



An Ever-widening Circle

Congregation Kehillath Israel

A Visitor's Guide To Our Service



Bar Mitzvah of Sam Roffman

פרשת וישב

November 23, 2013 -- 20 Kislev, 5774

Welcome to our Guests!

Welcome to our Shabbat service! We are honored that you are joining us this morning as Sam is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah. We hope this guide will help you understand and enjoy today's service.

What is a "bar mitzvah"? In Jewish tradition, a bar (or bat) mitzvah is an important coming of age rite. The term "bar mitzvah" means "son of the commandment." Under traditional Jewish Law, children are not obligated to observe formal religious rules in the same way that adults are. Becoming a bar or bat mitzvah marks the assumption of that obligation when a Jewish person becomes fully responsible for his or her own religious duties.

A bar mitzvah ceremony is part of a regular Jewish Shabbat service. For some of our guests, a Jewish Shabbat service may be unlike most things you experience in your daily life. You will see people standing, sitting, swaying, bowing, and chanting. These are all attempts to connect with God through prayer. You will hear music and melodies you may not have encountered before. Some of these are centuries old; some were written last year.

Don't worry about following along with every word of the service. We invite you to relax and experience the service in any way you would like. You can appreciate the aesthetic experience of watching, listening, and experiencing the prayers around you and the community that you are among during this morning's service. Know that no one is judging you, wondering what page you're on, or trying to ignore you. We welcome you to our Congregation and hope that your energy will join with those around you to contribute to a joyous service.

A few things to note:

- Electronic devices are **not permitted** in the synagogue during Shabbat. Please turn off all cameras, phones, tablets, etc. If you need to take a call, we ask that you please step outside the building.
- Men and women are invited to wear yarmulkes. Blue yarmulkes celebrating Sam's Bar Mitzvah are available in a basket outside the sanctuary. Many Jewish men and women also wear a tallis, a Jewish prayer shawl, while in the sanctuary, but doing so is entirely optional.
- Our services are participatory; they are not a performance. Feel free to get up, walk around, and come in and out as you please. We ask only that you be considerate of others when you do so.
- You are encouraged to sit and stand according to your own customs and preferences. Feel free to watch folks around you for cues.
- Periodically, the page number for the green prayer book will be posted on a stand at the front of the room. If you are unsure of what page we are on, please feel free to ask your neighbor for help in finding the page.

Thank you and welcome to KI!

Guide to our Shabbat Service

Preliminary Service

You may have noticed that the service was already underway when you arrived. Don't worry, you weren't late! Some congregants began the Shabbat services at around 8:45 am this morning with the "Pesukei DeZimrah", meaning "hymnal verses," or preliminary service. In Jewish tradition, the purpose of Pesukei DeZimrah is to give praise and thanks to God prior to the traditional morning service. This morning, the Pesukai DeZimrah is being led by Congregation member Emily Fishman.

Morning Service

The second part of today's service is called the Shacharit. The Shacharit starts with a call to prayer, called the Barchu. Then, the Congregation recites the Shma, which is a proclamation of Judaism's essential beliefs. Next, the Amidah, meaning "standing," is the devotional center of the prayer service. The Amidah is first said in silence and is then repeated by the Shaliach Tzibur (the prayer leader) for the benefit of those unable to read it. The Shacharit is being led this morning by Congregation member Emily Fishman.

Torah Service

After the Shacharit, Sam will lead the Congregation in a Torah service. "Torah" means "teaching of God" and it is the handwritten parchment scroll of the five books of Moses. Each Shabbat, a portion of the Torah is read. "Haftorah" refers to the biblical writing of the prophets, which are also read each Shabbat. The Torah service begins with the opening of the ark and a celebratory procession of the Torah to the bimah (pulpit). Eight readers will chant parts of the Torah portion, with Sam chanting the final part. The Congregation will recite a blessing before and after each reading. Between the seventh and eighth reader, the Rabbi will offer a prayer for the ill. All participants in the service will have an opportunity to provide names of any family or friends for whom they would like to offer a prayer of good healing. Members of Sam's family will also be honored by Sam with special roles during the service, including leading prayers before and after the Torah readings, opening and closing the ark, and dressing the Torah.

After Sam chants from the Torah, he will offer a "Dvar Torah" to the Congregation. A Dvar Torah is a talk about today's Torah portion and how it relates to the lives of Sam, his family, and our community. Following Sam's Dvar, he will chant from this week's Haftorah portion. The Rabbi and his parents will offer blessings for Sam, and the Congregation will say prayers for the Congregation, Country, and Israel. The Service then concludes with Musaf, which includes additional prayers and songs, and is being led by Congregation member Lauren Koenig-Plonskier.

Kiddush Luncheon

At the conclusion of today's Service, the entire Congregation and all our guests are invited to a Kiddush Luncheon in Epstein Hall. The luncheon is served buffet style with open seating. The Jewish custom is to recite the Kiddush prayers over wine and bread before taking food from the buffet. When you enter the Luncheon hall, take a cup of wine or grape juice, but please do not take food from the buffet until we have recited the prayers.

Today's Honors

This morning, Sam is honoring the following people during the service:

Ark opening: Melvin and Milo Chen, Sam's uncle and cousin

Prayers before and after the Torah readings:

1st aliya: Congregation member

2d aliya: Congregation member

3d aliya: Eric and Dorothy Roffman, Sam's grandparents

4th aliya: Jack Goldberg and Trudy Wood, Sam's grandparents

5th aliya: Sue Goldberg, Sam's grandmother

6th aliya: Evan Lindeman, Sam's friend

7th aliya: Ian and Jennie Roffman, Sam's parents

8th aliya (Maftir): Sam Roffman

Lifting and Dressing the Torah: Karin Roffman and Sharon Roffman, Sam's aunts

Prayer for Country: Jon Goldberg, Sam's uncle

Ark opening: Claire and Michael Goldberg, Liz O'Donoghue, Sam's aunt and cousins

Ark opening and Adon Olam: Eli and Zachary Roffman, Sam's brothers

About Congregation Kehillath Israel

Congregation Kehillath Israel of Brookline, Massachusetts began as a small collective in 1911. Land was purchased in Brookline, Massachusetts for the development of the Synagogue and Hebrew School. The first High Holy Day services were held in the Synagogue in 1924, and in 1925 the building was formally dedicated with Rabbi Louis M. Epstein installed as Rabbi. Rabbi Epstein led the Synagogue until his retirement in 1947. Rabbi Judah Nadich succeeded him until 1957, when Rabbi Manuel Saltzman was installed. Since 1995, the Synagogue has been under the leadership of Rabbi William Hamilton.

Congregation Kehillath Israel is a warm, vibrant and inclusive community committed to enriching Jewish life. Our members are from all generations and a variety of backgrounds, striving together to create a sacred space that welcomes God's presence as we pray, study, and serve together. We welcome everyone and invite you to help build our community.

Congregation Kehillath Israel's commitments to education and Jewish tradition have thrived for more than 90 years. We are proud of the more than 60 rabbis and professional educators that have grown up in our community over the years. We strive to continue to strengthen our bond with Israel, provide first-rate learning experiences, and enable congregants from all backgrounds to experience the holiness of prayer.

KI's role as a bedrock of the Boston Jewish community has led us to the forefront of religious egalitarianism – with a strong commitment to women's full participation in all of our services. Our historic position enables us to communally host many events and lectures of timely concern to the wider region. Our past is rich in decades, personalities, and stories. Our present brims with content, connections, and cause.

