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- "Putting God on the Guest List", Rabbi Jeffrey K. Salkin
- "The Bar and Bat Mitzvah Manual", Rabbi Steven M. Bob and Lisa Bob Howard

REQUIREMENTS

- a) The minimum educational requirement for B/M is five (5) years of religious school training or its equivalent, at the discretion of the Rabbi and Hazzan/Director of Education, either at Kehillat Ma'arav or another Bureau of Jewish Education (B.J.E.) accredited educational institution.

- b) Those students who are enrolled in the \aleph class (7th grade), and have their ceremonies in the fall, are expected to finish the year in June and graduate with their classmates.

- c) As our synagogue's fiscal year begins July 1, families celebrating a B/M prior to the High Holidays must be current members of the synagogue in good standing by August 15.

- d) Completion of the Family Torah Project which asks each family in the 7th grade to make a presentation to the entire class such as a skit, videotape, or song that communicates a theme or themes of each child's specific Torah portion. The Rabbi and Hazzan will explain this project in detail during a B/M Orientation meeting.

- e) All B/M candidates should submit to the Director of Education, in writing, a summary of their anticipated Tzedakah project. Said summary should include the Jewish organization that the project will benefit, the dates or dates of project completion, and a one page written summary of the project after completion.

SHABBAT SERVICES

- a) In order to add to the holiness of Shabbat, picture taking, video-taping, tape-recording, etc., are not permitted on Shabbat, either before, during or after the service. This must be strictly observed. Kehillat Ma'arav is pleased to offer you a dvd copy of the service using our in-house equipment which is set up prior to Shabbat.
- b) Picture taking is available the week prior to the B/M. Be sure to schedule these dates both with the Rabbi, Hazzan, and Kathie Rose so that your picture session is booked into our synagogue calendar.
- c) Kehillat Ma'arav is a congregation blessed with many שמחות (joyous occasions.) We therefore anticipate that other celebrations and commemorations may occur during the same Shabbat as the B/M celebration. Other events, such as the recitation of a ברכת גומל (Birkat-Gomel) for the recovery of an illness or accident, an aliyah commemorating a yahrzeit, celebrating a birthday or anniversary, and other such life cycle events, may be celebrated on the same Shabbat as a B/M. These events are not mutually exclusive of the B/M and in no way compete with, nor detract from, a B/M celebration.
- d) The Jewish value of "tz'niyut" or modesty, is observed in our congregation. Members and guests of our community should dress in a way that is appropriate for a synagogue setting. Excessive display of skin by either men or women is not permitted. Please inform your guests of this value prior to their arrival at our congregation so as not to cause embarrassment to them or to members of our community.

The overall quality of a B/M ceremony in the minds of family members and guests is directly related to the youngster's achievements in preparation for the event, and unrelated to any other incidentals which may occur during the other portions of the service which do not involve the B/M candidate. The inclusion of other celebrations will not, in most instances, diminish the number of aliyah honors available to the B/M family.

In all cases regarding matters of precedent, procedure, and propriety at religious events held at Kehillat Ma'arav, Rabbi Gotlieb, as the religious authority of our congregation, will be the final arbitor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Our congregation invites you to consider having your B/M reception, either luncheon or evening celebration, here in the synagogue. By doing so, you are adding a level of holiness to the event, and maintaining a spirit of community. Additionally, you should be aware that there is **no facility fee for members of our community**.

b) We strongly recommend and encourage B/M parties to be held if at all possible at an establishment with Kosher catering facilities. If this is not possible, we strongly recommend and urge that a fish or vegetarian meal be served to all your guests. This is in keeping with the traditional spirit of the occasion.

c) It is strongly recommended when sending out your invitations to include all of your child's classmates from his/her class. This helps to avoid embarrassment and helps to strengthen the bond of the students in the class.

d) The Education and Ritual Committees of the congregation again wish to stress the desirability of regular attendance at Saturday morning services in throughout the years of religious school. It is hoped that this attendance both by parents and students will make the services more meaningful and generally enrich the religious experience of this occasion.

B/M FEES

- a) The \$1,180.00 B/M Mitzvah fee includes approximately 9 months of individual instruction, all materials, the use of the Sanctuary for religious purposes, an unedited video of the Shabbat service, and use of the facility to host a post-service Kiddush.
- b) In keeping with Kehillat Ma'arav tradition, each B/M family will host the congregational Kiddush following services. Please understand that since we have a small Hospitality Committee, we can only provide a very simple Kiddush for no more than 150 people, which includes 80 Kehillat Ma'arav members. The kiddush will include both your invited guests, as well as the approximately 80 member congregants who attend each Shabbat morning. If you desire a more elegant and complete luncheon, or if you have more guests, please contact Paula or Fran from our in-house caterer, Baleboste, at (818) 344-3417. Baleboste Caterers are kosher and offer an extensive menu.
- c) ALL B/M FEES MUST BE PAID WHEN TRAINING BEGINS.

In addition, each B/M family must be current in payment of all dues and fees, including pledges, when training begins.

B/M DATES/TRAINING

- a) Approximately eighteen months (18) prior to the B/M each family should set up a B/M date. The Rabbi and/or Hazzan are available to meet with the student and the parents at any time during the training period to answer any questions that may arise. The Rabbi will meet with the B/M candidate approximately 6 (six) weeks in advance of the event in preparation for the B/M address (D'var Torah) to the congregation. The Rabbi strongly encourages parental participation in the preparation for the D'var Torah.

b) Portions of the Shabbat service, which include the Torah service, additional service, and various other blessings, prayers, including Tallit and Tefillin, are part of the Religious School curriculum. The Hazzan will also be teaching a mini-course in Torah trope to students of the Religious school. This instruction will take place during the spring semester.

c) Individual lessons begin approximately 9 (nine) months prior to the B/M date. Scheduling of these lessons are at the discretion of the Hazzan. B/M lessons are taught individually, and the duration of each lesson is 25 minutes.

d) To facilitate B/M studies, a CD or mp.3 of the service, including the Haftorah and Torah readings specific to the individual B/M portion, will be prepared by the Hazzan for each student.

e) YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT AND INSISTENCE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD STUDY HABITS WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND BENEFICIAL. Minimally, students should study for 30 (thirty) minutes each day.

B/M SERVICE PARTICIPATION/ORDER OF SERVICE

a) The Bar/Bat Mitzvah may conduct the following portions of the Saturday morning service:

שחרית (Shacharit) or morning service

סדר הוצאת חתורה or Torah service

Selected Hebrew readings in the Torah portion, including the
מפטיר (Maftir) Torah reading

Blessing before the הפטרה (Haftorah)

הפטרה (Haftorah)

Blessings after the הפטרה (Haftorah)

מוסף (Musaf) service (Additional)

קדוש/ברכת מוצי (Kiddush/Motzi)

This program will be designed by the Hazzan and the student, and will be determined using a number of factors, including commitment and timing.

- b) TORAH SERVICE, Saturday morning. The parent(s) and the grandparents are invited to join the B/M prior to the opening of the Ark.
- c) The Rabbi introduces the Torah portion.
- d) Aliyot, Saturday morning. The designated honorees are called to the Torah to recite the blessings before and after the Torah, preferably in the following order: Kohen, Levi, #3-#7. Typically, the parents of the B/M are invited for the 7th aliyah, followed by the Maftir aliyah, assigned to the B/M.
- e) Maftir, The Hazzan will call up the B/M by his or her Hebrew name, after which the B/M will recite the Maftir portion with the accompanying blessings.
- f) Hagbah , lifting the Torah & Gelilah, binding the Torah.
- g) The Rabbi introduces the Haftorah.
- h) The B/M chants the blessings and Haftorah.
- i) B/M delivers address (D'var Torah) to the congregation.

- j) Rabbi addresses the B/M
- k) Presentations to B/M from Rabbi
- l) Parent(s) may make brief, personal remarks (5 (five) minute total duration).
- m) Prayer for Peace, Prayer for Our Country, Ashrei, Torah returned to Ark.
- n) מוסף (Musaf) additional service
- o) Presentation by President or Board of Directors member to B/M

ARK OPENINGS & ALIYOT

Enclosed you will find the worksheet used to indicate whom you have chosen to receive aliyot, ark openings, and other honors on Saturday morning. Copies of the completed list must be returned to the Rabbi or the office one week before your child's B/M date.

It is strongly recommended that you ascertain beforehand that those individuals being honored are able to recite the blessings. For your convenience a copy of the blessings for before and after the Torah portion has been included along with transliterations for you to copy and give to those you wish to honor.

NOTES

- 1) Ark openings, Hagbah (Torah lifting), and Gelilah (Torah binding) do not require a Hebrew recitation. There are English readings available, such as Prayer for our Country and Prayer for Peace.
- 2) Kindly make every effort to limit the number of aliyot and other honors to those on the enclosed worksheet. Aliyot may be shared.
- 3) Husbands and wives are encouraged to take an Aliyah together.
- 4) Please notify the people you are honoring in advance and encourage them to be in their seats at 9:30 am Saturday, when Shabbat services begin.
- 5) Decorum on the Bimah requires men being honored wear a kippah and a tallit. Please notify your guests in advance. Both Tallitot and kipot are available in the atrium every Shabbat morning.
- 6) If candy is to be gently thrown after the reading of the Haftorah, please let the office know. The synagogue will provide kosher candy for this purpose. Candy should only be passed out during the recitation of the Blessings After the Haftorah. There is a strict limit of eighteen (18) pieces of candy that can be gently thrown.

REHEARSAL

The Hazzan will arrange for a complete rehearsal for the B/M and the parents to take place during the week before the occasion.

If you wish the Rabbi and the Hazzan to be included in a photo session, this may be accomplished at the rehearsal. Be reminded that picture taking is not al-

lowed during the Shabbat service. The rehearsal should be arranged at least three weeks in advance of the B/M.

SEATING

Members of the immediate family (parents & siblings) may sit in the front row in the center section, in front of the Rabbi's lectern (parents may also choose to sit on the Bimah). We hope the B/M sits on the Bimah during the entire service.

HOSTING THE ONEG SHABBAT AND KIDDUSH

It is Kehillat Ma'arav's synagogue policy, as well as a wonderful privilege, for the B/M family to sponsor the Saturday morning congregational Kiddush. Details about cost are mentioned above, and can be further clarified by contacting the synagogue office.

If you wish to hold your B/M party at Kehillat Ma'arav, including luncheon buffet, sit-down luncheon, or evening reception, please contact our in-house caterer, Baleboste, directly at (818) 344-3417.

FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

Flower arrangements for the Bimah and /or the food tables can be purchased from a florist at your discretion. This is not mandatory but they do enhance the occasion. If flowers, balloons or decorations will be delivered, please instruct vendors to do so before 12:00 noon on Friday. Please give the office the name and telephone number of your florist (just in case the flowers are not delivered by noon). The office has the names of vendors it will recommend if you wish.

TALLIT BLESSING

Prior to the onset of the service, the B/M should recite the following blessing, and then, with the assistance of his/her parents, place the tallit on his/her shoulders:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ
לְהִתְעַטֵּף בְּצִיצִית

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav,
v'tzivanu l'hitateif batzitzit.

Praised are You Adonai our God, who rules the universe, instilling in us the holiness of mitzvot by commanding us to wrap ourselves in tzitzit.

TORAH BLESSINGS

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ:

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בְּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת,
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נִטַּע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ: בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

Blessing before the reading:

Bar'chu et Adonai hamvorach

Congregation:

Baruch Adonai hamvorach l'olam va-ed.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher bachar banu mikol ha-amim v'natan lanu et torato. Baruch atah Adonai, notein hatorah.

Blessing after the reading:

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher natan lanu torat emet, v'chayei olam nata b'tocheinu. Baruch atah Adonai, notein hatorah.

Praise Adonai, the Exalted One.

Praised be Adonai, the Exalted One, throughout all time.

Praised are You Adonai our God, who rules the universe, choosing us from among all peoples by giving us the Torah. Praised are You Adonai, who gives the Torah.

Praised are You Adonai our God, who rules the universe, giving us the Torah of truth, planting within us life eternal. Praised are You Adonai, who gives the Torah.