

## **B'nei Mitzvah Honors**

*B'nei Mitzvah* families often give *aliyot* (honors) to friends or family who are not Temple Emunah members. In some cases, we have found that a lot of time may have passed since these guest received an honor. While what follows may be self-evident to many of these guests, in other cases it could be very useful. Sharing the appropriate sections would also help to ensure that the service proceeds smoothly. Please share the relevant information with your honorees well in advance of your celebration. Any questions can be directed to the *gabbai* for your Shabbat.

### **Opening the *Aron haKodesh* (the Ark)**

The Torah scrolls are housed in an ornate cabinet at the front of our sanctuary. Despite their beauty and size, the doors of our *aron* glide gently. They are “pocket doors,” which slide open, and pulling on one door opens them both. Please take care when opening them. In order to show respect and attention to the Torah, it is customary not to turn one’s back on the scrolls while the doors are open.

### **Carrying the Torah for the Procession**

The floor *gabbai* will signal you to come to the front of the sanctuary at the beginning of the Torah service. You should stand with, but to the side of, the group in front of the ark (the rabbis, president, *gabbai'im* and service leader) when the scrolls are removed. After the *sh'liah tzibbur* (service leader) sings the verse “*gad'lu Adonai . . .*” and bows toward the *aron* (ark), you should step forward to take the scroll. You will lead the procession to your right (facing the congregation) out the right-center aisle (in between the right-most section of seating and the right center section) and then back the center aisle. (On the procession after the reading of the Torah, the procession goes out the left side, and back the center.) Please be aware that the bar or bat mitzvah and the rabbis and president will follow you and will greet congregants. This often slows the pace.

When you return to the *bimah*, the *gabbaim* will be waiting for you and will assist you placing the scroll on the reading table.

### ***Kri'at ha'Torah* (Torah Reading)**

Hearing the words of the Torah is a central moment in our prayer service. Reading from the scroll requires a high degree of skill and planning. It is our expectation that those chanting the Torah portion will read from the scroll itself with the appropriate *trop* (melody). In order to ensure the quality of this central piece of our service, all guests of Temple Emunah who intend to read Torah will be contacted by a member of our Religious Committee in advance to provide any assistance and assure their readiness.

### ***Aliyot* (Blessing the Torah Reading)**

A few minutes before your *aliyah*, the “floor *gabbai*” (someone from Temple Emunah who is the guides the flow of the service) will escort you to the front row seats to the right of the Reading table. When it is your turn, the *gabbai* standing on the left side (when facing the table from the congregation) of the Reading table will call you up by your Hebrew name, starting with the word, “*Ya'amod*” (male), “*Ta'amod*” (female) or “*Ya'amdu*” (plural) which means “Arise!” You will then go up, and stand behind the

Reading table to the right of the Torah reader. The Torah reader will point to the word where s/he is about to read. It is customary to touch your *tzitzit* (the corner fringe of your *tallit*) to the word and kiss the *tzitzit* before beginning your blessing. (A *tallit* will be provided for this purpose by the calling *gabbai* if you are not wearing one. We encourage, but do not require, women to wear a *tallit* when approaching the Torah for an *aliyah*. Women who choose not to wear a *tallit* may hold it while touching the Torah scroll. The reader will then close the Torah and step aside. While you are holding on to the *eitz'im* (wooden handles of the scroll) recite the blessing. The blessing will be printed in large type on a laminated card that will be on the Reader's table. There will also be a transliteration of the blessings. If you need help, the *gabbai* will be there to assist you.

Please note that if two people are sharing an *aliyah*, we ask that one person recite the beginning blessing and the other the concluding blessing. This ensures that the congregation hears the blessing clearly.

While the Torah is being read, please follow along. After the Torah reading, again touch your *tzitzit* to the word where the reader stopped (s/he will point to it) and say the concluding blessing while again holding the *eitz'im*.

When you have finished, please take a few steps to your right and stand next to the calling *gabbai* throughout the next *aliyah*. When you are done, please walk up to the *bimah* in order to shake hands with the rabbis and synagogue president. As you then return to your seat, many people will shake your hand and wish you “*Yasher Koah*” (“May you have strength”). The traditional response is “*Barukh Ti'hiyeh*” (“May you be so blessed”).

### **English Reading**

When you come up to the *bimah* to read a prayer in English, please step up to the lectern on the right of the sanctuary. There is a small step riser behind the lectern available for anyone who would like added height.

### ***G'lilah***

After the Torah scroll is lifted and displayed to the congregation, it is dressed by the *golel/et* (the person doing *g'lilah*, or rolling the Torah). Once the *magbiah* (lifter) is seated, help her/him roll the scroll more tightly. It is customary not to touch the parchment of the scroll with your hands. The scrolls are then tied with a belt – with the opening facing the *magbiah* (front of the scroll). The Torah scroll is then dressed with its cover: the wood handles must be passed through the top of the cover. The *yad* (pointer) is placed over one of the handles. The *magbiah* or *gabbai* will then take the scroll.

The *gabbai'im* will assist you throughout this.