

General B'nai Mitzvah Guidelines

Congregation Adath Israel · Newtown, CT

Updated January 2024

Introduction

A Bar / Bat Mitzvah is a special event for not only the child, but also the parents, siblings, grandparents, other relatives and friends. At Adath Israel the Ritual Committee is committed to make the Bar / Bat Mitzvah a memorable, enjoyable experience with the hope that this is the beginning of the child's deeper quest for knowledge of his or her Jewish roots. We offer a comprehensive program where each child receives individual weekly tutoring for a full year in addition to the Religious School curriculum. Children are prepared to co-lead Friday and Saturday Shabbat services, chant Torah and Haftarah and deliver a short D'var Torah (sermon). They also fulfill a community service project during this year. Each child develops synagogue skills and life skills as he or she prepares to step into a Jewish adulthood. Confidence and self-esteem are gained as he or she practices from our Bimah and experiences the accomplishments of sustained effort.

The following pages will help guide you and your child through this year of preparation. Please read them carefully. Most of the information you will need is found here. If you have any questions that are not answered, don't hesitate to ask our synagogue administrator or anyone on our Ritual Committee.

The ritual committee can be reached at ritual@congadathisrael.org.

The administrator can be reached at office@congadathisrael.org.

Requirements for Eligibility

The Adath Israel B'nai Mitzvah program is designed to prepare your children for Jewish adulthood so that they would feel comfortable in any synagogue setting, be able to discuss Jewish faith and traditions with all people and to be able to speak confidently to large groups of people. To that end, we ask that our students fulfill several academic and skill requirements. Prior to entering the fourth grade, each student will be evaluated so that the Education Committee and the Ritual Committee may know the standing of the student and whether or not additional private tutorials, at the expense of the family, will be necessary to help bring the student up to our required academic standards. This also pertains to any new student entering our Hebrew school program in grades 4 through 7.

The skills and academic requirements of our B'nai Mitzvah are as follows:

1. Ability to read unfamiliar Hebrew words at a fairly fluent pace.
2. Knowledge and ability to lead major sections of Friday and Saturday Shabbat services.
3. Knowledge of Jewish holidays, observances, prayers, history and culture as covered in our school curriculum.
4. A B'nai Mitzvah is both a celebration and a religious rite of passage for our youngsters. It is an affirmation of Jewish faith. As such, every B'nai Mitzvah candidate must be Jewish. Our Halachic standards are of Conservative Judaism which for our purposes simply state: A child whose mother was Jewish at the time that he or she was born, is

Jewish. A child whose mother was not Jewish at the time of birth is presumed to be Jewish but must participate in the Mikvah ceremony to confirm a Jewish identity. It is a simple procedure of immersing in a natural body of water with the intent of being part of the destiny and spiritual heritage of the Jewish people. The actual rite takes three minutes and is usually performed when a child is a baby. If this is a matter that pertains to you or if your child has had this ceremony elsewhere, please be in touch with the Ritual Committee.

Preparation for Bar / Bat Mitzvah

Parents and students are responsible for fulfilling preparations as follows:

1. The parents are to attend a first meeting with the Ritual Committee chairperson and the other parents of the class. This will be scheduled towards the end of the 5th grade school year. The first meeting will serve as a means of:
 - Introduction to the other parents in the class.
 - Answering questions pertaining to B'nai Mitzvah.
 - Date Selection.
 - In accordance with the Jewish calendar your child becomes eligible for B'nai Mitzvah at the Hebrew age of 12-1/2 for girls and 13 for boys. Think about when you would like to schedule your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Then, please confer with the synagogue administrator for approval. There are a number of practical issues to be taken into consideration:
 - It is generally our custom to schedule the B'nai Mitzvah service on a Shabbat morning.
 - No dates shall be selected or agreed upon prior to this meeting. After a date has been requested, you will receive a letter from the administrative office confirming this date. The date should not be considered final until this letter is received.
 - No B'nai Mitzvahs are to be scheduled during the window of time starting one week before Rosh Hashanah and ending one week after Yom Kippur. No family rehearsals will be scheduled during this window either, except after Yom Kippur at the Rabbi's discretion.
 - We discourage scheduling their children's B'nai Mitzvah ceremonies during the summer months. There are several reasons for this: As a small community, we try to emphasize the support and fellowship of the class families. Even when there is a small B'nai Mitzvah class, this participation helps to provide the children to share an experience with their Jewish classmates that will help them maintain their Jewish identity in the future.
 - A B'nai Mitzvah event during the summer will need to consider the Rabbi's schedule. If an event is scheduled at a time when the Rabbi is planning to be on vacation, the family is responsible for arranging for someone else to officiate at their child's ceremony. In that case, the Rabbi will offer one family rehearsal before his vacation. The family should arrange to have

whoever is officiating provide a second family rehearsal closer to the actual event. The Rabbi is available to officiate and provide all services to the family, as usual, if the summer event is not scheduled during a vacation. Still, with this understanding, congregants are welcome to use the building for all B'nai Mitzvahs.

2. The parents are to attend a second meeting with the administrator and other parents of the class. This will be scheduled towards the end of winter during your child's 6th grade year. This meeting will consist of:
 - Confirmation of dates selected.
 - Parents will be given an information folder which includes:
 - The order of service for Friday & Saturday
 - Info on planning your child's B'nai Mitzvah
 - B'nai Mitzvah Checklist
3. The entire 7th grade class, along with parents, is to attend a third meeting with the administrator. This will be scheduled in the Fall of your child's 7th grade year. This meeting will consist of:
 - Final date selection list will be distributed.
 - Review of B'nai Mitzvah study notebook your child received at their first tutorial.
 - How to fill out Aliyah forms.
 - Finalize helper & food list from 6th grade folder.
 - Answer all questions.

A follow up meeting will be scheduled in the late winter, prior to the first B'nai mitzvah, to answer any last-minute questions and to be sure all helper lists have been finalized.

4. With our limited schedule of services, it can be difficult for children to attend services as frequently as desired. We hold 1 to 2 Friday and Saturday services each month on alternate weekends. We strongly encourage attendance at one Friday and one Saturday service. We also offer Learning Services from time to time where students will get an opportunity to practice leading the service without having to keep to the standard order of the service for the congregation at large. We encourage parents to attend these services as well. It is important for your children to know that you are supporting them in this endeavor and joining them at services shows that commitment.
 - In preparation for the big day, your child will have ample opportunities to practice in the Sanctuary. This will occur during class time and during tutorials, as well as at family rehearsals. During services held for the congregation on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, your child will, from time to time, also be given the honor of leading a prayer from the bimah. These services will remain dedicated, however, to the general needs of the community at large.
 - When attending services, students in the B'nai Mitzvah class are expected to bring their binders and use each service they attend as an opportunity to gain greater proficiency.

5. The main component of the student's preparation is the half hour weekly private tutorials at the synagogue. **Parents should contact the synagogue office at office@congadathisrael.org to schedule tutorials prior to the one-year marker before the child's B'nai Mitzvah date.** Parents are encouraged to be present whenever possible and do not have to ask permission to attend these tutorials. We support an "open door policy". This means that whenever a parent wants to be present, they may simply enter the office or classroom area where the tutorial is taking place. This kind of exposure helps parents be more in tune with the overall learning process. Tutorials will follow the synagogue calendar. During the school year, when there is no school due to vacations & holidays, tutorials will be suspended. When a tutorial is cancelled due to inclement weather, the tutorial will be rescheduled whenever possible. Tutorials will also be suspended for 4 weeks in the summer. Tutorials for students whose B'nai Mitzvahs follow immediately after these suspended periods may need to make special arrangements for additional tutorials. These will be at the family's expense.
6. Family Rehearsals – The first family rehearsal is typically scheduled 2 weeks prior to your child's B'nai Mitzvah. The final family rehearsal generally occurs a few days before the B'nai Mitzvah weekend. This final "dress rehearsal" can be combined with a family photo shoot, if you wish, as this cannot occur on Shabbat.
7. Mitzvah Project – It is required that each B'nai Mitzvah student do a mitzvah (social action) project as part of their B'nai Mitzvah preparation. It could be one major mitzvah project or 13 small individual mitzvahs. This requirement helps the student to realize that the mitzvot (commandments) to which they will be obligated involve not only Jewish ritual but also social action.
8. The B'nai Mitzvah child is strongly encouraged to attend community Hebrew High School programs or Jewish Youth Group programs after their B'nai Mitzvah.

Expectations for the Bar / Bat Mitzvah

The following is expected of the Bar / Bat Mitzvah:

1. Each student is expected to lead the Friday evening service on the night prior to their Bar / Bat Mitzvah.
2. The student is expected to chant the Maftir Torah Portion, the Haftorah portion, the associated blessings, and to lead major portions of the service.
3. Based on proficiency, the Bar / Bat Mitzvah can prepare to chant and to lead additional Torah readings and prayers.
4. The student is expected to recite the Kiddush (prayer over a glass of grape juice) and Ha'motzi (prayer over bread) during the Friday night and Saturday services.
5. The student is required to present a speech based on either the Torah or Haftorah portion of the week. The speech personalizes the material to the extent that your child is able to share original thoughts and insights with the congregation.

6. We encourage attendance by the entire B'nai Mitzvah class to the Friday and Saturday services associated with their classmates' B'nai Mitzvah Ceremonies. Please include the dates for the classmates on your calendar as they are set.
7. B'nai Mitzvah families should help each other on the dates of the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony. We also encourage families to include all the B'nai Mitzvah students in any reception/party held afterwards. Our families represent a small minority in this environment, and we need to support our own community. The class parent will facilitate coordination of these efforts.
8. The B'nai Mitzvah student is expected to continue with their Hebrew / Sunday school classes, following their B'nai Mitzvah, through to the end of their 7th grade year to fulfill their school commitment. Please take this requirement into careful consideration before selecting a date because it is sometimes difficult to keep students motivated and involved after their B'nai Mitzvah. It is most advantageous to your child to schedule their Bar / Bat Mitzvah later in the seventh-grade year as the curriculum in that year builds towards the Torah and prayer skills used at a Bar / Bat Mitzvah.
9. If the B'nai Mitzvah candidate is eligible and approved by the Ritual and Education Committees to begin studies for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in the 6th grade year, then...
 - The student shall be included in the group study sessions of the class ahead of them during the student's 6th grade year.
 - The student will remain part of his or her own class for the class photo (although individual photos for the student's program may be taken at the earlier date).
 - The Bar/Bat Mitzvah parent helpers will be from the student's own grade.
10. All students are expected to dress in a respectful manner when coming to services. Expect to be called up to the bimah at some point during most services and dress appropriately. Please, no sweatpants or athletic shorts. Girl's shoulders should be covered. Covering one's shoulders with a tallis is not considered to be adequate covering, as talleisim have a way of slipping off. Talleisim and yarmulkes are optional for girls but required for boys.
11. After two months of tutorials, the Rabbi is required to indicate to the Ritual Committee any problems that may make it necessary for the committee to alter the date or the nature of the B'nai Mitzvah event. A scheduled date may need to be postponed if your child is not on track to meet their requirements by this date. Or it may be determined that it is not appropriate for your child to have a full-scale Friday evening/Saturday morning ceremony. Instead, he or she may need to have a more abbreviated Saturday afternoon Mincha-Havdallah service. In either case, your child will need to be scheduled for an additional tutorial session each week at the family's expense in order to be adequately prepared. Issues that will be considered in this evaluation include the following: monthly attendance at services, attendance at tutorials and class, homework, being on track with preparations, and demonstrated ability and motivation. This two-month evaluation does not pertain to children with special learning, emotional, or developmental issues. Those are unique circumstances that should be addressed during tutorials, so that adaptations and expectations can be set according to individual need.

For the Parents...

Below is a list of items that the parent(s) of the Bar / Bat Mitzvah needs to be aware of:

Financial

1. All financial obligations to the Synagogue must be current six months prior to the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony and must remain current.
2. A supplemental B'nai Mitzvah tutoring charge will be included with the seventh-grade school tuition bill or when your child's tutorials begin. This fee must be paid in full six months prior to your child's B'nai Mitzvah date.
3. A supplemental charge will be included with your annual statement to cover cleaning expenses following the ceremony.
4. Several months before the first B'nai Mitzvah ceremony in the class, class and individual photos of your child will be taken. A fee of \$50 for this service will appear on your billing statement. The group photo will be added to our photo gallery in the lower-level hallway. B'nai Mitzvah class photos are on display there, dating back to 1992. The individual photos are for your own personal use and may be used for the cover of your program, if desired.

All students in the class are expected to be present for the class photo. It will be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time for all families. Once it is scheduled, please mark it on your calendar and make it be an absolute priority. "Photo shopping" one's child into the group photo **will not be allowed** except under extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the Ritual Committee. Modern technology presents all manner of ways to dilute the sense of class cohesiveness and community building that is an essential part of the B'nai Mitzvah experience at Adath Israel. We strive in our ritual policies to balance convenience and the availability of technology with the preservation of these important aspects of community that only come from shared experience. Examples of situations that will not be considered as reasons to bend this policy include but are not limited to: sporting events, academic commitments, simple 'forgetting', the common cold, and last-minute ski trips. These class photos are a great source of pride and nostalgia for our families. Your participation in this photo shoot can provide the same for you and your child for many years to come.

5. Although donations are not required, we suggest that you follow the traditional Jewish custom of expressing your simcha with a contribution to one of our synagogue funds or participate in a class gift to the synagogue.
6. It is a tradition at Adath Israel not to purchase individual gifts for one's classmates. In lieu of gifts, each child's family makes a single charitable donation to a charity of their own child's choosing. Then, during the child's ceremony a classmate is asked to read a statement explaining this tradition and describing the specific charity chosen and why it is meaningful for your child. This is also a good opportunity to mention the community service that your child has been involved in. It may or may not relate to the chosen charity. It's best if you and/or your child prepare this statement and give it to the classmate ahead of time so that he or she can practice reading it out loud. The Rabbi will call the classmate up to the bimah towards the end of the service. Please alert the Rabbi as to who is making this presentation.

7. It is customary that each family gives the officiating Rabbi an appropriate monetary gift, prior to Shabbat, in appreciation for all the time spent with your child. Please understand that the Supplemental B'nai Mitzvah charge (refer to #2 above) goes to the synagogue general fund, not to the Rabbi.

Other

1. There are a limited number of yarmulkes in the synagogue, and you may wish to order your own. We customarily put out your personalized printed yarmulkes for the Saturday service. They can be obtained from your invitation printer, the Judaica shop, or online.
2. There are a limited number of white doilies for women to wear as head covering. The B'nai Mitzvah families are responsible for purchasing them, if needed. It is suggested that they be purchased as a group item along with white bobby pins. The Judaica shop can purchase the doilies.
3. For Interfaith Families, the B'nai Mitzvah year may seem especially overwhelming. It is our goal to make all family members feel welcome and feel included in a child's preparations and ceremony. We have many mixed families in our community and we have a number of ways to include non-Jewish relatives in the service. Both the Rabbi and the Ritual Committee can provide guidance and suggestions.

As the day approaches...

1. You may order flowers for the bimah (optional). Generally, they are a 3-foot high fan shaped arrangement.
2. The Shabbat Order of Worship Program: (given out to all those attending the Saturday service) contains all information about the Saturday morning service including a photo of the B'nai Mitzvah child, the Hebrew and English names of the B'nai Mitzvah child, parent's Hebrew and English names and any innovation that departs from our usual Saturday service. The program may also contain a brief history of the synagogue as well as a welcome note to guests. Please speak with the synagogue administrator regarding these programs. A program template can be provided electronically. Samples from previous Bar and Bat Mitzvahs will be available to look at.
3. The synagogue has a video camera and tripod that you may use to record your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, but you must supply your own memory card. It is the responsibility of each family to familiarize themselves with the camera. The camera must be set to run in advance, in a stationary manner, and without ANY adjustments made during the service. It is the sole responsibility of the Bar / Bat Mitzvah family to be sure that the video camera is set up properly. The Synagogue is not responsible for picture or sound quality.
4. No photography is allowed in the building on Shabbat. This includes before, during, or after your child's ceremony. This includes the entire building, not just the sanctuary. Please make your guests aware of this policy in advance of the service. With so many cellular phones doubling as cameras, it is otherwise difficult for us to maintain the sense of the sacredness of Shabbat in our sanctuary. It is recommended that if you want to have photographs taken in the sanctuary that you arrange to do so on a

Sunday or weekday before your child's ceremony. Most families choose to do this on the same day as their family rehearsal with the Rabbi. Please allow enough time for the photographer so that it does not interfere with the rehearsal that follows. Alert the Rabbi in advance of your schedule with the photographer so that the Rabbi can be available to help with photo shoots that include the Torah.

5. In respect of Shabbat, please do not plan to use any electronic devices during your child's ceremony or at the reception in the synagogue. For example, please make sure that your child's D'var Torah (speech) has been printed out and is in his or her binder; it cannot be read from an iPad or smartphone.
6. The sanctuary pews seat 112 people. The front row on either side is made up of 7 individual, moveable chairs each, providing wheelchair accessibility if needed. We also have 18 upholstered folding chairs that match the pews stored in the closet off the main lobby. Each family is responsible for setting up the folding chairs if more than 112 people are expected. If you expect more than 132 people, the partition will need to be opened into the social hall area. There are 94 upholstered metal folding chairs in that same closet.
7. It has become a recent tradition to shower a Bar or Bat Mitzvah child with candy as they finish chanting the blessings after their Haftorah reading. This is to symbolize the joyous and sweet moment of accepting the obligations of the Mitzvot that the child is taking on as he or she moves into Jewish adulthood. If you plan to incorporate this tradition into your ceremony, please use SOFT candies**, either individually wrapped, or placed into little party pouches. Please also make sure that the candy you choose is KOSHER. This is a bit more challenging when it comes to soft candies as they are often made with gelatin which is not Kosher. With a little advance planning, kosher soft candy is easily available for purchase online through several different companies. Some local stores, like BJ's, sell "Sunkist Fruit Gems" which is a soft Kosher candy and usually comes individually wrapped. All candy should be at the front of the Sanctuary in bowls or baskets, ready to be passed out before the Haftorah reading. Make sure that the Rabbi knows who you would like to have help pass out the candy. Often, this will be young children from amongst your invited guests.

**Soft is very important as there is an obvious danger of your child being hurt (or the Ark being damaged) if pelted with hard candies.

8. The B'nai Mitzvah Class families are expected to provide the Onegs for each Friday occasion and the B'nai Mitzvah family is expected to provide the Kiddush following their child's service. More information regarding the Oneg and Kiddush is provided in the B'nai Mitzvah parent folder (typically given to parents during their child's 6th grade year). Each family is responsible for putting up their own decorations in the social hall (optional) and the placement of tables for refreshments; this cannot be done until the Thursday night before your simcha (joyous event), after meetings and activities have concluded.
9. The Kiddush on Saturday immediately following the service is intended to be a short nosh lasting approximately 1 hour. This is the kiddush that your "helper families" assist with setting up and cleaning up. You may use the social hall, either upstairs or downstairs, or the foyer, for this Kiddush. You are required to offer two challah breads for a motzi (blessing). Everything else you serve is your own choice. It can be a very simple or an elaborate catered spread, depending on your own preference. We ask

that you provide this even if you will be departing for a party venue shortly thereafter. We also ask that you provide this even if your plan is to serve lunch in the synagogue to invited guests. Not everyone who comes to the service will have been invited to your party, but they should all be offered a Kiddush nosh.

There is no charge to use the synagogue for this one-hour Kiddush following your child's ceremony. Any plans for a kiddush that extend beyond this one-hour time period are considered an expanded kiddush or a Kiddush luncheon. In these situations, where you are using the building as a party venue, the room rental agreement will need to be filled out. This is so, even if the entire congregation has been invited to your event. A copy of the room rental agreement, including fees, can be obtained through the synagogue office.

10. If you are planning to have a poster or whiteboard, where people write notes to the Bar / Bat Mitzvah child, we ask that you reserve this for a party setting outside of the synagogue, and not set this up anywhere in the synagogue on Shabbat.
11. Each family is responsible for the clean-up of the Sanctuary and the Social Hall after the simcha. All chairs, tables, and partitions must be put back in time for Religious School classes.
12. Please put a notice in the synagogue's monthly newsletter inviting the congregation to worship with you on Friday evening and at the Saturday Service in honor of your child's Bar / Bat Mitzvah. You can email this notice to newsletter@congadathisrael.org. Make sure that the word "newsletter" is in the subject line of your email. This should be placed by the 15th of the month preceding your child's Bar / Bat Mitzvah.
13. A list of English and Hebrew names of all participants is to be given to the Rabbi. (A form for this will be included in your child's B'nai Mitzvah notebook).
14. Gabbai'im (Assistants during the Torah service): Please ask two people to be your Gabbai'im for the Torah service. One will call people up for aliyahs and assist in following along in the Torah Volume. The 2nd Gabbai will assist with the Torah Blessings. A list of possible Gabbai'im is available through the synagogue office or a knowledgeable Jewish friend or family member may be selected.
15. Hagbah and Galilah (To lift and dress the Torah). Please ask two people to be your Hagbah and Galilah during the Torah Service. It is a great honor to be a Hagbah, lifting the Torah up high overhead and turning and opening the scroll for all to see the sacred script. The Hagbah you choose can be a family member, a friend, or a congregant, but MUST be someone who has had prior experience lifting a Torah. Being in good physical shape is necessary, but not sufficient. Lifting a Torah, particularly one of the larger ones, is a challenging balancing act that requires some practice. If you have any questions or concerns about your choice, or you have someone who would like to receive instruction and to practice ahead of time, please discuss with the Chair of the Ritual Committee at ritual@congadathisrael.org. There are no special requirements for the choice of Galilah. If your child's ceremony falls on a special Shabbat when there are readings from two Torahs you will need two sets of Hagbah and Galilah.
16. There are eight Torah readings on Saturday mornings and three in Saturday afternoon services. The Bar or Bat Mitzvah child is expected to chant the final reading in the

service, known as the “Maftir”. Once your child has mastered the Maftir, we encourage him or her to learn to chant more of these Torah portions, beyond the Maftir, if they are able to do so. We also encourage you to ask other members of your family or friends to chant if they are capable. One week prior to the ceremony the Torah reader must chant their portion for the Rabbi or the Ritual Chairperson to ensure that he or she is properly prepared for the responsibility and honor of chanting Torah from the Bimah. Our Rabbi will chant any unclaimed portions from the Torah scroll.

17. Each Torah reading has its own Aliyah. This is when an honoree is called up to the Bimah to chant the Blessings before and after the reading. Your child is given the (Maftir) Aliyah. That is the 8th Aliyah in a usual Saturday morning service. Parents typically have the 7th Aliyah. This assures that you will be on the Bimah during your child’s Aliyah. Aliyahs 1-6 should be offered to family and friends. More than one person may be part of an Aliyah. At least one person in each Aliyah must be Jewish. The first Aliyah is traditionally offered to a Cohen. If there will be anyone amongst your invited guests who comes from the line of Cohanim (The Israelite tribe of the Priests) please ask them to have the honor of the first Aliyah. If you are not sure, please ask your guests. Certain surnames are more likely to be associated with those descending from the Cohanim. “Cohen” is the most obvious but does not automatically indicate a Cohen. Other likely names include Kahn, Katz, Cone, Cowan, Kaplan, Kogen, Kasden, and Mazer. This is only a partial list, so please inquire amongst your guests. Similarly, the second Aliyah is traditionally offered to a descendant of the tribe of Levites. These were the assistants to the priests. Please attempt to find a Levite from amongst your invited guests for the second Aliyah. Typical surnames that suggest Levite descent include: Halevy, Levy, Lewin, Levin, Levinson, Levitt, Lowey, Segal, and Horowitz.
18. After you have chosen the people for each Aliyah, please assure that they will be prepared to chant the Torah Blessings. The Ritual Committee can provide you with recordings and instructions to share with your Honorees. These are also widely available online. Reassure your Honorees that when they are called up to the Bimah for their Aliyah, that the blessings will be on the Torah table in both Hebrew and in English transliteration. A Gabbai will be present to assist them.
19. Board Presentation: It is traditional at Adath Israel for the President of the Board or another member of the Executive committee to present each B'nai Mitzvah child with a gift and a certificate from the synagogue Board of Directors. If you and your child have a personal relationship with a different Board member and you would prefer to have that individual make this presentation, please arrange this through the synagogue administrator at office@congadathisrael.org or through the Ritual Committee Chair at ritual@congadathisrael.org.
20. Sisterhood Presentation: Please ask someone from our Sisterhood to make this presentation. Contact the synagogue office if you need a list of choices.
21. Men’s Club Presentation: Please ask someone from the Men’s Club to make this presentation. Contact the synagogue office if you need a list of choices.
22. Information for Interfaith Families: Our goal is that our synagogue and each Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony create a welcoming atmosphere of inclusion and a sense of community where families and family choices are respected and embraced. To this end, all family members are welcome to stand together on the Bimah at any time

during your child's service. This includes the presentation of a tallit, Aliyahs, Ark Openings and Closings, the Passing of the Torah ceremony that comes at the beginning of the Torah service, and of course during the speeches. Out of respect for the sacred and uniquely Jewish aspects of Torah, we ask that only Jewish family members handle the Torah and recite the Torah blessings. For Aliyahs, only the names of Jewish family and friends will be called out in Hebrew. However, in English and in written material, all names can be listed. Where names of Honorees for the Aliyahs are listed in English, the preferred language to be used is: {Name of Jewish person(s)}, "*to be accompanied by*" {Name of non-Jewish person(s)}. When the Bar or Bat Mitzvah child of an interfaith family is called for his or her own Aliyah, the name that will be called out in Hebrew by the Rabbi will include the Hebrew name of the Jewish parent.

23. Please try to bring all food to the Synagogue on Friday, prior to the start of Shabbat. Food must follow the Synagogue's Kashruth policy. This policy can be found in the Adath Israel Ritual Policy Handbook. It is also our tradition that there be two challahs together at any Shabbat service where there will be a Motzi (blessing).
24. Candle Lighting. If your child's ceremony is scheduled in the late spring or summer months, please check when sundown occurs. If your Friday evening service begins *prior* to sundown, please plan on beginning your service with the traditional lighting of Shabbat candles. This is an opportunity to bring a multigenerational group of women in your family together on the bimah. You are welcome to bring your own family candlesticks or to use ones found in the synagogue. Please provide your own candles. Please place the candlesticks and matches *on a tray* on the bimah before the start of the service. The blessing over the candles is in your child's binder. It can be read or chanted, depending on what the women in your family are accustomed to doing. Non-Jewish women family members are welcome to accompany Jewish family members to the bimah for this recitation.
25. B'nai Mitzvah families may choose to include some musical instrumentation in their child's service. Any musical instruments used in the sanctuary must be acoustic, not electronic. Ideally, the music will be used as a means of increasing the spirituality of the service without turning it into a concert type production. If a family wishes to have musical instruments played during a Kiddush oneg or during a party, they are welcome to do so. However, this same restriction holds that only acoustic instruments are acceptable in the synagogue on Shabbat. These instruments can be miked, as deemed necessary. For further information on this policy, please consult the *Adath Israel Ritual Handbook*, available on the synagogue website.

The day has arrived...

1. Arrive an hour before the service in order to check on last minute changes, prepare the Kiddush, confer with the Rabbi and Gabbai and to greet your guests. If you will need a key to the building, please contact the synagogue administrator.
2. Please inform all persons participating in the service of their role in the service. Please ask your Jewish family and friends who will be called for an Aliyah to don a tallit before they come up to the bimah. Please make sure that someone in each

Aliyah is able to chant the Torah Blessings. The Rabbi can provide tutorials or links to websites for help in this area.

3. Please inform your guests to arrive at least 15 minutes before services start.
4. Make sure that the Bar / Bat Mitzvah has a tallit, and that there are enough yarmulkes for the congregation. You may want to ask a grandparent or other family member to present your child's tallit to him or her at the beginning of the Saturday morning service. If the child has a new tallit of his or her own for this ceremony, but there is also a special tallit in the family, it can be worn for the Friday evening service and a family member is welcome to speak about the tallit's significance at that time.
5. Enjoy the day!