



[info@konabethshalom.org](mailto:info@konabethshalom.org)  
[www.konabethshalom.org](http://www.konabethshalom.org)

## INTRODUCTION TO BAT AND BAR MITZVAH WITH CONGREGATION KONA BETH SHALOM (KBS)

The celebration of your daughter's or son's Bat or Bar Mitzvah is a wonderful opportunity to affirm their Jewish adulthood as they lead their Jewish community in prayer. We love celebrating this *simcha* with you! Your girl or boy is saying for all to hear: "I am a Jew and I'm proud of it. I am ready to begin to act like an adult. I am prepared to take my place among my peers, my parents, my local Jewish community and indeed, the worldwide Jewish community, *K'lal Yisrael*. I hope that my ancestors are proud of me."

Yes, during that Saturday service the boy or girl is called an adult and on the following Monday he or she returns to the seventh or eighth grade, but there will have been a transition. They are now different individuals.

### Background Preparation

A significant part of their intention to become part of the Jewish community is for you, the parent(s) and your child, to attend Shabbat services during the year prior to Bat/Bar Mitzvah. If you are on the Big Island we hope that you will join us in person. When in-person attendance is not possible, join us via Zoom. If you do not live here you may choose to attend synagogue in your own community.

Besides Shabbat services, KBS uses Zoom for Torah study on all other Saturday mornings and for candle-lighting on every Friday evening. As KBS members you too will receive Zoom invitations.

### Here are the Steps to Prepare for the Bat or Bar Mitzvah with KBS:

- If you have not done so, please schedule the date for the Bat or Bar Mitzvah service. Email: [info@konabethshalom.org](mailto:info@konabethshalom.org). Also please complete the [KBS Membership/Application Form](#). If you have not received it, let us know.
- We cannot promise that a date, time or location you request that is different than our regular service is available. If it is different, you will be responsible for additional costs for the location and for bringing our *siddurim*, *kippot* and *tallitot* etc. Since we do not "rent out" our Torah or other items, we consider the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service to be a Kona Beth Shalom service and our membership is invited to join in the *simcha*.
- The Talmud (*Tosepha Brachot 4:1*) tells us: "One should use one's face, hands, and feet to honor one's Creator." Many mainland congregations and families have begun asking Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates to do *zedakah* (social action) or *mitzvah* projects as part of their Bar/Bat mitzvah preparation. Kona Beth Shalom encourages this.

## The Structure of the Service

- Congregation Kona Beth Shalom is not an affiliated congregation. We use a *siddur* based on the "Gates of Prayer" *Siddur*. The style of our service is Reform/Renewal.
- If you wish to arrange tutoring for your child to prepare for their Bat or Bar Mitzvah, please let us know.
- We generally call upon the Bat/Bar Mitzvah to recite or lead the following prayers. If there is more from the Shabbat service that they can lead, they are welcome to do so:

*Natilat Tallit* - The Prayer Shawl prayer

*Shema* - The Hear O Israel prayer

*Ashrei* - Psalm 145

*T'filat Torah* - The prayers recited when called to the Torah

*Kiddush* - The wine prayer

*Ha Motzie* - The bread prayer

- The precise details of what portions of the service your child will lead will be determined by the leader of the service from KBS in collaboration with your child's Bat/Bar Mitzvah teacher and you, the child's parents. The number of lines of Torah to be read depends on your child's skill, interest and ability. Some read or chant just a few sentences of the portion. Others read several paragraphs.
- Most families give their son or daughter their own *tallit* during their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. If you choose to do so, the appropriate time to present that gift is at the start of the service. Let us know if that is your plan.
- The service will be led by a designated member of the Congregation and your child. When it's time to take the Torah from the Ark, you (the child's parents), any grandparents attending, any siblings above the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah and other members of your family, will be invited to the *bima* to pass the Torah *l'dor va'dor* (from generation to generation).
- There will be three to seven *aliyot* during which a short paragraph from the Torah will be chanted. Consider whom in your family you will want to honor with *aliyot*. More than one individual may come up for an *aliyah*.
- Your child will be called to the Torah for the final *aliyah* (the *maftir*). When she or he finishes, the Congregation usually breaks into a spontaneous "*Simen Tov and Mazel Tov*" and throws flowers (instead of candy) at the Bat/Bar Mitzvah.
- Some also read the *Haftarah*. This is welcome but not required.
- After the *Hagba* and *Gelila* wrap the Torah, it's time for the Bat/Bar Mitzvah to offer her or his "*D'rash*" (discussion) about the meaning of her or his Torah portion. This speech usually includes some commentary on what it means to the child to become Bat or Bar Mitzvah and an expression of appreciation and thanks to parents and teachers.
- This is typically followed by the parents' words of pride, love and blessing to the Bat/Bar Mitzvah.
- The service continues to its conclusion (the *Amidah* and the *Kaddish*), and a *kiddush* then follows when we say the blessings for wine and bread.

### Other Information

- It is customary for parents to host *Oneg Shabbat* refreshments immediately following the service, wherever it is to be held. This need not be elaborate. It usually begins with the *kiddush*.
- We request a contribution to our Education Fund when you schedule your child's Bat/Bar Mitzvah with us. Once we understand what the plans are for the event, we notify you about the appropriate amount.
- We do not object to photography or videography during the service as long as it is discrete and does not interfere with the flow of the service.

We are delighted to hear from you and we look forward to sharing your *simcha*. We will shortly send you our **Bat and Bar Mitzvah Request Details Form** to gather needed additional details for us to prepare for the event.

If you have questions, please contact us.

Shaloha,

Dr. Barry Blum, KBS President  
Tel: (808) 326-4192  
e-mail: [bonedoc.bb@gmail.com](mailto:bonedoc.bb@gmail.com)