



**Manetto Hill**  
JEWISH CENTER

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# BAR / BAT MITZVAH HANDBOOK



Revised 2021

# Let's Start Planning...

## Resources:

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**Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns, options or inquiries. We will assist you to resolve any issue that may arise. Our goal is to make each Bar/Bat Mitzvah shine on their special day.**

Becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah means to become responsible for fulfilling the *mitzvot* of deeds that connect us to Judaism, to each other and to G-d. To be ethical, kind and compassionate and to understand that it is a privilege to live a full, rich Jewish life.



## *From the Rabbi's Study*

*Mazel Tov!* You are entering into a wonderful and exciting period of Jewish education and celebration – the Bar/Bat Mitzvah of your child. All of us at MHJC want to help make your child's upcoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah a

meaningful and memorable experience for your family and our entire congregation!

At MHJC we seek to create an environment of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah in which every family will understand the child's responsibilities and privileges within the context of our community. Your child will develop fluency in the skills and customs needed to participate as an adult.

We urge your family to attend Shabbat Services regularly. This will help everyone feel more comfortable with the service on the day of your simcha. It cannot be emphasized enough that the frequency of attendance at Shabbat services will enhance your child's appreciation of the service and increase the level of comfort and skill they will have in leading the service.

Services at MHJC are for all of our congregants. We want our children to feel that they are part of our MHJC community and the Jewish community at large. As such, *Aufrufs* (calling a bride and groom for an *Aliyah*), baby namings, recognition of anniversaries, birthdays or *yahrtzeits* may be part of a Shabbat Service in addition to a Bar/Bat B'nai Mitzvah.

We look forward to seeing you at the synagogue as we all contribute to the beauty and significance of this milestone in your family's life.

*Mazel Tov!*

Rabbi Neil

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## **Bar/Bat Mitzvah Time Line**

Note: The tasks that have a bullet point (●) are necessary for the ritual component of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. All other tasks and time frames are recommendations.

### ***One Year Ahead***

- Meet with Rabbi for consultation about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- Make decisions about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration (location, caterer, etc.).

### ***Nine Months Ahead***

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah begins to plan Mitzvah project.
- Family meeting with the Rabbi.
- Plan hotel accommodations for out of town guests.
- Consider child care arrangements for young children.
- Begin looking for invitations and planning the guest list.

### ***Six Months Ahead***

- Make sure Synagogue dues and other fees are paid in full.
- Start individual lessons with the Rabbi.
- Make arrangements for Friday dinner and Sunday brunch for any out of town guests.
- Order *kippot* (*yarmulkes*), order invitations, including any maps, direction cards, and RSVP cards.

### ***Four Months Ahead***

- Purchase *tallit*.
- Discuss with the Rabbi which parts of the service will be led by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student.
- Plan *Aliyot* (Torah Honors) Ark openers, Torah readers and other roles for family and friends.
- Read through the Torah portion in preparation for the *D'var Torah*.
- Arrange for announcement/bio/picture to be placed in the Synagogue's Book of Life, e-blast and newsletter.

## ***Two to Three Months Ahead***

- Make arrangements to host the Friday *Oneg Shabbat* and the Shabbat morning *Kiddush*.
- Advise Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee Chairperson of any dietary restrictions.
- Begin to discuss and write the *D'var Torah* (Bar/Bat Mitzvah speech).
- Begin to prepare Parent's Words of Encouragement Speech (OPTIONAL).
- Send invitations (RSVP's should be returned no less than 3 weeks prior to the event).
- Send information to out of town guests, including directions and hotel information.
- Confirm all caterer reservations and floral orders.
- Plan any speech or special ceremony for the reception.

## ***One Month Ahead***

- Submit honors form to synagogue office.
- Schedule weekday photography session and vendor deliveries with the synagogue office.
- Begin to get the final count of guests.

## ***Final Week***

- Review ceremony and honors assignments with the Rabbi.
- Photo session at synagogue.
- Confirm vendor deliveries to synagogue.

## **Bar / Bat Mitzvah Eligibility**

Historically, when a boy turned 13 he was called to the *Torah* at a public worship service to mark his coming of age in the Jewish community. The child was considered an adult and afforded all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of any member of the community. At MHJC, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue, that tradition has been preserved and extended to all young persons. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, usually part of the Congregation's regular Shabbat morning service, invites each young person to participate in a way that demonstrates their skills and abilities to function as an adult member of the Jewish community.

## ***Jewish Status***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate must be Jewish according to the standards of the Conservative Movement. Any concerns in this area should be discussed confidentially with the Rabbi.

## ***Educational Requirements***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate must successfully complete the Manetto Hill Jewish Center Religious School or attend an area Jewish day school. Any child who is new to the community will be evaluated for prior learning and Hebrew skills. Every effort will be made to facilitate a timely Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Parents will be responsible for securing a tutor, if needed, to facilitate this process. Tutors must be approved in advance by the Rabbi.

## ***Mitzvah Project***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate must successfully complete a mitzvah project.

A mitzvah project makes your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah that much more meaningful. Whether it is collecting for a charity or giving of his/her time, there are many ways to make a difference. There are many organizations and sources to find a project. See "Appendix 2" of this document for examples.

## ***Abilities***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate must demonstrate ability to participate in the Shabbat service in the following ways:

- a. Recite the blessings for the *Torah* reading.
- b. Lain *Torah* and/or chant the *Haftorah* and its blessings.
- c. Prepare and present a *D'var Torah* (Bar /Bat Mitzvah thoughts and explanation about a *Torah* theme).
- d. Lead portions of the Shabbat service to be determined by the Rabbi based on student's ability.
- e. Recite the blessings for *Kiddush* (blessings for wine & challah).

## ***Financial Obligations***

All Synagogue dues, fees and obligations must be paid in full 6 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

## **Bar / Bat Mitzvah Lessons**

Six months or more prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah the student will meet with the Rabbi for individual instruction. This will be in addition to Religious School.

Your child's comfort level on his/her special day will be directly related to the amount of time invested in practice. It is your responsibility to insure that your child is maintaining a daily routine of practice.

Half-hour sessions are given on a weekly basis. In general, the lessons start approximately six (6) months before your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, as illustrated below:

<b>Month of Bar/Bat Mitzvah</b>	<b>Month Lessons Start</b>
January	May
February	June
March	September
April	October
May	November
June	December
September	January
October	February
November	March
December	April

Please note that this is a general guideline, and assumes that lessons will not take place during July or August. If you or your child's teachers feel that your child will need additional time to prepare, then the lessons may be scheduled to start at an earlier date.

## ***Practice***

We recommend that you encourage your child to practice in front of you at least once a week. This will enable you to monitor your child's progress. Additionally, they will become more comfortable "performing in public".

## ***Administrative Procedures***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah training schedule follows the Religious School Calendar. If Religious School is closed because of a secular or religious holiday, then there will be no Bar or Bat Mitzvah lesson unless students are informed otherwise by the Rabbi. If a student cannot attend a lesson for any reason, please call the Rabbi. Please try to avoid cancellations except in emergency circumstances. Likewise, please avoid tardy arrivals so there is sufficient time for learning and preparation. Instruction cannot be scheduled during Religious School hours.

## **Preparations and Expectations**

### ***Family Meeting with the Rabbi***

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family should schedule an initial meeting with our Rabbi approximately 9 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This meeting may be scheduled earlier, if preferred. This meeting is an opportunity for your child and you to share thoughts about becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Contact the Rabbi or office to schedule the meeting.

### ***Attending Services***

To facilitate better understanding and proficiency, students and their families are encouraged to attend two Shabbat services monthly during the 12 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In the six months prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, students should attend one Friday evening and two Shabbat morning services monthly. Their families are also encouraged to attend. During at least one weekend, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah students will help lead services.

It cannot be emphasized enough that the frequency of attendance at Shabbat services will enhance the child's appreciation of the service and increase the level of comfort and skill they will have in leading the service.

### **Ushering (when required)**

#### ***Requirements***

To maintain proper decorum and a smooth flow of your *simcha* ushers are necessary. All families are required to usher at two (2) services prior to their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. You will count on the persons ushering at your *simcha*, so please meet your responsibilities in kind. Please note that in order to fulfill ushering requirements it is mandatory that both parents (if applicable) be present at each ushering assignment.

**Your child is encouraged to join you at services on your ushering dates to become as familiar as possible with Shabbat services.**

## ***Ushering Duties***

- Please be at the synagogue no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the Service. Upon arrival please have the custodian on duty check you in on the ushering list in the office. This is our way of verifying your attendance and issuing the appropriate credit on your bill. The synagogue officer that will be sitting on the *Bimah* should be there to clarify any questions that you might have.
- As worshippers arrive to the Synagogue greet them and hand them a *Chumash* (Bible) and *Siddur* (Prayer Book). There are copies of Prayer Books with transliteration of the service for those who would like them.
- As a sign of respect, all men must wear a *kippah* (head covering) while in the synagogue building. In accordance with egalitarian practice women are encouraged to wear a *kippah* or other head covering.
- Jewish men above the age of Bar Mitzvah should wear a *tallit* during services. In accordance with egalitarian practice Jewish women above the age of Bat Mitzvah have the option of wearing a *tallit* during services. They are kept in the center cabinet just outside the Sanctuary.
- Sanctuary doors should be closed when the Ark is open, during the Rabbi's sermon, the *D'var Torah* and the *Haftarah*. Congregants should refrain from entering and leaving the Sanctuary at these times.
- Remind those with cell phones to turn them off or, if needed for emergencies, then they should be set on vibrate mode. Any use of cell phones including text messaging and photography is prohibited inside the synagogue on Shabbat.
- If any guest, adult or child, is disruptive or loud, politely ask them to quiet down.
- Keep an eye on the young people in attendance in particular. One usher may need to sit behind them in order to keep them quiet.
- If any problem arises that cannot be handled bring it to the attention of the synagogue officer seated on the *Bimah*.

- After *Hagbah* (lifting the torah) and prior to the *Haftorah*, provide the candy basket for candy distribution.
- Congregants, guests and family members should be reminded to keep their voices down when they are in the foyer and hallway during services and that everyone is expected to be in the Sanctuary during services, as opposed to congregating in the hallway or restrooms.
- In the event of an extended Kiddush, assist in putting away all *Chumashim* and *Siddurim* at the end of the service. Ushers must remain at the Synagogue until the end of the Shabbat services.
- If you see a bus or commercial vehicle in the synagogue parking lot, please redirect them to Diamond Drive.

**Your efforts are truly appreciated by the Synagogue and the families at whose Bar/Bat Mitzvah you are ushering, as you will appreciate the ushers at your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah.**

## **Shabbat Decorum**

### ***Dress***

At both the Friday Evening Service prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and at the Shabbat Morning Service, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and his/her family should wear clothing appropriate for the *Bimah*. For men, a jacket and tie is appropriate. For women, please refrain from wearing low cut, sleeveless, strapless or backless attire. Guests are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for synagogue services.

### ***Ritual Apparel***

As a sign of respect, all men must wear a *kippah* (head covering) while in the synagogue building. Jewish men above the age of Bar Mitzvah should wear a *tallit* (prayer shawl), during morning services. In accordance with egalitarian practice Jewish women above the age of Bat Mitzvah are encouraged to wear a *kippah* or other head covering and have the option of wearing a *tallit* during morning services.

## ***Electronic Devices***

The use of cellular phones, beepers, and cameras is prohibited during Shabbat services and additionally is disruptive to the prayer experience. If you are a physician on-call, please use the vibrate mode. Moreover, in the spirit of Shabbat, unless it is an emergency, please do not use cell phones or use other communication devices in the building on the Sabbath.

## ***Photography and Videography***

In keeping with Jewish law, photography and videography are prohibited on synagogue grounds throughout Shabbat. Families may arrange to take pictures on the *Bimah* during the week prior to or following their simcha by contacting the synagogue office. These arrangements must be made in advance. Photographers will not be allowed in the sanctuary without prior arrangement with the office.

## ***Deliveries***

Flowers, decorations, *kippot* (yarmulkes), centerpieces, balloons and all food and beverages must be brought to the synagogue before noon on Friday. No items can be brought to the synagogue after Shabbat has begun. Also, please note that nothing can be removed from the synagogue until after the end of Shabbat. This includes centerpieces, extra *kippot* and leftover food and beverages.

## ***Offsite Party***

Should you be holding an offsite party following services please provide directions to your guests in advance. Please refrain from distributing directions in the Synagogue on Shabbat. Note: Shabbat morning services conclude at approximately 12:15. Please assume that your guests will remain for at least ½ hour during the Kiddush reception.

## ***Buses and Commercial Vehicles***

Buses and commercial vehicles may not park or pick up guests on the synagogue premises, and may not use the parking lot during Shabbat for any reason. Buses and commercial vehicles are discouraged from parking on Manetto Hill Road as this creates a hazardous traffic situation. The Diamond Drive exit of the parking lot has been used as a bus loading area. Please make sure to advise your bus company accordingly

## ***Bar/Bat Mitzvah Weekend***

Please arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of your service. Seats will be reserved for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family in the front row. Please make sure your guests are informed of the service start time to avoid any last minute confusion.

## Summary of Costs

If financial responsibilities are not satisfied, the policy of the Manetto Hill Jewish Center states that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah may not take place.

## **Fees and Expenses**

The following base fees are associated with having a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Manetto Hill Jewish Center:

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fee: \$750
  - The Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee is a fixed fee. This fee is not a payment for specific services rendered by the Congregation; rather, it makes it possible for Manetto Hill Jewish Center to maintain all of the programs and services that relate to Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah Sisterhood Hospitality Fee: \$600\*,
  - Included in this fee are *Bimah* (pulpit) flowers, a sheet cake, Friday night *Oneg Shabbat* dessert, Shabbat morning refreshments and a candy basket for the Shabbat morning service. The sheet cake can be served on Friday night or Shabbat morning at the family's discretion. Included in this fee is a basic Shabbat morning *Kiddush* for 100 guests. There may be an additional fee of \$50 for each twenty five (25) people you expect over 100. If the family is hosting a catered Shabbat luncheon (extended Kiddush), Sisterhood will not supply the refreshments and \$300 of the Hospitality Fee will be applied to the room rental fee.
- Security Guard Fee: \$150

**Total Base Fees: \$ 1,500.00**

\* The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family shares its simcha with the entire congregation by serving as host, sponsoring an *Oneg Shabbat* dessert after Friday evening services, and a *Kiddush* reception following Shabbat morning services. These two receptions provide an opportunity for the synagogue family to come together and rejoice with your family.

## ***Additional Expenses***

### **Ushering Fee (when applicable)**

A \$500 ushering fee will be included in your synagogue bill. The ushering fee can be eliminated by fulfilling the ushering requirements discussed above, as follows:

- The first time that both parents (if applicable) usher, \$250 will be deducted from the \$500 fee.
- The second time that both parents (if applicable) usher, the remaining \$ 250 will be deducted from the \$500 fee.

### **Supplemental Tutoring**

In the event that supplemental tutoring is required in addition to weekly Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons, the family will be referred to an approved tutor. The tutor will bill the family directly.

### ***Optional Extended Kiddush, Luncheon, or Celebration***

The following information will assist you if you wish to use the synagogue building for an extended *Kiddush*, luncheon, celebration, etc.

- Synagogue maintains a list of approved caterers. A copy of the list is included in your packet or can be obtained in the synagogue office.
- All food must be arranged through one of our approved caterers. You cannot bring your own food into the synagogue.
- Friday night *Oneg Shabbat* must be pareve.

- Saturday *Kiddush* or luncheon may be either meat, pareve, or dairy.
- It is your responsibility to reserve the use of our facilities for a particular date. Be sure to contact the Synagogue office at least six (6) months in advance.
- Catered food and/or Sisterhood *Kiddush* food may not be supplemented by any outside food.
- If you have an extended *Kiddush*, the *Kiddush* is open to all who attend services. Please notify your caterer that approximately ten (10) congregants will attend the extended *Kiddush*.
- If you are having an extended *Kiddush*, luncheon, or other celebration, then a room rental fee of \$300 will be added to your synagogue bill. Families hosting an extended *Kiddush*, luncheon, or celebration will not be charged the full Sisterhood Hospitality Fee.
- If your event is not on Shabbat morning, additional fees will apply. This is to cover additional custodial fees and other synagogue costs.

### **Additional Information**

#### ***Tzedakah***

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration should include acts of charity and prayer. Many families go to considerable expense to celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please remember to “place God on your guest list” by including in your plans and family discussions a choice of a charity to which to donate. Only through an act of *Tzedakah* is a family *simcha* truly a *mitzvah*, and only through sharing can God share our joy. It is quite appropriate to dedicate prayer books or *tallit* in honor of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Also appropriate is a donation of an item from the synagogue’s donatable list or a donation to a worthy charity.

## ***The Wall of Life, Tree of Life, Path of Honor and/or Holocaust Torah Memorial Names***

All memorable occasions deserve to be commemorated. One meaningful way is to have your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah inscribed on our Wall of Life, with its beautiful glass plaques and rich wood framing. You can also order an engraved leaf to add to our Tree of Life to commemorate your event or inscribe a brick paver to be placed in our Path of Honor walkway. You can also memorialize one of the Jews of Kolin who perished in the Holocaust. For additional information, please contact the synagogue office at 516-935-5454.

### **ROAD MAP TO BAR/BAT MITZVAH** **RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

#### **Pre-Primary & Primary:**

Introduces the children to the basic elements of Jewish religion, its traditions & practices.

**MAJOR FOCUS-** Students should feel proud of being Jewish and proud of their heritage.

**HEBREW-** Introduced to the letters and recognize the following Hebrew words; *shalom, Havdallah, Shabbat, Shema, mezuzah*; be able to recite the short blessings over candles, wine & challah

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES-** Introduced to the Bible stories, Jewish Holidays and the concept of *Tzedakah*.

#### **Aleph:**

**HEBREW-** Students will be able to identify all the Hebrew letters and vowels, count to 10 in Hebrew, recite fluently the blessings over the Shabbat candles, wine & challah, blessings over the Chanukah candles, Lulav & Estrog, and eating matza, and recognize the following Hebrew words; *Baruch, Torah, Shalom, Shema*, and their Hebrew names.

**PRAYERS TO BE FOCUSED ON-** *Shema, Barchu, Brachot* over food

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES-** Students will continue the study of *Torah* up to & including the story of Joseph in Egypt, be able to describe the Shabbat cycle; (*Kabbalat Shabbat, Shabbat* morning & Afternoon, *Havdalah*). Students will

recognize Jewish symbols and their association with each holiday. Students will be introduced to the key cities in the State of Israel.

### **Bet:**

**HEBREW-** Students will be able to read Hebrew words with vowels, continue to familiarize students with various blessings associated with *Havdallah* and Jewish items.

**PRAYERS TO BE FOCUSED ON** – *Shema, Barchu, V'shamru, L'cha Dodi*(1<sup>st</sup> line), *Amidah*(1<sup>st</sup> line), *MiChamochoh* (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> lines), Passover's 4 Questions

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES-** Students will learn about *Hachnasat Orchim*, elements of the *Hagaddah*; 4 Questions & 10 Plagues, *Tzedakah*, and continue with the study & learning Torah stories

### **Gimmel:**

**HEBREW-** Students will continue to develop their reading skills.

**PRAYERS TO BE FOCUSED ON-** Friday Night Service concentrating on *Shalom Alechim*, first two stanzas of *L'cha Dodi, Shema, V'Ahavta, Amidah, and Aleinu*

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES-** Students will continue to study Holidays, *Torah, Kiddushah*, identify the Patriarchs & Matriarchs, partnership with *Hashem (Brit, covenant)*, the importance of community, and continue the study of Israel and the surrounding region.

### **Daled:**

**HEBREW-** Students will continue to develop their Hebrew skills and fluency, identify roots, and be introduced to the meaning of the vocabulary pertaining to prayer

**PRAYERS TO BE FOCUSED ON-** Shabbat Morning Prayers concentrating on *Barchu, Shema, Amidah, Hatzi Kaddish*

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES-** Students will continue their studies of the Holidays, *Torah, Israel, leadership skills, the importance of Tzedekah, of menschlিকেit* (obligation to be a good person),

*Mitzvot* (obligation to do better than we might on our own).

## **Hay:**

**HEBREW**- Continue to identify roots and meaning of vocabulary pertaining to prayer.

**PRAYERS TO BE FOCUSED ON**- Prayers associated with *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and Shabbat morning

**JEWISH IDENTITY, CUSTOMS & VALUES**- Share their own understanding of prayer, define *Kashrut*, Jewish lifecycle, customs of Israel today through the introduction of Modern Hebrew, familiarize students with Jewish leaders not only in our history but secular history as well, study the Holocaust.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Students will have experience with *Tefillin*

## **Appendix1:How To Prepare a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Speech**

### A Guide for Bar/Bat Mitzvah Students

The purpose of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Speech (D'var Torah) is to afford you the opportunity to welcome your guests, thank the people who helped make your day special, and demonstrate that Torah and Judaism play an important role in your life as a young Jewish adult.

#### ***Before you begin Prepare a list of:***

1. People who have traveled a great distance that you would like to welcome.
2. Special guests that you would like to welcome.
3. People you would like to thank: Parents, Grandparents, Teachers, Principal, Bar/Bat Mitzvah Teacher, Rabbi, Etc...

#### ***Select a topic: Ask yourself...***

What really excites me about Judaism?

What do I find most interesting about Judaism?

Is a particular mitzvah (commandment) interesting to me?

Is something in my Torah or Haftorah Reading interesting to me?

A complete listing of the mitzvot can be found at  
[www.jewfaq.org/613.htm](http://www.jewfaq.org/613.htm).

Go to

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/WeeklyTorahCommentary>  
& <http://www.torah.org/learning/parsha/hsummary/index.html>  
for summaries, commentaries, and text studies on weekly Torah portions.

Who is your audience? What will they find interesting?  
Some topics selected by other B'nai Mitzvah Students include:  
The Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, The Music of Judaism, or  
Being Jewish in a Non-Jewish World.

**The topic is your choice as long as it has a connection to  
Judaism.**

The Rabbi will be happy to help you identify texts and/or online resources to assist in constructing your speech. Many resources are available online

**As you read the available texts and resources  
consider...**

What practical things can be learned from your topic of interest?

How does this topic impact your life?

How have you learned from this topic?

Is this topic as relevant today as it was in the time of the Torah?

Is it applied differently?

Have circumstances evolved?

Why is it necessary for this matter to be discussed as a matter of religion?

## ***An Outline of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Speech***

- 1) Welcome friends and family.
- 2) Thank everybody for coming.
- 3) Special welcomes (mentioned above).
- 4) Special thank you (mentioned above).
- 5) A brief explanation of the concept of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- 6) Introduce topic of discussion.
- 7) Explain why you selected this topic.
- 8) Present your thoughts on the topic.
- 9) Summarize and restate the main point.
- 10) Re-thank everybody for coming.
- 11) Close with the words, "Shabbat Shalom."

### **Appendix 2: Mitzvah Project Ideas**

Adapted from Alex Rosenthal

#### ***Before your Bar/Bat Mitzvah:***

- In the invitation, ask people to bring clothes, canned food, sports equipment, all the loose change they have, baby items, etc. to the reception, which would be taken to an organization afterwards.
- Include an envelope addressed to a charity. With this, your guests could send money to that charity.
- Send food to a less fortunate family for a holiday such as Passover, Purim, *Rosh Hashanah*, etc.
- The Points of Light webpage ([www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)) shows where volunteer centers all over the U.S. are, where you could volunteer for various community service projects.
- Visit local charitable agencies and shelters. You could then raise awareness of these by placing a brief

explanation of each organization's mission in the invitations or as something to take home after the reception.

- Learn entertaining skills such as juggling and magic and perform them at hospitals, retirement homes and for disabled people. This would be a good mitzvah to do as a group, with friends or family.

### ***At the Synagogue:***

- You can invite Jewish elderly people from local retirement homes to come and enjoy your service.
- Instead of *Bima* flowers consider creating a *Mitzvah* Basket.

There are many ways to make a beautiful and festive *Mitzvah* Basket that become items to donate after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. The following ideas were used successfully at Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations.

- i. Make a centerpiece out of books, and donate them to organizations such as Headstart.
- ii. Make a centerpiece with cans of food, which are to be later donated to an agency or shelter to be given to the hungry.
- iii. Find a way to arrange gloves, hats, and mittens into a centerpiece which looks like flowers, and then donate them to an agency or shelter.

## ***At the Party:***

- Instead of flower centerpieces, you can do several things. Contribute the saved money to *Tzedakah*. Make Mitzvah basket centerpieces (see above)
- Hold a *Tzedakah* fair, where each table represents a different charity, with information on the charities and ways to contribute.
- After your party, you and your friends could go and provide services to your community. You could entertain people in retirement homes, disabled children, or sick people in hospitals. Make it a fun group event.
- You could give some of your gift money to these organizations as you see fit.

For more information about specialized charities go to the Ziv *Tzedakah* Fund [www.ziv.org](http://www.ziv.org) or the Charitable Choices [www.charitychoices.com](http://www.charitychoices.com)