

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah of  
STUDENT'S NAME

DATE

TIME

PARASHAH

Student: A or B



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

TEMPLE RODEF SHALOM B'NAI MITZVAH INFORMATION PAGE  
**BAT MITZVAH OF KYLIE FINE**

Service: **Saturday, June 6, 2026 Shacharit (10:30 AM)** *(Arrive 30 minutes prior)*  
 Friday Night: **June 5, 2026 at 6:30 PM** *(Arrive 15 minutes prior)*  
 Partner: Adelaide Clewett, Parents: Todd Clewett, Diana Clewett  
 Partner Email: diana.clewett@gmail.com  
 Cohort: **June 2026 Cohort**

Prayer Section	<b>B</b>	<i>Avot, Gevurot, Kadsheinu, Torah Blessings, Blessing After Haftarah, Aleinu (optional), Kiddush</i>		
Torah Portion	<b>Behaalotecha</b> <i>(Numbers 9:1-4, 5-8, 9-12)</i>	<i>Details of a Passover celebration in the wilderness.</i>		
Haftarah Portion	<b>Zecharia 4:2-6</b>	<i>Zecharia speaks of a vision of a menorah in the Jerusalem Temple, and it ends with the famous line used for Chanukah: "Not by might, not by power, but by spirit alone."</i>		
Learning Links	Link to Prayer Recordings 	Link to Torah & Haftarah Recordings 	Link to Order Kol Koreh 	
Important Dates	Early December..... First Cantor Progress Check; Set this up with Julie. Early April..... First Rabbi Speech Appointment; Set this up with Julie. 5/20/2026, 4:15 PM..... Snacks and Chats Meeting with Rabbi Schwartzman. 5/26/2026, 3:00 PM..... First Bimah rehearsal with Cantor. 6/2/2026, 4:00 PM..... Final Bimah rehearsal with Rabbi.			

**COUNTDOWN**

- 11 Months Prior to Service ..... Receive tutor assignment. Tutor will contact you.
- 10-8 Months Prior to Service ..... Begin bi-weekly tutoring (in most cases).
- 9 Months Prior to Service..... Attend Tikkun Olam Workshop and Service
- 6-5 Months Prior to Service..... Schedule first progress check with Julie to see a Cantor.
- 2 Months Prior to Service..... Schedule first speech appointment with Julie to see a Rabbi.
- 1 Month Prior to Service..... All Hebrew should be learned! The final month is for practicing.
- 2 Weeks Prior to Service..... Snacks and Chats meeting with Rabbi Schwartzman.
- 1 Week Prior to Service..... First bimah rehearsal with a Cantor.
- Week of the Service..... Final bimah rehearsal with a Rabbi.



Parents - The QR Code will take you to our Parent Page for all information about a TRS Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah, as well as any forms you need to complete throughout the process.

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

## SECTION 1 **SHALOM** שלום

WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

Dear Student and Family,

Welcome to the B'nai Mitzvah program of Temple Rodef Shalom. We are excited to accompany you on a meaningful journey towards adulthood. We hope that preparing for your special day and leading the service where you embrace your new status as Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah will be joyful and rewarding.

Bar, Bat or B'nai Mitzvah celebrates taking responsibility for your Jewish actions as a young adult. This year will offer you opportunities to explore what this means to you personally. Through this process you will not only learn how to lead the worship service, but you will also learn about Jewish practices, ideas, culture, and Tikkun Olam – our commitment to repairing the world.

This binder is your guide for the journey. It will help you to manage this special year in an organized and achievable fashion. There are four sections, after this one, to be completed by the student. Each has an introduction and a checklist. Each person and family will approach this in their own way and on their own timeline, but please remember that completing the four sections is a requirement of our program. If the work here feels more than you can handle, please speak with us about your situation.

**Section 2 – Avodah (Attending Services).** This section includes information on attending services between now and your service. In order to be a service leader, you have to understand how a service works, and your role in it.

**Section 3 – Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World).** This section will help you prepare for, create, and execute your personal Mitzvah project.

**Section 4 – Haskalah (Enlightenment).** This section is all about **you**. It invites you to go in-depth into your Judaism as you begin your journey of Jewish adulthood.

**Section 5 – Limmud (Learning and Preparing for Your Service).** This section includes all the materials you need to lead the prayers and chant the Torah (and Haftarah). It also includes information for writing your D'var Torah, your own interpretation of what the Torah teaches us.

We are excited to begin this journey with you. Along the way, you will work with most of the TRS clergy team. We look forward to getting to know you and your family better. Remember that our doors are always open if you have questions or problems. Here's to a great year, and a meaningful B'nai Mitzvah celebration!

Your TRS Clergy Team:

Rabbi Schwartzman, Cantor Shochet, Rabbi Saxe, Rabbi Stein, Cantor Michaeli

# TEMPLE RODEF SHALOM CONTACT INFORMATION

*To Make an Appointment with any of the Clergy Contact*

**Julie Kaplan**

**703.532.2217 ext. 313**

or email:

[JKaplan@TempleRodefShalom.org](mailto:JKaplan@TempleRodefShalom.org)

Please make appointments at least one month in advance.

## *Clergy & Staff E-Mail Addresses*

Rabbi Schwartzman .....	ASchwartzman@TempleRodefShalom.org
Cantor Shochet .....	MShochet@TempleRodefShalom.org
Rabbi Saxe .....	JSaxe@TempleRodefShalom.org
Rabbi Stein.....	AStein@TempleRodefShalom.org
Cantor Michaeli.....	SMichaeli@TempleRodefShalom.org
Julie Kaplan (B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator).....	JKaplan@TempleRodefShalom.org
Sam Peppers (Clergy Assistant).....	SPeppers@TempleRodefShalom.org
Jessica Ingram (Executive Director).....	JIngram@TempleRodefShalom.org
Laura Rosh (Rental Coordinator).....	rentals@TempleRodefShalom.org
Grace Wright-Pazdra (Rental Coordinator) .....	rentals@TempleRodefShalom.org
Dara Holop (Religious School Director).....	DHolop@TempleRodefShalom.org
Hannah Foleck (Teen Engagement Manager).....	HFoleck@TempleRodefShalom.org

**Check out the B'nai Mitzvah section of our website for students and parents:**



- Torah Translations
- Video Commentaries
- Extra Hebrew Packets
- Links to Helpful Sites
- Parent Forms to Complete
- Torah Aliyah helpful guide for your guests

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

## SECTION 2

# AVODAH עבודה

## ATTENDING SERVICES



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

## SECTION 2: ATTENDING SERVICES

It is our hope that when you become Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah, you will feel prepared in every way. We are confident that you will know your prayers, the Torah reading and that you will have written a meaningful D'var Torah. It is our hope that you will become familiar with the overall service: what comes when, who does what, where do you lead your parts of the service, the melodies of the prayers that the Cantor leads, and how the congregation participates with you?

In order to achieve this goal, we want you and your family to attend at least 4 services including ushering at one. If you cannot attend one of the services listed below, please replace it with another service. Fill in the dates you've attended, below.

### TO DO:

- Stay for the Shabbat service after the B'nai Mitzvah Workshop, or come to a service in the next 3 weeks.  
*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_
- Attend a Friday night service on the same week of the month that your service takes place. Do this on any month. (Ex: If your service is on the first weekend of a month, attend a Friday night on the first weekend of a month.)  
*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_
- Stay for the Shabbat service after the Tikkun Olam Workshop (at 9 months), or come to a service in the next 3 weeks.  
*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_
- Stay for Shabbat morning or afternoon services after ushering at a service. Julie Kaplan will contact you to schedule your ushering responsibility.  
*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

## SECTION 3

# TIKKUN OLAM תיקון עולם

REPAIRING THE WORLD



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

## SECTION 3: TIKKUN OLAM: YOUR MITZVAH PROJECT

Becoming an adult within the Jewish community includes taking on responsibility in many realms. You are now in charge of your own Jewish commitments, rituals and behaviors. You are most likely being given more independence at home. You are also obligated to do your part to make the world a better place. The activities below will help you prepare for this through a group tzedakah project as well as an individual mitzvah project.

### TO DO:

- Attend the Tikkun Olam Workshop and the morning service that follows. This occurs 9 months before your service. An email will be sent from Julie Kaplan.  
*Date of Workshop:* \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Eight months before your service, participate in the cohort tzedakah project helping those who face food insecurity. This projects takes place at the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). Julie Kaplan will email you the date of this project.  
*Date of AIFAC Project:* \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Complete your own mitzvah project. See the next page for an explanation of this requirement.

## WHAT GOES INTO A MITZVAH PROJECT

Now that you have learned about the importance of Tikkun Olam and its connection to your Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah, it is time to pick your own mitzvah project.

Your personal project demonstrates your commitment to being responsible in the world -- this is what Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah is all about: taking responsibility as a Jewish adult.

Although you will begin your project this month, this activity can continue through the months ahead. We hope you will dedicate at least 13 hours to this project which includes organization as well as implementation. Keep a journal or diary as you complete your project in case you want to talk about it in your D'var Torah that you will write in a few months.

Looking for ideas? See the next page for websites to help you choose a project.

*My mitzvah project is:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Date Completed:* \_\_\_\_\_

## TOOLS TO HELP YOU SELECT YOUR MITZVAH PROJECT

Coming up with an idea for what you want to do for your mitzvah project can be challenging. Most people choose a project in an area that already interests them such as sports, animals, raising money for an important cause. Here are some websites to help you choose a project.

### WEBSITES:



The TRS Mitzvah Project Database. This database allows you to see what others have done by searching for a project topic. It gives you contact information for pursuing a project. Don't try to log in, just click on "Sign In as Guest".



Fairfax County has volunteer projects all the time. You have to find one for your age group. You do not have to sign in or create a user name to use this site.



Arlington County has a volunteer hub for projects if you live in this county.



The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's "Doing Good Project Ideas" webpage.



TRS also has a website with a Mitzvah Opportunities calendar and other projects that TRS is involved with in the community.

### WHEN YOU HAVE SELECTED YOUR PROJECT:

Go to the TRS Mitzvah Project Database (see QR code above) and add your project to the database.

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

## SECTION 4

# HASKALAH השכלה

## PERSONAL ENLIGHTENMENT



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

## SECTION 4: HASKALAH: YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY

As you become an adult responsible for your Judaism, you'll make decisions about how you will observe and practice your Judaism. This part of the B'nai Mitzvah year is important for ultimately being able to make those decisions. You will create your own personal journey to enlighten yourself in three central areas of Jewish life: Learning, Culture and Family. Select one activity from each category to fulfill between now and your Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah. You'll complete the worksheets or question for each activity you pick, and present that at the Snacks and Chat meeting with Rabbi Schwartzman three weeks before your service.

### CATEGORIES:

Complete one activity from each category.

#### 1) Jewish Learning (Limmud)

Jews are called “People of the Book.” In this category you will learn more about what responsibilities come with being Jewish. Such activities including reading a book(s), watching movies, researching a Jewish topic, attending a Jewish museum.

#### 2) Jewish Culture (Tarbut)

Judaism is not simply a faith-based religion, but an identity. Jewish culture helps one live out their Jewish life. In this category you learn how Jewish culture is important to the survival of the Jewish people. Activities in this category include such areas as music, theater, art, history, literature, food, etc.

#### 3) Jewish Community (K'hilah)

In Judaism, the community is of utmost importance. Family and community serves as the cornerstone for preserving our faith, transmitting traditions, and fostering a deep commitment to a Jewish future. Activities in this category include learning about and practicing Jewish rituals at home, learning more about your family, and becoming more involved in your TRS family.

## SECTION 4: YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY

### Category 1: Jewish Learning (Limmud); Pick One

#### Read a Book

Jews are often called “The People of the Book” primarily because the holiest object in Judaism is a book: the Torah. All of the sacred books that our people have written from the Torah forward gives us our laws and our history. It reflects our deep reverence we pay to books and learning. This is why our library at TRS is in such a central place when you walk into the Temple.

For this activity, choose a book from the list below to help you learn more about what it means to become a Bar/Bat/B’nai Mitzvah, or speak to our TRS librarian to help you find a book that reflects a topic or subject that you are interested in learning more about.

Answer the questions on the reverse side of this page.

All of these books have to do with B’nai Mitzvah, both fiction and non-fiction, and are available in the TRS library:

- Diaz, Natasha. *Color Me In*.
- Ruby, Lois. *Eddie Whatever*.
- Ehrenberg, Pamela. *Detour Ahead*
- Rosenbloom, Fiona. *You are so not invited to my Bat Mitzvah!*
- Lucido, Aimee. *Recipe for Disaster*
- Moulton, Deke. *Benji Zeb is a Ravenous Werewolf*.
- Synder, Laurel. *The Witch of Woodland*.
- Rosenberg, Madelyn and Wan-Long Shang, Wendy. *This is Just a Test*.
- Freedman, Paul J. *My Basmati Bat Mitzvah*.



This QR code will take you to our TRS library database, which has a more extensive list of books that we can recommend as well.

*Read a Book, pg 2.*

Once you have read the book you selected, please answer these questions:

What book did you choose and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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What were the main ideas in the book? \_\_\_\_\_

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If you chose a book about a kid preparing for B'nai Mitzvah, which parts did you relate to and which parts felt further from your own experience? \_\_\_\_\_

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Share one new idea or take-away that you learned from this book: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Category 1: Jewish Learning, *continued*:

### Research a Jewish Topic

There is always more to learn! Pick a topic from the list below, or come up with your own, and do some internet research. Try [www.MyJewishLearning.com](http://www.MyJewishLearning.com) or [www.URJ.org](http://www.URJ.org). Then answer the questions and write your answers on the reverse of this page.

1) **Jewish Holidays:** Pick a holiday from this list that you don't know much about and then, on the reverse of this page, answer the following:

- Is the holiday biblical, agricultural, or modern.
- What does the holiday celebrate or remember?
- What rituals are performed on the holiday?
- Are there special food to eat on that holiday?

*Jewish holidays you may not know:*

The three festivals: Sukkot and Simchat Torah, Pesach, Shavuot  
Minor holidays: Lag B'Omer, Tisha B'Av, Yom HaShoah, Yom Ha'atzmaut, Yom HaZikaron, Yom Y'rushalayim.

2) **Jewish View of God:** Do you believe in God? Do you know that there are many different concepts and images of God in Judaism? Watch the YouTube video that is linked to the QR code below. It is a young person talking about different Jewish views of God. Answer these questions on the reverse of this sheet:

- Which idea of God seems to resonate with you the most and why?
- Was there an idea of God that made you think differently? If so, which one?
- Was there an idea of God with which you had difficulty believing and why?



Click on this QR code above to go to the YouTube video.



Use this QR code to the left if you want more advanced reading on God ideas in Judaism.

## Category 1: Jewish Learning, *continued*:

### □ Research a Jewish Topic, *continued*...

**3) Jewish Places:** Learn about the culture of a Jewish place you have never been to. Research its history; Do Jews still live there? Do special foods come from that area? Are there museums to tour or special places to visit there? What would you want to see if you visited this place? Create a virtual itinerary with this information on the reverse of this page.



Visit [www.jewishworldtravel.org](http://www.jewishworldtravel.org) and use their Destinations page to search for a city you want to visit virtually.

Visit [www.ayelet.com](http://www.ayelet.com) and look for a trip that they are leading. Investigate the itinerary they put together and research some of those places online.



**4) Famous Jews:** There have been many scholars in Jewish history who have contributed significantly to Jewish thought and philosophy. Pick one thinker/figure, read about them and then write, on the back of this sheet, an introduction to that person and an interview with that person. Write questions you would ask them, if you could, and what you think their answers might be.



To see a list of scholars and thinkers, try [www.myjewishlearning.org](http://www.myjewishlearning.org) at this QR code.



## SECTION 4: YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY

### Category 2: Jewish Culture (Tarbut); Pick One

#### Jewish Foods



Learn about two Jewish foods that you have never heard of or eaten such as Shakshuka, Millowa, Tadig. Try [www.TorahMates.org](http://www.TorahMates.org) in their Jewish food section at the QR code below. Find two recipes and try making those foods. Or check out one of our many Jewish cookbooks in the TRS library. Write about it below: where does the food come from; what is the connection to Judaism or a Jewish holiday; when do we eat it; is it only eaten in that geographic area? Do you like it? Take a picture of you making it and share it with us at your meeting with Rabbi Schwartzman.

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#### Jewish Music

Search for Jewish artists on Apple Music, Spotify, Oysongs.com or JewishRockRadio.com such as Elana Arian, Noah Aronson, Chava Mirel, Becky Mann, Dan Nichols, Debbie Friedman, Ze'evi Tovlev, Rick Recht, Dan Nichols, and more. Listen to their music. Research information about the artist. Be a Jewish DJ and create a playlist of the songs you like to show to us. Write a short bio about the composer or artist as if you are introducing them. Write all of this on the back of this page and show it to one of the Cantors at your next progress check.



Oy Songs



Jewish  
Rock Radio

## Category 2: Jewish Culture, *continued*:

### □ Jewish Art

Jewish culture includes people who created Jewish art of all kinds: Jewish painters such as Mark Chagall, Mordechai Rosenstein, Judy Cassab; Jewish sculptors such as Judy Chicago, Leonard Baskin, Jacob Epstein; Jewish ritual items such as a tallitot, yadaim or dreidels, made by artists such as Gary Rosenthal, Tamar Haley, Yair Emanuel, Gabrieli, or even Jewish architects who created spectacular museums and synagogues including Moshe Safdie and Ada Karmi Melamede. In this category you have many choices:

1. Research a Jewish artist and create a virtual art exhibit of their work on powerpoint. Write a bio about the artist as if you were introducing them. Show your presentation to Rabbi Schwartzman.

2. Do a virtual tour of synagogues in the world that have won awards for their architecture. Create a powerpoint with pictures and short bios of the architects. Use the QR code to go to [www.synagogues-360](http://www.synagogues-360) to see synagogues around the world. Show to Rabbi Schwartzman.



3. Are you artistic yourself? Create your own tallit that you'll wear on the bimah at your service, and for the future. First, learn about what goes into a tallit, the different parts and why they are important, as well as how to wear one. See the QR code on the right from [myjewishlearning.com](http://myjewishlearning.com) about the tallit. Next, search tallit artists on Google and visit some websites to see beautiful tallitot. Then go to [TorahAura.com](http://TorahAura.com) where you can purchase your own tallit making kit. The QR to the left will take you to the Torah Aura site. Write about making your tallit in your D'var Torah.



## Category 2: Jewish Culture, *continued*:

### Jewish Movies and Theater

There are hundreds of Jewish themed movies and theater productions. Select 3 Jewish movies or plays/musicals that you can watch on-line (if not in person) and write reviews of them for our B'nai Mitzvah News! Here are some suggestions of some of our favorite movies or shows rated PG or below. You can also check out this list of the top Jewish movies, but get this approved by your parents first. Write your reviews below and on the back of this sheet.

- Fiddler on the Roof
- Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat
- Crossing Delancy
- You Are So Not Invited To My Bat Mitzvah
- Keeping the Faith
- The Chosen
- Full Court Miracle
- Prince of Egypt
- An American Tail
- Fievel Goes West
- Frisco Kid



Or go to the IMDb website at this QR code to see their list of Jewish movies. Each movie that is rated shows the rating in the listing.

## SECTION 4: YOUR PERSONAL JOURNEY

### Category 3: Jewish Community (K'hilah); Pick One

#### Keep Shabbat

Shabbat is our day of rest. Traditionally, Jews refrain from electronics, work, driving, cooking and other daily tasks. See what it is like to truly rest on Shabbat by choosing something from the list below. Try this for each Shabbat for one month and then answer the questions below.

- Don't use your phone or any of its apps from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.
- Take a Shabbat walk each Saturday with your family or friends.
- Start a new book and read it each Saturday instead of going out.
- Don't spend any money each Shabbat.
- Attend Shabbat services at TRS or try out different synagogues each Friday night and/or Saturday morning.
- Come to Torah Study at TRS at 9 am on Saturday mornings and hear how people interpret verses of Torah.

What did you pick? \_\_\_\_\_

How often did you do it? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you like about the ritual you chose? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What did you NOT like about the ritual you chose? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How did it feel knowing you were "keeping" Shabbat? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Category 3: Jewish Community, *continued*:

### ☐ Observe A Jewish Ritual

Judaism is full of rituals that help us find holiness everyday of our lives. Try taking on a Jewish ritual that you've never tried before for one month and then answer these questions on the back of this sheet:

1. What ritual did you observe?
2. How did it feel to observe this ritual?
3. Would you do it again?
4. Explain if performing this ritual helped you feel more connected or less connected to your Judaism.

Suggestion	QR code for More Information	Suggestion	QR code for More Information
Eat only kosher foods.		Say the Motzi or prayer over your food at each meal.	
Lead a Havdalah (end of Shabbat) ritual each Saturday evening.		Lead the Birkat HaMazon, the blessing after the meal, at the end of each dinner.	
Try saying the bedtime "Sh'ma" or similar prayer each night before bed.		Learn how to wrap T'fillin	
Start each morning off with saying a prayer of gratitude for something that you are thankful for.		Study the Shabbat Torah portion each week.	

### Category 3: Jewish Community, *continued*:

#### ☐ Learn Where You Came From

Everyone comes from somewhere! Do you know your family tree and places that your family lived generations ago? How far back can you trace your family? People have interesting stories and we hope that by interviewing your parents/grandparents that you can trace your family's roots and get a sense of where you come from. Create a family tree and find out who had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in your family. Submit your family tree at the Snacks and Chats meeting three weeks before your service.

#### ☐ Learn Where Others Came From

TRS has lots of members who have interesting stories of their backgrounds and family history. This activity invites you to interview an older member of TRS, perhaps someone you don't know. To be matched with someone, contact Julie Kaplan: [jkaplan@templerodefshalom.org](mailto:jkaplan@templerodefshalom.org) and she will connect you. Once you interview this person, present your interview in a Q & A format with your questions and their answers, as if you were interviewing them for a magazine story. Submit your interview at the Snacks and Chats meeting three weeks before your service.

### Category 3: Jewish Community, *continued*:

#### Volunteer at TRS!

Temple Rodef Shalom relies on our community and individual members to make the world a better place by getting involved in programs. How can you help your synagogue family out by participating in some social action projects or groups? Get involved in life at TRS and pick 3 events in which to participate. Consider the ones below. Write about what you did and how it felt to participate on the back of this sheet.

Consider helping the **Caring Committee**:

Bring food or a challah to a person in need or who is ill.

Volunteer at one of the area senior living centers;



Consider a Mitzvah opportunity through the **Community Service Committee**:

Check out the Social Action webpage and scroll down to Service Projects to see what is available.



Consider **Feed Em Fridays** where you can participate with your family in an Erev Shabbat mitzvah project. It's every 3rd Friday at TRS.

Check the Temple calendar for times

#### Join the Choir or Band.

Help out your TRS community by participating in Shir Harmony (3-6th grade choir), Kol Machar (7-12 grade choir) or our teen band Rak Noar. Join for the school year and answer the questions below on the reverse side of this sheet after a few rehearsals or performances.

Show your responses to Cantor Shochet or Cantor Michaeli:

Name 5 new Jewish songs that you learned.

Name 3 Jewish composers you learned about.

Name 3 connections you made by being a part of the group.

Name 3 things you got out of it for yourself.

# Bar / Bat / B'nai Mitzvah Preparation Guide

SECTION 5

LIMMUD  
לימוד

LEARNING AND PREPARING  
FOR YOUR SERVICE



Temple Rodef Shalom  
Falls Church, VA

## SECTION 5: PREPARING FOR YOUR SERVICE

This section contains all the materials you need to lead your service.

### TO DO:

- Friday Night Prayers
- Saturday Prayers
- Aliyot (Torah Portion)
- Haftarah Portion (Morning Services only)
- D'var Torah

### PRACTICE:

- At least 3-4 times per week for 20 minutes.
- Use Kol Koreh to learn the Hebrew and chants.
- Read your Torah portion in English.

SERVICE TIMES (Check off and circle when your services are occurring)

- Friday Night: 6:30 pm (8:00 pm on 5th Fridays)**
- Saturday Morning: 10:30 am** (Meet Clergy at 10 am)
- Saturday Afternoon: 5:00 pm** (Meet Clergy at 4:30 pm)

## SECTION 5: PREPARING FOR YOUR SERVICE

### YOUR HEBREW NAME

During the Torah service at your Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah, you will be “called” for the 3rd Aliyah by your Hebrew name. Do you know it? Cantor Shochet or Cantor Michaeli will ask you your Hebrew name at their first meeting with you. Now is the time to learn it.

A Hebrew name consists of:

- Your first, and sometimes a middle, name.
- Then “ben” (son of) or “bat” (daughter of) or a gender neutral “mi beit” (from the house of).
- Then your parents’ first Hebrew names.\*

*Example:* Shoshana Tzipora bat Avraham v’Rachel

Let’s get yours. Fill in the chart before your first Cantor’s meeting:

First Name in Hebrew	
Middle Name (if you have one)	
Ben, Bat, or Mi Beit	
Parent 1 Hebrew First Name*	
Parent 2 Hebrew First Name*	

\*If you don’t have a Hebrew name, we will tell you how to select one at the Cantor’s first meeting with you. If one parent is not Jewish, we will write their English name in Hebrew letters.

## SECTION 5: PREPARING FOR YOUR SERVICE

### WRITING YOUR D'VAR TORAH

Two months before your service you will meet with Rabbi Saxe or Rabbi Stein to begin preparing your D'var Torah. Your D'var Torah is your sermon, your chance to share with the congregation your thoughts relating to the Torah portion.

- In your first meeting with the Rabbi, you will choose your message and begin to form an outline for the D'var Torah together.
- Between then and your second meeting, you will write a draft of your D'var Torah (700-1000 words) and email it to the Rabbi before the meeting. This way the two of you can read it together, make changes directly in the document, and finish the meeting with a new version that reflects the work you did together.
- You and the Rabbi will then decide together whether you will need any additional meetings or drafts.

**Here are three things to keep in mind about your D'var Torah:**

- It should have one main message.
- That message should be relevant for everyone.
- There should be a clear “takeaway” that people are left with about how we can be better people.

## SECTION 5: PREPARING FOR YOUR SERVICE

### PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST RABBI MEETING

1. Read the summary of your Torah portion, which is in the pocket with your Hebrew packets in this section of the binder.
2. Read the English translation of your Torah portion, which is also in the pocket with your Hebrew packets. The particular verses you will be reading at your Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah are highlighted in yellow. At the front of this notebook, you will also see a personalized information page that lists the name of your Torah portion and the verses you are chanting. It is important to know what part of the portion you are reading, although you do not have to limit yourself to that part of the portion in writing your D'var Torah.
3. Learn about your portion by going to the following on-line sites:



<https://reformjudaism.org/learning/torah-study>

Here you can find quality commentaries on the weekly portion.



<https://bimbam.com/torah-texts/>

This site has great videos of each portion.

4. Now, answer the questions on the next page. They are designed to help you start thinking about themes from your portion, Judaism or other aspects of your life that you might want to talk about.



4. How do your Jewish identity and the Jewish values you have learned so far shape you as a person?

5. As you reflect in advance of your meeting with the Rabbi, keep in mind that you don't have to come to this meeting with a topic already chosen. It will be helpful, though, if you have come up with a few themes and ideas as possibilities. Write those here: