



Temple Rodeph Torah

PO Box 125
Marlboro, NJ 07746
732-308-0055

GUIDELINES FOR *BIMA* BASKETS FOR SERVICES

PLEASE REMEMBER that no decorations are required for the *bima* at any time. We appreciate when families choose to provide decorations for a *simcha*, and we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Food baskets *or* flowers may be provided. Either is welcomed and appreciated.
- The temple has baskets which you are invited to use if you are donating food. They are offered to make it as simple and inexpensive as possible to bring food, and to assure you that every family has the same resources available. You are free to take them after the celebration 13 days before your celebration.
- If you are providing baskets of food, we respectfully request that you *fill the baskets*. While filling the bottom of the baskets with packing material or paper may be visually appealing, this provides very little for the poor and the hungry. Given how little it costs to fill the baskets completely, we ask you to do your best to provide as much as possible in honor of your *simcha*. *Food baskets look best when they are filled to the top, so the food packages are visible from the congregation.*
- On the back of this sheet is a list of the most-needed foods. While it is nice to include a package of cookies for the kids, the recipients are in need of good, nutritious food. Please keep their hunger in mind when shopping.
- Please remember that only kosher-style food is acceptable. This is our policy for all food brought into the temple. Also, please do not include any Passover food; is basically indigestible, and gives the message that the poor only get what we were going to throw away. Remember, too, that most of the recipients are not Jewish; while we love matzah balls, they will not know what they are, so it helps most when you provide basic foods.
- Please do not bring pet food. Most of it is not kosher, and in any case, we do not have the facilities for storing or distributing it. Food pantries will not accept it, as they feel it is insulting to the people who are hungry and who come to them for help.
- If you are providing baskets of flowers, please remember that certain kinds of flowers are very fragrant and may trigger allergic reactions in some worshippers. Discuss this with your florist, and choose kinds that will be beautiful without causing discomfort.
- Whether you bring food or flowers, please make sure there are no signs or labels on them. We do not advertise on the *bima*. Baskets should not have any decoration on them; we believe that baskets full of food for the hungry are beautiful all by themselves.
- Flowers and food baskets may not be placed on the stairs, and may not block access to the handrails. This is to insure the safety of the people who will be called to the *bima*.
- ***Most important, we suggest you take this opportunity to prepare these baskets as a family. At a time when you are focusing so much on your Bar/Bat Mitzvah child, it is a strong, Jewish lesson to take the time and effort to think of others.***

Thank you for your generosity. Please call the rabbis, cantor, Worship Committee or temple office if you have *any* questions!