

# B'nei Mitzvah Timeline & Checklist

**PLEASE NOTE:** This checklist and suggested timeline is provided as a guide for planning your B'nei Mitzvah service and celebration. It does not cover educational requirements or timelines. Educational requirements and related timelines will be provided by your child's teachers and Rabbi Edery, and is individualized for each child as he or she moves through the education process.

## KEY CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

▪ <i>B'nei Mitzvah date:</i>	B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator (Larry Ginsburg)
▪ <i>Torah &amp; Haftorah preparation</i>	Tutors, coordinated by Hal Zenick
▪ <i>Temple/Facilities Use Form:</i>	Beth Shalom office
▪ <i>B'nei Mitzvah project:</i>	Rabbi
▪ <i>Service outline/plan:</i>	Hal Zenick
▪ <i>Speech:</i>	Rabbi
▪ <i>Oneg/Kiddush:</i>	Sisterhood
▪ <i>Hebrew:</i>	Learn in Hebrew School
▪ <i>Hebrew testing prior to date selection:</i>	Hal Zenick

### 2 years prior:

- Set the date. Typically, the B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator will reach out to eligible families at this time. You will need to work with the Ritual Committee's B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator on setting the date to ensure there are no conflicts with Beth Shalom's other scheduled events, holidays, or celebrations. The B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator will make sure your agreed-upon date is put in the Master Calendar.

### 1 – 2 years prior:

- Find out the torah portion.
- Think about your options and budget. Decide on what kind of celebration you want to have – there are no rules. It can be elaborate or as simple as you want. Think about what you liked and disliked at other B'nei Mitzvah celebrations.
- Make a tentative guest list – family, friends, Synagogue class-mates, business associates, etc. and begin to gather mailing addresses.
- Visit possible sites – hotels, restaurants, party rooms, etc., and talk with caterers. Past B'nei Mitzvah families make wonderful sources of information.
- Book your site. This should be done as early as possible to ensure availability for the date you want.

### 9 months - 1 year prior:

- Begin learning your torah and haftorah portions. You will need to set up regular learning sessions with Hal Zenick who will meet with the b'nei mitzvah child weekly to prepare him/her. An initial appointment with Dr. Zenick should be scheduled about one year before your planned date for an assessment of the b'nei mitzvah child's readiness.
- Think about and decide on themes and color schemes.
- Book the photographer, florist and music, if these are in your plans.
- Discuss the need for tutoring with Hal Zenick or your child's Hebrew teacher.

### **6 - 9 months prior:**

- Reserve a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests. Plan the weekend experience for out-of-town guests – do you want to plan transportation, meals and/or activities for Friday through Sunday, or leave people to their own devices?
- Review the service outline with the Rabbi. Also, consider your music choices for the service, and think about who you may want to include in the service.
- Begin drafting *dvar torah*.
- Begin the B'nei Mitzvah project. Each B'nei Mitzvah student is highly encouraged to complete a *tikkun olam* or *tzedakah* project as part of his/her preparation

### **3 - 6 months prior:**

- Order invitations, thank-you notes, napkins, kippot/yarmulkas, Tallit, Tallit bag. Our Sisterhood has some catalogs to help you order these items.
- Firm up plans with caterer.
- Order the cake.
- Contact cantorial assistants, singers, or other members of synagogue that you want to include in the service to book the date and discuss service plans.
- Work on schedules, maps, transportation, meal, and hotel information and anything else that will need to be mailed to out-of-town guests. Decide if you want to mail this information with invitations or provide separately.
- Meet with the synagogue office manager to complete a *Request for Building Use Form* and pay building use fees.

### **1 – 2 months prior:**

#### ***8 weeks prior:***

- Mail out-of-town invitations. Keep a record of responses.
- Send notice to Beth Shalom Newsletter with a picture and biography of your child (interests, school, family, etc.) The deadline is the first week of the month before your child's B'nei Mitzvah.
- Make Oneg arrangements. Finalize plans for setting up and cleaning up for Oneg.

#### ***6 weeks prior:***

- Mail in-town invitations.
- Double-check all arrangements.
- Work on the service outline with the Rabbi<sup>~</sup> aliyot, readings, and cantor.
- Finalize the service outline, music choices, reading assignments, and aliyot. Review your service program for the B'nei Mitzvah with the Rabbi.

#### ***2 - 4 weeks prior:***

- Get Hebrew names for the aliyot and provide to Rabbi.
- Reconfirm numbers with catering.
- Write family speeches.
- Consider mailing photocopied parts to people who will be participating in the service. Send an audio tape of aliyah blessings to people being called for aliyot so that they have time to prepare, or direct them to the link on the Beth Shalom website.

- Decide if you are going to have a candle lighting ceremony during the reception. If so, plan remarks, select participants, purchase candles and candleholders to prepare for ceremony.
- Arrange baby-sitting, if needed.

***1 - 2 weeks prior:***

- Prepare welcome gifts for out of town guests. Include maps and any other information your guests will need for the weekend.
- Make place cards and other necessary last minute items.
- Make plans to transport kids and out-of-town guests from services to reception, if needed.