B'NEI MITZVAH FAQ

Welcome to the B'nei Mitzvah program. This document is a quick reference to answer a few common questions that arise during the planning process.For specific questions, please contact your clergy's office directly.

Q: **Why is the program called "B'nei Mitzvah?" Will my child share their service?**
A: "B'nei Mitzvah" is a plural, gender-inclusive term. B'nei mitzvah ceremonies are held individually; students do not share ceremonies unless specifically requested, such as for siblings.

Q: **When does my child get their date?**
A: In third grade or later, parents may contact the B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator to request a date. Families then work with the coordinator to select a date that works for their family and is available on the Temple calendar.

Q: How much does it cost to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Emanuel?
A: The b'nei mitzvah fee is $2,325, and in-house tutoring is $2,000. A $1,000 deposit is required to secure the date.

Q: Are there differences in the fees for the different services?
A: Yes. Music for the 10:30 am service is included in the b'nei mitzvah fee as part of the congregational service. The private services have a $600 fee for piano accompaniment. Additional fees apply if you choose to hire other musicians.

Q: **What service options are available?**
A: Families can choose from three service times:

- 10:30 am Congregational Service — Main Sanctuary, public
- 12:30 pm Service — Main Sanctuary or Beth El Chapel, private
- 5:00 pm Service — Main Sanctuary or Beth El Chapel, private

Q: Is there a difference between the 10:30 am service and the private services?
A: At all three services, students lead prayers in Hebrew and English, chant from the

Torah, and deliver a d'var Torah (short sermon). Students chant from the Haftarah only at the 10:30 am service, and the prayers vary slightly among the three services in keeping with Jewish liturgical tradition.

Q: Can I request a certain clergy member?
A: If families make a request, we do our best to accommodate it. Clergy assignments occasionally change due to scheduling or other circumstances.

Q: When does my child begin their Hebrew classes?
A: Students learn Hebrew letters, vowels, and basic decoding through the Religious School's one-on-one virtual Hebrew Home Page program. These skills are necessary before beginning b'nei mitzvah tutoring, where students learn to chant prayers, their Torah portion, and, when applicable, their Haftarah portion.

Q: Can you explain what happens after we contact the coordinator?
A: After you contact the coordinator and decide on a date, you will be given a contract to sign and return along with a deposit. Members must be in good financial standing to receive a date, and the child must be enrolled in both Religious School and Hebrew Homepage.

Q: When does my child start tutoring and meeting with the clergy?
A: About one year before the ceremony, students meet with the cantor to review expectations and begin working with a tutor. Tutoring sessions are weekly, with monthly check-ins with the cantor. Two to three months before the ceremony, the family meets with the officiating rabbi to review the service and learn about the d'var Torah process. The student then meets twice with the rabbi to work on their d'var Torah.

Q: Who will I be working with to schedule all the check-ins?
A: Each clergy member has an assistant who will contact you to schedule the check-ins.

Q: Can my child leave Religious School early for check-ins or tutoring?
A: No. Students may not leave Religious School early for tutoring or clergy check-ins.

Q: Who do I speak to if we want to schedule a Kiddush or party in the synagogue?
A: For event planning, please contact John O'Hara at john.ohara@emanuelnyc.org.