Overview of B Mitzvah at Romemu

Welcome to Romemu’s B Mitzvah program. You and your family are on a journey toward a sacred rite of passage.

B Mitzvahs at Romemu are called to the Torah not only as students of Judaism, but as teachers. By leading the congregation in song, by chanting and interpreting texts, and by engaging in tikkun olam, the B Mitzvah becomes a teacher, a leader, and an “adult” member of the Romemu community and the larger Jewish community.

It goes without saying that this transformation does not happen overnight. The B Mitzvah experience is a journey, which takes hard work and dedication. This handbook is meant to help guide you through this process. We want this experience to be a meaningful and joyous spiritual journey for your family. Mazel Tov!

Booking a B Mitzvah

At Romemu B Mitzvahs happen at age 13 for all students. You may request your date up to 2 years in advance by emailing the Youth & Family Program Associate. We will do our best to accommodate your date request. If the date you requested cannot be accommodated we will offer alternatives. You’ll be asked to pay a $250 B Mitzvah booking fee to hold the date.

Families must be members of Romemu for a full two years to participate in Romemu’s B Mitzvah program. You’ll need to maintain your membership from the time of the scheduling of the B Mitzvah through and including the full year of the B Mitzvah service. The current year’s membership dues and any outstanding balance must be paid in full at least two months prior to the B Mitzvah.

Our Program

A B Mitzvah at Romemu includes the student leading a significant part of the worship service, chanting Torah and the blessings over the Torah reading and giving a d’var Torah, a speech about the meaning of the Torah portion. We facilitate this process of study over a minimum of two years of learning in our Seekers Holistic Hebrew school.

The costs of our B Mitzvah program is $1525 if the student is enrolled in Seekers, and $1750 if the student is not enrolled in Seekers. If you require tuition assistance, please contact the Director of Youth and Family Education.

The B Mitzvah program at Romemu spans 6th and 7th grade. Seekers students switch into the B Mitzvah tutoring track about twelve months from the date of their B Mitzvah. Students study prayer and Hebrew as a group, and have one-on-one sessions with our B Mitzvah tutors.
Our program includes B Mitzvah family workshops, logistics and support from Romemu staff, d’var torah writing with a Romemu rabbi, as well as assistance during the rehearsal and service. We also provide technical support if the B Mitzvah is virtual. For more information about the d’var Torah writing process see the D’var Torah Guide. Our program does not include Seekers tuition, nor private tutoring for chanting a specific parsha, nor trope or tefilah skills not learned or absorbed during Seekers classes.

Families are expected to attend monthly Family Shabbat services on Saturday mornings, as well as the B Mitzvah services of their classmates. Regular attendance to Shabbat morning service is essential for understanding what it means to become a participating adult in the Jewish community, and will help your child become comfortable with the service they will lead. Being at Shabbat services on a regular basis also allows you to get to know the Romemu community and those who will be celebrating with you on the day of your B Mitzvah.

Family workshops in 6th and 7th grade are a crucial part of Romemu’s B Mitzvah preparation. We will gather 4-5 times a year for learning and connecting with other families.

Jewish day school students or those who have received a Jewish education through another means are not required to attend Seekers.

If you are unable to attend our Seekers Holistic Hebrew school in 6th and 7th grade please contact the Director of Youth and Family Education as soon as possible to discuss your specific circumstances. You still need to attend Seekers Family Shabbats and the family workshops in 6th and 7th grades.

Our B Mitzvah Program includes a set of special Judaica gifts from Romemu clergy, Board of Directors, and broader Romemu community. These gifts are sent to the family in advance by the Youth & Family Program Associate, if possible, so that the B Mitzvah can receive them during service if on Zoom. If the service is in person, the gifts will be ready for the B Mitzvah at the ceremony location. They include a Kiddush cup, a Romemu erev Shabbat siddur with a custom bookplate and a framed, hand-customized B Mitzvah certificate.

**Timeline | 12 Months from Your B Mitzvah Date**

**9-12 Months**
Students receive a binder with all their B Mitzvah preparation materials. Students are assigned a tutor who will train them in Torah chanting and track their progress through their learning. Students switch over to the B Mitzvah preparation track at Seekers Holistic Hebrew School.

**4-6 Months**
Every B Mitzvah family will meet with the Youth & Family Director to go over the program and discuss their journey.

5 Months
We will pair each student with a Romemu rabbi who will work with the B Mitzvah student on their d’var Torah. This rabbi will work with your child to deep-dive into their parasha (Torah portion) and guide them as they explore and build their own interpretation of their text. The rabbi will work with your child to develop a schedule for d’var Torah writing, revising, and practicing.

3-4 Months
Every B Mitzvah family will meet with Rabbi David Ingber to establish a relationship and connection and frame the B Mitzvah.

2-3 Months
If your B Mitzvah is in person and you would like to host a Kiddush (a festive meal following services) please contact: programming@romemu.org

1 Month
Each B Mitzvah will meet with the Cantor 2-3 times for 30 minutes each in the month before the B Mitzvah to ensure preparations are complete and adequate.

If you are having a Zoom ceremony, the family will be provided with the link to the Zoom registration form and an invitation template for invited guests.

We provide you with a ceremony information form that will help you plan your B Mitzvah and designate special roles to family members or friends, such as offering the blessing before the Torah reading, opening the Ark, or dressing the Torah. This form will also have information that will be included in the pamphlet that will be distributed to your guests. Submit the B Mitzvah Ceremony Information Form to the Youth & Family Associate at least 2 weeks before the B Mitzvah.

We ask that you write a short parent blessing (no more than 3 minutes total) to offer your child after they conclude their Torah reading. We will happily provide past examples or resources for this upon request, and invite you to use this as an intimate and celebratory moment to wish your child support as they embark on the next phase of their Jewish journey.

Finalize party plans. If you are planning on having a reception, please invite everyone from your child’s Seekers class. We can help provide contact info if needed.

2-3 Weeks
If necessary, the Youth & Family Program Associate will meet with your family to assist in facilitating your home setup for Zoom. Additional set up times can be scheduled as often as necessary for your family to feel comfortable and prepared for your special day.
1-2 Weeks
Youth & Family Program Associate will coordinate with your family for Torah drop off & pick up if the B Mitzvah is not being held at Romemu.

1 Week
You will meet with a rabbi from our clergy team for your B Mitzvah rehearsal in the space where the service will take place. The rabbi will walk you through the choreography and your child will have a chance to practice leading the prayers, chanting their Torah portion, and reading their d’var Torah. The rehearsal serves as a “check in” for where your child stands in their preparation and allows us to best support them in any last minute preparation they may need.

If you are having a Kiddush in person at Romemu, please confirm all the kiddush arrangements with our program manager.

Day of the B Mitzvah in Person
A photographer using a still camera is allowed to work unobtrusively from the balcony during the service. No other photography is allowed during the service or the kiddush. Please make sure your guests know that prayer is a sacred experience and that there is no cell phone usage in synagogue.

Things to bring: tallit, kippah (with clips), d’var Torah, siddur.

Please arrive at 9:15am the morning of your child’s B Mitzvah. Our staff will be there to greet you and answer any last minute questions you may have.

Day of the B Mitzvah on Zoom
At 8:30am the moderators will open the Zoom for immediate family. Moderators will then conduct technology and sound checks. At 9:30am, invited guests and family will be let in the Zoom. At 9:45am, the Romemu clergy will enter for the tallit blessing.

For more details related to technology, please consult the Romemu B Mitzvah Zoom Tech Guidelines.

Relax and enjoy this joyous experience! Mazel tov!!
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<tr>
<th>Key People</th>
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