

I. Assignment of B'nei Mitzvah Dates

When will my child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah be?

At Beth El, we celebrate all B'nei Mitzvah at Saturday morning services, with rare exceptions. Because the observance of a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is to welcome the child into the adult Jewish community, it is essential the greater community be part of the celebration. If you have special circumstances that require you to celebrate at a time other than on Shabbat morning, please speak to the rabbi as soon as possible. Please note that all services, regardless of date, are open to all congregants.

B'nei Mitzvah date assignment process:

In the spring that is between two and three years before your child's 13th Jewish birthday (often when your child is in fourth grade) you will receive a letter that tells you your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah Shabbat. That date is the first available Shabbat following your child's 13th Jewish birthday. Some Shabbatot are reserved for different communal observances and there are times when a clumping of birthdates means that the oldest will get the most immediate available and appropriate Shabbat. Attached to the letter you will find a memo that contains a list of the open Shabbatot for that school year.

If you are happy with the date assigned to you, it is yours. At the B'nei Mitzvah Date meeting in the spring, simply confirm the date with the Rabbi. If you would like to change your date, that will be one part of the spring meeting. At the meeting, we will review the entire B'nei Mitzvah program here at Beth El and answer all of your questions. If you want to change your date, the process will proceed as follows:

There will be a series of drawings for open dates. We will start at the beginning of the year and review each open Shabbat. If there is only one family who would like to switch to that date, the date is theirs. If there is more than one family who would like to switch to that date, we will conduct a drawing to determine which family receives it. Then we will proceed in chronological order through the end of the Jewish year.

If your child's 13th birthday according to the Jewish calendar happens to fall in the month of September:

If your child's birthday falls during September and, because of the holidays, there is no available date for his or her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, then the first available date in October will be reserved for your child. If more than one child with a September birthday is affected by the holidays, October dates will be assigned in order of birthdates.