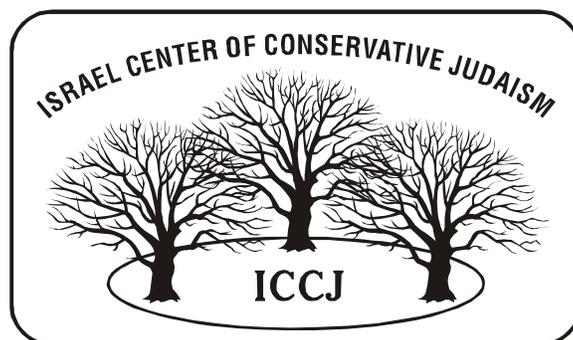


ICCJ
Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Guide
חוברת בר/בת מצוה



Updated 2016/5776

ICCJ

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Significance.....	2
Setting the date for your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony.....	3
Educational requirements for Bar/Bat Mitzvah training.....	4
Other requirements	4
Lessons with the Cantor	5
Synagogue attendance	5-6
Special Programs	7
Compliance with requirements	7
Students with special needs	7
Orientation program	8
The week before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah	8
The Bar/Bat Mitzvah service	9
Honors and aliyot	9-10
Kippot/head coverings	10
Dress code.....	10
Photography/cell phones	10
Flowers.....	11
Congregational kiddush	11
Smoking.....	11
Beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah	11
Financial requirements	11
Conclusion.....	12
Time line	13
Forms Included:	
Aliyot (Honors for Bar/Bat Mitzvah service)	
Aliyot Blessings (English transliteration)	

INTRODUCTION:

Mazal tov! You are about to begin one of the most exciting stages in your family's Jewish life, your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

In order to help you, the Israel Center of Conservative Judaism has compiled this handbook to answer many of the questions you may have regarding certain policies and procedures. A timeline of events has been included at the end of the handbook to assist you in understanding the requirements and activities involved in Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Bar/ Bat Mitzvah committee at the synagogue or our Rabbi.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is an initiation into the adult community. It is a confirmation of a young person's identity as a member of the Jewish community. The preparation and planning for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a family affair and a joyous occasion. We strive to involve the parents and other important family members as much as possible in this important event in the child's life. Children view the process leading up to Bar/Bat Mitzvah in whatever way the family sees it. If it is a joyful and auspicious occasion, filled with a sense of change in the child's role within the family as well as the religion, then that is what the child will experience. This can be a time for the family to reaffirm its own identity as a Jewish family. The ICCJ family rejoices in the opportunity to share this simcha with you. We hope you will truly enjoy this wonderful time in your child's life.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Reaching the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah represents the time when our children are deemed old enough to formally accept responsibility for the ethical, moral and religious traditions of Judaism. It indicates that the child's status has changed and includes certain responsibilities, privileges and obligations as adult members of the Jewish community.

Recognizing the equality of both our sons and daughters, the Conservative Movement has adopted equivalent standards for both sexes with regard to

education and religious requirements. As one of its most basic and fundamental principles, ICCJ is firmly committed to equal participation by men and women within the religious and social framework of the synagogue. Being counted in a minyan, receiving an aliyah and carrying a Torah scroll on Shabbat and Simchat Torah are some of the significant religious rituals and privileges enjoyed by both men and women.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a monumental event in our lives and in the lives of our children. The ceremony, however, marks the achievement of only one milestone in Jewish learning. It is therefore important that you and your child understand that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not the end of religious training, but the beginning of the child's religious education and observance as a young adult.

The focal point of this educational process and every aspect of our Jewish life is the synagogue. ICCJ is not just a house of worship or a religious school. It is a true center for our community. It is a special place where our members can:

- Enjoy a community of Jewish people and families;
- Celebrate holidays;
- Meet other teens in our joint youth programs, including Kadima and USY
- Learn about the richness of our Jewish heritage;
- Pray in an atmosphere of warmth and security;
- Participate in Jewish ritual; and
- Celebrate all our special occasions...such as our children becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

SETTING THE DATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a joyous and momentous occasion! Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations will typically be scheduled for Saturday morning services. When special circumstances arise, our rabbi and the family may create alternative opportunities.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah date is intended to correspond with the child's meeting the educational requirements listed below. A girl must be at least twelve years of age and a boy must be thirteen years old, as measured by her/his Jewish birth date. Typically, our Rabbi and family will schedule the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date approximately **2 years** in advance.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

In order to have a date for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to be assigned and approved by the Rabbi, the child must attain a certain level of Jewish education. The necessary education can be achieved by meeting one of the following minimum requirements:

- Five years of religious school at ICCJ (Ohr Chadash), beginning in the third grade of secular school. If a Bar/Bat Mitzvah occurs during the school year, the child is expected to finish that year.

OR

- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate is a student in good standing at a Jewish day school (such as Solomon Schechter).

OR

- The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is enrolled in private lessons as approved by our rabbi.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Spiritual Meetings with our Rabbi:

It is important that the children develop a relationship with our rabbi as they begin to explore their Jewish and spiritual identity. We expect that children will meet with the ICCJ Rabbi regularly to discuss spiritual aspects of their upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Jewish life, as well as write their dvar Torah. Children will meet with our rabbi approximately six times leading up to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In addition, children will be given our rabbi's email address and encouraged to send their thoughts and reflections.

Lessons with a Tutor:

Each child will meet with a tutor, which will be provided by our rabbi, in conjunction with the child's religious education. Parents should start these lessons approximately one year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date to determine the course of study. In most cases, the tutor will teach the child, **at minimum**, the aliyah blessings, the haftorah blessings and the haftorah.

Synagogue attendance:

Shabbat services are a weekly affirmation by members of the congregation of their community and identity as a Jewish people. It is important that children and their parents regularly attend Shabbat services. It is essential for the child to learn to read and chant the prayers that are part of the services and to familiarize him or herself with the nature and order of the religious service prior to the day s/he is going to be the one on the bimah.

Of course it is desirable for families to attend services on a weekly basis, but it is understandable that this is not possible for many families. However, since attending services is an important part of the child's identity as a Jewish person and integral to the purpose of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, it is essential that candidates attend Shabbat services at least

once per month for the year or two leading up to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

During the few months immediately prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the child should attend services in the main sanctuary on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This is where the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration will take place, and familiarity with the routine of the services will help the child become comfortable and self-assured. **The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration is even more meaningful when members of the congregation and the child know each other.**

Special Programs:

Bar/Bat children will be asked to work on a special Mitzvah project to complete during the year leading up to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The theme of each individual project, to be determined by the students in conjunction with our rabbi, can include volunteer work, fundraising, letter writing or any other activity that will help others. Parents should begin talking to their child about Mitzvah projects and help their child identify causes or issues of significance to them and how the child can follow up on those ideas. Parents do Mitzvot every day and they should discuss those with the child since it is a central principle of our religion.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

ICCJ will work closely with the family of any child with special needs. Please feel comfortable speaking with our rabbi regarding your child's needs. A course of study that suits your child will be developed so he or she can become part of our religious community by celebrating Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

ORIENTATION PROGRAM:

From time to time, our rabbi will organize orientation sessions for parents of children who are soon to celebrate their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

In a small group setting, parents will be able to share their concerns and questions, and discuss those issues that arise with the planning and preparation of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

In addition, parents will be asked to volunteer to help out at the Synagogue during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah of other members' children.

Parents will help direct guests and can assist in maintaining decorum of the children that attend the service for their friend.

THE WEEK BEFORE THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

It is customary for our B'nai/B'not Mitzvah to be called to their first aliyah on the Monday or Thursday before their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This will take place at the ICCJ morning minyan. It is traditional for boys to wear tallit and tefillin, and optional for girls. Please discuss this with our rabbi at your meeting (two months prior to the celebration). Cameras and videos are encouraged and welcome at this time *but not on Shabbat.*

THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH SERVICE:

Time:

Services begin promptly at 9 a.m. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family should be seated in the sanctuary at that time.

Child's participation at the Shabbat service may include:

- Be invited to sit on the bimah;
- Be called to the Torah to chant the blessings for an aliyah;
- Chant the Haftarah, including the blessings before and after the Haftarah;
- Prepare and deliver words of Torah, a brief introduction to the week's Torah or Haftarah portions.

In some cases the child will be invited to read from the Torah and/ or lead the congregation in prayer during the service. Our rabbi can determine what the level of participation will be for each individual child based on his or her abilities and desires.

Honors and Aliyot:

Jewish adults, both men and women, are treated equally in our congregation. Those called up to the Torah for an aliyah (aliyot is plural) will be called by their Hebrew names, and the Hebrew names of their parents. The names of those receiving aliyot should be handed in to the main office no later than one week prior to the event. (See attached form for this purpose). Families will be guaranteed at least three aliyot. The blessings that are recited before and after each Torah reading appear at the back of this Handbook, in transliteration.

No later than two (2) months prior to the Bar/Bat mitzvah date, the parents will meet with our rabbi to discuss the service procedure, including aliyot and honors. Our rabbi will answer any questions you have during these sessions.

If a guest scheduled for a particular honor, does not arrive on time, please advise the Gabbai of an alternate guest to receive that honor. All those being honored in any way should be in the sanctuary by 9:30 a.m.

Kippot/ Head Covering:

Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is required to provide kippot for men and head coverings for women, to be brought at least two days before the Shabbat of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please note that it is optional for women to wear head coverings. The synagogue staff arranges for placement of the kippot outside the sanctuary.

Photography and Cell Phones:

Photography or videotaping is prohibited in the sanctuary or anywhere on the synagogue grounds on Shabbat. Please inform your family and friends not to bring personal cameras for use on Shabbat. The use of all electronic devices, including tablets and cell phones, is forbidden in and around the building on Shabbat. Please contact the synagogue office in advance to make arrangements for taking photographs in the sanctuary on a day other than Shabbat.

Appropriate Dress:

Please advise guests that they should be dressed in a modest and appropriate manner. Guests should not wear jeans to the service. Girls should not wear very short skirts or low-cut shirts. Please advise your guests to show respect to our Synagogue and way of life by dressing in a manner that will not offend any members of our congregation or the sanctity of the day.

If you desire, you can insert the following message in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah invitation:

“Appropriate dress during the service includes dress clothes that are not revealing. Please do not wear jeans, short skirts, sleeveless or low cut blouses to the Synagogue. “

Flowers and Congregational Kiddush:

It is traditional for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to decorate the bimah with flowers and to host a Kiddush for the congregation on the day of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please contact the office to make arrangements.

Smoking:

All smoking is prohibited on Shabbat anywhere in the synagogue building and on synagogue grounds.

BEYOND THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

We trust that you will encourage participation in our Jewish youth organizations: Kadima and United Synagogue Youth. You will serve your children well if you impress upon them that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a religious ceremony that marks the **first** stage of their adult Jewish education. In Judaism, learning never ceases.

As a gift to your child, ICCJ gives one year of free membership to our joint youth program and a complimentary experience at METNY Encampment.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS:

There is a Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee of \$500. Payment arrangements will be made at the time the Bar Mitzvah date is set. This fee covers individualized lessons and other instruction by the Synagogue.

CONCLUSION:

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the perfect time for the family to rejoice in its dedication to Jewish ideals. This is also the ideal time to work as a family to grow spiritually and religiously. This is one of the most significant events in a child's life, a time when he or she is expected to take on more responsibility at home, in society and in our religion. It is an opportunity to discuss with your child what your expectations are now that he or she is becoming an adult. This connects the religious ceremony to the child's life in a tangible way and helps the child understand the significance of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

As the excitement of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration becomes a fond memory, we urge you to continue pursuing cultural enrichment as a family, through ongoing involvement in Jewish activities such as: continuing educational programs, social events, youth group programs, and Shabbat and festival services.

ICCJ is the center for all these activities. Take advantage of the broad spectrum of programs and opportunities that are offered to you as a member of our synagogue, and reap the benefits of the rich and vibrant culture that we all share.

Once again, we wish you and your family a hearty Mazal Tov!

Rabbi Fryer Bodzin can be reached at
718-591-5610 or RabbiRFB@iccj2004.org

TIME LINE OF EVENTS:

Two Years prior: Call the Rabbi to set the date.

One year prior: Go to orientation.

One year prior: Meet with the Cantor.

One year to date: Fulfill all the educational and religious requirements.

Three months prior: All financial obligations to ICCJ must be met.

Three months prior: Discuss flowers and Kiddush with catering committee.

Two months prior: Family meets with the Rabbi for final preparation.

One-week prior: All aliyot sheets must be finalized and submitted to the Rabbi.

Hotza'at Sefer Ha- Torah (Taking out the Torah from the ark)

- A) Pull curtains _____
- B) Pull curtains _____
- C) Carry Torah _____

Aliyot (People called to the Torah)

	ENGLISH NAME	HEBREW NAME AND NAME OF FATHER AND MOTHER
1. Kohen		
2. Levi		
3. Shelishi		
4. Revi'i		
5. Hamishi		
6. Shishi		
7. Shevi'i		
7A. (a) Hosafah		
(b) Hosafah		
Maftir		

Gelilah _____

Prayer for country _____

Prayer for Israel (Hebrew) _____

Prayer for soldiers (veteran) _____

Prayer for peace (English) _____

Hakhnassat Sefer Ha-Torah (Returning the Torah to the ark)

- A) Carry the Torah _____
- B) Pull curtains _____
- C) Pull curtains _____

ALL RECIPIENTS OF THE ABOVE HONORS MUST BE IN THE SYNAGOGUE BY 9:15 AM. IF THEY ARE NOT PRESENT WHEN THE TORAH IS TAKEN OUT, THEIR HONORS MAY BE GIVEN TO SOMEONE ELSE.

BLESSINGS

BEFORE THE READING OF THE TORAH PASSAGE

Oleh/Olah says:

Barkhu et A-donai

Ha-mevorakh

Congregation responds:

Barukh A-donai

Ha-mevorakh le-olam va-ed

Oleh/Olah says:

Barukh A-donai

Ha-mevorakh le-olam va-ed

Barukh Atah A-donai E-loheynu Melekh Ha-olam asher bahar banu mi-kol ha-amim v'natan lanu et Torahto. Barukh Atah A-donai noteyn ha-Torah.

AFTER READING OF THE PASSAGE

Barukh Atah A-donai E-loheynu Melekh Ha-olam asher natan lanu Torat Emet, v'hayyei olam nata betokheynu. Barukh Atah A-donai noteyn ha-Torah.