

# B'nai Mitzvah at MVHC

## Choosing a Date

Choose a date with Rabbi once Shabbat service requirements are up to date or once there is an approved plan for completion. This date is conditional on the successful fulfillment of service requirements. To confirm a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, a \$500 supplemental fee for usage is required.

It is understood that the student commits to completing their final year in Hebrew School even if the Bar or Bat Mitzvah takes place before the end of the year.

## Shabbat Service Requirements

During the year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, students are required for nine of those months to come to 3 Shabbat services/month. Two of those services must be on Shabbat morning. In other words, over the course of the year before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the student must come to 27 services. Rosh Hashanah morning and Yom Kippur Kol Nidre morning are a required part of those 27 services. Students are requested to come on time and to dress appropriately for the occasion.

## Tutoring

1. Tutoring begins around 9 months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with weekly meetings from 15-30 minutes. The Rabbi meets with the family to assign a tutor and explain the process. The Rabbi will check in with each student 1/month and meet with the student the last 3 weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The Rabbi will work with each student on their d'var Torah and on planning the service with the family. A member of the congregation assigned by the Rabbi will tutor Torah chanting and review prayers. It is important that students come on time for their appointment and come prepared. If they are not able to prepare that week, please let the tutor know in advance so they have the option to reschedule.
2. Students will learn how to chant Torah, prepare a d'var Torah, will, lead select prayers in the service. We adapt our program to each student's strengths and learning styles. The typical requirements are:
  - a. Torah chanting 9-21 verses
  - b. D'var Torah
  - c. Prayers; Friday night Kiddush and candles; Saturday morning Shema V'Ahavta, Torah service, Aliya Blessing, Tallit Blessing
  - d. Mitzvah Project

## **Planning the Service**

1. When the date is chosen, let the office know the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's full Hebrew name.
2. Over the course of that year, decide on a Tallit and Kippah for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This can be purchased, created, or handed down to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
3. **Honors: Aliyot and Torah Honors** - The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is welcome to invite guests to come up for some of the Aliyot. An Aliya is an expression of belonging to the Jewish people and therefore are reserved for Jewish family and friends. It is the responsibility of the family to notify all those who will be honored. Parents who are not Jewish are welcome up to the bima to stand with their spouse during the Aliya. For Torah honors such as ark openings and dressing the Torah, we also request that you ask Jewish family and friends for these honors. *Please let your honorees know that they must wear a tallis (and for men a tallis and yarmulke) when they come up to the bima for Torah honors. If they are saying the Aliya blessing, please encourage them to practice before the service. The blessing is recorded on our website.*

Give Rabbi names for Aliyot 3 weeks before service  
(English name and Hebrew name \_\_\_\_\_ ben/bat \_\_\_\_\_), as well as the names for other Torah honors.

4. Readings: Readings are open to everyone including non-Jewish family and friends. You are invited to choose up to three English readings for friends and family members. Please give the Rabbi these readings and the names of readers no later than 3 weeks before the service.
5. A run-through of the whole service will take place 2 weeks in advance of the service. Please schedule with the Rabbi.
6. Parents are invited to say words of blessing to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah youth during the service and are given up to 5 minutes for all expressions of blessing and personal words. Beyond that, family and friends are welcome to continue with personal words at the Kiddush or party.

## **Shabbat Etiquette at MVHC Services**

We try to keep the synagogue and the sanctuary a special and holy place over Shabbat and holidays. Regardless of our home practices, we therefore join to make the sanctuary a place that reflects a Shabbat of connection, holiness, prayer and rest. Therefore, please let your guests know that there is no photography permitted during the service. Use of cell phones and/or electronic devices are not permitted anywhere inside the synagogue or outside the front entrance on Shabbat and holidays. Please refrain from writing in the sanctuary on Shabbat or holidays. Please assign 4 ushers to pass out prayer books and to help seat people.

## **Oneg and Kiddush**

1. It is our custom that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family sponsors the Oneg on Friday night and the Kiddush for Saturday morning. Some B'nai Mitzvah classes organize a co-op so that families sponsor each other's Friday night Oneg. MVHC supplies the wine and challah.
2. In order to be inclusive of all our members, our Onegs and Kiddushim are pareve/milchig (no meat including chicken or chicken broths). We therefore ask you to check with the office about approved caterers and permitted menus before you finalize your plans. Please submit menu to office 3 weeks in advance.
3. Check in with the Office Manager about plans for clean up after the Oneg and Kiddush, which will be your responsibility in order for the Center to be left in the condition it was prior to your event. The Office Manager can arrange cleaning services if this is your preference.
4. Let the office know 4 weeks in advance how many invited guests are expected so she can have the room set up appropriately.
5. Flatware, linens and other supplies for reception are to be supplied by the family.
6. All left over food is to be removed after your event.

## **Contribution**

It is a Jewish custom to express gratitude to the community for life-cycle events with contributions that help maintain the community. Please consider a contribution to the synagogue in honor of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

## **Bar and Bat Mitzvah Checklist**

- Choose a date with the Rabbi and provide office with student's full Hebrew name
- Set up tutoring with Rabbi
- Decide on a Tallit and Kippah for the Bar/ Bat Mitzvah
- Discuss with Rabbi Aliyot and Torah Honors
- Give Rabbi names for Aliyot three weeks before service as well as names for other Torah honors
- Schedule run through with Rabbi two weeks before the service
- Prepare parent(s) blessings at Bar/ Bat Mitzvah
- Oneg Friday night traditionally sponsored by the family or friends of Bar/ Bat Mitzvah
- All Onegs and Kiddushim are pareve/milchig. Submit menu to the office for Rabbi approval three weeks prior to event
- Set up and Cleanup (sanctuary, social hall, library, classroom and kitchen) is responsibility of family. We can refer you to custodian/cleaning services. Please discuss with Office Manager.

## **Payments and Deposit**

Dues and school tuition must be paid in full at least one month before event.

The fee of \$500.00 is required one month prior to event.

You will be billed for any additional service(s) two weeks after event.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_