

In the interest of continuing to grow participation in the davening by as many members of the Minyan as possible, the Gabbaim thought it would help to share their thinking of how, on a regular Shabbat morning, they select who will be the Chazanim and who will receive Aliyot and other honors. In the bigger picture, the Ritual Committee aims to prepare a statement of guidelines to be reviewed in the coming months by the Board and membership. But in the short run, here is a description of a typical Shabbat morning in the life of your Gabbaim.

The Gabbai Rishon is responsible to select the Aliyot including Maftir. (There is discussion to provide the means to sign up via the website for the Maftir honor in advance.) Often, the Maftir is requested or determined before Shabbat morning. The Aliyot are chosen and finalized during the beginning of the Chazarat Hashatz (Reader's Repetition.) Generally, there is a preference to honor those men who arrived during Shacharit. There is a feeling among the current Ritual Committee and also held by the past Gabbaim that a man who arrives shortly before the laining starts has missed his chance for an Aliyah that week. Asking the Gabbai Rishon to delay selecting the Aliyot until that late in the morning's davening is not fair to the Gabbai or respectful of the Minyan itself.

Tip: *If you want an Aliyah, please plan on arriving well before the Torah is taken from the Ark. The odds are strongly in your favor to get one. By all means, please ask for one in advance if you have a special request such as a Simchah or Yahrzeit.*

The Gabbai Sheni selects the Chazan for Pesukei d'Zimra, choosing from those present at 8:45 am.

Tip: *In a heartbeat, you will be asked to daven Pesukei d'Zimra if you are here at the 8:45 kick-off. It may take a week or two, but frankly, the competition for this honor is not intense at 8:45 am.*

The Gabbai Sheni also selects the Chazan for Shacharit around the time we daven "Hodu." That is about half-way through Pesukei d'Zimra: say 9:00 am. Again, the thinking is to ask a man who has davened the first part of the tefillot, Pesukei d'Zimra. Hard as you may find this to believe, it is sometimes a difficult job to find within this time frame people willing to accept the honor of davening Shacharit

Tip: *You now know how to move to the top of the list, if you want to be the Chazan for Shacharit!*

The Gabbai Sheni selects the Ba'al Mussaf fairly late in the morning.

Tip: *If you ever want to daven a particular tefillah, please speak to the Gabbaim. They will do their best to accommodate your request. An independently conducted survey by the Harvard Business Review in conjunction with National Lampoon concluded that nine out of ten requests are responded to in a timely and positive manner!*

Finally, the Gabbai Sheni chooses the Kibbudim of opening the Ark, Hagbah and Gelila. These choices are finalized at the same time as the Aliyot. Some Shabbatot it is easy to honor late arrivals. Others it is not possible without offending those who arrived earlier.

Tip: *The earlier you start to warm up your seat, the greater the odds you will be invited to take one of these honors.*

You may find it good to know that the Gabbai Rishon maintains a spreadsheet to track how the various duties and honors are allotted week by week. This is done in the interest of remaining fair and balanced. Of course, if you ever wish to volunteer for any honor, please speak to the Gabbaim and we will continue to do our best to make it happen.

Shabbat Shalom
The Gabbaim

(For contact information, please see: <http://DEM.DenverJewish.com/contacts>)