

## Beit Am's Benei Mitzvah Family Planner and Timeline

A guide for families of students who are planning for a *bar mitzvah* or *bat mitzvah* service

### 1) **Meet with Rabbi Benjamin** – at least 1 year prior to the service date

*How does our family begin preparation for the actual service?* Please schedule a private appointment with Rabbi Benjamin **at least** a year before your child's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday. He can provide an overview of all the necessary steps, help you set the service date, suggest tutors, and provide counseling on any matters of particular concern to your family. Often parents lead parts of the service or *leyn* (chant from the Torah) – even for the first time! – at their child's *bar* or *bat mitzvah* service. Be sure to discuss this option for any Jewish member of your family who is over 13 years of age.

### 2) **Schedule the date for the service** with the Beit Am office

After consulting Rabbi Benjamin, be sure to contact the Beit Am office (541-753-0067, [office@beitam.org](mailto:office@beitam.org)) to have the service date added to Beit Am's calendar of events. This is important to do, even if the event will be held at an alternate location. (You may petition for an alternate date. Please refer to the petition form at the bottom of page 5.)

### 3) **Decide on a location** – as soon as you can make an estimate of your guest list

A) If your child's service will be held at the Beit Am building, and the date has already been scheduled with the office, then the only additional consideration may be concerning set-up of your celebration. Please be aware that if you plan to set up on Friday, you may need to work around the Friday night service if one is scheduled.

B) If you are expecting a large number of attendees (over ~80), then you may require a larger space than Beit Am's building can provide. In this case we suggest that you consider renting the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis (UUFC), where we traditionally hold our High Holy Days services (see the UUFC rental fee schedule on page 7).

❖ **You will need to move** the portable *bimah* and ark, the prayer books, the *tallitot* and *kippot*, etc. Plan to move everything no later than the Friday afternoon before the service. It's best to make arrangements at the other location to store the items over-night, or, even better, to set them up at the alternate location on Friday, if possible. You or your helpers will need to sign a form before taking the supplies from the building, so be sure to contact the Beit Am office concerning who will be moving the items, including day and time. Usually, everything is moved back to Beit Am on Saturday after the service – with the exception of the Torah. (See guidelines for transport of objects on pages 4 and 5.)

C) An extended celebration for the community, or simply one for your family and friends, is completely optional! But if you are thinking about an extended celebration (beyond a Kiddush and possible luncheon) and plan to use a space other than the Beit Am building, start looking for an appropriate venue right away!

### 4) **Engage a tutor** – 9 to 12 months before the service date

A) **Ask Rabbi Benjamin for a list of tutors.** Tutors do require a fee.

B) **“What is my child expected to learn in preparation for the service?”**

Beit Am's current *minhag* (tradition) for the student is to learn the Torah *trope* (cantillation), to chant the *maftir aliyah* (last few lines of the *parashah* in the Torah) and recite the Torah blessings, to chant the blessings before and after the *haftarah*, and to

read the *haftarah* (in some combination of Hebrew and English, chanted or not). The tutor(s) you select will work weekly for one hour with your child to help them master all of these Jewish skills. In addition, each student is expected to give a *d'var torah* (personal commentary on the day's readings) and will work on this under Rabbi Benjamin's guidance. Most students also lead the Torah service (and sometimes other parts of the service). The expectations for each individual student will be evaluated as she or he progresses with their studies.

## 5) Meet with Rabbi Benjamin again – 3 months before the service date

A) **Who can our family go to for help with putting on the service itself?** First, please schedule another private appointment with Rabbi Benjamin to discuss service details and to answer any questions that your family may have at this point. At this time, you can go over the service planner (see page 6) with Rabbi Benjamin. You may want to ask the following questions.

- 1) What kind of service is most appropriate for my family?
- 2) Who might we ask to help lead parts of the service, *leyn* from the Torah, and participate in other ways?
- 3) What are appropriate ways of honoring our family and friends?
- 4) How do we supply recordings to help Torah *leyners* or other leaders?

**Important!** It is the responsibility of the family to ask individuals to help lead and *leyn*, and hold up and wrap the Torah, and for other honors. It is courteous to **ask for leadership help at least 1 to 2 months ahead** so there is adequate time to prepare, and so that individuals can plan ahead to attend the event. **Please choose honorees who are comfortable with and knowledgeable about their roles in the service.**

**Also important!** Before the service, provide the *Gabbai Rishon* with a copy of the completed service planner (including the Hebrew names of each person called for an *aliyah*, and their mother's and/or father's Hebrew names).

## 6) Invitations

- A) About 2 months before the service date, order invitations (the internet is a great resource) or design your own.
- B) About 6 weeks ahead (or more, for out-of-town guests), send invitations. For out-of-town guests include directions to Beit Am or other facility, and a map of Corvallis. Corvallis Tourism has information on accommodations.
- C) By the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the service, send information of the service to Beit Am's newsletter, Kol Ha'am. (All Beit Am services are open to our entire membership, and it is our tradition to post an invitation to the service in our newsletter.)
- D) A note about RSVPs. In our community, people do not always RSVP even though they may intend to come to the service, event, and/or evening function. If it is critical to have an accurate attendance count, you (or someone you assign) may want to call any of the people you have not yet heard from to be sure of your attendance numbers.

## 7) The Kiddush following the service – at least one month ahead

A) ASK FOR HELP – Especially from other *benei mitzvah* student's families

**B) Potluck or catered lunch?** It is your decision whether to ask Beit Am families to bring food for the *kiddush*. For *bar* or *bat mitzvah* services, Beit Am's *minhag* (tradition) is for the family to at least supply the paper goods and other supplies, drinks, grape juice and kosher wine, and the *challah*. (Families often donate any leftover supplies to Beit Am for future events.) **If you decide to have a catered luncheon, look for a caterer right away after determining the service date!**

C) **If you plan to have a potluck luncheon**, assign someone (other than yourself!) to make phone calls to recruit help. Have the helper make calls **at least one month ahead**. This is a perfect job for another *benei mitzvah* family. You can help with their planning and they can help with yours. The caller should ask for help from the community with the following.

- a. Bringing food (dairy-vegetarian-kosher fish required in Beit Am's building)
- b. Setting up
- c. Overseeing the food as it arrives, pouring wine and grape juice, setting out the *challah*
- d. Overseeing the luncheon during the meal (plates are refilled, taken away, washed)
- e. Cleaning up of dishes, put away food afterwards
- f. Washing linens (if appropriate) and returning them
- g. Clean-up of the building: returning tables and chairs, mopping if needed, closing and locking of the building (**the families or friends of family usually do this part**)
- h. **If the service is held at a facility other than Beit Am**, additional help will be needed for hauling on Friday and Saturday (see section 3B).

8) **On the day of the service – RELAX AND ENJOY YOUR SIMCHA!** And in the afterglow, remember to thank those in your community who helped make it all happen!



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### A Note to the *Benei Mitzvah* Family concerning Honorees

Please be sure to share the following information with your honorees who will approach the *bima*. Also please be sure that all honorees are fully prepared and comfortable with their honors, including the *hagbahah* and *gelilah*.

#### A special note to honorees at the *bima* (pulpit).

1. It is a Beit Am custom to wear both a head covering and a *tallit* (prayer shawl) when called up to the *bima* for an *aliyah*, the latter being important for saying the blessings over the Torah. If this is not your family custom, you should not feel obligated.
2. As a guest being honored with an *aliyah*, you are encouraged to say the blessings in Hebrew, but English is acceptable. Those not familiar with the prayers for an *aliyah* are encouraged to ask for help in advance, either from your local resources or from Beit Am.
3. When you are called up for an *aliyah*, the reader will indicate the spot in the Torah scroll where they will begin reading. You may use the fringes (*tzit-tzit*) of your *tallit* to touch the margin closest to that spot, to avoid touching the ink directly. This helps preserve the Torah.

## ***Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Guidelines***

Beit Am has a diverse membership and a history of working with the families of *benei mitzvah* to meet their needs. However, the *bar* or *bat mitzvah* service is not a private family affair, but a religious function open to the entire Beit Am community. The following guidelines are based on Beit Am's egalitarian traditions. If parents would like to vary from these guidelines, they should work with Rabbi Benjamin, who will attempt to accommodate their needs.

### **General Guidelines of the Religious Affairs Committee (RAC)**

Revised November 2010

- Jewish boys age 13 and Jewish girls age 12 plus one day (based on Hebrew birthday) are eligible for the ceremony. However, Beit Am's egalitarian tradition is not to distinguish between boys and girls, and so *bar* and *bat mitzvah* ceremonies are typically held after the *bar* or *bat mitzvah* student turns 13.
- Priority for scheduling the service date is given to birth date or birth *parashah* (Torah portion) of the *bar* or *bat mitzvah* student.
- It is required that families having a *bar* or *bat mitzvah* service with Beit Am support hold current Beit Am membership.
- Each *bar* or *bat mitzvah* student is expected to attend one Saturday morning Shabbat service per month during the year prior to their *bar* or *bat mitzvah* service.
- It is a Beit Am custom to wear both a head covering and a *tallit* (prayer shawl) when called up to the *bima* for an *aliyah*, the latter being important for saying the blessings over the Torah. If this is not the family custom, they should not feel obligated.
- It is encouraged that the student decide on a *mitzvah* project that is suitable for him or her, either during the preparation year or during the year following the ceremony.
- It is traditional to give back. Beit Am has various funds that parents of *benei mitzvah*, family members, and friends can contribute to in celebration of the blessing of the student's achievement.

## **Guidelines for Transport of Objects**

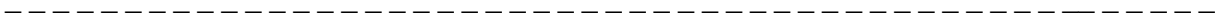
### **1. Beit Am Policy for Transport of the Torah**

The following rules are to be followed whenever a Torah is taken from the Beit Am building. They are necessary to ensure that the Torahs are not damaged and to show respect for them.

1. When a Beit Am member (hereafter referred to as "the member") or Beit Am committee (such as the High Holidays Committee) wishes to have services at a facility outside of the Beit Am building (off-site), the member, or the committee, as the case may be, must submit a written request for approval to the Beit Am Board or the Executive Committee of the Board for moving and using the Torah.
2. The Beit Am Board establishes guidelines for the care and transport of the Torah. The Beit Am Board also ensures that there is a pool of persons who are knowledgeable about the extra care needed to transport the Torah safely. Beit Am therefore assumes all responsibility for the Torah. The Board or designee will facilitate making arrangements with the Torah movers.
3. When the Torah needs to travel by vehicle to another facility, it should be brought to the other facility before the beginning of Shabbat or the High Holiday/festival and returned following the end of Shabbat or the High Holiday/festival.
4. The Board or its designee will facilitate finding a safe and respectful place for the storage of the Torah in the off-site facility when it is not in use. A *ner tamid* should be placed in the presence of the stored Torah.
5. During High Holidays or festivals, if the Torah is needed at the Beit Am building before the conclusion of the holiday, it must be moved back to the building in accordance with these guidelines.

## 2. Beit Am Policy on Transport of Objects other than the Torah

1. When a Beit Am member (hereafter referred to as "the member") wishes to have services at a facility outside of the Beit Am building (off-site), the member must submit a written request for approval from the Beit Am Board or the Executive Committee of the Board for moving and using religious objects (e.g., *tallitot*, *kipot*, *siddurim*).
2. The member (or a designee) must provide a list of enumerated items that will be moved. The member moving religious objects, such as *siddurim*, etc., assumes all responsibility for their transport, security, and care while outside the Beit Am building.
3. For Shabbat services (such as *b'nai mitzvah*), the religious objects must be returned to the Beit Am building on the Saturday night after the end of Shabbat. This is especially important during the school year when *siddurim* may be needed on Sunday morning by our religious school's students.
4. After the return of the religious objects to the Beit Am building, the Board or its designee will check in the returned items. A list of the items returned with a statement concerning any damaged or missing items will be developed. The member will be responsible for the replacement or repair of said items.



### Petition for Alternate Date for a *Bar Mitzvah* or *Bat Mitzvah* Service

To petition for an alternate date, or to formally submit any other concerns, please fill out and return this petition to Rabbi Benjamin at Beit Am, or send it to care of Rabbi Benjamin, Beit Am, P.O. Box 1143, Corvallis, OR 97339.

Name of Parent of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate:

Phone (day): \_\_\_\_\_  
Include area code

Phone (night): \_\_\_\_\_  
Include area code

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's birth date \_\_\_\_\_  
month, day, year

born after sunset? \_\_\_\_\_  
(yes or no)

*"I would like to petition for a different bar or bat mitzvah service date than was assigned."*

*"My reasons are as follows."*

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*"I suggest the following date(s) as an alternative."* \_\_\_\_\_  
month, day and year

Any other considerations or concerns?

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Parasha:</b>		
<i>Parts of the Service</i>	<i>Name of Leader or Participant</i>		
<b><i>Birkhot HaShahar/PZ</i></b>			
<b><i>Shaharit</i></b>			
<b>Torah Service</b>			
Open/Close Curtain			
<b>Generation-Generation</b>			
<i>Gabbai Rishon</i>			
<i>Gabbai Sheini</i>			
<b>Torah Reading</b>	<b><i>Aliyah Hebrew Names (English too)</i></b>	<b>Reader (<i>leyner</i>)</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1) <i>Kohein/Rishon</i>			
2) <i>Levi/Sheini</i>			
3) <i>Shlishi</i>			
4) <i>Revi'i</i>			
5) <i>Hamishi</i>			
6) <i>Shishi</i>			
<b>Prayer for Healing</b>			
7) <i>Shivi'i</i>			
<b><i>Hatzi Kaddish</i></b>			
Maftir			
Hagbahah			
Gelilah			
<b><i>Haftarah</i></b>			
<b><i>D'var Torah</i></b>			
<b>Releasing parents</b>			
<b>Parents/Others Speak</b>			
<b>Prayer readings</b>	For Country:	For Israel:	For Peace:
<b>Return Torah</b>			
Open/Close Curtain			
<b><i>Musaf</i></b>			

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis

Rental Rates

Room Rates Hourly (Capacity)		Friday evening through Sunday evening (Weekend)	Monday morning through Friday afternoon (Weekday)	
Fellowship Hall/Sanctuary (178 & 299)		\$50/hr	\$25/hr	
Social Hall (75 & 99) <i>see equipment list*</i>		\$30/hr	\$15/hr	
Kitchen		\$20/hr	\$10/hr	
Religious Exploration Rooms: • Rooms 4 & 5 (Dr. Seuss & Beatrix Potter) <b>Childcare</b> • Rooms 6 A, B, or C (PT Barnum 3 Ring Circus) separately (6A discouraged do to Pre-School Renter use/Special Conditions apply) • Rooms 8 (Susan B. Anthony), 9 (Clara Barton), 10 (Christopher Reeve) • Mezzanine (when used with Rooms 9 & 10 only) <b>(6A &amp; 6B ea. 25-30, 8—20-25, 9—20-25, 10—15-20, Mezzanine—10-15)</b>		\$15/hr	\$10/hr	
Room 7 (Ralph Waldo Emerson) (25-30)		\$20/hr	\$15/hr	
Parking Lot Rental for large events (CSA drop box space see Office Administrator)		\$10/hr (no bldg. access) \$15/hr (w/access)		
Sound System \$25 per hour		Available only by special arrangement		
<b>Special Services (Weddings, Services of Union, Personal Ceremonies)</b>				
Service only	Includes: changing rooms 7 & 9, Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, piano (suggested service time two hours plus a one-hour rehearsal the day or sometime the week before). Childcare rooms extra at stated rates.		\$75/hr	
Service and reception	Includes: changing rooms 7 & 9, Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, piano, Social Hall with its table and chairs, Kitchen, and Patio (suggested service and reception time five hours plus a one-hour rehearsal the day or sometime the week before). Childcare rooms extra at stated rates.		\$125/hr	
Bar/Bat Mitzvahs	Includes: Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, Social Hall, Kitchen, (the latter two for reception) and Minister's Office for storage of Torah from before sundown Friday the night before until after <b>Havdala</b> , Saturday evening and one hour set-up time in the Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall and Social Hall (table set up only—in case we have another function). (Suggested service time six hours with reception, three to four hours without.) Childcare rooms extra at stated rates. For more information see <b>Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Guidelines</b> <a href="http://www.beitam.org/barmitzvah_planner.pdf">http://www.beitam.org/barmitzvah_planner.pdf</a> (The paper products surcharge of \$50 does not apply)		\$80/hr w/reception \$50/hr w/o reception	
<b>Memorial Services (no charge to contributing supporters/staff)</b>			<b>Weekend</b>	<b>Weekday</b>
Service only	Includes: Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, piano (suggested service time two hours) Childcare rooms extra at stated rates.		\$25/hr	\$20/hr
Service and reception	Includes: Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, piano, Social Hall with its table and chairs, Kitchen, and Patio (suggested service and reception time five hours). Childcare rooms extra at stated rates.		\$50/hr	\$40/hr
<b>Special Services rates do not include rates for our minister, please contact her for rates and other information (revgwoods@comcast.net 541-752-5218 extension 224)</b>				
<b>Concerts or Similar Events</b>				
Concerts: Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall, Social Hall, and Kitchen		Seven hours total (set up to tear down)	\$200 + 5% of gross (extra hours at \$20/hr.)	
Recitals	\$25/hr (Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall only)	\$30/hr (with reception in Social Hall—minimal kitchen use)		
<b>*non-profits 2/3 members 1/2 on all stated rates (UUFC Policy #s 5.2 and 5.1)</b>				
Custodial Fee				\$40/hr
**Use of Paper Products fee for those using the Social Hall and Kitchen (excluding paper napkins) \$50/event (from Rental Policy 5.2 approved January 11, 2010):				
*TYPES OF USE 1f and 2				
f. Donations to UUFC for Overhead Expenses				
If groups or individuals for whom the rental fee is waived charge admission or collect donations from participants, we ask that they consider making a donation of 10% of their income to UUFC to help defray overhead and other expenses.				
2. Community Rentals				
...Full waiver for nonprofit organizations may be granted at the discretion of the UUFC Rental Committee or the minister.				
**STIPULATIONS FOR ALL FACILITY USERS 1d				
d. Consistent with our status as a Green Sanctuary, we encourage the use of washable dishware and/or compostable goods. This includes tablecloths, cutlery, plates, cups, bowls and glasses, but not paper napkins. A surcharge of \$50 is levied if such products are not used.				

\*Social Hall Equipment list: Tables: 10-5 ft diameter round, 8-8 ft. long tables (2 @ 2.5 ft wide - 3 ft. wide) & 80 Chairs.