



Hebrew Congregation of Somers Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah Manual 5783/2022-3

B* Mitzvah is where you can B Yourself

*B Mitzvah, or Be Mitzvah, is a non-binary way to state that we are *being and becoming the mitzvah*.

A B Mitzvah is a moment in the human journey when a person becomes both counted and accountable – in one's family, community, and society at large. We aim to deepen the process of that move toward responsibility and independence through reflection, study, and ultimately, celebration. We offer a program of study and exploration for your family and your child as they navigate their way through the B Mitzvah journey.

This is a time for you and your family to share who you are, to learn more about who you are as a family, and who your child is and is becoming. To discover and connect with prayers and rituals that resonate with your family. We are here to guide you towards connecting deeply with the traditions, rituals and this monumental process.

At HCS, from our youngest students to our madrichim (teaching assistants), we model living a Mitzvah-centered life. The B Mitzvah moment affirms a readiness to take additional responsibility through demonstrating what we have been cultivating all along:

How to explore a personal relationship with Torah:

*How to live our lives through constructing meaning and purpose-reconstructing our Judaism, just as our ancestors did, to meet the needs of our times.

*We seek for joyful Jewish living while we hold the broken tablets in the ark alongside the whole.

To become a Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah is not an end-goal in Judaism and it is not becoming an adult. ;-). Rather, it is a springboard for a life-long endeavor of further study, continued religious, moral, spiritual, and intellectual growth, as well as for the continued participation in the life of the synagogue.

We ask that you purchase Reclaiming Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah as a Spiritual Rite of Passage by Rabbi Goldie Milgram. This is an excellent book that describes the meaning and importance of the Bar/Bat/B mitzvah. We will be using this book as a reference during our B Mitzvah workshops.

All children in the child's Hebrew school class are to be invited to the service and any celebration.

PREPARATION FOR BECOMING A BAR/BAT/B MITZVAH

Scheduling the date

In the summer between fifth and sixth grade, the first step in the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah process begins! Please provide Rabbi Shoshana with your child's birthday and preferred B Mitzvah month. She'll then check to see when he/she turns 13 according to the Hebrew calendar.

Rabbi Shosh will confirm a possible date with you (taking into account holidays, vacations, etc.)

It is the synagogue's policy to schedule b'nai mitzvah only on Saturday mornings.

Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah preparation

Preparation for becoming a Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah falls into six categories listed below:

1. Tutoring with Cantor Ruth
2. Dvar Torah work with Rabbi Shosh
3. Hebrew school attendance and emergent leadership within the Hebrew School community
4. Service attendance
5. Tikkun olam ("mitzvah") project
6. Family workshops

Tutoring

Tutoring sessions take place outside of Hebrew School. Cantor Ruth's tutoring sessions are paid to her directly, in advance, at \$500 per 10 lessons. Typically, twenty half-hour one-on-one tutoring sessions are needed. Occasionally, additional sessions are needed. If more than 20 sessions are needed, they can be added.

Preparing to become Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah takes a lot of time and commitment. Plan to study for at least fifteen minutes per day, six times each week.

Students should begin tutoring between seven to nine months before they are scheduled to become Bar/Bat/B mitzvah. Our experience has demonstrated that the summer months (especially when students are at sleep-away camp, even when Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah tutoring is available) are often less effective learning periods. Students scheduled to become Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah in the autumn should begin working with a tutor in the preceding winter months.

Parents are strongly encouraged to speak or email with Cantor Ruth on a regular basis so that you know how things are going.

The student is expected to chant from the Torah and to assist in leading prayers. We also encourage adult family members (and older siblings) to chant readings from the Torah in honor of this special day. Please let the cantor know if you are interested in doing this.

Special accommodations for children with learning differences

Our community welcomes learners of all kinds. We are committed to creating a meaningful experience for you and your family, and will work with you to find the best way to work with your child. We are blessed to have a small, dynamic and individualized approach to working with our students.

Please contact us so that we can develop a plan together. Please also send us information about any support that your child receives during the school day so that we can do our best to meet their needs.

Hebrew School (Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah preparation)

In grades 5-7, the students will study the structure of the Saturday morning (Shacharit) service. The goal is that they not only learn how to read and sing these prayers, but learn what they mean and how they are relevant to them as modern Jews. They will be given recordings of the prayers for home practice. Hebrew reading skills will also be emphasized. Additionally, they will learn about the Torah and Prophets.

We will provide a prayer mastery chart and each student will have the opportunity to be tested on each of the prayers on the chart demonstrating their knowledge of the prayer's meaning as well as being able to read and lead it when appropriate. This core knowledge acquisition begins earlier on in the educational journey (starting in earnest in grade 3) so if you have joined the school later on,

please consider outside tutoring in order to catch up. This can be discussed with the Educational Director.

We expect that the student will attend at least 80% of each month's Hebrew school classes, both Tuesday and Sunday.

Attendance through the end of the 7th grade year is also expected, even if the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah service occurs before the completion of classes.

Working with Rabbi Shosh

Rabbi Shosh will meet with the student to work on the speech / D'var Torah (analysis of the subset of the portion he/she has chosen to focus on) These meetings will start about 3 months before the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah date at times arranged by the parents and the rabbi. They will not occur during Hebrew school hours.

We encourage you to get involved with this. Communal grappling with the meaning of the Torah portion is a long-standing Jewish practice.

Rabbi Shosh also meets with the family to discuss details of the service, including the possibility of honors, and other related items. An outline of the service will be shared and there is always opportunity to collaborate.

There is a (three minute max) parent blessing as part of the service. Material included below to help guide you. A sibling blessing is also an optional addition to the service.

There is a rehearsal during the week before the ceremony with the rabbi, parents and students to be scheduled about two months before the date. In some cases two rehearsals will be required.

Service attendance

Attending worship at HCS will help you become more familiar with our style of worship and standard melodies. The student will also feel more comfortable when it is his/her turn to lead worship. Service attendance also strengthens our community and will help your family to feel more connected to our congregation.

The final calendar of services will be posted on the HCS website, www.hebrewcongregationofsomers.org The Friday night service starts at 6:30 pm, lasts about 45-60 minutes. The Saturday morning services start at 9:30 am and lasts about two hours.

In order to be prepared for a Bar/Bat/B mitzvah, we expect our families to attend 10 services at HCS in the year leading up to the date. At least 7 of these should be Saturday morning services.

Tikkun olam (“mitzvah”) project

Tikkun olam means “repair of the world” and it is a critical Jewish value. As part of becoming “commandment accountable,” we want each student to pick and then participate in a mitzvah project of personal meaning to him/her. Vicki Prusnofsky, our long-time social action chair, is familiar with many possible opportunities and is an excellent resource. The decision as to what the project will be should be made a minimum of 6 months in advance of the Bar/Bat/B mitzvah. **Jill is the contact person for discussing and approving mitzvah projects as well as mentoring opportunities.**

The Service

Miscellaneous things to know re: in-person services

- The service will start promptly at 9:30 am and last approximately two and a half hours.
- The Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah and his/her immediate family will sit in the front of the sanctuary.
- Though a typical HCS service is informal, a Bar/Bat/B service is a formal service.
- We strongly recommend that you ask one or two members of our HCS community to serve as ushers. They will direct guests to seating and make sure that they have siddurim and chumashim.
- We ask that you let your guests know in advance that photography, videography, and use of electronics (cell phones, etc) is not permitted in the synagogue during Shabbat. All electronics need to be turned off prior to entering the building.
- All guests are encouraged to wear kippot or other head coverings. Tallitot are optional.
- Clapping for a “job well done” is not done during a service
- Throwing candy at the “newly-adult Jew” is a tradition that many families continue. Candy must be soft (no gelatin) and wrapped. You will want to designate one or two people to hand out the candy. Best to use candy with quiet wrappers!

Participation of family and friends

Parents are asked to present their child with a tallit at the start of the service. Jewish family and friends of the family are encouraged to chant from the Torah. This is a wonderful tribute to your child, and shows him/her the family's commitment to hard work. You should contact Rabbi Shosh six months before the service so that she can choose the readings with you.

There is an optional ceremony of passing the Torah from generation to generation. This involves grandparents, parents and the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah.

There are a number of honors that are available for family and friends of the family. These must be confirmed with the rabbi at least two weeks prior to the service.

Honors include:

- Four aliyot (blessings before and after each Torah reading) Family members doing aliyot should be familiar with and practice the Torah Blessings. Non-Jews and children are welcome to come up with the Jewish adult. (The fifth aliyah is reserved for the B Mitzvah!). We can offer up to seven aliyot total.
- Hagbah (Torah lifter, needs some training/previous experience)

Honors more generally available include:

- G'lila (Dressing the Torah)
- Opening and closing the Ark (great for younger children)
- English readings from the Siddur or elsewhere (determined in consultation with Rabbi Shosh)
- Parent and sibling blessings.

Hosting a Kiddush following the Saturday morning service

We expect that the family of the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah will host the Kiddush in the social hall following the Saturday morning service. Cookies, challah etc are the minimum requirements. Many families provide a dairy luncheon.

You will need to work with the caretaker about delivery, set up and clean up.

Contact Oscar at 914 804-3866 or oscar@red-oak.net at least six months before the date. See the separate section "Remuneration of the caretaker."

You will need to provide at a minimum: paper goods and utensils; plastic and hot cups and plastic short (Kiddush) cups; table covers; Kosher wine and grape juice; challah and cake and cookies; coffee and tea, non-dairy creamer and sugar; and cold refreshments

Base your purchases on the number of your guests plus about 20 congregants. All deliveries to the synagogue must be made on Friday prior to sundown; check with Oscar about this.

Please do not use the food from the refrigerator or freezer in the synagogue's kitchen.

Seating in the sanctuary

Depending upon the number of guests at your child's Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah service, additional folding chairs may need to be set up. Oscar will do this but you will need to notify him of the total number of attendees two weeks before the service. Please note that the Sanctuary capacity is 120 people (84 in benches with 36 additional folding chairs).

Remuneration of the caretaker

For a fee of **\$200** payable directly to our caretaker one week prior to the Bar/Bat/B mitzvah, Oscar will do all of the set up and clean up for the Saturday Kiddush. In addition, Oscar can remain in the social hall during the service. For an additional charge- to be determined between you and Oscar- he may be available to assist in other ways. This might include serving a buffet Kiddush luncheon, pickup of food, receiving food and supplies during the week prior to the service, and general last-minute errands.

Financial obligations to the synagogue

The synagogue Board expects that all synagogue dues and Hebrew school tuition be paid prior to the child's Bar/Bat/B mitzvah. Additionally, there is a **\$350** bima fee.

Many families, also, make a donation to one of the synagogue's funds in honor of their child's Bar/Bat/B mitzvah.

Kippot

While not a requirement, many families purchase special kippot (yarmulkes) for their guests. These serve as a commemoration of your family's and the community's special day.

Tallit for the Bar/Bat/B mitzvah

As part of the service, the parents will be asked to present their child with a tallit (prayer shawl.) You need to allow ample time to shop and purchase one. You may decide, instead, to present your child with a tallit that belonged to a close relative.

Commemorative booklets

Commemorative booklets explain the synagogue, the service, a glossary of terms, a summary of the Torah and Haftarah readings, and list of those receiving honors. A personal message from the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah and/or the parents may also be included. You must submit a draft to the rabbi one month prior to the Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah service to avoid factual errors.

Flowers

You are welcome to provide flowers and/or plants for the sanctuary, lobby, restrooms and/or social hall. You may want to consider flowers or plants that the synagogue can use afterward to beautify the grounds after the day of the Bar/Bat/B mitzvah.

The celebration

Not noted above is your need to plan your family's celebration, transportation, invitations, clothes and so on. Please be sure to invite all the students from the Hebrew School class. We have a number of members of the community who can offer advice about the myriad of details that you will want to consider and many suggestions about how you may address them.

B'nai Mitzvah Workshops

Be the Mitzvah! **Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah Family Workshops** *Welcome and open to all!*

Turning thirteen is a pivotal moment in a lifelong process of becoming- becoming compassionate, becoming courageous, becoming who we are. This ten session workshop series is intended to complement synagogue skill development. Students tap into Jewish wisdom and community to harness their unique soul-print and take responsibility for their "Be the Mitzvah!" journey and beyond.

Required book (for purchase)

Reclaiming Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a Spiritual Rite of Passage, Rabbi Goldie Milgram

Description of the Sessions

Session #1 - Setting our Direction for the B Mitzvah Journey

It's not just another test to prep for! The process of creating a B Mitzvah Action Plan (BMAP) increases enthusiasm, reduces conflict, facilitates cooperation and expands the vision of what is possible. Each person in the family becomes directly involved and clear about his or her goals in three essential dimensions of ritual planning - emotional, intellectual and spiritual. (Logistics come later!)

Assignment before the session: Chapter 2 of *Reclaiming Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a Spiritual Rite of Passage* by Rabbi Goldie Milgram

Session #2 - Mitzvah as Love in Action

From head to heart to soulful action, there's a mitzvah for every moment. The spiritual practices known as mitzvot are tools, edifying us in our transition from childhood to the beginning of young adulthood, from living a self to a mitzvah-centered life. You will be matched with a mentor based on your interests to support you to set positive change in motion.

Session #3 - Speak Like Yourself (No, Really!)

Whatever your Torah portion, whatever your personal stories, you're the best person to speak about them on the day of your B Mitzvah in a way that is memorable, actionable and relevant for your guests and participants.

You will learn to:

- Approach the preparation of your Dvar Torah that is personally meaningful, emotionally honest, reflective of ancient stories made relevant for our times
- Connect with your public speaking audience
- Convey the best of who you are

Session #4 - How to Green your Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah

How do you “green” your Mitzvah, and other core teachings regarding the earth and our relationship to it as it relates to becoming a Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah.

Session #5 - How Do People Change

We will apply the core practice of teshuva, returning to our essential selves, today and every day.

Session #6 - Names!

We will explore our Hebrew names + other names we go by. We will also discuss our gender pronouns and Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah.

Session #7- Wisdom Circles

What wisdom do elders, community members, kids and parents bring and what wisdom does Jewish tradition offer for us to help navigate these challenging times.

Session #8 - Gratitude + Blessings

The rabbis taught that we should say 100 blessings a day. We will explore the transformative practice of giving thanks throughout our days and into the night. We will also study the mechanics and mystery of the empowering practice of giving and receiving blessings. This will support both parents’ blessings and children’s blessings.

Session #9 - Tallit Workshop

Bring a 4 cornered garment, and the fringes. We will study teachings about the Mitzvah of Tallit and Tzitzit, share stories about the personal meaning of our tallit, and tie our intentions into the garment.

Session #10 - Sacred Shifts* through Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah Process

In this session, we'll learn together about the transformational shifts that occur between childhood and adolescence. These desirable developmental shifts, once thoughtfully addressed, are likely to increase the quality of the B Mitzvah experience for all involved.

Pirkei Avot 5:21

He used to say: At five years of age the study of Scripture; At ten the study of Mishnah; At thirteen subject to the commandments; At fifteen the study of Talmud; At eighteen the bridal canopy; At twenty for pursuit [of livelihood]; At thirty the peak of strength; At forty wisdom; At fifty able to give counsel; At sixty old age; At seventy fullness of years; At eighty the age of “strength”; At ninety a bent body; At one hundred, as good as dead and gone completely out of the world.

* **B-Mitzvah!™ Sacred Shifts © 2016** adapted by Reb Goldie from *Living Jewish Life Cycle: Creating Meaningful Rites of Passage for Every Stage of Life ©2014* by Rabbi Goldie Milgram rebgoldie@gmail.com | www.reclaimingjudaism.org | 914-500-5696

GOAL: Creating a season of life that helps to transition a youth across the threshold from childhood into young adulthood through a Jewish lens on learning and living

1. Parents shift from taskmasters to empowered family B-Mitzvah team members working as a family/educator team, and the community team where they explore/learn with other families so that they have a B-Mitzvah!™ community.
2. The family begins to appreciate the applications of each others' talents and skills to the B-Mitzvah process through the B-Mitzvah!™ Talents and Skills Assessment experience.
3. Shema. The family shifts from parent-directed planning into collaborative planning by learning and engaging in active listening during the first stage of the Four Worlds B-Mitzvah!™ Planning Process.
4. Formation. The youth and family shift from unconscious journeying into considering how people change as they reflect upon a wide range of parameters of personal change including friendships (who is in the minyan of your life activity), learn and discuss traditional stories (Exodus, Jacob, etc.)
5. The youth and rest of the B-Mitzvah!™ team receive a copy of the Reclaiming Judaism as a Spiritual Practice Venn diagram that shows how Judaism fits together as a coherent system of supportive spiritual practices and discuss and engage in (or adapt) B-Mitzvah!™ activities.
6. The youth and rest of the B-Mitzvah!™ team each take a deck of Reb Goldie's MITZVAH CARDS in hand (these are languaged through a spiritual lens and don't 'dumb the meaning or practices down') and begin their shift from unawareness of the range of Jewish spiritual practices into finding many existing personal connections, ruling out what isn't presently of interest and placing into the hand of the educator/facilitator the practices they want to learn and explore more deeply—as each practice delivers vital nutrients for the soulstream that help people survive and thrive. They also shift from feeling alone to recognizing interdependence, their role in the world, and experience community through their community's B-Mitzvah!™ group which they learn to have each others' backs, and to work together rather than competitively.
7. Youth and the other B-Mitzvah!™ team members shift from literal to metaphorical and midrashic understandings of prayer and Torah as trained educators guide them in exploring metaphors such as cloud (the classic one for teaching metaphor and it goes with Sukkot), stone, water/well, and

associated stories from tradition and then enter into soulful prayer practice of B-Mitzvah!SM identified options for this age group.

8. Parents, youth and educators can be helped to shift from primarily talking *about* G*d to methods to support experiences the divine that arouse yirat haShem (reverence) and ahavat HaShem (love) as nutrients for the soulstream that undergird the entire Jewish spiritual system.
9. Youth unaccustomed to responsibility for major tasks are guided into becoming young adults who are trained, supported and successful in carrying out major life tasks. All adolescent rites of passage have major hurdles that mentored advancement of awareness and skills.

10. Youth discovering traditional interpretations of Torah are also mentored in how to find personal meaning for living through the lens of Torah. See the guide to creating a dvar Torah in Reb Goldie's Bmitzvah book.
11. Disempowered parents who engage tutors shift to being empowered parents who seek out meaning-making mentors including family, friends and Jewish educational professionals trained to work with this age group through a Jewish spiritual lens.

12. Youth move from the 21st century culture of "self" to delighting in to the realization that they are an important part of an amazing "tribe" with a long history, rich, diverse culture, effective spiritual practices for mitzvah-centered living by being exposed to a B-Mitzvah!SM set of cultural images and videos to which they are given dynamic (InterPlayTM) response options.

13. Youth are mentored to engage their talents and learning strengths creatively within B-mitzvah so that they come out as young adults preparing to serve as cultural, political, religious, etc., contributors to the Jewish future.

14. Students who are accustomed to passively receiving information are mentored in communicating meaning to others and step up to the plate during their B-mitzvah process or ritual as empowered first-time teachers of Torah through the lens of their talents and skills.

15. Families accustomed to caterer & DJ driven celebrations often shift to become advocates for renewal of Jewish culture by bringing Jewish artists, maggidim (storytellers), folk dance teachers, *badhanim* (humorists) into the celebratory experience.

B Mitzvah PARENT BLESSING

Rabbi Dianne Cohler-Esses, Romemu

Speaking to your child publicly on the day of their B Mitzvah is a precious moment. Blessing your child at this moment is an opportunity to lift up the uniqueness of your child's character, share your hopes and dreams for your child and emphasize the importance of continuing on their paths of wisdom, community and spirituality in the years to come.

You might want to ask yourself:

- When you think about your child, what thoughts come to mind? What are you most thankful for? What are you most proud of?
- When you think about your child becoming B Mitzvah, what do you feel? What are your thoughts about your child leading services and reading Torah? About your child being "counted" as a Jewish adult?

- When you think about your child’s future in general; what hopes, dreams or wishes do you have for him/her?
- When you think about your child’s future as a Jewish adult, what do you hope for?

Some helpful hints:

- The verbs in blessings are usually done in “may ____ be” construction
- Don’t be afraid to put your hands on the person you are blessing. Physical contact is not only appropriate, but it is also historically proper and very moving
- Don’t be afraid of repeating a phrase (e.g. May God grant you X, May God grant you Y, May God grant you Z...)
- End your blessing with a phrase so that it is known that the blessing is over (e.g. May this be your blessing, And let us say: Amen).
- The most successful parent blessings are written out ahead of time and typically no more than one page per parent

SAMPLE PARENT BLESSINGS

Sample Parental Blessing 1

May you embrace life to the fullest

May you move through your fears and and pursue what you love

May you view this world as a safe place in which to dwell

May you appreciate the extraordinary gifts that you have been given of empathy, kindness, intelligence and beauty

May your sense of humor always be close to you and comfort you through difficult times

May you always remember this extraordinary day - and your Jewish mothers and fathers who came before you and made it possible for you to stand here today as a Jew

May God smile upon you, bathe you in sunlight and embrace you with love

Sample Parental Blessing 2

_____, surrounded by our family, friends and community,

This is the blessing I have for you:

May you have the ability to make your hopes and dreams come true.

May you be blessed with patience and understanding,

With wisdom and compassion, in your mind and heart.

May your deeds support righteousness,

And your goodness serve as an example to others.

May your enthusiasm for learning continue throughout your life,

And bring you great personal joy and fulfillment.

May your eyes shine with the light of the Torah,

And your voice be filled with song.

May your Judaism not be just something inherited, but something to be discovered and explored.

Mazel Tov

Sample Parental Blessing 3

With tremendous joy and pride;

In the presence of God, friends, family, clergy and congregation;

We offer you this blessing, _____;

On this day of your B Mitzvah:

May your sensitivity to others less fortunate compel you to act on their behalf in the spirit of Tikkun Olam, repair of the world.

May your love of learning inspire you to seek knowledge and engage in the exploration of Torah.

May your passion and enthusiasm propel you to spread joy and hope and possibility to those whose lives you touch.

May your spirit of adventure lead you to fully experience all that life has to offer.

May your self-confidence and determination fortify you in times of uncertainty.

May you take the gifts and talents that you have been given and make the world a better place for all.

May you always remember this special day and cherish the memory of your Jewish ancestors who came before you and made it possible for you to stand here today with pride in being a B Mitzvah.

Together: We love you, _____.

Sample Parental Blessing 4

Together: *Baruch ata Adonai shepetarani me'onsho shel zeh.*

(Praised be Adonai who has freed me from responsibility for this child.)

Mother: _____, a few months ago you asked me what I expect of you in life. Then you said "And don't quote Plato!" Well, I won't quote Plato. But I will paraphrase Hillel. I expect one thing of you, and that one thing is to treat all people the way you wish to be treated.

Father: But a blessing isn't just what we expect of you. It's also what we wish for you. So here it is.

Mother: _____, May you continue to be the wonderful person you already are.

Father: Intelligent and inquisitive, healthy and humorous, creative and confident, honest and loyal, and responsible. You have an acutely tuned sense of fairness.

Mother: You also have the wonderful ability to say "I love you." Hang onto that one especially!

Father: _____, May you have companions throughout your life who love and appreciate you for who you are, who honor your values, and who are there for you when you need them.

Mother: May you help create home and community wherever you go.

Father: May you help to make the world a more just and peaceful place. May you do all the things you want to do, not all at once, but with enough time and space around them to fully experience and appreciate each one.

Mother: May you find spirituality on your own terms.

Father: May you be successful, as you define success.

Mother: And most of all, may you have joy, not all of the time, but enough of the time to feel that life is a wonderful gift.

Together: _____, thank you for being one of the brightest lights in our lives. We're proud of you, and we love you. Mazel tov.

Sample Parental Blessing 5

My blessing for you.

Be interested in everything. Be curious, explore, adventurous, drink in everything, have fun but also be serious. Make a difference. Don't sit back and watch, go for it, take risks, be involved, help other people, help this planet. Honor your Jewish heritage and traditions. Have a purpose in life. Let me say that again: have a purpose in life. Your

purpose gives meaning to your life. May you pursue justice and be a blessing to others. May you feel passionate about the social injustice in this world and may you do your part in helping to repair the world. May you continue to study Torah to help shape you into a better human being. May you love reading and read many books. May you be not just smart, but become wise. May you look beyond the surface of things. Life is about making choices. May you have the courage and good judgment to make good choices in your life.

I love you.

Sample Parental Blessing 6

Here is the blessing Bob Dylan wrote for his son, recorded in 1974. If you'd like to listen to it you can go to this link: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xs13ou_bob-dylan-forever-young_music.

Forever Young

Bob Dylan

May God bless and keep you always
May your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
And let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.
May you grow up to be righteous
May you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you
May you always be courageous
Stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.
May your hands always be busy
May your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful
And may your song always be sung
May you stay forever young
Forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young

Addendum

1. Security. Please provide a list with the names of the guests (who are not members of the HCS community) prior to the bar/t mitzvah. Bob Fischer or someone else from the HCS community will be standing outside with the list and will admit only those names on the list.
2. Vaccinations. All attendees over the age of 5 years old must be fully vaccinated (including boosters). The family is fully responsible for vetting the responses from guests, preventing non vaccinated guests from attending, and ensuring the safety of all in the sanctuary.
4. Masks/spacing. We require masks (n95/kn95) Stay aware of emails that come from HCS regarding masking policies, etc. Zoom is always an option for guests who can not be in person.
5. The bima. People who have honors and the B Mitzvah student does not need to mask on the bima.
6. Kiddush. Our current policy is to only offer outdoor kiddush gatherings for B Mitzvahs.
7. We ask that families invite an HCS member(s) to serve as ushers. This can be the previous or the upcoming B Mitzvah for example or a synagogue regular... or both! It's an honor and a mitzvah...