

CANTOR WALTERS' EXPECTATIONS FOR B'NAI MITZVAH MONITORING SESSIONS

Candidates for Bar or Bat Mitzvah will be expected to begin lessons with a private tutor approved by Cantor Walters 12 months in advance of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. For students with special needs or learning difficulties, it is urged that tutoring begin even earlier. Except in the case of special needs, **as an absolute minimum**, students are required to do the following:

Friday night Kiddush (Siddur Sim Shalom, p.49)
Blessings Over Tallit (p.62)
Torah Service (both parts - pp. 139-141 and pp. 148, 153-154)
Torah Blessings (before and after their aliyah)
Maftir or other appropriate Torah reading
Haftarah Blessings (before and after Haftarah)
Haftarah
Speech (*D'var Torah*) introducing the Torah or Haftarah

In addition, students are expected to learn and attempt to do as much of the Shacharit service as they possibly can. Instructions on the chanting of the Shacharit service are being given by the Hebrew School. Each student and each approved tutor should make use of the section of the Beth Shalom website in which Cantor Walters has made of the Friday Evening and Shabbat Shacharit and Torah services, in order to help the student master the parts of the service he or she hopes to lead. Cantor Walters will review these instructions during Sessions.

A special note for students who are doubling:

The Congregation has taken much justifiable pride in the high level of accomplishment evidenced by our B'nai Mitzvah students. We want to ensure that such competency continues even during doubling. Therefore, we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that all students still learn the entire Shacharit and Torah services, at a minimum.

To further this goal, students who are doubling are still expected to learn everything that students who are having a single Bar/Bat Mitzvah are learning. Decisions about how to divide sections of the service between specific doubling students will not be made until two weeks before the final rehearsal with the Cantor. This is for two reasons: First and foremost, our goal is that all our students develop a competency in the service which will give them the basis for a lifetime of meaningful Jewish identity and involvement. Second, there are any number of scenarios that might cause a planned double to become a single on the day of the event (e.g., one of the students may become ill or have to reschedule their date for other reasons) so that each student should be prepared to lead all the parts of the service normally reserved for students.

Sessions and performance goals remain the same whether or not a student is doubling. If you have any questions about the process for assigning parts during doubling, please refer to the service section of this guide and/or speak to Cantor Walters.

The B'nai Mitzvah coordinator will provide you with a service "flow" chart. It helps to

explain which family does what, when.

For all students:

The Shacharit service begins in Siddur Sim Shalom on page 105, top ("Shochan Ad") and proceeds through page 138 (Kaddish Shalem). Only if the student has mastered the entire Shacharit service will he/she be permitted to lead Friday night services (aside from the Kiddush).

In addition to lessons with their tutors, students will be provided with a series of monitoring sessions, 20-30 minutes in length, after services on Shabbat, plus a complete rehearsal (normally 1 week prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.) The sessions – which are shown on the Cantor's B'nai Mitzvah Training Schedule – will be spaced as follows:

- Session 1 - approximately 4 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Session 2 - approximately 3 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Session 3 - approximately 2 months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Session 4 - approximately 1 month prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Session 5 - approximately 2 weeks prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Full Rehearsal - 1-2 weeks prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Cantor Walters will conduct, as a minimum, Sessions 2, 5 and the rehearsal. He may also conduct Sessions 1, 3, and 4. [Because they have been tutors for many years, Debbie Wilcox, Jerry Sinay, Eric Yaffe, and Rabbi Plotkin have been permitted to monitor their own students for completion of goals for Sessions 1, 3, and 4, and report back to Cantor Walters via email regarding their students' progress. Such monitoring is done by them without the need for separate lessons. This protocol will also be used for other approved tutors, once Cantor Walters is satisfied that monitoring of the students involved is being done properly by those tutors. Of course, for any students having difficulty, Cantor Walters may opt to increase the frequency of his involvement, either in person or over the telephone.]

Monitoring Session Goals: Tutors and students should know that Cantor Walters is expecting the following as performance goals for each of the 5 Sessions:

For Session 1 (approximately 4 months prior):

1. Torah and Haftarah Blessings - complete
2. Haftarah chanting - 2/3 complete
3. Torah Service, Part 1, pp. 139-141; and Part 2, pp. 148, 153-154- complete
4. Shacharit, pp. 112-114 - complete

For Session 2 (approximately 3 months prior):

1. Haftarah chanting - complete
2. Shacharit, pp. 115-116 and 138 - complete

For Session 3 (approximately 2 months prior):

1. Maftir chanting - complete
2. Shacharit, pp. 110-112 - complete

For Session 4 (approximately 1 month prior):

1. Torah chanting, additional portion(s) - complete/in process
2. Shacharit, pp. 105-109 - complete

For Session 5 (approximately 2 weeks prior):

1. All Torah reading - complete
2. Shacharit -- All Shacharit (including pp. 117-120) - complete]
3. Speech completed with *D'var Torah* Tutor and checked by Rabbi
4. Blessing Over Tallit and Friday night Kiddush [Pesukei D'Zimrah and any other portions of Friday Service] - complete

NOTE: The above expectations are geared to the B'nai Mitzvah occurring during Shabbat morning services. For students opting to do Shabbat Mincha or Sunday morning services, a separate monitoring protocol will be arranged between the Cantor and the tutor. Also, the above expectation listing presumes the student's ability to undertake the entire Shacharit service, including the full repetition of the Amidah (i.e. continuing beyond the Kedushah on page 116 and doing pages 117-120). The expectations should be adjusted to accommodate students who will be doing less of the Shacharit. Tutors and students must know that, before any time is spent learning the Shacharit prayers, students should have completed the Torah and Haftarah blessings, both parts of the Torah service, and should have completed at least half of the Haftarah. **If students are having obvious difficulty mastering the Haftarah, tutors should defer teaching prayers until they are confident that progress with the Haftarah is well underway. (If tutors note special difficulties with a student, they are to advise the Cantor as early as possible in the training process, so that an appropriate plan may be devised for the student.)** Also, it is important for both students and their tutors to understand that, if any of the Shacharit is to be undertaken, the student must focus on and first be proficient in leading the Sh'ma and the Amidah – the central and more fundamental prayers within our service – before commencing to learn the earlier Shacharit prayers (e.g., Shochan Ad at page 105). Any questions regarding how to tailor a student's participation in leading services to the student's individual abilities must be addressed to and resolved by the Cantor and Rabbi.

Scheduling Conflicts – IMPORTANT: If a student has a conflict with the B'nai Mitzvah Training Schedule for a Monitoring Session to be conducted by Cantor Walters, **please see what you can do among yourselves to swap Session times with another student** and advise Cantor Walters of any changes. It is important that you contact the Cantor either on Sunday or during the week (at a time when he may be able to note down the change - not on Shabbat) so that the schedule may be amended accordingly. Because of the rehearsal's length and the difficulty inherent in trying to reschedule a rehearsal, absent a critical need, and absent the provision of several weeks' advance notice to the Cantor, **the date for the rehearsal is to be considered FIXED and immutable!** Students, parents and tutors are urged to contact Cantor Walters (301-793-2422 or arfikomen@hotmail.com) with any questions concerning the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony or the scheduling of Sessions.