

## **BJCC Bar/Bat Mitzvah Policy**

(approved August 6, 2013)

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### **Preconditions**

1. The family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child must be paid members of the BJCC.
2. To be eligible for tutoring from BJCC members, the child must take full advantage of the educational programs of the BJCC during the three years prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.
3. Substitution of an equivalent education elsewhere must be substantiated by the Religious School Director and approved by the BJCC Board.

### **Preparation**

1. Finding a Bar/Bat Mitzvah mentor or tutor is the responsibility of the family. The Religious School Director will maintain a list of possible volunteer tutors.
2. The child must attend Shabbat services at the BJCC at least twice a month during the year prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. It is strongly urged that at least one parent attend regularly with the child.
3. In the event that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child is not trained under the auspices of the BJCC, the community requires, at the minimum that:
  - The child is educated about the history and meaning of the traditional prayers.
  - The child is prepared to lead some portion of the service.
  - The child will read the Maftir passage of the Torah portion from the Torah scroll, and the Torah blessings in Hebrew.
  - The child will read the Haftarah in English or Hebrew, and the Haftarah blessings in Hebrew.
  - The child will deliver a Dvar Torah (an explication of the Torah portion).
  - The family should consult the Religion Chair and the Religious School Director to make sure that private training is consistent with ritual and worship likely to occur at BJCC services.
4. The BJCC urges that the child and family participate together in a tzedakah project of their choice during the preparatory year.
5. Six months before the scheduled Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, the Religion Chair and Religious School Director will assess the student's progress.

### **Use of the building**

1. The family is responsible for obtaining, paying for, and returning any additional equipment or furnishings that they require.
2. The family may use the BJCC kitchen for their celebration. Only vegetarian or dairy food may be prepared or served in the BJCC building.
3. The family is responsible for ensuring that both the upstairs and downstairs are clean after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. This must be completed prior to Religious School classes on the following morning, or if there is no Religious School the following morning, within two days. A fee will be assessed if the cleaning is done unsatisfactorily.

### **The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service**

1. The service will be held in the BJCC building and will be open to all BJCC members.
2. The service must generally conform to the community practice for a Shabbat morning service and may not include elements of another religion. BJCC prayer books are Gates of Prayer (Reform) and Sim Shalom (Conservative).
3. The family may choose to have the service led by an individual who is not a regular ritual leader at the BJCC. This person must be Jewish and is required to have the skills and

- ability to provide an appropriate Jewish prayer environment.
4. The family is responsible for providing one or more competent Torah readers so that there will be seven aliyot. There must be a Gabbai (a Torah service coordinator) and a minimum of 21 consecutive verses of the weekly Torah portion must be read from the scroll.
  5. The family may wish to prepare booklets with copies of the Torah and Haftarah selections. All such booklets should be taken home after the ceremony; please take care in respecting the copied texts.
  6. No pictures or videos whatsoever may be taken in the sanctuary before or during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service while congregants are present. A video camera may be placed on a tripod in an unobtrusive spot and turned on before the service, and no adjustments may be made to it during the service. Photographs and videos can be taken after the service once the sanctuary is empty.
  7. The family must provide wine for kiddush after the ceremony.

**General**

1. Eight months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the family must request a date in writing to the BJCC President.
  2. Requests for exceptions to these rules should be made, as early as possible in the planning process, to the Religion Chair and Religious School Director.
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Name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below I am indicating my full understanding of the above regulations and agree to follow these guidelines to the best of my ability:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Religious School Director Date: