

# Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook

## A Thought

A Bar or Bat Mitzvah is the time of a child's life when they become a Jewish Adult in the Jewish community. This marks a new stage when they are no longer practicing all the traditions and rituals, but are now full fledged adults and have the privileges and responsibilities of the millions of Jews who passed this stage before them. As they are just about to enter their 'teen' years, this beautiful process will allow them to find the pride and identity amongst their elders and friends.

At Chabad we try to work with you to make the over-all process as powerful and memorable as possible to yourself, your child and all those involved. The most powerful thing we can do for your child is to give them positive memories of their Jewish education along with a strong footing in their Jewish heritage that will last them a lifetime.

Of course we could not complete the journey without the complete support of the parents at home. Although we keep homework to a minimum, as the big day gets closer, there will be extra time needed at home. Your support and encouragement will go a long way and by making the studying a priority will help make the big day extra special.

**Mazel Tov!**

Being that part of the education process is to help your child feel familiar and comfortable with the Synagogue experience **it is mandatory to attend at least 6 Saturday morning services in the 5 months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.** We encourage you to attend services with your child as well, in order to become more comfortable and to help make your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah day even more meaningful. If you want, please bring your child's friends and their parents as well.

*Please be advised that the success of your child being prepared for the service is dependent on the parent's ability to make sure that the child practices at home. The Rabbi cannot perform miracles and his job is to guide the child and give all the support possible. If there is no practice – they will not be ready!*

## Bat Mitzvah

As every family and child is unique, there are a few different options for the ceremony.

### **Sunday Morning Or Evening Ceremony**

A 45 minute service that is focused exclusively on the Bat Mitzvah girl. She will read her portion in Hebrew and say a few prayers in Hebrew as well as a speech. Parents,

grandparents and Rabbi Teldon share prayers and blessings as well. The service can be followed by a reception.

### **Saturday Morning**

Your regular Shabbat morning service in the synagogue is followed by the Bat Mitzvah girl reading selected prayers from the pulpit. After her portion, her parents say some prayers and share a few words. The service can be followed by a Kiddush lunch.

### **Havdalah Service**

The service can begin anywhere from 30 minutes after Shabbat ends. The Bat Mitzvah girl welcomes everyone and speaks about the Havdalah ceremony. She honors close family members by having them participate in parts of the service. Havdalah is recited by the Rabbi or the girl's father or grandfather, etc. and the Bat Mitzvah girl recites special Saturday night prayers. All guests are then invited to the social hall for a reception.

### **Friday Night Candle Lighting Service**

The Bat Mitzvah ceremony is followed by the Friday night service for all guests to attend, conducted by Rabbi Teldon. There will be separate seating during the service.

In a Friday evening service, the Bat Mitzvah girl leads the women and girls in the candle lighting and blessing. In the winter the candle lighting will be at the very beginning of the ceremony, and in the summer, the candle lighting will be after the Bat Mitzvah ceremony but before the Shabbat evening service.

After the service, the Kiddush is recited by the Rabbi or father/grandfather of the Bat Mitzvah girl. The family of the Bat Mitzvah girl then hosts either a dinner or dessert reception.

Optional Candle Lighting Ceremonies: The Bat Mitzvah girl may choose to honor family members and friends by inviting them to light a candle. She may have as many as 13 candles.

### **Service Outline**

The following is a description of a typical Bat Mitzvah service, which is approximately 45 minutes, and includes prayers as well as reading selected verses from the Torah portion and D'var Torahs (speeches).

- Welcome & Introduction
- Prayers led by Bat Mitzvah girl
- Parents' Blessings and greetings
- Oseh Shalom
- D'var Torah on Parsha and Haftarah (includes readings of selected verses)
- Rabbi's Comments

## Bar Mitzvah

One of the rites of passage for a Bar Mitzvah has become for the child to read from the Torah or the Haftorah. Based on the abilities of the Bar Mitzvah boy we can come to a decision on the best route to go. Whether it is a Haftorah, Torah, both or neither, we will gear towards something that he will be confident and proud of doing. ***Although that for many it is very important that the boy read from the Torah, it is not mandatory at all.***

Your child will learn the meaning of the Parsha of that week and select a few parts that have meaning in their own life. After the service, they will speak to the whole congregation about the portion and read some of the Parshah in Hebrew and English and speak about what it means to them.

Your son will also learn how to perform the Mitzvah of Tefillin. It is part of the curriculum for this class and they must bring the Tefillin to school each week (or leave it at Chabad).

### **Shabbat Morning Service:**

A Shabbat Morning Service begins at 10 a.m. with Shacharit (morning service.) It includes the Torah, Haftorah reading, Mussaf service and then the speeches. Services generally end approximately 12:45 pm., after which guests join the congregation for a Kiddush.

### **Shabbat Afternoon Service:**

This ceremony will begin with a 30 minute Mincha (afternoon service.) There is a short Torah reading (no Haftorah.) The speeches will then be delivered and the total service is about 45 minutes. (In the winter it would be early afternoon and in the summer it would be evening.)

### **Sunday Morning Service:**

This ceremony will be about 1 hour. It includes prayers as well as reading selected verses from the Torah portion and D'var Torahs (speeches). The Bar Mitzvah boy will put on a Tallis and Tefillin and read his portion. Mother and father will say a few prayers as well.

### **Havdalah Service**

The service can begin anywhere from 30 minutes after Shabbat ends. The Bar Mitzvah boy welcomes everyone and speaks about the Havdalah ceremony. He honors close family members by having them participate in parts of the service. Havdalah is recited by the Bar Mitzvah boy. All guests are then invited to the social hall for a reception.

### **Weekday Service:**

The weekday Shacharit (morning service), short Torah service (no Haftorah) and speeches take approximately 1 ½ to 2 hrs. You may choose to have a Bar Mitzvah on a Monday, Thursday, or Rosh Chodesh (1st day of Hebrew month.) Days like Memorial Day, Presidents Day, Thanksgiving Day and Labor Day might work for your family.

## Bar and Bat Mitzvah Preparation

**12-18 Months Before:** An informational meeting is held for parents to obtain their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.

**Six Months Before:** The child will be assigned a study schedule. A Bar Mitzvah boy's Tefillin should be purchased at this time. Attending Friday night and/or Shabbat service will help your child develop a true sense of familiarity with the prayers.

**Two Months Before:** The child should begin working on the draft of their speech with the Rabbi's assistance. If the parents desire to prepare their own D'var Torah, please notify the rabbi.

**Final Preparation:** On the Friday prior to the celebration, everything needed for Shabbat (decorations, candies, etc.) must be at the Chabad Center by 2:00 p.m.

## Costs

The fee for the tutoring and Rabbis services is \$970 for the Bat Mitzvah and \$1275 for Bar Mitzvah (Tefillin included). All children must go to Hebrew School the year of their Bar Mitzvah. All families must be members of Chabad of Mid-Suffolk. All payments must be complete before the day of the Bar Mitzvah.

## The Day

### Service Booklets

The synagogue can provide a format for a service booklet for distribution at services. The booklet lists the Torah portion as well as the names of those guests who will be honored. Families wishing to provide their guests with a booklet describing the various components of the service may obtain a template of this booklet from the synagogue office. In the case of a large crowd on a Saturday morning service, it is recommended that the service booklets include a copy of the full Torah Portion so that all of the guests may follow along. We can supply you with a few examples from which to work with. All drafts of such booklets must be given to Rabbi Teldon for review at least two weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Once approved, the family should arrange for copies to be made.

### Aliyot

It is a great honor to be called up to the Torah during such a celebration. It is a custom to honor friends and relatives with the honor of receiving an Aliyah. Aliyot may be given out to individual men who are post Bar Mitzvah age and are of the Jewish faith. Please consult with the Rabbi regarding the Aliyot honors, as many Shabbat Torah readings are different from each other.

### Additional Honors

Siblings who wish to lead the congregation in the chanting of the Ein Keloheinu, Aleinu, or other appropriate prayers, are invited to do so, provided they have learned and practiced

reciting the prayer beforehand. Additional honors are available. Please discuss the opportunities for your family members to participate in the service with Rabbi Teldon.

### **Photography**

In accordance with Jewish law, no photography, videotaping and recording of any sort is permitted in the building or on the synagogue grounds on Shabbat or the Jewish festivals. Any family wishing to photograph or videotape a dress rehearsal of the service may arrange to do so by contacting the office to reserve the sanctuary for a specific date and time.

### **Kiddush**

It is customary for a "Seuda" (festive meal) to be shared by the community to accompany any Simcha. In keeping with this tradition, each family is encouraged to sponsor the Shabbat afternoon Kiddush (for all invited guests as well as congregants), even if there is a private reception afterwards. Catering options should be discussed with the Catering Coordinator, Brocha Teldon.

Please Note: Families may elect to pick up any leftover food on Saturday night (after sunset) or Sunday morning. In either case, arrangements should be made with the office in advance. Under Jewish law, no food or any other items may be removed from the synagogue on Shabbat.

### **Decorum & Demeanor**

Our traditions and teachings regard modest attire and entertainment, as well as in the extent of financial expenditure. In keeping with the Jewish concept of modesty, we request appropriate dress for the synagogue. You may speak with the Rabbi for further details.

## **Service Location**

Being that we are a growing congregation, we do not at this present time have the full facilities needed for a full size affair. We have made many arrangements in the local community for you to have a smooth and enjoyable affair.

### **Location of the Service**

Chabad of Mid-Suffolk can host up to 75 guests. There is no building fee associated with using the building. If you are having more than that amount there a few other options. If you are having a Saturday morning service, please be aware that there are 20 regular worshippers that come weekly.

If the service is on a Saturday morning, you are required to sponsor the Kiddush after services. You can deal directly with the caterer: Hunkis: 516-870-0435.

The Sheraton Long Island @ 631-231-1100. Ask for Carol and tell her that you are calling from Chabad of Mid Suffolk. You will receive a special discounted price for being affiliated with us.

If you will be doing the service at another location and having the Rabbi and his family stay at a hotel, it will be required to have 2 hotel rooms for the entirety of Shabbat as well as an

additional \$200 fee for food plus \$200 to pay for a replacement rabbi for Shabbat at regular Chabad services..

The transportation of the prayer books and other supplies to the Sheraton or other location are the responsibility of the family. They are responsible to bring it all back to Chabad as well.

**Kosher – Rabbis attendance**

The Rabbi and his wife will only be able to attend the party if it is a Kosher event under Orthodox certification. While they both wish you a hearty Mazel Tov, being that they are leaders in the community, they cannot endorse an event that is not fully Kosher.

**Conclusion**

We hope that this handbook has been helpful to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the appropriate staff member. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah is an extremely important and joyous lifecycle event, and we at Chabad of Mid Suffolk are glad that you have chosen to share it with us.

**Mazel Tov!**