



B'NEI MITZVAH HANDBOOK

18 SHOOLMAN WAY
MILTON, MA 02186
OFFICE: (617) 698-3394
WWW.BETHSHALOMBLUEHILLS.ORG

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>WELCOME</i>	3
<i>BACKGROUND</i>	4
<i>B'NEI MITZVAH TEAM</i>	5
<i>BIMAH TEAM</i>	6
<i>PREPARING FOR THE B'NEI MITZVAH</i>	
<i>THE MITZVAH PROJECT</i>	10
<i>PLANNING FOR THE CEREMONY</i>	11
<i>SHABBAT CUSTOMS & RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	14
<i>CELEBRATING AT CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM OF THE BLUE HILLS</i>	16
<i>TIMELINE</i>	18
<i>PARENT BLESSINGS</i>	20
<i>HONORS WORKSHEET</i>	21
<i>TEMPLE FLOOR PLAN</i>	22
<i>FACILITY RENTAL FORM</i>	23

WELCOME!

Shalom Families!

Hello and welcome to our B'nei Mitzvah Handbook! We are honored to join you on this sacred journey through the B'nei Mitzvah experience. We will be there for you every step of the way and look forward to having a great time with you.

Being a B'nei Mitzvah is about your child growing into themselves and realizing their full potential. You are about to embark on one of your Jewish family's most exciting and gratifying journeys. This handbook contains information about the B'nei Mitzvah experience at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills for your child, yourself, and your entire family. The B'nei Mitzvah ceremony has various levels of significance. It marks a coming of age for your child and a chance to shine in front of family and friends. It is a moment for you to reflect on your years as a parent and to look forward to new adventures in your child's future.

We at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills want to assist you in making the most of this lovely period in your life.

Please contact our staff for assistance, support, and guidance.

All our best wishes for a joyous and meaningful Simcha!

Rabbi Alfred Benjamin

Jason Beck, BIMAH Team

Cantor Lisa, Religious School Director

Steven Ostrovitz, President

BACKGROUND

Becoming a B'nei Mitzvah is a significant milestone in the life of any Jewish child. B'nei Mitzvah is Hebrew for "children of the commandments" and a time for our children to celebrate their Jewish identities and everything they have learned.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is Hebrew for "son or daughter" of Mitzvah." A mitzvah is a God-given mandate, and it can also refer to a good deed (something that God would want you to accomplish). "B'nei mitzvah" is the plural of "bar mitzvah." In our day and age, "B'nei Mitzvah" can refer to a ceremony for two or more persons, a ceremony for someone who identifies as non-binary; it's the generic term for both bar and bat mitzvah at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills,

The Talmud uses the term B'nei Mitzvah to refer to those who have reached the age of legal majority, which means they are adults in Jewish law and responsible for their acts (equivalent to turning 18 in the United States today). Because we treat boys and girls equally at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills, we consider 13 to be the age of mitzvot for everyone.

Traditionally, one becomes a B'nei Mitzvah simply by reaching the age of 13, whether or not a celebration in a synagogue occurs. Even if they never had a ceremony, all Jews beyond 13 are B'nei Mitzvah! That is why we talk about "becoming" a B'nei Mitzvah; once you reach the age of 13, you are a B'nei Mitzvah for the rest of your life. B'nei Mitzvah is a way of life, not a specific celebration.

The practice of celebrating B'nei Mitzvah as a life-cycle event dates to the Middle Ages when a boy (at the time, only males) was called to the Torah in front of his synagogue on the Shabbat following his 13th birthday to inform the community that he had reached adulthood and now would be responsible for the mitzvot (commandments)

A B'nei Mitzvah focuses on both education and responsibility. The first is to lead a community in worship by reading or chanting from the Torah. The second is for their Jewish responsibility, shown in the synagogue and the home. The young person who becomes a B'nei Mitzvah is transitioning from childhood to adulthood.

Inspired by Jewish beliefs and heritage, we provide opportunities for parents and children to learn together as part of the B'nei Mitzvah program. This supports the idea of lifelong Jewish learning and provides opportunities for parents and children to explore their relationship and the concept of responsibility when young people are testing their individuality and the authority of their parents.

In addition to Jewish beliefs, history, and holidays, B'nei Mitzvah youth learn basic synagogue skills such as reading Hebrew, being familiar with the essential components of Jewish prayer, and composing a D' var Torah (roughly, "a word of Torah," a brief talk based on the Torah portion).

The individual who becomes a B'nei Mitzvah is embarking on an exciting new chapter in their life. It is a time when the ability to apply Jewish ideas to daily decisions emerges. Becoming a B'nei Mitzvah creates a solid Jewish identity, a profound, personal understanding of Judaism, and a lifelong dedication to the Jewish community.

B'NEI MITZVAH TEAM

THE RABBI

Rabbi Benjamin – RabbiFredBenjamin@gmail.com / 617-698-3394

Each student and their family will work closely with the Rabbi, who will guide them through the B'nei Mitzvah process. The process begins a year before the B'nei Mitzvah date. The Rabbi and the family will set the date and discuss the Torah portion at the initial meeting. The Rabbi and the family will continue meeting throughout the year to discuss the logistics of the events, including a full-service run-through, honor assignments, and family pictures. Additionally, the Rabbi will work with the student to help him/her/them prepare the D'var Torah.

THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL DIRECTOR/B'NEI MITZVAH TUTOR

Cantor Lisa Kipen-Hershenson – EdDirector@BethShalomBlueHills.org / 617-698-3394

The Religious School Director oversees our students' Religious Education experience and supports students and families throughout the Religious School experience. The School director works with families, the Ritual Committee, and the Rabbi to ensure a successful B'nei Mitzvah experience, provide the best educational experience possible, and find a path for students to continue participating in the Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills community. Cantor Lisa is also responsible for all BM tutoring.

THE OFFICE

Candice Privott, Office Manager office@BethShalomBlueHills.org / 617-698-3394

Our office staff coordinates arrangements for the use of the facility and concomitant financial obligations, coordinates all vendors and reviews all aspects of the day outside of the service itself. The office is a resource for questions concerning vendors, approved accommodators and Kosher caterers. Our office staff is here to support the B'nei Mitzvah family at the start of the preparation and until after the celebrations.

THE BIMAH TEAM

The BIMAH team (**B'nei Mitzvah All Hands**) is a group of parents who have previously celebrated their child's B'nei mitzvah at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills within the last two years. They are here to offer support and practical assistance.

The B'nei mitzvah journey is an auspicious occasion for you and your child. It can, however, be a stressful time. The BIMAH team's mission is to assist in relieving that stress so you may enjoy the beauty and love of the occasion.

The BIMAH Team will host a meeting for all B'nei Mitzvah families with a child who will have their ceremonies that school year. The first meeting will occur in the fall, followed by the second in January. All meetings take place on Sundays during religious school. These gatherings are intended to provide support where people can ask questions, get advice, and get help. The Bimah team has a list of vendors (accommodators, caterers, florists, and so forth) who have been used and recommended by other families. Examples and templates of invitations and programs used by other families are also available. Because Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills is a diverse community, the resources available can fulfill all your family's needs. Everything you need is at the [BIMAH Team Resource Page](#).

We will assign a "buddy" to each family at the fall meeting. Your buddy is there to help you along the way and to be an additional set of hands on the day of the ceremony and in the days leading up to it. A buddy can assist with setup on Friday (the day before the ceremony), whether helping with deliveries and table setting at synagogues or running errands for those last-minute forgotten goods. Your buddy and the other B'nei mitzvah family can assist with ushering on the ceremony day. There are several opportunities for your buddy to assist you, and we hope you will reach out at any time along the journey.

The BIMAH Team's event family has completed their own B'nei Mitzvah journey. Because of the diverse community of Congregation Beth Shalom in the Blue Hills, no B'nei mitzvah is the same, and that variety of experiences will help you with your own.

We look forward to walking beside you on this adventure. Please reach out to the [BIMAH Team](#) with any questions.

PREPARING FOR THE B'NEI MITZVAH

The Jewish journey begins long before B'nei Mitzvah and continues for a lifetime! Everything you do in the process of parenting a Jewish child helps prepare your child to mark the first 13 years of their journey as they demonstrate leadership, Jewish knowledge, synagogue skills, connection to the Jewish People and celebrate with joy and confidence.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The B'nei Mitzvah is not a competition or test. Each budding adult is encouraged to do the best they can and as much as they can do without making comparisons to others. Our goal is that your child does as much as his/her/their talents and capabilities permit.

Our desired outcome is that for each student and family, the B'nei Mitzvah is a joyous, Jewish learning experience that engenders lovely, life-long memories, affirms a deep commitment to Jewish identity, and expresses a deep sense of belonging to the Jewish People.

CHOOSING A DATE

B'nei Mitzvah dates are assigned based on the child's Hebrew birth date and fall after their 13th birth date according to the Hebrew calendar.

Most often, your children will receive their date one year before their B'nei Mitzvah, and you will have the opportunity to discuss any preferences or circumstances to be considered when choosing a date.

B'nei Mitzvahs are scheduled from September to the end of June, excluding certain Jewish holidays and secular holiday weekends.

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION AND RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS:

Below are the essential guidelines to follow to lay a solid foundation of educational background for the B'nei Mitzvah experience:

We request that the student attend and complete a structured program of formal Jewish education before the B'nei Mitzvah, either through our Religious School, a Jewish day school, or approved private tutoring for at least four consecutive years, having attended classes regularly and fulfilled the class requirements,

The commitment to attend Religious School through the end of 7th grade is required regardless of the B'nei Mitzvah date.

For each B'nei Mitzvah child to develop a sense of ease and confidence leading services, arrangements are made with the Rabbi to attend 6 Shabbat morning services – 3 of which can be Student-led Shabbat services. For the other 3, our students will "show what they know" by leading with the Rabbi. Students should arrive at these Shabbat services by 9:25 AM. Services end at around noon.

Regular Shabbat attendance supports a student's preparation and becoming familiar and comfortable with the flow and content of the Friday evening and Shabbat morning services. Students in 3rd – 5th grade will have experiences leading the congregation in selected prayers and the order of the service that will complement and supplement the classroom curriculum. Students will also become comfortable speaking in front of others when participating in these programs. Regular classroom and Shabbat School attendance will support and enhance a student's B'nei Mitzvah experience.

TUTORING

B'nei Mitzvah tutoring begins approximately six months before the date or 7 to 8 months if the student is away during the summer. The student meets once a week for half an hour with the tutor for 25 lessons.

In these lessons, the children will learn how to lead the Shabbat morning service sections, chant the Torah and Haftarah (Reading from the Prophets), and the appropriate *Brachot* (blessings).

The Religious School office will get in touch to begin tutoring. There is a \$750.00 fee for B'nei Mitzvah tutoring. If needed, Cantor Lisa will arrange for additional tutoring at a rate of \$30/half-hour session.

PREPARING TO LEAD THE CONGREGATION

When a B'nei Mitzvah leads the congregation in prayer, they serve as Shaliach Tzibbur, representing the community before G-d. This is an honored responsibility requiring respect, competence, and commitment. The skills and values our B'nei Mitzvah gain as each becomes a Shaliach Tzibbur stay with them long after the day of the B'nei Mitzvah celebration.

Prior to 5th grade, our students receive their siddur. The prayer book is theirs as a gift from the congregation. This siddur joins them on this journey to the B'nei Mitzvah and for the rest of their lives.

At the end of 6th grade each student's Hebrew reading skills are assessed to determine if that skill needs bolstering. If so, additional tutoring sessions will be recommended. The Rabbi or Cantor Lisa will contact parents regarding any concerns and will address any questions or concerns you have.

For information about the B'nei Mitzvah Project see that section of this Handbook.

Starting a month before the BM date, the B'nei Mitzvah student begins working in the Sanctuary to gain hands-on experience so they get accustomed to being on the Bimah (the pulpit). At this point, we concentrate on fine-tuning all the skills they have acquired in preparation for the B'nei Mitzvah day.

THE RABBI'S ROLE

The Rabbi will meet with parents to discuss all aspects of the B'nei Mitzvah experience and to answer any questions. Our educational approach is to allow each child to flourish according to their talents and abilities.

Starting approximately two months before the B'nei Mitzvah date, the student will meet with the Rabbi to study their Parshah (Torah portion) in preparation for writing a D'var Torah (words of wisdom related to each student's specific Haftarah).

The Rabbi will be the point of contact to work with students on developing their D'var Torah. The Rabbi is available to meet with parents and students throughout the process for counseling and to help with any special assistance needed.

THE PARENTS ROLE

INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement and encouragement are essential. We recommend that parents attend services with the child whenever possible; this will familiarize all involved with the order of the service, melodies, and what is involved with honors given out during the service. Please only drop students off at services if you attend yourselves. Engagement in services is a powerful example for your child. It often helps parents experience their child's B'nei Mitzvah not as an isolated family event but as a milestone in the life of the entire Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills Community.

FINANCIAL

Families up to date in their financial obligations to the Synagogue will receive B'nei Mitzvah date assignments. If a family is experiencing unique circumstances, please call the office to set up a private and confidential meeting with the Congregation's President. All financial obligations to the Temple must be current one month before the B'nei Mitzvah, including rental fees, membership dues, Religious School tuition, and tutoring fees. Full payment of dues and fees for the current year is required for any B'nei Mitzvah held after March 1.

SHABBAT KIDDUSH OR LUNCHEON (MEAL AFTER SERVICES)

At the end of the service, it is our custom that the B'nei Mitzvah family sponsor/host the entire congregation at the Kiddush Luncheon. The B'nei Mitzvah will lead the congregation in the blessings over the wine, handwashing and Challah.

Celebrating at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills section of the handbook outlines the details for hosting.

USHERING

To support the families of fellow B'nei Mitzvah students, family members serve as ushers at each others B'nei Mitzvah service. In addition to these ushering duties many also help the caterer set up the Kiddush. Setting up the ushering schedule is done by the Rabbi.

FLOWERS

It is customary for the family to provide two flower arrangements that will grace both sides of the Bimah. Due to allergies, sanctuary flowers must not give off any scent. Speak to the office about details. Providing small flower arrangements for the tables used during the luncheon is also lovely but optional.

The number of tables will depend on the number of people expected. For details, please see the Celebrating at Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills section of the handbook.

THE MITZVAH PROJECT

Students learn what it means to be part of a community by finding ways to contribute to it. Many students volunteer their time while others raise funds for worthy causes or collect items to donate. While there is no specific requirement for this project, we ask that students choose a meaningful topic for them and Set a specific and achievable goal (i.e., several hours to volunteer, an amount to raise, etc.) The nature and scope of the project will be discussed in consultation with the Rabbi and the Religious School Director.

Tips for the most effective ways for youth to volunteer:

- Research the cause or issues important to you. Look for a group that works with issues about which you feel strongly.
- Think about the abilities you already have. Writing, computer competence, communication, athletics, musical, acting, artistic talent, carpentry, and landscaping labor are examples of skills.
- Consider learning something new. Aside from the satisfaction of helping others, you can also enhance your current talents or learn new ones.
- Don't overcommit your time. Begin slowly and gradually increase your time commitment.
- Non-profit organizations may have questions for you, too. It is in your best interest and that of the organization and the people it serves if you have the skills needed, the commitment, and the interests that match the organization.
- Consider doing volunteer work as a family. This sends a message about the importance of giving and creating enduring memories.
- How about virtual volunteering? Yes, it exists! This could take the form of word-processing papers or reports for someone with a disability or keeping in touch with a shut-in who uses email.
- All types of organizations could benefit from a helping hand. Daycare centers, public schools, civic groups, museums, theaters, after-school programs, soup kitchens, and homes for older adults are among them.
- If you choose to raise funds for a charity, inquire about the percentage of donation money that goes to administrative costs against the percentage that goes to beneficiaries.
- Bonus Tip: Give voice to your heart through your giving and volunteering! Bring your heart, sense of humor, and enthusiastic spirit to your service. These are priceless gifts. What you get back will be immeasurable!

Examples of previous Mitzvah Projects

- Collecting books for prisoners
- Baking homemade dog treats and selling them for donations to an animal shelter
- Fundraising for Milton food pantry
- Collecting used clothing for Quincy Interfaith Center

PLANNING FOR THE CEREMONY

INVITATIONS

Recommended information to include:

- Child's English and Hebrew Name
- Name of the Torah portion
- B'nei Mitzvah date for both secular and Hebrew calendar
- Service starts at 9:30 AM
- Name and address of Synagogue:
 - Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills, 18 Shoolman Way, Milton, MA 02186,
- And a note regarding synagogue/Shabbat customs, such as appropriate dress and silencing of cell phones (page 5)
- If necessary, provide parking instructions with an overflow parking map and directions.

As a matter of sensitivity, we strongly encourage all students in your child's Religious School class to be invited to the service and Kiddush luncheon.

To make your guests feel comfortable and out of respect for our congregation, please share synagogue etiquette and conduct with those for whom these things might be unfamiliar. We suggest that those unfamiliar with Shabbat services, especially classmates and peers, be informed that it is perfectly fine to arrive for the service at around 10:30. Please let them know that services will end at approximately 12:15.

The BIMAH team has an extensive library of invitations done by previous families; please reach out to the [BIMAH Team](#) for access.

SERVICE HONORS

This Handbook contains a B'nei Mitzvah Honors worksheet. (Appendix C). If you have any questions, contact the Rabbi. It is your decision to decide on who gets these honors. This worksheet is to be returned to the Rabbi two weeks before the B'nei Mitzvah date. As a reminder, Hebrew names consist of a person's Hebrew first, if applicable, second name and their parents' Hebrew names. People who aren't Jewish people are not called up to the Torah for an Aliyah (blessing over the Torah) but can participate in other ways such as English readings and certain prayers.

If you have a Kohen or Levi in the family who you would like to honor, please inform the Rabbi to discuss how they can be integrated into the service.

Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills is a diverse congregation with families from diverse backgrounds and religions. Understanding this, we always work with families to include those friends and family members who are not Jewish, this of course, includes a non-Jewish parent of the B'nei Mitzvah student.

BRIEF EXPLANATION OF SERVICE HONORS:

Ascending and descending the *Bimah* (Service "platform"/Torah reading table area) From the perspective of facing the Ark, it is customary for all honorees to approach the *Bimah* on the right side and depart on the left. An usher will always be nearby to help or answer any questions you may have. Be sure to shake hands with all who wish you *Mazel Tov* or *Yasher Koach*! (Well done! Literally, "Remain Strong")

Opening and closing the *Aron HaKodesh* (Ark) consists of two people standing on either side of the *Aron HaKodesh* doors to slide them open for the removal of the *Torah* at the beginning of the *Torah* service, closing those doors and then joining in the *Torah* procession counterclockwise around the Sanctuary. Honorees return to their seats after the procession. **This honor is usually assigned to the parents/guardians.**

Carrying the *Torah* involves approaching the *Aron HaKodesh* to hold the *Torah* (on right shoulder) as the *Hazzan* (Cantor, Service Leader, or B'nei Mitzvah) chants the appropriate selections, leading the *Torah* procession around the Sanctuary and then placing the *Torah* on the Torah reading table. Honorees return to their seats after the procession.

Note – Keep in mind that Torahs are heavy. This honor should only be given to those who can hold and walk with the *Torah*.

Aliyot – (literally: "coming up" or "ascending both physically and spiritually to the *Torah*") There are 7 *Aliyot* during the Shabbat morning *Torah* reading in addition to the *Maftir Aliyah*, which goes to the B'nei Mitzvah. The first is for a *Kohane* (a descendent of Temple priests) and the second for a *Levi* (a descendent from the Tribe of Levi).

The remaining *Aliyot* are reserved for Israelites. Those getting *Aliyot* should identify themselves as an usher and sit in our "on deck" chair one *Aliyah* ahead of time. People are called up by their Hebrew names: X ben/bat/m'beit (son of/daughter of/from the house of) parent/s' Hebrew names. If someone has a parent who is not Jewish, they will provide that parent's English Name.

Hagbah – After the *Torah* has been read, the scroll is lifted with the columns of words facing the congregation. **This requires one with strong arms and back!**

Gelilah – Once the *Torah* has been lifted, the person honored with *Gelilah*, wrapping the *Torah*, comes forward and dresses the *Torah* by rolling it together and replacing the belt, cover, and all other adornments. **Those unfamiliar with this are encouraged to come in for a practice session.**

English Readings – For example, "A Prayer for Our Country" or "The State of Israel" prayer.

Carrying the *Torah* after the Torah service. This consists of holding the *Torah* (on the right shoulder) while the service leader chants the appropriate prayers. The *Torah* is carried counterclockwise around the sanctuary, and is then returned to the *Aron HaKodesh*. After the ark is closed, the one with this honor is directed back to their seat.

Opening and closing the *Aron HaKodesh* to conclude the Torah service consists of two people standing on either side of the *Aron HaKodesh* to slide open the Ark doors so the *Torah* can be returned to the

Aron HaKodesh. They remain in front of the *Aron HaKodesh* during the procession and then close the ark doors slowly at the Rabbi's direction. Honorees return to their seats after the procession. **This honor is usually assigned to the parents/guardians.**

RABBI / GIFT PRESENTATIONS & PARENTS' TALK

After the *Maftir Aliyah* is chanted by the B'nei Mitzvah, the Rabbi and a congregation representative will say a few words and present gifts. If not already on the Bimah, the parents will be asked to come up for a special prayer with the child. (See Appendix B). Parents may also choose to share a few words (optional). Should this be the case, please know that the congregation has entrusted the Rabbi with the responsibility that everything said or done on the Bimah is appropriate. A copy of any "Parents' Talk" is to be given to the Rabbi no later than the week before the B'nei Mitzvah. Should there be concern about any aspect of the talk, the Rabbi will contact you to talk about it.

FAMILY PICTURES

If you would like to have pictures taken to commemorate this occasion, we will be more than happy to accommodate you during the week before the B'nei Mitzvah date. Pictures that do not involve taking out the Torah or opening the Ark do not need the Rabbi's presence. If the family does want the Ark to be opened and the Torah removed, the Rabbi's presence is required. The Rabbi's role in picture taking is to set up pictures that parallel moments in the service. The family should coordinate with the Rabbi the time slot when these shots will be taken and his presence required. Please notify the office or the Rabbi to make arrangements.

DISPLAYS

At Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills, displays in the synagogues are not allowed at any time. A sign is posted in the entryway with the name of the child. Additionally, writing is not permitted on Shabbat, so sign-in books are not allowed.

PROGRAMS

We recommend creating and printing a unique individual program for your B'nei Mitzvah. A program can explain the ceremony, Shabbat practices, and personalized comments on your child. The BIMAH Team and Rabbi have curated examples and templates for programs and would be more than happy to share them.

THE DAY ITSELF

Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30 AM. Please arrive by 9:20 AM; family and friends of the B'nei Mitzvah will be shown to their seats by ushers. Services end at approximately 12:15 PM. We strongly recommend that your child's friends who may not be familiar with a traditional Shabbat morning service be encouraged to arrive around 10:30 AM.

SHABBAT CUSTOMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Becoming a B'nei Mitzvah is a happy and festive occasion for our young people and their families. It is an event with a major religious significance and appropriate reverence is required. It is important that everyone respect our synagogue and those worshipping with us on this important day in your family's life. Please remember that this is a House of Worship and Shabbat is the Jewish day of rest; a time to put the week's ordinary activities aside. Traditional Shabbat observance includes some unique traditions that enable the creation of an appropriate spiritual atmosphere.

We ask that you and your guests exercise good judgment in behavior, language, and dress.

KIPPAH / TALLIT (PRAYER SHAWL)

We ask that **all** men cover their heads by wearing a **Kippah** during services in the sanctuary. Wearing a head covering is optional for women. In the sanctuary, wearing a Tallis is encouraged but optional for Jewish men and women though required for Jewish men over B'nei Mitzvah age while on the **Bimah**. **All participating individuals called to the Bimah must wear a Kippah/headcovering, regardless of gender.**

LIVE FLAME

Lighting candles is prohibited on Shabbat in the building or Temple property.

MONEY

In keeping with the spiritual focus of Shabbat, no business dealings/payments are to take place on Shabbat.

PHOTOGRAPHY / LIVE-STREAMING / WRITING / CELL PHONES

Photography, sign-in boards, or cell phone use (except in an emergency) are inappropriate in the synagogue during Shabbat services or **Kiddush**. The service is automatically Live-Streamed and Zoomed. CD of service can be purchased.

MODESTY

We ask that all our guests dress modestly: shirts or blouses covering the shoulders. Pants that are knee-length or longer are appropriate, as are at least knee-length dresses.

CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

The family of the B'nei Mitzvah is responsible for the conduct and behavior of the children who are your guests the entire time they are on synagogue property. This expectation extends to all Temple spaces inside or outside the building. We have found that it is constructive for those unfamiliar with Shabbat Services to include an explanation of Temple customs and expectations in the invitation. Babysitting during services can be arranged. Contact the office with any questions.

APPLAUDING

While there is often clapping when we sing or pray, since leading the service is not a performance, it is not considered appropriate to applaud on the Sabbath.

CANDY

It is not our Synagogue's custom to throw candy at a B'nei Mitzvah. We reserve this for weddings!

SMOKING

The Synagogue does not permit smoking of any kind anywhere in the building or on its premises (including the parking lot).

SIDDUR (PRAYER BOOKS) AND CHUMASHIM (PENTATEUCH)

Please do not place these books on the floor, as they are sacred texts.

CELEBRATING AT CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM OF THE BLUE HILLS

DELIVERIES

All deliveries for items associated with your B'nei Mitzvah must arrive before the office closes on Friday at 2:00 PM. Please coordinate your deliveries with the office staff.

ACCOMMODATOR/CATERING

We strongly recommend that families engage an accommodator/caterer for the ceremony day. An accommodator is a non-Jewish person who helps with the logistics of the Kiddush luncheon. On Saturday, an accommodator will ensure that tables are set up, decorations are placed, and food is appropriately laid out.

Most importantly, an accommodator ensures the family enjoys every second of the day. You can be in the Sanctuary and know that everything is in control.

The BIMAH Team and office have a list of approved accommodators and Kosher caterers.

KOSHER CATERING AND FOOD/DRINK

Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills has a Kashrut policy. All foodstuffs brought into the synagogue must be certified Kosher.

Caterers are responsible for clearing tables, leaving the kitchen neat and clean, disposing of refuse in plastic bags, and depositing them in the dumpster outside the kitchen.

All catering must be delivered before the office closes on Friday at 2:00 PM.

VENDORS

All new vendors who come into the building must show proof of insurance to the office. The office has a list of vendors who are already approved.

RECYCLING / COMPOST POLICY

All paper good and cups, etc must be compostable. Contact the office for details

RESERVING SPACE AT CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM OF THE BLUE HILLS

WORKING WITH THE OFFICE

Families coordinate the ceremony and after-ceremony activities with the office manager. It is recommended that families set up an in-person meeting with the office manager to review plans. The office manager will make necessary arrangements with the maintenance staff and be the point of

contact for any questions regarding the facility. The office manager must know the days and times that deliveries are planned.

The setup and clean up after the Kiddush is the responsibility of the B'nei Mitzvah family. To guarantee that no personal things or food are left behind, the B'nei family should arrange to return to the synagogue the following day. Families who don't return the kitchen to a clean state will be charged a cleaning fee.

The entire synagogue must be returned to its proper condition, including any other rooms used.

DECORATIONS

Event hosts are responsible for setting up any decoration of their event space. We recommend having a designated person responsible for setting up any centerpieces, flowers, tablecloths, etc. Please contact your caterer, party planner, or private linen company to rent linens for your event.

Helium balloons, glitter, confetti, Styrofoam chips, hard bouncing balls, or other decorations may not be used. Decorations that adhere to the walls are not allowed.

MUSIC

After the Congregational component of the *Kiddush* luncheon is over (approx. 1:15 PM), live or electronic music is permitted because we understand the luncheon to have transitioned into a private family event.

PARKING, OVERFLOW PARKING, AND BUSES

The Temple parking lot can accommodate a maximum of 40 cars.

AS A MATTER OF SENSITIVITY TO OUR NEIGHBORS, NO TEMPLE-RELATED PARKING ON LODGE OR MAITLAND STREETS.

Parking is permitted on both sides of Pleasant Street. When necessary, arrangements can be made with St. Elizabeth's Church for a fee (two blocks away on Randolph Ave) for overflow parking.

Coordinate arrangements with the office if you plan to transport guests by a hired bus after services.

TIMELINE

JANUARY OF KITAH GIMEL / 6TH GRADE:

- Speak with Rabbi to discuss B'nei MITZVAH date preferences.
- The date is coordinated with the Spiritual Life & Ritual Committee and confirmed by the office.

NINE MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE:

- Speak with the Education Director to arrange for tutoring to begin.

6 – 8 MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE (DEPENDING ON SUMMER PLANS):

- Tutoring 30 minutes/week begins for 25 total sessions.
- The child and parent/s begin attending Shabbat morning services.
- As tutoring progresses, the child leads Shabbat morning services three times. B'nei MITZVAH fees are due.

SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE:

- Purchase a *Tallit* for your child!
- Ordering *Kippot* is optional.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE:

- Rabbi will arrange a meeting with your child to begin working on his/her/their *D'var* Torah.

TWO MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE:

- The honor sheet is completed and returned to the Rabbi.
- All remaining fees to the Temple are paid in full.

FOUR WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE:

- *D'var Torah* is completed.
- Send office Application and License Agreement

2 - 4 WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE:

- The Education Director and the Rabbi set a "run-through" day and time.
- Contact the office and the Rabbi to set up a time to use Sanctuary for picture taking.
- Meet with the Rabbi with any final questions or concerns.
- Parent/s write "talk" and share it with the Rabbi

- Send office Meeting/Event Request Form
- Send office service and lunch layout (see the end of Meeting/Event Request Form)

- Print programs

THE WEEK BEFORE THE B'NEI MITZVAH:

- "Run-through" for child and parent/s on the *Bimah* with Education Director and Rabbi.
- Family Pictures.
- To have to the shul before 2:00 PM:
 - Catering/food for Kiddush
 - Lunch
 - Challot for Hamotzi
 - Grape juice for Kiddush (and wine if providing)
 - Programs
 - Kippahs (if providing)
 - Tablecloths (if providing your own)
 - Flowers for tables on Saturday (if having)
 - Flowers/plants for either side of the Bimah

THE DAY OF THE B'NEI MITZVAH:

- Reminder to bring:
 - Tallitim (for B'nei Mitzvah and anyone else who will wear one in the immediate family)
 - Personal Kippah (for B'nei Mitzvah child or family members)
 - D'var Torah
 - Siddur (if there are notes in it for the services)
 - Haftorah
 - Parent talk

PARENTS BLESSINGS

Parent Blessings

For Daughters

יְשַׁמַּח אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה
יְבָרֵךְ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֵךְ
יָאֵר ה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַחַנֵּךְ
יִשְׂאֵה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֵּׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

*Y'simaich Elohim k'sarah, rivka, rachel v'leah.
Yivareichayich Adonai v'yishmarayich.
Ya'er Adonai panav elayich v'yihunayich.
Yisah Adonai panav alayich vayasem lach shalom.*

May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah:
May the Holy One bless you and keep you.
May the Holy One shine light upon you and be gracious to you.
May the Holy One turn towards you and grant you peace.

For Sons

יְשַׁמַּח אֱלֹהִים כְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה
יְבָרֵךְ ה' וְיִשְׁמְרֵךְ
יָאֵר ה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַחַנֵּךְ
יִשְׂאֵה' פְּנֵיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֵּׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

*Y'simcha Elohim k'ephraim v'chi'menashe.
Yivarechecha Adonai v'yishmarecha.
Ya'er Adonai panav elecha v'yihunecha.
Yisa Adonai panav elecha vayasem lecha shalom.*

May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe:
May the Holy One bless you and keep you.
May the Holy One shine light upon you and be gracious to you.
May the Holy One turn towards you and grant you peace.

Gender Neutral – Delete first sentence in Hebrew and English or say both.

Shehechyanu

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמַּן הַזֶּה

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech Ha'olam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are you, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this moment.

HONORS WORKSHEET

Honor Sheet for B'nei Mitzvah- Shabbat Morning Service

Child's name: English _____ Hebrew _____

Date of Service: _____ Torah Portion _____ Haftarah _____

Honors (In Order of Service)

Open/Close Ark: (Parents) _____

Carry Torah: English Name _____

Aliyot to the Torah for Jewish family or friends: *B'nei Mitzvah family may assign up to 4 of these 7. Do not assign Parent/Child and Siblings consecutive Aliyot. Couples may come up together.*

Kohayn*: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Levi*: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Third: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Fourth: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Fifth: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Sixth: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Seventh: English Name: _____ Hebrew: _____

Maftir Child's: Hebrew Name: _____ ben/bat/m'beit _____

Hagbah (lift Torah) English Name: _____

Glee-lah (Wrap Torah – must be at least 13): English Name: _____

Holding Torah during chanting of Haftarah (optional): English Name: _____

Heb. or English Prayer for Israel (p.149): English Name: _____

English Prayer for Peace** (p.149): English Name: _____

Open/Close Ark (Parents): _____

Carry Torah back to Ark: English Name: _____

OTHER ISSUES / CONCERNS:

PLEASE RETURN THIS LIST TO RABBI AT LEAST 4 WEEKS BEFORE SERVICE!

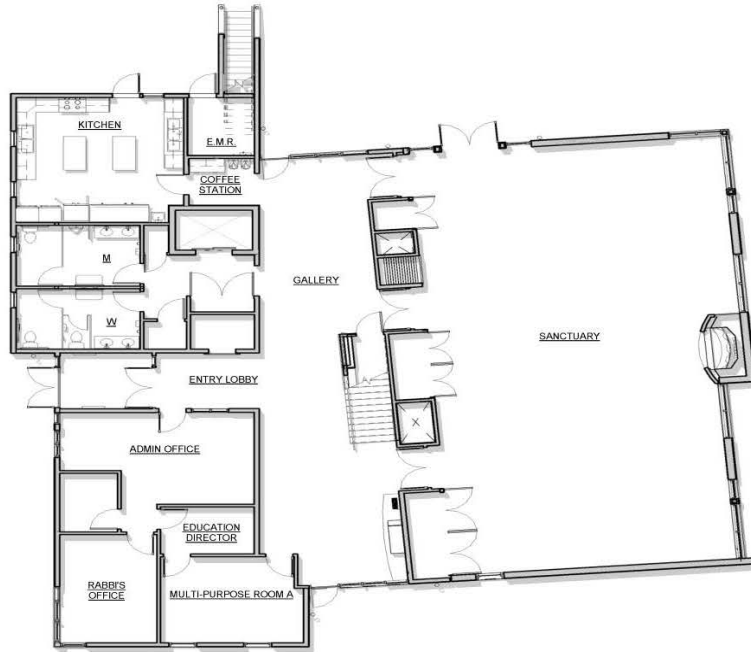
* If you do not have a Kohayn or Levi an appropriate congregant will be given this honor.

** Person does not have to be Jewish for these English readings.

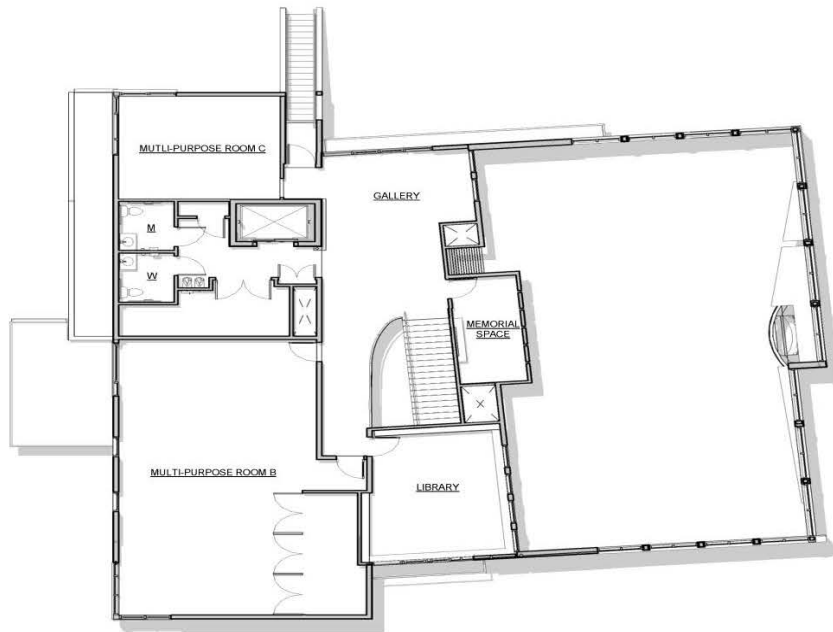
Questions? Contact Rabbi Benjamin at RabbiFredBenjamin@gmail.com or call 617-698-3394

TEMPLE FLOOR PLAN

Temple Floor Plan First Floor



Second Floor



FACILITY USE FORM

[HTTPS://WWW.BETHSHALOMBLUEHILLS.ORG/SPIRITUAL-LIFE/LIFE-CYCLE-
EVENTS/](https://www.bethshalombluehills.org/spiritual-life/life-cycle-events/)