comfortable when plans are made far in advance, while others may have a more relaxed approach or may not yet have a clear idea of the type of celebration they would like to plan. We suggest that you consult friends and/or other congregants who have recently planned a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration for guidance as to how early you need to plan for a party location, entertainment, catering, decorations, etc. Helping in the kitchen can also be a great source of information for planning.

6-8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Assistant Rabbi to select topic and begin work on child's d'var Torah • Consider twinning and other Tzedakah options • Continue to support and assist child by listening to Torah and Haftarah readings • Encourage research and writing of d'var Torah • Parent or sibling preparation or practice of prayers, Torah, d'var or other selected roles • Inform out of town family and friends of assigned roles and provide tapes, text, etc to allow them to practice; encourage Torah lifter to practice in his/her own synagogue.
2-3 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the Senior Rabbi: Bring draft of Bar/Bat Mitzvah d'var Torah, Bar/Bat Mitzvah family questionnaire, and list of those you wish to honor at services. The meeting will review these items. • Consider gifts to Har Shalom; order leaf on Megillat Simḥa, select books, etc. • Meet with Executive Director to go over final details. • Send in final information and payment for Sisterhood Kiddush
1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearsal with Hazzan.
week of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver kippot, candy, and other items to Har Shalom before Shabbat.

Which services can be chosen?

The family may indicate their preference of the religious service at which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be celebrated. At that service, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child will play a central role, including delivering a d'var Torah and chanting Torah and/or Haftarah. We call that service the central service, to distinguish it from other services in that same time period in which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah may be invited to participate.

While the following descriptions identify the key differences among the services that are available for celebrating a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the best way to decide what service will work best for your child and family is to attend these services and consider the different opportunities offered for participation by each of them.

In Part 4: "Role in the Service", we delineate the opportunities for participation by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and family in greater detail. This section should also be consulted before selecting a preferred service. The chart on page 23 provides a visual guide to service highlights.

Shabbat morning

This is the most commonly chosen service for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

- The service is comprised of three parts—Shaharit, Torah service and Musaf—and lasts about three hours. While the Torah service, which includes the reading of the Torah and Haftarah, provides the principal opportunity for family participation, children and families who are willing and able to learn are encouraged to participate in other parts of the service, such as leading the P'sukei D'Zimra, Shaharit or the Torah service. The Musaf service is ordinarily led by the Hazzan.

The Torah service:

- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah must chant the Haftarah and at least one Torah reading.
- We encourage the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to have a greater participation by leading the Torah service if s/he is comfortable and proficient. Family members can participate by learning to chant a Torah reading.
- Most of the "honors" associated with the Torah service are available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and to assign to family and guests.

Shabbat afternoon (Minḥa/Ma'ariv/Havdalah):

This service is a combination of the afternoon service (Minḥa), at which time the Torah is read; a brief evening service (Ma'ariv); and Havdalah, the ceremony marking the end of Shabbat. The service lasts about

an hour and a quarter. While the Torah service provides the principal opportunities for family participation, additional participation by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and family in other parts of the service is always welcome. The Minḥa Torah service includes:

- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah chants three readings from the Torah scroll. No Haftarah is chanted. (Since the Torah scroll contains neither vowels nor musical accents, more preparation is required for chanting from the Torah than chanting a Haftarah.)
- All of the "honors" associated with the Torah service are available to family and guests.

The Shabbat Minḥa service starting time varies throughout the year based on the time of sunset. The service starts one half-hour before sunset, rounded to the closest quarter hour. The Minḥa service can be scheduled one hour earlier to allow the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to serve a seudah shlishit (a light meal) in the Gathering Hall. After about one hour, everyone returns to the sanctuary for the concluding Ma'ariv/Havdalah service. Before you make any plans on this option, you must consult with the Senior Rabbi.

Weekday morning (Sunday-Friday morning)

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah may be celebrated at any service at which the Torah is read, which occurs on the morning of all of the following days:

- Monday or Thursday
- The first days of a Hebrew month (Rosh Hodesh)
- Hanukah

Families often choose to schedule a weekday Bar/Bat Mitzvah on a secular holiday such as Labor Day, Thanksgiving or Memorial Day. Weekday services last about one and one-half hours (based on the occasion). Unlike a Shabbat service, during which only Tallit is worn, Tallit and T'fillin are worn by both men and women during a weekday service.

As with the other services described, the Torah service provides the principal opportunities for family participation:

- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah chants three readings from the Torah scroll. No Haftarah is chanted. (Since the Torah scroll contains neither vowels nor musical accents, more preparation is required for chanting from the Torah than chanting a Haftarah.)
- All of the "honors" associated with the Torah service are available to family and guests.
- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah or his/her family may lead other parts of the service.

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel

Har Shalom sponsors an annual summer trip to Israel, accompanied by one of our clergy, during which a Bar/Bat Mitzvah may be celebrated. We can arrange Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies there at other times as well, possibly with a Har Shalom clergy member. If you are interested in a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel please contact the Rabbis' office two years in advance.

In addition to celebrating in Israel, every Har Shalom Bar/Bat Mitzvah receives an aliyah to the Torah at a congregational service. Anyone celebrating in Israel is called to the Torah after returning. This can occur as a regular Bar/Bat Mitzvah or on a Shabbat when another Bar/Bat Mitzvah is already scheduled. Those celebrating B'nai Mitzvah in Israel are expected to learn at least one Torah reading. Other opportunities for participating in the service or Torah reading can be scheduled through the Hazzan's office.

How is the date selected?

Har Shalom will select the date for your Bar/Bat Mitzvah based on a number of factors: Har Shalom policy, the availability of the Har Shalom sanctuary and social hall, your wishes regarding a private reception, and other considerations unique to your family. *Your preferences in these matters must be communicated to*

Har Shalom by returning the questionnaire, that has been provided to you, in a timely manner. Some of the factors used in selecting the date are discussed here.

Har Shalom Policy

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony will be scheduled as close as possible to your child's 13th birthday based on the Jewish calendar. (A birthday anniversary on the Jewish calendar may be as much as a month apart from the birthday on the secular calendar.) The scheduled date may follow the birthday date by several weeks due to conflicts with religious holidays or other Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, but may precede the birthday date at the Congregation's discretion and only on rare occasions.

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah may be a single -- only one Bar/Bat Mitzvah child -- or a shared, or double. If a shared ceremony is scheduled, an attempt will be made to match children with similar abilities and families with compatible plans for the Congregational Kiddush following services.

Only a limited number of ceremonies are scheduled during services other than Shabbat morning. The considerations for scheduling such services include priority for families who contract to use Har Shalom's social hall for their private reception.

Har Shalom is an egalitarian congregation which treats boys and girls equally in scheduling B'nai Mitzvah; a child's gender has no effect either on priority for a particular service, or in the selection of partners for a shared ceremony.

Since many aspects of congregational life center around the Shabbat morning service, there may be a speaker or special activity scheduled at the same service. If this should be the case with your child's ceremony, you will be informed well in advance.

Meals and Receptions

Two kinds of meals often accompany a Bar/Bat Mitzvah: a Kiddush held for the entire Congregation attending the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony; and, in addition, an optional private reception for friends and relatives. Both may need to be considered in scheduling a date.

The Kiddush

A Kiddush always follows Shabbat morning services at Har Shalom and all who attend services, whether visitors or congregants, share the same food. The Kiddush can range from a fairly simple buffet of cookies, cakes and gefilte fish to an elaborate, traditional, sit down lunch. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family(ies) are responsible for sponsoring the congregational Kiddush. (The Kiddush following a Shabbat morning service is often called an Oneg.)

Catering options for the Kiddush and optional private reception at Har Shalom

Two forms of kosher catering are permitted for a Kiddush: Sisterhood or an outside commercial caterer.

If you choose to hold a private reception at Har Shalom, either a luncheon following the Kiddush, a private evening party, a family Shabbat dinner, a Sunday brunch or casual children's party, it will be necessary to engage a commercial caterer who meets Har Shalom's kashrut requirements. The East and/or West sides of the Social Hall and other congregational spaces are available for these events.³

Sisterhood. Har Shalom's Sisterhood offers a professional catering service for a Kiddush on Shabbat morning. Sisterhood offers a full range of choices and also provides customized services.

A general description of Sisterhood's services will be presented by our Executive Director at one of the sessions of the Orientation Program conducted during the year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah (and can also be obtained from Sisterhood's Vice President for catering who is listed in the Har Shalom directory and in the

³ The date you are assigned may be influenced by the nature of your Kiddush and optional private reception plans.

supplement to this Manual). Approximately 5-6 months before your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you will receive a mailing from Sisterhood with information pertaining to the catering service, including contracts and price lists.

Commercial. You also have the option of using a commercial caterer as long as that caterer has been approved in advance by Har Shalom as someone who meets our standard of Kashrut (Kosher) observance. A list of approved caterers is included in the supplement to this manual, but you should double check with the synagogue office to see if there have been any recent changes to the list. The caterer is responsible for arranging for sufficient quantities of food for all congregants and guests and to provide the variety of food required by Har Shalom policy. In most cases, Sisterhood will provide the hallah, grape juice and wine which will be billed to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family.

Kitchen coordination

The kitchen may not be used by more than one caterer, either commercial or Sisterhood, at any given time. For this reason and to avoid conflicting use of the kitchen by different caterers, the Executive Director and Sisterhood's VP of Catering must be kept informed of your catering plans. Should your plans change at any time, please consult with the Executive Director immediately to ensure that your revised plans can be accommodated within our schedule of activities.

The optional private reception

Families often wish to celebrate with their guests immediately following the Kiddush or in the evening or next day following the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. The celebration of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a festive occasion and often brings together widely separated families and friends. These celebrations can range from a very small, informal party to a large and lavish event. While it is often difficult to mesh the spirituality of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service with the frivolity of a party, we encourage families to strive for a balance and to incorporate religious or spiritual elements into the party. For example, when the party is held on a Saturday night, many families commence the party with a short and lovely Havdalah service. Another common idea is to create centerpieces that are donated to charitable organizations. For example, congregants have created food baskets, books and toy baskets for needy children, etc. Other congregants, the clergy and staff can provide ideas to enhance your party.

Congregants are encouraged to make use of Har Shalom's facilities which enables them to enhance the simḥa by minimizing travel and offering kosher food. However, wherever the celebration is held you can significantly heighten the Jewishness of the event, regardless of the nature of your personal observance, by making kippot available, by serving a kosher meal, preceding it with the recitation of hamotzi, and following it with the recitation of Birkat Hamazon (grace). Many families choose to invite the Rabbis and Hazzan to the reception. They may accept, provided that it does not require riding on Shabbat, that all guests are served only kosher food, and that it does not conflict with other obligations.

A number of books provide guidance on infusing spiritual elements into a party. You may find the following resource materials (which are available in the library) helpful in planning:

Davis, Whose Bar/Bat Mitzvah Is It Anyway, A Guide for Parents Through the Family Rite of Passage

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

Olitzky & Isaacs, Rediscovering Judaism: Bar and Bat Mitzvah for Adults

Rossel & Cutter, A Spiritual Journal: The Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Handbook

Salkin, Putting G-d on the Guest List: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah, 2d ed

Is attendance at Har Shalom's religious school necessary?

In order to celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Har Shalom, a child must have completed at least four years of approved religious schooling and have satisfied the Youth Services attendance requirements set by the Religious School. Furthermore, if the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is to be held during the school year, the child must be in attendance throughout that school year. In addition, in order to assure that our children will be prepared to learn and perform at an accomplished level the tasks expected of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah child,

the Religious School has established minimum standards and skills tests that will be administered on a regular basis to determine whether each child is on track or requires tutoring or remedial lessons. Parents will be contacted so that remediation can be provided. This program is designed to provide early intervention so that each child can expect to be fully prepared by the time of his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

The educational programs of Har Shalom's religious school and of Jewish Day School are approved programs of study; any other program must be individually approved by the Har Shalom Educational Director. If a child's educational background or skills are inadequate, it may nevertheless be possible to qualify for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Har Shalom if the family provides for special tutoring by an approved tutor and agrees to an educational program that may continue beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year. In all such special cases, early consultation with the Har Shalom Educational Director is essential.

Har Shalom's educational curriculum is carefully structured to provide your child with sufficient practice in all the skill areas necessary for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Regular attendance at all sessions of the Religious School is necessary to guarantee that a student derive full benefit from the program.

What are the cost factors?

This section summarizes and explains the fees, expenses, and other financial obligations that are associated with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Please consult the Supplement to this manual which is updated on an annual basis and can be downloaded from the Har Shalom website for the most up-to-date information on the amount and payment schedule for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee and Har Shalom facility fees. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is locked in as of the date of the initial payment.

Standard fees and expenses

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is a fixed fee charged to the parents of all B'nai Mitzvah. This fee is not a payment for specific services rendered by the Congregation; rather, it makes it possible for Har Shalom to maintain all of the programs and services that relate to Bar/Bat Mitzvah (e.g., clergy, janitorial services, utilities, office staff time, Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring program, Bar/Bat Mitzvah materials, prayer books).

Sanctuary Fee. A sanctuary fee is charged when a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is celebrated at a service that is not regularly scheduled in the Har Shalom sanctuary. These include: Shabbat afternoon (Minḥa/Ma'ariv/Havdalah) and weekday morning services. Part of this fee can be applied against the facility fee, if you schedule your private reception at Har Shalom. There is no sanctuary fee for services on Shabbat morning.

For B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies on legal holidays an additional fee is charged for opening the building.

Congregational Kiddush. As indicated earlier, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family(ies) are responsible for sponsoring the congregational Kiddush which always follows morning services on Shabbat or Yom Tov. This charge covers the cost of the Kiddush for the entire Congregation attending the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, including all guests and congregants who regularly attend Shabbat services. An estimate of the number of congregants who regularly attend services and are likely to be present on a typical Shabbat can be found in the Supplement to the Manual. Others congregants celebrating simḥas on your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date are responsible for paying for their guests.

Optional private reception

For receptions held at Har Shalom there are two additional cost factors: a security deposit and a guard fee. The security deposit is required prior to the reception and will be applied to unanticipated costs arising from misuse of the facilities, vandalism, and unauthorized use of telephones. The guard fee covers the cost of a security guard, required to be present during all private receptions held in the Har Shalom social hall. A minimum guard fee, covering four hours of guard service, is required prior to the reception; the fee for any additional guard service will be billed following the event.

There will also be a Mashgiach fee charged whenever the kitchen is used.

Har Shalom payment requirements (see supplement for current fees)

You are required to be current in all your financial synagogue obligations (including dues, building fund, tuition, and all special fees and expenses as outlined above). Unless you are current, a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date will not be scheduled for your child, you may not contract to use synagogue facilities, schedule Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring or celebrate the Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the synagogue. If you become delinquent following the scheduling of the date and do not bring your account current or arrange for payments satisfactory to the Financial Secretary, your child's date and all related activities will be suspended.

A reservation fee is billed at the time the child's date is assigned. One half of both the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee and (if applicable) the special Sanctuary fee, is due on July 1 of the year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The balance is due on July 1 of the year of the child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Due dates for the bill for the Congregational Kiddush are established by the commercial caterer or Sisterhood, as applicable.

One half of the rental fee for your private reception (e.g., for the Social Hall and kitchen) is due at the time the contract is signed; the balance of the payment is due two months before the event.

Fees for optional expenses related to the use of the kitchen or Social Hall will be estimated and charged prior to the event. (e.g., table setup for the Congregational Kiddush, Mashgiah fees, and fees for the use of dishes and utensils). These fees will be reconciled and either charged or refunded at the end of the month following the event.

How can the service be enriched?

There are several ways in which you can add to the meaning of the service. Some of the available options are described in this section.

Family Participation

Involving the family in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service demonstrates to the child the importance of the religious service as the primary event being celebrated. Siblings can learn a new prayer or read Torah. This is also a wonderful opportunity for parents to learn new skills. Many parents choose to learn (or brush up on) how to read Torah trop so that they can read a Torah reading at their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service or better assist their child in practicing his/her Torah reading(s). Har Shalom offers many adult education classes, including Torah trop, prayers and a learners service that can enrich the parent's experience in celebrating a child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Private tutoring is also available for parents.

Acts of Tzedakah

Parents are encouraged to express their thankfulness for the occasion through an act of tzedakah, some of which are appropriate for mention or presentation at the service. One notable tzedakah, singled out by our Board of Directors, is Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger; arrangements to contribute to Mazon can be made with our Rabbis. The Rabbi, Hazzan, or Executive Director can offer additional suggestions in keeping with the family's interests.

Twinning

Twinning With a Child Who Perished in the Holocaust

"Twinning" refers to the symbolic adoption of a child who was unable to celebrate his/her own Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The adoption is made public by the presentation of a certificate to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah during the service. In recent years, the adopted twin has been a child who perished in the Holocaust, arranged by an organization called Friends of the Holocaust. Other twinning opportunities may be available. You can arrange for twinning by contacting the Rabbis' secretary.

Twinning With a Disabled Child in Israel

Another twinning option is made available through the Masorti Movement (Conservative movement in Israel) and the Cantor's Assembly which offer a program that matches the Bar or Bat Mitzvah with a disabled child in Israel. Information can be obtained from the Hazzan or by contacting masorti@masorti.org.

There are many other twinning opportunities. Please contact the clergy for information.

Decorations and Candy

The family may provide decorations for the Ark Bimha (2 floral arrangements) and Social Hall in the form of flowers or plants. The family may also wish to provide candy to be showered upon the Bar/Bat Mitzvah during the service, in recognition of the sweetness and joy of the occasion. Only wrapped soft Kosher candies, such as Sunkist Gels, may be thrown. They may be covered with netting or other similar material, but should not be bundled together. *Decorations and candy must be delivered to the synagogue by 1 p.m. on Friday before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.*

PART 3: PREPARING YOUR CHILD

The responsibility for a meaningful Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is shared by Har Shalom and the family. In this section we discuss Har Shalom's responsibility of providing for your child's education and training, and the family's vital role in becoming actively involved with the training program.

How are skills taught?

Hebrew school: Har Shalom's program for group instruction

More than skills. The primary role of the Har Shalom Religious School is to familiarize your child with significant aspects of our Jewish heritage; a secondary role is to train your child in particular skills used in Congregational services. Because it is only the skills that are on display at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, we might think that acquiring those skills is the culmination of Jewish education. That is clearly not so. Becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah means also being familiar with traditional beliefs, the meaning and observance of Shabbat, the rationale and practice of Kashrut, Jewish sacred writings, the basis and observance of Jewish holidays, contemporary Jewish issues, and the content of Jewish prayer. By the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we hope to have established a foundation for further study and participation in increasingly adult-oriented activities of the Jewish community. The display of synagogue skills should therefore not be viewed as a symbol of completion, but of beginning. It demonstrates that your child has mastered the basics, and is prepared to continue a lifetime of Jewish learning and living.

But what does Har Shalom do to prepare your child for the skills that will be demonstrated at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service? Following are highlights of our program.

Schedule for teaching skills. Throughout our Religious School program, students learn skills relating to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. These include:

- Hebrew reading, Hebrew comprehension, prayer skills (chanting and comprehension of central prayers), study of Torah, Torah and Haftarah trop.
- The progress that students make in acquiring Bar/Bat Mitzvah skills is monitored within our Religious School. Students who have not reached the desired proficiency level are given individual lessons within the school, wherever possible. When necessary, the academic strengths and weaknesses of students will be discussed in meetings of parents with the Educational Director and the Hazzan.
- In addition, in order to assure that our children will be prepared to learn and perform at an accomplished level the tasks expected of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah child, the Religious School has established minimum standards and skills tests that will be administered on a regular basis to determine whether each child is on track or requires tutoring or remedial lessons. Parents will be contacted so that extra lessons can be provided. This program is designed to provide early intervention so that each child can expect to be fully prepared by the time of his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

Tutors: Har Shalom's program for individual instruction

Tutoring schedule. The synagogue will provide approximately six months of individual lessons before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date (anticipated vacations are taken into consideration). Approximately 12-18 months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, parents are contacted by the Hazzan's office to arrange a meeting, at which time a program of individual instruction will be established. Instruction consists of four months of lessons with a teenage tutor, and the final two months with an adult tutor.

During the final weeks, your child will have the opportunity to rehearse his/her participation in the service under the guidance of the Hazzan or one of the adult tutors. This is also a good time for the family to discuss their plans for participation by family members and friends with the Hazzan. The Hazzan can then inform the family what opportunities are available and what level of preparation will be necessary.

Missed tutoring lessons. It is important to communicate your child's schedule to the Hazzan's office well in advance. If, for example, your child will be away during any part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah training period (typically for summer camp or a long vacation), the Hazzan will need to build that time into the tutoring schedule. If your child misses a lesson, a makeup lesson may be scheduled, but only if the instructor was given adequate advance notification of the absence.

Material covered in individual tutoring lessons. The material covered in these lessons is prioritized and taught sequentially; a student must demonstrate proficiency in each skill before the student is allowed to begin learning the next skill set. The material, in priority order, consists of the following:

- Review of basic Jewish skills with which all B'nai Mitzvah should be familiar, including Hebrew reading, prayers and Torah trop (and Haftarah trop for Shabbat morning). Some, but not all, of the prayers your child has learned (or re-learns at this time) may be chanted by him/her during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend.
- Preparation of the youth's specific Torah and Haftarah reading and associated blessings.
- Optionally, additional Torah readings, and/or preparation to lead parts of the service. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is encouraged to do as much as s/he is able and interested in doing. At the first meeting with the Rabbis/Hazzan or at any later time that the child expresses an interest, s/he should inform the Hazzan as early as possible of any particular prayers in the service that s/he would like to be permitted to lead. Of course, a Bar/Bat Mitzvah will only chant or lead prayers that have been adequately learned.

In addition, each child delivers a d'var Torah in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. The Assistant Rabbi will assist in clarifying the Torah reading, choosing a message and reviewing the d'var Torah. (In the case of a shared Bar/Bat Mitzvah, this may be a d'var Haftarah with a message taken from the morning's Haftarah reading.) The Hazzan is prepared to assist as well, including at least one rehearsal. Others on the Har Shalom staff, particularly the librarian, are also available to assist, but the d'var Torah is intended to be primarily the product of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's own efforts. (See "D'var Torah or D'var Haftarah by Bar/Bat Mitzvah" in Part 5 for additional comments on the d'var Torah.) Parents can be especially helpful in assisting the child's confidence in delivering the d'var Torah by offering several rehearsal opportunities at home.

Quality Control. To ensure that the tutoring program is proceeding at the expected pace and that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is acquiring the necessary proficiency, the Hazzan regularly supervises the tutoring lessons and tutors.

Reports to Parents. Status meetings are regularly scheduled with the Hazzan to review your child's progress.

Homework. As with their school studies, homework is critical to acquiring proficiency and ensuring that the child will feel successful at his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah. As a result, during the period of individual instruction, it is important that the student devote a minimum of 20 minutes per day at home to studying trop, Torah/Haftarah chanting, and prayers. Most of the reinforcement of skills and learning of Torah/Haftarah readings occurs during these home-study sessions. It is critical to the child's success that parents and students take seriously the responsibility for the student to study regularly and conscientiously. Parents play a critical role in ensuring that their child is on track by monitoring and encouraging their child.

Study Materials. The Congregation provides materials that assist the child in his/her studies. These include:

- A CD of basic Bar/Bat Mitzvah skills, with accompanying booklet.
- Translations and commentaries of pertinent scriptural readings (Torah and Haftarah readings).
- A Haftarah booklet (if needed).
- Other materials, as needed.
- Software will also be made available for purchase or rental that will assist the child in learning the trop and applying the trop to his/her Torah and Haftarah readings.

Children are provided with a siddur at the Third Grade Consecration. We encourage families to use these to prepare for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony or to purchase additional copies from the synagogue office or

from a Jewish bookstore. It is important that humashim and siddurim belonging to Har Shalom not be removed from the sanctuary, chapel or other location or be borrowed for study purposes as they are intended for use by the Congregation at services. It is also important to impress upon your child that these are sacred texts and should be treated with respect.

Youth Services

Attendance at Har Shalom's Youth Services is an important component of Har Shalom's Religious School education and offers an excellent opportunity for children in grades 3-6 to become familiar with the Shabbat morning service, and to put into practice the skills learned in Religious School. Children who regularly attend the Youth Services are much more likely to be comfortable with the service, and confident in their abilities than would otherwise be the case; we strongly encourage that the family make use of this opportunity. Youth Services are held on the first and third Shabbat of each month.

Special Awards

A student's superior performance and commitment is recognized in a variety of ways:

Rabbis' Award. The Rabbis' Award is an optional program for students who will be continuing their religious education beyond Bar/Bat Mitzvah. To complete the program, a child must successfully complete thirteen "mitzvot" projects intended to deepen both his/her understanding of the role of mitzvot in Jewish life, and his/her commitment to the practice of Judaism. If the program (which includes a personal interview by an Award Committee) is successfully completed, the Award is presented during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. The Award will be explained to your child in more detail by the Hazzan and/or the Rabbis.

Hazzan's Award: The Hazzan's Award is an optional program for students who demonstrate interest in mastering some of the skills necessary to become a (prayer leader). To earn this award, the student, starting any time before becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah, must independently acquire the skills necessary to lead a variety of prayer services. If the program is successfully completed, the Award is presented at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. As with the Rabbi's Award, the program will be explained to your child in more detail by the Hazzan and/or the Rabbis.

Presentation of a Tikun. A student who reads seven or more verses from the Torah at his/her simha, and who makes a commitment to become a regular Torah reader for the Congregation (including scheduling five Torah readings over the next 12 months), and continue his/her Jewish education, is presented with a tikun (the book used to help prepare for the reading of the Torah). In addition, after reading Torah five times for the congregation, the teenager will be eligible to join the Yad Squad.

What can parents do to help?

Preparations for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony require a substantial amount of your child's time and effort, and may involve the rescheduling of other normal activities. Parents play an essential role in fostering a positive attitude by showing their continued support and enthusiasm for their child's Jewish studies, and by faithfully attending sessions of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah University Program. With the support of parents, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah can become a positive, creative, and authentic Jewish experience. Some suggestions follow.

Attend services regularly

Make synagogue attendance part of your family's normal weekend schedule. For several years before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, try to attend congregational and/or youth services as a family. This will enable your child to meet his/her Youth Services attendance requirement and become fluent in Hebrew prayers. In particular, for at least six months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, attend services of the regular congregation as a family. In addition to familiarizing you and your child with our service, traditions and melodies, you convey to your child the message that Jewish life is more important than just the celebration of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, and that the service as well as the Bar/Bat Mitzvah reception has meaning and value for you.

Encourage your child

You can help your child by taking an interest in the content of your child's studies and monitoring his/her progress. You can assist your child by listening regularly to rehearsals of prayers, his/her Torah and

Haftarah readings and his/her d'var Torah. Knowledge of the skills is not necessary for your participation. Your encouragement and willingness to listen are more important. Significantly, practicing in front of you and other family members will help your child to master the necessary skills and to gain the confidence to chant proficiently in front of the congregation. By listening and participating, you can help your child achieve fluency and comfort with the texts.

You can also support your child by allowing him/her to take on as much responsibility as possible and by taking on educational challenges yourselves. A child's upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah can be a wonderful opportunity for parents to show their support and interest by learning new skills. Har Shalom's adult education program offers a wide range of courses, including trop and Torah study.

Your support and interest can also be demonstrated by attending the following programs scheduled for Bar/Bat Mitzvah families and sessions of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah University:

- About two years in advance of your child's thirteenth birthday, a group meeting is held with the Executive Director, the Rabbis, and the Hazzan to explain the procedures for scheduling the ceremony. You will be asked to fill out a questionnaire to help the scheduling committee accommodate personal family preferences when they assign dates for your simha.
- Twelve to eighteen months before a shared Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the families will have a joint meeting with the Rabbi; for families with a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah, this meeting will be held nine to twelve months in advance.
- Starting about eight to ten months in advance of the ceremony, parents (with students) take part in sessions of the **Bar/Bat Mitzvah University** (BBMU). BBMU is an exciting new program that will be scheduled on 8 evenings throughout the school year.
- At least seven months in advance, a family meeting is held with the Hazzan to establish a program of individual instruction, and to discuss the family's participation in the service.
- Six to eight weeks in advance, a child/family meeting is held with the Assistant Rabbi to discuss the d'var Torah.
- Two to three weeks in advance, a family meeting is held with the Senior Rabbi, to review everyone's participation in the service.
- Two to three weeks in advance, a family meeting takes place with the Executive Director to review final details.
- During the final week, the Hazzan will conduct a rehearsal to review the participation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her immediate family in the service.

In addition, you may ask for meetings with any of our professional staff as you see the need.

Demonstrate concern for Jewish traditions

Perform Jewish Home Ceremonies You can assist your child's preparation by making Jewish home rituals part of your regular Shabbat observance. The ceremonies of Friday evening candle-lighting and Kiddush can be easily learned and integrated into your Friday night dinner and Shabbat observance. Adding these rituals to your home observance will increase your child's comfort in leading rituals during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Another lovely observance that marks the end of Shabbat is the Havdalah service. This service is both brief and beautiful and can be easily learned. You can give your child an opportunity to practice and lead these and other Jewish home rituals which will prepare him/her for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and increase his/her appreciation of Congregational gifts, such as the candlesticks or kiddush cup presented by Sisterhood.

These rituals and more will be taught as part of BBMU.

Provide Gifts Symbolizing Jewish Maturity

Kippah and tallit. Kippah and tallit are important ritual garments that are worn during Shabbat morning services. Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah is required to wear a head covering (kippah or hat) and tallit throughout the religious service. The tallit is presented to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child by the family at the beginning of

services. Although congregational kippot and tallitot are available at all services, most families prefer to provide the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with his/her own special kippah and tallit.

T'fillin. T'fillin are worn during weekday (Sunday-Friday morning) Shaharit services. The correct way to wrap, wear and care for t'fillin will be taught as part of the seventh grade curriculum at Har Shalom. This learning can be reinforced by attending weekday Shaharit services and wearing t'fillin (including Sundays).

While every Bar/Bat Mitzvah child should own t'fillin, and be familiar with their use, B'nai Mitzvah celebrating at a weekday morning service are required to wear t'fillin at the service. For a weekday Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, guests should be encouraged to bring their own t'fillin since the congregation owns only a limited number of t'fillin that are available for congregant use.

Yad. A yad (Torah pointer) must be used during the reading of the Torah. A yad owned by the congregation is always available for use during the Torah reading. However, many families use the occasion of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to present their child with a gift of a yad, to encourage the child's future participation as a Torah reader.

Shofar. While a shofar (ram's horn) is not usually a part of a child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony (except a weekday service in the month of Elul), some families choose to present their child with a shofar to encourage the child to participate as a shofar blower during our High Holy Day services.

Kippot, tallitot, t'fillin sets, yadiim and shofarot are available in our gift shop and in Jewish bookstores. (For more on the rules and customs associated with these gifts, see "Head Covering" and "Tallit and T'fillin" in Part 6.)

Provide needed supplies

Provide your child with a CD Player and other supplies that may be needed for his/her studies.

Involve the family in study

Some parents use the occasion of their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah to learn Torah reading skills themselves. The family effort can enhance the learning experience for all involved. Note that Har Shalom offers free instruction in Torah trop for adults, and parents have the opportunity to read from the Torah during the service.

What happens after Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be a beginning – a commencement of active committed involvement in Judaism and in the Jewish community. It is a milestone marking the start of one's individual place in the active Jewish community. Following his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a teenager can demonstrate his/her commitment to the Jewish community in the following ways:

- **Continuing Religious Education**

Continuation of religious education is perhaps the most important area of involvement for a post Bar/Bat Mitzvah teenager. Continued study can help assure that your child goes through life with more than a thirteen-year-old's understanding of Judaism, and thus is better equipped to meet the challenges that the modern world presents to a Jew. Continued study can unlock doors to our rich, multifaceted Jewish heritage. Har Shalom's Upper School programs, Keshet and Post-Keshet, offer an excellent curriculum taught by an outstanding staff, including our clergy, with courses designed to meet your child's needs and interests.

- **Synagogue Attendance**

Regular synagogue attendance after a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is an ideal way to demonstrate this commitment. Har Shalom has an active Shabbat Teen Congregation, which meets once a month, where teenagers engage in worship and make use of skills learned during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation period. Attendance at our regular Sunday, Monday or Thursday morning minyan provides an opportunity to use skills associated with the wearing of t'fillin.

- **Leadership Opportunities**

Many of our B'nai Mitzvah continue in the months and years beyond their ceremony as Torah readers for the congregation. By providing an email address to the Hazzan's office, the teenager will be placed on a regular mailing list which seeks volunteers for Torah reading assignments. A teenager can commit to as many or as few readings as s/he chooses and can also sign up to learn special trop for holidays such as Purim and Rosh Hashanah. In addition, by demonstrating special interest and mastery of skills, teenagers may be invited to become members of our Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring staff.

- **Youth Group Membership**

Involvement in Jewish youth groups provides an opportunity to build strong Jewish contacts and to develop leadership skills. Har Shalom, through its Kadima and United Synagogue Youth ("USY") groups, offers an exciting opportunity to provide for our children's religious, educational, cultural, and social needs. In addition, many teenagers participate in B'nai Brith Youth Organization, Young Judea, and Habonim which offer year-round programs and activities that can meet a variety of interests and preferences.

- **Israel Quest**

A peer Israel trip is considered one of the most important and long lasting ways to cement a teenager's Jewish identity into adulthood. Har Shalom, in partnership with the UJA Federation, encourages each of our teenagers to travel to Israel on an approved educational trip during the high school years by offering a significant financial contribution. By enrolling in Israel Quest at the time of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, teenagers have a unique opportunity to make a commitment to such a trip and receive significant subsidies.

- **Yad Squad**

All congregants are eligible to become members of the Yad Squad and to receive a beautiful Israeli yad after reading Torah for the congregation on five separate occasions.

PART 4: ROLE IN THE SERVICE

Introduction to the services

This section describes the participation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family in the central religious service celebrating the simḥa.

A question of balance

Har Shalom religious services are attended by a wide variety of congregants, friends and guests. Har Shalom strives to be responsive to all of their needs, including those of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family and to make Shabbat services meaningful to each of those attending. Our B'nai Mitzvah are encouraged to assume leadership roles in the service and their families are also offered opportunities to lead portions of the service and read from the Torah.

In order to preserve these goals it is important that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's participation be commensurate with his/her Jewish commitment, attitude, skill, and (when appropriate) musical talent. We stress the quality, not only the quantity of his/her participation, and expect that family members will prepare diligently as well, for any roles they wish to undertake.

The decision on the extent of participation by a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family will be made by the Rabbis and the Hazzan. There are three important considerations that will influence their decision:

- The participation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family must conform to a standard of quality and personal commitment that provides the Congregation a meaningful service.
- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family *share* in leading the congregation, leaving room for other family simḥas and participation.
- The service will not be lengthened or reconfigured to create extra parts.

Family and extended family are encouraged to read from the Torah. The family should discuss this participation at an early meeting with the Hazzan or Rabbi, well in advance of the simḥa. This advance planning will both afford the participants sufficient time to prepare and also prevent conflicts that might otherwise occur if the Congregation assigns portions to other readers.

Importance of preparation by guests

As discussed earlier, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will receive education and training to prepare for his/her role in the service. It is equally important for family members and other included guests to prepare for their assigned roles. To that end, the family honors that are described in this section should be assigned well in advance, and participants should be encouraged, as needed, to seek help in preparing for their parts, either from their own clergy or by contacting the Hazzan at Har Shalom. It is important for family honors to be rehearsed before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. This benefits not only the congregation, but also ensures the comfort of the participant and avoids embarrassment that may otherwise unnecessarily arise. Guidelines that may be of help to participants can be found in Part 5 of this manual, "Guide to Participation."

All participants and honorees in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service should be aware of and willing to abide by Har Shalom's ritual dress requirements; these pertain primarily to head coverings and wearing a tallit. A head covering is required for *both* men and women. Men are required and women are encouraged to wear a tallit for all honors.

The central service

The chart on the next page summarizes the involvement of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her family at the central service.

Participation by Bar/Bat Mitzvah & Family
(See text that follows for full explanation)

	Sat AM	Sat PM	Weekday AM
Tallit presentation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ark opening & closing during Torah removal (petiha)	3 people ¹	3 people	3 people
Hotza'ah (Torah removal)	1 person ¹	1 person	1 person
D'var Torah/D'var Haftarah	Yes ²	Yes	Yes
Family aliyot (including parents, excluding Bar/Bat Mitzvah)	3	2	2 or 3 ³
Parents' Sheptaranu	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bar/Bat Mitzvah pledge	Optional	Optional	Optional
Bar/Bat Mitzvah aliyah	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Torah reading	Yes	Yes ⁴	Yes ⁴
Shehechyanu (Thanksgiving, extended family)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Candy shower	Optional	Optional	Optional
Hagbah (raising the Torah) Gelilah (binding the Torah)	1 person ⁵ 1 person ⁵	1 person 1 person	1 person 1 person
D'var Haftarah (introduction)	Yes ²	–	–
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Haftarah reading	Yes	–	–
Ark opening & closing during Torah return (petiha)	3 people ⁶	3 people	3 people
Torah return (hachnasah)	1 person ⁶	1 person	1 person
Prayer for Country (English) Prayer for Israel (Hebrew) Prayer for Peace (English)	1 person ⁵ 1 person ⁵ 1 or 2 persons ⁵	1 person 1 person 1 or 2 persons	1 person 1 person 1 or 2 persons
Shabbat morning Kiddush	Yes	–	–
Havdalah	No	Yes	No
Havdalah holders	No	2 people	No
Friday night kiddush	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reads Torah again for Congregation	No	Yes	Yes ⁴

Notes:

¹ With a shared Shabbat morning ceremony, reserved for the family of “A”, as will be discussed at the joint Family Meeting with the Senior Rabbi.

² For a single, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will give a d'var Torah; a parent may deliver the d'var Haftarah. For a shared, one Bar/Bat Mitzvah will give a d'var Torah, the second will give a d'var Haftarah.

³ Two aliyot if a regular Monday or Thursday service; three on Rosh Hodesh or Hanukah.

⁴ The Bar/Bat Mitzvah reads his/her portion again at the following Shabbat morning service, unless the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony takes place on a weekday Rosh Hodesh or Hanukah.

⁵ With a shared Shabbat morning ceremony, the family is chosen at the joint Family meeting with the Senior Rabbi.

⁶ With a shared Shabbat morning ceremony, reserved for the family of “B”, as will be discussed at the joint Family Meeting with the Senior Rabbi.

PART 5: GUIDE TO PARTICIPATION

Tallit Presentation

The first honor is presenting the tallit to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This presentation occurs at the start of the service. The Rabbi's introduction of the tallit presentation is the signal for the presenter (usually a parent or grandparent) and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to proceed to the Rabbi's lectern. The presenter may present the tallit by saying a few personal words to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah while holding the tallit open with the atara (neckpiece) facing the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will then take the tallit from the presenter, recite the blessing, kiss the two ends of the atara and put it around his/her own shoulders. The presenter should be reminded in advance not to place the tallit around the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's shoulders; that should be done by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah himself/herself, following his/her recitation of the tallit blessings. The following blessing for the tallit is sometimes embroidered in the atara, but in any case should be memorized.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית.
Barukh Ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hitatef b'tzitzit.

Petiha (Ark opening) and Torah Procession

Two people are designated to open the Ark doors and one person is designated to close the curtain for the removal of the Torah/Torot. Another person is chosen to remove the Torah from the Ark. The gabbai will advise these honorees to proceed to the Ark (at the beginning of the Torah service). At the gabbai's signal, the Ark doors will be opened.

As the Ark is opened, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah (if he/she is leading the Torah service), or the Hazzan begins walking toward the Ark. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is joined by the Hazzan, the Rabbis, and the gabbai.

On signal from the gabbai, the hotza'ah (Torah remover) steps up to the Ark, grasps the Torah (right hand under the Torah, the left around it) and hands it to the leader of the Torah procession (Bar/Bat Mitzvah or Hazzan), by placing it upon his/her right shoulder.

After the Torah has been removed the curtain closer will pull firmly on the *left* cord to close the curtain.

The four people involved in opening and closing the Ark at the beginning of the Torah service may join the Torah procession from the Ark to the shulhan (Torah reading desk), after which they will return to their seats.

D'var Torah by Bar/Bat Mitzvah

The *d'var Torah* is presented by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah at the beginning of the Torah service, following the Torah procession. (*D'var Haftarah* is presented later in the Torah service, following the reading from the Torah scroll and preceding the Haftarah reading). *D'var Torah/d'var Haftarah* is a speech prepared by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, introducing the Torah/Haftarah reading to the Congregation. The *d'var Torah/d'var Haftarah* should express the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's original thoughts, reflecting the Bar/Bar Mitzvah's understanding of the text and personal and generalized lessons s/he has gleaned from it. The *d'var Torah/d'var Haftarah* should include the speaker's own feelings and opinions about how the text relates to his/her own experiences, ideals and identity. The *d'var Torah/d'var Haftarah* provides the Bar/Bat Mitzvah an opportunity to teach the Congregation, it is not a thank you speech for parents, teachers, and others for their past support.

For Shabbat morning shared ceremonies, one child will give a *d'var Torah* and the other a *d'var Haftarah*, as chosen by the Rabbi. With a single, a parent may deliver a *d'var Haftarah*. The desired length of the *d'var* is normally one and a half double-spaced typed pages, but quality is the determining factor.

Parents are encouraged to help their child choose a topic from the Biblical portion, to support the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's research efforts and to act as a sounding board for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's ideas. In the final

stages, parents may assist with grammar and other editing, but they should not write the *d'var Torah/Haftarah* for their child.

The Assistant Rabbi will be primarily involved in guiding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's research and writing, will assist the child in focusing his/her ideas and give advice regarding structure. Students are also encouraged to make use of the library and the assistance of the librarian; additional resources include the Educational Director, other religious school teachers, the Senior Rabbi and the Hazzan.

Above all, the *d'var Torah/Haftarah* and its preparation – research, ideas, writing, rewriting, etc. – should be a learning experience for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This is the student's opportunity to explore the Torah or Haftarah reading on a personal level, and to teach the Congregation. Preparation for the *d'var Torah/Haftarah* should be a stimulating experience for the student; as is true of a child's secular work, such as science or other research projects, well-researched and delivered *divrei Torah/Haftarah* are often a source of great pride for many years.

A copy of the *d'var Torah/Haftarah* will be submitted for the approval of the Rabbis after the family meeting with the Assistant Rabbi (6-8 weeks in advance) and by the time of the family meeting with the Senior Rabbi (2-3 weeks before the ceremony). The Assistant Rabbi will comment on the text and make suggestions. After approval of the final draft, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah should practice his/her delivery of the text to ensure that his/her hard work can be heard and understood by the guests and Congregants.

Torah Readers and Honorees with Aliyot

Torah readers and honorees with aliyot ("oleh/olah") will be directed to take a seat in the front row near the shulhan (Torah reading desk) during the preceding aliyah.

The Senior Rabbi's office should be informed of the oleh/olah's full Hebrew name no later than the Monday before the central service. A person's full Hebrew name consists of his/her given name, his/her father's and mother's given name, and the designation of Kohen or Levi, if applicable to his/her father. (If neither, the presumption is that the oleh/olah is an Israelite.) For example, the full Hebrew name of an Israelite man might be Barukh ben Aryeh v'Rivkah (i.e., Barukh, son of Aryeh and Rivkah). If the man's father is a Kohen, his name would be Barukh ben Aryeh ha-Kohen v'Rivkah (i.e., Barukh, son of Aryeh who is a Kohen, and Rivkah). Similarly, if a woman's father is a Kohen, her full Hebrew name will so indicate, for example, Sarah bat Aharon ha-Kohen v'Hannah (i.e., Sarah, daughter of Aharon who is a Kohen, and Hannah).

When called by his/her Hebrew name, the oleh/olah comes to the shulhan and stands to the *right* of the Torah reader. First, taking the right hand corner of his/her tallit, (or if a woman without a tallit, a corner of the reader's tallit) the oleh/olah should touch the Torah scroll at the place to which the reader points, and then kiss the part of the tallit that touched the scroll. Second, while holding on to the *etz hayim*, the Torah's wooden handles, s/he recites the Torah blessings (see below). A large version of the Torah blessings will also be available at the shulhan.

Oleh/olah:

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ
Barkhu et Adonai Ham'vorakh.

Congregation:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
Barukh Adonai Ham'vorakh l'olam va'ed.

Oleh/olah:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

*Barukh Adonai Ham'vorakh l'olam va'ed.
Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu melek ha'olam,
asher bahar banu mikol ha'amim, venatan lanu et torato.
Barukh ata Adonai, noten hatorah.*

The reader then chants a selection from the Torah, after which the oleh/olah again takes the tallit, touches it to the spot at which the reader finishes, kisses it, and recites:

Oleh/olah:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת, וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

*Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu melek ha'olam,
asher natan lanu torat emet, vehayay olam nata betokhenu.
Barukh ata Adonai, noten hatorah.*

After reciting the prayer, the oleh/olah *remains at the shulhan*, moving to the right to make room for the next person. (If the Rabbi suspends the Torah reading after an aliyah, for example to make a Mi She-berakh for those who are ill, it is proper for the oleh/olah who has just completed the blessings to take one of the front row seats near the shulhan until the reading resumes, at which time s/he returns to his/her place at the shulhan.) When the next person ends his/her aliyah, the oleh/olah shakes hands with the people at the shulhan, greets the Rabbi and Hazzan, and returns to his/her seat.

If desired, two or more people with the same relationship to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah (for example, grandparents or aunts/uncles) may share an aliyah. Some aliyot are reserved for the Congregation and are not allocated to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. These aliyot are often given to those celebrating or observing a special occasion.

Sheptaranu and Pledge

Despite our desire to help our children in all ways, we also want to see our children become independent, self-assured and confident. This can happen only when we, in love, "let go." The child, in turn, is often ready to proclaim his/her readiness to continue on the path that s/he began while still under his/her parents' direct supervision. Both the declaration of a willingness to let go, and the declaration of a commitment to continue are part of our Bar/Bat Mitzvah rituals. The one is expressed in the traditional blessing of sheptaranu; the other is expressed in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah pledge.

The sheptaranu is recited by parents after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is called to the shulhan just before s/he begins his/her aliyah. Traditionally this blessing marked the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood

and signaled the end of a parent's financial and educational responsibility for a child. As this does not reflect our modern reality, the English forms of the prayers, as they appear below, are free translations. They may also be replaced by one composed by the family. (Anyone composing his/her own English rendition is required to have it approved in advance by the Senior Rabbi to ensure that it expresses the appropriate traditional sentiment.)

For a boy: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שִׁפְטָרְנוּ מֵעַנְשׁוֹ שֶׁל זֶה:

Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-p'taranu me-onsho shel zeh

NOTE: A single parent should substitute the word שִׁפְטָרְנִי (she-p'tarani) for שִׁפְטָרְנוּ (she-p'taranu).

For a girl: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שִׁפְטָרְנוּ מֵעַנְשָׁהּ שֶׁל זֶה:
Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-p'taranu me-onshah shel zo

NOTE: A single parent should substitute the word שִׁפְטָרְנִי (she-p'tarani) for שִׁפְטָרְנוּ (she-p'taranu).

Possible English renditions are:

1. Praised are You, Adonai our God, who has brought us to this time of shared responsibility.
2. Praised are You, Adonai our God, who has brought us to this time when our child (son/daughter) begins to assume adult Jewish obligations.
3. Praise to You, Adonai, who has enabled us to reach this moment when our child (son/daughter) assumes his/her appropriate role as a full member of the Jewish community.
4. Praise to You, Adonai, who has made us aware of the need to give our child a fuller role in shaping his/her destiny as a Jew.
5. Praise to You, Adonai, who has enlightened us as parents to hand over to our child (son/daughter) the responsibility for the perpetuation of his/her Jewish heritage.

One parent may recite the Sheptaranu in Hebrew, the other in English, or both parents may recite the Hebrew and English together. The English selection should be chosen in advance and read from the shulhan. The text of both the Sheptaranu and the above English selections may be found on the back of the Torah blessing card at the shulhan.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah pledge of ongoing commitment to Judaism is strongly encouraged; it may be recited only by a student intending to continue his/her formal Jewish education beyond the current school year. An original composition approved by the Senior Rabbi may be substituted for the commonly used text below:

Standing before the Torah, I declare my acceptance of my responsibilities as an adult Jew.
I pledge to act with the sense of maturity expected of a Bar (Bat) Mitzvah.
I pledge to continue my formal Jewish education.
I pledge to participate throughout my life in activities that will strengthen my Jewish identity, and be an asset to my family, my People, and all humanity.

The pledge should not be memorized. The text of the standard pledge will be on the shulhan.

Sheheheyanu

This is the traditional blessing for joyous occasions. The Rabbi will lead its recitation in Hebrew and in English. The entire family will be invited to rise and join in the recitation of this blessing; all relatives are invited to participate. Families are encouraged to photocopy the Sheheheyanu blessing and to provide it to relatives in advance of the service.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, who
rules the Universe,
Keeping us in life, sustaining us, and
enabling us to reach this moment of joy.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שְׁהַחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְן הַזֶּה.

*Barukh Ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
sheheheyanu, v'kee'yemanu, v'higeeyanu lazman
hazeh.*

Candy Shower

Candy is normally distributed during the Torah reading by younger members of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family from baskets provided by the Congregation. (The family must have delivered the soft, individually wrapped, Kosher candy (50 piece maximum) to the Rabbi's office at least one workday before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.) The candy should be distributed over as large a portion of the sanctuary as possible.

After the Hazzan and the Rabbi recite the Mi She-berakh (prayer for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's future well being), the Congregation sings a song of congratulations (Y'varekhekha). Following the completion of the song, the Congregation may toss candy at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This traditional gesture of showering with candy expresses our recognition of the sweetness and joy of the occasion, and our wish that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's life be filled with sweetness and joy. After they are thrown, the candies are collected by the children present and may be taken outside of the Sanctuary and eaten there.

Hagba'ah and Gelilah

The person chosen for hagba'ah (raising the Torah) is called "Magbiah"; the person chosen for gelilah (binding the Torah) is "Goleyl" or "Golelet". The honor of hagba'ah should be assigned only to someone fully conversant with this specific task, as it requires not only strength but skill and practice. (It is important to practice this skill, either through an arrangement with the Rabbi at Har Shalom or through the honoree's own rabbi.)

During the chanting of the final Torah aliyah, the Magbiah and the Goleyl/Golelet will take their seats in the front row near the shulhan. When the aliyah is completed, the gabbai will call upon them by reciting "Ya'amdu ha-Magbiah v'ha-Goleyl/Golelet."

The Magbiah will raise the Torah, show the open scroll to the Congregation and walk backwards to sit on the bench on the bimah. The Goleyl/Golelet will then grasp the wooden handles and roll the two sides of the scroll firmly together, affix a band/belt to hold the scroll in place, and cover the Torah with a mantle and silver ornaments. A gabbai will be present to assist the participants as needed.

The gabbai will then take the Torah from the Magbiah and place it in the Torah stand as the Magbiah and Goleyl/Golelet return to their seats.

D'var Haftarah

At a shared Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, one of the two children will give a d'var Haftarah as a Haftarah introduction. At a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah, this honor may be given to a parent. The purpose of the introduction is to provide the necessary background for everyone present to understand the portion, and to

stimulate the Congregation to follow the text. It also provides the parent an opportunity to study the content of the child's Haftarah.

The parent's introduction can follow the same outline described to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah in his/her meeting with the Assistant Rabbi. It should present the parent's original thoughts and might include historical background, an interpretation of the content, or a discussion of the relevance of the portion to our lives. The librarian, the Hazzan or one of the Rabbis can assist in finding Biblical commentaries that will be illuminating. This introduction should be short – no more than one and a half double-spaced, typewritten pages. A copy should be given to one of the Rabbis for approval approximately three weeks before the service.

Petiha/Torah Recessional

At the end of the Torah service, the procedure followed for the procession is reversed: the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or Hazzan carries the Torah at the head of the recessional in order to return it to the Ark. The honorees designated to open the curtain, close the Ark and return the Torah to the Ark proceed to the Ark as the Torah recessional begins. The curtain is opened on signal from the gabbai, by grasping the *right* cord. The person doing the "hakhnasah" (returning the Torah) takes the Torah from the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or Hazzan and places it in the Ark. The Ark doors are closed when a rabbi gives the signal and all honorees return to their seats. (The curtain remains *open* when the doors are closed).

Shabbat Morning Kiddush

A short version of the Kiddush is recited in the Sanctuary following Adon Olam, at the end of Shabbat morning services. It is introduced with the congregational singing of V'Shamru. It can be found on page 315 of *Siddur Sim Shalom*. It is recited by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or B'nai Mitzvah of the Shabbat morning service.

Friday Night Kiddush

On Friday night, Kiddush is recited before the singing of Aleinu. It can be found on page 49 of *Siddur Sim Shalom*. It is recited by the B'nai Mitzvah celebrants of that weekend.

Reading Torah on Shabbat Morning Following A Weekday or Minḥa/Havdalah Service

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah who celebrates his/her simha on a Minḥa/Havdalah or Weekday (Sunday-Friday morning) service will recite his/her same Torah portions on the Shabbat morning following his/her ceremony. This way the entire Congregation will have the opportunity to celebrate with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

PART 6: RITUAL GARMENTS, CUSTOMS, AND OTHER GUIDELINES

Ritual garments, dress and customs

All congregants and guests are encouraged to wear a head covering—**kippah**—whenever they are in the synagogue building.

- Men and boys (other than babies) are required to wear a kippah at all times.
- Women and girls are required to wear a kippah, hat or lace covering whenever they come forward for any honor.
- Kippot and lace head coverings are available at all services.
- Many families choose to purchase new kippot for the congregation and their guests in honor of their child's becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah. They can be ordered through our Judaica Shop or a private source.

All Jewish congregants and guests (age 13 and older) are encouraged to wear a **tallit** at morning services (Shabbat and weekday).

- Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah should wear a tallit at his/her central service.
- It is important that all congregants and guests wear a tallit at the time of an assigned aliyah or other Torah honor, and then for the remainder of the service.
- Tallitot are available at all services.
- At Shabbat Minḥa (afternoon) services, a tallit is worn only by those who participate in the Torah service, while they are participating.
- Tallitot are not worn on Friday evening.

T'fillin are worn only at morning services on days other than Shabbat or Yom Tov.

- Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah is expected to wear t'fillin at his/her weekday central service.
- All other congregants and Jewish guests (age 13 and older) are encouraged to wear t'fillin at weekday services.
- A limited number of sets of t'fillin are available for congregants and guests at weekday services.

Congregants and guests should dress in a manner that is respectful of the sanctity of religious services.

Guests

Guests of all religious backgrounds are welcome at Har Shalom's services. Whether or not they are Jewish, your guests may be unfamiliar with Har Shalom's customs and requirements and may appreciate some advance information.

You may wish to familiarize your family and guests with our customs as described in this manual by including an insert in the invitation or with directions and other material provided to out of town guests.

You should inform your guests of the schedules for the appropriate services:

- **Friday evening services.** 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM
- **Shabbat morning services.** 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

- **Weekday morning services.** Begin at 9:00 AM.
- **Shabbat afternoon services** (Minḥa, Ma'ariv, Havdalah). Begin one hour and fifteen minutes before the end of Shabbat.

Invite your guests to take their seats near you in the forward part of the Sanctuary. The family may, of course, greet arriving guests before services; but the family should be at their seats at the start of services, and avoid further social greetings until the Kiddush that follows the service.

Your guests should be aware that gifts should never be brought into the sanctuary; on Shabbat and Yom Tov gifts should not be brought into the synagogue building.

Smoking is never permitted in the sanctuary or in any other part of the building; smoking is not permitted on the grounds of the synagogue on Shabbat.

Photography, cell phones and other electronic devices:

- Guests should also be informed that cameras (whether photographic or video) may not be brought into the synagogue on Shabbat;
- Photographic cameras are not permitted during services, even during weekday services.
- A video camera may be used during weekday services, provided it is set and fixed on a tripod in a corner location in advance of the start of the services.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used in the synagogue building on Shabbat; if carried, they must be turned off before entering the synagogue.
- On weekdays, cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off or silenced during services.
- Tape recorders may not be brought to services (Shabbat or weekday). Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is automatically recorded on our taping equipment, and the cassette is presented to the family as a gift from the Congregation. Should you desire additional copies of the tape, special arrangements can be made with the Rabbis' office.

The family can schedule a photographic session during the week preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah by contacting the Executive Director's office. It is advisable to schedule the session in advance, preferably before or after the rehearsal, to ensure that the sanctuary will be available. The following rules apply to these photographic sessions.

- If clergy or approved Congregants are available to remove and return the Torah, a scroll may be used during the photographic sessions.
- It is important to treat the sanctuary with respect during the photographic sessions. As a result, neither the shulhan nor the Rabbi's podium may be moved to accommodate the family or photographer.

Ushers

One of the responsibilities of Bar/Bat Mitzvah families is to serve as ushers at three Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations of other families. Other families will, in turn, serve as ushers at your family's simḥa. Families will receive a call from a synagogue volunteer regarding ushering, approximately six months in advance of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. If you wish to usher at an earlier time or can contact the Usher Coordinator or the Chair of the Religious Activities Committee. Ushering duties can be performed by either parent and are a good way to become familiar with the central service for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

APPENDIX: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adon Olam - A closing prayer that concludes the Shabbat service. This prayer is often lead by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, siblings and/or cousins.

Aleinu - A hymn of praise sung immediately before the recitation of the Mourner's Kaddish at the end of the service. This prayer is often lead by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, siblings and/or cousins.

An'im Z'mirot - A hymn of praise that is sung at the conclusion of the Shabbat service. (Also referred to as *Shir Hakavod*.)

Aron HaKodesh/Ark – The beautifully decorated cabinet at the front of the sanctuary that holds the congregation's Torah scrolls.

Atara - The neckpiece of a tallit. It is usually embroidered with the tallit blessing or other decoration.

Aliyah (pl. aliyot) - The "going up" of a worshipper to the bimah (raised platform in the center of the Congregation) in order to recite the blessings before and after the reading of a portion of the Torah. The person selected for this role is called an *oleh/olah* (m./f.).

Bar/Bat Mitzvah (m./f.); (pl. B'nai Mitzvah) — A person who has attained the age of religious maturity. A person automatically becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at age 13.

Barkhu - A preliminary prayer in many religious services, including *Shaharit*, *Minḥa* and *Ma'ariv*; specifically, the call to prayer.

Bimah - The raised platform from which the Torah is read. At *Har Shalom*, the bimah is placed in the midst of the Congregation.

Birkat Hamazon - A prayer of thanksgiving said following meals; grace.

B'rakha - A statement of praise of God, beginning with the words "Praised are You, Adonai our God."; blessing.

D'var Torah – an explanation of the Torah reading, highlighting a theme meaningful to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and presenting a message for the larger community.

D'var Haftarah - an explanation of the Haftarah reading, highlighting a theme meaningful to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or parent, and presenting a message for the larger community.

Ein Keloheinu – A closing prayer that concludes the Shabbat service. This prayer is often lead by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, siblings and/or cousins.

Gabbai (pl. gabbayim) - As currently used, a person who assigns parts (including aliyot) for the reading of the Torah, or who helps in the proper reading of the Torah. The Gabbai will assist you and those of your guests and family members who have been assigned honors.

Gelilah - The honor of rolling up and dressing the Torah scroll after it has been read. The person so honored is called the *Goleyl/ Golelet* (m./f.).

Grace after meals - See *Birkat Hamazon*.

Haftarah - The section of the book of Prophets read following the reading of the Torah.

Hagba'ah - The honor of raising the open Torah scroll so that it may be seen by the Congregation after it has been read. The person so-honored is called *Magbiah*.

Hakhnasah - The honor of returning the Torah to the Ark.

Hallah (or Challah) - A tasty, usually braided loaf of egg bread, traditionally used to begin a meal on Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

Hallel - A selection of psalms included in certain services, such as during holidays or *Rosh Hodesh*.

Hamotzi - The blessing recited before eating bread, hence, typically, before beginning any meal. This blessing is recited after the end of Shabbat morning services.

Havdalah - A short series of prayers recited at the conclusion of Shabbat or a festival to distinguish those special days from the ordinary day that follows.

Hol Ha'moed - The minor days of a festival week, those between the more restrictive beginning and ending days. See *Yom Tov*.

Hotza'ah - The honor of removing the Torah from the Ark.

Humash (pl. humashim) - The five books of Moses; also called *Pentateuch*. The humash contains the same text as the Torah scroll: *Genesis/B'reishit*, *Exodus/Sh'mot*, *Leviticus/Vayikra*, *Numbers/B'midbar* and *Deuteronomy/D'varim*.

Israelite - A Jew who is neither a Kohen nor a Levi. (See Kohen, Levi.)

Kabbalat Shabbat - The Friday evening service that welcomes the Shabbat.

Kaddish - A prayer of praise used to designate the end of a section of a service.

Kashrut - Rules regarding what is kosher, i.e., ritually fit for eating.

Kiddush – (1) Sanctification; hence the praises to God recited before drinking a cup of wine while ushering in Shabbat or Yom Tov; (2) the reception that takes place after Shabbat and Yom Tov morning services when food is served to the congregation.

Kippah (pl. kippot) - A skull-cap; a yarmulke; head covering.

Kohen - A descendent of the Biblical priests; in some congregations (but not at Har Shalom) the first aliyah is reserved for a Kohen. See Levi and Israelite.

Levi - A descendent of the Biblical tribe of Levi; in some congregations (but not at Har Shalom) the second aliyah is reserved for a Levi. See Kohen and Israelite.

Ma'ariv - The evening prayer service.

Maftir - The last person called up to the reading of the Torah (i.e., the person having the last aliyah). Following the Torah reading, the maftir reads the appropriate portion from the Prophets (i.e., the Haftarah).

Magbiah - See hagba'ah.

Mantle - The decorative covering for the Torah scroll.

Mashgiah - A supervisor whose function is to ensure that the rules of kashrut are being observed.

Megillat Simḥa - A plaque in the Har Shalom lobby, in the shape of a scroll, on which congregants may have commemorative inscriptions mounted.

Minḥa - The afternoon prayer service.

Minyan - The quorum of ten required for public worship.

Mi Shebayrakh - A special prayer (named for its initial words) offered following the reading of a portion of the Torah, either in honor of the person called for that reading, or on behalf of some sick person.

Mitzvah (pl. mitzvot) - A divine commandment; Jewish ritual or ethical obligation.

Musaf – The additional service that takes place on Shabbat, Yom Tov and Rosh Hodesh, following the Torah service.

Nusah - Melodic patterns used in certain parts of certain services; also, standard texts adopted by particular Jewish communities.

Oleh/olah - See aliyah.

Parasha - One of the weekly portions of the Torah in the yearly cycle of readings; to be read on a particular Shabbat.

Petiha - The honor of opening and/or closing the Ark.

P'seukei D'Zimra – The introductory "warmup", a collection of Psalms recited before the Shaharit service.

Rosh Hodesh - The beginning of a Jewish lunar month.

Sefer Torah (pl. Sifrei Torah) - the Scroll on which the Torah (i.e., the Pentateuch) is written.

Se'udah shelishit (alternatively, **Shalesh Seudes**) - By tradition, the third meal of Shabbat, eaten after Minḥa (the afternoon service) and before sunset. The two prior meals are the Friday evening meal, and the Shabbat morning meal following Shaharit (the morning service).

Shabbat (pl. Shabbatot) - Sabbath; Saturday. Shabbat begins at sundown on Friday evening and ends after sundown on Saturday night. Shabbat religious services include:

- the Friday evening service: Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv;
- the Shabbat morning service: Shaharit/Torah/Musaf;
- the Shabbat afternoon service: Minḥa; and the final brief ceremony following Minḥa and Ma'ariv, called Havdalah, which marks the conclusion of Shabbat.

Shaharit - The morning service which follows Psukei D'Zimra.

Sheheḥeyanu - A prayer of thanksgiving. (Recited by all members of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's extended family at the central service.)

Sheptaranu - A prayer recited by parents of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah expressing thanks that their child

now is responsible for his/her own religious behavior.

Shofar - The horn of an animal, used as a trumpet.

Shir ha-Kavod – See *Anim Zemirot*.

Shulhan - The table or desk on the bimah (raised platform) from which the Torah is read.

Sh'ma Yisrael - "Hear O Israel", a key passage from the Torah included in most services.

Siddur (pl. siddurim) - A prayer book.

Simha - A joyful celebration; frequently used in this manual to describe the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

T'fillah (pl. t'fillot) - Prayer.

T'fillin – Leather prayer boxes containing four scriptural passages strapped to the arm and forehead, signifying allegiance to God with body and mind; worn only during morning services on days other than Shabbat and Yom Tov.

Tallit (pl. tallitot) - A prayer shawl with fringes (tzitzit) and an atara.

Tikun - A study book in which the Torah text, as it appears in the Torah scroll (i.e., without vowels or musical accents) is placed side by side with the same Hebrew text containing vowels and accents.

Torah Portion - A parasha, i.e., one of the sections of the Torah, in the yearly cycle of readings, to be read on a particular Shabbat. (Har Shalom is on a triennial cycle, and therefore reads one-third of the traditional parasha each week.) Also, one of the several divisions of a parasha read for a single aliyah.

Torah Scroll - See Sefer Torah.

Torah Service – The ceremony for removing the Torah scroll from the Aron HaKodesh, the reading of the Torah and the returning of the Torah to the Aron HaKodesh. On Shabbat and Yom Tov mornings, it includes the reading of the Haftarah.

Trop - The melodic chant patterns used in the reading of any of the books of the Bible during services. The chant varies based on the book (Torah, haftarah, other scrolls) and the occasion for the service (special Trop is used for some holidays) .

Tzedakah – Literally "justice" or "righteousness," usually translated, somewhat inaccurately, as "charity."

V'shamru - A passage from the Torah sung as a preliminary to the Saturday morning kiddush.

Yad - (Literally, "hand") A pointer, the end of which is commonly shaped as a hand, used to keep the place during the reading of the Torah.

Yom Tov - A Jewish holy day. In particular, as used in this manual, a term that designates the beginning and ending days of a festival week (the "primary days") from the less restrictive intermediate days. (Sukkot, Pesah and Shavuot.) See Hol Hamoed.

