

[Front Cover Text:]

[Bar/Bat] Mitzvah Celebration of

[English Name of Child]

[Hebrew Name of the Child in Hebrew (if you would like)]

You may use a Jewish graphic or a picture of your son/daughter—current or as a young kid—no baby pics with no clothes!

Shabbat [name of parasha]

English Date

Hebrew Date

[insert] Congregation Beth El Logo

[Inside Pages]

Shabbat Shalom! We welcome you to Congregation Beth El and are very happy you are joining us for this joyous occasion when [name of child] will be called to the Torah as a [Bar/Bat] Mitzvah, and lead the congregation in prayer. This pamphlet is meant to be a helpful, informative guide to your experience today.

[personal note from parents]

Upon Entering the Sanctuary

Please feel free to sit wherever you are comfortable. At your seat you will find a small blue prayer book, *Siddur Sim Shalom*. For much of the morning, we will be following the services in the *Siddur*. Periodically, Rabbi Roston will announce the page number. Note that the *Siddur* is read from right to left, opening opposite from English books. English translations of most prayers are included in the *Siddur*. You should feel free to follow along in Hebrew or English, or meditate on a reading that grabs your attention. Please refrain from engaging in conversation while in the sanctuary.

You will also find a larger red book, the *Etz Chaim Chumash*, in the slot in front of your seat. It contains the Hebrew text of the *Torah*, along with an English translation, commentaries on the *Torah*, and readings from the Prophets and will be used during the Torah service.

Customs

It is the custom of our synagogue for all men and boys to cover their heads with a *kippah* or *yarmulke*, as a sign of respect. Women are encouraged to cover their heads as well

and all of the children who learn in our school and become Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Beth El are expected to wear kippah and tallit. All men and women who are approaching the Torah and/or coming onto the *bimah* (pulpit) for an honor are expected to wear a head-covering. The *tallit* (fringed prayer shawl) is worn by all Jewish men over thirteen years old, by all of our *b'nai mitzvah* and by many women who choose to take on the mitzvah. The commandment to wear fringes is part of one of the oldest and most important prayers in Judaism—the Shema. The fringes at the four corners of the *tallit* are called *tzitzit* and they are worn to remind us of God's commandments which sanctify our lives.

In keeping with the commandments governing *Shabbat* observance, the use of cell phones, cameras, and all other electronics is prohibited. It is also prohibited to write or draw. In the lounge, we provide children's books and "Shabbat toys" so that children can sit in the sanctuary, in the back or in the lounge.

[Bat/Bar] Mitzvah

"[Bat/Bar] Mitzvah" refers to a [girl or boy] who has come of age and is now responsible for fulfilling the religious and moral commandments as a full member of the Jewish community. A [bar/bat mitzvah] can be counted in a *minyan* – the ten adults needed to form a quorum for public worship. In recognition of having reached this milestone, [name of child] will [lead services, read from this week's portion from the Torah and from the Book of Prophets, and teach the congregation with a *D'var Torah*—an explanation of the sacred readings as well as how they relate to each other and to modern times.

Worship Services

The Shabbat morning observance is divided into 4 distinct services: the *Pesukei d'Zimra*, *Shacharit*, the *Torah* service and the *Musaf* service.

Pesukei d'Zimra

The first service of the morning is filled with psalms or "verses of song" which reflect on God as Creator and our gratitude for life and the wonders of Creation. It begins with the morning blessings, *Birchot Hashachar*, which should each be answered by the congregation's "Amen."

The Shacharit Service

The Shabbat Shacharit service begins with "*Shochan Ad...*" in the middle of page 105. The *Bar'chu* (page 107 of the *Siddur*) is the formal call to worship and begins a section of the service that emphasizes God's sacred relationship with Israel defined by the commandments and the Torah. In the *Sh'ma* ("listen" or "hear", page 112 of the *Siddur*), we affirm our belief in God as the one God, our commitment to the commandments, our obligation to not forget them and to teach them to our children. It is in the third

paragraph of this prayer (page 113), that we find the commandment to wear *tzitzit* (fringes).

The *Amidah* (literally “standing”, page 115-120 of the *Siddur*) is a prayer of thanks and praise to God. The *Amidah* for Shabbat includes special blessings regarding Shabbat. The final blessing of the *Amidah* is a request for peace.

[If it is Rosh Hodesh, this paragraph is included: *Hallel* (page 133 of the *Siddur*) is a collection of psalms of praise that is read only on certain holidays. Today, we will be singing *Hallel* because, in addition to being Shabbat, today is *Rosh Hodesh* (a holiday marking the beginning of the month) for the Hebrew month of [insert name of the new month.]

The Torah Service

Each *Sefer Torah* (Torah scroll) contains the Five Books of Moses: *B'reishit* (Genesis), *Sh'mot* (Exodus), *Va-Yikra* (Leviticus), *B'Midbar* (Numbers), and *D'varim* (Deuteronomy). When not being read, the Torah scrolls are kept in the *Aron Kodesh* (Holy Ark), which is located in the front of the sanctuary in the middle of the *bimah*.

After some introductory prayers, the *Sefer Torah* is taken out and paraded through the Congregation with ceremony and song. After being paraded around the sanctuary, the *Sefer Torah* is returned to the *bimah*, and the scroll is opened so the *Torah* can be read.

At this point, we turn to the *Etz Chaim Chumash* (the large, red book). The Torah readings for each Shabbat are divided into seven parts, plus an additional part (*maftir*) for a total of 8 readings. For each, an individual is called up (an *Aliyah*), to recite a blessing before and after the reading.

[If it is Rosh Hodesh/Holiday: Usually, we read from only one section of the Torah, the particular *parashah* (portion) for the week. On this morning, however, we will be reading from [two or three] different parts of the Torah.

Rather than having to wait while the scroll is rolled from one section to another, [two/three] *Sifrei Torah* are removed from the *Aron Kodesh* to facilitate these readings.]

Reading from the *Sefer Torah* requires much study and is a difficult skill to master. Unlike the *Chumash*, which contains vowels and trope (melody) marks, the Torah scrolls are handwritten in special ink with a feather quill on parchment paper without vowels or tropes. As the Torah must be flawless, we take special care not to touch the parchment with our hands, which could change the lettering and thus make the Torah not *kosher*. The reader uses a *yad* (pointer in the shape of a hand) to locate the correct place and follow the text.

Each Shabbat, we also read a selection from the Book of Prophets. Frequently, this selection echoes the themes found in the week's Torah reading. Today's reading is from the book of [name of Prophetic book].

A few concluding prayers proceed the return of the *Sifrei Torah* to the *Aron Kodesh* at the end of the Torah service.

The Musaf Service

The *Musaf* (additional) service is said only on Shabbat and holidays, making them distinct from other days. *Musaf* primarily consists of the *Amidah* (standing) prayer, similar in structure and content to the *Amidah* chanted in the *Shacharit* service.

Musaf is completed with a few closing prayers, including *Aleinu*, in which we affirm God's sovereignty over all creation, and the Mourners' *Kaddish* recited by people who are in mourning and by those observing the anniversary of the loss of a loved one. We end services with the hymn *Adon Olam*.

Kiddush Reception

After the concluding prayers, we will remain in the Sanctuary for the blessings over the wine and challah, Kiddush and *haMotzi*. [Name of child] will lead us in the blessing over a cup of grape juice, perform the ritual washing of [his/her] hands, and then say *HaMotzi*, the prayer thanking God for the gift of bread.

Gifts from the Congregation

[Name of child] will receive a package of presents from the congregation representing the three pillars of Jewish life: *Torah* or Study, *Avodah* or Worship, and *Gemilut Hasadim* or Acts of Lovingkindness. A *Tanakh*, or Hebrew Bible, is given as a gift from the congregation. Certificates of congratulations and invitations to participate in our Kadima/USY events as well as a contribution from our Morning Minyan toward [enter the organization for Mitzvah Project] is included. Beth El's Sisterhood gives a Kiddush cup to each [bar or bat] mitzvah child and hopes that the joy felt this day be with [name of child] every Shabbat and Holiday when [he or she] uses this cup. Last, there is a "Passport to Israel" from the Greater MetroWest Jewish Federation that enables our children to receive up to \$1000 in scholarship toward their first educational trip to Israel. This program is cosponsored by Beth El's Men's Club.

A Note from [name of bar/bat mitzvah child]

I want to thank.....family, teachers, all those who supported my work for [mitzvah project]...etc.

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Honors

Opening of the Ark:

First Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Second Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Third Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Fourth Aliyah: Reserved for Congregation
Torah Reader:

Fifth Aliyah: Reserved for Congregation
Torah Reader:

Sixth Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Seventh Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Maftir Aliyah:
Torah Reader:

Haftarah:

Lifting & Dressing the Torah
Hagbah & Gelilah:

Ark Closing: