

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

Established in 1858

February 8, 2017

Dear «Family_Formal_Salutation»,

It is with great joy and anticipation that we join with you and your family in beginning the journey for your child's *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. This is a milestone experience of your child's Jewish journey, which leads them to Confirmation, through High School and beyond.

Although your child is just in third grade this year, it is actually time to start thinking about *B'nei Mitzvah*. We start tracking Sunday Religious School attendance in third grade. Your child's experience in religious school in the years leading up to their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will be spent expanding their Jewish knowledge, learning the skills they need to read Hebrew, chant the prayers, and eventually to chant from the Torah scroll itself. The social aspect of religious school is equally important as your children develop friendships with their Jewish peers.

Enclosed you will find a calendar of *Shabbatot* for the 2022-23 year, which is when your child should be turning 13. We have reviewed the dates and marked out which are not available due to holidays or scheduling conflicts. The remaining dates are open unless otherwise noted. Most *B'nei Mitzvah* ceremonies are held during 10:30 a.m. *Shabbat* morning services. There is also an option to hold a *Havdalah Bar/Mitzvah* service, which takes place at 5pm on Saturday.

Using the calendar, please mark on the enclosed form three possible date choices for your child's *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*, indicating if there is a preference for the *Havdalah* option. As you look through the calendar, please take into account any extended family or friends that may be traveling in for the celebration, or any other factors that might influence the viability of the date. If changes need to be made as the date gets closer, there will be far less availability for choosing a new date, so please take your time thinking about which dates work for you and your family. **Please note that there will always be at least one clergy member in town to lead services, but we cannot guarantee which one.**

After you have completed filling out the form, please return it in the enclosed envelope no later than **Tuesday, February 19**. Based on the requests, we will work on placing names into the calendar. If any conflicts arise, such as families requesting the same dates, we will reach out to you and work together to make sure everyone finds a date that works for their family.

The next part of this process continues on **Sunday, March 3rd**. We have set aside the morning from **10:00 to 12:15pm** for the 3rd grade family program, which includes meeting with parents and 3rd graders as a group to confirm the 2022-23 *B'nei Mitzvah* calendar as well as begin the dialogue with you about the *B'nei Mitzvah* experience at Beth Israel. This will include a discussion of what is expected of the student and the family, what training is involved, what requirements and policies are in place, and so on. You will receive email reminders about this event in the next few weeks. As with all good Jewish events, there will be food!

Should you have any questions about this process or need guidance completing the date request form, please feel free to contact Emily: 971-339-2073 or emily@bethisrael-pdx.org.

We look forward to working with you now and in the coming years as your child prepares for this next important step on their Jewish journey.

B'shalom,



Rabbi Michael Z. Cahana
Senior Rabbi



Cantor Ida Rae Cahana
Senior Cantor



Rabbi Rachel L. Joseph
Assistant Rabbi

Michael Z. Cahana
Senior Rabbi

Ida Rae Cahana
Senior Cantor

Rachel L. Joseph
Associate Rabbi

Emanuel Rose, D.H.L., D.D.
Rabbi Emeritus

Judith Blanc Schiff
Cantor Emerita

Joshua Kashinsky
Executive Director

Ben Sandler, M. Ed.
Education Director

Jen Levison Feldman
Development Director

Marisa Reby
*Director of Membership
and Special Events*

1972 NW Flanders Street
Portland, Oregon 97209

P 503-222-1069
F 503-274-1400