



Temple Chayaí Shalom B'naí Mitzvah Handbook



*You will need this booklet from now through your
Bar/Bat Mitzvah service; please save it.*

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INTRODUCTION:

Shalom! You are entering an exciting and enriching time in the life of your family. Your child will soon be preparing to become a Bar or Bat Mitzvah: responsible for the commandments, an adult in the eyes of the Jewish community.

We hope that the information in this booklet will help clarify the procedures, requirements, responsibilities, and expectations involved in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process.

At Temple Chayai Shalom, the public celebration of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is an honor offered by the congregation to eligible individuals, as outlined in this booklet. The continuity of the Jewish people depends on a knowledgeable and committed Jewish community. SULAM, our congregation's educational program, supports the development of Jewish identity and builds connections among participants and a sense of belonging in Jewish community. SULAM fosters spiritual growth. In addition, SULAM enriches participants' lives with exploration of Torah, values, tradition, and culture, making Judaism a part of their everyday lives.

All Jewish children 13 years old are eligible to be considered for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. For our purposes, a child is Jewish who has at least one Jewish parent, as long as the child has been raised as a Jew and lives his/her life as a Jew.

The family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate must be members of Temple Chayai Shalom in good standing, according to the financial policies for Bar/Bat Mitzvah as established by the Board of Directors.

The Ritual Committee of Temple Chayai Shalom publishes this booklet to clarify the procedures and responsibilities for Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates and their families. We hope that it is helpful. Please feel free to contact the chairperson of the Ritual Committee or the Rabbi with questions.

TIMELINE/PROCESS:

Late Fall Grade 5: On the Road to Bar/Bat Mitzvah:

Assigning Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service Dates:

Late in the fall of the fifth grade, parents will receive correspondence from the congregation with general information about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process, a list of possible Bar/Bat Mitzvah service dates, and a questionnaire, which will be used to determine Bar/Bat Mitzvah service dates for the class. The questionnaire will give families an opportunity to request dates, as well as to share information about the number of anticipated guests and information relative to the potential pairing of classmates.

Many Shabbatot are available for services in the morning or afternoon. Date assignments are made by a small committee appointed by the Ritual Committee. They will do their best to honor individual requests, but unfortunately, they may not always be able to do so.

If the number of children in a class permits and enough dates are available, one child will be assigned to a date. Please understand that if a new family joins the congregation at a later time, their child may be scheduled with yours to share a date for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. There are also occasions when two children from the same family (siblings or cousins) are paired for the same date.

We will confirm your date once the process has been completed. Once the date has been assigned, no changes will take place without the permission of the Rabbi. Once the date has been set, the family may begin to plan the service and the reception.

Grade 5 & 6: Continuing the Journey to Bar/Bat Mitzvah - Family Workshops:

A series of Bar/Bat Mitzvah family workshops will be held and will be an opportunity for prayer, learning, and community building. Pertinent information about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience will be discussed and distributed. Many of your questions will be answered at this time.

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Tutor Assignments:

We are dedicated to ensuring that the preparation for your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service is a positive experience for everyone involved. The tutor will be an important connection between the congregation and your family and will be the primary teacher leading up to your special day. We are lucky to have incredibly talented and dedicated tutors to work with your child.

Most students begin their preparation to lead the service, including the study of their Torah and Haftarah portions, with a private tutor at least nine months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service date. They usually meet with the tutor once a week and may add sessions as they get closer to the date of the service. The decision on when to begin lessons with the tutor is a collaborative one, made by the parent, the Rabbi, the Cantorial Soloist, and the tutor.

The student's fluency in Hebrew, his/her knowledge of the morning prayers, his/her individual learning style, and the demands of his/her schedule all need to be considered when planning the tutoring process. In the fall of the sixth grade, you will receive a questionnaire that will help us match your child with the best possible tutor. We will take into account your child's schedule and your family's geographic preference. Once your child has been assigned to a tutor, please contact the tutor directly to schedule your appointments.

There is a uniform fee for the 45-minute lessons that is set annually by the Board of Directors and billed by the congregation.

Tzedakah and Class Gift:

In honor of your child becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, it is traditional to make a donation to the congregation. In recent years, classes have chosen to present a group gift. As a class, you might wish to choose a parent representative to coordinate a B'nai Mitzvah class gift. If your class chooses to donate a group gift, a "wish list" may be requested from the president(s) of the congregation. All items to be donated must be approved by the Board of Directors, and anything for the sanctuary must first be approved by the Ritual Committee.

We also encourage families and their children to remember those who are not as fortunate as they are by giving a donation to a charitable organization.

12-18 Months Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

At this time, families often begin to make plans for the celebratory meal following the service. Congregants are welcome to host a kiddush luncheon at the temple.

We take our kashrut policy seriously; it is included at the end of this booklet on page 15. If you need some guidance, we encourage you to ask the Rabbi or the chairperson of the Ritual Committee.

9-12 Months Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Meet Tutor:

The student begins to meet with his/her tutor to begin individual preparation of the Shabbat morning or afternoon service, including Torah and Haftarah portions. To begin, students will read their Torah portion in English and work with the tutor to choose a section that is meaningful to him/her.

The student is encouraged to lead as much of the service as possible. The Torah and Haftarah readings and individual prayers are to be chanted in Hebrew. Recordings of the prayers and individual portions will be provided to you.

Plan Guest List:

As you begin to plan your guest list, please know that, in keeping with the Jewish values of community and hospitality, it is the policy of Temple Chayai Shalom that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates invite all of the students in their Hebrew School class to both the service and the reception. To help you do this, we will provide a class list. We encourage all students to attend their classmates' services and celebrations as a demonstration of their support and commitment to each other. In addition, it is also our practice to invite the student's tutor and their significant others.

Clothing:

During this time period, it is common for families to start to plan their clothing for this special occasion. We ask that you and your family be mindful of appropriate dress for the sanctuary. Short skirts and bare shoulders are not appropriate, and all men, regardless of religion or age, are asked to wear a kippah as a head covering.

We encourage all families to attend other B'nai Mitzvah services while you are planning your special day so that you can observe what other families do.

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2-3 Months Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Student Meets with Rabbi to Prepare d'var Torah:

The Rabbi will be in touch to schedule several meetings with the student. The student and Rabbi will study the texts together. The student will write and share a d'var Torah, a learning or insight that s/he has gained based on the Torah text studied, as well as a brief introduction to the Haftarah.

Student Meets with Cantorial Soloist:

Once your child knows the assigned Torah and Haftarah portions, he/she will meet twice with the Cantorial Soloist to polish the chanting and bimah presence. If a meeting needs to be cancelled, please give at least 48 hours notice.

Honors (includes Torah Honors and English Readings):

Because we wish to help you include people who are important to you in order to make your day as meaningful, inclusive, and joyous as possible, there are certain honors that are available to give out at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. Please see an outline of the honors policy on page 16).

The Rabbi will guide you on what roles may be taken by those who are and those who are not Jewish. Reciting the blessing before and after the Torah reading, as well as lifting and dressing the Torah, are reserved for those of the Jewish faith. (All Jewish adults with Torah honors are expected to wear a tallit.) Other honors include opening/closing the ark and English prayers. The Rabbi will provide a list of suggested prayers, and will also review any others that you may like to include. The Rabbi will also provide you with a form to complete, indicating whom you choose to honor at the service. This form should be returned to the Rabbi one month before the service.

Kippot and Tallitot:

We have kippot available, and you may also provide personalized ones. Jewish guests over the age of 13 are encouraged to bring and wear a tallit. We do not have sufficient tallitot for the whole congregation.

Bimah Decorations:

If flowers or other arrangements for the bimah (such as a basket of food to be donated) are desired for the service, the family provides them. We recommend that your arrangements not utilize fragrant flowers, as some people are allergic. Please contact the temple office to arrange for delivery of the items.

Board of Directors Representative Contact:

During this time period, the Board of Directors Representative for your specific Bar/Bat Mitzvah service will be contacting you to introduce him/herself and answer any logistical questions you may have.

Ushers:

You are going to be very busy on the morning of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. It is necessary to ask for help with certain tasks. Consequently, each family assigns two adult ushers, who are temple members. Families in the class often help each other out by serving as ushers for one another. They will greet guests, pass out books and programs, direct seating arrangements, and maintain decorum in the sanctuary. They are also responsible for returning the books, kippot, and tallitot to their respective storage places after the service.

Ushers are also asked to set up and clean up the Kiddush that follows the service. This includes setting up food in the lobby or multi-purpose room, clearing any unused food, wiping down tables, and taking trash to the dumpster. Please do not leave any food in the kitchen. Take it home and enjoy it!

4 Weeks Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Programs:

The Ritual Committee has prepared a booklet that includes an explanation of the service for those who are unfamiliar with Jewish customs and practices. In addition, some families choose to create a personalized program to be given to each member of the congregation attending the service. If you wish to produce your own, please share a draft with the Rabbi at least four weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. Please do not print the final copies until approval has been provided by the Rabbi. If you are sharing a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service with another student, we ask that you create one program for everyone. This program may include a letter of greeting, a list of honorees, and additional selected readings.

Multi-Purpose Room Set Up Requests:

If you plan to use the multipurpose room before or after the service, you will need to provide details on how you would like the room arranged within 3-4 weeks of the event. You will be contacted by your Board of Directors Representative to confirm these details. The B'nai Mitzvah fee set annually by the Board of Directors includes the use of the multipurpose room.

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If a family is having a tent and needs tables and chairs set up outside, the family is responsible for making all arrangements; i.e., to rent tables and chairs or to pay someone at the temple to set up and break down anything used in a tent. The maximum size tent allowed is 30 feet by 30 feet and must allow a safe traffic flow around the temple building.

It is the obligation of the family to ensure that the entire facility (including the sanctuary, multipurpose room, kitchen, and classrooms) is in order at the conclusion of the event and that trash has been placed in the dumpster, unless other arrangements have been made.

2 Weeks Before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Parent Blessing:

Parents will have the opportunity to offer a blessing for their child at the service. You may wish to start working on your blessing. Guidelines will be provided by the Rabbi.

Candy:

As a sign of a joyous celebration, it has become the custom at TCS to toss soft candy toward the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child. Certain parameters have been established to protect individuals and the facility. TCS will provide the candy to be tossed by those guests sitting in the first few rows.

The Ritual Committee reserves the right to disallow the throwing of candy if it appears that the safety of the people in the sanctuary or the protection of the premises cannot be guaranteed.

Responsibilities for the Kiddush:

Families are expected to provide and host a Kiddush (grape juice, challah, and/or other refreshments such as small pastries) following the service. The food for Kiddush may be as simple as challah and grape juice, or as elaborate as a whole meal. This is up to you. Families must provide their own paper goods, including tablecloths.

Week of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service:

Final Walk-Through and Photography:

The final walk-through for the whole family will take place in the sanctuary with the Rabbi, usually on Thursday afternoon. Pictures may be taken at the walk-through or before the service on Saturday. Please note that on Saturday, the Torah may not be undressed for the purpose of photos. If the family chooses to take pictures on

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Saturday, the family should make appropriate arrangements with the Board of Directors Representative to open the temple early for pictures to ensure the temple is open and available for their family and photographer. No photos may be taken during the service.

The congregation has provided a list of rules for photographers and videographers. Please give this to your vendor, so that there are no surprises.

Delivery of Food or Flowers:

Kindly coordinate any deliveries of food or flowers with the office.

Friday Night: Erev Shabbat:

Having your family come to services that night is a great way to spend quality, sacred time together, as well as to take a moment to pause and reflect before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. As part of the service, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah will lead a prayer that has been previously selected in coordination with the Rabbi. This also allows your child to be on the bimah in front of a congregation prior to the actual Bar/Bat Mitzvah service.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service Day:

Before the Shabbat service begins, a video camera may be set up in the Rabbi's office. It may not be moved during the service.

Unless other arrangements have been made, the Board of Directors Representative will open the temple 90 minutes before the start of the service, at the family's request.

Mazel tov! Sit back and kvell!

REQUIREMENTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND POLICIES:

Religious School Education

New Attendance policy adopted by the school committee August 2016:

At Temple Chayai Shalom, we place a high value on learning and being part of a learning community. Consistency and participation are very important to a child's educational success, and to their ability to connect with others and develop relationships with classmates. We appreciate that 21st century life is busy, with competing priorities for time and resources. Choosing to belong to a temple shows your commitment to Jewish community and continuity, and we want to partner to make this relationship work and be positive for you and your child. To that end, we strive to offer choice for weekday Hebrew instruction, as well as work through conflicts as they arise. We believe in maintaining high standards of excellence in our educational program, both in Hebrew and Judaic studies, which partly depends upon excellence in attendance.

Expectations:

Children in grades 2-6 are expected to attend all weekday and Sunday sessions regularly, missing no more than 3 total sessions (weekday & Sunday) each semester. Students in grade 7 are expected to attend all Tuesday sessions regularly, missing no more than 2 sessions each semester. Students who miss class will be expected to complete make-up assignments as appropriate. Parents of students who miss in excess of 3 sessions (or 2 in 7th grade), in a given semester, will meet with the Director of Congregational Learning and Rabbi to discuss the reason for the chronic absenteeism and consider options. Options can include, but are not limited to, independent study, paid tutoring at parents' expense, and delayed B'nai Mitzvah.

Shabbat Service Attendance

Attendance and participation at Shabbat services is a proven way for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and family to become part of the community, to become familiar with services at TCS, and to develop their own spiritual sense. It is expected that the student and the family will attend at least 5 services during 5th grade, at least 6 services during 6th grade, and at least 7 services during 7th grade. We strongly recommend attendance at as many Shabbat morning services as possible.

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Synagogue Life

We encourage students to be fully involved in life at Temple Chayai Shalom. This includes participation in special congregational programming, as well as in our youth group activities. Similarly, we encourage parents to take advantage of the many spiritual, social, and educational opportunities our synagogue offers.

A student who has attended a non-congregational religious school or one who has had no formal religious training:

We affirm the importance of congregational membership in order to instill Jewish identity. Thus we expect,

- The family of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidate will become participating members of Temple Chayai Shalom for two years prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. This includes attending services and becoming involved in congregational life.
- The candidate will attend a minimum of two years of formal education at Temple Chayai Shalom, supplemented by tutoring, as necessary.

Tutoring Policies:

The Board of Directors has established the following policies regarding Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutoring in an effort to make this experience fair and equitable to both you and your child's tutor.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Please provide the courtesy of at least a 24-hour notice. This allows your appointment time to be made available to someone else. If your appointment is missed without prior notification to the tutor, or is cancelled within less than 24 hours of the scheduled appointment time (with the exception of emergencies), you will be charged the full tutoring session fee.

LATE ARRIVAL AND NO-SHOW POLICY

It is important for all students to arrive and depart their session on time to assure a full 45 minutes of tutoring. Fees are calculated according to the times stipulated in the schedule.

No adjustment can be made for time lost because of late arrival by the student. You will be required to pay the FULL AMOUNT of the session. Late arrivals sometimes can't be avoided, but the session won't be prorated. The tutor will wait up to 15 minutes past the appointment time before a student will be considered a No-Show.

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CANCELLATION OF LESSONS BY TUTOR

The tutor may cancel lessons by giving 24 hours prior notice to the parent, in which case no fees will be incurred. The tutor will reschedule the appointment at a time agreeable to both parties.

ANNUAL ADDENDUM:

Policy Regarding Temple Financial Obligations

The Board of Directors has established the following policies regarding a family's financial obligations to Temple Chayai Shalom.

Tutoring Sessions

Tutoring is a very personalized process. While the average number of tutoring sessions per child is generally 36, your child may require fewer sessions or need additional sessions, based on the tutor's recommendations. Because the temple pays the tutors directly, each family will be billed a one-time charge for tutoring services approximately one month before tutoring begins. It is based on the estimate of 36 sessions at a rate of \$50 per session (or a total of \$1,800). The balance will be adjusted accordingly if the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student requires fewer or additional tutoring sessions.

Tutoring charges may be paid, in advance, either in a one-time payment or monthly via check or credit card as part of your normal payments to the temple. In order to process your payments, please fill out the attached Tutoring Payment Selection form that gives us the authority to charge an account or identify a date that each payment will be made. Please see dates below when full payments of all temple financial obligations are due.

Our financial policy requires families to be in good financial standing. Your TCS account must be current including dues, fees, and tutoring charges. The Treasurer and/or a Co-president, if need be, will notify the tutor and the family if tutoring is to be suspended. We will not compensate the tutors for sessions provided to families who are not in good standing.

If you are having financial difficulties, please contact our bookkeeper, at 508-238-6385 or finance@templechayaishalom.org, or the temple Treasurer, at treasurer@templechayaishalom.org, about your account.

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Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service Dates between July 1st and December 31st:

- It is critical that all tutoring fees be current since tutoring will be suspended to those in arrears more than 45 days.
- Families are required to pay a minimum of 50% of this fiscal year's annual commitment and religious school fees no later than seven days prior to the event. Any past due amounts must be paid in full.
- The remaining 50% must be paid by credit card over the remaining five-month period (January to May) in five equal installments.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service Dates between January 1st and June 30th:

- Families will make normal payments throughout the year (monthly, quarterly, or annually). However, your total balance will be due no later than seven days prior to your event. It is critical that all tutoring fees be current since tutoring will be suspended for those in arrears more than 45 days.

Note: The final Bar/Bat Mitzvah walk-through/rehearsal scheduled prior to the event will not take place unless full payment has been received as per the TCS policies detailed above.

Fees:

The Board of Directors of Temple Chayai Shalom has established a usage fee for all B'nai Mitzvah families to cover cleaning and set up inside the temple building of \$250 per family for a partnered B'nai Mitzvah or \$300 for a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This fee will be on your invoice the year of your simcha.

KASHRUT POLICY (approved by Temple Chayai Shalom Board 4/13/11)

The kashrut policy of a congregation not only deals with the food that is served, but, just as importantly, it speaks to the values of the community. Temple Chayai Shalom is built on the traditions of the Jewish people, and food has always played an important role in Jewish ritual and celebration. Food connects us to our ancestors, to holidays, and to one another.

Jewish eating customs assert the holiness of food and guide us as we determine what we eat. This Kashrut Policy of Temple Chayai Shalom is meant to be inclusive of all people by offering a kosher option and by excluding such serious allergens as peanuts.

We support Israel by serving Israeli products when appropriate; we support the ethical production of food; and we recognize the need for educating our members about this policy.

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Inside the TCS building, we maintain a dairy facility. If a family wants to serve a meat meal in the temple building, that meal must be kosher. For specific guidelines, please check with the Rabbi, the president of the congregation, or the Ritual Committee chairperson.

INFORMATION ON HONORS

Mazal Tov as you enter this exciting time! By the time you are looking at this document you are likely thinking about and planning the details for the day of your child's bar/bat mitzvah.

We receive many questions regarding roles that families and friends might take during the service. Here are a few items to take into consideration. Any thoughts and plans should be discussed with your tutor and/or the Rabbi and will need to be coordinated with the family you are partnered with (if applicable).

Honors

Adult Jewish family and friends may:

- Be called to the *bimah* for an *aliyah* – please obtain full Hebrew names
- Read from the Torah (discuss this well in advance with the Rabbi)
- Open the ark
- Lift the Torah (*hagbah*) *
- Dress the Torah (*gelilah*) *

Note: all Jewish participants (over bar/bat mitzvah age) are requested to wear a *tallit* when they are on the *bimah*. All men and women are encouraged to wear a kippah (yarmulke).

* *Video instruction is available to assist/demonstrate these honors.*

If a parent is not Jewish:

- May stand with Jewish parent/partner when he/she is called to the *bimah* for an *aliyah* (prayer before and after the Torah reading)
- May stand with Jewish partner when the Torah is passed from generation to generation (Midor L'dor)
- May walk in procession when the child carries Torah around the sanctuary
- May deliver parents' speech or blessing
- May read an English passage or poem

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- May open the ark
- May participate in presenting the tallit to son/daughter

If a Grandparent(s) is/are not Jewish:

- May participate in presenting the tallit to the child
- May walk in procession when the child carries the Torah around the sanctuary
- May read English passage or poem
- May open the ark

If a relative or friend is not Jewish

- May read English passage or poem
- May open the ark

Children who are relatives or close family friends may:

- Help to pass out candy
- Dress the Torah (*gelilah*) (Jewish family only – older children only)
- Open the ark (older children only)

Temple Chayai Shalom Photography Guidelines

Pictures and video on Shabbat (Friday and Saturday) or Holiday evenings:

Pictures may be taken in our building and on our grounds before sunset on Friday and before evening services have begun. On Saturday, pictures may be taken in our building and on our grounds until 30 minutes before the start of the service. Please remove all photography equipment within one half hour of the start of the service.

Video

- With advance permission, a video camera may be set up in the Rabbi's office, and should be in place within 30 minutes of the start of the service. The camera is not to be moved during the course of the service. The videographer will be asked to leave the office 25 minutes before the service start time so that the Rabbi can use the office to meet with the family. He/she can return as the service is about to start.
- Please remember that you are in the Rabbi's office and treat the Rabbi's property with respect.

Pictures in the Sanctuary

- Please do not open the ark or touch the Torah scrolls. The Rabbi or a board member will take a Torah scroll out of the ark for photos.
- If it is a shared Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, there may be another family taking pictures as well; please plan accordingly.
- Please do not stand on the furniture.
- The microphones on the podium are fragile; please handle them gently.
- If you move anything, please make sure that it is back in its original location at the start of the service.

Out of respect for our customs, male photographers and videographers are requested to cover their heads while in the building. Kippot are located in the lobby.

If photographs are going to be taken during the week, the sanctuary space has to be reserved in advance. Please contact the TCS Office for availability. A board member or the Rabbi must also be available to assist the family.

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B'nai Mitzvah Tutoring Payment Form

Names of parent & student: _____

Tutoring costs will be billed on one invoice and are made to tutors for each session, therefore payments should be made in advance. If you currently have temple charges billed to a credit or ACH debit you may use the same card for tutoring charges.

Section 1 – Payment frequency – choose one option

- One tutoring payment – will be charged before first tutoring session Monthly payments

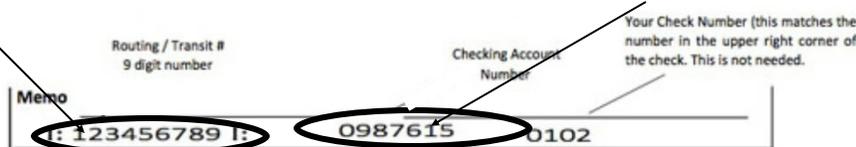
Section 2 – Form of Payment – choose one option

- ACH Debit** (automatic checking account transfer) - payment will be automatically withdrawn from your checking account by the last day of the month (**There is no charge for this.**)



Bank Name _____ Bank Phone _____

Routing Number _____ Checking Account Number _____



Please go to Section 3 - ACH Authorization Next

- Personal Checks** – due by the last business day of the month in the temple office

- Electronic Bill Pay / Online Banking** - must be received electronically by the last business day of the month

- Credit or Debit Card** – we will submit your card for payment on the last business day of the month (**Please Note This Change: a 3% convenience fee will be charged.**)

Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Holder's Name _____ Acct Number _____

Expiration Date _____ CVV Number _____ Zip Code _____

Please go to Section 3 - Credit Card Authorization Next

Section 3 – ACH Authorization

I authorize Temple Chayai Shalom to submit an ACH Transaction to my bank account . I agree that this authority will remain in effect until I submit a written notice to terminate my authorization.

Date _____ Name of Member (please print) _____

Signature of Checking Account Holder _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Section 3 – Credit Card Authorization

I authorize Temple Chayai Shalom to submit a charge to my credit card account. I agree that this authority will remain in effect until I submit a written notice to terminate my authorization

Date _____ Name of Member (please print) _____

Signature of Credit Card Holder _____

Telephone _____ Email _____