

B'NEI MITZVAH TERMS AND TRADITIONS

B'nei Mitzvah - Child of the commandments. This is a milestone in a young Jewish person's life, when they are seen as an adult in the community, fully accept the responsibilities of their Jewish faith, and begin to be held accountable for their own actions.

Aliyah - Meaning "to go up." An Aliyah refers to the honor of being called up to the Torah while it is read. Certain family members or guests are honored by coming forward to the bimah to recite blessings before and after the reading of a portion of the Torah.

Siddur - The prayer book. It contains a set order of daily prayers. Hebrew is read right to left, so what seems like the front of the book if it were in English, is actually the back cover. SIDDUR comes from the word "seder" meaning "order."

Torah and Haftarah - Jewish sacred books and texts. The Torah contains the five Books of Moses. The Haftarah comes from the books of the Prophets or the Writings. They are the source of Jewish law, history, tradition, and values. Each week, we recite a portion of the Torah and a Haftarah reading. It takes a full calendar year to read the entire Torah, and we begin the cycle again on Simchat Torah.

Kippah (*yarmulke*) and Tallit (*tallis*) - Religious head covering and prayer shawl, sometimes worn by participants during a prayer service. The kippah is worn on the head to acknowledge that God is everywhere, around and above us all the time. When wrapping ourselves in the Tallit or prayer shawl, we are thinking about attaining a mood of reverence for God and a prayerful spirit during our worship. The corner fringes of the Tallit are tied in a special series of knots which symbolically total 613, the same number of commandments given to us by God in the Torah.

Sanctuary - Sacred room where the service occurs. At the front of the sanctuary is the *bimah*, or raised platform. At the rear of the bimah sits the Ark or *Aron Hakodesh*, the home of the Torah scrolls. Above the ark is the eternal light or *Ner Tamid*, which remains continuously lit as a reminder of God's everlasting presence.



Rabbi and Cantor- These are the religious leaders of the service. These leaders help train and prepare the student for the celebration and also assist in conducting the service itself.

GUIDELINES FOR SYNAGOGUE ETIQUETTE

Our sanctuary is a place of prayer and meditation. We ask for your cooperation in maintaining an atmosphere of quiet dignity and reverence both before and during our worship.

Our service is participatory. You are invited to join in the responses, hymns, and readings.

Please remain in your places: when the congregation is standing; when the Cantor is singing; when the Torah is being read; when the Rabbi is speaking; or the B'nei Mitzvah is leading the service.

No photographs are permitted to be taken during the service. No food or drink is permitted in the sanctuary. Please turn off cell phones. Please do not place prayer books on the floor. While we are celebrating a joyous occasion, applause is inappropriate during our religious services.

