

Temple Beth Rishon Life Cycle Events

Confirmation

What is the Confirmation service and why was it created?

Reform Judaism introduced the group Confirmation service for fifteen- or sixteen-year-olds as a substitute for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ritual. It was felt that thirteen was too young to take on the responsibilities of adulthood.

Where and when did the practice of the service originate?

It originated in Germany during the nineteenth century.

What is the current-day practice?

The Reform movement has reinstated the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ritual but has retained the practice of Confirmation. Some Conservative and Reconstructionist synagogues have adopted Confirmation. After a *Bar/Bat mitzvah*, a student is encouraged to continue with his or her religious studies. The culmination of graduation is the Confirmation service.

When does the service take place?

It takes place during the holiday of *Shavuot* when the students stand before the *Torah* and recommit themselves to our ancient tradition. During this service, the class marks their group status as the next generation to stand at Sinai receiving the *Torah* as their Jewish heritage.

What is the practice in our synagogue?

The tenth grade Hebrew school program is concerned with Confirmation. At the end of the academic year, the Confirmation service is held during the *Erev Shavuot* service. At Beth Rishon, however, learning goes beyond the tenth grade. There is also an eleventh/twelfth grade curriculum.

Who can I contact to find out more about the high school program and Confirmation?

Micheline Burke, the principal of the Hebrew school.