

FAQs for Kol Ami B'nai Mitzvah Service and Celebration – July 2013

The following are a list of frequently asked questions by families who are planning to celebrate a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. In addition to reviewing this document please review the *Kol Ami B'nai Mitzvah Policy and Expectations* (2013 revision) and several related documents referred to within the FAQs. All documents you will need related to B'nai Mitzvahs are on the Kol Ami website. Please feel free to contact the Children and Family Programs and Services volunteer chairperson and other Kol Ami families who have previously celebrated a Bar or Bat Mitzvah for more information.

Q: What has to occur/who do you need to speak with when you want to set the date for your B'nai Mitzvah?

A: Please review the *Kol Ami B'nai Mitzvah Policy and Expectations* (2013 revision) for details. You will find a timeline towards the end of this document. Approximately a year or so prior to the desired date of your celebration talk with the spiritual leader of your choosing to secure a date. If you want to reserve the UUCA sanctuary and/or Fellowship Hall (room across from the sanctuary) prior to locking in a date contact the Kol Ami administrator who will in turn contact the UUCA. Once you are certain that your spiritual leader and the UUCA are available, advise the current Ritual Committee chairperson so your celebration can be added to the Kol Ami master schedule.

Q: Who and how do you need to work with the UUCA if this is where you choose to have your service and celebration.

A: Once you have chosen a date with your spiritual leader and secured the UUCA (if that is your chosen venue), you will be asked to sign an agreement with the UUCA for use of the facility. You will be asked to sign this about 2 months before your event. This agreement will be sent to you directly from the UUCA administrator (Barbara Gilligan). It is important that you and your guests to understand the guidelines for use of the UUCA facilities. It is particularly important for you and your guest to supervise any children in attendance at any time. Children are not permitted in the sanctuary (or other room the service is held in) after the service has ended, in the choir loft or downstairs. If you have a number of young children in attendance you may want to consider renting a separate room for children and providing a sitter for them.

Q: What is the Kol Ami B'nai Mitzvah fee? When is it due? Who should it be paid to? What does the fee cover/not cover?

A: This fee is currently \$750. It covers ~\$300 for the UUCA sanctuary, ~\$300 for the fellowship hall and ~\$150 for rabbinical and other administrative fees covered by the community. The fee is due three months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The fee is payable to Kol Ami: NVRC and can be sent to the P.O. Box address (P.O. Box 1801 Annandale, VA 22003).

Q: If we will use the UUCA for our service and celebration, what are the details, fee, timing?

A: If the service and celebration are held at UUCA, the family will be responsible for working with the Kol Ami administrator who will communicate with the UUCA administrator to determine availability of facilities, related costs, timing of payment, etc. The family will need to sign an agreement with

UUCA that will be directly provided about 2 months prior to your event by the UUCA administrator (Barbara Gilligan). The current fee is ~\$250 with an additional \$200 security deposit to cover additional time you may need with the event coordinator, for a total of \$450.

The ~\$250 includes a \$100 custodial fee. It also includes ~\$150 for 6 hours with the event coordinator (~\$25/hour). The UUCA event coordinator is required by UUCA. The event coordinator is invaluable to you and your family. The event coordinator must be present at both the rehearsal and during the entire service and celebration and will be your onsite contact person regarding event logistics prior to and the day of the event. They help with sound system, rehearsal, room setup, etc. and just assuring that things go smoothly. Do keep in mind, as noted above, this person is not responsible for looking after young children any time during your event. If you use the event coordinator more than 6 hours, you will be charged an additional \$25/hour and this will come out of the \$200 security deposit. If you are within the 6 hours you will have the entire \$200 security deposit returned.

Q: What is the best way for my family to communicate with the Kol Ami community to invite them to our service and celebration? How many people can we expect?

A: Most families have used a simple e-mail which they've sent to the community several times leading up to the event. This helps inform community members of your event and allows you to get RSVPs. You are welcome to use an evite program if you want. For samples of what other families have sent out, contact families who have had celebrations in the recent past. It's best to send a first announcement out about 4-5 weeks prior to the event and then one or two others leading up. Keep in mind people are not great about RSVPing. If past experience is any indicator you can expect somewhere between 35- 45 people from the Kol Ami Community to join you at your service and celebration.

Q: Can we request specifics about how we want the UUCA sanctuary and Fellowship Hall set up for the service and celebration?

A: Yes. There are a few changes which can be done in the sanctuary. You can request that the first few rows of chair be removed to allow for the service elements to be on the same level as the seating. The service elements can also be placed on the bimah (elevated section) and seats left in place. The Fellowship Hall can be set up to the specifications of the family with buffet tables, tables for seating based on desired set up, number of attendees, etc. These details should be discussed with your UUCA event coordinator prior to the event at your rehearsal or before.

Q: What is my family responsible for regarding securing hosts for the B'nai Mitzvah service from the community?

A: See the *Securing Shabbat Hosts for B'nai Mitzvahs and Responsibilities of Shabbat Hosts* (on Kol Ami website).

Q: What is my family responsible for regarding the challah and the wine/grape juice and set up for this aspect of the celebration?

A: The family celebrating the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is responsible for the purchasing sufficient challah and

wine and grape juice for the celebration. They also must provide the paper goods and other supplies. These supplies, other than tablecloths are not to be taken from the Kol Ami closet/supplies. If, due to an emergency, use some of the Kol Ami supplies, please purchase replacements and make sure these get into our closet space. See *Securing Shabbat Hosts for B'nai Mitzvahs and Responsibilities of Shabbat Hosts* (on Kol Ami website) for more details.

Q: What is the policy regarding use of Kol Ami supplies kept in the closet at the UUCA for B'nai Mitzvahs?

A: Families can use the plastic tablecloths Kol Ami stocks in the closet. See below for sizes. See *Securing Shabbat Hosts for B'nai Mitzvahs and Responsibilities of Shabbat Hosts* on the Kol Ami: NVRC website to see how this answer dovetails.

Q: What are the sizes of the tablecloths Kol Ami stocks in the closet?

A: The round tablecloths for the individual tables are 84" round and fit the 8' tables at the UUCA. The oblong tablecloths are 6' long and 2 1/2' wide. These fit the oblong tables typically used for the buffet and drink tables.

Q: What is the Kol Ami Kashrut policy and does it need to be followed for B'nai Mitzvah celebrations?

A: The following is the Kol Ami Kashrut policy which can be found on the Kol Ami website. This policy must be followed for all Kol Ami events sponsored by the community. This includes B'nai Mitzvah celebrations which take place at UUCA and as community events. "Food brought to an Kol Ami: NVRC event should be vegetarian/dairy or pareve. Any foods that may be an issue with vegetarians (i.e. fish) should be clearly marked so people can make informed choices. We assume that kashrut is determined by ingredients and that a heksher by a rabbinic authority is not necessary. In addition, we assume that food offerings are not required to be prepared in dishes considered ritually fit (i.e. one set for meat, one set for dairy/pareve [includes foods which are not considered milk or meat e.g. vegetables, fruits, eggs, etc.]). Folks in our community who are concerned about these issues should determine which food dishes were prepared by those of similar kashrut observance level and then restrict themselves to those food dishes."