

Preparation Guide

Overview

FAQ

*What you can
expect*



Adult B'nei Mitzvah

at Temple Emanuel of South Hills

Description and Overview

- Are you interested in learning more about the prayers of Jewish tradition, both meaning and mechanics?
- Are you looking for ways to practice Hebrew in a practical setting?
- Do you want to learn more about the study of Torah and how it is chanted?

Consider pursuing Adult B'nei Mitzvah with Temple Emanuel!

All Temple members who have not yet participated in the ritual of Bar, Bat, or Bet (an inclusive term for those who prefer non-gendered language) Mitzvah are eligible and encouraged. Perhaps you weren't ready or weren't given the opportunity as a young person? Maybe you joined the Jewish community later in life and are now ready? Perhaps you wish to study along with a child or grandchild preparing to read from Torah for the first time? All are welcome!

Together with Rabbi Aaron and Cantor Kalix, this supportive cohort will study the prayers of Jewish tradition, keep working on their Hebrew, learn some trope (Torah chanting), and prepare a D'var Torah before leading a service in the Fall of 2024.

The only prerequisite is the ability to decode Hebrew (readily recognize the letters and vowel sounds and begin stringing them together into syllables). Temple recommends [Alef Isn't Tough](#) and recognizes there are many options available [online](#). If you've already taken a Hebrew class with Melinda Freed, you are good to go, and a new cohort starts this Fall!

Questions & Answers

When do classes begin? If you aren't comfortable decoding Hebrew (combining letters and vowels to form syllables and beginning to read), please join Melinda's **Adult Hebrew Class beginning Sunday, October 1** or choose a similar online option. **Adult B'nei Mitzvah classes begin Sunday, January 14.**

How will classes be offered? Both Adult Hebrew and Adult B'nei Mitzvah classes will be offered both in-person and on Zoom, though we think they are best experienced in-person when your life permits!

Is there an expectation of work outside of class times? Absolutely. There will be reading assignments to deepen your knowledge and understanding, videos to help catch the melodies of prayer, and lots and lots of Hebrew practice.

How often will the group meet? Classes will take place on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month from January until July from 1:30-3:00pm.

When will the Adult B'nei Mitzvah Service take place? Adult B'nei Mitzvah candidates will lead a Shabbat morning service at 10:30am on a mutually agreeable date in September!

Can I really do this? You can. It's a lot of work, to be sure, and a significant time commitment. In return you will receive a comfort and familiarity with the prayers of Jewish tradition, the spiritual high that comes from reading from the sacred scroll of our people, and the friendship of a really great group of people!

Syllabus

After completing an Adult Hebrew class (if necessary, Melinda's runs from October - December), the Adult B'nei Mitzvah cohort dates and subjects are as follows:

Date	Topic	Prayer Focus
January 14, 2024	Introduction to the Service; Historical development of the siddur	Shema / V'ahavta
January 28, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Shema / V'ahavta
February 11, 2024	Liturgical innovation in Reform Judaism; Inclusion of women in Jewish prayer	Adonai Sifatai, Avot V'imahot
February 25, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Adonai Sifatai, Avot V'imahot
March 10, 2024	Kevah and Kavanah; Critical look at Mishkan Tefilah	Candles, Kiddish, Motzi, and Havdalah
March 24, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Candles, Kiddish, Motzi, and Havdalah
April 7, 2024	How Torah is studied, who wrote it, and why it matters	Torah Blessings
April 21, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Torah Blessings
May 12, 2024	Why chant Torah and why aren't there any vowels?	Trope phrases
May 26, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Review
June 9, 2024	Study Torah portion; How to write a D'var Torah	Review
June 23, 2024	Intensive Prayer Practice	Review
1-1 sessions	Practicing your individual Torah portion and finalizing prayers	Torah portion + Review
August 2024	Rehearsals for the Shabbat Morning Service	All of them!