

You're Turning Into Who You Are: Ritual Leadership for B'nai Mitzvot

with Rory Michelle Sullivan

As a parent with a child approaching the age of B'nai Mitzvah, you have a powerful opportunity. My work is to support you to nurture who your soon-to-be teen is becoming in a way that honors both their ties to Jewish tradition and the world they inhabit today. I strongly believe this is an important growth moment for parents and the whole family as well. I would be so delighted and honored to co-create a meaningful and Jewishly-rooted coming-of-age ritual for your child – and family.

Ritual Leadership Package: \$1000

Includes:

- Ritual Leadership** at the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony (with guitar if desired)
- Planning meetings** (up to 3 hours) via phone or Zoom
- “You're Turning into Who You Are” Sessions** with B'nai Mitzvah student. The B'nai Mitzvah student and I meet for two 45 minute sessions on zoom to ground into what becoming a B'nai Mitzvah means, what it means to them, and who they feel they are becoming. If desired, we will incorporate some of the meaning made here into the service with an [accompanying singing meditation](#).
- Review of and feedback on the service booklet
- Additional planning meetings at \$100/hour

Ala Carte Rates:

Ritual leadership: \$500

Planning meetings: \$100/hour

“You're Turning Into Who You Are” Sessions (two 45-min zoom calls): \$180

Creation of service booklet: \$100/hour

B'nai Mitzvah Tutoring: \$100/hour

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FAQ

Are you ok with adapting the service and leaving some things out?

Absolutely! A teacher of mine once told me that in order to have a Jewish service, one must have the Sh'ma and some time for silent prayer. As long as we include these two elements, I would love to craft a creative and innovative ritual with you. We can make it as traditional or innovative as you like!

Do you play guitar?

On guitar: Yes! I've been a singer-songwriter and songleader for over a decade. I've lead Reform, Reconstructing Judaism, and Conservative services; song sessions at summer camps; and play my own music (story songs and sing alongs!) in participatory sing-along concerts, listening-room style, as well. My guitar chops function to carry a roomful of people into joyous, meaningful song.

Does my child need to read Hebrew already?

Nope! I prefer to lead ceremonies where the B'nai Mitzvah reads in Hebrew directly from the Torah - but we can start from where they are - even not knowing any Hebrew! - and get them as far along as time and interest allows. We will find a balance of Hebrew and English for the service that meets your family's needs and desires.

Do they - or we - need to know anything Jewish?

We will start from where your child and family are, and build from there. I am passionate about Jewish literacy and learning, and would love to incorporate additional Jewish educational elements into our tutoring sessions, the B'nai Mitzvah service, and the overall process as well. If you're interested in this, let's talk!

Can my child do a "Mitzvah Project" like they do in some synagogues?

Yes! The "You're Turning into Who You Are" Sessions involve reflection on who your child is, who they are becoming, and who they want to be in the world - including the contribution they would like to make. I'd be delighted to talk about expanding this to a project of some sort, be it a mitzvah project, art project, music, writing, or otherwise.

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MEET YOUR RITUAL LEADER

Rory Michelle Sullivan (she/her) is a powerful, inspiring, and sought-after singer-songwriter and songleader based in Philadelphia.

She has released four albums of original music, including an album based on Jewish text and a musical theater concept album. Through playful and moving songs, theater, and intentional gatherings, Rory



Michelle empowers individuals and communities to blossom and thrive by exploring what it means to be human, healthy, and whole. She brings a holistic approach to Jewish life and learning and is beloved for uplifting others with her vibrant energy, enthusiasm, presence, unbridled joy, and captivating voice. From tiny babies to B'nai Mitzvah to elders, from lively camp and synagogue Shabbat programs to intimate healing services, from her contemporary folk story-songs to both rousing and meditative sing-alongs, Rory Michelle has touched thousands of individuals with her enchanting voice and spirit. She is excited to work with you!

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