

“The world stands on three things: *Torah* (study), *Avodah* (worship) and *G’milut Chasadim* (acts of loving kindness).” – *Pirke Avot 1:2*

This program, *Ma’asei Mitzvah* (*Mitzvah* Makers), was created to enhance your *bat/bar mitzvah* experience. What an exciting time in the lives of everyone in your whole family! Your *bar/bat mitzvah* preparations require you to demonstrate an awareness of becoming a more responsible young adult by making conscious Jewish choices. Participating in this program allows you many opportunities to make great choices. You will also be able to feel personally rewarded while incorporating more or new *mitzvot* into your life.

First, sit down as a family and read through this material, noting what is interesting to you. ***Ma’asei Mitzvah* is made up of three categories: *Torah*, *Avodah*, and *G’milut Chasadim*.** Usually, you need to choose three *mitzvah* projects from each of the categories (totaling nine) plus four *mitzvah* projects which can come from any category (totaling thirteen). Some students put a great deal of on-going effort into one or more projects which can result in having less than a total of thirteen. Each student’s experiences should be as individual as they are. We encourage those who want to customize their *mitzvah* projects in a slightly different way from what is outlined here. Feel free to discuss your ideas with Mrs. Bernstein, your *mitzvah* mentor.

You are most likely already fulfilling *mitzvot* and may just not realize it! When you and your family meet with Mrs. Bernstein, she’ll help you to create your own unique action plan. You might even choose to include projects which involve your family and friends also!

In the fall of 6th grade, you will attend a program with your family where you will learn about *Ma’asei Mitzvah* and receive this booklet. About six months before your big day while meeting with Mrs. Bernstein, you and your family will have the chance to discuss projects you may have already done or are working on. Next, you will make an outline for other projects you would like to do. This is how you’ll create the action plan mentioned earlier. As you complete projects, be sure to fill in a reflection sheet (the forms are included in this packet). You should try to complete your projects a few weeks before your *bar/bat mitzvah* ceremony. When they are completed, please give your reflections back to Mrs. Bernstein who will share them with the Rabbi and Cantor. Remember, the most important experiences you stand to gain from this program will be your continuation of always making *mitzvot* part of who you are!

Suggested *mitzvah* projects are on the next pages. Remember that these are **only** suggestions.

You can find additional ideas on these websites:

Areyvut – B’nai Mitzvah

www.areyvut.org/Resource/bneimitz.asp

Bar Mitzvah and *Bat Mitzvah* Planning & Resource Guide

www.bnaimitzvahguide.com/projectideas.php

My Jewish Learning.com – How to Choose a *Mitzvah* Project for a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*

www.myjewishlearning.com/lifecycle/Bar_Bat_Mitzvah/InPractice/PuttingtheMitzvahBack/ChoosingTzedakahProject.htm

Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism- Listing of project ideas

http://rac.org/social/chair/mitzvah_days/ideas/

We are here for you! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us!

Best of luck!



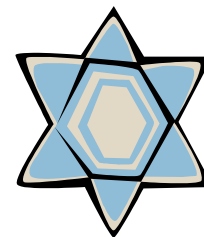
TORAH װרן, - STUDY



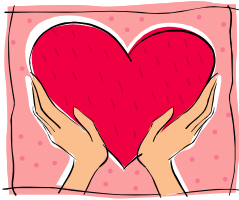
- Explore your torah portion and write a *d'var torah*.
- Research your family tree and prepare a report of your ancestors and their Jewish experiences (where did they come from? did they go to a synagogue?)
- Find the Hebrew/Jewish names of all the people in your family (grandparents included) and why they received that name (i.e. who they were named after, why that name was chosen for them).
- Investigate a Jewish topic of interest and write a report (i.e. historical event, hero, Israel).
- Research your *Torah* and *haftarah* portions and find the connection between them.
- Create an artistic interpretation of your torah portion (i.e. the breastplate for the *Torah*, a painting, drawing, or poem).
- Write a report about the most interesting thing that you have learned in religious school and what you would like to study post-*bat/bar mitzvah*.
- Become a peer tutor.
- Research the ritual of *bat/bar mitzvah* and write a report.
- When you perform acts of loving kindness, research the *mitzvot* they fulfill.
- Teach your parents something new about Judaism that they did not know before.
- Learn a new way of observing a Jewish holiday and do it.
- Help someone who is in need of a little extra Hebrew practice.
- Volunteer to read to younger students or to be read to by younger students.
- Raise your own awareness about supporting a variety of causes with **no need to contribute money!** Go online to <http://www.thehungersite.com>. Look at the tabs along the top and find 1 or more causes that are of interest to you. This also falls into the *g'milut chasadim* category!
- Increase your knowledge in one or more areas by going to the following website: <http://www.freerice.com>. Once there, you can learn by answering questions. Each time you provide the correct answer to a question, sponsors donate rice to the United Nations World Food Program. This is another mitzvah that fits into the *g'milut chasadim* category as well.



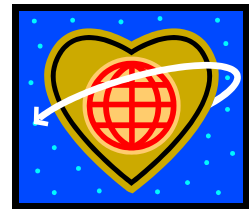
AVODAH וְשׁוּחַ
- WORSHIP



- Attend 3 Friday evening services and 3 Saturday morning services at Temple Emanu El.
- Attend services at another congregation and write a brief report about how they are similar or different from services at TEE.
- Write a creative prayer.
- Write an essay on the meaning of your favorite prayer.
- Create a new melody for a prayer and record it.
- Light *Shabbat* candles and make *Kiddush* every Friday for one month.
- Learn how to say a prayer in sign language.
- Learn NFTY tunes for two prayers.
- Attend a Jewish life cycle event of a friend or relative and write a report.
- Research how your way of praying is similar or different from your parents' way of praying when they were 13 years old.
- Lead your family in a home ritual (i.e. *havdalah* service).
- Attend a *shiva minyan* with your family.
- Put up a *mezuzah* on your bedroom door and hold a ceremony for your family. You can get a *mezuzah* hanging service from the religious school office.
- Say the *Sh'ma* and *V'ahavta* every morning when you wake up or every night before you go to sleep for a month.
- Set aside personal prayer time every day.
- Learn the blessing for seeing a rainbow and recite it every time you see a rainbow for a month.
- Learn *Birkat Ha-Mazon* (Grace After Meals) and recite it after one meal each day for one month.



G'MILUT CHASADIM οησξφ ,υκηνδ
- ACTS OF LOVING KINDNESS



- Volunteer at a local agency (talk to Mrs. Bernstein for suggestions).
- Make a monetary donation to a national or international organization (see suggestions in this packet).
- Call local agencies and find out what products they need. Ask your *bar/bat mitzvah* guests to bring a donation to your ceremony. You can even include your request with the invitation.
- Make centerpieces or decorations with items that can be donated (i.e. nonperishable food, sporting equipment, books, baby items, school supplies).
- Do a fundraiser (i.e. sell goods, bake sale, wash cars, walk-a-thon) for a worthy cause. Be sure to research the organization you wish to fund very well or select one that is listed on the JGooders or jchoice websites:

<https://www.JGooders.com/>

<http://www.jchoice.org/>

- Participate in the *Mazon* Program (Jewish Response to Hunger) by donating a percentage of the cost of your *bat/bar mitzvah* celebration.
- Contact Hillel Foundation (216-231-0040) and see if there are students who would like to join a family for any of the Jewish holidays.
- Invite members of the congregation (especially new members) to your home for *Shabbat*. Plan a nice evening together.
- Make crafts that you can donate (i.e. flower arrangements, door hangings, blankets, sun catchers) to local agencies.
- Participate in the annual “Jewish Garden” beautification or a park/river clean up.
- Purchase your *bat/bar mitzvah* needs (*kippot*, *tallit*, gifts) from *Yad L’Kashish* – Lifeline for the Old, an agency for the elderly in Israel.
- Do a *Yad Sarah* (an agency for the aging and disabled in Israel) *chesed* project.
- Donate your hair to Locks of Love, Wigs for Kids, or *Zichron Menachem*.

SOME NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROJECTS YOU MAY LIKE TO INVESTIGATE AND/OR SUPPORT

A Package from Home
www.apackagefromhome.org

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org

AMIT
www.amitchildren.org

Anshe Rachamim
www.feedrussianjews.com

ARZA: Association of Reform Zionists of America
www.arza.org

CHAI – Concern for Helping Animals in Israel
www.chai-online.org

COEJL: Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life
www.coejel.org

The Great American Bake Sale
www.greatamericanbakesale.org

INTRA – Israel National Therapeutic Riding Association
www.intra.org.il

Jewish Braille Institute of America
www.jbilibrary.org

Jewish National Fund
www.jnf.org

Kids for Kids
www.kidsforkids.net

Kids Wish Network
www.kidswishnetwork.org

Magen David Adom
www.magendavidadom.org

Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger
www.mazon.org

North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry
www.nacoej.org/bar

Table to Table
www.tabletotable.org.il

Soccer for Peace
www.soccerforpeace.com

Society for the Protection of Land in Israel
www.aspni.org

Struggle to Save Ethiopian Jewry
www.studentstruggle.org

Women of Reform Judaism
www.wrj.rj.org

Yad L'Kashish (Lifeline for the Old)
www.lifeline.org.il

Yad Sarah
www.yadsarah.org

Zichron Mecaheem
www.zichron.org

SOME ADDITIONAL WEBSITES YOU MAY FIND HELPFUL:

<https://www.JGooders.com/>

<http://www.jchoice.org/>

**MA'ASEI MITZVAH – MITZVAH MAKERS-
REFLECTION PAGE (YOU'LL NEED TO ANSWER THESE FOR EACH OF YOUR MITZVAH PROJECTS).**

Category:

Name of *Mitzvah* Project:

Describe what you did for your *Mitzvah* project:

Why did you choose to do this *Mitzvah* project?

What did you learn from doing this *Mitzvah* project?

How did doing the *Mitzvah* project make you feel?

What effect did this *Mitzvah* project have on others?

MA'ASEH MITZVAH – MITZVAH MAKERS

What *Mitzvah* Projects would you like to do?

TORAH



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

AVODAH



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

G'MILUT CHASADIM



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

YOUR CHOICE

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

MITZVAH MENTOR'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____