

B"H



*Bat Mitzvah  
Guide Book*



**The Shul**  
**5769/2009**

## How to Celebrate

In the Jewish cycle of life there are many designated times for *simchah* (joy), when the emphasis is celebration and revealed happiness. These include the *chagim* (festivals) and milestones such as birth, bar/bat mitzvah and weddings.

Interestingly, all Jewish experiences of joy seem to be preceded by serious or solemn moments that motivate reflection, introspection and feelings of repentance. A bar mitzvah is preceded by a program of study; a wedding reception by a traditionally solemn *chupah* (wedding ceremony). Sukkot and Simchat Torah, the most joyous festivals, are preceded by Yom Kippur, fasting and prayer; and Purim, the happiest day on the Jewish calendar, comes the day after the Fast of Esther.

The reason for this phenomenon has to do with the definition of true joy. Happiness is not defined by celebration or any other external stimulus, such as pleasure or wealth. Many people party and celebrate in pubs and other clubs and are miserable individuals. Some even have real reasons to celebrate but seem to remain unhappy.

Real happiness is a deep feeling that comes from within the person's soul. To be happy means to have a sense of purpose, fulfillment and achievement. It comes with the mindset of giving meaning to every experience. Happiness comes with clarity of direction and life's goals and is an expression of inner peace.

Only when there is a foundation of true inner joy, can celebration then play the critical role of nurturing, developing and expressing those feelings of happiness. When the happiness is real then the party can add fuel, vibrancy and permanence to the Simcha.

This is why Jewish celebrations are always preceded by a time of reflection and seriousness. The lead up time helps us focus on the meaning of true inner happiness. Once that is in place, we can throw ourselves into the celebration, expressing our joy to the fullest.

## .....THE BAT MITZVAH CEROMONY

The following is a description of a typical Bat Mitzvah Service, which is approximately forty-five minutes to one hour, and includes readings from the Torah portion and D'var Torahs (speeches). Nine months of practice is typically necessary.

- Welcome & Introduction
- Special Prayer & Explanation
- Rabbi's Comments
- D'var Torah and Torah Readings
- Shehecheyanu
- Parents' Greeting
- Yivarechicha Blessing
- Candy Throw and Congratulations from everyone  
(This custom signifies our wish for the young lady to be showered with sweetness and mazel throughout her life)
- Mazel Tov sung and played by..
- Reception



The Optional Candle Lighting Ceremonies: Bat Mitzvah girl may choose to honor family members and friends by inviting them to light a candle. She may have as many as 13 candles.



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## **SUNDAY MORNING OR EVENING CEREMONY**

A Sunday Bat Mitzvah Ceremony takes place as described on page 3. The service can be followed by a brunch or a reception.

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## **Booking a Date**

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Before booking a date, a meeting is set with the rabbi to discuss the Bat Mitzvah event. The Bat Mitzvah should be preferably scheduled following the Bat Mitzvah girl's 12<sup>th</sup> Hebrew birthday, or soon thereafter. A Bat Mitzvah registration form should be completed and submitted to the office. Your date will not be confirmed until receipt of the signed Bat Mitzvah registration form.



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## **Information for Invitations**



Times for Friday night or Saturday night Services must be determined with the Rabbi once the date is confirmed. For the invitation to effectively convey the spirit of the event and prevent errors, a proof is to be shown to the Rabbi before printing.

## **Entertainment**

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Due to the sanctity of Shabbat, music is not permitted. However, accapella male vocalists are more than welcome to provide Jewish entertainment; please feel free to arrange this. Please call the Rabbi for more information.



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## **Photographers**



While we gladly welcome the family and photographer and/or videographer for a weekday photo session, due to the sanctity of Shabbat, photography/videography is not permitted. However, in the event of a late Saturday afternoon service, or an early Friday Service, photographers and music are welcome until the onset of Shabbat or after the Havdalah Service (nightfall).

## **Bat Mitzvah Receptions**

### **at Other Venues** .....

If you are planning an evening reception, we ask that in keeping with the spirit of the invaluable lessons incorporated in our Bat Mitzvah program, any reception outside The Shul be catered kosher.

## **Costs and tax receipts**

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A non-refundable \$25.00 deposit will be required to secure your chosen date.

There is a \$500.00\* fee for a Bat Mitzvah PLUS cleanup fees. (Scholarships are available; inquire in the office.)

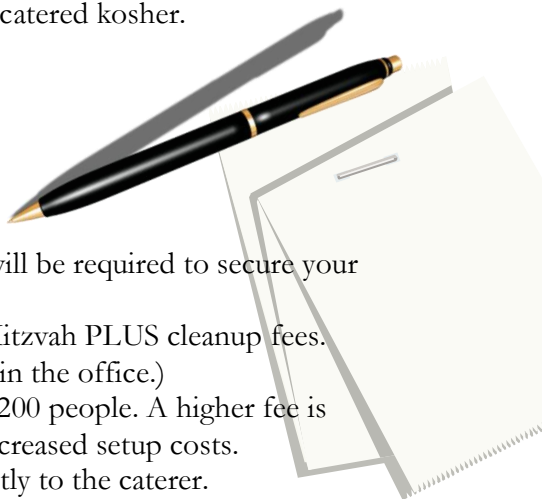
\* This is subject to a maximum of 200 people. A higher fee is required for more people due to increased setup costs.

Catering costs should be paid directly to the caterer.

### **ALL COSTS PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.**

This pricing schedule is for Shul members only – for membership packages please inquire in the office.

Since the entire congregation is invited to the Simcha, a tax receipt may be issued. Certain conditions apply. Please ask our office about this.



## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BAT MITZVAH GIRL**



### **Bat Mitzvah Discovery Course**

All Bat Mitzvah girls must complete the Bat Mitzvah Discovery Course, our program on basic Jewish traditions and Bat Mitzvah training. The course includes stimulating discussions and

presentations on intriguing areas of Jewish life that the Bat Mitzvah girl will not have encountered in Hebrew School or Jewish Day School. These sessions provide the child with valuable information that will prepare her for a most meaningful Bat Mitzvah. It will ignite in her a love and pride for her Judaism, and will help her define who she is as a Jew.





[www.theshul.net](http://www.theshul.net)

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