



Bet Aviv

The Meeting House
5885 Robert Oliver Place
Columbia, MD 21045

BET AVIV B'NAI MITZVAH POLICY – June 2015

Introduction

Bet Aviv's primary role is to serve the needs of adult Jews in our community. In recent years, some families have expressed an interest in having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah for a young family member at Bet Aviv. The policy outlined below was developed to address the needs of these families in keeping with Bet Aviv's mission.

Scope

This policy only addresses B'nai Mitzvah of children, ages 12 – 16 years. We recognize that some children may have disabilities that prohibit them from being able to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah by age 16. In these instances, requests for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah for a disabled child over age 16 will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah are not covered by this policy. For guidance on adult B'nai Mitzvah, please refer to the Ritual Committee.

Definitions

A Bar Mitzvah is a Son of the Commandment and a Bat Mitzvah is a Daughter of the Commandment. B'nai Mitzvah are Children of the Commandment and the collective term, B'nai Mitzvah or B'nai Mitzvah ceremony, will be used throughout this policy statement unless there is reference to a single Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

Congregant - For the purpose of this policy a congregant is a person or family that has been a dues paying member in good standing of Bet Aviv for at least three years prior to the anticipated Bar/Bat Mitzvah date of the child in question. "Good standing" means there are no dues, other than for the current year, owed to Bet Aviv.

Child/Children of a congregant – For the purpose of this policy, a child/children of a congregant is defined as a child/children under the age of 16 years, living with the congregant who is: 1. The natural parent, stepparent, or adopted parent of the child/children; or 2. The legal guardian of the child/children. In all cases, the child/children must have their primary residence be with the congregant.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Children of Congregants - A child/children of a Bet Aviv congregant can become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at a regularly scheduled Bet Aviv service in Oakland Mills Interfaith Center (OMI) at no cost to the congregant. Bet Aviv will not provide religious education, preparation, or tutoring for the B'nai Mitzvah. It is the congregant's responsibility to secure these services. Bet Aviv can serve as a resource for referral to other institutions that provide the requisite services.

Grandchildren of Congregants – Bet Aviv does not offer any services for grandchildren of congregants but may be able to suggest other resources to the grandparents. If the congregant is

interested in using OMI as the venue for their service, the congregant can rent the facilities at Bet Aviv's rates, but at the congregant's expense. The congregant is responsible for contracting directly with OMI for the use of the room of their choice.

Congregants wishing to have Bet Aviv clergy perform the B'nai Mitzvah service are free to contact them for a fee-for-service arrangement based on the rate set for clergy by the Baltimore Board of Rabbis. A donation to Bet Aviv's general fund in honor of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah, while not required, would be most appropriate and highly appreciated.

If the Rabbi and/or Cantor agree to a fee-for-service arrangement and OMI is the venue, then the following conditions for the service applies:

1. Based on availability at OMI, the family can rent the room(s) at their expense.
2. All necessary arrangements for rental and room set-up would be made with OMI, Bet Aviv and the family of the congregant, at the congregant's expense. Congregants should be aware that they may need to rent a sound system for use during the service.
3. If the Service takes place on a Saturday morning, the service is to begin at 10:00 a.m. The service can only be scheduled on a Saturday morning immediately following the Friday of a Bet Aviv service. (Second and fourth Fridays in January, February, March, April, May, June, September and October. First and third Fridays in November and December.) If the Service takes place on a Friday evening it can only be scheduled on the Friday night immediately before a Bet Aviv Saturday morning service that takes place approximately four times a year. Services are not to be scheduled in July or August.
4. B'nai Mitzvah families are responsible for acquiring all religious items for the religious service to take place including, but not limited to: Ark, Eternal Light, Torah scroll, Torah crowns, Torah pointer, dais for Torah reading, yalmulkahs, tallisim, prayer books, bimah cover, Kiddush cups, American and Israeli flags. If the congregant desires to borrow any of the above items from Bet Aviv, all such arrangements for the usage of said items are to be made with the Bet Aviv President or the President's designee.

Children/Grandchildren of Non-members – Bet Aviv does not offer any services to non-members.

Responsibility

Bet Aviv will only pay for costs as outlined in this policy. All other costs are the congregant's responsibility.