

Dear Parents of 6th Graders,

My name is Randi Simon, and I am the B'nai Mitzvah/Ritual Co-ordinator at Congregation Beth Shalom and will also be teaching the 6th grade, Mechina class. I am excited to work with you and your students .

Mechina is part of Religious School and an integral component of our B'nai Mitzvah training program. On Tuesdays, 6th graders will continue to attend Religious School. But on weekends, 6th-grade students participate in Mechina, which takes place either on Shabbat or Sunday mornings.

Shabbat Mornings: Our desire is for the students to find comfort and familiarity with services on Shabbat. We will focus heavily on getting to know the Torah service while watching their contemporaries stand on the bima before the congregation. In addition, the students will have several opportunities to lead from the bima throughout the year. On Mechina Shabbat (January 31, 2026), the students will lead the entire Torah service and much of Musaf (concluding service).

Sunday Family Sessions: A child's B'nai Mitzvah takes place within the context of the entire family's Jewish journey. Sunday Mechina sessions will add depth and meaning to this significant milestone. Rabbi Chapman, Cantor Stoehr and Rabbi Honig will lead sessions to invite parents to consider and address the many religious and spiritual questions that arise during this time in your child's development. Students will also discuss and workshop with their parents and the Clergy important questions and steps they are and will be taking on their Jewish journey. In addition, families will learn about each student's individual Torah Portions and discuss how to make them relevant for today. Finally, students will begin developing their Tikkun Olam projects with clergy support.

Both Saturday and Sunday Sessions:

The students will also begin learning the tools (trope) for chanting Torah, reciting the blessings related to Torah and Haftarah, and review and learn prayers from the Shabbat Service they have already or will become familiar with for their B'nai Mitzvah.

Our first day of Mechina is Saturday, September 6, 2025 - for students only. We would love the class to stay for community Kiddush Luncheon, so plan on picking your student up about 12:20-12:30 (Parents are always encouraged to come for services and Kiddush).

Your presence in the synagogue every Shabbat is encouraged. We want families to have the opportunity to experience this journey together and be a part of the larger CBS community on a consistent basis.

The Mechina program is the first requirement towards B'nai Mitzvah and prepares students for their individual tutoring. Tutoring begins approximately 11-12 months before the date of the B'nai Mitzvah and will continue until the week of their B'nai Mitzvah. Note: for some students Mechina and tutoring will overlap. Students continue attending Mechina even after they begin tutoring.

Below you will find the dates for this year's (2025-6) Mechina Class.

Calendar/Timing:

Most Shabbat classes will be from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with community Kiddush immediately following (We encourage your students to stay and have lunch with the congregation.).

The Sunday classes will be interactive with the Clergy from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for parents and students. When class is on Sunday, there will be no Saturday class that week. You will receive weekly email reminders to clarify dates and times.

MECHINA 2025-2026 DATES

September: 9/6, **9/14**, 9/20, 9/27

October: 10/4, 10/11 **10/19**, 10/25

November: 11/1, **11/9**, 11/15, 11/22

December: 12/6, **12/14**,

January: **1/11**, 1/24, **1/31** (Mechina Shabbat)

February: **2/8**, 2/21, 2/28

March: **3/8**, 3/14

April: 4/4, **4/12**, 4/18, 4/25

May: **5/3**

Non-Highlighted dates are Students only

***All highlighted dates are for Parents and Students.**

*All bolded dates are Sundays

(I will send a weekly reminder out as well.)

We look forward to sharing this journey together!

And remember, B'nai Mitzvah is the beginning..... Not the end!

Warm Regards,

Randi Simon

