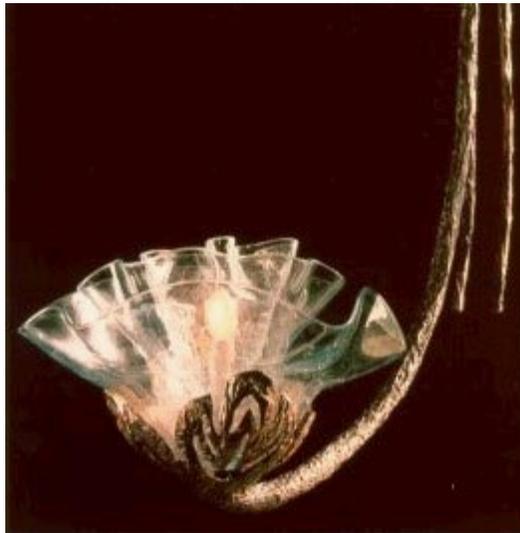


Shir Tikvah
שיר תקווה

B'nai Mitzvah Parent Planning Guide





Dear Bar/Bat Mitzvah family,

We begin with a Mazel Tov! You are embarking upon a very important time in your lives. In addition to intensive study and preparation for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student, the coming year will be filled with learning, planning, and preparation for the entire family. All of these efforts will culminate in the observance and celebration of a wonderful and meaningful Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

This guide has been written to help you better understand Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, and to help you plan and prepare for this special occasion. As you proceed, please contact the office if you need assistance, guidance or clarification along the way. Also, please contact the office if you have suggestions to add to this booklet to assist the families that come after you.

We hope the day your child becomes Bar/Bat Mitzvah is unforgettable and rewarding for your entire family and our congregation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Adam Latz'.

Michael Adam Latz
Rabbi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Humleker'.

John Humleker
Executive Director



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Introduction

What is Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the name we give to a Jewish person who has reached the age of 13. It is at this time, the Talmud teaches, that a young person is ready to understand and accept adult responsibility for *mitzvot*. At Shabbat services, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah takes part in the reading of the service and the reading of the Torah, symbolizing the achievement of spiritual maturity. There are many challenges associated with B'nai Mitzvah. There are tasks of knowledge and skill, and there are tasks of growth and development. All of these tasks combine to make the experience an exhilarating and soul-stirring time. It is a time when the extended community of friends, family and synagogue take on a deeper and more special meaning. It is a time when friends, family, and the entire congregation want to be there to celebrate with you.

Requirements for B'nai Mitzvah at Shir Tikvah:

All B'nai Mitzvah students are asked to make a commitment to Jewish life and learning. Specific expectations include:

1. Enrollment in the Shir Tikvah Religious School.
 2. A minimum of five years of Hebrew studies at Shir Tikvah or approved equivalent. The fifth year must either be completed before the year of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, or a commitment must be made to complete it during the year of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
 3. A commitment to continue with Religious School through Confirmation.
 4. Attendance at Shir Tikvah Shabbat services at least once a month in the year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
 5. Other requirements are provided at your meeting with Rabbi Latz one year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah
-



Preliminary Planning

Selecting a Date

A date for your son or daughter's Bar/Bat Mitzvah is selected in consultation with the Rabbi and Executive Director approximately two years in advance. The date is most often the Shabbat closest to the 13th birthday as is possible.

Meeting with the Rabbi

There will be a number of meetings prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The Rabbi or Rabbi's assistant will contact you to set up an appointment time. The Education Director will contact you to set up an appointment with her to check on Hebrew preparations before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Parents should accompany their child to the initial meeting, which takes place about one year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. All preliminary arrangements and expectations will be reviewed at that time. You will receive a Bar/Bat Mitzvah folder containing the prayers, Torah portion, Haftarah portion, Torah and Haftarah blessings, and other information.

The second meeting will take place about four months prior to the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Rabbi Latz will focus upon the D'var Torah. The Education Director contact you to review the Hebrew parts. After having worked with a tutor for several months it is presumed your child will demonstrate a good facility with the materials. Rabbi Latz will meet with your child about every two to three weeks after the initial D'var Torah appointment. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah, together with the parents, will meet with the Rabbi just prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service to rehearse the service and go over all final preparations.

Tutor

In addition to regular Hebrew classes, students usually start studying with a private tutor 6-8 months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to focus on the very specific tasks of the day (listed below). Most students meet weekly with the tutor. **As of July 1, 2010 all tutors will be provided and assigned by Shir Tikvah. More Information will be available soon.**



The Service

Role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah during the Service

1. Lead the congregation on Friday evening and/or Saturday morning in the following prayers: Barchu, Sh'ma, V'ahavta, Avot, Gevurot, Torah Service Prayers, and Kiddush.
2. Chant the Torah Blessings and 15-25 verses of Torah.
3. Chant the Haftarah Blessings and 10-15 verses of Haftarah.
4. Prepare a translation of the Torah portion in his/her own words.
5. Prepare a summary/introduction of one to two paragraphs for the Haftarah portion.
6. Prepare a D'var Torah. This is one to two pages, double spaced, typed "sermon." It is an opportunity for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to talk about his/her thoughts on the Torah portion, the Haftarah portion, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience, and the people who helped him/her reach this special moment.

Shir Tikvah is dedicated to inclusion and to ritual participation of all congregants. If you have concerns about your child's ability to participate in any parts of the service listed above, please discuss any unique circumstances with the Rabbi.

Role of the Parents/Family during the Service

There are many ways parents and families can participate in the service. The Rabbi will discuss particulars with you at the final meeting.

- Candle Lighting – usually mother and grandmothers
- Friday evening Motzi – usually the entire immediate family
- Presentation of the Tallit – usually parents or grandparents
- Chain of Tradition: Jewish grandparents, parents, and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Aliyot (up to 5, including the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, depending on length of portion, for Jewish adults over 13 years old)
- Giving a short speech to your child (1-2 double spaced typed pages). Both parents may do this.
- Doing readings or selecting readers – 4 or 5 on Friday evening depending on the siddur we use; 7 on Saturday morning
- Leading Shehechyanu – an honor for a Jewish person of any age
- Hagbah & Gelilah – lifting and dressing the Torah (These honors should be given to 2 able-bodied Jewish adults who make a commitment to attend a short rehearsal with the Rabbi at the conclusion of the Friday evening service).

Many families have relatives who are not Jewish whom they would like to honor. Keep in mind that the Hebrew and ritual honors (candle-lighting, aliyot, Hagbah & Gelilah) should go to Jewish guests. All parents regardless of religion are invited to participate in the Chain of Tradition. We recognize that each of our Shir Tikvah families, regardless of structure, is unique and has its own special dynamics.



Hosting the Oneg and Kiddush

Overview:

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is responsible for sponsoring an Oneg following the Friday evening service, and a Kiddush following the Saturday morning service. Many families enlist friends and relatives to contribute baked goods, challah, and fruit. Don't be afraid to recruit! Shir Tikvah has made a commitment to increase our environmental stewardship and encourage you to keep this in mind as you plan your event.

Other lifecycle events

As the date of your Bar or Bat mitzvah approaches, we may happily learn of another simcha taking place (a wedding or anniversary blessing, a baby naming). In such cases, these families are pleased to contribute to the oneg and will contact you to see how they can best help.

Hosting the Friday night Oneg

Oneg captain responsibilities

Shir Tikvah will schedule an Oneg captain for the Friday night service. The Oneg captain will prepare the juice, wine, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, condiments, and help with food setup and teardown. Shir Tikvah does have all of these items, but you are welcome to bring your own if you prefer. There is almost always plenty of, sugar, powdered creamer, and tea in the kitchen, but if you wish to have "fresh" cream, you will have to supply it.

Your Oneg responsibilities

For Friday night, generally speaking, you can anticipate attendance of 120-150. You should arrange to have the following food items available (again – always a good idea to recruit help from friends and family!). Please also provide cups, plates, and napkins.

- Assorted sweets (cookies, bars, etc.): These are as fancy or as simple as you desire.
- Challah: One for the bima and one for the Oneg table.
- Assorted cheese and crackers.
- Fresh fruit: (pineapple, strawberries, and melon are usually big hits).

Again, don't be afraid to go to a grocery store and get something that's pre-sliced and ready-to-go.

Friday night cleanup

The Oneg captain will be there on Friday night to help with cleanup as the Oneg progresses. (Do remember that the Oneg captain is a volunteer and a Shir Tikvah member just like you! Appreciation goes a long way!) After the Oneg, please put away the food, beverages and supplies. Please make sure all recyclables are properly recycled.



Hosting the Saturday morning Kiddush

A luncheon at Shir Tikvah following the Saturday service is a wonderful way to celebrate the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and maintain the community spirit at Shir Tikvah. If you are not serving a lunch at Shir Tikvah that is open to all, you are still responsible for providing a Kiddush. For either a Kiddush or an open luncheon, a good rule of thumb is to add 10 to your number of invited guests.

You will not have an Oneg captain assigned to help you on Saturday morning, so you will have a little more responsibility. The Shammash volunteer will arrive 45 minutes before services begin to unlock the building, and you are invited to arrive around the same time to prepare for the kiddush and luncheon.

Please know that there will be an on-site custodian available all day on Saturday, and he can set up tables or move any furniture that is needed. He can do this before or after the service, even in between the service and the kiddush luncheon, if you are planning one. He will also stay after and clean up. It is important that we receive any special setup instructions *at least* two weeks before the event.

Juice, wine & coffee

Because there is no Oneg Captain on Saturday morning, you are responsible for putting out the coffee, tea, juice, and wine **in addition** to the kiddush food items.

- **Coffee:** Some families have preferred to use a coffee shop and arrange for some big “to-go” coffee boxes for pickup. They usually provide cream, sugar, napkins, and stir sticks. If you want to make the coffee yourself, use the big urns in the small kitchen. Shir Tikvah has a commitment to serving Fair Trade coffee.
- **Juice:** Bring two large jugs of apple or white grape juice (no grape, cherry, etc. – it stains the carpet!)
- **Wine:** There is usually some wine for the Kiddush cup in the small kitchen. If you want to serve wine, feel free to bring your own (again, white wine only please!).

Kiddush Items

For Saturday morning, if you have a Kiddush only, and no luncheon, you should be sure to include:

- Challah: One for the bima and one for the Kiddush table.
- Kiddush wine and grape juice
- You may want to add traditional foods like herring and kichel.

Shabbat Dinner: Some families enjoy hosting their family Shabbat dinner at the synagogue. Dinners are catered and can take place in the downstairs Social Hall, Library or in the Kiddush Hall. *A \$200.00 set up rental fee will be charged.*



Catering

All food served at Shir Tikvah must adhere to the Shir Tikvah Kashrut Policies which indicate the following: When congregants prepare or purchase food for any Shir Tikvah event, we request: (I) that the food not contain pork products or shellfish; and (ii) that 'milk' (milk, cheese, butter, etc.) and 'meat' (red meat or poultry) not be mixed in any single dish, nor set up on the same buffet table.

For catered events, we request: that the food not contain pork products or shellfish; and (ii) that 'milk' (milk, cheese, butter, etc.) and 'meat' (red meat or poultry) not be served at the same meal.

White wine and champagne are the only alcoholic beverages permitted. The caterer should be informed that Shir Tikvah does have a commercial kitchen, located in the basement, which has: convection ovens, large stove, refrigerators and a 90 second dishwasher.

Any caterer that hasn't worked at Shir Tikvah before should arrange a time to meet with the Executive Director. All caterers should furnish Shir Tikvah with a copy of insurance certificates. Caterers should speak to the office about when to deliver supplies.

Please arrange for your caterer to set up coffee, pour wine and juice and set up the Kiddush (then you won't have to do it yourself). The caterer is responsible for removing all garbage relating to the event and storing or removing leftover food.

Shir Tikvah has dishes, flatware, and glasses for up to 350 people, and access to inexpensive tablecloths and napkins. Consider how much you want your caterer to do, what you are willing to do yourself or whom else you can enlist to help. The more you have the caterer do, the more it costs; on the other hand they may have access to deals that you don't, and they can save you a lot of work and worry. Also, ask if your caterers provide servers.

Think about whether you would like a buffet lunch or a served meal. A buffet can easily accommodate the congregants who come regularly to Saturday morning services. A served meal can be private, but must be preceded by a Kiddush (challah, wine, herring) open to all.

Shir Tikvah does not require that caterers be kosher, only that they adhere to our kashrut policies.

Possible caterers include:

Common Roots	612-871-2360	Good Life Catering (Jenny Breen)	612-220-0163
Deco Catering (Soile Anderson)	612-623-4477	Never Enough Thyme	612-822-9451
Georgia's Catering	612-623-4900	Someone's in the Kitchen	612-544-5832
Broders' Cucina Italiana	612-925-3113	The Wedge Co-op	612-871-3993
D'Amico-	612-238-4444	Sheila's Inc.	612-374-0336
Joseph Catering	612-362-9634	Create Catering	612-331-3310
Little Tel Aviv (Israeli food-kosher)	612-929-1111	Spirit of Asia	612-724-4056



Childcare

Shir Tikvah provides childcare for all Shabbat services. It is located on the lower level. Parents are responsible for signing their children in and out and for watching their children when formal childcare is over following services. The minimum age for childcare is 12 months, the maximum age is 8 years.

Behavior

Shir Tikvah has expectations for good behavior of children during all services, especially Bar/Bat Mitzvah services, when there may be large numbers of young people. To this end, Shir Tikvah asks all Bar/Bat Mitzvah families to do their part to prevent damage to the building & grounds during their simcha weekend. We ask that you find a friend or family member to occasionally check the building during and after the Bar Mitzvah service. A quick look is all that's needed once every so often, especially through the downstairs Social Hall and bathrooms. If any children are involved in destructive, disrespectful, or dangerous behavior, your volunteer would have an opportunity to put a stop to it.

Please make sure that all alcoholic beverages are secured, are only served to adults of legal age (21 years or older). Any incident of underage drinking puts Shir Tikvah and you at risk!

Happily, this behavior is rare at Shir Tikvah! But your volunteer would be playing a very important role in maintaining the condition of our building and the safety of our visitors.

Shabbat Volunteers

In addition to the Friday night Oneg captain, Shir Tikvah will schedule a Shammas and an Usher on Friday and Saturday, to assist during the services. The Shammas helps with ritual setup to ready the sanctuary for services. A member of the Board will serve as an Usher. If you are expecting a large number of guests, or many people who are new to Shir Tikvah, you may decide to enlist additional people to serve as ushers or greeters.

Please be mindful that the Oneg captain, Shammas and Usher are your peers. They are members of the congregation who volunteer their valuable personal time to help during services. Please treat them with respect and ensure that they are not asked to take on tasks that are more appropriately assigned to your caterer or friends and family.



Flowers & Decorating

Most families choose to adorn the bimah with one or two flower arrangements for Shabbat. Feel free to consider a floral arrangement for the Oneg/Kiddush hall. You may use any florist you wish.

Many families decorate the tables in the Kiddush Hall for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This can be as elegant as good linens and beautiful flowers, or as simple as paper tablecloths and balloons. Candles for decoration are not permitted; the only candles allowed are the Shabbat candles on the bima. You may want to consider Shir Tikvah's commitment to environmental stewardship as you plan your centerpieces- minimize disposables and packaging. You can do much of your set-up during the day on Friday. You will have your own key, so you can come and go as you please all week long.

Centerpiece ideas:

- Food shelf donations, wrapped in cellophane
- Flowers
- Potted plants
- Photo stands
- Books to be donated to the library
- Balloons

Invitations

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is a Shabbat morning service, and therefore all congregants are welcome to attend. Most families do send out invitations to friends, family, and those congregants to whom they wish to extend a personal welcome. A general rule of thumb is to send invitations to out-of-towners 8 weeks in advance and to people in town 6 weeks in advance.

Because Shir Tikvah is committed to inclusivity, it is the custom of all of our families to extend invitations to all of your child's Hebrew school and Religious School classmates. This special tradition goes a long way in fostering the special spirit that is such a part of our congregation. Consider too those adults at Shir Tikvah that have played a special role in your child's Jewish life. You are encouraged to include on your guest list: your child's to religious school teacher, tutor, the Rabbi, the religious school director, and their partners and/or families. All would be touched to be included.

Please make sure invitations note the 10:30am start time for Saturday, and your child's participation in the preceding Friday evening service (usually either 8pm or 6pm but make certain to check).

Invitations should probably be decided about 6 months in advance. Some families work with a professional company (see below) while some families make their own. Make sure to



print extras in case of late additions and in order to save some for souvenirs. You can also look on the web for invitations and calligraphers.

Consider adding an insert to your invitation reminding guests that the main entry is on the Minnehaha Parkway side, and the handicap accessible entrance is on the Girard side of the building. The 50th street doors are generally not used, but could be.

Professionally made invitations:

- Give my Regards, Minneapolis
- Litin Paper, Minneapolis
- S. Clein Inc, St Louis Park
- The Writery - Sue Harris

Homemade invitations can be designed on the computer, or a calligrapher can design them and you can have them reproduced.

Do-It-Yourself Resources:

- The Paper Depot, Minneapolis
- Paper Source, Minneapolis
- Kinko's

Rabbi Latz gives you a packet of sample invitations from previous B'nai Mitzvah to assure the correct content, but feel free to be creative with design. Please call the office if you would like another copy of this invitation sample packet (or to donate yours as a sample to add to our collection!)

Announcements

Kol Tikvah

Please email us at rebecca@shirtikvah.net a photograph of your child, and a short two-paragraph article about your child (no more than 150 words) to the Shir Tikvah office. You may include information about the family, your child's interests, his/her teacher and tutor, and why he/she is looking forward to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The newsletter deadline is the 5th of each month for the following month. (So for an April service, the deadline is March 1st). Details for submissions can be found in every issue of Kol Tikvah. Don't worry that you might forget about this detail! The office will automatically remind you about the picture and article (roughly) two months prior to the service. If you don't know where to start, feel free to drop by the office or check the website and look through back issues of Kol Tikvah to see how other families wrote their own announcements.

American Jewish World

We are happy to provide an announcement of your simcha to the American Jewish World. We will take care of the details – you don't have to write this one! We use the picture you provide us for the Kol Tikvah Announcement in the American Jewish World.



The Program

Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah service has an accompanying program. Most families will have the office prepare the program for them, and it is included in your fee. Remember to include the words to any songs if they are not in the prayerbook.

If you would like Shir Tikvah to create the program for you, the office will send you an informational sheet to fill out approximately two months before the service. When you send back the completed sheet, the office will e-mail a draft of the program for you to proof. Pay close attention to the spelling of family names!

Tzedakah

It is traditional for Jews to mark important events in life with the giving of *Tzedakah*. *Tzedakah* is one of the *mitzvot* a child becomes responsible for fulfilling upon reaching the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Many parents encourage their child to select worthy causes or organizations to be recipients of *Tzedakah* in honor of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This information can be included in an invitation and in the service program.

Some families have chosen to replace floral centerpieces with decorative cards indicating a contribution to a favorite cause, or with centerpieces of non-perishable foods for a food-shelf, books for the library, etc. Shir Tikvah will gratefully acknowledge donations to any of its funds in honor of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah or in recognition of the rabbi, music leader, teachers and/or others.

Fees

The fee of \$700.00 includes the following:

- On-site custodian will be present through the end of your simcha.
- Cleaning on Shabbat morning and right after your simcha.
- Music Leader Honorarium
- Program for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service
- Childcare

Additional fees might include:

- Tutoring fees- contact the office to learn more about these
- Pre or Post Shabbat service Dinners(Friday night) in the library or social hall downstairs - \$200.00 rental fee
- B'nai Mitzvah Party Rental - \$200.00 to \$500.00 depending on setup required.
- Linen \$1.25 each / Napkin \$.25 each – actual cost from Spruce Linen

There is no guarantee that space at Shir Tikvah will be available for Shabbat Dinner and/or a post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah party. Please contact the Executive Director, if you are considering using the space. Once you have decided, Please supply written confirmation. At that time, Shir Tikvah will require a \$200 damage deposit, which will be returned if no damage or excessive cleanup is needed. The amount of refund will be determined by the Executive Director. No reservations can be made more than 6 months in advance



Additional Information

Music Leader

You have the privilege of choosing a music leader for the Saturday morning service (the Friday night music leader is already scheduled). Any of our music leaders would be pleased to lead music. The sooner you call, the more likely that person will be available. Please let the office know when your music leader has been confirmed.

A complete list of available music leaders is included in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah packet you receive at your meeting with the Rabbi one year prior to your date. Don't be afraid to ask the office for another copy if you need one.

Kippot and Tallitot

The wearing of kippot and tallitot is optional at Shir Tikvah for both men and women. We do have a supply of kippot and tallitot that are available at every service. Tallitot are worn at morning services only. Some families choose to order personalized kippot to honor the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Guests can then keep the kippot as a memento.

Contact Wendy Morris of our Judaica Shop (952-929-8504) if you choose to do this.

Several students in the past have made their own tallitot. Congregants Amy Lange, Jodie Spirer, Shayna Berkowitz, and Cheryl Shachaf were the experts at the time this part of the guide was written (2002). The first *Jewish Catalogue* has detailed instructions. The art teachers at the Jewish Day Schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul help their students make tallitot, so they can be resources. There are undoubtedly Jewish web sites that can guide you. "Kosher" tzitzit may take a while to order, do this in advance. If you are not making your own, consider if there is a special person in your child's life who wishes to give this as a gift. Is there a special Tallit in the family that your child can wear? For shopping, nothing beats the selection and prices at the Shir Tikvah Judaica Shop (contact Wendy Morris at 952-929-8504).

Building Use

Only members in good financial standing may use the synagogue for B'nai Mitzvah. The office will contact you regarding final arrangements for setup of the facility at least four weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

The office will sign out a building access card to you, which you are responsible for returning after the service.

Please make sure that all alcoholic beverages are secured, are only served to adults of legal age (21 years or older). This is a reminder to do otherwise puts Shir Tikvah and you at risk!

Shir Tikvah is not responsible for losses or damage to clothing, personal effects, or the safety of your guests. ***Shir Tikvah is a non-smoking facility.*** Please leave the synagogue



and its facilities in the same condition as they were found. You are responsible for any damage to synagogue property. Please, no thumbtacks, nails or adhesive tape on walls.

Capacity

- Maximum comfortable seating capacity of the sanctuary is 250
- Maximum comfortable seating capacity of the balcony is 50.
- Maximum comfortable seating capacity of the Kiddush Hall is 50 (not many families put chairs in the Kiddush Hall for the service, but it is an option if you are expecting more than 240 people in attendance).
- Shir Tikvah has 15 round tables that can be used for a sit down luncheon to be set up in the Sanctuary. Each table seats approximately 8 people.
- The office will contact you about one month before the service to determine what (if any) setup needs you may have. Our on-site custodian can arrange tables & chairs before the Erev Shabbat service, and before or after the Shabbat morning service.
- Table seating: 175 in Sanctuary; 50 in Kiddush Hall; 80 in Social Hall on lower level.
- There is a handicap accessible bathroom by the 50th street door.
- The building is handicap accessible on the Girard Avenue side.
- Other bathrooms are located on the ground floor and upstairs.

You may use tables from the classrooms around the building. Our custodian is happy to get these tables for you.

Rental Places:

- Midway Party : (651) 647-1323
- Aarcee: (952) 922-7233
- Apres: (952) 942-3399



Photography/Video

Taking photographs during a religious service is prohibited. You may arrange for a photographer to take pictures prior to services and during the Kiddush. Things to think about: Do you want posed photos? Do you want to do this before or after the Saturday service, or on Friday night? Assume that most of your photos will be taken during the Kiddush. You can hire a photographer, or have guests take candid shots with disposable cameras.

Some photographers other families have used: Marcie Stein 612-374-4905

Possible videographers:

- Neal Gosman (651) 227-6032
- Family Ties (952) 929-6484
- Joni Fisher (651) 644-7652

DJ:

Consider the type of music you want and find out if the prospective DJ will take requests. Will they bring their own dancers? Do they bring party favors? Do they teach any dances? How much experience do they have? ***NO SMOKE OR FOG – due to the fire alarm!***

Some popular DJ companies:

- DJ's unlimited (more expensive but they come with several dancers and lead a lot of dancing): (763) 509-6880
- Total Entertainment: (952) 933-8558
- Simply Entertaining: (952) 953-0348

Party Sites

Party sites are often reserved very far in advance. Different venues have different regulations about who can rent (resident vs. not) and how far in advance the venue must be reserved. Hotels require you to use their caterers and often have a minimum food/liquor bill.

Consider city park buildings and picnic shelters, county park buildings and shelters, golf clubs, country clubs, health clubs or Shir Tikvah. ***Shir Tikvah will require a \$200 damage deposit, which will be returned if no damage or excessive cleanup is needed. The amount of refund will be determined by the Executive Director. In additional rental fee of \$200 to \$500 will be charged depending on the scope and size of the event.***

Some Possibilities:

- Shir Tikvah
- Edinborough Park
- Student Union, St. Paul Campus, U of M
- Nicollet Island Pavilion
- Science Museum
- Minnetonka Community Center
- St. Anthony Main Event Center



Helpful Checklist

Parents of B'nai Mitzvah past developed this checklist. We pass it along to you as a helpful guide.

Eight - twelve months in advance

- Contact Shir Tikvah to get a tutor assigned to your child
- Select music leader for the Saturday morning service
- Hire a caterer
- Reserve space for a party, if any events are taking place outside of the synagogue
- Hire DJ or entertainment, if desired
- Book hotel rooms

Six months in advance

- Select or design invitations
- Contact the Executive Director if you are wanted to use Shir Tikvah for a Saturday afternoon or evening event.
- Start working on the guest list
- Send a "save the date" announcement to out-of-towners

Three to six months in advance

- Find a photographer
- Find a videographer, if desired
- Watch for some e-mails from Shir Tikvah:
 - A complete list of volunteers scheduled to assist at services on the Shabbat of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah (Shammash, usher, and Oneg captain)
 - An informational sheet to fill out and return for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah program

Eight – ten weeks in advance

- Select a florist and order flowers
- Finalize the guest list
- Arrange a time with the office to sign out a key for the Shir Tikvah building.
- Mail out of town invites 8 weeks in advance, in town 6 weeks in advance
- Send list of your caterer, florist, and table vendor to the Shir Tikvah Executive Director
- Send your choice of music leader to Rebecca at the front desk (office@shirtikvah.net).
- Return space request/setup forms to Shir Tikvah
- Write announcement for Kol Tikvah and e-mail it to Rebecca with a small photograph. (The office will send you a reminder for this.)
- Buy the wine (watch for sales)
- Finalize name (or list of names) for aliyot



One month in advance

- Order tables and chairs, linens, dishes etc. (if needed)
- Finalize “Information for Program Book” form and e-mail to Rebecca.
- Send map and directions to out-of-towners
- Buy paper goods for Oneg
- The office will e-mail a proof of the program. Make sure to check spelling of family names! The program goes to print one week prior to the service.
- Find someone to help organize your Oneg & Kiddush food (see “Hosting the Oneg & Kiddush” portion at the beginning of this guide)
- Alert Shir Tikvah of any help you will need with setup.

One - two weeks in advance

- Finalize numbers for caterer and let the office know
- Assign readings for Friday and Saturday
- Choose candle lighters
- Write your parent talk for the Saturday service (1-2 double spaced pages)
- Check in with the Music Leader if you have special requests
- Find readers for select readings during service

Bring to Shir Tikvah for services

- Tallit and Kippah
- Your child’s service, D’var Torah, etc.
- A box of Kleenex
- Your speech
- Containers for leftovers
- Sign-in book and pens, if desired
- Ice for drinks

After the Bar Mitzvah, thank yous to:

- Rabbi
- Music Leaders
- Tutor
- Oneg helpers



And Finally...

Thoughtful planning and hard work help make the actual day of your son or daughter's Bar/Bat Mitzvah unforgettable and meaningful. Our shared goal is to celebrate a very special moment in the life of a young adult. We hope this guide is helpful to you in your planning. Please contact the office with your questions and don't hesitate to enlist the help of other congregants who have been through Bar/Bat Mitzvah before you.

- For questions about your child's preparations in terms of Hebrew and ritual issues, first ask your tutor. If you need further clarification, ask the Education Director. They may refer you to Rabbi Latz if needed.
- For questions about use of space, vendors, programs, timing or meetings, please contact Rebecca Rubenstein our office manager. She will refer you to the Executive Director if needed.
- For moral support, guest lists, menu suggestions, decoration ideas or anything else, ask those families and friends who have hosted a life cycle event in the past year. A complete list of past B'nai Mitzvah names & dates can be obtained from Rebecca. You may be surprised how many names you recognize!
- Don't feel pressured just because something is listed here - do what feels right to you. Remember: We are all at Shir Tikvah because the focus is right. Many of the suggestions in this handbook are here to give you all the information you might need... but you don't need to use it all! Simple is good. Should you find things missing from these suggestions, please contact the office so your ideas can be included in the next "edition" of the planning guide.
- Contact information: The administrative staff is here to help call or e-mail us:
Rabbi Michael Adam Latz, rabbilatz@shirtikvah.net
John Humleker, Executive Director, john@shirtikvah.net
Rebecca Rubenstein, Office Manager, rebecca@shirtikvah.net
Judy Silver, Director of Education, judy@shirtikvah.net
Holly Fields, Assistant to the Rabbi, holly@shirtikvah.net

We all can be reached by phone at 612-822-1440.

BREATHE AND ENJOY YOURSELF, AND TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR CHILD!
