

IV. RITUAL PRACTICES

IV.A. Ritual Practices: Life Cycle

IV.A.1. B'nai Mitzvah

IV.A.1.a. ELIGIBILITY

IV.A.1.a.i. A student must be registered in religious school for the year of the Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah AND complete a minimum of two years of religious study at the JRC Religious School or a Jewish day school, immediately prior to the year in which their Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah service is to take place. *(2/13/2013; "B'nai" added 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.a.ii. This requires, at minimum, two years of paid membership by the student's household being members in good standing. Thus, a student should normally complete, at minimum, the 5th and 6th grade and be enrolled in the 7th grade. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.a.iii. An exception to this policy can be made for families that are newly arrived in the area or changing their synagogue affiliation, contingent on the approval of the Rabbi, the Cantor, the Assistant Rabbi for Education, and President. *(Approved 2/13/2013; "Religious School Director" replaced with "Assistant Rabbi for Education" 11/7/2018; "President" added 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.a.iv. *(Approved 2/13/2013; rescinded and replaced with IV.A.1.a.v. 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.a.v. All B'nai Mitzvah should take place within six months of the student's thirteenth birthday, but should not take place before the student begins 7th grade. *(2/13/2019)*

IV. A.1.a.vi. All variances from these B'nai Mitzvah eligibility policies are contingent on the explicit permission of the Rabbi, Cantor, Assistant Rabbi for Education, and President. *(2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.b. READINESS

IV.A.1.b.i. A competency assessment of all incoming students to JRC B'nai Mitzvah tutoring would be made by the Cantor. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.b.ii. For students with special needs, the family should schedule a meeting with the clergy at least 2-3 years prior to the Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah year. In these cases, competency assessment will be sensitive to each child's needs. *(2/13/2013; "B'nai" added 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.b.iii. If the student cannot practically attain the necessary levels of competency within the usual time prior to the planned Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah date, the event must be rescheduled for a later date. *(2/13/2013; "B'nai" added 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.b.iv. Each student is required to attend a minimum of ten (10) JRC Shabbat services during the 12 months before their B'nai Mitzvah date. *(Approved 2/13/2013; "before his/her B'nai Mitzvah date, beginning from the time he/she is assigned a B'nai Mitzvah date" replaced with "during the 12 months before their B'nai Mitzvah date" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.1.c. ADDITIONAL PREPARATION/TUTORING

IV.A.1.c.i. If the Cantor determines that the student needs a significant amount of additional tutoring or resources, the parents must pay for this additional cost. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.c.ii. This additional preparation is not conducted by the Cantor. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.d. THE B'NAI MITZVAH SERVICE

IV.A.1.d.i. JRC considers the Bar/Bat/B'nai Mitzvah to be a congregational Shabbat morning service led by JRC's clergy. All efforts in preparation for this service should emphasize its communal nature. *(2/13/2013; "B'nai" added and "the Rabbi and Cantor" replaced with "JRC's clergy" 2/13/2019)*

IV.A.1.d.ii. B'nai Mitzvah is a celebration for the entire JRC community. The congregation as a whole is encouraged to attend B'nai Mitzvah in its context as a Shabbat Morning Service. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.d.iii. Families are expected to invite the student's entire class to the service and also to the following Kiddush and/or luncheon, if it is held at JRC. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.e. SCHEDULING

IV.A.1.e.i. B'nai Mitzvah are scheduled between the months of September and June. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.e.ii. Partnership (doubling-up B'nai Mitzvah at the same service) will be jointly determined by JRC's clergy, staff and the JRC scheduler. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.1.e.iii. Families may indicate their wishes regarding partnerships to the JRC scheduler. All requests will be taken into consideration, but it should be understood that accommodating requests may not be possible in all circumstances. *(2/13/2013)*

IV.A.2. Clergy Officiation

IV.A.2.a. Subject to schedule, the clergy is available to officiate at the funerals of JRC members and their first-degree relatives (parents, partners/spouses, siblings, children) and at other life-cycle ceremonies (baby namings, brit mila, weddings) of JRC members and their children. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" and "weddings/commitment ceremonies" replaced with "weddings" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.2.b. As the services of the clergy are presumed as part of congregational affiliation, JRC members are not expected to offer an honorarium for clergy officiation at the above-named life cycle events. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.2.c. Officiation at life-cycle events of other family members may be requested, but is at the discretion of and subject to the schedule and availability of the clergy. When the clergy does officiate at such ceremonies, an honorarium is expected. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.2.d. In the case of weddings, the clergy is available for JRC members in accordance with their standards for officiation. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" and "weddings/commitment ceremonies" replaced with "weddings" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.3. Baby Namings

Baby namings for Jewish children normally take place in the sanctuary during a Shabbat evening or morning service. Naming ceremonies are available to JRC members in good standing, for their own children or grandchildren. Baby namings must be scheduled with the clergy. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "boys and girls" replaced with "children" and "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.4. Brit Mila

While a brit mila does not require the presence of the clergy, the clergy may be available to co-officiate with the Mohel/Mohelet, schedule permitting. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "Mohelet" added and "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.5. Conversion

The Rabbi is available for consultation with regard to conversion. *(2/8/1995)*

IV.A.6. Chuppah

IV.A.6.a. *(Approved 4/7/1996; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.6.b. The JRC Chuppah should not be used for weddings that begin prior to the end of Shabbat or Jewish Holidays on which weddings traditionally do not take place. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.c. The JRC Chuppah may be used with these provisions:

IV.A.6.c.i. One member of the couple must be a member of JRC or a child of a JRC member. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.c.ii. *(Approved 4/7/1996; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.6.c.iii. The Chuppah may not be used out of doors. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.c.iv. The Chuppah should not normally travel out of the greater Chicago area. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.d. Personnel must be trained for set up and take down to ensure minimal wear and tear on the Chuppah. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.d.i. When the Chuppah is used at JRC, the custodians will be the trained personnel. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.d.ii. When the Chuppah is used away from JRC, a list of trained personnel will be available through JRC. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.e. All arrangements for use of the Chuppah must be made through the Executive Director of JRC. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.e.i. Application information shall be available through the Executive Director. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.6.e.ii. There will be a maintenance fee for use of the Chuppah. *(4/7/1996)*

IV.A.7. Divorce

When necessary, the clergy is available to arrange a Jewish ceremony of divorce. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.8. Funeral Plan

IV.A.8.a. *(Approved 5/1988; rescinded and replaced 11/16/1994)*

IV.A.8.b. *(Approved 11/16/1994; rescinded and replaced 4/3/1999)*

IV.A.8.c. The change of funeral plan to Chicago Jewish Funerals was approved. *(3/4/1999)*

IV.A.9. Dedications

IV.A.9.a. *(Approved 2/8/1995; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

IV.A.9.b. In most cases, the recitation of the brief ceremony for a dedication can comfortably be done by family members without the presence of the clergy. JRC has available a packet of materials that explains the service that accompanies a dedication. The clergy is also available for consultation in planning a dedication. *(Approved 2/8/1995; "rabbi" replaced with "clergy" 11/7/2018)*

IV.B. Ritual Practices: Congregation

IV.B.1. High Holidays *(Approved 7/22/1992; rescinded 11/7/2018)*

IV.B.2. Yom Kippur Open Mic

IV.B.2.a. The "Open Mic" policy on Yom Kippur afternoon is an opportunity for JRC members to reflect personally on issues of a spiritual, social or religious nature that they wish to share with the congregation. To ensure that the maximum number of speakers is given the opportunity, remarks must be limited to 3 minutes. *(1/19/1995)*

IV.B.2.b. The presumption of the "Open Mic" is that it indeed be "open." Personal attacks, endorsements for political office and solicitation for support for political office, however, will not be allowed. *(1/19/1995)*

IV.B.2.c. Submissions for the "Open Mic" will be sent to a committee comprised of the President, High Holiday chair(s), and Ritual Practices Vice President. This committee will review and schedule materials for presentation. *(1/19/1995)*

IV.B.2.d. Materials must be received at the JRC office no later than 5 days prior to Yom Kippur. *(1/19/1995)*

IV.B.3. Shabbat Services

Services need not be held every Friday night. *(11/14/1975)*