



CONGREGATION HAKAFA B'NAI MITZVAH GUIDE

A Hakafa Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a way of bringing our children into the encirclement known as Hakafa. In a larger sense, it is a way of becoming part of this ancient and vital tradition we call Judaism. To be one who embodies the commandments is to reveal not only an ability to read from the Torah, but also a commitment to those values Judaism has always regarded as sacred - worship, study, and good deeds. It also is to taste the joy of being Jewish. And so, we hope that the guidelines that follow will help you not only understand the meaning of the ceremony, but enjoy it in the fullest possible way.

At Hakafa, Bar and Bat Mitzvah services are meaningful to children, but they also are important acts for the entire family. We encourage all members of our Hakafa families to join not only in the *mitzvah* itself, but also in the planning that precedes it.

Use the following as a guide. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We want to help in every way we can. Above all, try to make whatever you do a stepping-stone toward a rich and fulfilling Jewish life.

Bruce Elder, Rabbi
Bibi Patt, Director of Education

Mitzvah: The Commitment

The purpose of this handout is to help our children and their families have a more meaningful religious experience. Our guidelines have been thoughtfully discussed with the members of Congregation Hakafa, with our Rabbi, and with our religious education staff.

We want to stress simplicity. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is a religious one, and that is where we feel the emphasis should be. This means that wherever possible, both in the ceremony itself and in the celebrations that accompany it, worship, charity, and deeds should be emphasized - and extravagance minimized.

Do not worry: Help is available. Rabbi Elder, Bibi Patt, Sara Goodman, and your tutor, with the help of other Hakafa members, will be happy to assist you. Please feel free to contact any of us.

Educational Standards

Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is above all a learning experience. Start early. Congregation Hakafa encourages religious education and training and provides a full program beginning with our Sunday morning primary classes. Our children begin formal Hebrew instruction in the third grade. **Because we believe that a well-rounded Jewish and Hebrew education is essential to becoming a bar or bat mitzvah, all B'nai Mitzvah Candidates are expected to be enrolled in both Religious School and Hebrew School.**

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate should have enough knowledge to read and understand the basic prayers of the Shabbat service in order to conduct or participate in it. In addition, the candidate should be able to read the weekly Torah portion, to read part of the Haftara (the prophetic reading) if the Haftara is traditionally read during the service, and to give a short reflection on the Torah portion.

It is understood at Hakafa that all of our young people who celebrate becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah will remain in our Hebrew Program through Hebrew School Graduation (7th Grade) and in our Religious School Program through Confirmation (12th Grade). Bar/Bat Mitzvah is not an ending, but a beginning. If we fail to convey this to our children, we have missed the point of the whole ceremony and have done a disservice to them as well as to Judaism. Continuing education is a must at Hakafa, and it is something that makes the whole process more meaningful and enjoyable.

How to Begin

Approximately 12-18 months in advance of your child's 13th birthday, contact Rabbi Elder to arrange a date and discuss the preparation process. You will have an opportunity to work closely with our Rabbi. He looks forward to personal contact with each of our families.

1. The Mitzvah of Study

Note: Hakafa members have found that writing one's own service adds immeasurably to the entire experience. The service booklet should incorporate the basic prayers of the Jewish ritual, which the Rabbi and/or Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor will share with you, but it also leaves room for creativity on your part. It may be tailored to express your own personal search. Rabbi Elder likes to meet with each family to discuss the service and to develop a closer relationship. If you are unable to create your own service booklet, you may opt to use Mishkan T'fillah, the Reform Movement's prayerbook, if your service will be taking place at the Winnetka Community House.

Sample services are available from Rabbi Elder. These will help clarify the order of the service and offer ideas for ways to personalize it. The use of artwork may enhance the appearance of the service booklet, and many of our families create their own art. We also have sample services that we can e-mail to you.

After your service has been written, please review it with your tutor and the Rabbi for final suggestions and approval. You may then proceed to have it reproduced for use at the service. Please donate a few copies of the service to the religious school for others to use as models when they are working to create a service. *Remember, we want to help you along the way.*

a. B'nai Mitzvah Workshops and Shabbat Services with Rabbi Elder: A series of workshops and Saturday Shabbat services will be offered for families to learn about the rubrics of Jewish prayer. The meaning behind the prayers and the structure of the service will be covered in depth. By the end of this series, families should have the tools by which they can more easily compile a service for their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

b. Hebrew/Tutorial Assistance: We have a superb Hebrew staff at Congregation Hakafa. Children who enter our Hebrew School in 3rd grade and continue through the 7th grade will receive the background they require, and we will recommend tutors for the additional, individual instruction needed to read or chant Torah, etc. *It is **strongly recommended** that you use a Hakafa tutor for this purpose and not someone else.* They know us best.

We expect participation in our Hebrew School program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, you may speak to Bibi about Hebrew tutors for private instruction.

c. Continuing Education: Remember that study does not end with Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Not only is there Confirmation to which to look forward, but we are also part of S.K.I.P., the Send a Kid to Israel Partnership. With the help of Hakafa and the Jewish Federation, you may look forward to a visit to Israel during High School or after (Students must register while in 3rd - 6th grades.). Rabbi Elder will be happy to discuss the details of this wonderful opportunity with you.

2. The Mitzvah of Social Action

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah year is an important time to learn the meaning of service to others. At Hakafa, we are very conscious of our commitment to work together as Jews to help in *tikkun olam*, repairing our world. As you become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, this obligation (this gift) becomes yours as well. You should develop your own justice project; you may wish to involve your family and/or religious school class as well. We are eager to help you find a service project that is meaningful to you.

There are also a number of ways to bring this *mitzvah* into the service and celebration. Share a part of the gift money or cost of the celebration with Mazon (or other organizations that feed the hungry). Donate the centerpieces. Teach about the lessons behind the social action project with which you have been involved, and find a way for your guests to help.

In accordance with Jewish tradition, an important aspect of your *simcha* (celebration) is *tzedakah*. You may choose to make a charitable donation in honor of the occasion. A contribution to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund is always appreciated. Your joy can then benefit those who depend upon help from these funds.

3. The Mitzvah of Worship

Bar and Bat Mitzvah youngsters and their families are expected to attend a minimum of THREE Friday evening or Saturday Morning services at Hakafa during the year prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Not only does this help in the learning process, but worship opens our families to the actual values the Bar or Bat Mitzvah is about to affirm.

When a child becomes a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, it is a celebration for our whole Hakafa community. Where possible, please invite the members of the congregation to share the worship service with you – you are welcome to extend an open invitation to the congregation in our newsletter. **Minimally, we ask that you invite members of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's religious school class to the ceremony.** In addition, your service is an excellent opportunity for prospective B'nai Mitzvah students and their families to attend and get a feel for what a Hakafa Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is like.

4. The Service Itself

We have found that most families find it beneficial to sit down and discuss exactly what kind of Bar or Bat Mitzvah service and celebration they wish to have. Your options for the time of the service include Shabbat morning or afternoon, Rosh Chodesh (the new moon), or the traditional days of Monday and Thursday. In addition, a late Saturday afternoon Havdallah service may be very beautiful. Friday night services are not available for b'nai mitzvah ceremonies. **Before setting your service time, please clear it with Rabbi Elder.**

5. The Place

Hakafa holds services at the Winnetka Community House. It has beautiful facilities for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and celebration. Since Hakafa does not have a permanent home of its own, the choice of a place is up to you, and there are other suitable locations you may wish to explore. Your own home may also be an appropriate place. Please be sure that your location can provide a sound system (if needed).

6. Hakafa's Ark

Many families choose to borrow Hakafa's second ark, which is kept in storage at our offices at the North Shore United Methodist Church (213 Hazel Avenue, Glencoe). If you would like to borrow the Ark, you are responsible for picking it up, transporting it to your ceremony location, and returning it. It is fairly large. As such, a large vehicle will be necessary, as will a couple of strong people.

If you do not choose to use Hakafa's Ark, please be sure to have a cloth-covered table and Hakafa's Torah Cover to drape over it.

7. Music

We have found that some kind of musical accompaniment to the services makes for a beautiful ceremony. Your options include guitar, piano, violin, etc. You may also wish to engage a soloist to help lead in the prayers and to sing any personal musical selection. Our own Hakafa musical staff is experienced and eager to help. You may contact Sara Goodman or Bibi Patt. If you wish to do something else, we will be happy to assist.

8. Friday Evening Service and Oneg

It is customary for the family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to attend Friday evening services and host the congregation's Oneg Shabbat on the Friday evening prior to your Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration. Some may wish to invite other Hakafa members to help fulfill this *mitzvah*. Please contact Rona Elder, Congregation Administrator, in the Hakafa office for details on hosting a Friday night oneg.

In addition, Rabbi Elder may ask members of your family to light the Shabbat candles, participate in the Torah service, and help lead Kiddush during these Friday evening services.

Finally: Some “Don’ts” and Some “Dos”

Photography and videos: Since the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a religious ceremony; the congregation has decided that the use of photography is intrusive and should be omitted. However, video cameras are allowed if the camera is stationary and the operator remains unobtrusive.

Candle lighting: Candle lighting in Judaism is reserved for honoring God and remembering the departed. For that reason, it is not appropriate to add a candle lighting ceremony to the post - Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. However, we are available to share creative alternatives with you.

Kipot and Tallit: Many b’nai mitzvah candidates wear a tallit at the ceremony. Some receive one as a gift for becoming a bar/bat mitzvah. Others use one handed down from previous generations. In addition, some families choose to provide kipot for their guests. We are happy to provide suggestions as to where to purchase these ritual items.

Aliyot and family involvement in the service: Often, though not necessarily, friends or relatives are called to the pulpit during the reading of the Torah. There are many other opportunities for involvement by others in the service as well, whether it be through a reading, opening the Ark, or the like.

Dietary Laws: Kosher foods are not required. However, we request that in accordance with Jewish tradition, no pork or shellfish should be included in your celebration.

Liquor: Wine is traditionally served at religious ceremonies. Liquor is not a necessity. In all cases, moderation and simplicity should be stressed.

**Becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is an inspiring and life changing act.
Start early and plan well. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. And, enjoy!**

CHECKLIST

✓ **Set the Date:**

Contact Rabbi Elder (847-266-8854 or rabbi@hakafa.org) to reserve your date on Hakafa's calendar. Generally, families select dates 12-18 months in advance.

✓ **Attend the B'nai Mitzvah Workshops and Workshop Services:**

Put the B'nai Mitzvah Workshop and Workshop Practice Service dates into your calendar and make it a priority to attend all 4 workshops and both services in the year preceding your ceremony.

B'nai Mitzvah Workshop and Workshop Service Dates 2018-19

All Workshops are held at the Takiff Center.

All Practice Services are held at North Shore United Methodist Church.

- **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FIRST AND LAST WORKSHOPS ARE FOR ALL FAMILIES.**
- **THE 2nd & 3rd WORKSHOPS AND BOTH PRACTICE SERVICES WILL HAVE TWO SESSIONS – ONE FOR THOSE HAVING MORNING B'NAI MITZVAH AND ONE FOR THOSE HAVING EVENING B'NAI MITZVAH.**
- **PLEASE BE SURE TO MARK THE CORRECT TIMES IN YOUR CALENDARS.**

Workshop 1	Sunday, November 11, 2018	12:15 p.m.
Workshop 2	Sunday, December 16, 2018	12:15 p.m. & 1:30 p.m.
Practice Service	Saturday, January 26, 2019	10:30 a.m. & 11:45 a.m.
Workshop 3	Sunday, February 24, 2019	12:15 p.m. & 1:30 p.m.
Workshop 4	Sunday, March 17, 2019	12:15 p.m.
Practice Service	Saturday, April 27, 2019	1:30 p.m. & 2:45 p.m.

✓ **Reserve a Place:**

Reserve a room to conduct the service. Many Hakafa families choose the Winnetka Community House (847-446-0537). Some of our families have chosen to have the ceremony in Israel. For information on this option, contact Rabbi Elder (847-266-8854 or rabbi@hakafa.org).

✓ **Select a Tutor:**

Below is a list of tutors used by our students. You may choose to call and/or meet with more than one individual and ask about their hourly rates prior to making a final selection. It is recommended that you contact a tutor 12 months in advance in order to determine when the best time to begin private studies would be.

Sara Goodman	847-274-7166 / music@hakafa.org
Rebecca Willis	847-559-1217 / beccabecca28@gmail.com
Ros Wolfe	847-564-2578 / ros8080@aol.com

If you have any questions regarding which tutor to select, contact Bibi Patt (847-650-7720 or education@hakafa.org) or Rabbi Elder (847-266-8854 or rabbi@hakafa.org).

✓ **Select a Music Leader:**

Select someone to do the music at the service. Two options are:

Sara Goodman

847-274-7166/music@hakafa.org

Guitar/Vocals

Bibi Patt

847-650-7720/education@hakafa.org

Guitar/Vocals

✓ **Sign Up to Host the Friday Night Oneg:**

It is customary for the family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to attend Friday evening services and host the congregation's Oneg Shabbat on the Friday evening prior to your Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration. Some may wish to invite other Hakafa members or friends to help fulfill this mitzvah. Please contact Rona Elder, Congregation Administrator, in the Hakafa office (847-242-0687 or admin@hakafa.org) for details on hosting a Friday night oneg and see the oneg instruction sheet attached to this packet.

✓ **Attend Services:**

You are expected to attend AT LEAST 3 Friday night Shabbat Services or Saturday Morning Minyan Services at Hakafa. It is a good idea to put some dates onto your calendar now. Attending Shabbat Services is one of the most valuable preparation tools for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The more services you attend, the more familiar your child (and you!) will become with the service, and the easier his/her preparation will become.

✓ **Ask for Help - Additional Sources of Support:**

The following parents have had one or more B'nai Mitzvah celebrations at Hakafa and would be happy to share their ideas about the prayer book (your tutor will assist you with the contents of the book) and offer ideas about other aspects such as graphics and printing, the oneg, and the celebration following the service. Please feel free to call the following:

Christine and Mark Adler

847-982-9628

Gwen and Marc Jacobs

773-296-1189

Martha and Don Pollak

847-256-7445

CONGREGATION HAKAFA SHABBAT SERVICE AND ONEG HOST PROCEDURES

This document should provide all of the information you need to successfully host a Hakafa oneg and set up for the Shabbat service. Please plan to arrive at least 45-60 minutes before the service starts (no later than 6:45 p.m. for the 7:30 p.m. service). In addition to hosting the oneg and kiddush, you are also responsible for setting up for and cleaning up after the service.

HAKAFA SUPPLIES THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

The following items are supplied by Hakafa and should be loaded on two carts. The carts are stored in a closet located just beyond and to the left of room 102. It is the first door on the left after turning the corner. The closet should be unlocked for us, but if it is not, the custodial staff may be contacted for access. Hakafa does not have a key.

Cart 1 (the Oneg cart) should be checked for completeness and then brought to the service room. Additional supplies, if needed, are on the shelves in the storage room. If these supplies are running low, let us know. Cart 2 (the book cart) will be transferred along with the Ark by the Winnetka Community House (WCH) custodial staff. Following the service, return Cart 1 and the WCH custodial staff will return Cart 2.

Cart 1 for the Oneg:	Cart 1 for Kiddush:	Cart 2 for Service:
Water pitchers (fill in main kitchen) Ice bucket (ice machine in main kitchen) Tea and sugar	Kiddush cup Challah cover Tzedakah box Cart 1 for Service Name tags and pens Matches/candles/candlesticks/ candlestick tray Kippot (in basket) Fabric book covers Welcome to Hakafa sign	Prayer books Chumash books (Torah)

HOST BRINGS THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Paper Goods (cups, plates, napkins, forks/knives/spoons - as needed)
- Challah (a must)
- Grape Juice for Kiddush (NOT wine)
- Food (enough for 30 people*): at least two desserts (cake and/or cookies); fruit; cheese & crackers; snacks (pretzels, popcorn, or nuts), or anything else you'd like to bring!
- Serving utensils (spatulas, knives, etc.)
- Serving trays (trays do not need to be fancy – just please do not put out desserts in boxes or on paper plates). A few platters and bowls are available on the shelves in the storage closet. If you use these, make sure they clean before and after use.
- Beverages (non-alcoholic) such as iced tea, lemonade, soda, water (Water pitchers are provided and can be filled in the main kitchen, so no need for plastic water bottles.)
- If you are hosting for a special occasion and know that there will be a large number of additional guests, please plan accordingly.

PROCEDURE / RESPONSIBILITY CHECKLIST:

- **Plan to arrive no later than 6:45 p.m. Services begin at 7:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted on the Hakafa calendar – which can be found at www.hakafa.org)**

SUGGESTION: If you pull up at the ramp for handicapped access in the parking lot off Pine Street, you can unload your items right onto a moveable cart found in the kitchen just inside the doors from the ramp. Then, park your car and you will be able to walk easily with the items you have brought.

- **Service Location: Our service is usually in Room 111ABC (Garden Room in the newer wing of the Winnetka Community House - WCH).** Sometimes our service is moved to a different room. If the service is in Room 111AB or in Room 101, both the service and oneg will take place in the same room. If the service is in Room 102, the oneg will take place in Room 104.
- **Set up for the Service.**
 - 1) Put Shabbat candles in the tall candlesticks and put a 3rd candle in one of the smaller holders. Please use the candle wax drip guards.
 - 2) Put all 3 items on a tray and place on the end of the Torah table.
 - 3) Set out the basket of *kippot* and names tags/pens near the entrance to the room.
 - 4) Set out the “Welcome to Hakafa” sign near the basket of *kippot*.
 - 5) Put a fabric book pocket over the back of every chair. If the room is set up for more than 50 people, do not put them out.
 - 6) Leave prayer and chumash books on cart for congregants to take.
 - 7) Place two prayer books and one chumash on the middle seat between where Rabbi Elder and Sara Goodman sit.
 - 8) Just before the service, light the 3rd candle that is in the smaller holder.
- **Set up for the Oneg.** The custodian will have a white paper tablecloth on the oneg table and will have a pot of hot water for tea. If this has not been done when you arrive, let the person at the front desk know that it needs to be done.
 - 1) Put the Tzedakah Box/Can on the oneg table.
 - 2) Put some grape juice in the kiddush cup and place it near the challah on the oneg table.
 - 3) Place the food and drinks, along with paper goods, nicely on the table. (Note: An ice machine can be found in the Winnetka Community House main kitchen. Ice can be placed in bowls or an ice bucket.)
- **Stay for the Service and Oneg.** It is customary and respectful for the oneg host to attend Friday evening services after setting up. Oneg hosts are often given the honor of lighting the Shabbat candles. If you would like this honor (or not), please notify the rabbi prior to the service.
- **Clean up both the Service and Oneg.** When people start leaving, you can start to clean up. The custodian will discard the hot water and remove the tablecloth after everyone has gone. Discard the used cups, plates, food, and drinks from the Oneg. Clean and replace Cart 1 items and return the cart to the storage closet near room 102. If items on the cart need to be replenished from our storage supplies, do so such that the cart is ready for the next use.
 - **PLEASE be sure to wash out the Kiddush Cup with soap and water and dry it off before it is returned to the cabinets.**
 - **PLEASE clean the wax off the candlesticks with warm water and dry them with paper towels before they are returned to the cabinets.**

- **Please DO NOT leave any extra trays, serving utensils, beverages, or food of any kind on the carts on shelves in the closet, even if they are unopened.** We have limited storage capacity and do not want uninvited critters. Other than paper goods (if there is space) please take all leftover supplies/food/drinks home with you.
- **Check the tzedakah box:** If money has not been removed at the end of the evening, please take it and send a check for the amount found made out to "Congregation Hakafa" to: Congregation Hakafa
P.O. Box 409
Glencoe, IL 60022
Make sure to include a note explaining that the check is tzedakah from Shabbat Services. Please also include the date of the Service.
- **Let the custodian know when you are finished so that the storage closet can be locked.**
- Please let our oneg coordinators, Ellen and Henry Criz (847-910-0686, oneg@hakafa.org) or Suzanne and Rick Shore (847-722-6797, oneg@hakafa.org) know if you have any questions or comments.

Once again, thank you, and please let us know if you have any questions.