

B'H

A Bar Mitzvah at Chabad of Cary

Dear Parent,

We are so happy you are considering Chabad of Cary for your son's Bar Mitzvah. We hope to be able to make this event meaningful, with inspiration that will last for years to come!

Jews have celebrated Bar Mitzvahs for thousands of years, and they have become a prominent part of our contemporary culture.

In thinking about the way to commemorate a Bar Mitzvah, we should first take a step back. What are some of the spiritual concepts we are celebrating?

- A Bar Mitzvah Celebrates the first 13 years of a child's life, childhood is a formative stage and a foundation for life.
- A Bar Mitzvah Celebrates a time when the soul begins to blossom allowing the individual to find "moral maturity" with himself.
- A Bar Mitzvah Celebrates the Child's Commitment to living his life as a Jewish Adult.
- A Bar Mitzvah celebrates Our Torah, which gives us a world-view and guidance on how to lead a meaningful life.
- A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the idea that this boy is now taking his rightful place as part of the Jewish Community.
- A Bar Mitzvah celebrates the new link in the chain of Jewish continuity.

Which leads us to an important question: How can we infuse these concepts into the design of a Bar Mitzvah Celebration?

With this question in mind, we have set out to design a ceremony that emphasizes the "process" of maturation, responsibility, and Jewish identity. Rather than memorize a particular text for a one-time event (one that often does not have meaning for the Bar Mitzvah boy) we have chosen readings that articulate a developmentally appropriate message for your child. **These 12 Passages are** taken from the Bible, Talmud, and Jewish Spirituality. They are not just religious texts for a specific day, rather, messages for life. It is our hope that these values will become "tools for a meaningful life" as your child matures into adult life.

The model that we have chosen is one that has been tremendously successful in communities around the country.

Your son's ceremony includes:

- Readings of the 12 Passages

- A Speech, with reflections on the meaning of this important milestone, his path in reaching it, etc. In particular, a theme of one of the readings will be elaborated upon as well as new Mitzvot the Bar Mitzvah commits to.
- The Rabbi's explanation of the process, ceremony, and respective readings.
- As per your guidance, we call on family-members and friends for readings and/or personal reflections.
- A handout will be prepared for the all the guests containing the above readings and some additional prayers. The handout can also contain a personalized message from the family. If you like, you can also design your own cover.
- The parents (and grandparents if you choose) bless the Bar Mitzvah boy through our "fountain of blessings." They can also choose to convey the continuity of tradition with a "Judaic bestowal" (Tallit, Kiddush Cup, etc)
- A candy throw, in which we shower the Bar Mitzvah with sweetness

The Ceremony can take place in one of two manners

Option 1 - Shabbat

WHEN:

Shabbat Morning

WHAT:

The Ceremony revolves around the 12 Passages mentioned above and will be incorporated into our Shabbat Services.

The Bar Mitzvah boy studies a portion of the Torah-Reading with its cantillation marks and recites it as part of our Shabbat Morning Service. He also delivers a Dvar Torah in the middle of the service. (For more advanced students there is also the option of leading the Musaf Service)

Afterwards, at the Kiddush following services, he recites the twelve Passages. Parents and other family members are welcome to share speeches at that time. Service begins at 9:30 am and lasts approximately three hours.

FOOD:

For larger crowds, please contact Atara's Kosher Catering. Atara can be reached at 713-505-9172 or ataradelicious@yahoo.com

For smaller crowds, you can choose one of the following two regular Kiddush Lunch Menus prepared by Chana and a group of women at Chabad of Cary. If choosing this option, We kindly ask that you please do not request additional food choices.

Deli

Challah
Grape juice/ wine
Deli meat –pastrami and turkey
Pickles
Rye bread
Ketchup and mustard
Potato chips
Coleslaw
Cookie/ Bar dessert
Fruit
Seltzer and ice water

Bagel and Lox

Challah
Grape Juice/Wine
Bagels
Lox
Cream cheese
Sliced tomatoes & onions
Pasta Salad
Cookie/ bar Dessert
Fruit
Seltzer and ice water

FEE:

This Simcha Fee of a Bar Mitzvah at Chabad of Cary is \$500. This includes the ceremony, use of facility, copies, kosher supervision of food (if through caterer), and a donation to the synagogue.

If choosing the Chabad of Cary Kiddush, the Kiddush will generally costs between \$200-\$300 depending on the number of guests.

NOTES:

Please bear in mind that videos and cameras are not used during this Shabbat Service.

Option 2

WHAT:

The Celebration is not a formal prayer service per se: It's a free-standing Judaic celebration of your son's Bar Mitzvah. We can schedule this ceremony at a time – and shape its schedule in a way – which will maximize the Bar Mitzvah meaning and celebration. The Ceremony revolves around the 12 Passages mentioned above. In addition, prayers will be recited, psalms read, and speeches shared (psalms and speeches may be recited in English) by family and friends you'd like to honor.

WHEN:

This Ceremony can take place on:

- A) Sunday Late Morning (on days without Hebrew School)
- B) Sunday Early Afternoon.
- C) Work/school holidays (Presidents Day, etc.)

(On a Shabbat just before the date of the ceremony, your son will get called up to the Torah at Chabad of Cary for the very first time though the celebration will take place on the date of the ceremony). If you want your child to also read from the Torah, we encourage OPTION 1

WHERE:

At either Chabad of Cary or another venue of your choice.

We've made some inquiries regarding affordable locations that are easy-going and allow you to bring in outside food (as the event will need to be kosher.) The Community Center at Bond Park in Cary seems like an excellent option. They are quite flexible and are only \$49/hour. As you will see from the link below, (search the bond park facility) there are a few available rooms.

<http://tinyurl.com/carybarmitzvah>

FOOD:

All Food and Liqueur at the Ceremony must meet the Kosher Standards of Chabad.

There are two options for food.

A) Food prepared by Atara's Kosher Catering. Atara can be reached at 713-505-9172 or ataradelicious@yahoo.com

B) Family purchases all food and takes care of setup and cleanup.

The Rabbi will guide you with where food can be purchased locally. Certain other kosher items can be ordered through Chabad.

Paper goods and disposable serving utensils will be purchased by family. (Certain items like cutting boards, knives, can openers, etc can be borrowed from Chabad of Cary)

Suggested Menus Include 1) Bagels, Lox, and Cream cheese 2) Deli

NOTES:

Photography is permitted for a non-Shabbat Bar Mitzvah Ceremony

FEE:

This Simcha Fee of the Bar Mitzvah with Chabad of Cary is \$500. This includes the ceremony, copies, kosher supervision of food (whether Atara or by family), and a donation to the synagogue.

Preparation:

About six months prior to your son's Bar Mitzvah, you should contact the Rabbi to schedule a date for the Bar Mitzvah. At that meeting, we will discuss our goals for the Ceremony and Readings. We will also chart forward the path to prepare for those goals.

Weekly tutoring with the Rabbi will take place in the months before the Mitzvah. In these meetings we will practice the Readings, discuss what it means to be Bar Mitzvah, and learn about Mitzvot such as Tefilin.

The number of these sessions will depend on the goals for the Bar Mitzvah as well as your child's knowledge of Hebrew, etc. (If you choose to also have your child read from the Torah or lead Musaf, a more substantial number of meetings will be necessary)

FEE:

Tutoring will take place in 45 minute sessions. For students of the Hebrew School, it is \$30 a session, and for non-students, \$40

TEFILIN:

Family must purchase *NEW* Tefillin for the Bar Mitzvah boy. (\$250)

MITZVAH PROJECTS:

The Torah is a program for life, a 'user's manual' if you will. This isn't just theoretical; the Torah's ideas need to find expression in actual conduct. In light of that, we strongly encourage the Bar-Mitzvah boy to adopt specific practices. For example:

- Designating a Tzedaka box in his bedroom and placing a coin there each day (except Shabbat)
- Saying the Shema Prayer each day
- Regular (even if not weekly) attendance at Shabbat Services the year of the Bar Mitzvah.
- Over the course of the preparation process, the Bar Mitzvah boy will choose a Mitzvah Project; this has two dimensions; one of a "social" consciousness nature and the other of a 'ritual' nature (Tefilin, Mezuzah, etc) We will work with your son so that he can incorporate this into his Bar Mitzvah Ceremony.

Note: Regardless of when you schedule your ceremony and party, the actual 'Bar Mitzvah Day' is your son's 13th birthday on the Jewish Calendar. With your permission, the Rabbi will **visit your son at home on that day** – perhaps for just a few minutes – to celebrate the day's unique character.