

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminar Overview

Once you are approximately a year away from your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, we begin the formal process of study that will engage your child in connecting to Jewish community, study, and spirituality. This journey takes several steps, so please take the time to read and plan for the experience ahead. Please note this is a separate study path from Religious School, and throughout Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparations, students continue with their Religious School classes as well.

PATHWAY 1: B'NEI MITZVAH SEMINARS

Most of our students take advantage of our ***B'nei Mitzvah Seminars***, one of the paths toward becoming Bar/Bat mitzvah. This innovative program has enhanced the lives of our students and families in the last several years and has met with great success. The seminars all meet on **Wednesdays, from 4:30-5:30, or from 5:30-6:30**. You may attend either time slot each week, with no need to commit to a specific one. Seminars are taught by our Cantorial Team, and contain small groups of students (usually around 5 per session), who inspire and engage each other in the learning process. This has been very successful in connecting our students to their Jewish identity and community.

HEBREW BOOT CAMP: The first seminar is optional, but is an excellent way to prepare for the more formal journey. Some students need some extra Hebrew assistance before engaging with the specific prayers and Torah for their service, and so we offer *Hebrew Boot Camp*. This class, which is designed to strengthen and deepen your child's Hebrew skills, is taught by our fantastic Hebrew teacher, Aviva Eagle, whom many of you will remember or recognize from Religious School. We recommend that all students attend the first class, but some will pass out of the Hebrew Boot Camp if their Hebrew reading skills are fluid.

PRAYER SEMINAR: Following Hebrew Boot Camp, students progress to the *Prayer Seminar*. In this class, students review and solidify their knowledge of the prayers and blessings your child will lead at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. As with Hebrew Boot Camp, this class meets on Wednesdays, and you may attend at 4:30 or 5:30 as per your schedule.

TORAH SEMINAR: Following the Prayer Seminar, students proceed to Rabbi Cantor Wissot's *Torah Seminar*, in which they learn to chant their maftir (concluding segment of Torah, reserved for the person of honor in any service) as well as discussing the narrative of their Torah portion. They also gain skills for learning other segments of Torah, which they will go on to do later in this process.

HAFTARAH SEMINAR: Following the Torah Seminar, students attend Cantor Kliger's *Haftarah Seminar*, and they learn to chant and understand their Haftarah portion.

MENTORING: After that, your child will receive 8 private 30 minute lessons with our Cantorial Tutoring staff, where they will continue to work on their Torah chanting as well as any other materials.

MEETINGS WITH RABBI AND CANTOR: Believe it or not, this leads you up to the final weeks before your child's big day! In those last few weeks, there will be final rehearsals with the officiating cantor and rabbi, and you will be contacted individually with those dates.

PATHWAY 2: Private Tutoring

Some students either need more individualized attention or cannot attend classes on Wednesdays. These families choose private tutoring throughout the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year. There is a small added expense for private tutoring. If for some reason you think your child cannot be a part of the seminars, please talk with Rabbi Cantor Wissot or Cantor Kliger.

MATERIALS Needed for Seminars:

PLEASE have your child bring a 1" 3-ring binder of their choice to their first class and a pair of headphones, along with a phone, ipad or laptop on which to listen to the recorded materials.