



Dear B Mitzvah family,

We're thrilled that you're having – or considering having – your family's *simcha* with us. We love B Mitzvahs (our gender neutral term), and the Romemu Brooklyn experience is special, personal, and powerful. This document and timeline will help you understand what to expect as your date comes closer.

Timeline

9-24 months before B Mitzvah

- ☐ Have an initial meeting with Sela Alexander, our Community Director, sela@romemu.org, to walk through the process and get excited!
- ☐ Join as a Romemu Brooklyn member for your household if you haven't already. Sela can help with that as well.
- ☐ Confirm the B Mitzvah date – determine if it will be communal or private. (See below for description and pricing of both options.)
- ☐ Select and confirm clergy member to lead the service with your child (either directly with one of our freelance clergy or with Sela's help).
- ☐ Commit to B Mitzvah fee and determine payment schedule with Sela.
- ☐ Determine with other B Mitzvah families if you want to add a cohort experience – up to the energy and vision of the active B Mitzvah families (See below for more on this.)
- ☐ Receive [Reclaiming Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a Spiritual Rite of Passage](#) by Rabbi Goldie Milgrom, a book Romemu has recommended for years to use as a resource.

9-12 months

- ☐ Meet our recommended B mitzvah super tutor, Laura Thien, to begin the tutoring process, which covers learning *trope*, applying the *trope* to the *parsha* in order to *leyn*, learning the Romemu Brooklyn prayers for service leadership, and writing a *Dvar Torah*.
 - Laura charges parents directly (as does any tutor) and meets over Zoom. (As of 2025, Laura's rate is \$130/hour. Her bio is below.)
 - If you have a different tutor already in mind, then Laura will still be involved as the B Mitzvah coordinator for Romemu Brooklyn. This means she will check in with your tutor throughout the B Mitzvah learning process to ensure steady progress, which costs nothing additional to B Mitzvah families.





- It's also possible that you use Laura for some of the learning topics, e.g. learning Romemu Brooklyn prayers and writing a *Dvar*, and your other tutor for others, e.g. learning *trope* and applying it to the *parsha* in order to *leyn*.
- ☐ Commit to attending every monthly Romemu Brooklyn Shabbat morning service, if you aren't already, with your B Mitzvah child to support their learning of the service and their/your connection to the community. (There is a published calendar for all Shabbat dates throughout the year.)
 - To the extent that families put together a cohort experience and want to meet after Shabbat morning services, we will provide the space immediately following.
- ☐ Laura will check in with Sela and your clergy member throughout your B Mitzvah child's learning; if you're using a different tutor, she will confirm the learning plan is sufficient.
- ☐ Pay 50% of B Mitzvah fee. (See below.)

6 months

- ☐ Parents meet with Sela to check in on logistics.
- ☐ Laura will confirm your child is on track and identify any particular areas of preparation that need additional attention.

3 months

- ☐ The clergy member for your child's service will meet with them to spend time together.
- ☐ Laura will confirm your child is on track and identify any particular areas of preparation that need additional attention.
- ☐ Sela will meet with you as parents to help explain the honors you can give during the service.

1-2 months

- ☐ Provide your child's responses to a short questionnaire so we can create their B Mitzvah pamphlet.
- ☐ Schedule a rehearsal time with your clergy member and your child, to happen a week to two weeks before the ceremony.
- ☐ Laura will confirm your child is on track and identify any particular areas of preparation that need additional attention.
- ☐ Pay remaining 50% of B Mitzvah fee.



1-2 weeks

- ☐ Final rehearsal happens!
- ☐ We're all busily getting ready for this amazing day!

B Mitzvah Options

We offer two main ways you can celebrate your B Mitzvah with Romemu Brooklyn: communal and private.

Communal

- Our communal B Mitzvahs are the joy of our community and happen within the community, typically on the second or third *Shabbat* morning of the month, as part of our regular *Shabbat* schedule. (See the current annual calendar [here](#); for those in out years, Sela will guide the date selection.)
- Venue and musicians are provided for by the community.
- Should a family choose a different venue (with permission of the clergy and Sela), Romemu Brooklyn will contribute up to \$1,000 towards the venue rental. (If the venue is less than \$1,000, Romemu Brooklyn will pay up to that amount.)
- We ask that families provide a *kiddush* (at a minimum, light mid-day fare, e.g. bagels and spreads) for all community members who attend and guests of the family.
- Photography is permitted before and after the service, but not during. Stationary videography is permitted.
- Two of our three customary *aliyot* (Torah readings) are available to your family. The first is celebrated by the community and your family is welcome to join this as well if the *kavanah* speaks to you.

Private

- Romemu Brooklyn celebrates private B Mitzvahs when Torah is traditionally read but when Romemu Brooklyn does not already have a service scheduled. These can happen on *Shabbat* mornings, afternoons, and mornings where Torah is read: Mondays, Thursdays, some holidays, and *Rosh Hodesh*.
- Photography is permitted before and after the service, but not during. Stationary videography is permitted.



- Romemu Brooklyn covers the cost of the clergy member, one support staff (typically Sela), and Romemu Brooklyn materials/equipment transportation and set-up.
- The family is responsible for finding a venue (must be discussed with your clergy member to assure ability to travel if on *Shabbat*), and covering the cost of the venue, food/catering, decorations, and musicians.
- All *aliyot* are available to the family.
- The family can decide to invite Romemu Brooklyn community members (through publicizing in our weekly emails) or not.

Pricing

For communal B Mitzvah, the B Mitzvah fee for Romemu Brooklyn members is \$1,800 for services that occur in 2025; for B Mitzvah services that happen in 2026, the fee is \$1,900. For private B Mitzvah ceremonies, the fee for Romemu Brooklyn members is \$2,300 for services that occur in 2025; for B Mitzvah services that happen in 2026, the fee is \$2,500.

For those who need *Ezrah*, please discuss with Sela.

B Mitzvah Cohort Ideas

Here are some possibilities that could make the experience meaningful for your family. Some of them can and should be shared with others in a cohort, and some can be done by your family alone to enrich your family's journey from here to the B Mitzvah ceremony itself.

- Join, as a group, a Fig Tree B Mitzvah learning year by June for those B Mitzvah students whose B Mitzvah will be October or after; registration opens each June for a September start.
- Hire a Romemu educator, such as [Shoshana Jedwab](#), to lead a 60-90-min cohort learning experience after each Romemu Brooklyn *Shabbat* morning service.
- Lay *tefillin* as a family - study the history, meaning, and practice of *tefillin*, and then practice wrapping and wearing it.
- Reach out to Repair the World to join a service learning program.
- Purchase and use [Mitzvah Cards](#) (deck of 52) developed by Rabbi Goldie Milgrom.



- Before the B Mitzvah, create the moment for family members to gift your B Mitzvah items of personal, familial, and/or spiritual meaning. e.g. a pair of family cufflinks, *kiddush* cup, or *tallit* passed from an older generation.
- Hold a family story night – an in-person or Zoom conversation for your B Mitzvah child to hear stories of generations past with your family members, about how they lived Jewishly, their own *bar/bat mitzvah* experiences, iconic moments in the family's history,...

The goal is to be meaningful, doable, and enjoyable.

Recommended Tutors and Romemu Brooklyn B Mitzvah Coordinator

***Kohenet* / Student Rabbi Stephanie Guedalia**



Kohenet Serakh, also known as Stephanie "Steve" Guedalia, is a Queer, Sephardic mystic priestess, and scholar in residence at Bushwick's Love Gallery.

Serakh spends much of their time guiding seekers in exploring curiosities and developing personal spiritual practices. They are a ritual theater crafter who officiates weddings, develops rites of passage, and holds space for grounding, connection, and transformational moments. They also offer dream readings from an elemental and kabbalistic perspective.

Serakh's storytelling spans performance, music, and the written word. They have worked with progressive spiritually-centered Jewish institutions such as Romemu, Lab/Shul, and Beit Kohenet. Their work has been featured at various cultural events across New York City and written about in various publications including Efram Sicher's *Re-envisioning Jewish Identities: Re-envisioning Judaism in Contemporary Jewish Feminist Art*.



They live with their partner and their beloved bunny, Oneiro the Dream Spirit.

Laura Thien



I am a Renewal Rabbinic student with the Aleph Ordination program. Recently, I started a business, Living Torah LLC, where I officiate and prepare people for all types of lifecycles and rituals. I am also the spiritual director of Beloved Brooklyn. I worked for 8 years as a middle school Judaics teacher at Hannah Senesh Community Day school in Brooklyn. My passion is Jewish mindfulness for all ages and helping create spaces where our tradition gives us language, connection and support to deepen our lives. Based in New Jersey, Laura works with students primarily over Zoom.