Dear Bar/Bat Mitzvah Parents:

Congratulations on your child’s upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah! Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a time of great joy and celebration. It is also a time which raises many questions. How is the Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring arranged? How many hours a day should my child practice? What is expected of my son/daughter? What is Temple policy concerning the Kiddush/Seudah preparations? In addition, there are many more questions that will arise.

To help answer some of these questions and to help you plan your simcha, we have prepared this Bar/Bat Mitzvah manual. Please read the manual carefully, as it will address many of your questions. In addition, Melanie May, our Simcha Event Coordinator, is available to provide guidance and help answer other questions you might have in planning your event. If you have celebrated a simcha in our Temple previously, please pay close attention as some of our policies have recently been revised and may differ from what you experienced previously.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah takes place within the sacred context of the Shabbat. The rabbis said that the laws regarding Shabbat observance were “like mountains hanging by a hair.” Indeed, there are many rules and regulations. Please remember that the rules are there in order for us to observe the greatest gift bestowed upon the Jewish people, the sanctity of the Shabbat. “Shabbat,” said one important Jewish philosopher, is a “palace in time.”

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff, we extend our warmest congratulations to you and your family. May you and your child go from this important accomplishment to many others.

Mazel Tov,

_____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________
Moshe Re‘em                  Kevin Wartell               Lynn Rothman              Melanie May
Rabbi                       Cantor                      President                Simcha Event Coordinator
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Introduction

The Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremony presents a challenge to today’s scattered, sometimes fractured families. Guests and family members are often not clear about the meaning of the service and how to participate in it. The family of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah child is often caught in the ethics of celebration – and in the highly subjective matter of “good taste.” Bar and Bat Mitzvah ostentation has become a morally debilitating part of the American Jewish landscape, though many families have rebelled admirably against the culture of glitz. Their experiences prove that this trend can be reversed, that the celebration can be kept in perspective, that the sense of spirituality that is inherent in the ceremony can be reclaimed.

Putting God on the Guest List
By Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin, 1996

Eligibility

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a joyous occasion which occurs within a lifetime of religious commitment. In order for a student to be adequately prepared for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, the following criteria must be satisfied:

1. Completion of four years of Jewish study, or an approved equivalent, such as the Jewish Day School.

2. Enrollment in, and completion of, the program at the Temple Beth El Religious School seventh grade Midrasha is required. This is inclusive of all students who become Bar/Bat Mitzvah prior to their 7th grade year. Students who are attending the Jewish Day School through grade seven are welcome to enroll in the Monday night program, if they desire.

3. Attendance at religious school classes and Shabbat morning services is an essential part of your child’s Jewish education. Students of the religious school are expected to attend all classes, but are required to attend a minimum of 80 percent. (See page 5 of the E. G. Scoblionko Religious School Parent Guide for full attendance policy). The clergy requires the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and family to attend Shabbat Services at least once a month for the year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Moreover, Bar/Bat Mitzvah families are strongly encouraged to attend on a weekly basis to provide positive role modeling for their children.

4. Satisfactory proficiency in the areas of study under the Cantor’s supervision which is preparatory to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

5. Behavior in synagogue and school in accordance with the moral and ethical teachings of our faith and the practices of Judaism.
Preparatory Academic Requirements
For the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Ceremony

Tutorial preparation for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is under the supervision of the Cantor and consists of:

1. Chanting of Haftarah and Maftir (portion of Torah reading)
2. Learning appropriate cantillation systems for Torah and Haftarah
3. Chanting Torah and Haftarah blessings
4. Kiddush, Shabbat evening and morning (including Netillat Yadayim and Motzi)
5. Ashrei
6. Eyn Kelohamu
7. Aleinu
8. Adon Olam
9. Chatzi Kaddish
10. Amidah (Avot and G’vurot)
11. Musaf Kedushah
12. Kaddish Shalem
13. Sh’ma/V’ahavta
14. V’yechulu

Advanced students who complete the minimum requirements will receive additional Torah portions to prepare.

⇒ NOTE: It is suggested that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child practice 45 minutes per day.
Important Information on the Preparation
For Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah Ceremony

1. Attendance at all lessons is essential to the learning process. Attendance records will be strictly maintained and absences followed up by Cantor Kevin Wartell. Only under extenuating circumstances will more than three absences per trimester be tolerated. The Cantor will prepare a schedule of lessons for all eligible students. You will receive a letter from the Cantor 6-9 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah informing you of the start of these lessons.

2. Approximately 4-5 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, parents shall meet with the clergy individually, to discuss the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. All members of the immediate family are encouraged to attend these meetings.

3. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will meet at least three times with the Rabbi to prepare a D'var Torah. You will be contacted approximately 6 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to schedule these appointments.

4. A dress rehearsal in the Sanctuary with the Cantor will be scheduled prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Arrangements are made with the Simcha Event Coordinator.

5. If you plan to take pictures in the Temple for your simcha, time can be scheduled with the Simcha Event Coordinator. **Photography is not permitted on Shabbat.**
Tallit and Tefillin
An Eternal Sign of Our Covenant with God

One of the mainstays of Jewish existence is our commitment to observe God’s commandments (mitzvot). The wearing of tallit and tefillin are two of the important mitzvot we learn as we approach Bar/Bat Mitzvah age.

The mitzvah of tallit and tefillin are covered in the E.G. Scoblionko Religious School curriculum. Bar and Bat Mitzvah students and parents are asked to attend two sessions on the wearing of tallit and tefillin. These sessions are conducted on Sunday mornings prior to class. A separate letter will be distributed notifying you of the dates of these sessions. The dates are also listed in the school calendar which is located in the Parent Guide of the Religious School.

Covered in these sessions will be both the history and religious significance of these two important ritual items. We will train, or in some cases retrain, both the student and adult on how to put on tefillin in a non-threatening environment. If you have tefillin, please bring them, if not, tefillin will be provided for demonstration purposes.

One of the best ways of learning is through experience. Actually seeing and experiencing how tallit and tefillin are put on is a very moving and historically significant moment. (Please feel free to bring your cameras for photo opportunities). The act of putting on a tallit connects young Jews with generations past and with the beauty of our religious heritage.

What exactly are our expectations? What we are requiring is participation in these sessions on tallitot and tefillin. For those students and parents who do not personally own a tallit and tefillin, we will make tallitot and pairs of tefillin available for your convenience. However, for those wishing to purchase tefillin, you will be provided with order forms through our religious school. The Federation of Jewish Men’s Clubs also has reasonably priced tefillin available for purchase. PURCHASE IS NOT NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROGRAM. Also, as is the case with tallitot, girls are not required to put on tefillin.

To enable us, and our children, to be literate and knowledgable Jews, we need to know about the spiritual and symbolic significance of these mitzvot, and how and why they can enhance our spirituality.
Honors During the Service

Honors are usually given to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child, his/her parents, grandparents, close relatives, and/or friends. The family must submit a Service Honors Form given to them by the Simcha Event Coordinator, listing the names of those individuals who will be receiving honors on Shabbat morning. This form serves as a guide for parents wishing to honor close family members and friends. Families are not required to find people to perform all of the listed honors. A preliminary form must be submitted to the Simcha Event Coordinator 2 months before the date of the ceremony. A final form will be due 3 weeks prior to the ceremony.

A maximum of five Aliyot (the honor of being called up to the Torah) may be given out. No more than four individuals at a time can be called up for a single Aliyah. This number includes the Parent’s Aliyah. DO NOT include your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrant’s Aliyah in this count. (Parents always receive the seventh Aliyah.) The Hebrew name of each person receiving an Aliyah plus those of his/her father and mother must be recorded on the above-mentioned form. Copies of the Torah Blessing, in Hebrew and in English transliteration, are available for advance preparation, (see Cantor for details). If you choose to assign Torah portions to any of your guests, the Cantor can provide these parts on CD. Please provide him with blank CDs for recording these portions at the start of your lessons.

Families may assign honors only to members of the Jewish faith. Non-Jewish people may not perform any rituals in the Sanctuary such as opening the Ark, chanting an Aliyah, or leading the congregation in prayer. In families where one parent of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not Jewish, the non-Jewish parent may accompany the Jewish parent on the Bimah as the Jewish parent chants the Aliyah. In addition, at the conclusion of the service after Adon Olam, a non-Jewish parent or relative may recite the Bar/Bat Mitzvah blessing.

Please do not assign honors to anyone who is unfamiliar with the service rituals; this is likely to cause embarrassment to them, to the family, or to the congregation. Not all of the available Honors need to be assigned. The Gabbai will distribute any unassigned Honors.

When reading the Torah a “pony” or “cheat sheet” may not be used. All Gabbai’m adhere to this policy.

(Please refer to the Service Honors Form for further details.)

Please remind all guests who will be participating in the service to be punctual so as not to cause delay or distract the service. Those receiving honors in the service should be respectful of the holiness of the Sanctuary. Please be sure that those receiving honors dress modestly and refrain from chewing gum.

Kindly bear in mind that ours is a large synagogue family, and throughout the week numerous simchas may occur in the lives of our members. There may be occasions when baby namings, “Aufrufs,” etc. will take place on Shabbat. Such individuals, as well as those who have yahrzeits or wish to Bentsch Gomel (a Prayer of Thanksgiving), will also be given the honor of being called to the Torah. Additionally, very often on Erev Shabbat, class services for our religious school may be held. Please know that all Bar/Bat Mitzvah children are entitled to equally participate on Erev Shabbat as we have reserved specific prayers for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child to lead. Class services enhance the Erev Shabbat services.
Parent Speeches........
“Should I or Shouldn’t I?” is the Question

For many years it has been our tradition to offer parents the opportunity to speak to their children from the Bimah during the Shabbat service celebrating their child’s achievement.

There are several guidelines that the clergy will review with you to help you determine whether you would like to accept or decline this honor.

When determining whether you would like to present a speech to your child, please be mindful of the following:

🌟 Passing on Jewish life and tradition and upholding the mitzvot found in our Torah is the essence of a parent’s speech.

🌟 What you say to your child on the Bimah during a Shabbat service should be uniquely different from what you would say at a reception holding a glass of wine. Jewish content is to be the foundation of your presentation. Other achievements such as in sports or academics, are not appropriate for the Bimah.

🌟 There is a rhythm to the worship experience, and in order to enhance this experience we ask that your speech be brief (no more than two minutes).

Your child and your family are very special to us. We want your family to experience the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a joyful event which is filled with great spiritual exaltation. We appreciate your cooperation in making this a festive and dignified occasion.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Speeches........

Your child will want to prepare a Thank You speech to be delivered at the end of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. Please have them print out a copy to be reviewed by the Rabbi one week prior to their service.

Presentation of Congregational Gifts

Your child will be presented gifts from the Synagogue, Men’s Club, Sisterhood, USY and other community organizations on the Bimah at the end of the service. It is an honor for someone to make this presentation. This honor is reserved for a member of the Temple’s Board of Directors, often but not always the President. You may choose to ask someone that you and/or your child have a relationship with. A current list of Board Members is available from the Simcha Event Coordinator. Selection must be made 2 months in advance of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah. If you do not choose someone specifically, one will be assigned for you.
The Welcome Pamphlet

Many Bar and Bat Mitzvah families wish to provide a welcome pamphlet for their guests and our congregation which explains the Shabbat service, details the requirements for wearing a kippah and tallit, and describes the ritual objects in the synagogue. Approved wording is available from the Simcha Event Coordinator. If you wish to design and provide a personalized pamphlet or a personalized insert for your occasion, please incorporate this approved wording. Additionally, prior to having this pamphlet printed, it must be approved by the Rabbi at least two weeks prior to the Simcha.

For your convenience, a half page insert listing the assigned honors with a service explanation and a short Thank You note to your guests may be included with our regular Shabbat Bulletin. A template is available from the Simcha Event Coordinator.

Anything larger than one half page must be brought in already copied and ready for distribution on the day of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Decorum in the Service

1. Upon entering the Synagogue, it is expected that all Jewish males wear a kippah and tallit. Non-Jewish male visitors are expected to wear a kippah as a symbol of respect.

2. Photography (including cell phone photography) or videography of any kind is not permitted in the Synagogue on Shabbat (Ritual & Service Committee 3/06). Arrangements to take pictures in the Sanctuary before and after the actual day of the ceremony should be made with the clergy and the Simcha Event Coordinator.

3. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off upon entering the Temple. Even in the vibrate mode, cell phones interfere with our sound system. Only physicians, on call, are permitted to use pagers and cell phones on vibrate mode.

4. Dress should be modest and appropriate for a house of worship. Modest dress includes the covering of shoulders and midriffs.

5. Every effort should be made to encourage behavior conducive to the worship of G-d. Gatherings in the foyer or outside the building should be avoided while services are in progress. It is your responsibility to oversee the behavior of all invited guests while on Synagogue property.

6. Childcare for ages 2 to 6 is available upon request. Arrangements can be made with the Simcha Event Coordinator. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the room next to the sanctuary. For small children who are unable to sit quietly in the service, parents can see and hear the service while taking care of their child. Please let your guests know about this amenity.

7. The permanent pews in our Sanctuary seat 300. Be sure to advise if your expected number of guest exceeds 300 (including 70 regular worshipers). In the event that attendance is expected to be large, additional chairs will be pre-set.
Rules of Conduct on Shabbat
(During Kiddushim and Private Luncheon/Dinner Affairs)

1. We strongly urge an invitation to your celebration be extended to the entire Bar/Bat Mitzvah class (including the Jewish Day School students) in order to protect the feelings of the members of the class and prevent misunderstandings between the families. A current class list can be obtained from the Simcha Event Coordinator.

2. The observance of Shabbat begins with candle lighting on Friday evening and ends one hour after candle lighting the next day. Havdallah must take place for events starting before the end of Shabbat. The Rabbi determines the time of the Havdallah service. Photography, videography, etc. may take place during the Havdallah service.

3. Writing of any kind is prohibited in the Synagogue on Shabbat as well as text messaging on cell phones. This includes sign-in-boards and caricaturists.

4. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off upon entering the Temple. Even in the vibrate mode, cell phones interfere with our sound system. Only physicians, on call, are permitted to use pagers and cell phones on vibrate mode.

5. Balloons may not be inflated on Shabbat in the synagogue.

6. Temple Beth El is a smoke-free environment, including the outside perimeter of the building and the entire Temple grounds. (TBE Board of Directors 12/05)

7. Photography of any kind (including cell phones) is prohibited in the Synagogue on Shabbat. (Ritual & Service Committee 3/06)

8. Lighting of candles is prohibited in the Synagogue on Shabbat. This includes candle lighting ceremonies.

9. Any craft which produces a work of art is prohibited by Jewish law on the Sabbath. This includes computer art. No writing, coloring, construction, defined as requiring cutting, stapling, hammering or similar activity may take place on Shabbat.

10. Kindly ask your guests to refrain from bringing gifts into the Synagogue on Shabbat, since this is not keeping with the spirit of Shabbat observance.

11. Vendors may not bring any food or alcohol into the building. They are expected to abide by the rules covered in this manual. It is their responsibility to convey the appropriate regulations with any staff member whom they employ. Please consider this when making arrangements with your caterer.
12. **An important word about the Use of Bands, DJ’s and secular music.**

- Only Jewish music may be played during the congregational Kiddush.
- At your private event, tasteful secular music may be played during your celebratory meal.
- We encourage you to choose music that is Jewish in nature.
- At no time shall derogatory, sexist, obscene, violence-promoting, or racist lyrics be permitted.
- Projection screens are permitted for live feed of the party and/or montages of the guest of honor. These activities may only take place during non-Shabbat hours. The Synagogue prohibits the use of smoke machines, strobe/disco lights and similar items.
- Using electronic devices, drawing, writing, flame swallowing, candle lighting, or tearing paper is prohibited on Shabbat.
- Immodestly dressed professional dancers are prohibited at all times.

13. Alcohol is permitted at the kiddush and at a private event. However, it must be tended to and supervised by catering staff at all times. If alcohol is being served at your private event, a bartender must tend bar during the entire event. Please do not allow children to drink alcoholic beverages!
The Logistics

Approximately three (3) months prior to your simcha, a meeting with the Simcha Event Coordinator will be arranged to discuss the logistics of your simcha. The following information will provide you with a guide to assist you with planning prior to your meeting.

**Temple Beth El must approve all Vendors and their required insurance.**
Prior to booking any services, please contact the Simcha Event Coordinator to verify if they are on the current list of approved vendors. If not, Synagogue requirements can be sent to them to obtain approval.

1. **Finances and Facilities**

Deposits must be paid three (3) months prior to events. Two (2) weeks prior to your simcha, all room rental charges, Oneg, Kiddush, and Shabbat dinner balances are to be paid in full. A maintenance deposit is also due at this time. All other financial obligations must be current prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Temple policy requires full payment of all financial obligations that are in arrears prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In addition, all current financial obligations (dues, commitment, school fees, etc.) must be paid prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah unless other arrangements have been made with the Executive Director.

2. **Catering**

1. Food ordered through the Temple, or an approved Kosher Caterer may be brought into the building. No cooking utensils or serving dishes may be brought in, other than by an approved caterer. The caterer must submit a certificate of rabbinic supervision (hasgacha) and an insurance certificate at least one (1) month in advance of the reception. In addition, Kosher, pre-packaged foods may be supplied. They must arrive *unopened* with approved Kosher labeling on the packaging and be checked in upon arrival by an authorized Temple Mishgeach. Approved Kosher symbols are included in this manual. Arrangements should be made with the Simcha Event Coordinator. **Make sure that any food, supplies, or flowers are delivered to the Temple before 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. No deliveries are allowed on Shabbat.**

2. Food may not be cooked on Shabbat, only warmed. No toasting, browning or “heating” of food can take place (both in and out of the kitchen) over an open flame (i.e. frying pans, sterno, etc.) before Havdallah.

3. We strongly urge that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah s’udah (party) be held in the synagogue. Holding your reception at Temple Beth El helps to maintain the dignity and joy of this religious milestone. It is also convenient for your invited guests to remain in the building after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony to participate in your reception.

4. If having a party in the building - be mindful of the setting, while making it fun for the kids.
3. Centerpieces/Decorations

1. No candles may be lit on Shabbat.
2. Use of candles is permitted but must be displayed safely and securely. Candles may not be lit prior to the end of Shabbat.
3. Loose glitter and confetti is not permitted as part of your table decorations.
4. Any items being affixed to the walls or flooring should be discussed with the Simcha Event Coordinator for acceptable procedures.
5. If the meal is “meat” – centerpieces and party favors cannot consist of “dairy” products and vice versa.

4. Invitations

You may wish to send formal invitations to family and friends. Our services begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday evenings and 9:00 a.m. Saturday mornings. Please encourage your guests to be punctual so that they may worship with us for the entire service. It cannot be stressed enough that late arriving guests/worshipers are a distraction and disturb the decorum and sanctity of the service.

5. Temple Bulletin

Please submit a picture and article of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah child to the Simcha Event Coordinator eight (8) weeks prior to your simcha for inclusion in the Temple Bulletin (name on back of the picture is required).

6. Shabbat Kiddush/ Oneg Requirements

All families who utilize the tutoring services of our temple are required to sponsor a Shabbat Oneg and Kiddush. This policy applies whether a child is receiving his or her Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Beth El or elsewhere.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family has the obligation, along with their guests, to attend a significant portion (at least 30 minutes) of the congregational Kiddush, which takes place immediately following the Shabbat morning services.
7. Friday Night Oneg Shabbat

If your family is expecting more than 35 personally invited guests, please make arrangements with the Simcha Event Coordinator to increase the standing bakery order.

Your Oneg will include:

- An assortment of parve, dairy and sugar-free cakes, pastries, and cookies.
- Linens and Napkins.
- Coffee, tea, Soda.

8. Kiddush

Standard Minimum Kiddush

As a tradition, the following standard in-house menu is provided at a typical Saturday Kiddush. Additional enhancements to the Kiddush can be arranged with the Simcha Event Coordinator.

- Herring
- Gefilte Fish
- Plain Tuna
- Tossed Salad & Dressings
- Bagels and Cream Cheese
- Assortment of Cakes (including sugar-free)
- Hard Boiled Eggs
- Tuna Fish Salad
- Egg Salad

If you wish to use the services of an outside kosher caterer for your Kiddush, please check with the Simcha Event Coordinator for an up-to-date list of approved kosher caterers. All caterers must be approved by Temple Beth El. Outside caterers should notify the Simcha Event Coordinator as to whether the meal will be dairy or meat. Food for our regular Shabbat attendees needs to be provided in addition to your invited guests. A current number of regular Shabbat attendees can be obtained from the Simcha Event Coordinator. This count is based upon the number of congregants who attend services on a weekly Shabbat basis and should not be diminished by your invited Temple Beth El guests who do not regularly attend services. All arrangements should be made with the Simcha Event Coordinator at least 6 weeks in advance.

9. Shabbat Dinner Option

Friday night Shabbat dinners are available upon request for your family and friends. These dinners typically take place prior to the evening service. Menus from our in-house catering staff can be provided. All arrangements should be made with the Simcha Event Coordinator at least 6 weeks in advance.
10. Flowers/Basket for Pulpit

Bar/Bat Mitzvah parents may choose to provide flowers or a donation basket for our Bimah. If choosing flowers, please inform the florist that flowers must be delivered by 3:00 pm on the Friday preceding your simcha. Flowers for the service are placed on a carpeted floor in the sanctuary in front of 1 – 3 lecterns. The front of these lecterns measure approximately 3’ x 3’. Please ensure flowers are placed in appropriate containers and are of appropriate size. The florist must be approved by Temple Beth El.

As an alternate to flowers, Temple Beth El has put together a basket displaying various food and sundry items which can be placed on the Bimah. A minimum donation can be given to Temple Beth El who will in turn forward the check to Jewish Family Services to use as deemed necessary for people in need in our community. A color bow of your choice will be tied onto the basket.

If you choose to provide your own donation basket, please discuss the details with Simcha Event Coordinator.

11. Silver

Silver serving pieces may be rented from Sisterhood. Please contact the Simcha Event Coordinator to make those arrangements. This must be done at least three (3) weeks prior to your simcha.
Approved Kosher Symbols
Community Outreach  
(Ideas For Giving Back To The Community)

Cantor Wartell is available to consult with your family concerning specific Mitzvah Projects. We encourage each student to participate in a mitzvah project during the year preceding their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please schedule an appointment with him to discuss your interests and project.

**Mazon**

A national hunger organization, Mazon, a Jewish Response to Hunger, has been established to raise funds to help alleviate hunger in this country and around the world.

In the best of our Jewish tradition, Mazon’s simple, unique concept is to help feed hungry Jews and non-Jews through a suggested voluntary contribution equal to three percent of the cost of a celebration held at the time of your simcha – weddings, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, birthdays, etc.

These funds will be allocated to field organizations here and abroad who are doing useful and cost effective work feeding the hungry at the local, national, and international level. Donations may be sent to:

MAZON  
A Jewish Response to Hunger  
12401 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 303  
Los Angeles, CA 90025-1015

**Give a Mitzvah, Do a Mitzvah**

Give a Mitzvah, Do a Mitzvah is an initiative of the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley, which was created to offer young adults a resource for mitzvah projects and Tzedakah opportunities for their B’nai Mitzvah year and beyond. The JFLV is available to guide your child through the process of creating, establishing and executing the Mitzvah project. They also will make their first adult act of community tzedakah with a pledge to the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley’s Annual Campaign for Jewish Needs. With a little help from the JFLV, the possibilities for such projects are as endless as the participant’s creativity. At the bar/bat mitzvah ceremony, participants are recognized for their projects and support with a beautiful certificate. For more information, contact Abby Trachtman, Program Coordinator at abbyt@jflv.org or 610-821-5500 x321.
VISIT Israel

The VISIT Israel program is a savings partnership between the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley and the members of the Jewish community. Each year, participating families contribute at least $300 into their VISIT Israel savings account to be matched by $200 from the JFLV, for up to eight years. A family that participates in the VISIT Israel program for the full eight years will accumulate at least $4000 (plus interest) to pay for their child’s Israel Experience.

Eligibility for enrollment begins in 3rd grade. Participant families must be donors in good standing to the JFLV Annual Campaign for Jewish Needs. If enrollment occurs after 3rd grade and the family has been donors in good standing for prior years, they may make up the difference by contributing the total sum of prior year’s eligibility and receive the full Federation match.

A VISIT Israel participant may use the funds for an approved Israel experience anytime between the conclusion of the 9th grade and age 25. Participation in the visit account is limited to eight years. The VISIT Savings Partnership is designed to fund Israel programs that emphasize Jewish learning or living experiences for a period of at least four weeks in Israel.

If you are interested in learning more about the VISIT Israel program, please contact, Abby Trachtman, Program Coordinator, at abbyt@jflv.org or 610-821-5500 x321.
We hope this manual serves as a useful tool to help guide you along the path to your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Thank you for all of your effort and cooperation to make this a positive, memorable experience. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Melanie May.

On behalf of the congregation, Mazel Tov!

Contact Information

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