

בֵּר מִצְוָה

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah

H A N D B O O K

בַּת מִצְוָה

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## Welcome

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**C**ongratulations on this milestone in your child's life! You are about to embark on an exciting journey toward your son or daughter becoming a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. This handbook has been created to lead you through this process and help you prepare for your special day.

Please read the material carefully. If you have any personal, family, or religious questions, we encourage you to contact Rabbi Joshua Gruenberg or Rabbi Wechsler. If you have any procedural or synagogue questions, please contact Cantor Lichterman or Marci Scher. We will work together throughout this exciting time to ensure that your family has a beautiful and fulfilling experience.

In anticipation of welcoming your child into the community as a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*, we wish you and your entire family a hearty *mazal tov*.

**Chizuk Amuno Congregation**

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NOTES:

[A series of 18 horizontal grey bars for taking notes.]

## Message from our Rabbis

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Dear Friends:

One of our great joys as rabbis at Chizuk Amuno Congregation and Schools, is to work together with *B'nai Mitzvah* families during this important time in your lives. It is a beautiful privilege to partner with families as they embark upon the journey of their child becoming a *Bat/Bar Mitzvah*. We are mindful of the importance of our task in helping to guide your family as your child takes these vital steps towards Jewish adulthood.

We also know that this is a significant moment in your life as parents, as the words uttered at the baby naming or *Berit Milah*, "*zeh ha-katan gadol yihyeh*" ("May this little one become great!") have indeed come to pass. The book of Proverbs instructs us, "Educate a child according to their way, and even as they age the knowledge will remain." We believe that a big piece of the *Bnei Mitzvah* process, is students developing personal relationships with the clergy. We look forward to creating these bonds, as we hope that through this process, your child will understand the meaning of this important milestone and their own perspective on the world and on the *Torah*.

Becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is cause for celebration for the entire family. We are here to guide you through every step of this process. In this handbook, you will find information for everything that you will encounter during this important time. We hope this exciting time is filled with joy, and that it is not too stressful. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. We are looking forward to spending time with you and your child in the months and years to come.

*L'Shalom,*

Rabbi Joshua Z. Gruenberg

Rabbi Debi Wechsler







**NOTES:**

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah Training**

**B'nei Mitzvah Process**

Cantor Lichterman, contacts families to arrange an orientation meeting about nine months before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date. The goal of this meeting is to explain the process of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah at Chizuk Amuno. It is also a chance for you to ask any questions pertaining to this very meaningful time in your family's life.

He will talk with you and your child about the meaning of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, the obligation of a hesed project, the wearing of a *tallit* and *tefillin*, and the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* training. Our Rabbis are also available and involved in these preparations and discussions. You will also receive the English translations of your child's *Haftarah* and *Torah* portions along with some helpful commentary to support family study at home.

Cantor Lichterman follows your child's progress and helps to ensure that training is individualized to your child's specific needs and style of learning. Throughout the training process, he also serves as a liaison to other staff members. We encourage you to contact Cantor Lichterman or our Rabbis with your questions or concerns at any time during your child's preparation toward becoming a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*.

**The Madrikhim Program**

During your family meeting with the Cantor, he will evaluate your child's Hebrew reading skills and explain the tutoring program. The program emphasizes Hebrew reading, proper diction, and knowledge of *Haftarah* and *Torah* trope (musical cantillation).

Cantor Lichterman personally works with the student as long as required to bring the student's basic skills in Hebrew and trope to the proper level. Then, under the supervision of the Cantor, a *madrikh/a* (tutor) is assigned to meet with the student on a weekly basis for 30 minutes. These *madrikhim* are very carefully selected from our teenage community and

are trained by the Cantor. The role of the *madrikh/a* is to teach students their *Haftarah* and *Torah* portions as well as to serve as a role model for them.

Cantor Lichterman will follow your child's progress and supervise the *madrikhim* so that tutoring is structured according to the individual needs of each student. In addition to weekly tutoring sessions with a *madrikh/a*, your child will study regularly with the Cantor who will also schedule periodic appointments throughout the training process.

You are encouraged to check on the progress of your child at regular intervals with Cantor Lichterman..

**Alternative Training with an Adult Tutor**

Cantor Lichterman carefully evaluates individual learning styles when choosing appropriate training for your child. In some cases, and for a variety of reasons, an adult tutor may be required, recommended, or requested. Paramount is the expectation that *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* training be a positive and challenging growth experience. If extra sessions are required to bring the student to the appropriate level, additional fees may apply.

**Rehearsals for the Bar and Bat Mitzvah Student**

Each student has at least one rehearsal with his/her *madrikh/a* or adult tutor in the Sanctuary or Hoffberger Chapel, to practice chanting from the *Torah* scroll and to become accustomed to using a microphone from the bimah. In addition, Cantor Lichterman conducts a family dress rehearsal during the week prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, usually at 4 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. In the case of a double *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, a joint rehearsal is held with both families. Immediately before or after this rehearsal is often the time that families take photographs in the sanctuary. Please coordinate your photo session with Jenny Baker at the synagogue.





## Schedule of Services

### **S H A B B A T**

- Services start at 9:15 a.m. and end at approximately noon.

### **HOURS OF REGULAR WEEKDAY SERVICES**

Weekday services are conducted in the Hoffberger Chapel as follows:

#### • **Sunday services**

Morning services begin at 9:15 a.m. and evening services begin at 6:15 p.m.

#### • **Weekday services**

Morning services begin at 7:30 a.m. and evening services begin at 6:15 p.m.

#### • **Friday evening services**

*Minhah* begins at 6 p.m.  
*Kabbalat Shabbat* begins at 6:15 p.m.

- **Saturday afternoon/evening services** depend on the time of sundown.

## Synagogue Services

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### **Weekday Services**

You and your family are invited to attend the morning service in the Hoffberger Chapel on either the Monday or Thursday prior to your child's *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date. This will be the first opportunity for your child to be called up for an *aliyah* as a member of the Chizuk Amuno adult community. Following services there is a breakfast in your child's honor. Services generally begin at 7:30 a.m. You can expect breakfast to be over between 8:45 and 9 a.m.

For guidelines on appropriate dress, please refer to the section to the right, "Dress Recommendations." Shorts, t-shirts, jeans, and sandals are not acceptable attire.

### **Friday Evening Services**

Families are invited to attend *Kabbalat Shabbat* services at Chizuk Amuno. Ushering in *Shabbat* in synagogue on Friday evening is a beautiful way to begin your weekend celebration. There are opportunities for your child to participate and, thereby, add meaning and memories to your *simhah*.

You are also welcome to host your family for *Shabbat* dinner at the *shul*. Our Synagogue Administrator, Jenny Baker, will be happy to speak with you about planning and reserving a room.

### **Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Seating in the Sanctuary**

**When there is a single *Bar or Bat Mitzvah***, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* student sits on the *Hazzan's* side of the *bimah*. Following the *Torah* service, the child joins his/her family in the third row on the *Hazzan's* side of the Sanctuary.

**When there is a double *Bar/Bat Mitzvah***, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* student whose last name is first in the alphabet sits by the rabbis on the *bimah*. His/her family will be seated on that same side of the Sanctuary. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* whose last name is second in the alphabet sits by the *Hazzan* on the *bimah* with the family seated on that same side of the Sanctuary. Following the *Torah* service, they join their respective families in the third row of the Sanctuary.

### **Dress Recommendations**

When we come before God and community, we do so with respect and reverence. We ask that modest clothing be worn.

*B'not Mitzvah* and their families are expected to wear dresses of an appropriate length and modesty. Dresses and suit jackets should cover the shoulders and upper arms. Other women receiving honors may wear pantsuits.

Men receiving honors are expected to wear a suit and tie.

For the weekday service and *aliyah*, similar dress requirements are to be followed. Boys should wear a button-down shirt, long trousers, socks, and shoes. Please keep in mind that shorts and sandals are not respectful attire for this service.



**NOTES:**

**Honors During the *Torah* Service**

The Rabbis will help you distribute your *aliyot* and other honors when you meet with them prior to your *simḥah*. People receiving honors must be Jewish adults (13 years old or older). Please inform those people whom you are honoring to arrive at services by 9:45 a.m.

**Women and men who are honored with an *aliyah* are each expected to wear a *tallit*.** If you do not have your own *tallit*, a *tallit* will be provided.

**During services at which *tefillin* are worn (most weekdays but not on *Shabbat*), men who receive an honor must wear *tefillin*.** Women are welcome to wear *tefillin*, but are not obligated to do so in order to receive an honor. Our Ritual Director is prepared to assist anyone who wishes to don *tefillin*.

**Following is a description of the available honors:**

**• *Aliyah***

A person is “called up” to stand by the *Torah* when it is read and recites the blessings before and after the reading. We recommend that you suggest to those who are being given *aliyot* the importance of reviewing the *Torah* blessings to avoid any embarrassment. Please refer to the *Torah* blessings on page 15.

**• *Gelilah***

After the *Torah* is read it is raised and shown to the congregation. When the *Torah* is rolled, then the *Gelilah* fastens the belt snugly and replaces the *Torah* mantle, breastplate, *yad*, and crown.

**• *Petiḥa***

Two people are honored with opening and closing the doors of the Holy Ark (*Aron HaKodesh*) before the *Torah* is read, and two people when it is replaced in the Ark.

Generally, each family receives three *aliyot* to the *Torah*: one for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, another for the parents of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, and a third for a family member or friend.

The parents of each *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* have the *aliyah* immediately preceding their son or daughter so that they can stand next to their child on the *bimah* and recite the appropriate Parent’s Prayer at that time.

Each family, for both single and double *B’nei Mitzvah*, will also receive three additional honors: one person for *gelilah* (dressing the *Torah*) and two people for one of the *petiḥot* (opening the Ark).

The Rabbis are happy to help you in planning your family’s participation in the Service. Please refer to the *Shabbat* Service Honors form on page 20.

**Honors Reserved for the Congregation**

On practically every *Shabbat* morning there are others in the synagogue who are honored with *aliyot*. Parents naming a new child, persons observing *yahrzeit*, a couple about to be married, individuals celebrating special birthdays and anniversaries, and those going to Israel are all entitled to *aliyot*. We reserve two Congregational *aliyot* for these people.







**NOTES:**

***Bar/Bat Mitzvah Kiddush At Chizuk Amuno*** (effective 7/1/2019)

We suggest that in addition to communicating with caterers, you might want to consider our Congregation *Kiddush*. The Chizuk Amuno Catering Department is pleased to offer the following dairy, *Kiddush Luncheon Menus* and Options. Coordinated by Jenny Baker, and prepared by our in-house chef, Annie Hood, our Krieger Auditorium and Esterson Hall are available at no additional charge when using our synagogue caterer.

There is no additional charge for hall rental if you choose our in-house caterer.

Prices subject to change.

***Kiddush Luncheon Menu #1***

- Assorted Bagels and Rolls
- Cream Cheese
- Cheese Platter
- Relish Tray
- Gefilte Fish Bits
- Pickled Herring
- Tuna and Egg Salad
- Choice of 3 Hot Dishes:
  - Kugel, Quiche, Frittata, Mac & Cheese,
  - Baked Ziti, French Toast Casserole,
  - Eggplant Parmesan, Falafel
  - Spinach Pie Casserole, Latkes
- Salad Bar
- Fresh Fruit Platter
- Assorted Dessert & Miniature Pastries
- Ceremonial Challah
- Coffee/Tea Set-ups, Soda, Assorted Juice

\$26 per person

- Wide selection of color linen table cloths, napkins, China, glassware, and silver flatware are included.
- Tables and chairs for seating are provided.
- Menu plans may be enhanced with additional menu food items.
- *Birkat HaMazon* pamphlets are available upon request.
- Liquor and floral centerpieces not included.

***Kiddush Luncheon Menu #2***

- Assorted Bagels and Rolls
- Assorted Flavored Cream Cheese
- Sliced Nova Garnished with Capers
- Whole Whitefish
- Cheese Platter
- Relish Tray
- Humus and Pita Chips
- Gefilte Fish Bits
- Pickled Herring
- Tuna and Egg Salad
- Choice of 3 Hot Dishes:
  - Kugel, Quiche, Frittata, Mac & Cheese,
  - Baked Ziti, French Toast Casserole,
  - Eggplant Parmesan, Falafel
  - Spinach Pie Casserole, Latkes
- Salad Bar
- Fresh Fruit Platter
- Assorted Dessert and Miniature Pastries
- Ceremonial Challah
- Coffee/Tea Set-ups, Soda, Assorted Juice

\$29 per person

- Prices are subject to change due to fluctuations in our costs.
- Final guest count is due 14 days prior to event.
- Payment in full is required one month prior to the function.
- Any additional charges will be billed afterward and must be paid within 10 days of receipt of the bill.

***Kiddush Luncheon Menu #3***

- Assorted Bagels and Rolls
- Assorted Flavored Cream Cheese
- Sliced Nova Garnished with Capers
- Whole Whitefish
- Choice of a Soup, Hot or Cold
- Choice of Salmon, Hot or Cold
- Cheese Platter
- Relish Tray
- Gefilte Fish Bits
- Pickled Herring
- Tuna and Egg Salad
- Choice of 3 Hot Dishes:
  - Kugel, Quiche, Frittata, Mac & Cheese,
  - Baked Ziti, French Toast Casserole,
  - Eggplant Parmesan, Falafel
  - Spinach Pie Casserole, Latkes
- Salad Bar
- Fresh Fruit Platter
- Assorted Dessert and Miniature Pastries
- Ceremonial Challah
- Coffee/Tea Set-ups, Soda, Assorted Juice

\$32 per person



## APPENDIX 1

### Torah Blessings

When called by your Hebrew name, come up to the *Torah* reading table and stand at the reader's right.

Touch the *Torah* with a corner of your *tallit* at the place to which the reader points.

Then kiss that corner of your *tallit*.

**Recite the following blessing for before the *Torah* reading:**

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת ה' הַמְּבָרֵךְ.

*Barukh et Adonai ha-m'vorakh.*

**The congregation then says:**

בְּרוּךְ ה' הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

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

**Then you continue:**

בְּרוּךְ ה' הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

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

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים

וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

*Barukh attah Adonai, eloheinu melek ha-olam,*

*asher bahar banu mi-kol ha-amin,*

*v'natan lanu et torato.*

*Barukh attah Adonai, noten ha-torah.*

The *Torah* reader then chants the *Torah* portion. After the reading again take your *tallit* and touch the *Torah* at the place to which the reader points.

**Then recite the following blessing for after the *Torah* reading:**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,

אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת,

וַחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִמְעַ בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

*Barukh attah Adonai, eloheinu melek ha-olam,*

*asher natan lanu torat emet,*

*v'hayei olam nata b'tokhenu.*

*Barukh attah Adonai, noten ha-torah.*

## APPENDIX 2

### PARENT'S PRAYERS

#### I. Personal Parent's Prayer

These are guidelines to help you write your personal prayer in honor of your son or daughter on the *bimah*:

- Be brief, 150 words or less.
- Be prepared in writing.
- Be sensitive to the setting and share thoughts that are appropriate to a synagogue and prayer gathering.
- Please do not say something that might embarrass your child.

**• Focus on your child's new status as a responsible Jew and the qualities relevant to being a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*.**

We are not interested in the habits of your son's or daughter's childhood. These are better expressed at your reception, if at all. Please do not list all of your son's or daughter's academic or athletic achievements. Rather, select that element of his or her character and personality that you as a parent can best celebrate and appreciate in the presence of God and those worshipping in our congregation.

Please try to connect your brief prayer to this celebration. (For example: Jewish community and life, Jewish family, *Torah*, *mitzvot*, the ethics and traditions of our heritage, family customs, Jewish quotes, ideas, images, etc.)

### II. Blessing Your Child

After your child's *aliyah*, one of the rabbis will lead you in reciting the following:

May you know God's blessings in the experiences of your life as did our ancestors and their children.

**For a daughter:**

יְשִׁימֶךָ אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׂרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה.

*Y'simekh Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rahel, v'Leah*

May God make you as our matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah.

Blessed is God for the merit of celebrating this moment as \_\_\_\_\_ becomes a *Bat Mitzvah*.

**For a son:**

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶפְרַיִם וּבְמִנַּשֶּׁה.

*Y'simkha Elohim k'Efrayim uk'Menashe*

May God make you as our ancestors Ephraim and Menashe.

Blessed is God for the merit of celebrating this moment as \_\_\_\_\_ becomes a *Bar Mitzvah*.

### III. *Shehehyanu*

Following the *Haftarah*, one of our rabbis will lead you in the following prayer of thanksgiving:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְן הַזֶּה.

*Barukh atah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha'olam*

*she-he-he-ya-nu, v'ki-y'ma-nu, v'hi-gi-ya-nu*

*laz-man ha-zeh.*

Blessed are you, Lord our God, Sovereign of the universe, for the gift of our lives, for all that sustains us, and for our reaching this special day.



**NOTES:**

**V.** O God of all humanity: We lift our voices in gratitude that the *Torah* has come into the world through the Jewish people. We lift our voices in gratitude for the ideals it teaches: justice, compassion, devotion, and the partnership of mind, heart, and deed.

We lift our voices in gratitude that on this day \_\_\_\_\_ takes his/her place among the people of Israel. We pray that he/she will do so with pride and joy. As You called Israel to be a light to the nations, so, too, we pray that our son/daughter will be his/her own ray of light to the world.

May you always cherish your precious inheritance. May your heart always be filled with joy, your mind always pursue knowledge, wisdom and insight. May you always speak and act with kindness, and may you be a worthy sustainer of the teachings of *Torah*, teachings that have given light, meaning and inspiration to all humanity.

—Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin, *Putting God on the Guest List*  
(Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1993)

**VI.** May you live to see your world fulfilled,  
May your destiny be for worlds still to come,  
And may you trust in generations past and yet to be.  
May your heart be filled with intuition  
And your words be filled with insight.  
May songs of praise ever be upon your tongue  
And your vision be on a straight path before you.  
May your eyes shine with the light of holy words  
And your face reflect the brightness of the heavens.  
May your lips speak wisdom  
And your fulfillment be in righteousness  
Even as you ever yearn to hear the words  
Of the Holy Ancient One of Old.

—*Talmud Berakhot 17a*

**VII.** May your eyes sparkle with the light of *Torah*,  
And your ears hear the music of its words.  
May the space between each letter of the scrolls  
Bring warmth and comfort to your soul.  
May the syllables draw holiness from your heart,  
And may this holiness be gentle and soothing to the world.  
May your study be passionate,  
And meanings bear more meanings  
Until life itself arrays itself to you as a dazzling wedding feast.  
And may your conversation, even of the commonplace,  
Be a blessing to all who listen to your words  
And see the *Torah* glowing on your face.

—Danny Siegel, inspired by *Talmud Berakhot 17a*















Chizuk Amuno  
CONGREGATION  
ק"ק חזוק אמונה

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