

B'nai Mitzvah Scheduling Policy

Policy: Or Hadash will work to schedule a bar/bat mitzvah celebration on a Shabbat morning of the family's choosing, not more than two weeks prior to the child's 13th birthday.

Rationale: To provide guidelines for scheduling of B'nai Mitzvah services

Date Originated: May 2014

Date approved: September 18, 2014 (approved by Board)

To be implemented by: Synagogue Administrator

Accountability: Synagogue Administrator

Procedure: Families will receive a list of all possible dates for their child's B'nai Mitzvah celebrations in 4th grade. A Bar/Bat Mitzvah service may be scheduled up to two weeks in advance of the child's 13th birthday, at the discretion of the Rabbi and Education Director. There is no time limit on choosing a date after the child's 13th birthday. Family agreement for the date is confirmed in writing. Changes to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service date must be made in writing (to the Synagogue Administrator, subject to approval by the Rabbi). The Bar/Bat Mitzvah service will be held on a Shabbat morning. In addition, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student also leads parts of the Erev Shabbat service (Friday evening). Exceptions to this scheduling policy can be made for students and families with special circumstances, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Rationale for scheduling of B'nai Mitzvah services on Shabbat morning:

1. The Torah is customarily read on Shabbat morning. Our religious school curriculum honors this tradition by focusing on prayers from both the Erev Shabbat (Friday evening) and the Shabbat Shacharit (Saturday morning) services. Our school focuses on these prayers because they are the ones that are most central to Jewish literacy and active participation in synagogue life.
2. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is meant to be a public and communal event in which our young people take their place in the community. We believe it is important for the child to experience a service that includes the community. At Or Hadash, our regular Shabbat services are held on Friday evening and Saturday morning.