

מִשְׁכַּן
Temple Chai



Mishkan Mitzvah

מִשְׁכַּן מִצְוָה

My Name: _____

My Bar/Bat Mitzvah Date: _____

My Torah Portion: _____

My Haftarah Portion: _____

My Hebrew Name: _____

As I begin the B'nai Mitzvah process, I am most nervous about:

I am most excited about:

*These are the obligations without measure,
whose reward, too, is without measure...*

Mazel tov to you and your family as you embark on this wonderful journey toward becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah!

In addition to preparing for the service by mastering the prayers and chanting from our sacred scriptures, a huge component of entering this new stage of your Jewish life is engaging in mitzvot: our sacred obligations.

The teaching below outlines ten responsibilities that our sages have deemed to have special honor. It is our hope that this text can help you connect more to the Jewish tradition as you engage in your mitzvah activities.

These are the obligations
without measure, whose reward,
too, is without measure...

To honor father and mother,
to perform acts of loving-kindness,
to attend the house of study daily,
to welcome the stranger,
to visit the sick,
to rejoice with the wedding couple,
to bury the dead,
to pray with sincerity,
to make peace when there is strife.
And the study of Torah is equal to them all
because it leads to them all.

אֱלוֹ דְּבָרִים שְׂאִין לָהֶם שְׁעוֹר,
שְׂאָדָם אוֹכֵל פְּרוּתֵיהֶם
בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהִקְרוֹן קִיּוּמָת לּוֹ
לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן:
כְּבוֹד אָב וְאִם,
וּגְמִילוּת חֲסָדִים,
וְהַשְׂכַּמַּת בֵּית הַמְּדֻרָשׁ
שְׁחָרִית וְעֶרְבִית,
וְהַכְּנֵסֶת אוֹרְחִים,
וּבִקּוּר חוֹלִים,
וְהַכְּנֵסֶת כְּלָה,
וְלִוְיַת הַמֵּת,
וְעִיּוֹן תְּפִלָּה,
וְהַבְּאֵת שְׁלוֹם בֵּין אָדָם
לְחֵבְרוֹ.
וְתִלְמוּד תּוֹרָה כְּנֶגֶד כָּלֶם.

To honor father and mother (appreciating your family)

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Ask your parent(s) to teach you something about Judaism
- Do something you do not ordinarily do to be helpful in the house
- Make calls or visit with a grandparent whom you do not regularly see
- Create a family history or genealogy
- Go through family photographs or videos with a parent and hear stories about people you do not know
- Talk to your parent(s) or grandparent(s) about their lives when they were your age

Your activity:

Why did you choose this activity?

What did you learn from this experience?

How will you perform this type of mitzvah in the future?

To perform acts of loving-kindness (and giving tzedakah)

1. Research a charity that supports a cause that is near and dear to your heart and
 - Contribute your own money to this charity as *tzedakah*, or
 - Hold a fundraiser and donate that money to the charity
2. Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:
 - Visit a retirement home and spend time with the residents
 - Ask your guests to bring a donation to the service like canned goods, clothes, school supplies, etc. that you can deliver to a local agency
 - Clean out your drawers and closets and donate clothing and/or toys
 - Volunteer at an animal shelter or another place that addresses a need

Which organization did you choose and why did you choose it?

How much did you donate to the organization?

How can you continue to help this organization and/or its cause?

What other activity did you do?

What made you choose this mitzvah?

What did you learn about yourself while doing this mitzvah?

How can you continue to help this organization and/or its cause?

To attend the house of study daily (participating in the congregation)

1. Fulfill your religious studies requirements, which include Religious School, Hebrew School, 7th Grade, and Individual Tutoring
2. Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:
 - Come to a special Shabbat or holiday service you have never attended before, like S'lichot, Sukkot, or MLK Shabbat
 - Participate in a youth group event
 - Attend a social or social action program at Temple Chai
 - Volunteer your time at Temple Chai (ask Charla for suggestions)

What are four things you have learned so far in religious school?

1. 3.
2. 4.

In what ways do you apply some of these things you have learned in your life?

What other activity did you do?

What did you learn about your congregation from this experience?

Why do you think it is important for Jews to be members of a congregation?

To welcome the stranger (practicing hospitality)

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Invite guests to a Shabbat dinner, Seder, or other holiday at your home
- Make a special effort for three days to be friendly to a new student in your class and introduce that person to your friends
- Volunteer to call a new Temple Chai member to welcome them into our community
- Volunteer to serve as an usher or greeter for a Shabbat service

Your activity:

Why did you choose it?

How did you feel as you performed this mitzvah?

When have you felt like a stranger? Did anyone make you feel welcome?

What are some other examples of how we can be welcoming to others?

To visit the sick

(caring for those who are ill)

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Make a get-well card for someone who is ill
- Cook a meal for someone who is ill
- Help a classmate who is ill by bringing homework, messages, and other things they need between home and school
- Raise money and/or awareness about a particular disease or illness and research to find a cure
- Write a prayer for someone who is ill and share it with them

Your activity:

Why did you choose it?

What was the reaction of others as you performed this mitzvah?

What did you learn about yourself after performing this mitzvah?

Why do you think this type of mitzvah is so difficult for some people to do?

To rejoice with the wedding couple (celebrating joyous life cycle events)

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Ask your parent(s) to tell you about your baby naming or brit milah
- Write a letter of congratulations to a couple who is about to be married (ask Charla for names if you do not know anyone who is engaged)
- Look at a wedding album or video of a friend or family member and learn about that special day
- Interview an older sibling or relative about their memories of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience
- Attend a life cycle event of a friend, relative, or community member

Your activity:

Why did you choose it?

What did you learn about yourself or your family while doing this mitzvah ?

Why do you think it is important to celebrate life cycle moments?

To bury the dead (and comforting the mourner)

1. Reflect on your Circle of Life Experience from 6th Grade
 2. Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:
 - Attend a shiva or minyan service at a house of mourning
 - Write a condolence note to someone who has recently lost a loved one
 - Ask your parent(s) for your family's Yahrzeit dates and attend Shabbat services on those weeks to honor the memory of those who have died
-

The name of your Circle of Life child:

What do you know about this child (where and when was s/he born, what was life like for him/her)?

Why did you choose this person?

Why is it important to remember those who perished in the Holocaust?

What other activity did you do?

Why did you choose this activity?

How did you feel as you were engaging in this mitzvah?

To pray with sincerity (engaging in worship)

1. Attend at least three (3) Shabbat services with your family and at least two (2) B'nei Mitzvah services in the same time slot as your service (these services should be at Temple Chai).
 2. Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:
 - Write a paragraph on the meaning of your favorite prayer and how it relates to your life
 - Say the Sh'ma at bedtime for an entire month
 - Recite the Motzi before meals for an entire month
 - Create a prayer for peace
 - Create a piece of art that represents your favorite prayer
-

What are some of the things you noticed at the services you attended?

Why do you think prayer is important to the Jewish people?

What other activity did you do?

What made you choose this mitzvah?

When is it easy to pray, and when it is hard to pray?

*To make peace when there is strife
(being a force for good)*

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Listen to a friend who is upset and try to help them feel better
- For two days, work on only speaking well of others and avoiding gossip
- Defend someone who is being teased
- Include someone in your group of friends who is usually excluded
- Write a letter to our President or to the Prime Minister of Israel about why peace in Israel is important to you
- Choose an issue close to your heart and contact an elected official to share your views

Your activity:

Why did you choose this activity and how did it feel to perform this mitzvah?

What was the reaction of others as you engaged in this mitzvah?

What do you think are the most important skills necessary to make peace?

*And the study of Torah is equal to them all
because it leads to them all*

Choose at least one of these activities or create your own:

- Pick a Jewish book to read and make it a practice to read it for at least 15 minutes each day
- In order to develop your own Jewish library, add at least three Jewish books to your personal collection (and read them)
- Research a topic about Israel and write a report or make a PowerPoint presentation
- Visit the Holocaust Museum with your family
- Create a fact sheet about a Jewish holiday
- Visit www.myjewishlearning.com or www.israel21c.org and learn about a topic of interest

Your activity:

Why did you choose this activity ?

What was the most interesting thing you learned from this activity?

How can you share this knowledge with others?

What are some other mitzvot that your studies have inspired you to do?

Personal Reflections

Which mitzvah activity was the most....

Fun: _____

Important to you: _____

Surprising: _____

Difficult: _____

Meaningful: _____

Pick two of these mitzvah activities and explain why you felt that way.

1.

2.

Certificate of Achievement

This certifies that

**has successfully completed *Mishkan Mitzvah* of Temple Chai.
You have fulfilled this discovery of the sacred obligations of a
Jew, and we look forward to many more years of learning and
deeds as you continue your Jewish journey.**

מזל טוב!

RABBI

RABBI

CANTOR

DATE

For more information about *Mishkan Mitzvah*, please contact Rabbi Baden at ibaden@templechai.org or 847-537-1771.

Please remember to bring your completed booklet to your appointments with the Rabbi Hart and Rabbi Baden.