



**TEMPLE REYIM**  
A Congregation of Friends

**B'NEI MITZVAH PROGRAM**  
**GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN**  
**2016-17 / 5777**

**PROGRAM DATES:**

November 4 and December 3, 2016

January 14, February 3, March 4, April 8, and May 5,  
2017

Reyim Intergenerational Shabbaton at Camp Ramah  
Palmer

June 16-18, 2017



**Mazal tov!** Preparing for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a very special time for families, and we look forward to supporting you through this process and celebrating together with you.

This handbook is meant to offer guidance in your preparation for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. You should always feel free to reach out to Rabbi Berman, to our Rabbinic Intern Laura Bellows, and/or to our B'nei Mitzvah Parent Coordinator, Ellen Tanowitz, with any questions, thoughts or concerns.

**What is a Bar/Bat mitzvah?** The term Bar/Bat Mitzvah does not actually refer to a ceremony, but a time of life. When boys reach the age of 13, and when girls reach the age of 12, they take on responsibility for mitzvot. They are counted in a minyan (a quorum of ten adult Jewish individuals necessary to say certain prayers), can be called to Torah for an aliyah, and can recite the blessings before and after reading Torah. Our hope is that this sense of responsibility will deepen the child's Jewish and spiritual identity.

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a significant moment of transition: the child formally becomes the community's prayer leader and teacher. It is an opportunity for your child to deepen his or her understanding of the many pathways into Judaism: religious, spiritual, textual, and ethical.

Family involvement is an essential component to this process. We hope the many programs we will share throughout the year will bring meaning to you and your family, and that this process deepens not only your child's understanding, knowledge and skill but also the Jewish identity and spiritual life of your whole family.

Finally, as a practical matter, we would like to announce all Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies in our monthly bulletin. Please send along a short and sweet description about your child and his or her interests so we can celebrate together.

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## **I. HOW DO WE BEGIN?**

### **1. THIS HANDBOOK**

In this handbook you will find much of the introductory information you need to begin your Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation, including requirements, planning and logistics, and responses to frequently asked questions.

You are always welcome to call or email Rabbi Berman at rabbiberman@reyim.org, our rabbinic intern Laura at laura.bellows@gmail.com and/or our Parent Chair, Ellen Tanowitz at ellentanowitz@gmail.com.

### **2. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

We are committed to making this important life cycle celebration accessible and meaningful to all our members, including children who have learning differences and/or disabilities. We will work with you to make this occasion meaningful, purposeful and holy.

### **3. INTERFAITH FAMILIES**

Non-Jewish family members are warmly welcomed and embraced in our community, and participate in many aspects of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, including standing with your child as he or she takes an aliyah l'Torah, and reading the Prayer of Peace. Involvement of the child's family is a very important aspect of the Bar and Bat Mitzvah and Rabbi Berman will work closely with you to ensure this is a meaningful experience for the whole family.

## **II. BAR/BAT MITZVAH REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. PRIOR EDUCATION**

Students must have completed at least five years of Jewish education and be currently enrolled in a Jewish educational program such as Keshet, Makor, and/or Jewish Day School. We understand children have different experiences and needs. If your child does not have this educational background or is not currently enrolled in a Jewish educational program, please be in touch with Rabbi Berman to discuss this further.

### **2. TUTORING**

We can help match you with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor for your child. You may also choose to make your own arrangement, and have your child learn from a teacher or tutor they (or you) already know.

Each student will meet with his or her tutor to assess Hebrew reading ability and develop an individualized learning plan.

There are four main components to Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring:

- leading tefila (prayer);
- leyning Torah and learning the Torah blessings;
- chanting the Haftarah and learning the Haftarah blessings; and
- other special blessings

#### **Leading tefila (prayer)**

As set out in the student's individual learning plan, students will begin learning some or all of the following aspects of the Friday night and Shabbat morning service:

- the psalms and melodies of Kabbalat Shabbat and maariv
- the Shabbat morning service: Psukei D'zimrah barchu; shema; v'ahavta; and the Amidah
- Torah service before and after Torah reading

· Musaf: chatzi kaddish and the Amidah

**b. Leyning Torah and Torah Blessings**

Our primary goal is for students to become life-long readers/chanters of Torah. Therefore, instruction will begin with the taamei mikra, meaning cantillation (trope) notes. Trope notes were copied, edited, and added to Torah by a group called the Masoretes (meaning those who transmit tradition) between the 7<sup>th</sup> the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Because of the highly developed placement of these cantillation notes, trope not only helps us chant the Hebrew words, but enables us to better understand the meaning and inflection of the text.

Students will learn to:

- read at least two aliyot of the Torah reading: one aliyah and the maftir;
- the blessings before and after the Torah reading

**c. Chanting Haftarah and its Blessings**

Likewise, students will learn:

- Haftarah trop
- Blessings before and after the Haftarah
- the Haftarah for the Shabbat of the child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah

**d. Other Blessings**

- for Tallit and tefilin
- Friday evening candle lighting, shalom aleychem, and kiddush
- Shabbat morning kiddush
- Motzi (blessing over bread)
- Havdalah (blessing separating Shabbat from the rest of the week)

### **3. MEETING WITH RABBI BERMAN**

About 3 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the student and his/her parents will begin meeting with Rabbi Berman individually to develop and nurture a relationship so that the simcha will be more meaningful.

The purpose of the meetings is:

- a. Introduction: getting to know each other
- b. D'var Torah: reading and discussing the Torah portion, and writing a d'var Torah (speech interpreting the Torah reading);
- c. Final preparations/rehearsal: the final meeting is a rehearsal, which will also include the student's family, and tutor. Photographs may be arranged for the start of the rehearsal or for another time shortly before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

As always, you are welcome to meet and talk with Rabbi Berman at any time.

#### **4. AREVUT (SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY)**

##### **A. SOCIAL JUSTICE/SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT**

As part of our B'nei Mitzvah program, students will begin working on a mitzvah project with a special focus on chesed and tzedakah.

**A list of example Jewish social action and social justice projects is attached as an appendix to this handbook.**

##### **B. 13 NEW MITZVOT<sup>1</sup>**

**In addition to this primary mitzvah project, students will take on 13 new mitzvot.**

In the ancient rabbinic text called Pirkei Avot (Wisdom of the Fathers) we learn that the world depends on three things: Torah (Jewish learning, Avodah (Jewish and spiritual practice) and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of loving kindness). **Every Bar and Bat Mitzvah student will support the world by learning about and completing 13 mitzvot, including 4 in each of these three categories upon which the world stands. The 13<sup>th</sup> mitzvah will be coming to Torah for the first time as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. We also encourage you to keep a journal so you can reflect on your experiences and share them with family and your class.**

Below are recommendations for mitzvot within each of these 3 categories. You may also propose your own options to Rabbi Berman.

#### **TALMUD TORAH (LEARNING)**

- **REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS:** Participate in monthly Shabbat Bnei Mitzvah family education session
- **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS:**
  - Read your Torah portion with your family during Shabbat dinner. Have everyone ask one question that you reflect on together during dinner.

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<sup>1</sup> This program is based on Mitzvah Project Models developed by Rabbis and Jewish educators at Temple Beth Zion in Brookline, Temple Emanuel in Newton and Temple Ner Tamid in Bloomfield, NJ.

- Read a Jewish book
- Visit a Jewish museum, gallery, or special Jewish cultural event.
- Interview your parents or grandparents or other elders in your family or community. Learn about their Jewish roots.
- Identify something about Jewish life and practice that you do not understand. Research the question in books, on-line, and by interviewing your parents, teachers, friends, and Rabbi.
- Art or music project: Create a ritual object such as a mezuzah, Kiddush cup or knit a kippah. You can draw, paint, or sculpt a scene from your Torah portion. Or learn Hebrew songs.
- Watch a movie about a Jewish theme at home, in the theater, or at the Boston Jewish Film Festival and write a review for your journal.

### AVODAH (SERVICE)

- **REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS:** Attend one Shabbat Friday evening service and one Shabbat morning service monthly.
- **Additional Options:**
  - Attend a joyful Jewish life cycle event such as a wedding, baby-naming, brit milah
  - Celebrate Shabbat at home by adding one ritual that is new
  - Attend one festival morning service (Sukkot, Pesach, or Shavuot) or community event.
  - Blessings for food: lead your family in saying hamotzi before your main meal every day for at least two weeks and lead your family in birkat hamazon for four Shabbat dinners.
  - Kashrut: keep one aspect of Kashrut that is new for you for a month
  - Likboah Mezuzah: affix a mezuzah to your bedroom door. What is the text on the parchment? What does that text mean to you? How is it important?

### GEMILUT HASADIM (SOCIAL ACTION)

- **REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS:** Participate in our group's areyvut social action project and present it to the Reyim community.

- **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS**

- Bikur Cholim: Help a classmate who is sick. Bring homework, library books or a message between home and school. Help them keep up with notes.
- Clothe those in need: Collect clothing from your home and bring for donation.
- Honor the elderly: visit a Jewish nursing home and speak with residents about their lives. Write their stories down and share it with them.
- Be kind to animals: volunteer time at the local animal shelter or another organization that cares for animals.
- Comfort mourners: attend a shiva minyan with your parents at a house of mourning.
- Take care of the environment: Plant a tree or flowers in your yard or buy a tree from JNF in Israel.
- Participate in Remember US: The Holocaust Bnei Mitzvah Project: connect with the memory of children who died in the Shoah. You can find more here: [www.remember-us.org](http://www.remember-us.org)

## 5. **SHABBAT REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. SHABBAT SEMINAR SERIES**

From November through June, you will participate in a seminar taught by Rabbi Berman and Laura Bellows on either Friday nights or Shabbat afternoons once every month. The seminar will be after services and dinner Friday nights from approximately 7:45-8:45 pm or after Shabbat morning service and Kiddush lunch, from approximately 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.

Students and their families must attend Shabbat services that morning, arriving by 10:30 am, and participate in the seminar. Seminars will sometimes include parents; other times it will be for students alone.

**Being part of a peer-based Jewish and spiritual community is an essential component of becoming Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Thus, all students are required to continue in the program throughout the year.**

#### **B. SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES ATTENDANCE**

In addition to the monthly Shabbat afternoon seminar series, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and his or her family is required to come to Shabbat morning services between 6 and 8 times during the 3 months before the child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This experience will help the student to observe, participate in, and become comfortable with Shabbat practice at Temple Reyim, and will also strengthen the student and family's relationship with Shabbat and with the Reyim community.

#### **C. SHABBAT EVENING SERVICES ATTENDANCE**

Families should also plan on attending **one Friday evening service per month** from September through May. This may be a traditional minyan Kabbalat Shabbat service, which begins at 6 pm in our chapel, or our Shabbat Reyim services, which include dinner after services. Shabbat Reyim services also begin at 6 pm, held in the Offit room.

### **III. A MODEL TIMELINE**

Every Bar and Bat Mitzvah child brings different learning styles and experiences. Our goal is to meet the needs of the child and family while also challenging and encouraging the child to grow as much as possible in his or her Jewish learning and ability to lead the community as a prayer leader and teacher. One of the wonderful parts of this approach is that our relationships with the child and the family develop naturally, “*l’fi da’ato*” – according to the abilities and gifts of the child and needs of the family.

Below is a model timeline and goals for a Bar and Bat Mitzvah.

#### **3 Years Prior to Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

- Schedule a date with our Bnei Mitzvah coordinator

#### **2 Years Prior**

- Begin coming more regularly to Shabbat services and join in youth and family synagogue programming.

#### **12-10 Months Prior**

- Initial parent meeting with Rabbi Berman
- Connect with your tutor (We will match students with tutors)
- Read your entire Torah reading in English
- Read your entire Haftarah in English
- Begin Mitzvah Project
- Begin monthly Shabbat seminar series and mentoring
- Begin coordinating logistics of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah with the Office Manager, Rachel Savage

### **9-8 Months Prior**

- Begin to learn Haftarah trope
- Begin to learn Haftarah
- Begin to learn blessings before and after Haftarah

### **7-6 Months Prior**

- Learn to chant blessings before and after Torah reading
- Learn to lead the Torah Service
- Begin learning the Torah trope
- Begin to learn Maftir, with vowels and trope

### **5-4 Months Prior**

- Chant Maftir fluently with vowels and trope
- Begin to learn additional aliyot, if desired
- Learn to chant parts of Kabbalat Shabbat, Shabbat Maariv or Shacharit
- Find or make your tallit
- Coordinate kiddush plans with our Office Administrator Jean Max
- Begin individual meetings with Rabbi Berman

### **3-2 Months Prior**

- Begin more intensive Shabbat attendance
- Practice chanting Maftir from the tikkun (i.e. without vowels and trope)
- Begin to write D'var Torah with Rabbi– first draft

### **1 Month Prior...**

- Write and finalize your D'var Torah
- Schedule rehearsal and photographs with Rabbi Berman
- Give out honors to family and friends – coordinate with Rabbi Berman

### **3...2... 1 Weeks Prior**

- Meet with Rabbi and tutor for rehearsals
- write down remarks to give to your child at the service (1-2 minutes)
- Inform office of any delivery schedules for decorations and flowers

## **IV. RESPONSES TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. FEES**

- In order to commence Bar/Bat Mitzvah training, the family must be a member in good standing with the Temple: all dues and fees must be paid or arrangements must be in place for the balance as an abatement or payment plan.
- If you decide to use a tutor arranged through Reyim, there is a \$850 fee to Reyim, and we will pay the tutor for 24 hours of lessons. If your child has learning challenges and will require additional lessons, please speak to Rabbi Berman prior to starting lessons. Otherwise, if your child needs additional lessons, the family is expected to pay the additional cost per lesson.
- If you decide to make your own arrangement with a tutor, you will work out a financial plan independently with the tutor.
- We also ask that you sponsor Kiddush for the community. There are many options, including our Ayin Chefs and Sisterhood Designs or an outside caterer from our list of approved Kosher caterers. Please ask the office for contact information.

### **2. DATES**

- Your daughter's Bat Mitzvah date will be on or after the date she is 12 years old according to the Hebrew calendar. Your son's Bar Mitzvah date will be on or after the date he is 13 according to the Hebrew calendar.
- In choosing a date, we will try to honor requests to the best of our ability. Please let us know 3 or 4 dates that could work for you as well as any dates that would definitely not work for your family.
- Dates are assigned by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Parent Chair in collaboration with Rabbi Berman . You will be informed of the date by the spring of the year that your child turns ten years old.

- If you need to change the date, please contact the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Parent Chair as soon as possible.

### **3. SHABBAT MORNING B'NEI MITZVAH**

- Our Bnei Mitzvah take place during our community's Shabbat morning services. This is important for many reasons, including our emphasis on the experience of becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah within the Reyim community. While we want to make the morning as reflective of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's family as possible, this is also a service for the congregation, and will maintain the structure and spirit of a community Shabbat morning service. We want to encourage members to attend one another's simchas (joyous occasions) just as we would support one another in times of need.
- If you feel this will be difficult for your child, please speak with Rabbi Berman.

### **4. KIPPOT, TALLIT/TEFILIN**

- You should plan on making or buying a tallit for your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah, as s/he will wear a tallit while leading the community in prayer.
- You may place the tallit upon the child on Shabbat morning and say the blessing together with your child. This will be an opportunity to share your own words of blessing with your child before the community.
- You may also choose to buy tefilin for your child. We hope that your child will wear tefilin as an aspect of his or her Jewish practice.
- You may also choose to purchase personalized kippot.
- Rabbi Berman is available to help you if you need support purchasing tallit, tefilin or kippot.

### **5. KIDDUSH**

- We ask that you sponsor a kiddush in honor of your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah for the full community, including the congregation and your invited guests.
- Please speak with Jean Max, our Office Administrator, to discuss our Kiddush options.
- You can customize the Kiddush with our Ayin Chefs/Sisterhood Designs or an outside Kosher caterer from our approved list. Please ask the office for the contact information. Please also arrange for all deliveries to be made prior to noon on the Friday before the Bar/Bat mitzvah.

## **6. FLOWERS**

- You may make flower arrangements to be placed at the side of the bima in the Sanctuary. You may use any florist, though we do ask that the dimensions of each flower arrangement be no larger than 18 inches wide and two feet high. In addition, please provide 2 arrangements – one in front of each lectern. You may also use flowers as the centerpieces of the tables for the Kiddush. Please arrange for all deliveries to be made prior to noon on the Friday before the Bar/Bat mitzvah.

## **7. INVITATIONS**

- There are many options for invitations, both print and on-line.
- Our Friday evening services start at 6 pm. Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30 and, during Bnei Mitzvah, typically end by 12:30.

## **8. HONORS**

- At a meeting with Rabbi Berman, you will receive a sheet with honors that you may assign to family and friends. Please note you should provide Hebrew names for all those taking an aliyah l'Torah and those lifting or wrapping the Torah.

- If you would like for family members to read Torah or lead another part of the service, please let Rabbi Berman know as soon as possible, but not later than 2 months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

## **9. BOOKLETS**

- You may wish to provide a booklet for your guests sharing the meaning of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process and ceremony. We have a model booklet that you may use and personalize. Alternatively, you may simply print a list of people who have honors. This is optional and totally up to you!

## **10. THE MORNING OF...**

- Arrive by 9:15 am
- Family sits in the three front rows on the right (facing the bima)
- Remind your guests of their honors (Please introduce them to the ushers, who will assist them to know where they need to be and when)
- Please wear a head covering when taking any honor
- Soft candy will be available in baskets for guests to throw after your child reads his/her Haftarah, as we sing and celebrate together.
- In honor of the sanctity of Shabbat, please do not take photographs or use any technology during the service. Shabbat is a time to place technology away and be as present as possible.

## **11. PARTIES**

- You may reserve and rent Reyim's facilities for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah party, including:
  - ✓ Ordis Hall (225 guests for dinner and dancing)
  - ✓ Offit Bet-Am (80 guests for dinner)

- ✓ Lobby (for hors d'oeuvres)
  - ✓ Silver-Shore Hall (90 guests for dinner, 70 for dinner and dancing)
- Please reserve as soon as possible by calling or emailing the office at [office@reyim.org](mailto:office@reyim.org) to avoid any scheduling conflicts
  - The office can also provide a list of approved Kosher caterers. All foods brought into our community must be certified kosher, as provided in our kashrut policy.
  - To arrange for a floor plan and set up, please complete a set-up sheet in the office. Number each table and specify the number of seats at each table and return the sheet to the office at least two weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Please let us know as soon as possible with any special requests.

## **12. TIMING OF DELIVERIES**

- All deliveries of food, flowers or other items must be made by 12 pm noon on the Friday preceding the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- Please do not bring in deliveries or remove items from the synagogue during Shabbat.

## **13. HONORING YOUR CHILD'S SIMCHA (JOYFUL EVENT)**

- There are many ways to honor this special occasion in your child's life. If you would like to make a donation to Temple Reyim, you can:
  - ✓ Inscribe a leaf in our community's Tree of Life. There is a \$350 donation per leaf and/or
  - ✓ Make a donation in your child's honor to any of Temple Reyim funds. Please ask the office for more information.

**MAZAL TOV on this wonderful, joyful occasion in your family's lives. We are here to guide, teach, help and support you during this process and we look forward to doing so together!**

## APPENDIX 1: MITZVAH PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES <sup>2</sup>

This section lists different organizations (listed alphabetically) you can become involved in. You may choose to take on a project that speaks to a particular interest of yours.

- **Adopt-a-Student**

The North American Association for Ethiopian Jews (NACOEJ) works to help Ethiopian Jewry in a variety of ways. For example, NACOEJ matches American students with Ethiopian students and encourages communication between the two in pen-pal format. Additionally, they are able to provide hot lunches for the children in Ethiopia for \$53 per child per year. NACOEJ also sells beautiful embroidered challah and pillow covers made by Ethiopian Jews in Ethiopia that benefit the community.

Contact: NACOEJ at 212-233-5200, [nacoelj.org](http://nacoelj.org)

- **AIDS/HIV Programs**

There are many ways to help with this world-wide issue that is a Mitzvah and a very educational experience. Some ideas include: Reach out to people with aids, write letters to government officials to ensure equal rights for those infected with the AIDS virus, or donate time or money to the prevention and spread of AIDS.

Contact: Sara Crane (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism Commission on Social Action and Public Policy), 212-533-7800 x2614

- **Birthday Wishes**

Birthday Wishes' mission is to provide birthday parties to homeless children. Volunteers may help at a party, donate an item at a party, hold a drive for new toys/ books, host a party, make cards, and help at a fundraising event.

Contact: Rachel Freeman, Volunteer Director.  
[Rachel@birthdaywishes.org](mailto:Rachel@birthdaywishes.org) 866-388-9474

[www.birthdaywishes.org](http://www.birthdaywishes.org)

- **Boston Food Bank**

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<sup>2</sup> With gratitude to Temple Emanuel for providing resources

The Chelsea Community Kitchen strives to provide a weekly meal program of food and services to the needy people of the local community. We welcome volunteers to join our team, working to serve meals.

Contact: Joyce Loïselle [keith\\_jones@bbns.org](mailto:keith_jones@bbns.org) 617-800-2216

- **Causes International - ‘Upcycling – It’s a Mitzvah!’ Kit:** This is an innovative “green” opportunity to partner with Causes International, Inc. to add a ‘double dose’ of tikkun olam to your Bar or Bat Mitzvah:
  - Be a philanthropist! Help your chosen charity, for example any of the charities listed in this Mitzvah Project Manual. You will collect no longer used small and medium sized electronics from family and friends that are then made like new and resold. This raises money for your charity without having to ask anyone for money.
  - Be Green! Do Good! Help protect the environment, people and animals by keeping electronic waste and toxic materials out of landfills.
  - It’s easy! Our complete Upcycling Mitzvah kit has everything you need to succeed. A complete guide including step-by-step instructions, FAQ’s, letters and emails that guarantees your success!

Contact: Anne Lowenthal, [anne.lowenthal@causesinternational.com](mailto:anne.lowenthal@causesinternational.com); 781-444-8800.

Check website for the complete list of devices we accept:  
[causesinternational.com](http://causesinternational.com).

- **Challenge Unlimited Ironstone Farm**  
Ironstone farm is home to Challenge Unlimited, Inc. and Ironstone Therapy, Inc two non-profit organizations established to provide a variety of services for people with and without disabilities, using horses and the wholesome environment of a working farm, while involving people in serving others through volunteering.

Contact: Emily Kimball [emilykimball@challengeunlimited.org](mailto:emilykimball@challengeunlimited.org) 978-475-4056

[challengeunlimited.org](http://challengeunlimited.org)

- **Community Servings**  
Community servings is dedicated to providing free home-delivered meals throughout eastern Massachusetts to people homebound with HIV/ AIDS and other acute life-threatening illnesses, who are unable to shop or cook for themselves. We welcome volunteers in our kitchen M-F 6am-8pm.

Contact: Viral Sheth [vsheth@servings.org](mailto:vsheth@servings.org) ; 617-522-7777 x228  
[servings.org](http://servings.org)

- **Ethiopian Jewry Project**

Approximately 80,000 Ethiopian Jews have immigrated to Israel. They are among the poorest economic groups in Israel and about 60% of them are under the age of 18. You can help these students by collecting and donating needed supplies (a specific list of needed supplies is available). Organized through the Jewish Relations Council.

Contact: Sandra Krumholz, 617-457-8651

- **Family Table**

Over 45 congregations, day schools, and other community organizations have helped collect food for the Family Table food pantry. Every month, Temple Reyim members are responsible for collecting 25 boxes of cereal and 30 boxes of raisins. Your family can help solicit donations and collect soda cans and bottles and redeem them for \$0.05 each at the supermarket. Then, use the money to buy pasta and cereal for the food pantry.

Also, one afternoon a year, Temple Reyim members are asked to help bag the groceries that have been donated by others in our community and deliver the packages to those in need.

Suggested items to collect include:

- Holiday items (Seder plates, matzah covers, graggers, matzah meal, other products, Chanukah candles, etc.)
- Accessories (mittens, hats, socks, etc.)

- **Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy**

This program aims to make a difference in the lives of children and foster a love for reading by tutoring children in grades K-3 at the William Ohrenberger School in West Roxbury. A weekly commitment of 1-2 hours is required. Training is provided.

The following is a list of potential mitzvah opportunities:

Books on tape – Record a children’s book on tape to help bi-lingual students develop their English reading skills. Many kids are not read to at home since their parents don’t speak English. Temple Reyim students would choose one or more books from a recommended list or from one for their favorites (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade books are preferred). They’ll record the book(s) on tape, and then the books, tapes and an inexpensive tape recorder would be packaged and donated to the Ohrenberger. The package would be identified as coming from the Temple Reyim student and his/her family. The student could include a note in the package if he or she wished.

Tutor at After-School Program – Volunteer at the Ohrenberger after-school program once a week, once a month, or on occasional basis. Students could help with homework, read to the children, play games, etc. Contact Tom Regan, director of the after-school program at 617-635-5183.

Table Centerpieces – Use books as centerpieces and donate them to the Ohrenberger library or to a particular grade for distribution to the students in that grade. The JCRC provides bookplates that indicate the donor of the book. If the books are donated to the library, they are set aside in a special area and are identified as being donated by the student and his/her family.

Contact: Joan Beer, 617-969-4137, [beerj@erols.com](mailto:beerj@erols.com)

- **Hebrew Senior Life—Hebrew Rehabilitation Center**

Hebrew Rehabilitation Center is committed to helping provide the highest quality of care and life for frail elderly residents. Volunteers help meet the residents’ physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

Contact: Volunteer Services Department: 617-363-8459  
[hebrewseniorlife.org](http://hebrewseniorlife.org)

- **Heifer International**

The mission of Heifer International is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the earth. Heifer provides livestock and training in animal husbandry and organized farming to help people around the world improve their nutrition and provide a sustainable source of additional income. We have various volunteer opportunities.

Contact: Rachel Brown [rbrown@stoneconsult.com](mailto:rbrown@stoneconsult.com) 508-359-9600  
[heifer.org](http://heifer.org)

- **Horizons for Homeless Children**

Horizons for Homeless Children works with community groups that want to help improve the lives of homeless children and families. Designed for ages 10-13, we will guide volunteers through a series of activities that include educational sessions and service projects. Participants learn to foster a greater sense of community action, leadership and learning.

Contact: Scot Keay; 617-553-5422,  
*skeay@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org*

- **Jewish Community Center - Teens for Tzedek**

TJCC is open to all teens in grades 7 - 12 in the Boston area. Teens for Tzedek is a youth social justice program within TJCC.

Contact: Liana Mitman, 617-558-6512, *tjcc.org*

- **Jewish Family & Children's Service**

We serve delicate populations by offering direct services to individuals with disabilities, couples looking to adopt a child, and people with mental health needs.

JF&CS strives to provide services for people with disabilities and their families that reflect the values of individual autonomy, community inclusion, and care continuity.

Contact: Doreen Cummings *dcummings@jfcsboston.org* 781-647-5327  
*jfcsboston.org*

- **Kippot**

If you are buying special kippot for the day of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, consider buying them from programs that specifically employ elderly or less fortunate people.

Contact: Myriam's Dream, *myriamsdream.org*; Lifeline for the Old,  
*lifeline.org.il*;

Maya Works, *www.mayaworks.org*

- **Literacy Book Drives**

Do you have a favorite book from your childhood? Many children in the Boston area do not have access to books and we can help! Organize a new book drive, give books to a school library that suffers from lack of resources (centerpieces of books replace flowers at receptions and can later be donated), and donate books for children to take to their homes. Organized by the Greater Boston Coalition for Literacy.

Contact: Cathy Schumer, [schumer@comcast.net](mailto:schumer@comcast.net)

- **Match-Up Interfaith Volunteers**

The mission of MATCH-UP Interfaith Volunteers, Inc. is to reduce social isolation, enhance the quality of life, and preserve dignity of older and disabled adults in the greater Boston area.

Contact: Lois Lord Waller, Program Director [jgallagher@matchelder.org](mailto:jgallagher@matchelder.org)  
617-482-1510

[matchelder.org](http://matchelder.org)

- **Mazon, A Jewish Response to Hunger**

Mazon asks that people donate 3% of the cost of an event where food is served. The money is then used to help food pantries and soup kitchens all over the United States.

Contact: [mazon.org](http://mazon.org), 310-442-0020, [mazonmail@mazon.org](mailto:mazonmail@mazon.org)

Send donations to: Mazon 1990 S. Bundy Drive, Suite 260 Los Angeles, CA 90025

- **Newton Food Pantry**

The pantry is open from 1:30-3:30 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month. Volunteers are needed to help sort and shelve donations, assist clients when the pantry is open, and maintain the facility. This project is great to take on during school vacation days. Contact: Jackie Colbey, 617-527-2394

- **Newton- Wellesley Hospital**

The mission of the Newton- Wellesley Hospital is to provide exemplary patient care. Our volunteers provide service to patients or their families in an inpatient setting or outpatient clinic, assist in a clerical or greeter role, and volunteer in one of the hospital support areas.

Contact: [llele@partners.org](mailto:llele@partners.org), 617-243-6048 [nwh.org](http://nwh.org)

- **Parent-Child Home Program in Newton**

Run art material drives or pre-school book drives and contribute the items to the Newton Community Service Center PCHP. The program is

an early education program for culturally diverse families living in Newton, Waltham, Needham and other nearby towns.

Contact: Claire Kushuck, 617-969-5906 x20, [ckushuck@ncscweb.org](mailto:ckushuck@ncscweb.org).  
[PCHPNewton@comcast.net](mailto:PCHPNewton@comcast.net); [ncscweb.org](http://ncscweb.org)

- **Project Ezra**

Project Ezra is the effort of the Jewish community to provide service on Christmas and to enable employees at various service organizations to spend time with their own families. Opportunities include preparing and serving meals at local shelters or churches, visiting nursing homes and preparing and delivering meals to those whom cannot leave their homes. Most tasks involve a commitment of a half-day.

Contact: Joan Katz, 617-332-3564

- **Sunday's Bread**

This is a wonderful community service initiative appropriate for individuals or families with teenage (15+) children. The program serves a mid-day meal on Sundays to homeless people in Boston. The meal is served at the Church of All Nations in Chinatown. Volunteers help set up the dining room, prepare/serve the meal and clean up afterwards.

Contact: Abby Flam, 617-244-0796

- **Walk for Hunger**

Recruit sponsors for the annual Project Bread Walk for Hunger in the spring of 2015

Contact: Howard Zaharoff, 617-332-2895

- **Zoo New England Franklin Park Zoo**

Zoo New England's mission is to inspire people to protect and sustain the natural world for future generations by creating fun and engaging experiences that integrate wildlife and conservation programs, research, and education.

Contact: Alix Marcoux [amarcoux@zoonewengland.com](mailto:amarcoux@zoonewengland.com) 617-989-3746

[franklinparkzoo.org](http://franklinparkzoo.org)

## **Websites for Jewish Social Justice and Social Action**

This section lists websites that may be useful to you. Many of these websites have a variety of projects and different ways to get involved. Check them out there is always a new project to be found!

Jewish Community Relations Council

[jcrcboston.org](http://jcrcboston.org)

Jewish Social Action

[socialaction.com](http://socialaction.com)

Teens for Tzedek

[tjcc.org/tzedek](http://tjcc.org/tzedek)

Chai Kids Bar Bat Mitzvah Projects

[chaiisrael.org](http://chaiisrael.org)

The Hunger Site

[thehungersite.com](http://thehungersite.com)

Tikkun Olam projects

[jgooders.com](http://jgooders.com)

Do One Nice Thing

[doonenicething.com](http://doonenicething.com)

## **APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- **Bar Mitzvah: A Guide to Spiritual Growth by Marc-Alain Ouaknin**
- **Make Your Own Bar/Bat Mitzvah: A Personal Approach to Creating a Meaningful Rite of Passage by Rabbi Goldie Milgram**
- **Jewish Family and Life: Traditions, Holidays, and Values for Today's Parents and Children by Yosef I. Abramowitz, Susan Silverman**
- **Danny Siegel Bar and Bat Mitzvah Mitzvah Book: A Practical Guide for Changing the World Through Your Simcha by Danny Siegel**
- **Putting God On The Guest List: How To Reclaim The Spiritual Meaning Of Your Child's Bar Or Bat Mitzvah by Jeffrey K. Salkin**
- **For Kids - Putting God on Your Guest List: How to Claim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Bar or Bat Mitzvah by Jeffrey K. Salkin**
- **It's a Mitzvah!: Step-By-Step to Jewish Living by Bradley Shavit Artson**
- **Tough Questions Jews Ask by Rabbi Edward Feinstein**