

A HISTORIC NARRATIVE

By
EVELYN AVERICK

The Story of
TEMPLE EMANU-EL
Westfield, New Jersey

About the Author . . .



Evelyn Averick has a "love-affair" with Jewish history, the Jewish people and the written word. Sustained by these passions, Evelyn has devoted more than a year of her life to researching and writing the history of Temple Emanu-El of Westfield. And she has done so with style, thoroughness, integrity and faith.

Evelyn and her husband Walter moved to Mountainside in 1956. There being no post office or synagogue in the village at that time, they immediately found their way to Westfield for both and have been cherished members of the Temple ever since.

Their son Jeffrey and their daughters Sara and Ellen were all educated at the Temple Religious School, with the girls beginning in the Nursery School. The history of the Temple is Evelyn and Walter's history. The creation of this volume was a rediscovery of their "roots."

Evelyn's first activity at the Temple was in the Sisterhood Bible Class. She went on to write "Tevye Comes to Westfield", celebrating the Temple's 20th Anniversary and the script for my 10th Anniversary celebration as rabbi of Temple Emanu-El. She also set her creative pen to work for Sisterhood Sabbaths, adult education, and the original bulletin of the National Council of Jewish Women which won the national first prize. Her documentary film, "He That Hath Clean Hands", written and produced by her for the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey, won her national acclaim and merited first prize nationally by the Council of Jewish Federations. She is also a frequent contributor to the *Jewish Community News*.

When God said, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," our faith was clearly founded on the historical experience of the Jewish people. It is my fervent prayer that this inspiring story will encourage Jews in our community and throughout our land to walk in the way of Abraham and Sarah and to sustain the faith of our fathers and our mothers.

Rabbi Charles A. Kroloff

8 Adar I 5741

February 8, 1981

Rabbis

1951-54 – Rabbi Ezra Spicehandler
1954-55 – Rabbi David Raab
1955-62 – Rabbi Jack Stern
1962-64 – Rabbi Azriel Grishman
1964-66 – Rabbi Bernard Honan
1966-present – Rabbi Charles Kroloff

Cantors

1951-54 – Cantor Marshall Glatzer
1954-55 – Cantor Paul Silbersher
1955-58 – Cantor Martin Rosen
1958-60 – Cantor Sidney Kaiser
1960-present – Cantor Don Decker

Presidents

1950-52 – David Schimmel	1959-61 – J. Leonard Wilson	1970-72 – Gabriel Malkin
1952-53 – Nathan Stritzler	1961-63 – Isaac Daniels	1972-74 – Harold A. Cohen
1953-54 – Karl Millman	1963-65 – Sidney C. Mele	1974-76 – Alan Goldstein
1954-55 – Harry Jaffe	1965-66 – Dr. Francis Lehr	1976-78 – David Kabakow
1955-57 – Nathaniel M. Cohen	1966-68 – Seymour Krueger	1978-80 – David Bregman
1957-59 – Melvin Gabel	1968-70 – Samuel Mallor	1980-present – Zelda Kahn

The Sisterhood

Past Presidents

1951-53 – Ruth Millman	1966-68 – Charlotte Gold
1953-55 – Lillian Lerman	1968-69 – Zelda Kahn
1955-56 – Ann Shapiro	1969-71 – Rita J. Kessler
1956-57 – Bette Morris	1971-73 – Eileen Nathanson
1957-59 – Kiki Kass	1973-75 – Seena Feinsmith
1959-61 – Joyce Gabel Tischler	1975-77 – Agnes Faber
1961-63 – Lilyan Weiss	1977-78 – Phyllis Reiss
1963-66 – Sylvia Sommerfield	1978-80 – Daryl Worth
	1980-present – Sheri Stern

The Men's Club

Past Presidents

1954-55 – Fred Ehrich	1960-62 – Francis Lehr	1973-75 – Martin Goldstein
1955-56 – Melvin Gabel	1962-64 – Edward Lewis	1975-77 – Simon Saplan
1956-57 – Jerry Craft	1964-66 – Harold Weiss	1977-78 – Harold Kahn
1957-58 – J. Leonard Wilson	1966-68 – Bernard Heller	1978-80 – Jerome Linder
1958-60 – Jack Kutzenco	1968-71 – Marvin Fein	1980-present – Melvin Cohen
	1971-73 – Jerry Krupnick	

Benefactor's Page

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in underwriting the cost of this book.

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Prologue

This book is an attempt to capture the human story of Jews in their struggle to understand themselves, to grow and to create a Jewish community in the heart of a colonial American town.

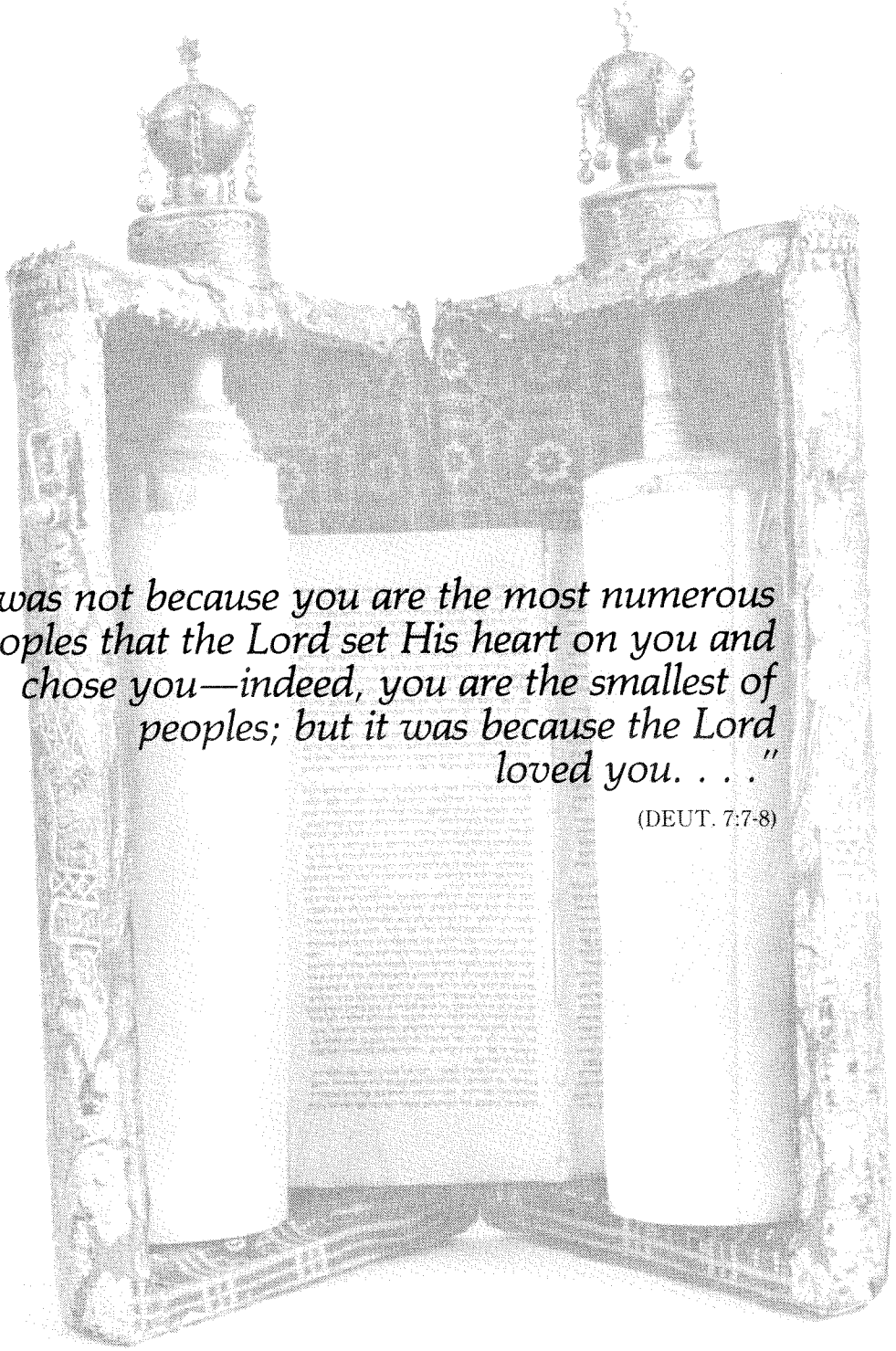
Although the Jewish community is small, the story is significant for it attempts to demonstrate how a small group of Jews developed its awareness and commitment, over a period of approximately thirty years, both to world Jewry and to the larger human family.

The intent of this book is not specifically to document events and names, although they are included as much as possible wherever relevant to the narrative.

The theme of the narrative determined the selection of historical events for inclusion in the book, a formula that seemed most reasonable in view of the voluminous material that had to be examined.

The objective was to tell a readable story. It is hoped that this was accomplished and that the reader will understand it was done with the best of intentions.

E. A.



"It was not because you are the most numerous peoples that the Lord set His heart on you and chose you—indeed, you are the smallest of peoples; but it was because the Lord loved you. . . ."

(DEUT. 7:7-8)

Where We Came From

The history of the Jews of Westfield, New Jersey, began during the first half of the second millennium, B.C.E., when Abraham arrived in the land of Caanan and the Lord said to him: "Raise your eyes and look out from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west, for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring forever." And Abraham moved his tent to Hebron where he set up an altar to the Lord.

Throughout the religious history of the biblical and Greco-Roman periods, Jews had ample opportunity to unburden themselves of their commitment to the One God with its manifold demands on them such as circumcision, ritual and sacrifices, and surrounded as they were by the enticements of liberal societies. Yet, numerous instances in history tell us otherwise. When their slave mentality had reduced some Jews to savage behavior, God knew it was time to rescue His people, appointing Moses to this great task. A tattered people, harshly shaped by the rigors of desert life, and at last free from Egyptian enslavement, they arrive in Sinai and immediately establish the Covenant, pledging themselves to be a people apart.

This awesome heritage of the Covenant through Revelation has been transmitted to Jews through the generations, binding them to the One God and to the Jewish people. With the destruction of the first Temple in 586 B.C.E., Jews maintained this commitment in Babylonian exile where the forerunner of the first synagogue may have been built. When the Babylonian empire fell and Cyrus of Persia permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C.E., a large number of prosperous and settled diaspora Jews elected to return to rebuild their Temple. They demonstrated their loyalty to God and their yearning to be reconciled with Him.

New struggles occurred. The biblical view of the relationship of the soul to God, that is, that such a relationship exists only during a human being's life on earth, was too melancholy a view to bear. Biblical people were not only concerned with human destiny, but they challenged God's sovereignty as well. Job in his wretchedness questions the injustices of Divine Providence. During the time of the second Temple, when people out of their suffering questioned why Israel was downtrodden and why heathendom reigned, there evolved a new doctrine of retribution for the soul after death. New horizons of religious meaning opened up. Thus a person would remain in relationship with God and His judgment even

after death. This brought about a reassessment of human nature and the meaning of one's deeds. The human being became immortal. Again we see how, in spite of the harshness of life, the Israelite repeatedly struggled to find meaning within the boundaries of the Covenant with God.

With the return of the Babylonian exile, Ezra, who brought with him a Torah Book in the year 430 B.C.E., there arose a desire to establish a canon of sacred writings. All the people gather with fear and trembling to hear Ezra's six hour reading of the entire canonized Torah, interpreters explaining the difficult passages. In this emotional and significant moment of history the Torah becomes the property of an entire people, their guide to a sanctified life.

The irresistibility of Hellenization affected many Jews, giving rise to the division of Jews into sects, notably the Hellenized Sadducees and the Pharisees who were the forerunners of the Talmudic rabbis and the roots of present day Judaism. This inexorable movement of conflict within the Jewish community of Palestine, combined with the rise of anti-Semitism and forced idol worship, ultimately leads to the revolt of the Maccabees.

Although there were those Jews who willingly gave up their identity and succumbed to the Hellenistic life style, Alexandria became the center for a rich and varied Jewish life, producing for the first time in Greek the Septuagint translation of the Torah, as well as yielding out of this culture the great works of Philo. Later the Septuagint, because of its commonly understood Greek language and because it included the Apocrypha, was readily seized upon by the emerging church as a basis for spreading the word of Christianity.

The age of variety, with more Jews moving about the known world, talking with men of other cultures, reading other scrolls, questioning the idea of immortality and the individual soul, worrying about who is a Jew, about the steadiness and dependability of the young and about intermarriage, produced great anxiety in the Jew who had to struggle with that eternal historical conflict of the outside culture inviting him in.

It was a time of great intellectual influence when the Greek giants Plato and Aristotle inevitably influenced the thinking of Philo who, as a religious philosopher, felt compelled to understand the Jewish religion in relation to their imposing ideas. These difficult times led to an age of analysis and explanation when it was felt that obedience to God's will should grow out of intellectual agreement with Torah's propriety. To uncover that significance, the sages developed the art of *midrash* which explores, reads into and gives significance to every aspect of biblical teaching. Thus, *midrash* was seen not as a break from, but as a testament to the force of faith, an essential process that brought the Jew out of biblical times into the reality of the Hellenized world in which he lived.

The experience of foreign domination in Palestine, causing seething and self-destructive internal political, social and religious upheaval and culminating in 70 C.E. in the

destruction of the second Temple by the Romans, was perhaps the greatest challenge to the ingenuity and determination of the Jewish people to survive as Jews.

Continued longing and hope for return and restoration of the Jewish state, reflected in pathetic rebellions, notably the brutally crushed Bar Kokhba rebellion, were deeply felt by the Jewish people. They were deprived not only of their nationhood but, because of the destruction of the Temple, of their traditional means of communicating with God through the Priesthood. In the context of the times, believing in their chosenness to live according to God's revealed Torah, and believing that the destruction and hardships they endured were God's punishment for their sins, the people felt it incumbent upon themselves to discover new interpretations of the Torah that would make it possible for the Jewish people to survive and flourish in exile. The Jew felt himself in exile, even in Judea, as long as he lived under foreign rule. Out of despair, there evolved such creative institutions as the academy and the synagogue, the synagogue undoubtedly assuring the continuity of Jewish religious life to this day.

The threat of the Jewish people being totally decimated put an end to all aggressive acts of rebellion, until modern times, and gave way instead to the inspiration of rabbinic wisdom which brought about changes in community life and worship. Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai's decrees obliged the synagogues to add liturgical forms which had been the exclusive right of the Temple, thereby averting the danger of attachment to the memory of the Temple and freeing the synagogue to develop in accordance with the needs of its own people. Scripture and personal prayer became the two focal points of Jewish piety. Thus the priesthood was transcended and every person became in effect a priest.

The singular concern of Jews with the education of their children dates back to the cultural revolution of the Talmudic civilization, when the need to define and explain *Torah* was an essential part of daily life. The deeper one's knowledge of the *Torah*, the less likely one is to sin. Much is at stake—nothing less than salvation, both in this world and beyond. Thus, communal prayer in the synagogue expressed a longing for knowledge, for closeness to God, for forgiveness and repentance and a sense of being free of the burden of sin.

The formality and repetitiveness of the liturgy gave a sense of timeless form and truth, and the use of the venerable Hebrew language made it possible for Jews to feel connected to the land and to each other as a people, no matter where in the world they were praying or learning *Torah*. But the Jew had to learn how to pray. He had to create texts and a structured liturgy in order to participate in prayer. The *Haftarah* was one of the additions that made extended stay in the synagogue possible. Any violation of ritual or law was seen as the equivalent to violation of the cosmic order. Adherence, only with fervent consciousness, could conceivably bring one to a state of Revelation and ecstasy. Since Torah, as written and the oral law, was an ongoing process further Revelation was always a possibility.

With the rise of the Islamic empire in 622 C.E., great changes took place in Jewish organizational structure, with Jews given special minority status and the right to self-government. As the Jewish population became Arab speaking, new values and doctrines opened up to them. They had a choice under a fairly congenial Arabic society to enrich their knowledge of medicine, physics, astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, literature and poetry, these subjects having been translated into Arabic from the Greek. The Jewish arbiters of power in the Arabic world, the Gaonim, instructed world Jewry on Talmudic law. Ultimately other centers of Jewish influence arose, such as Spain, where a golden age of Jewry flourished until the Jews were decimated by the Crusaders and suffered expulsion in 1492.

The age of Emancipation from the late 18th through the 19th centuries, when Jews were formally declared citizens of their respective countries and were granted political rights as well as obligations, brought about a sharp curtailment of their ethnic-religious autonomy. The forces of "progress" were inexorably in motion and political events of the times swept the Jew into the mainstream. The French Revolution with its rousing claims of equality, initially became a driving force in accelerating egalitarian ideals. Jews were expected to divest themselves of their ethnic separateness which many did gladly and in time many did gradually and perhaps imperceptibly.

The American experience freed Jews from the restrictions of English law and with the United States Constitution treating Jews as one of many denominational groups to be guaranteed freedom of conscience and worship, the Americanization process rapidly took place. The Enlightenment that made it possible for Jews to enter into the world of financial success and political influence was subscribed to by many Jews as a way to save Judaism. Instead, the Enlightenment resulted in the mass gradual assimilation of Jews from which Judaism never fully recovered. Yet, the Zionist movement that made possible the restoration of the land of Israel could not have happened without the support of those powerful Jews who gained influence as a result of the Enlightenment.

The first Reform congregation in the United States was established in 1824, in Charleston, South Carolina. The new Temple was to replace the old synagogue, a sharp reminder that rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem was not to be on the Reform agenda.

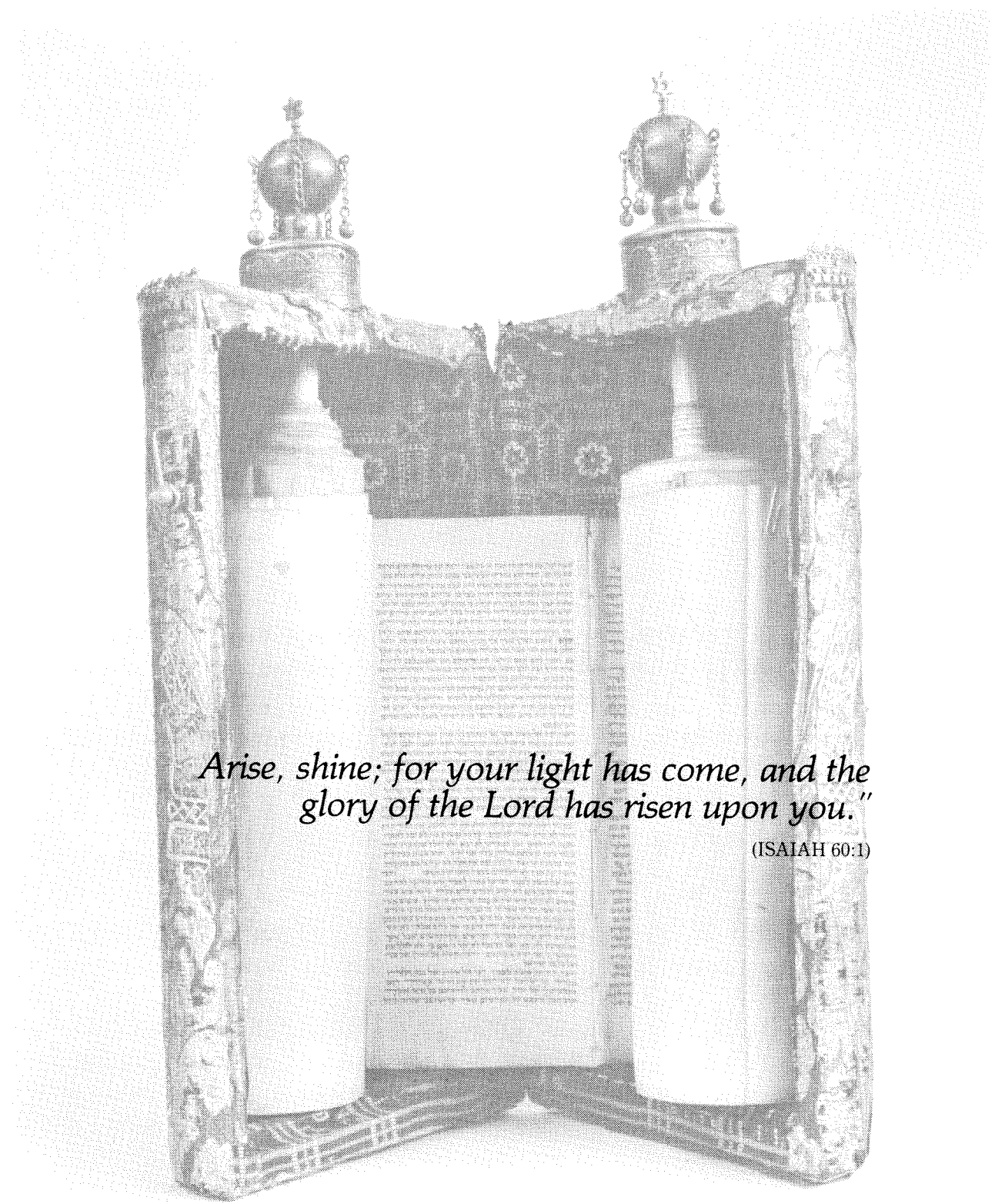
Controversy over the Reform movement was divisive, causing sharply repressive measures, even actual excommunication on the part of the Chief Rabbinate and the Orthodox establishment. The extent of Reform practices varied and in some instances to such extremes as to evoke comparisons to Protestantism. Extreme reformers such as Felix Adler, a professor of philosophy at Columbia University, rejecting circumcision as a barbarous act, was later to found the Ethical Culture movement.

Ultimately, with the leadership of powerful Reform leaders such as Isaac Mayer Wise, the Reform movement achieved a certain singleness of purpose and with the establishment of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Hebrew Union College, a definitive sense of direction.

Through democratic processes of debate, congregational autonomy, and respect for centralized leadership, the movement was able to absorb a variety of approaches and adjust itself to speedily changing needs. In the twentieth century, the American branch exerted a powerful influence on Reform movements all over the world and, with the aid of German leadership, helped organize also a World Union for Progressive Judaism serving as an important vehicle for Reform ideas in various countries.

The fact is that the life of a pious Reform Jew is as demanding as that of an Orthodox Jew. The mainstream of the American Reform movement in this century has seen the progressive development of this view to this day.

The story of Westfield is but another link in this ongoing history. Why and how Jews continue to survive as Jews is the drama of this time and this place.



*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the
glory of the Lord has risen upon you."*

(ISAIAH 60:1)

DECADE I: THE FIFTIES

A Time of Self-Discovery

The adaptation of Jewish immigrants to America coincided closely with the successive frontier stages of the country as a whole. Jews moved on with the advance of the American frontier into small towns and mining camps as well as the emerging cities of the West. By the time of the fourth immigration wave, the period from 1880 to 1924, the rural-land frontier had given way to the urban-industrial frontier, a time when an overwhelming majority of Jews, seeking new economic opportunities, settled in the cities. Despite the generally favorable climate that Jews have enjoyed in this country, anti-Semitism was never absent from the Jewish experience, and the children of this immigrant wave, facing social and job discrimination, often responded negatively or passively to their Jewish identity.

This pattern existed for Jews until the end of World War II when revulsion to racist and anti-Semitic views generated the opening of doors to a great equalization in American society. By the 1950s, a so-called religious revival had begun and with the exodus to the suburbs Jews, although largely estranged from traditions of Jewish observance, sought out the synagogue as a means of expressing their Jewishness, of handling their rites of passage and of creating a closer proximity of Jews—an Americanized concept of the *shtetl*. This pattern, moreover, fit the American scene since Jews were given the opportunity to participate as one of the three major religious pillars.

The area known as the West Fields of Elizabethtown was purchased in 1684 by the English Deputy Governor from four Indian Chiefs, one of whom was named Mindowaskin. The town grew around its Presbyterian Church, which in 1728 was a log cabin on Benson Place.

On June 26, 1777, the church bell rang out to warn the town that the British troops had entered and were planning to attack. The troops camped near Grove Street and although they never attacked, Westfield became a traveling route for troops on both sides of the Revolution.

Westfield became noted for the fine horses raised on its plantations. Horse racing and betting developed as common forms of entertainment. Its first public school, made of logs, was built on Broad Street about the year 1750. Life centered around the churches, giving rise to eight denominations through the early years.

This conclave of Americana, isolated from the ethnic elements of the general society, was probably unaware of the concerns of Jews living as close to them as Newark, Elizabeth and Plainfield. Those communities had a long history of responding to the needs of their fellow Jews and in the year 1919, for example, Mr. William Newcorn of Bamberger & Co., wrote to the Elizabeth Jewish Relief Drive, rallying that organization to a united national effort to raise substantial sums of money to help "our brethren, six million Jews in Eastern and Central Europe, innocent sufferers from the world war."

In 1950 colonial Westfield and the roots of a Jewish community, two widely diverse elements swept up by the inexorable movement of the times came together, and the face of Westfield was altered.

Of course, there were individual Jews who came to Westfield much earlier, such as David Berse who with his brother Leo in 1919 started a battery rebuilding business on North Avenue and, although told by a towns person that a Jew would not last six months, remained in the automobile business for fifty-one years. Gurson Berse and his two sisters grew up in Westfield, attending the Lincoln and Roosevelt Schools where Adelaide, a good student, became the president of the first student government and a cheerleader, paving the way for Gurson who got accepted faster because of her and because of his participation in sports. David Berse was the only Jewish veteran listed in the dedication program when the monument to World War I veterans was unveiled at the Circle in Westfield.

Jerry Glasser is probably the only Jew to be born in the town of Westfield. He still has in his possession the bill for his arrival at the no longer existent Westfield Maternity Home on South Avenue. His grandparents, Louis and Anna Glasser, arrived in Westfield in 1908 to start a shoe store at 109 Broad Street and a stationery store at 116 Broad Street. Louis Glasser was the distributor of all the newspapers in circulation at the time. Jerry's father Harry was very active in the Westfield Fire Department and Police Department and was in charge of volunteers for the Fire Department as well as Captain of the Auxiliary Police, holding Badge No. 1. Jerry has fond memories of playing at their headquarters as a child.

Jerry's uncle Max was a great athlete and became a star and captain of the Westfield High School football team in the late 1920s. His father and uncle were well integrated into the community and were very popular. Jerry, the editor-in-chief of the High School newspaper, was also the sports reporter to local newspapers. They all had very happy lives growing up in Westfield and Jerry, whose grandparents were founders of Temple Beth-El in Cranford, attended religious school there.

Harry and Katie Bliwise arrived in Mountainside from Newark to start a general store in 1914. They sold hay, pumped gas, sold second hand automobiles and became the first Firestone dealer in the area. Danny Bliwise, who now runs Bliwise Liquors in Mountainside, remembers playing ball on Route 22, then called Springfield Road. His only Jewish

friend was Danny Goodfriend whose family owned Goodfriend's Hardware in Westfield. There was a heavily anti-Semitic German population in Mountainside then and Danny suffered many a bloody nose because of it. His parents taught him never to deny that he was a Jew and he just found it natural to accept who he was.

Founding member Nette Wallack, now retired with her husband Al in Florida, grew up in Westfield in the 1920s. Her parents, Frieda and Hyman Solowe, came to Westfield in 1924 to open a cleaning store on Elm Street. Nette was the only Jewish child in her class in high school. When they read "The Merchant of Venice," she still remembers how every head turned to look at her as they also did during the recitation of the daily prayer. However, Nette had friends among the Christian children and although there was never any overt discrimination, she felt "different." Her parents were diligent about preserving Jewish traditions and arranged for a tutor to come to their home to instruct the children. A hall was rented on Rahway Avenue in Westfield and a rabbi hired for the High Holy Days. In the middle twenties, the Solowe's and a handful of Jews from Westfield and the surrounding communities attempted to purchase land in Westfield for the establishment of a Temple. No one would sell land to them. With the failure of that effort, this group joined others in founding Temple Beth-El in Cranford.

In 1920, there was a butcher shop on Broad Street owned by Lewis Wetter in partnership with Edward Gettis, who operated the fruit and vegetable department and was later to prosper in the super market business and become a founder of Temple Emanu-El. Also at that time, the Greene family had a candy store-luncheonette on South and Summit Avenues. The Jack Klions, who were to become active founding members of Temple Emanu-El, owned a dry goods store and later a corset shop on Broad Street.

A few other pioneers to arrive in the thirties and forties to Westfield were Henrietta and Sam Epstein of "Epstein's Bootery", Gussie and Sol Silberman of "Milady's", Bea and Nathaniel Cohen of "Made In America", Shirley and Morris Kamler of "Jeannette's", Bernice and Gerson Barondess of "Baron's Drugs", Ruth and Bernard Bernstein of "Westfield Liquors." Warren Victor, son of James and Rebe Victor, grew up in Westfield as did Beverly Drittel, daughter of the Silbermans. Ruth Gettis who also grew up in Westfield, later married Karl Millman and was to become the first Sisterhood president of this Temple and Karl its third president. Ann and Harris Shapiro were also here early and became deeply involved founders of the Temple. Sid Spector established "The Leader Store" in town in 1947 and was to arrive with his wife Ruth in 1950 as a resident member of the community. There were others worth noting, but these are just a few examples to illustrate a point and not an effort at documentation.

It may be of interest to realize that in spite of the sparse number of Jews settled in this area in those early days, there was rarely an intermarriage. This was not unusual for those times, but may be worth noting as a historical aspect of the period under examination.

Some of the families at first commuted to Westfield and moved in later when they could afford to do so. There are stories of hardship and struggle to make a living, of renting attic space for living quarters in homes on Broad Street, allowing walking access to their stores for those who could not afford cars.

The children of some of these pioneers had varying experiences growing up in Westfield. Some report no problems whatsoever, others report minor anti-Semitic skirmishes no different from those experienced by children in large ghetto areas, while still others tell of exclusionary practices where their children were not permitted into the homes of Christian friends. In one instance, a mother remembers feeling desperate enough to bribe a child with twenty-five cents so she would play with her daughter.

These were real concerns for families where the wife worked in the business with her husband and still had to be worrying about the children's care and well being as well as their religious education. Some children were transported to Temple Beth-El in Cranford where several of the families belonged, while others were transported to Plainfield and Newark, these choices mainly dictated by family ties and affiliations.

Some had more favorable experiences. The Kamlers, of Orthodox background though "not quite practicing," were taken in hand by an influential Christian woman who felt that this young couple needed help to get started in their business. She wheedled her friends into the store and when the Kamlers had their first child, she made a shower for them in her home in Wychwood where her friends came with gifts.

Nathaniel Cohen, who arrived in Westfield in 1938, found that people would go out of their way to be cordial. When someone called him "Mr. C," he corrected them by saying, "My name is Mr. Cohen." He was a good neighbor to Christian shopkeepers and once worked for six backbreaking hours on a Sunday to help carry merchandise out of a neighbor's flooded store.

Than, who was to become the fifth Temple president, was so devoted to the Temple that he would stand at the door every Friday night to personally greet each member. He was lovingly referred to as the *shamus*. He also became well known in the community where he was a leader in the Rotary Club and on the board of the Children's Specialized Hospital. Than was the first in Westfield to hire a Black person as a saleswoman. He also saw to it that she was treated as an equal.

Other concerns were more subtle and perhaps less understood. This early period was a time largely of emotional attachment to Jewish roots, not one of intellectual choice that is so prevalent today. The question of one's Jewishness, not always clearly defined for the Jewish pioneer coming out of an urban ghetto, was further exacerbated by his need to "make it" with the gentile community. Struggling to define these feelings, one shopkeeper explained her early self-image as being "unimportant," of seeing her customers as superior, and the

need she had to be especially attentive to them and, of course, scrupulously honest. There was always the fear of antagonizing them merely because she was a Jew. Several others said they felt a responsibility to project a positive Jewish image.

In spite of the anxiety about making a living in those early days, Jewish shopkeepers closed on the High Holy Days. In the context of the times, these were visible individual acts of courage.

There were, of course, others besides the shopkeepers. Temple Emanu-El's first president, Dave Schimmel and his wife Inez arrived early. Dave was an executive with Allen Industries, a major U. S. carpet corporation. The second Temple president, Nathan Stritzler, with his wife Lillian, was the successful owner of a storm window plant in Garwood. Bill and Betty Lester of Mountainside owned a plastics company. Harry and Bea Jaffe were active founding members. Harry, a lawyer later to become a Judge, was the fourth president of the Temple.

The earliest doctor to come to Westfield was Murray Babbitt, a podiatrist, who opened his practice in 1932. Sarah and Murray Babbitt's children grew up in the Westfield school system with positive feelings about their Jewish identity. Murray recalls that two Jewish doctors came to Westfield in the thirties, but because of the depression, they were unable to make a living here and left. Yet, Murray did well. It is difficult to pin down explanations for any of these individual situations, particularly so in light of the following interesting information given by Nette Wallack. In the twenties and thirties, her family and many white families in Westfield used the services of two successful Black doctors, Dr. Howard Brock, a physician and Dr. Thompson, a dentist.

Bernard and Sidelle Feldman arrived in Westfield much later, 1949, to establish Bernard's practice as an optometrist and he did well. Neither Murray Babbitt nor Bernard Feldman recall any other doctors at that time. Sam and Lil Lerman were to arrive in 1950, but Sam's urology practice was in Elizabeth.

Dr. Ira Greifer is the Director of Pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. His credentials are such that he is not only listed in *Who's Who In America* but in *Who's Who In The World*. Ira grew up in Westfield. His parents, Julia and Benjamin, were founders of the Temple. They came to Westfield in 1939 to open the Westfield Stationery Store. His step-mother, now living in Florida, is Lee Greifer.

In spite of Ira's fond nostalgia for Westfield, the home of his youth, some of his recollections are not pleasant. Ira, probably because he was blond and blue eyed, was asked to play Jesus in the school pageant. When he refused, stating that he was a Jew, there were repercussions. He was beaten up and called "Jew boy" on many occasions. If he missed a basketball shot, he was called "dirty Jew." In 1940 his father found a swastika painted on his store window.

Ira remembers when Blacks were segregated in the Rialto theatre. Blacks also could not enter a Westfield restaurant. He remembers that Jewish boys and girls were not invited to parties. His view is that Jewish doctors could not succeed in Westfield at that time because they were not accepted on the staffs of the area hospitals.

Recently Ira was invited to speak at the Junior League of Westfield on the subject of his expertise for which he is known throughout the world – the kidney. It was an ironic occasion for him and he took the opportunity to say a few words about his past experience in Westfield.

In 1950, World War II and the Holocaust were still fresh wounds in the Jewish psyche. Joe McCarthy was attracting public attention in Washington by his defense of some Nazi war criminals and the McCarthy era had begun. Miss America aspirants had to state their opinion of Karl Marx. Although “McCarthyism” had become the great passion of professors, their students were not much interested. It has been said that never had American youth been so withdrawn, cautious, unimaginative, indifferent and silent.

Not surprisingly, according to Rabbi Ezra Spicehandler, first spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El, the Jews of Westfield at that time were living in a quasi Marrano situation. His feeling was that the gentiles in Westfield had left Brooklyn and parts of Manhattan about the turn of the century to escape from the ethnic elements of those places. There were entire areas of Westfield in which Jews could not buy real estate. Not that individual Jews were unwelcome, but all these factors undoubtedly influenced the Jews as a whole to play a very low keyed role.

At the same time although the Jewish community was quite disparate and disorganized, there were those who, together with newer Jewish elements coming in, thought that the time had come to organize a Temple. The feeling had become, “We are also part of Westfield.” It was also felt that a rabbi would “stand up for us.” Certainly, a major impetus was that the children have a cohesive expression of religious life. Their resolve began to strengthen.

In spite of such optimism, there were internal problems that were extremely discouraging. The community, as already noted, was made up of separate elements. Although most of the Jews were not products of Reform Judaism, a number of them were interested only in a Reform congregation. There were also a larger number who had sentimental attachments to traditional and Conservative Judaism. There were even those who in an effort at compromise, suggested Reconstructionism as a unifying name, if not philosophy. The task of bringing all these factors together was an awesome one.

During this early period, help and inspiration were sought from nearby congregations. In this respect, Rabbi Theodore Halberstadter of the Elmora Hebrew Center in Elizabeth was to serve such a purpose. His words of encouragement are not forgotten and have been

recorded in the Temple archives: “Awaken from your slumber – Build with love. Be not logical.” In spite of the lack of funds, it was this rabbi who persuaded the founders not to be discouraged. According to a report by Ruth Millman: “We were all deeply moved and that night each member paid a \$20 charter fee. Everyone left the meeting with faces glowing – with a spirit like this we knew the Temple would be.” The charter membership ultimately numbered forty-three.

It is a matter of record that on February 16, 1950, the first meeting for the purpose of discussing the establishment of the Temple was held in the Mountain Avenue home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Klion. Other information, perhaps less known, indicates that the genesis of the Temple had other roots.

It seems that during a social afternoon in the home of Ruth Millman, daughter of Edward and Bessie Gettis, six women turned the conversation to their dream of starting a Temple in Westfield. They were Henrietta Epstein, Lillian Stritzler, Nette Wallack, Bernice Barondess, Ann Shapiro and Ruth Millman. They spoke to other women, then to their husbands, and to the other Jews of the community, resulting in the gathering of those men and women in the home of the Klions, the first official meeting. Thirty-one families were represented at this meeting, although sixty-eight had been invited.

Money was the major problem at that time. People simply did not have it. It was the women who conceived the idea that a women’s group was the likely choice to organize social activities for the essential fund raising purposes in order to get started at all. Every man interviewed has acknowledged the remarkable contribution of these women, commenting on their passionate dedication to the establishment of a Westfield Temple. Ruth Millman, who was to become the first Sisterhood president of the Temple in 1951, fanatically devoted her life to this project. No wonder Joyce Tischler, formerly the wife of Melvin Grabel, sixth president of the Temple, says unequivocally of Ruth Millman: “She single-handedly started this Temple.”

In the spring of 1950, Rabbi Ezra Spicehandler was advised of “a nice little community in Westfield that was looking for some Jewish identity.” It was uncertain whether they would be interested in Reform, but a talk might be useful. The rabbi met with community members in the home of Dave Schimmel, referred to by everyone as a dynamic, extraordinary man, a leader, a mover of events, a man whose exceptional qualities brought him to the highest corporate level.

Dave Schimmel came from a Reform background and was very much in favor of a Reform Temple. People looked up to him and liked him and were greatly influenced by his preference. His personality and style were such that today he is still remembered by several of the founders as one of the original moving forces, “without whom the Temple could not have happened.”

Dave was not a particularly observant Jew and in trying to assess the motivation for his dedication, it has been said of him that he was a man who liked getting things done and that he applied the same skills to getting the Temple started that also enabled him to move up the corporate ladder in industry. Yet, it might be interesting to note that years later, and after Dave had long since been gone from Westfield and was at the top of his career, Harry Jaffe ran into him in Detroit, and Schimmel said: "Harry, one thing we can be proud of – we built a Temple."

None of this is intended to minimize the importance of Rabbi Spicehandler's role. He had to work out the delicate challenge of a compromise that would bring together all the disparate groups. The rabbi suggested that although most of the potential members did not know much about Reform, it would be the best arrangement in terms of their Jewish cultural situation as well as their theological views. They were also told that there had been changes in Reform and that Rabbi Spicehandler belonged to its more traditional stream. He believed in a *kehillah* congregation in which all Jews would feel at home.

The rabbi was referring to an organic Jewish community with its religious, cultural, social and philanthropic efforts integrated and working harmoniously together.

The terms of the compromise were mainly drawn up by the rabbi, taking into account the sentiments of the people and an agreement was reached with everyone acknowledging that Rabbi Spicehandler would be the arbiter of all disagreements over theology and practice. Customs that are taken for granted today by the congregation were grave issues at the time. For example, after much controversy, it was agreed that *kipot* must be worn on the pulpit, although not mandatory in the congregation; that holidays, particularly Rosh Hashanah, would be observed two days and that the proportion of Hebrew in the service would be more than was generally in use at the time.

To understand "the compromise" requires some special comment here. This was no small accomplishment. The fact that the Temple was to serve three interpretations and still does seems to be unique. At the time, to walk into a Reform congregation and see so many heads covered was unusual. The openness of these early people to shape a congregation out of diversity was really a Jewish experience based on the ideal of the oneness of the Jewish people, and this was an example in microcosm that it could work. Today, it is especially unique because of the large membership of Temple Emanu-El. In the last thirty years, the oneness of this congregation has often been subjected to philosophical disagreement, but it is a tribute to the leadership through the years, both lay and rabbinical, that this unique experience flourishes, an ideal worth preserving.

It has often been said that the only way we can explain the mystique of Jewish survival is by pointing to the occurrence of miracles, both great and small. On reflection, such a miracle, albeit a small one, was present in Westfield at that early time.

When the Jewish community applied for a building permit, a committee of neighbors objected to the creation of a place of worship and prepared to circulate a petition to be presented to the town council. Fortunately, the fledgling Jewish congregation had been offered the use of the parish house of the First Congregational Church of Westfield. Prior to that they had been meeting in private homes to conduct Friday night services and when Reverend Joseph Lyle McCorison, Jr., pastor of the church heard about this, he requested permission from his Board of Trustees to make this generous offer. The Jewish community was to utilize the parish house until completion of the Temple in 1953.



Left: Cantor Marshall Glatzer.
Right: Rabbi Ezra Spicehandler, celebrating the first Simcha Torah at the First Congregational Church.

An elder of the First Congregational Church, when presented with the petition opposing the Temple for his signature, refused to sign it saying: "The Jews are my guests at my Church and I think they are entitled to a synagogue and think it's unfair for them not to have a place of worship. They are good, quiet, friendly people." Thereupon, the petition was squelched and never presented to the council.

Had the Jews not been in the parish house at the time the petition was circulated, they most likely would never have come to the attention of the good Christian who defended them in the particularly personal way that he did. Further, the fact that Dr. McCorison happened to be the Vice-Chairman and later Chairman of the national Children to Palestine Committee, undoubtedly was another small miracle that sensitized this fine man to the human needs of people other than his own.

In a recent history published by the church, this period is referred to by them as one of cooperation and harmony. It seems that because of reconstruction of their meetinghouse where their religious services are held, they too were using the parish house at the same time that the Jews were invited to do so. This necessitated extra effort on their part for when the Jews arrived for services each Friday night, they would find that every Christian symbol in use there had been scrupulously removed.

The Jewish community deeply appreciated this, but there were some traditional grandparents who refused to participate in any life cycle celebrations there. Nevertheless, the new generation was finding its own way and with much joy, the first *Bar Mitzvah* held at the church was that of Kenneth Fritz, son of Annette and Herbert Fritz, founding members.

No gesture, material or otherwise, could adequately have expressed the appreciation felt by the Jewish community over the acts of kindness shown to them by the First Congregational Church. But, of course, an effort was made and the young Jewish congregation subsequently presented the church with a gift of red carpeting for their meetinghouse and a Magic-Chef range for the kitchen in their Coe Fellowship Room. Further, a Brotherhood tribute was presented to them by B'nai B'rith in the form of a scroll which now hangs in the pastor's study.

During this time, the building campaign was moving along rapidly. Whereas social life until then had been a private matter for individual Jews of the community, it now moved out into the public arena and became organized. Fundraising was the party theme. An air of joy, unity and purpose prevailed, an overall spirit that has been described as, "everyone loved each other; we were all so close."

Their high spirits, nevertheless, did not blind people to the fact that ingenuity and determination were necessary if important procedures were to be resolved. Purchasing the land, for example, was virtually impossible. No one dared sell land for the purpose of building a Temple. Sam Weintraub, a Jewish druggist in town, owned the lot on which the Temple exists. In spite of the heated objections and the many threats of a boycott of his drugstore, he sold the land to the Jewish community and was to become a Temple member as well. He has been described as a truly courageous man, a genuine hero.

Moreover, efforts to obtain a mortgage met with resistance and when Dave Schimmel, accompanied by David Berse, could not even with his unique powers of persuasion, move

the Westfield Federal Savings Bank (presently renamed the Lincoln Federal Savings), he asked for ten minutes, went out to get Jack Klion and returned with him to the bank. Schimmel was not reluctant to use some other persuasive method if necessary. It seems that Jack Klion, the only Jew on the Board of Directors of the bank, somehow gave the bank the impression that he would withdraw his money if a mortgage was not forthcoming. The bank reversed its position.

It was decided that using a Christian architect would help to facilitate the Temple's position with the bank as well as with the town council. Ray Peck was hired as architect and W. Martin Vincentsen, Inc. as builder and general contractor. As far as the council was concerned, Dave Schimmel's personal magnetism evidently worked well with them, if not the bank, for when he stood before the council promising that there never would be on-street parking for Temple Emanu-El, they believed him.

It is unlikely that Dave Schimmel envisioned the growth of the Temple to its present proportions. Undoubtedly, he meant what he said; but his promise to the council now has a touch of the ironic.



The original building

There can be no adequate description of the sacrifices that went into the establishment of this Temple. As already indicated, money was scarce, people were young and, in many cases, trying to establish themselves in business in an alien community. Still, they devoted themselves to a cause that they perceived to be crucial to themselves, to their families and to the cause of Jewish survival.

Their resolve had strengthened to a point of such determination that when the brick foundation was up at last and the painted words, "Get Out of Town," appeared on it one morning, founding member Bea Jaffe explained: "After the Holocaust, this didn't mean anything. We knew we were going to have a Temple."

And they did. After a series of groundbreaking ceremonies, the Temple was formally dedicated in 1953 and the Jewish congregation of Westfield, chartered in 1950, now had a home of its own and was ready for occupancy.

To have insight about the Jewish roots of this congregation, it is necessary to trace some other elements. On October 13, 1949, the Westfield Leader ran a story about the United Jewish Charities of Cranford-Westfield. Its annual dinner dance was to be held at Temple Beth-El in Cranford, under the chairmanship of William Lester. Betty and Bill Lester moved to Mountainside in 1941, the second Jewish family there after the Bliwises. They were deeply devoted to Jewish causes and when they moved their Temple affiliation from Cranford to Westfield, their commitment to Zionism continued. They had been to Israel at a very early time and the Lesters, described by Rabbi Spicehandler as perhaps the Temple's wealthiest congregants, were heavily supporting the UJA as well as the Technion in Israel, of which Bill was a board member. However, when in 1954 a cocktail party was held for the UJA, with Jack Klion as chairman, only six people showed up, among them Ruth and Sid Spector of the Leader Store in Westfield.

Clearly, interest in Israel during the fifties was minimal, if not virtually negative, due primarily to the lack of rabbinical leadership since Israel was not generally a concern of the Reform movement at that time, although there were exceptions among notable Jewish figures. The Lesters were traditionalists and perhaps this connection with the homeland was satisfying to them on an emotional level. In any case, families like the Lesters gave leadership and incentive to people to identify as Jews. Harry Jaffe acknowledges a debt to Bill Lester in this respect.

Rabbi Spicehandler refers to the traditionalism of the early Jews as emotional, although not necessarily reflected in ritual observance, very few maintaining the *kashrut*, for example. At least one exception may have been Nathan Stritzler, the second president, and his wife Lillian, who have been described as having a more profound Jewish base. Lillian Stritzler was also involved in helping Israel receive essential equipment during the War of Independence.

As word got around in the 1950s that a congregation had been organized in Westfield, Rabbi Spicehandler was literally besieged with telephone calls at his home in Roselle from people who wanted to know whether it was true. He was asked what kind of congregation it was and about the attitude toward Jews. When he reassured the callers that there was Jewish life in Westfield, Jews began to move in rapidly. Some people who had earlier left the New York area and had been living in a gentile environment, for example, when moving into Westfield eagerly sought out the Jewish community.

It seemed as if the American dream had beguiled Jews into believing they could become part of the new religion of America, that is, the pluralistic-humanistic form of democracy. Instead, Jews found that the United States Constitution with its noble ideals, nevertheless, was no substitute for *Torah*. As the Jewish community grew, old Jewish commitments and memories would revive themselves and it is these people, and all the others described above, who established the solid Jewish base which is the foundation of this Temple.

The Jewish presence really took root and was most fully realized when to everyone's surprise, in his second year, Rabbi Spicehandler and the congregation were invited to the Thanksgiving service of the Presbyterian Church where the rabbi occupied the pulpit and was to do so several times thereafter. He was also invited to become a member of the ministerium where he experienced some amusing, if delicate, moments. In one instance, the ministerium was quite upset when the first hotel applied for a liquor license. They were going to vote against it. The minister who headed the Episcopalian Church, turned to Spicehandler and said, "Ezra, I can't go along with you, because we don't think there is anything wrong with taking a drink." The rabbi who felt he had been invited to the group as a courtesy and had been, therefore, reluctant to express himself, was most relieved to be able to tell his colleague that he agreed with him.

In another instance, the ministerium voted down admission to their organization of the Unitarian Church because the Unitarians did not believe in Jesus. When the rabbi abstained from voting because he said he did not believe in Jesus either, they said he was different because he was a Jew. Westfield and the Jews were getting to know each other.

This was especially so when in the early 1950s an audit was made by the Westfield Community Relations Commission probing questions of racial and religious discrimination in Westfield and, its findings were published in the *Westfield Leader*. Two Jews, Lillian Stritzler and Bernard Bernstein, were on the commission. In all categories of questions, the opinions of the majority group differed from those of such minority groups as Blacks and Jews. The questions related to discrimination in housing, recreation, jobs, education and social activities of children, etc. The majority group seemed unaware that the minority groups were having less than satisfactory experiences in these areas.

While Jews at that time were generally accepting many such limitations, it was an early sign of the times to come that there was a growing awareness that equality was not exactly reigning in Westfield. The fact that the right to equality was based in law and could be redressed in the courts if necessary was an attitude that simply did not surface then and was not to do so until much later.

The attitude of Westfield Jews of this era was not unrelated to the times. *McCall Magazine* introduced the concept of "togetherness," an idea that became so popular as to take on overtones of a social crusade, almost a national purpose. The term "egghead," coined by John Alsop, was seized upon by anti-intellectuals and used as a reproach. The Korean "military action," requiring military draft quotas to be increased, was hardly protested. Patriotism, a hold-over of World War II, was still strong. Although the development of the H-Bomb, introducing the term "fallout" into the language, triggered a mad rush for air-raid drills in schools, for nuclear shelters and civil defense campaigns, life in Westfield was mainly turned inward.

The “togetherness” concept perfectly fit the mood of Westfield Jews who were searching for identity, who were building a Jewish community and were concerned about relating to their neighbors. With the formal dedication of the original Temple building in 1953, the growth of the Temple, both in membership and in self-awareness, was taking quantum leaps. The struggle was one of gaining maturity both as a congregation and as a community. In Westfield, under the guidance and leadership of Rabbi Spicehandler, there was less emphasis on “congregation” and greater emphasis on the concept of community since, as already pointed out, Temple Emanu-El was embracing all branches. The Temple also symbolized the voice of the Jewish community to the town of Westfield, its various groups and individuals and was gaining recognition as such, a grave responsibility.

After all, it wasn't until the Temple was well established, that other Jewish groups began to emerge. Although many of those groups were also to interact with the general community, it is a fact that without the establishment of the Temple that made possible the growth of the Jewish population in Westfield, these organizations would never have been formed. It is also true that in spite of the existence of these fine Jewish organizations with their varied essential functions, Temple Emanu-El remains the voice of the Jewish community of Westfield.

Temple business at this early time was conducted at monthly meetings where the entire congregation participated quite vocally, at one meeting voting down an amendment that would empower the Board of Trustees to pass on all business by majority vote as well as voting down an amendment that intended to limit congregational meetings to only four per year. Clearly, Temple was deeply personal to the lives of its members, an intimate extension of family and they intended to keep it that way. Paul and Shirley Shapiro recall how they and others at that early time cooked for dinner parties and brunches and washed dishes in the old social hall kitchen. The men planted the shrubs that are beautifying the Temple to this day. They cut the lawns and cleaned the driveway of snow during the cold winters. Each Friday, a few families would undertake the *Oneg Shabbat*, and home baking was expected and given with love.

In 1954 the Sisterhood, by now well established, joined the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods. They started the Judaica shop and the Men's Club, established only the year before, started a bowling team which became part of the Union County Church Bowling League. Sisterhood sent Helene Wyatt to the Council of Community Organizations, its program entitled “Meeting The Needs of Youth.” Adult education consisted of an arts and crafts workshop at the home of Joyce Grabel, and an extra curricular activity for children was a social dance class for sixth graders, given by Hortense Green.

The time had come for Rabbi Spicehandler to make what he described as a purely personal and difficult decision, whether to be a professor or rabbi. He departed, leaving behind the “warm and good feelings” he shared with the Jewish community. He eventually

earned the rank of Professor of Hebrew Literature at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion and Dean of the Jerusalem campus.

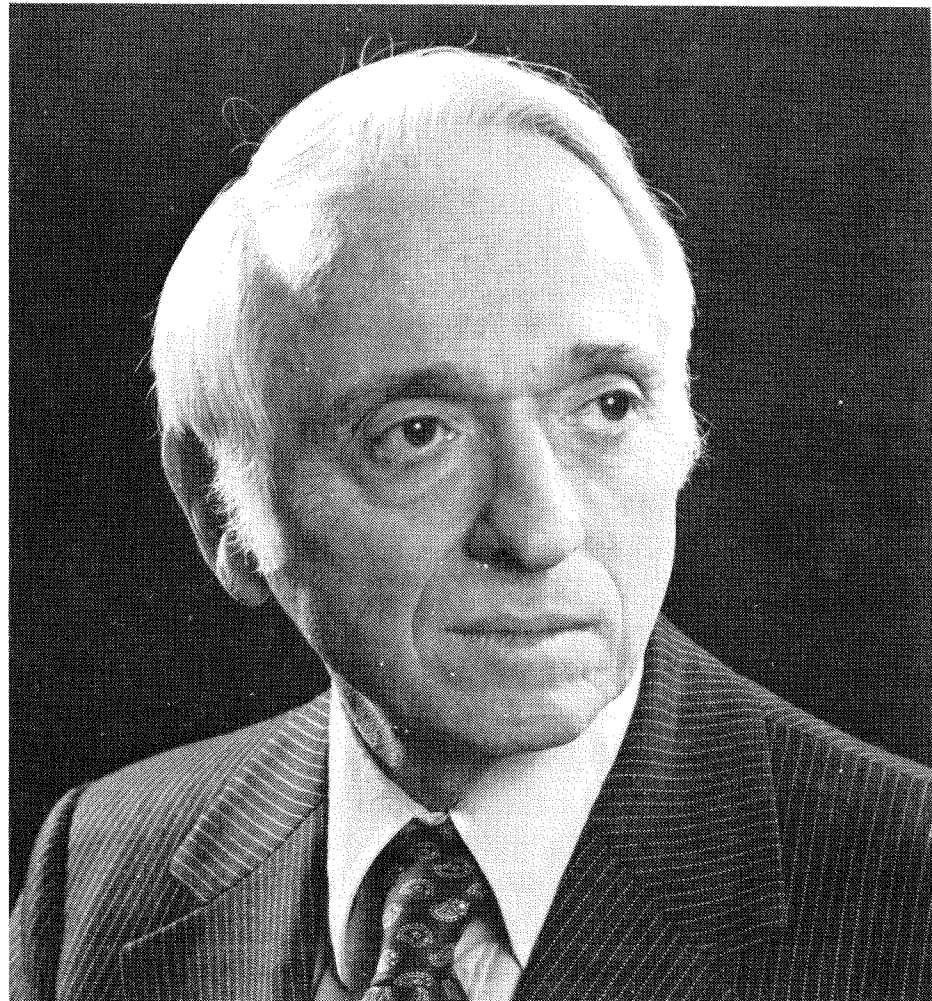
When Rabbi David Raab arrived, he was to find a congregation that had taken root and, though its operative style was unsophisticated, was also beginning to reach outward. In 1955, Rabbi Raab's sermons: “Prejudice – Will There Ever Be A Jewish, Catholic or Negro President?” and “Horror Comics – Is It A Laughing Matter?” reflected the concerns of the day, a time that by comparison to present day problems, seems to have been as tranquil as a pastoral scene. But Rabbi Raab's activities were extending to include the leading of 300 children from the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches through the Temple; an appearance at Rutgers University as part of the national observance of the Jewish Tercentenary in the United States; and speeches given at the YWCA and Westfield High School. Town church groups sent 100 of their children to visit the Temple's *Sukkah* while the Sisterhood Civic Affairs Committee sent twelve of its members to a lunch and panel discussion at the Baptist Church to discuss “On Being A Member of a Minority Group.” Halloween participation by the children included collections for UNICEF, an activity supported through the Religious School.

The year 1955 also saw the formation of the first youth group with Fred and Ceil Ehrich devoting their time to it as advisors, and Gert Lewis on behalf of Sisterhood, organized a cradle group to see that the pre-schoolers enjoyed holidays through party celebrations. Kiki Kass, a past Sisterhood president, refers to this time: “Sisterhood's obligation has always been to provide Jewish culture and education to its members. In the beginning, when our membership was small, our responsibilities were enormous. We were the main fundraisers for the Temple, and most important, the ‘caretakers of the Religious School’. We provided the Sunday School chairperson, took care of the school's financing, provided home room mothers to help with the celebrations as well as help the teachers when the children were on trips.”

This was a time when professional services were kept to a minimum to save costs and family participation was necessary at every level. The Religious School was under the fiercely guarded protectorship of the Sisterhood's Religious School Committee and when enrollment increased, this committee was obliged to hire a part time principal with whom it worked closely. Ultimately, of course, the school's enrollment was such that a Board of Education was required, superseding the committee and coming under the aegis of the Temple Board of Trustees.

One can easily get stuck in the fifties for it was such a nostalgic time. However, one can also look back nostalgically at Talmudic times. The high expectations of the Talmudic period when rabbinic functions were to be performed free of charge has, of course, become unrealizable in modern society. Nevertheless, it can be noted that non-professional learning

remained in very high esteem then and the word of a learned layman carried as much weight as that of the official rabbi. Today well-trained administrators, whether or not they have an emotional stake in their work, have become a necessity in Jewish life, particularly in the area of communal service. But often a price is paid for their efficiency. The great strength of the old communal service was its deep and self-sacrificing devotion, a heritage that has served this Temple well.



Rabbi Jack Stern

When Rabbi Raab resigned in 1955 after one year of service, the attitude of the congregation at the time might be described as a philosophical shrug. There had not been an opportunity, whether because of time or other reasons, for any emotional investment in the rabbi and evidence seems to be that this departure was mutually agreeable.

This was not to be the case with the next spiritual leader, Rabbi Jack Stern who, between the time of his arrival in 1955 and departure in 1962, had such a deep impact on this

Temple's congregants that his departure was felt by many to be that of a father rejecting his child. In some cases, emotions at his departure were so deep that they were described by some congregants as feeling bereft, as though a personal death had occurred.

Some of these emotions came as a surprise to those who felt them. The rabbi, after all, was a young man and one did not realize the workings of the unconscious that were creating so deep an attachment as that of father and child. But the congregation was small making it easier for congregants and the rabbi to get to know each other. The congregants were young, too, and new at relating to a rabbi and Jewish communal life. They and the rabbi were growing up together and the separation, when it came, was bound to be painful. Today, Rabbi Stern refers to that period as the time of his youth, a subject that he and his wife Priscilla often talk about. Rabbi Stern says: "We were a group of young people searching for Jewish roots, awareness and identity, and I think that this is what was particularly exciting about those years. Of course, not everyone was young. A distinctive aspect of the rabbinate is that it allows interaction across age lines, because one of my closest friends was Alfred Moser, a man who was seventy when I was thirty. While organizing was going on everywhere (after all, we were still very close to the founding of the Temple), what was happening within was more significant: Men's Club retreats; the women's Bible classes; these were the real feelings of the people."

The women's Bible class was the beginning of real knowledge and association with Rabbi Stern was a process of identifying with a role model whose presence had an aura of spirituality. The rabbi's lameness, the result of a childhood affliction of polio, was always evident as was his touching sunny disposition that enthusiastically embraced all that he did.

Rabbi Stern would arrive for Bible class laden with books from which markers were sticking out. Hunger for knowledge was palpable and the rabbi was not satisfied until poetry, quotations and interpretations were exhaustively presented each week. Friendships from those classes exist to this day and several of the original students happily continue their Bible studies.

A word must be mentioned here about Alfred Moser, the man referred to by Rabbi Stern. His wife, Dr. Hannah Moser, was a practicing psychiatrist, but Alfred Moser was retired and was one of the beloved ambassadors of the Temple to the newly arrived Jews in the community. His devotion was such that anyone who moved to Westfield was to know Alfred Moser and to love him. Hannah Moser contributed the beautiful menorah that stands in the hall of the Temple building, a fitting tribute to a man that loved this Temple.

In 1956 when the British and French were preparing to invade Suez and the Israelis had crossed into Egyptian territory, Rabbi Stern acknowledges the fuzzy attitude toward Israel that was generally felt by the congregants at that time. The night that news of the Suez war broke out David Sidorsky, who was scheduled to speak at the Temple on "The Wandering

Jew Legend," dropped his prepared talk because he and the audience only wanted to talk about what had happened. Everyone was disturbed by this threat to Israel and that evening marked an awareness that would flower in the decade to come, that what was happening to world Jewry might have something to do with the Jews of Westfield.

While there were those suburbanites who were concerned about how their social status would be enhanced with the addition of a knotty pine rumpus room in their basement, there were many who were hungrily responding to the appeal of the Temple's newly formed Adult Education Committee, initially under the leadership of Fred Ehrich and then under Harold Kern's more extended guidance. The golden age of adult education had begun, its influence so effective and dominant that it was to continue through the early sixties and when Harold Wasserman took over the chairmanship in 1967, another golden era of adult education flourished.

The coincidence of Harold Kern's minimal Jewish background and his acknowledged need for an outlet, a legitimate motivation often expressed by committed doers, was the incentive for him to accept the offer of leadership in the specific area of adult education, a fortuitous opportunity for him and the Temple. He and his actively involved committee felt an obligation to provide the membership, particularly the many young and new members coming in, with an intellectual understanding of Judaism, something Harold and his committee members felt they too needed.

Home discussion groups were formed, a forerunner of and very much similar to the Temple's present *chavurot*. Through discussions of issues and problems, a socialization process to help individuals to feel more comfortable with each other and at the Temple, was made possible. The popularity and enlargement of these groups necessitated moving to the Temple when more space was required for their meetings.

The need to know was so great that each outlet of expression led to another so that there was horizontal as well as vertical growth. For example, a community forum was established by the Temple to bridge the gap between the new and growing Jewish community and the non-Jewish world. The Westfield High School became the setting for the entire community where, at no charge to the public, such luminaries as Harry Orlinsky spoke about "The Dead Sea Scrolls," Nelson Glueck on "Archeology and the Bible," and Harlow Shapley on "Science Ponders Religion." An amusing aside: when Shapley was told the title of his subject on the night of his lecture, he turned to Rabbi Stern and said, "You ponder religion and I'll ponder science," and this was precisely what he did. These lectures were very well received, with the audiences always filling the auditorium.

Men's Club Bible lectures were given Sunday mornings by Rabbi Stern. Lillian Adler, who since has become a noted writer of Hebrew language books and was an inspiring teacher and principal in the Religious School, taught beginner's Hebrew classes for adults.

Rabbi Stern gave a lecture series on the Talmud, answering such questions as "who wrote the Talmud?", what does it contain?, and what place has it occupied in Jewish history and world history?" There were Friday night symposia on questions of "Religious Ethics vs. Demands of Reform Judaism," and "The Meaning of Reform Judaism."

And Dr. Israel Knox's fascinating lecture series on "Great Trials In Jewish History," remains memorable also because of his unusual and moving response to the audience. When he completed the series, the sanctuary well filled as always, he looked out at the audience appearing to direct his gaze at each person there, and with tears in his eyes expressed with deep emotion how moved he was at seeing such young and eager Jews wanting to learn.

The importance of leadership cannot be stressed enough. Clearly the role played by Harold Kern and his committee in the fifties and the beginning of the sixties in designing programs to make the expanding Jewish community feel at home with its religion, its Temple and the Gentile community, answered the needs of the congregants whose response to learning during that golden era was phenomenal.

The year 1956 was one of remarkable growth. The Men's Club, responding to the Middle East crisis, sent telegrams to President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles asking that arms be provided for Israel's defense. It also introduced the congregation to the Chautauqua Society, an organization devoted to promoting the understanding of Jews among non-Jews of college age. Men's Club also hosted forty representatives of the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods, and officially adopted the sponsorship of youth group activities, sending young Charles Moser to Wisconsin for twelve days of leadership training and fellowship.

Concern for Israel helped spark the sale of trees for Israel in Sunday School and Ruth Millman, past Sisterhood president, became chairperson of Westfield's Women's Division of the United Jewish Appeal. Temple Emanu-El hosted the ministerium of Westfield and vicinity, the same year that Rabbi Stern notified the area superintendents of schools about Jewish holiday dates, asking for excused absences for Jewish children. It was a year also when twenty men and women of the Temple met to discuss plans for a theater workshop. The Temple was being served by and attempting to meet the needs of a broad variety of people whose unique interests and talents were rising to every occasion.

Not that all interests were being met. This was also the year when Rabbi Stern had to convince a few vocal members at a Chanukah workshop that Chanukah bushes were an anathema and not traditional as they would have preferred to believe.

1956 was also the year of the heroic Hungarian revolution when the world saw crushing Russian tanks moving into Hungary, a violation of the United Nations Charter. The rabbi's sermon that fantasized Isaiah at the U.N. speaking out in moral outrage was a potent exhortation that nations who professed a belief in freedom stand up to deplore the deprivation of liberty and independence of the Hungarian people.

This year was also one where the rabbi's insight noted an emerging trend in suburban Jewish life that was causing concern. He pointed out the tendency toward a renaissance of intellectual emphasis on Jewish content, that is, the intense interest in studying Jewish history, learning about holidays, and various interpretations of Judaism. His point was that although this was satisfying an intellectual curiosity, it was perhaps missing a more crucial spiritual quality. The moral law of Judaism, he said, required a total involvement in being Jewish—intellectual, as well as emotional, spiritual and ethical.



Left: Ike Daniels with Mel Grabel in 1956, at groundbreaking of new school building.

At the same time, the realities of 1956 required that the congregation face up to the overcrowded conditions at Temple. Ike Daniels was chairman of the building committee of that period. He and Mel Grabel and the building committee had the great task of planning the new school building. They developed all the information and then presented the blue prints and figures to the congregation who voted to approve the purchase of adjoining property that would expand the Temple facilities. This meant a crucially needed increase of sanctuary seating as well as increase of classrooms. The whirlwind campaign of the solicitation committee overrode any possible objections since the congregation clearly had to face the fact that its Religious School was holding classes in the sub-divided old social hall, on the stage and even in the kitchen. There were also scheduled classes on Saturday as well as double Sunday School sessions and families were being assigned either A or B sessions for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, with the social hall also put into use for supplemental seating on the Holy Days.

In 1957, a major addition to this Temple's activities was evolving in the minds of three women whose names were to become identified with the Temple's growth and development. Sisterhood members Bea Reiss, Betty Barnett and Dottie Ehrich, because of a compelling wish to give their young children a quality pre-school education and not finding a proper facility available to them, decided to launch a nursery school under the aegis of the Temple. Jewish children had been attending church nursery groups and private schools of questionable value where, in one instance, Bea Reiss describes the pre-schoolers as being greeted with handshakes. This, of course, is pointed out in contrast to the hugs and kisses ministered by the loving and beloved Lisbeth Brodie who was to become the first and long serving school teacher for Temple Emanu-El's nursery school.

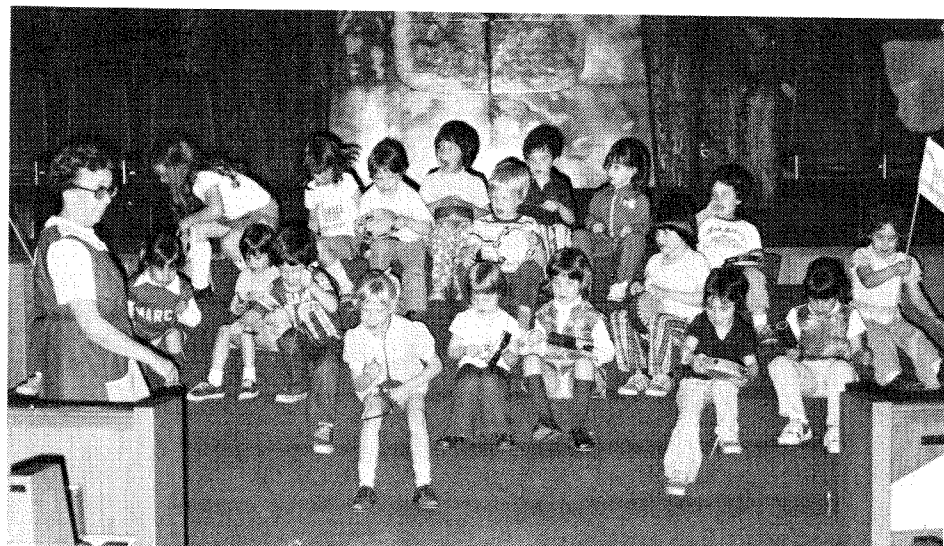


In 1956 at groundbreaking of new school building. Left to right: Mayor Emerson Thomas, Rabbi Jack Stern, Nathaniel Cohen.

One has to recall the context of the times to realize the significance of this important educational concept coming under Jewish jurisdiction. Pre-school education was not a well developed discipline, and little information was available about it. When the women approached Rabbi Stern about this, they were aware that money was tight and the board would need persuasion. Rabbi Stern, after hearing assurances of the women that they

would not need much and could run a school on a shoestring with full cooperation of all the parents, and although not yet a parent himself, was sympathetic enough to agree to go to bat for them if they also would prove that there was a community need for such a school.

The need, of course, was proven; the school came into being and was self-supporting; fathers built equipment, including some of the book cases in use to this day; Miss Brodie was hired; a parents' committee was formed and ran the school, and parents' meetings and workshops were held, educating the adults as well. This was reflected, for example, in the type of parent meeting where one professional lecturer spoke on: "Psycho-Sexual Development In Young Children."



Miss Lisbeth Brodie
with the nursey school
class of 1975

With Rabbi Stern always poking his head into the classroom, the children coming to love him, and with the influence of the Temple environment, the children, parents and rabbi developed a love for the nursery school that nurtured it to a point of first rate quality. In the process, a school that was first conceived out of a need for a "good" school became also a place that was to nurture a growing awareness of and love for Judaism on the part of the children, parents and teacher. It also made Temple members out of parents who were only sending their children to nursery school. Today, with the nursery under the aegis of the Religious School, that early policy is still in operation where paying non-members who are making use of the nursery school often are encouraged thereby to join the Temple.

Music, always an integral part of Jewish life and worship, was never absent from the beginnings of the Temple. Some of the earliest recollections are of several founding women forming an informal and *haimesh* choir for Friday night services.

The succession of part time student cantors in the fifties, of course, contributed to the musical life of the Temple. Sam Lerman, a physician who arrived in Westfield with his wife

Lillian in 1950, both actively devoted to Temple through the years, was a great lover of ritual music. He and Ike Daniels would personally contribute a few out of pocket dollars and ask others to do the same, the money paying for the professional services of choir singers. For many years, music was thus left to the cantor and a professional quartet that sang on *erev Shabbat*.

While this was very satisfying to congregants, talented Temple members were seeking self-expression in other musical ways, resulting in the production of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." The cast was composed of professional level performers from the Temple family, namely: Ed Lewis, Enid Rosenblum, Sidney Koorse and Gerry Weiss and the production was so ecstatically received that it was talked about by the community for years to come. The development of music and drama in the Temple by its multi-talented members was to expand and grow in the years ahead.

In 1958, with the assistance of the Sisterhood, a Golden Age Club was established. The parents of many members were living in the community with their children and they were feeling severely isolated, with no activities available to them. The Golden Age Club was a forerunner of today's Friendship Group. Mrs. Sarah Spelansky, mother of Mary Lahn, was its founder and president, ruling with an iron hand for a period of four years. She was a European woman, of matriarchal stature, a beloved dictator who willingly gave of her strength and time and in return had an enviable place in the community. Rabbi Stern fondly recalls how he finally had to press Mrs. Spelansky to hold elections. Reluctantly, she addressed her beloved group of ladies: "Rabbi wants elections. Now I will find out what you think of me." She continued as president.

In 1959 the Golden Age Group, realizing the more varied composition of its membership, was to rename itself "The Friendship Group." Under the leadership of two great women who were to follow Mrs. Spelansky, namely, Ella Jackson and Henrietta Selbst, this group was to continue to flourish and serve the needs of the senior citizens of this community.

Mrs. Selbst was asked whether the Jewish community of Westfield has met its responsibility in fulfilling the needs of its seniors. To illustrate the quality of her leadership, the following is her reply: "It has for me, but perhaps that is because I have always actively put much of myself into the community and so I get much back. If people sit back and wait to have their needs answered, they will probably feel that the community is falling short. Being fulfilled has a lot to do with one's own efforts."

With the leadership of both Mel Grabel who became president in 1957 and Leonard Wilson who took office as president in 1959, Temple activities were thriving and bustling with variety and growth. It has been said of Mel Grabel that he was a boy doing a man's job. His boyish looks and warm and gentle manner were a beguiling exterior for a deeply intellectual and skillful mind.

Mel's profession as a mechanical engineer, was of great benefit to this Temple when during his administration he was able, for example, to solve structural problems of the old social hall in connection with the new school building under way. His love for this Temple was so deep that he referred to it not as his second home, but as his home. He felt it equal in value to his personal home and that the work he put into it was a way of life, one he enjoyed deeply. He especially loved the weekly Saturday afternoon discussions he had with Rabbi Stern when they discussed Temple problems together. The beautiful Mel Grabel Garden in the Temple, is a fitting memorial to this beloved man whose death was so untimely in 1966.

Leonard Wilson, too, was an excellent administrator, a man with leadership qualities who was able, with his strong nature, to pull people together to do a good job for the Temple. He recognized talent in people and was persuasive in bringing them forward and getting them involved.

The leadership of these two men was fortuitous at a difficult time in this Temple's history, for although building plans and fundraising were heavily under way, Temple life thrived. The Religious School, overcrowded as already mentioned, was functioning well under the rabbi's leadership, with the assistance of the part time student cantor and the part time principal, Lillian Adler. This was possible with the involved cooperation of a host of parents assisting with such tasks as clerical work, carpentry, traffic control, telephone squad, cooking of turkeys and *latkas*, boiling eggs, chopping *charoset*, polishing apples and willing to do any chore, menial or otherwise that was asked of them.

In 1955 Addie Prince and Dorothy Shulman were co-chairpersons of the Religious School Committee. There were 267 children in the school. Parents were not only totally dedicated to the school but were eager to learn themselves. With the cooperation of Sisterhood and Men's Club, holiday workshops for parents were an important part of running the school since parents were uneducated about Judaic customs in Reform and they and their children had to learn together. Classroom mothers and Sisterhood members would bring in table settings with the necessary religious objects to fully explain the meaning and carrying out of customs related to each holiday.

The need for parental education was best demonstrated when in preparing for the Succot celebration at that time, the rabbi found that although the *lulav* was in its place, the *etrog* was missing. One of the women had cut up the *etrog* thinking it to be the lemon for the Friday night *oneg shabbat*. Everyone rallied together to solve the problem. A congregant telephoned her mother in Brooklyn. She called a nearby Talmud Torah to ask if they could spare an *etrog*. They could and a courier brought it to New York and then to Westfield by bus, arriving at Temple before sundown.

Parents arranged for the teachers to come together regularly for coffee breaks between sessions, providing them with coffee and snacks and utilizing this time for important discus-

sions about the children, the problems of the school, the curriculum and many other meaningful matters.

During a Purim festival, the old social hall was turned into a beautiful decorated fair, with Paul Shapiro supplying free toys for all the children in the school. Marvin Gershenfeld was the official photographer both for the school and the Temple through the years, giving his time, service and materials at no cost.

It was a time of extraordinary devotion inside the classroom. Peggy Ackerman, a teacher in the Religious School to this day, has been on the staff since 1957. She is described as having a "fabulous" way with children and through the years played an important part in the lives of the children growing up in this congregation.

Edith Tenenbaum, a teacher for eighteen years and Molly Halprin, a teacher for twenty-six years, have also been exceptionally devoted to the school.

Estelle Finkelstein became the first Hebrew teacher in the school. It was a rarity for anyone to know Hebrew then and to be able to teach it. There was much excitement and joy when Estelle joined the staff on a part time basis.

The children of the Religious School adopted a six year old foster child, Ame Sellem, through the Keren Ami Fund, a meaningful learning experience for the children in the timeless tradition of *mitzvol*. Temple teenagers served as aides in the classrooms. Youth Group members participated in a program of the World Union for Progressive Judaism that aided youths in Israel, India, Poland, So. Africa and the United States. Youth group members also visited a Newark Hebrew Sheltering Home where they gave a Chanukah party, supplying entertainment, refreshments and grab bags.

The Men's Club invited a speaker from the Anti-Defamation League, had Bible brunches with the rabbi and managed to raise \$10,000 in advertising ads for their journal to help keep the school solvent.

Other activities included a Hebrew class for adult beginners, taught by Harry Kaplan. The Sisterhood Judaica shop was now expanded into a full fledged gift shop. Sisterhood also promoted the Serv-A-Committee whose first cancer dressing group met in the Temple library, where they were assisted by senior citizens who had been thoughtfully invited to participate in this worthwhile project. The Sisterhood's Civic Affairs Committee publicized United Nation's seminars and hosted Westfield's Needle Work Group. Sisterhood members Muriel Malkin, Shirley Shapiro, Joyce Grabel and Kiki Kass, who were members of the Westfield Garden Circle, worked very hard outdoors to beautify the Temple grounds. It is of interest to note that the founding of this garden club by Temple members was the direct result of exclusion from other garden clubs in town.

In an effort to save money, the official Temple bulletin, an important source of cohesive communication to the membership, was mimeographed and mailed from the Temple office by staff and with the dedicated assistance of congregants.

The Camp Institute For Living Judaism, the summer camp of the U.A.H.C. in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, became a factor in the Jewish growth of many of the Temple's children.

The official dedication of the new Religious School building took place on May 3, 1959. Fourteen boys and girls were confirmed, including Ellen Lehr, daughter of Edith and Fritz Lehr. Ellen is now married, the mother of two children, and actively dedicated to work in her own Reform Temple in New Brunswick. In the fall, at the opening of the Religious School, four hundred children attended, a record number.

Men's Club had its first Retreat at Great Barrington where inspiration served to renew commitments and dedication to Judaism, to inner repose and to the many needs of Temple. The Sisterhood was preparing to celebrate its tenth anniversary and plans were made to see "The Sound of Music." The bus trip, the play, donor lunch and fundraising were all possible for the sum of \$21. Sisterhood also hosted representatives from more than thirty Sisterhoods of the New Jersey Federation of Temple Sisterhoods where a report was given about project "braille." Sisterhood was part of this program that had certified forty-one brailleists who had completed transcriptions of more than 20,000 pages of braille, in addition to teaching it.

In January of 1958, under the auspices of the Westfield Brotherhood Committee, an affiliate of The National Conference of Christians and Jews, honorary Temple president David Schimmel was co-chairman when Dr. Martin Luther King was invited to speak at the Westfield High School. The Temple bulletin commented: "Dr. King is the one person most responsible for the peaceful and successful outcome of the bus boycott of Montgomery. He has become the most recognized and admired exponent of civil rights in the country." By mid-October newspapers were headlining the events of Little Rock and Atlanta.

In 1959, a special session of the Board of Trustees of this Temple resulted in the announcement that a study for the long range needs of the congregation would continue to be an important part of that board's responsibility. Coming at the end of the first decade of the Temple's existence, such foresight on the part of the board was appropriate to the times, for the next decade of the sixties was to be a period of turmoil for the United States, for world Jewry and for Temple Emanu-El.

The search of the fifties for self-identity had served an important need and now had to give way to new and even greater concerns. How Temple Emanu-El met the challenges of the sixties is the subject of the next section of this book.



*Behold, how good and how lovely it is when
people dwell together in unity.*

(PSALM 133:1)

DECADE II: THE SIXTIES

Reaching Out to World Communities

To serve as a reminder, a montage of the early sixties may be helpful in setting the scene and creating the context for understanding the Temple's concerns and development during that wild and terrifying decade.

The early 1960s saw the rise of Black militancy, expressed through the famed sit-ins and Martin Luther King marches. The U-2 incident and the victory of the Cuban revolution found the United States in shock over the delayed realization of Fidel Castro's political ideology, these events creating an uneasy atmosphere of world tension. The presidential debates between Nixon and Kennedy and the Nixon-Khrushchev "kitchen debate" in Moscow were events that seemed to point up the contrast between the old and the new hope for a better world that the young, handsome Knight of Camelot had to offer. In 1961 John F. Kennedy became president and the accent now was on youth.

This did not, however, ease anxiety as the Berlin Wall went up and Russia orbited the first manned spaceship with astronaut Yuri Gagarin. The Freedom Riders, seven Blacks and six white CORE members, left Washington for the deep South, challenging segregation in interstate bus terminals and meeting with "incidents" wherever they went. Failure of the Bay of Pigs had America's young president in tears. Concern for Saigon's sovereignty resulted in the decision of the United States to send military "advisors" there.

The theme of "the medium is the message" created an awareness that the way people get information, rather than the information itself, is the key fact in history. The phenomenal success of "The Beatles" revolutionized the world of music and was considered by sociologists to be an anti-establishment statement. Mary Quant's London creation of the miniskirt gained instant success in the United States and, to a lesser extent but nonetheless titillating the nation, the fashion nudity of Rudi Gernreich's topless bathing suit was much talked about. This was the beginning of nudity in the theatre and even in the streets as some women were quick to follow fashion with the wearing of "see-through blouses." Grossingers in the Catskills started the new social phenomenon of the "singles weekends" and the age of the "new morality" was ushered in with hippies, the pill, and the newly coined "copping out."

On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy's assassination sent the nation and the world into mourning, resulting in frustration, anger, suspicion and hopelessness. Camelot had died with the young president.

About this time, Saul Bellow's book *Herzog* became a best seller and was talked about by intellectuals throughout the country and was a particularly popular topic for the rabbinical sermon. It was also a focus for the Temple's discussion groups. Herzog, an intellectual symbol of universal man, becomes immobilized with despair as the burden of his Jewish conscience overwhelms him when faced with the difficulties of his life and times. Identification with Herzog was strong, causing great concern for humanity's dilemma. And this was only the early stage of the decade. The worst was yet to come.

A new vocabulary was coming into existence, its proponents attempting to stem the tide of the times, metaphorically speaking, the equivalent of the Dutch boy with his finger in the hole of the dike. "Relevance" and "commitment" were bravely doing their best and what better proponent of such words than Temple Emanu-El of Westfield?

Those people who were involved in Temple life found that in many ways the demands of Temple's ever necessary and familiar institutions made possible a "business as usual" life style. This proved to be for some a haven in the brewing storm. Rabbi Stern's 1960 spring lecture series dealt with the theme: "The Jew Through The Centuries – A Story of Change." Topics relating to this theme were concerned with such areas as religious ceremonies and concepts of God.

The Temple board was grappling with new problems of space and announced that the sanctuary had reached its capacity for regular Friday night services, with chairs in the aisles for overflow attendance. In December of 1960, at its annual meeting, the board approved an "Ability To Pay" dues program, its innovation predictably causing resistance among a vocal number of people, but gradually falling into place as a workable and justifiable solution to the Temple's economic problems.

The Religious School innovated a program for ninth graders with members of the congregation lecturing on Jewish subjects of interest. Seymour Gross, for years actively involved with the Religious School Committee, held discussions on "Comparative Religions" and Eva Schnitzer, editor of a book on the history of Jews in Eastern Union County, spoke on that subject. Lee Prince, with Seymour Gross, spoke on "Science and Religion." Lee Prince, for a period of six years, had been teaching in the Religious School where his topic, "Ethics of the Fathers," was extremely popular.

Lil Lerman, the second Sisterhood president and one devoted to many aspects of Temple life, was installed as treasurer of the New Jersey Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, with ten members of the Sisterhood attending the convention and proudly seeing Lil achieve this honor for herself and for this Temple.

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, of which the Temple has been an affiliate since its inception, was expanding to new headquarters at the House of Living Judaism, 838 Fifth Avenue, New York City, and the Temple marked the occasion with ceremony at a *Shabbat* Service.

In April of 1960, Helene Wyatt, one of the earliest teachers in the Religious School made an appeal to the members to open their homes to underprivileged children for a period over the summer. This was a time of idealism when Jews were supporting such civil rights groups as SNCC and CORE who were receptive to white cooperation. Although these organizations and Jews were later to become mutually distrustful, this early period was a time when people believed that their personal commitment could improve life for the downtrodden. This was especially reflected in the opening of homes to underprivileged children, which many of the congregants were happy to do.

Irene Kornblatt, who devoted herself to teaching dancing to the girls of the Religious School, a popular activity, escorted several girls to New York City to take part in a dance festival of Jewish schools, with 2000 youngsters participating.

Dorothy Mallor, a second grade teacher in the Religious School, observed that two children were experiencing learning difficulties. As a result of her interest, a class for retarded children was started on Saturday mornings, open to any child in the Union County area. Her son Andy would come down each week to help dress the children. Dottie taught a Jewish curriculum to six children who were responsive and benefited noticeably from this special environment. The class flourished for three years and was a valuable service to this and the larger community.

In 1961 Reverend Elmer Talcott became the newly installed minister of the Community Presbyterian Church of Mountainside. He was to become a good friend of Temple Emanu-El and its rabbis, with pulpit exchanges, sharing of worship service and other common interests.

Rhonda Brown and Andy and Jane Mallor were winners of an essay contest open to all of Union County. Temple's Religious School won three out of seven possible prizes, and these young congregants made everyone proud of them and of the school.

The Men's Club invited to their meeting Rabbi Israel Dressner of Temple Shaarey Shalom of Springfield. He and other rabbis were the controversial participants of the "Freedom Rides" to the South, along with other white and Black clergymen. He was asked to speak on their motives and accomplishments.

In December of 1961, a call for talent appeared in the *Bulletin* for an "Evening of the Arts," to be presented in January, 1962. The Adult Education Committee decided on a new venture into the world of Sholem Alechem with "A Tale of Chelm," directed by Jack Rockett, and a second play "Bontcha Schweig" by I. L. Peretz. Besides the two plays and because of the feeling of Rabbi Stern and Cantor Decker that a vital force in music was

needed to make the congregation aware of what could be done with Jewish music, there was to be a choral recital and a dance recital. Florence Horne, with many years of musical experience, directed a Temple chorus, bringing them to a state of dazzling and professional performance. Dances of Israel were performed by the ninth graders under the direction of Helene Wyatt and Esther Intriligator. Many of the congregants had never acted before, yet under Jack Rockett's direction they gave a superb performance. Hank Zimmerman became so enamored of acting that he took lead roles in both plays.

With the great success of this evening, the following year "A Second Evening In The Theatre" was presented. Gerry Weiss directed and played the lead part in "Holiday Song" by Paddy Chayefsky and another choral recital of Hassidic, Yiddish folk, sacred and Israeli music was beautifully directed by Florence Horne.

The significance of these events might be lost if not seen in the context of those earlier years. The strength and sophistication and enormous pool of talent that the Temple can draw on today was simply not the case then. It was a small congregation with limited resources, and when people attempted to make a contribution to the Temple, it took much ingenuity and a huge stretch of one's self to rise to the occasion. One talented person such as Florence Horne, for example, was able to help untrained people, who loved to sing, develop skills and improve their performance. The excitement they felt about themselves was transmitted to the audience whose gratitude was unstinting. When an event occurred, the entire congregation was involved either as participant or enthusiastic supporter. With the size and scope of the Temple's activities today, no single activity is likely to capture the interest of the entire congregation at one time as it did then. Of course, the Temple has so much more expertise and resources to offer today because of its size and sophistication, but those early years are still beautiful to those who remember.

In January of 1962, a Citizen's Housing Committee, dedicated to the purpose of securing equal opportunity in housing for citizens of all colors and creeds, was to be formed. It was composed of residents of the Westfield area, including Mountainside, Scotch Plains and Fanwood. Subsequently, a symposium entitled "Equal Opportunities in Housing" was to follow Friday night services at Temple, moderated by Adult Education chairman, George Friedman, and including Helen Jackson, Rabbi Stern and realtor Nancy Reynolds.

February was also a time when thirteen year old Lynne Jacobs cared about the much publicized James Meredith, a southern Black who was attempting to break the barriers of the University of Mississippi. She wrote to him: "—Over the doors of my public school is written: 'Be courageous, have faith, and go forward.' I say then now to you—be courageous, have faith and go forward, remembering that God is with you because you are right. One more thing, please remember that if you're ever anywhere near here, you will always be welcome in this town. If you have time, please write to me. . . ." He replied with much

appreciation for her kind words and both their full letters were printed in the *Temple Bulletin*.

In October of 1962, Mr. Leo Pfeffer, the articulate Chief Counsel of the American Jewish Congress and leading figure in a series of court cases leading up to the Supreme Court decision about prayer in public schools, was invited by the Adult Education Committee to give four lectures on "Church-State Relations for the United States." His brilliant presentations were enthusiastically received by a large audience.

All the above described events are intended to reflect the mood of the Temple during those early sixties as it was looking for direction in trying to cope with the pressures of the times. It may in part explain the sense of shock that was felt by an overwhelming majority of the members of Temple when the following event occurred.

In 1962 Rabbi Stern announced that he would be leaving. Ike Daniels, president of the Temple at the time, had been extremely close to the rabbi and devoted to him. Rabbi Stern felt the same way about Ike and has acknowledged how well they worked together. No one was more stunned than Ike, yet he had to cope with the shock waves in the Temple while dealing with his own emotions.

Interestingly, the rabbi's explanation for his departure related to the UAHC, for he felt that by accepting his new post in Scarsdale, he would be in a better position to influence his new congregation to greater support of the UAHC. He explained that this was of major importance to the larger cause of Judaism and that he had not been able to bring Temple Emanu-El to that point. Word of his departure spread rapidly, even to distant vacationers. There was no possibility of reversing his decision, although many tried and the congregation had to face the reality and deal with its separation anxiety.

Although the separation ultimately proved to be a valuable personal growth experience for many congregants who now had to determine, as adults, their commitment to Judaism and not to a rabbinic father figure, it did not easily happen. Until Rabbi Charles Kroloff arrived in 1966, miraculously possessing the right combination of personality traits and abilities that made it possible for him to unite this congregation, there was a four year period of such intense confusion and difficulty that the personal lives of many congregants were in anguish because of it.

One stabilizing influence must be noted here. It was at this time that the board made a decision to hire on a full time basis Cantor Don Decker who had been serving the Temple as a part time cantorial student since 1960. He was a student at the Hebrew Union College as were the part time cantors serving the Temple before that time. With the departure of Rabbi Stern imminent and because of the growth of the Temple, it seemed timely to engage the services of a full time cantor. Don's gentle and sensitive nature and appealing voice were well appreciated and the possibility of enjoying a continuity in one area of religious leader-

ship served an important need of the congregation. Don and his wife Marcie, with her exciting professional career as a singer, were an attractive and appealing couple. They and their two children Elisa and Marlon were a welcome addition to the Temple family. It



Cantor Don S. Decker

became a common occurrence for congregants to trek to New York to see Marcie's performances in musicals such as "Milk and Honey" and "Man of LaMancha." In 1962 a bus load of ninth graders from the Religious School went to see "Milk and Honey", the Men's Club sponsoring transportation expenses.

The twenty-one years ahead were to demonstrate that the decision to hire Don Decker as cantor turned out to be a remarkably good and important one. Don's tenure, the longest thus far of any spiritual leader, influenced a generation of Bar and Bat Mitzvah children who cherish long lasting warm feelings for him. He proved to be a warm and compassionate person, also demonstrating loyalty and devotion to the congregation. He was to assist many families in need, instruct hundreds of congregants through the Hebrew courses he was to offer and also assist in pastoral work through his visits to hospitals.

Some review of this Temple's ritual structure needs reexamination. Harry Kaplan and Sid Koorse were ritual committee chairmen who helped to guide this Temple through many stormy debates on the thorny issue of ritual practices. Both men are particularly noted for their devotion to this Temple and served in many capacities, with Harry Kaplan renowned for his blowing of the Shofar every Yom Kippur.

The "battle of the *yarmulka*", for example, is one that flares up regularly and requires newly phrased interpretations. However, it is the overriding philosophy of the ritual committee not to fragment the community and its environs, based on the earlier philosophy of maintaining the uniqueness of Temple Emanu-El's liberal-traditional spectrum. Compromise, therefore, is necessary as often as possible.

Traditionalists, such as Mel Intriligator and Fritz Lehr and others, always gravitated toward involvement with the ritual committee in order to create an environment in the sanctuary that was compatible with their feelings and that of others. Such influence has succeeded in maintaining the traditional strain within the Reform context.

The ritual committee's structure, as that of the congregation itself, might be compared to the varied components of Israel's society. There are cultural Jews, traditional-ritual Jews, liberal Jews and those Jews whose identity revolves around Peoplehood. When Rabbi Azriel Grishman arrived in 1962 to replace Rabbi Stern, this was the situation at Temple Emanu-El. Rabbi Grishman, with his unusual style, was unable to unify these elements. The evangelistic fervor of his sermons and prayers, his eyes closed and arms imploringly raised heavenward, and his insistence on the congregation's recitation of the Ten Commandments as part of every service, were startling to most people, although not to all for he did have his admirers.

At the same time a major new building program, to be discussed more fully later, was causing further exacerbation of the situation. A large number of the congregants, unable to relate to the rabbi, were unwilling to make a commitment to the essential building program. A lingering sense of displacement and dissatisfaction that followed Rabbi Stern's departure probably was also underlying the emotions of the time.

The divisiveness in the Temple was very disturbing. Esther Intriligator was editor of the *Bulletin* at the time. Probably because of her uniquely warm and open personality, she

somehow became a clearing house for soothingly dealing with emotionally aroused congregants. She developed a forum in the *Bulletin* for airing complaints and published a number of letters as well as guest editorials by congregants. Her direct yet friendly personality also enabled her to deal successfully with the beleaguered rabbi. Rabbi Grishman's departure, apparently the only solution to a hopelessly entangled bind, took place in June, 1964.

Early in 1960, a small group of concerned congregants had met to discuss the "State of the Temple." The group consisted of Mel Grabel, Sid Mele, Fritz Lehr and Harold Weiss. With the congregation at a near 300 member level and space inadequate for Friday night services and certainly Holy Day services, something had to be done. At the time Holy Day Services, if they occurred on the weekend, were held at the local public school or otherwise at the Masonic Temple in Elizabeth. Many felt these outside places could not create a meaningful spiritual atmosphere. Also, the social hall was unable to meet the needs of *b'nai mitzvah*, weddings and other functions.



Harold Weiss in 1963
conducting a meeting
concerning the new
building

The conflicts were many, however, since there were differences of opinion as to the potential growth of the Temple, some seeing 400 as an absolute maximum beyond which a split would surely take place. Projections for a 500 member capacity, which is what the building committee was aiming for, were seen by some as unrealistically high. Yet, virtually everyone realized that even with a moderate growth projection, there was a serious need for a new building that would contain an adequate sanctuary, social hall, kitchen, stage and possibly more. There were even those who wanted YM and YWHA facilities that would include athletic and locker room areas and a few envisioned a swimming pool.

Heated discussions in and outside the Temple were going on, some vociferously and extensively, straining close friendships and causing much soul searching. There was, however, a determined feeling among a certain small group of men and women that theirs was a grave responsibility which must be met. They saw that preparation by the few who made sacrifices in the past paved the way for the present. If others had not done so, there would be no Jewish community in Westfield that made it possible for other Jews to feel welcomed. They were determined that this would happen in spite of, in their view, the selfish reasons offered for non-cooperation, such as high building costs, personal business pressures and young families to care for. Responsibility for the Temple was seen by these dedicated people as equal in necessity to one's private commitments.



From left to right at
groundbreaking
ceremony of new
building in 1965. Dr.
Sanford Reiss, Miss
Gail Walker, Mrs.
Sylvia Sommerfield,
Gabriel Malkin,
Mayor Robert H.
Mulreany, Rabbi
Bernard M. Honan,
Dr. Francis Lehr,
Nathaniel M. Cohen,
Harold J. Weiss,
Bernard Heller.

There were alternate, modified proposals but the congregation finally approved the recommendation that projected the largest capacity, the present building, reasoning that if they built too large, they could live with it, but if too small, it would be a serious mistake.

With many hurdles to clear and with much emotion and inner reservations, the final building and financial plans were submitted to the congregation in 1963, three years after the first meeting. The estimated cost of the building was projected to be \$500,000, with a requirement on the advice of the professional fundraisers hired by the committee, that no construction was to begin until at least \$300,000 was raised. The congregation gave its approval and the enormous undertaking began.

Harold Weiss was officially established as general chairman, with Gabe Malkin in charge of all matters relating to the architect and construction and Bernard Heller responsible for fundraising, assisted by Fritz Lehr and Sid Mele. Because the original variance did not cover the proposed new building, a new variance from the township was required. Many

of the Temple's neighbors objected to the new large building and parking area. The building committee members made personal visits to each neighbor trying to work out adjustments with them that would meet with their approval. This, in addition to the intensive work of Irving Silverlight, resulted in obtaining the elusive and essential variance. Manny Brotman, well experienced in these matters, negotiated the mortgage with the cooperation and understanding of the Lincoln Federal Savings Bank of Westfield. Plans were then really under way.

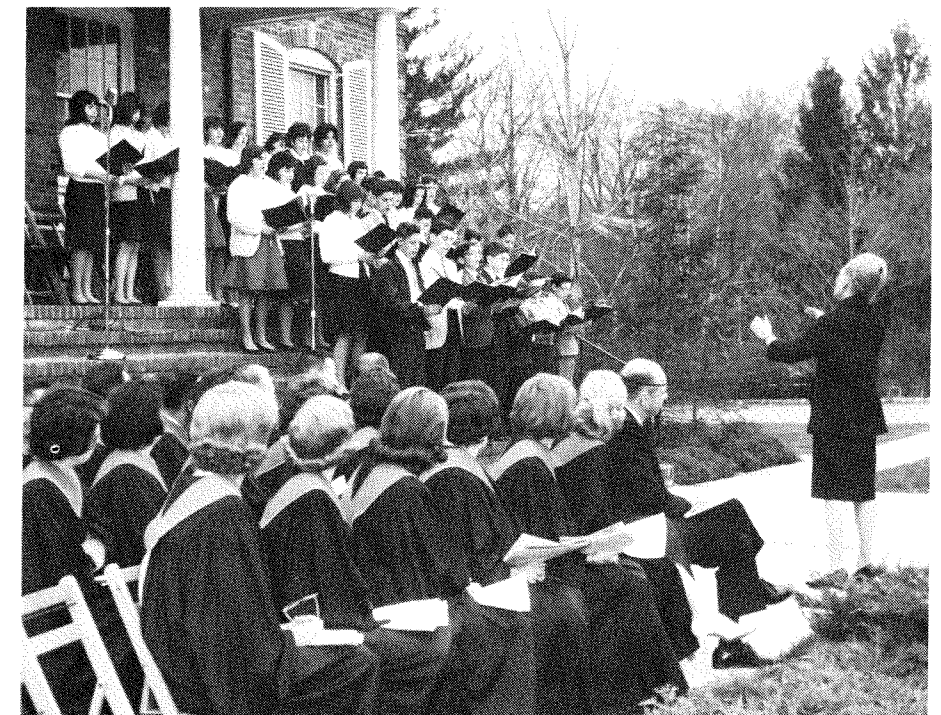


From left to right: Seymour Kreuger, Rabbi Charles Kroloff, Harold Weiss, Gabe Malkin laying the new building corner stone in 1966. The event was also commemorated with the inclusion of a capsule in the building wall.

With the Temple membership at this writing at 800 families and with seating at the 1980 Kol Nidre service at 2000, it is clear that the foresight and dedication of the people mentioned above in providing the present Temple Emanu-El facilities, resolved at the time under crisis conditions, is a great tribute to them and to the congregation that cooperated in this massive undertaking. The new building was dedicated on October 7, 1966. It is a monument to those people who made it possible and is a reminder of their visionary determination that Jews have an obligation to build for the future as well as for themselves.

Other Temple activities were less strenuous. As an interlude of calm before presentation of later difficult developments, this might be a good moment to see what else was taking place. In 1963 the Sisterhood, with Annette Rindner and Shirley Ducatman as chairpersons, produced a successful cook book, "Look Who's Cooking." It contained home

recipes of the Sisterhood members, their friends and family and was a popular activity that absorbed the dedication of many people. It might be of interest to note that an introductory poem to the book, ended with the last stanza: "All a woman has to know/She'll find inside this book/A temptress wisely tempts her beau/By learning how to cook." Terry Kroloff recently referred to this poem as a "period piece," in effect a useful relic of the past that serves as a signpost of the times. The sentiments expressed in the poem evidently reflected the mood of the women at the time for there were no objections to it, nor as some have said, had anyone thought of objecting. This is particularly notable since, as reference has already been made, the public was also talking about the rebelliousness of women in the early 1960s who were adopting new behavior patterns. In any case interest in such timeless traditions as good Jewish cooking was a satisfying activity of the Sisterhood then as it is today.



Enid Rosenblum conducting the junior choir with the Mountside Presbyterian Church choir in foreground at ground-breaking ceremony in 1965.

In January of 1963 Sid Mele, in his "Message from the President," stated: "— Today we no longer have to define our role in the community. Our job is to develop and grow to fulfill that role. We must also assist in shaping and implementing the demands of our times. 420 plus families have said: 'Plan—develop—lead—administer', and we will. But your help is needed.—" This statement is a reflection of the kind of growth that had occurred by the sixties, that is, a transformation of the congregation from its stance of introspection and self-consciousness in the fifties to one of having a more confident identity and a readiness for outwardness and action-oriented concerns.

Congregants were gaining community recognition and this was always a boost for the Temple, as acknowledged in the Temple bulletins. In 1963, Jack Kutzenco was appointed by the mayor to the Board of Trustees of the Town Library and Than Cohen was appointed to the Executive Board of the Children's Specialized Hospital where he had long been active. Than was also the Temple's representative to the National Committee on New Congregations of the UAHC, a distinguished assignment. Morris Kamler, who was to be elected to the Town Council in the late sixties, had consistently since the fifties, created an unusual task for himself that benefited the people of Westfield. He is in charge of placing 265 American flags on display throughout the town for at least fourteen holidays plus other special occasions. His love for the community that he feels was good to him was the motivation that directed this particular interest.

In 1960 Sandy Reiss was the first Jew appointed by the mayor to the Westfield Board of Health on which he served for twenty years. He was also president of the board from 1977 to 1979. Joe Fox has also served on the Board of Health.

In 1963, a donation was given to the Temple of some beautiful old silver religious objects. This gift was the beginning of an awareness of the beauty and relevance of Judaica to Jewish life. The display of Judaica or the concept of a Judaica Museum had not yet developed in the congregation and was not fully to do so until the arrival of Rabbi Kroloff and the dedication of the new building. During the existence of the original building, art was considered extraneous since the Temple needed too many functional objects. Contributions from members, therefore, were generally of a practical nature. Sensitivity to Orthodox members who believed that art did not belong on the Temple walls was probably also a consideration.

Rabbi Kroloff's view was that the magnificent mosaics found decorating ancient synagogues in Israel proved such traditional prohibitions to be without factual basis. As a result attitudes began to gradually change. Through the years, many people contributed to the development of a fine arts program in the Temple, initially with Beverly Paskow as chairperson and most recently with Leatrice Minzter. Today, the visibility and attractive displays of Judaica have encouraged the contribution of funds by members for such purpose and the committee members serving the Temple in this capacity have combed the New York Judaica galleries for acquisitions and have also acquired the contemporary crafts of quality artisans noted in their fields. This attention to the esthetics of Jewish life has been a welcome and meaningful part of the growth aspect of the Temple.

By 1964, there seemed to be a ground swell of concern about the problem of intermarriage. The ingrained Jewish conviction of the sacredness of every human being is a quality of Jewish thought that is generally transmitted through the generations and Jewish children get the message that all people are created equal in the eyes of God. This fact of

Jewish life, plus the encouragement by Jewish parents of their children's participation in the community, in sports and school activities, as well as the broadening acceptance of Jewish children as friends by the children of other faiths, was seen as the probable basis for the growing incidence of intermarriage.

The larger Temple family at this time also became deeply involved in interfaith community activities. The Men's Club initiated The Ministers' Institute, a group that included twenty-five members of the ministerium, representing Jewish, Catholic and Protestant congregations in the area. Its purpose was to discuss problems of common concern and to promote study of comparative theology. Rabbi Eugene Borowitz was invited to speak on "The Rabbinic Concept of the Law," and "The Rabbinic Concept of God and Man."

An inter-community dialogue with the Community Presbyterian Church of Mountain-side was held, the rabbi and congregation exchanging visits with the pastor and his congregation. As a result of the dialogue, a "People to People" program sponsored by Temple's Adult Education Committee and the church was initiated, its purpose to commemorate the celebration of Brotherhood Week.

In the years following, nearly a dozen living room dialogue groups would be established bringing Temple members together with Methodists, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians and Episocialians to discuss such subjects as theology, Jewish history, the Holocaust and the State of Israel.

With the departure of Rabbi Grishman in 1964, Rabbi Bernard Honan arrived to take his place. Rabbi Honan was a gentle person, a Talmudic scholar from a yeshiva background, with a solid Orthodox tradition. He was devoted to study rather than the dynamics of Torah and the reality of Jews living in the world. As the congregation continued to grapple with the turbulence of the sixties, it became increasingly clear that Rabbi Honan was unable to serve the needs of the congregation and his departure was ultimately to occur in June of 1966.

In 1964, at the urging of the UAHC which was attempting to give direction to its affiliate congregations on civil rights issues and the problems of general nationwide unrest at the time, a Temple Social Action Committee was formed. Initially, Mel Intriligator was chairman and Jack Rindner, co-chairman, with Jack Rindner six months later continuing alone in that role. In the absence of any involved rabbinic leadership during this particularly difficult period, these men were obliged to take the initiative for such leadership and ultimately Jack Rindner's identification with social action was such that for the ensuing seven years he became the prodding conscience of this congregation.

This was a period when there was still deep sensitivity about the outside community, an attitude that was generally to prevail until the 1967 Six Day War when Jewish consciousness was to rise to a more militant stance. The Social Action Committee, faced with

this reality, took the position of a "go slow" policy in relation to civil rights issues since the Temple board denied the committee any right to speak out in the name of the Temple.

The committee was, therefore, obliged to concentrate on educational activities that would influence the social consciousness of the congregation. A "Bill of Rights" for all minorities was sent to the Temple members. The Temple building expansion was going on and one of the purposes of this action was to prevent discrimination in hiring practices at the Temple itself. Congregants were also urged to practice fairness in their personal business dealings.

Jack Rindner, whose untimely death in 1971 was a great loss to the entire community of Westfield and a personal tragedy to everyone who was close to him, came out of a strong Jewish background. It wasn't until the early sixties that circumstances influenced him to become a dedicated activist in the area of minority rights, his dedication described with great admiration by many as that of a zealot, a man of principle. He had had occasion to meet and socialize with a middle class Black family and that opened his eyes to the injustices they experienced in American society. He also had a strong reaction to the virulent way in which the Christian community was to respond to the Christmas issue.

Jack was the right person at the right time and his persistence was to give the Temple an outstanding and strong social action committee which, when compared to other congregations throughout the country at that time, attained an enviable record of achievement. Jack's style was cool and rational and his realistic determination to work within the system ultimately prevailed. Although Jack had been denied re-election to the board, he continued to work for social action until he was voted in once again.

The committee kept the civil rights movement alive in the Temple. Books were collected, with the assistance of youth group members, and sent to children in Mississippi. Jack attended the "March on Washington" and came back inspired to do something for the Westfield Black community. A meeting was held with Black leaders, attended by Jack and Annette Rindner and committee members Alan Goldstein and Diana Cohen. It had been their thought to suggest a legal storefront operation in the Black community. The Black leaders thought otherwise and their ideas were responded to with sensitivity. As a result of this meeting, after-school tutoring for Black children was established at the Temple and six months later, the program was moved to Cacciola Place. This successful program, directed by Diana Cohen, a year and a half later was taken over by the Church of Christ and is ongoing to this date.

During the time of the committee's involvement, other aspects of assistance were provided. Discussions were held with Westfield teachers and the guidance department about the needs of the Black children. There was resistance to this, but eventually this resistance was overcome and the school authorities became more cooperative. Also, a new low-income

housing project, an outcome of the establishment of the newly formed Community Development Corporation, with Rabbi Kroloff representing the ministerium and serving for many years as its Secretary, was under construction on Cacciola Place at that time. With Alan Goldstein's leadership, the Jewish community shared in the fundraising for seed money so that Federal funds could be secured for this project.

Activists Julie and Alan Gray made an important contribution to this community. They personally adopted hard-to-place children, including a Black child who became part of their family. They insisted with prophetic determination that their children were properly accepted into the Temple family. In spite of having their own large family to care for, they were also actively engaged in the community. It was through them and another couple, Phyllis and Arnold Gold of Clark, that Spaulding For Children, Inc. was established in Westfield, an agency dedicated to the placement for adoption of hard-to-place children. Spaulding has three offices today serving the entire State of New Jersey.

The Christmas issue, a subject of infinite sensitivity to both Christians and Jews, must be recorded here as one of the most traumatic periods of the history of this community.

To state the problem briefly: Compulsory attendance for all students had been traditionally required at the Westfield High School Christmas pageant and if a student was a member of the choir, he or she had to participate in the pageant regardless of religious inclination. Excused absences for religious reasons were not acceptable. The pageants were of a highly religious nature, comparable to what is described as a Passion Play.

Muriel Hyman, long a civil rights activist who was ultimately to become deeply involved in the anti-Vietnam movement, was one of the earliest individuals to bring the issue of the celebration of Christmas in the schools of Westfield to the attention of the Jewish community. Quiet efforts to bring about change brought no results.

By March, 1965, things had come to a head and upon learning of possible legal action by citizens concerning the Westfield High School Christmas pageant, Mayor Robert H. Mulreany, in the interest of civic harmony, offered the services of his Advisory Committee for Community Relations. Although these citizens were acting as individuals, the mayor turned to the Temple and suggested that the Board of Trustees of the Temple appoint representatives to work with his advisory committee, the ministerium and the Board of Education. Negotiations with this group were carried on by Temple members Fritz Lehr, Jack Rindner, Julie Zack and Sandy Reiss. At its October meeting the Board of Education explained that, upon advice of its counsel, its position was legally correct and there would not only be a continuation of the Christmas pageant, but that it was strongly considering a policy of compulsory attendance and would not accept excused absences for religious reasons.

As a result of this policy, two Westfield citizens expressed an intent to challenge the legality of the Christmas pageant in the courts. The Temple board continued its efforts to encourage a reasonable solution and appealed to the Mayor's Advisory Committee to intercede. A meeting was arranged and at that meeting, the Board of Education decided that attendance at the 1965 pageant only would be voluntary. The Board of Education requested that for the year 1966 continued "reasoning together" be accepted by all parties. In view of this, no suit was filed by the individuals who had intended to do so. Later, with the election of a new Board of Education, the situation deteriorated and there was no resolution of the matter.

During this period Fritz Lehr, as president, was obliged to take full responsibility for this awesome situation. He gained some solace in consulting with Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the UAHC and this was helpful, but not until Rabbi Kroloff came to Westfield the summer of 1966 was rabbinic leadership forthcoming.

Over a period of approximately nine years, the Jewish community was unable to gain satisfaction on this issue and had to face bitter controversy and hostility. When Arthur Sommerfield, an able attorney, ran for the Board of Education, he was defeated in a blaze of hatred over the Christmas issue.

Negotiations through the years were ongoing, and when the young Rabbi Kroloff arrived he, too, was faced with this fiery issue. Through the years, he tried to work through the ministerium with whom he had developed excellent relationships but to no avail. Jack Rindner once described his feelings about these negotiations. He said, "It was like sitting with a one way mirror; we could see them, but they couldn't see us."

In 1972, when the school board came out with an obscure statement of policy that seemed to weigh in favor of the rights of the Christian majority, Rabbi Kroloff encouraged the Temple Social Action Committee in its inclination that something had to be done.

A broad-based community litigation was organized, with over 100 participants that included Jews and non-Jews. Dr. Jane Spragg, a Christian who had been on the school board during the sixties, participated in this suit and was part of the negotiating team with Rabbi Kroloff and Sandy Reiss after the suit had been filed. It was her feeling and that of other participating Christians that the true meaning of Christmas was not being served by the kind of pageant that was presented in the school. They felt that this type of program belonged in the Churches. It might be noted here that the program included scenes from the life and death of Jesus as portrayed by great artists; these were re-enacted by the drama and art departments. This created a solemn religious atmosphere accompanied by Bible readings and Christian songs for which the audience was asked to rise.

Ultimately, hearings were held in the private chambers of Judge Lacey who decided that the pageant was not to be held during school hours and attendance would be on a volun-

tary basis with no one being penalized for not attending or participating in the program. To no one's satisfaction, this compromise was finally accepted.

It would be very nice to say that everyone then lived together happily ever after. It is simply not so and although peace was seemingly restored to the community on the surface, there were many bitter feelings and those who often bore the brunt were the Jewish shopkeepers in town, none of whom participated in the litigation. Many were boycotted and in some instances received threatening phone calls. Several of the participants were professionals whose offices were in Westfield and who probably lost a few patients or clients.

It was a time of great courage and co-attorneys in the litigation, Alan Goldstein, Dick Samuel, Bernard Turiel and Bob Eisenberg, devoted countless traumatic hours to solving the problem in an effort to avoid resorting to the courts, although there were many who wanted to be confrontive about it and were urging such action. There were, of course, also those Jews who were opposed to raising the issue at all. But the Six Day War had profoundly affected the Jewish consciousness toward activism. Undoubtedly, this was a factor in the consciousness of the Temple leadership at the time of the Christmas crisis when they acted with courage, sensitivity and dignity.

Yet, one significant hope for peace emerged following the Christmas crisis. There were a number of ministers and lay people who had not wanted the situation to go as far as it did. It was through their efforts that the League of Religious Organizations of the Westfield-Mountainside Area was formed whose purpose was to work with the schools and officials to achieve a better understanding of community concerns. Fritz Lehr was unanimously named as its first president.

In the midst of turmoil in the larger community, the attitude of the Temple's leadership during the 1964 to 1965 period was a call to deeper Jewish commitment. One area of internal response was to strengthen the Religious School.

Through the early years, as already indicated, the Sisterhood was responsible for the Religious School. When the Board of Trustees took over responsibility for the school, Diana Cohen and Annette Rindner had been serving as chairpersons. Seymour Gross headed a committee to review the school's future. Serving on this committee were Kiki Kass, Lilyan Weiss and Lil Lerman. The committee recommended transfer of responsibility from Sisterhood to the Board of Trustees and also recommended that the rabbi be more involved with the operation of the school, which had not been the case until that time. Mel Intriligator represented the board on the committee.

Following the departure of Lillian Adler, with the succession of new principals, Joseph Ehrenworth and Rae Hoffman, and under the Religious School chairmanship of Mel Intriligator, the school became more structured. Report cards were standardized, a formal curriculum was established and Hebrew became mandatory for the first time. Responsible

attendance was required and if absences exceeded an established number, make-up tests were given. The primary concern of the school at that time was to develop a recognition in students and parents of the school's importance. Under Rabbi Kroloff's leadership, these requirements were strengthened, leading to an increase in Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Confirmation was extended to the tenth grade, thereby increasing the total number of years of religious education. Emphasis was placed, with success, on students continuing their Jewish studies through Confirmation. Confirmation classes often numbered fifty or more students. Over thirty high schoolers attended Rabbi Kroloff's seminar for juniors and seniors on "The Jewish View of Sex, Love and Marriage."



Left to right: Phyllis Dimond, Arthur Kaplan, Howard Dimond, Jr., Toby Burke, Patty Dimond, Lou Rakin, Rabbi Jack Stern. The children of the Religious School presenting a UJA Children's Fund gift.

All these changes reflected a concern for proper certification, credentials and image improvement. This readiness for change was necessitated not only by the growth of the Temple but was a response to the demands of a more Jewishly developed congregation that wanted a high quality Jewish education for their children.

At the end of her third year, Rae Hoffman was terminated as principal and Aimee Neibart was hired, with Mel Intriligator remaining as chairman. It was during Mrs. Neibart's term that the school received accreditation from the UAHC which was the goal of

the process of changes described above. When Mrs. Neibart was to resign, Pauline Tannenbaum became principal with Charles (Bud) Bronston as chairman of the Religious School in 1974. Bud remained chairman until 1977 when Bob Fuhrman took over the chairmanship.

It should be noted that many other congregants were associated with the school and made important contributions to its development. Those who have been noted and all the others, too numerous to mention, were guided by the principle of quality Jewish education, a tradition in the development of Temple Emanu-El of Westfield.

The children's sense of Jewish identity and responsibility was deepening. The Social Action Committee involved the school in many activities such as minority rights and later Russian Jewry and congregants active in UJA work also involved the children. It was a time of growing concern for the State of Israel, reflected in the Temple's cooperation with the UJA. Herb Seidel conducted a UJA marathon at the Temple which also honored the UJA at a *Shabbat* Service.

Because of Rabbi Honan's Sephardic background, and with the cooperation of the Ritual Committee, in 1965 a change was brought about in the Hebrew pronunciation from Ashkenazic to Sephardic. The opinion was that it was fitting for the congregation to be in the same form as the rabbi. Although the congregation was initially mildly unsettled by this change, the realization that it would also bring the Temple into harmony with the language of Israel made the transition a meaningful one.

As the concerted efforts of the Religious School, the Men's Club, the Sisterhood Bible class and the leadership of the Temple brought about a deepening Jewish consciousness, there developed a more comfortable feeling of living in the larger community and a more open attitude toward ritual.

Being Jewish also meant caring about others. A message from President Fritz Lehr, in 1965 in part stated: "Whether we want to or not, we are involved. We are involved in civil rights and social justice programs. We don't have to be victims, but it is our problem nonetheless."

The responsiveness of the congregation to Fritz Lehr's leadership was positive as was its response to President Johnson's anti-poverty program. With funds collected from Keren Ami, a seven year old South Vietnamese boy and a five year old American girl were adopted. They received clothing, school supplies and family assistance. Contributions were also made to Ozar Hatovah, a group supporting religious school training of Jewish children in Africa and the Middle East. Supplies were provided for a one room mountain school high in Appalachia, as well as supplies for a rural school in Guatemala.

The name of Fritz Lehr has already been mentioned several times, since he functioned in numerous strategic positions of leadership. But nothing that has been said thus far adequately clarifies his contribution to the Temple. Fritz Lehr has been described as an extraor-

dinary man which is why the Temple Board awarded him, the only person until 1981 to be so honored, with the coveted Than Cohen Award for outstanding service.

Fritz was the complete Jew, a man of compassion and vision and having a sense of organization that permitted him to pursue the highest ideals of the Temple. He could do this while effectively working with people at the same time. Thus, he had that unique combination of qualities, the dreamer and the actualizer, functioning within a framework of justice and compassion.

Fritz thought of everyone. He wrote to the Temple caretaker to commend him for a simple job done in the Sanctuary and was sensitive to the young, this most poignantly demonstrated in a beautiful letter to Joe Spector who was president of the Senior Youth Group, complimenting him on a folk-rock Sabbath Service by the Youth Group, although as acknowledged in the letter Fritz had initially been apprehensive about it.

Ellen Lehr Brown in her eulogy to her father at the Fritz Lehr Library Dedication, pointed out that her father's admonition to his family was the guiding ethic of his life: "Pray as if everything depended on God; work as if everything depended on you." She described how during the Temple's difficult times, he had the support of a besieged but loyal board and a besieged but loyal wife, Edith Lehr. The complete Jew is also a man devoted to family, the recipient of their unstinting love and functioning at the highest level because of it.

Fritz's leadership during the deepest crises of this Temple—the Christmas issue, the completion of the beautiful Temple structure, the development of the newly established League of Religious Organizations, his devotion to Israel Bonds and UJA and other matters too numerous to mention, the engaging of and close association with Rabbi Kroloff—was one of the most outstanding forces in the development of Temple Emanu-El. Rabbi Kroloff was to describe Fritz Lehr's loss to him personally as that of a brother or father.

In the conclusion of her eulogy, Ellen's remarks would best describe the feelings of this congregation in remembering Fritz Lehr: "—'The hero comes when he is needed. When our belief gets pale and weak, there comes a man out of that need who is shining, and everyone reflects a little of that light and stores some up against the time when he is gone.' With the naming and dedication of the Fritz Lehr Library, the congregation has guaranteed that the spirit and light of Fritz Lehr will always remain a viable and vibrant part of the Temple he loved."

Rabbi Charles A. Kroloff became the spiritual leader of this Temple in 1966, arriving with his wife Terry and his three children, Micah, Noah and Sarah. He was thirty years old. President Lyndon Johnson had committed 3500 marines to Vietnam and opposition to the war was gaining force, demonstrated through lie-ins at draft boards and public burning of draft cards. Malcom X was assassinated causing a serious schism among Black militants. The Black Panthers were emerging in Oakland, California and the Watts riots gripped the

nation. The SNCC denounced Zionism, attacked American Jews and accused Israel of crushing Arabs through terror, force and massacre. Sit-ins and peaceful demonstrations became outmoded, giving way to militancy.



Rabbi Charles A.
Kroloff

On the homefront, the rabbi understood that there were serious problems in the Jewish community. A leader was needed who would support and represent the position of the Jews effectively and maintain ties with the Christian community. The new building structure was

partially up and the enormity of it seemed overwhelming. He was made aware that there were diverse factors and elements in the congregation who had worked effectively together in the past and that strong rabbinical leadership was needed to bring these elements together once again. Also, a rabbi was needed who could relate well to the youth of the Temple since that population had grown considerably.

The rabbi was challenged. After all, the Jewish community had established a solid base. He often, in fact, generously refers to Temple Emanu-El as "The house that Jack built." He feels that this Jewish community was fortunate to have had the leadership of Rabbi Jack Stern, one of the outstanding spiritual leaders of the Reform movement.

Rabbi Kroloff saw Westfield as an attractive community, the larger community as well as the Temple having an identity that gave it a stability often lacking in the suburbs. Westfield had the quality of a self-contained mid-Western town, in this case a colonial American identity, that spilled over to the synagogue. The relatively little turnover of the population gave the Temple an opportunity to grow, a continuity, rather than having to start over again with heavy membership changes. In Westfield, where a large number of people work within a thirty minute distance from home, their identity with the community is greater and they and the community benefit from this kind of energy and stability.

Rabbi Kroloff came with a strong commitment to Israel. Very few rabbis in the fifties voluntarily chose to study in Israel as he had done. This was not encouraged by the Hebrew Union College at that time as it is required today and young Kroloff was going against the grain when he chose to spend a year of study there in 1958 to 1959. He had been active in Young Judea as a youngster and had been to Israel in 1951 when he was fifteen.

Rabbi Kroloff grew up in Atlanta, Georgia in a home that was strongly oriented toward Jewish community life. His father was the Assistant National Director of the Anti-Defamation League and an excellent public speaker. His mother's family was one of the outstanding Jewish families of the South in terms of Jewish leadership with most of his uncles and cousins serving as presidents of organizations such as synagogues, federations, B'nai B'rith or ADL. He had strong, positive feelings about being a Jew in Atlanta. He entered Yale at the age of sixteen to major in philosophy and completed his rabbinical studies at the HUC in Cincinnati.

It is interesting that Rabbi Kroloff's background coincided with the diversity of this Temple's membership, for although he grew up in the classical Reform tradition in Atlanta he became a Bar Mitzvah at the Conservative synagogue where he also studied, since the Reform Temple did not provide such training. His inclination is traditional, combined with Reform philosophy and an intense cultural Zionist love of the Jewish people. It might be pointed out that when he and Terry spent that year in Israel, it was on a motor scooter which says something else about the rabbi.

Rabbi Kroloff feels that the historic circumstances of his background converging with the unique diversity of this Temple's composition allowed him the fortunate opportunity to give leadership to this community's support for Israel. This occurred through a whole range of programs that were Israel-centered, whether through political action or taking groups to Israel as he did in 1968 and many years following. He also brought into the curriculum of the school a separate course on Israel and tried to intensify support of the UJA and Israel Bonds. His goal was not only to help Israel, but to make Israel a central part of the lives of the Jews of Westfield since he felt that this would strengthen their own Jewish identity.

The community needed a strong leader without his being authoritarian, someone who had a direction and knew how to point the way to it and above all, organizational ability. He had to take charge of the pulpit, deliver good sermons and be able to work with people. Yet, as the rabbi will point out, there was a readiness in the congregation, on his arrival, for him to succeed. He came into the best of possible conditions; everyone was on his side.

All of which was fortuitous, for with the serious problems in Israel culminating in the Six Day War, the rabbi's multi-faceted abilities, were readily tapped for leadership and action. His affinity to the message of the prophets, that the themes of social justice require social action, found in Westfield a ready corps group of people preoccupied, even obsessed, with the desire to apply Jewish values to social action, an expression of the more universal side of Judaism. But there was a tension in the community between the activists and those people who wanted very peaceful relations, that is people who were not happy with controversy, and it was the rabbi's sense that his role was to disturb this complacency through his sermons, through committees such as social action and through links with the outside community that were brought into the Temple.

He feels that although in the seventies the Temple board was to take action requiring that the Social Action Committee get the board's approval for any outside statements or programs, the committee did function independently within the Temple family, and that even within these parameters much had been done and can continue to be done.

The rabbi is disarmingly frank about the more personal side of himself. He recognizes that his strength and organizational ability were crucial to this community in the sixties. However, the rabbi's strength, as that of any strong leader, was eventually to engender a backlash; that is, a group emerged that was to see him as too strong. Recognizing that his resistance to this development could cause a divisiveness, the rabbi sensed the need to make adjustments in his own behavior without compromising his principles. Ultimately in the seventies this awareness, together with the development of his interest in marriage and family counselling, caused him to look inward, a subject to be dealt with later in this book.

The thematic slogans of the Temple presidents when they held office can be a good barometer of the times in which they functioned. Looking back to 1963, for example, Sid

Mele points out that his primary concern was the continuity of the Temple. The internal stresses of the congregation due to the building program and the turnover of rabbis at that time caused him to focus his energies in that direction. Quietly behind the scenes, he talked with board members to determine their commitment to moving up the ladder of responsibility. The Temple was floundering and continuity was a crucial concern for Sid Mele. When Fritz Lehr was president his theme, as already pointed out, was greater commitment to the world communities and to the larger Westfield community.

When Seymour Kreuger became president in 1966, he saw the congregation as entering a period of consolidation. His particular personal qualities were suited for this important role. Seymour is a man of peace, a gracious and compassionate man who saw the necessity to create a peaceful administration, with the goal of bringing the various divided elements in the Temple back together again. He attempted to get the work of the Temple done without alienating people. His theme of consolidation was an invaluable service to this Temple for with things going more smoothly at the time, with a new and well liked rabbi, and with the new building becoming a selling point for real estate agents, the Jewish population of Westfield expanded rapidly. People were joining the Temple in large numbers as word got out that things were going well. Temple members felt pride in the new Temple building and in the congregation's new image of solidity and strength. At a ministerium dinner, one of the ministers took Seymour Kreuger aside to tell him how fortunate the Jewish community was to have Rabbi Kroloff. It felt good; at last peace prevailed.

A perfect interlude for theatre. In February of 1966, the Temple theatre group presented its first full length play, "A Majority of One," staged by Jack Rockett and starring Fran Crystal as Mrs. Jacoby, Gerry Weiss as Jerome Black, Stan Nathanson as Korchi Asano and Harriet Goodson as Alice Black. There were many others in the cast, all of whom gave moving and outstanding performances. It was theatre in the round in the old social hall, an innovation due to the removal of the old stage. With the aid of the inventive and ingenious lighting of Bill Turk, the results were professional theatre.

Other plays were to follow in the round and thereafter continue on the stage of the beautiful new social hall. The ultimate in theatre was achieved in 1969 when Jack Rockett, with Cantor Decker as musical director, produced "Victory at Masada," a music drama by Martin Kalmanoff, staged in the sanctuary as part of the Friday night service. The staging was unique, with performances played in the congregation hall, on the steps of the *bimah* and across the entire length and breadth of the *bimah*, and with dialogue also coming from the choir loft. The spirit of victory soared as great performances were turned in by Marcie Decker, Gerry Weiss, Harold Cohen, Ed Lewis and Don Decker, with Jeanne Goldstein choreographing the dances.

The relative tranquility of this period was to allow space for innovativeness. With fund-raising always a concern of Sisterhood and Men's Club, there were inevitably certain individuals whose particular talents or interests emerged or developed because of this existing need. In behalf of Sisterhood, the concept of the present day successful and prestigious craft show was initially the germ of an idea in the mind of Annette Rindner in 1966. This was before crafts were to become as fashionable as they are today.



Left to right: Betty Barnett, Bea Reiss, Annette Rindner at the first Craft Show in 1966.

Sisterhood was in need of a fund-raiser. Annette was aware of the growing interest of people in self-expressive activities at that time. Her initial thought was that the congregation would benefit from doing something together as a group and she came up with the idea of congregants displaying their handiwork. She felt their work deserved exposure and the first show was an exhibition of such work as well as a sale.

When this was first talked about, a network of people became interested and contributed useful information that was to help launch the craft show and contribute also to its development. There were numerous congregants who had been exploring the development

of their own talents and were receptive to this idea. Al Green, a talented and noted ceramist whose work appears in museums such as The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, exhibited his work in the first show. Al's beautiful ceramic plaque, a tribute to the memory of Mel Grabel, hangs on the Temple wall near the Mel Grabel garden.

At first, the interest was in utilitarian items that were turned into an art form, such as Jewish ceremonial objects for the home. The work of Ludwig Wolpert of the Jewish Museum in New York appeared in the first show as did the work of Maxwell Chayat, who was to be commissioned by the 1972 confirmation class to create the Holocaust memorial candelabra which can be seen on the far wall of the sanctuary.

The craft show also served to stimulate the personal interest of congregants and their children in this field, some of whom have ventured into private businesses and readily acknowledge their debt to the craft show. Certainly, the execution by Sisterhood women of the elaborate needlework tapestry, "The Development of Judaism" that hangs in the social hall was stimulated by exposure to the beautiful artistry of the craft show.

The concept of "form follows function" is best realized when one sees the creative *tallit*, *kipot* and other lovely handcrafted ceremonial objects in such popular use today. The Temple's craft show has had much to do with the development of taste and pleasure in the use of beautiful religious objects as well as other beautiful handcrafted objects, an important function in improving the quality of life for so many.

Today's craft show, "Creative Crafts," is one of the finest in the country and a successful fund-raiser for the Sisterhood. It is first in the State of New Jersey, with craftspersons represented from across the entire country. Many of today's most noted craftspersons were first exposed to the public in this show, and many anxiously seek out the Temple's craft show for their exposure. It is a museum quality show, manned by volunteers and not a booth show manned by craftsmen, an important difference in artistic standard.

Annette Rindner was the first chairperson of "Creative Crafts". Since 1966, it is significant to note the contributions of so many to this important Temple function, such as the families of the Sisterhood members who have worked closely with the shows, performing the labor of putting the shows together and acting as security guards, carting, cooking and even babysitting.

The succession of notable chairpersons and their committees who have assumed leadership for the craft show since its inception all added their unique talents and imprints. Bea Reiss, Barbara Gutmacher, Mimi Friedland, Muriel Malkin, Gladys Sandak, Grace Gutman, Louise Randall, Maxine Bradie, Liz Shapiro and Lee Schoenfeld, must be acknowledged for their extraordinary contributions to "Creative Crafts," a prestigious asset to this Temple and to the larger community.

Looking back at 1967 evokes memories of troubled times for Jews and for the country. In April of 1967 Rabbi Kroloff, at a *Shabbat* service, addressed himself to the Vietnam conflict from a religious perspective. He referred to the fact that military and political decisions were made by leaders in Washington on behalf of all Americans and then challenged the congregants to ponder whether it was proper to ask questions about morality with the nation at war and if so, what those questions would be. Although many in the congregation were shocked at what they thought was the rabbi's "lack of patriotism," some cheered. All, however, were to remember that he also said that the example and results of such violence would be back to haunt them in ways they could not then begin to understand.

The Six Day War in June was a catalyst that caused Jewish identity to surface with fierce emotion, surprising Jews themselves, surprising the world and surprising the Israelis. Everyone expected Israel to be wiped out and despair struck the Jews of Westfield as it did Jews everywhere.

The UJA leadership of this community until that time had been a loose, unstructured group of men and women who each year took it upon themselves to run campaigns, the women organizing separate campaigns as they do to this day. The leadership came from the Temple ranks, Lou Rakin especially identified through the years as running the campaign almost singlehandedly and earning the unofficial title of "Mr. UJA." Other strong UJA leaders to emerge from the Temple ranks were Herb Seidel, Al Finkelstein, Adolph Gross, Herb Brody, Stanley Sloane and among the women, Betty Seidel, Lil Lerman, Eva Schnitzer, Harriet Sloane, Estelle Finkelstein, Elsie Gross and Rita Kessler.

The Temple building always served as a meeting place for Jewish community activities and continued to do so when the Temple joined the Jewish Community Council of Westfield-Mountainside, an organization that was composed of representatives of all the Jewish groups in the area that had come into existence by that time. Its purpose was to coordinate Jewish activities since many of these activities were in conflict with one another; to act as a Jewish community voice, to jointly consider Jewish problems, to safeguard civil rights and to act as an organizing body for the United Jewish appeal. Ultimately, this group was to merge with the Jewish Community Council of Eastern Union County, and a year later with the Jewish Community Council of Plainfield, all these groups later to merge with the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey, the body now in existence to deal with those issues of common Jewish concern. Al Finkelstein was the first president of the original Westfield Council, followed by Shelly Glickman and Harold Wasserman.

The fact that the council was created as a structure for the UJA was fortunate. A week before the war broke out, Lou Rakin and Stanley Sloane, the latter now a national board member of UJA, but then a young emerging leader, called an emergency meeting at Stanley's home. A handful of men and women met and raised an unprecedented sum of

money to help Israel. When the war broke on a Monday morning in June, Rabbi Kroloff called Herb Seidel, and a meeting was immediately held with the rabbi, also attended by Herb Brody, Stanley Sloane and Lou Rakin.

A telephone squad was activated and within forty-eight hours everyone was contacted, resulting in an overflowing rally at the Temple on Tuesday night. Many Christians came, although the Jewish community's good friend Reverend Talcott of Mountainside was the only minister to respond to the call for support. That same week, at the Friday night services, an unsolicited overflow crowd attended, Jews instinctively wanting to be together to pray, to share and to find solace in one another. On both occasions, there was an outpouring of financial support, and from then on the Jews of Westfield-Mountainside knew without a doubt that they were closely linked to world Jewry.

The year 1967 was one of many challenges. At that time the Temple *Bulletin* was edited by Herb Ross.

The *Bulletin* erupted with controversy between Herb and Social Action chairman, Jack Rindner. A Black leader, Lincoln Lynch of CORE, had spoken at a brunch attended by over 200 people, sponsored by the Social Action Committee, Men's Club and Sisterhood. Herb, in an editorial, expressed his personal reactions to certain statements of Lynch. He stated that he was frightened by statements, such as: "There is a master plan on the part of the white community against the non-whites."

In a subsequent *Bulletin*, Jack responded with a call for understanding of the true feelings of a large segment of the American Blacks as presented by Lynch and promised to present other viewpoints in the future. These two views undoubtedly reflected the positions of the congregation as a whole, causing much controversy and heated discussion.

That year, Rabbi Kroloff gave a sermon on drug use and stimulants on college campuses and in high schools, linking the possible relationship of drug use to mounting pressures on college admissions. Vietnam was taking its toll on the homefront. Positive response to this and other problems of youth led to the participation of the rabbi with the Westfield Council of Churches in a special ministry to youth in the area, offering help to those, feeling caught in a crisis situation, needing someone to talk to.

The burning issues of this decade were so disruptive and confusing that Rabbi Kroloff deemed it urgent to have a dynamic adult education program that would educate the congregation to understand the many problems it was facing. He asked Harold Wasserman to serve as chairman and another golden era of adult education was launched, with Harold to serve in that capacity for six years.

The ecumenical movement of the Roman Catholic Church was of historical significance and was a subject for discussion in this Temple and a much talked about subject in Jewish circles. The Vatican II Council declaration on the relation of the church to other religions,

notably deploring anti-Semitism and calling for cooperation by Roman Catholics, required knowledgeable clarification.

Harold Wasserman had ideas. During their summer vacations, he and his wife Selma had taken mini-courses at Brandeis University where they came into contact with outstanding scholars. He became interested in Jewish history. His idea was to avoid "pop" speakers who were in effect entertainers and to expose the congregation to scholars of substance, even controversial figures. He thought that sharing food together would also be an intimate and important part of this experience and so he launched the idea of supper lectures and that was the beginning of popular, high-quality Sunday nights at the Temple.

Harold's first program was a series of Jewish-Christian dialogues with Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, a forceful speaker involved with World Jewry, Father Flannery of Seton Hall who had written a book documenting Christian anti-Semitism, Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum of the American Jewish Committee and a Jewish representative to the Vatican Council and lastly Rabbi Norman Lamm, the only Orthodox leader in the series and the only one who opposed ecumenical cooperation by the Jews. Rabbi Lamm's point of view, to be a people apart, was so convincing because of his eloquence that he singlehandedly counteracted the influence of the other three dynamic speakers. Harold Wasserman feels that Rabbi Lamm helped to make the series the great success that it was.

It is a tribute to this series that the near disaster of the first evening was overcome. At the first lecture, the Temple social hall was crowded, with many Christians in attendance. People were waiting, but no Rabbi Hertzberg was in sight. After frantic telephoning, it was discovered that a chairman's nightmare had occurred. Rabbi Hertzberg had forgotten his commitment, an unintentional oversight due to family illness. The new Adult Education Chairman, at his first event, looked out at the vast audience and threw the ball to Rabbi Kroloff. The rabbi, also disconcerted, but with a provocative question to the audience created an atmosphere that saved the day and Rabbi Hertzberg returned at another time, the series surviving the initial disaster with the entire audience intact.

Other speakers that Harold brought to the Temple were: Rabbi Richard Rubenstein, head of Hillel at the University of Pittsburgh. The rabbi, an existentialist, was one of the philosophical leaders of the "God Is Dead" movement. His contention was that God died at Auschwitz. His personal political philosophy was leading him toward conservatism; he was an admirer of Richard Nixon. The rabbi pointed out the powerlessness of the Jews who burden themselves with ethical dilemmas as compared to the Blacks who were seizing power through force. He was shocking and fascinating, but it was his aim to persuade Jews to be realistic about their position.

Rabbi Bruce Goldman of Columbia University explained the position of the students in the Columbia campus riots, a situation that was very disturbing to the Jews of this community at the time.

At Elie Wiesel's first lecture at this Temple, 1200 people attended, buses coming from all over the state to deliver people. Elie Wiesel's fee sounded prohibitive at the time and Harold Wasserman nervously took a chance in asking him to speak, since the budget could never cover his fee. But Elie was known, with people wanting to follow him and to touch him. The turnout was so overwhelming that the advertised coffee and cake were never served and no one complained. Money was made on this lecture and Elie Wiesel was to return four times and always to overflowing audiences.

Another controversial and very angry man to speak was Dr. Bruno Bettelheim, author of *Children of the Dream* and head of a noted institute for autistic children in Chicago. He was deeply upset by the college campus riots, with Jewish youth in the forefront, and he predicted an anti-Jewish backlash comparable to Hitler's. He showed his ever present passport to the audience, saying that he was ready at all times to escape a holocaust for the second time. These were indeed stirring times.

Harold Wasserman and his committee also started an Ulpan class, the only one in the area at the time. The first night 150 people showed up, a response that was never expected, with people lingering in the hallways.

There was also an exciting brunch series with Professor Robert Bull speaking on archeology and Rabbi Eugene Borowitz of HUC lecturing on the popular Jewish literature of the day. The brilliant Professor Howard Sacher also spoke. Maurice Samuel, the Yiddishist, spoke on "The World of Sholom Aleichem," and made the prediction that by the end of this century, the president of the Temple will deliver his/her installation speech in Hebrew.

These were turbulent times and people came out. They were looking for answers to perplexing problems and Harold Wasserman, together with his committee, made this Temple a vibrant and alive place to be.

In April of 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated, followed exactly two months later by the assassination of Robert Kennedy by Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, a native of Jordan. The violent death of Dr. King resulted in outbursts of violence in the cities, with Stokely Carmichael telling Blacks to "get your gun."

The U.S.S. Pueblo was captured by North Korea as a spy ship. The war in Vietnam was stepped up by North Vietnam and the United States military forces rose there to 549,000. Bitterness over the war was causing extreme tension in the U.S. Eugene McCarthy, with his anti-war position, scored big in the primaries and President Johnson announced he would not seek another term.

The SDS, led by Mark Rudd, emerged as a militant organization; student demonstrations became more violent. The Democratic convention in Chicago was the scene of violent riots, with Mayor Daley accused of using Gestapo tactics of repression.

The year 1968 was one of strikes with New York garbage men, New York teachers, New York police walking out, air traffic controllers staging slow-downs and the first U.S. postal walkout in history. Richard Nixon was elected president, a response of the "silent majority."

In spite of the turmoil the traditions of Temple life went on, contributing a sense of timeless solidity, a rock of dependability, the continuity of Jewish life and values. In March of 1968, the Temple celebrated a Jewish Music Sabbath in honor of Isadore Freed's contribution of beautiful Jewish music. His *Sacred Service*, consisting of twenty-two compositions, was given in its entirety after a brief service, under the leadership of Cantor Decker.

The children of the Temple nursery school, maintaining a friendship with the nursery in Kibbutz Hazorea, received a record from them, "Jerusalem, The Golden City." They were fascinated with the strange rhythms and voices.

In April, a community seder was held for seventy-five church women and that same month, a community inter-faith Memorial Service for Dr. Martin Luther King was held at the Temple, attended by 1400 people.

Rabbi Kroloff's Sunday night course concluded with the topic, "Where Judaism Differs." The *Bulletin* announced that the rabbi would be in Israel that summer directing the first UAHC Camp Institute in Israel. Six Temple teenagers participated.

In December of 1968, Debbie Zack and Monica Reiss appeared with the rabbi on the national radio program, "The Temple Hour," to discuss "What Israel Does To American Teenagers." The rabbi was heard each Sunday in December.

In December, word reached the Temple that Richard Greenspan, the son of former Temple members, had been killed in action in Vietnam.

To demonstrate how even the most well intended deeds can go wrong, a word here might be of interest concerning the above mentioned Martin Luther King rally. The community committee that planned this rally neglected to include the Black leadership of Westfield. Jack Rindner on a Friday night heard that the Blacks were meeting that night to plan a course of action, most likely a boycott of the rally. After Friday night services, and after Jack was able to learn where the meeting was taking place, the rabbi, Jack and Alan Goldstein went to the meeting. Because of Jack's close ties to the Black community and because of his ability to convince them that the oversight was an unintended error, he saved the day and the Blacks generously responded by joining the rally.

This was the generally prevailing atmosphere that faced Sam Mallor when he took office as president in 1968. He found that although an active Social Action Committee and the rabbi shared similar views in opposition to the Vietnam war, as Temple president and in spite of his own personal opposition to the war, it was necessary for him to uphold the rights of the large but not vocal number of congregants who felt differently or who felt that a religious organization should not be involved in such issues.

Sam's view was that the rabbi correctly exercised his prerogative, through use of the pulpit, to express opposition to the war, but the board never took a position on this. When a group from the Temple wanted to go to Washington, using the Temple as a rallying point, Sam refused to permit the group to identify itself as representing the Temple and refused to allow Temple funds to be used for this purpose. They were free, of course, to go as individuals at their own expense.

Sam Mallor was concerned about the Temple as a whole and about Temple life. The Temple was well run under his administration, and was on a sound financial footing. It was under this administration that an extensive congregational survey was conducted whose purpose was to help formulate plans and programs for the congregation and its members in their quest for a full and meaningful Jewish life. Sam was concerned about improved communication between the congregation and the Temple board and this survey, in addition to an innovation in the *Bulletin*, "Know Your Board," was an attempt to accomplish this.

There was a codification of Temple policies as approved by previous boards as well as the completion and ratification of a new Temple constitution. This, in particular, was a massive personal undertaking by Harris Gilbert, a major accomplishment of that board and a phenomenal job by Harris.

Another interesting development occurred during this time. For the first time, women were invited on the *bimah* on Friday nights. On the High Holy Days or at a Sisterhood Sabbath, the president of the Sisterhood would sit on the *bimah*, but this had not occurred at other times. If a woman was to have an *aliyah*, her husband was called up to receive it in her behalf. It was Sam Mallor's idea that if a woman had a role to play in the Temple, she should have an equivalent honor. It wasn't until 1970 that an *aliyah* was given to a woman, but Sam felt that it was an idea whose time had come and finding a rabbi who would listen, he was able to overcome the objections of the traditionalists and institute this revolutionary new idea.

Sam doesn't know why this feeling emerged in him. He notes that a few women on the board, notably to his memory Grace Gutman and Zelda Kahn, were extremely active and did an excellent job in every area of Temple life. Of course, it's just possible that Betty Friedan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, had by now begun to influence the consciousness of men and women. This consciousness did not really surface in Westfield until the seventies, a subject to be discussed here later, but the Mallor administration was the first to show any sensitivity to a situation that was to become a virtual revolution.

Sam's administration was a productive one and he points out that the excellence of his board, with four future presidents on it, Gabe Malkin, Harold Cohen, Alan Goldstein and Zelda Kahn, in addition to others of the calibre of Harris Gilbert, had everything to do with it.

It should be noted here that Rabbi Kroloff was convinced at an early time, as early as 1965 before coming to Westfield, that the war was wrong. He spoke out against the war from the pulpit very often and he readily points out that his right to do so was never questioned by anyone in the congregation, although there was vehement disapproval of his point of view.

The rabbi became active in one of the most effective anti-war organizations to emerge at that time, "Clergy and Laymen Concerned," and worked with them on both a regional and national level. Young men from the congregation were coming to him for draft counselling in the late sixties and particularly in the early seventies in larger numbers. The rabbi took a short course in draft counselling in order to be effective in this work. A few young men had their cars packed and ready to leave for Canada if they passed their physicals.

Most of the young men the rabbi saw sincerely objected to war in principle and others objected to the Vietnam war in particular. The law did not and still does not permit selective conscientious objection, so that it was a difficult situation to handle and the rabbi had to help the young men make the best case possible within the confines of the truth of the situation.

He accompanied a few to the draft board, speaking in their behalf and even saw a young man in jail. The entire range of options was discussed with these men, including alternate service possibilities and the rabbi is very proud that most of the men he saw received exemption based on a CO status.

Another area of complexity in 1968 was the effort of the Jewish Community Council, under Shelly Glickman's leadership, to develop a better structure of programming and facilities for the youth of this community. The activities until then had been loosely formed, with advisors such as Joel Bernstein in the early sixties and later Jim Ackerman and Shelly Glickman doing the best they could to interest the youngsters in a variety of activities. The goal of these activities was to encourage Jewish consciousness, but the difficulty was that the youngsters did not like being bused to either the Union or Plainfield Jewish "Y".

Shelly Glickman, Adolph Gross and Al Finkelstein, under the auspices of the Jewish Community Council, went to the Westfield YMCA and asked for use of their facilities on Sundays on a rental basis. The YMCA wanted the Jewish children to join their "Y" as regular members and rejected this request. It was necessary to explain to them that the "Y" programs were really geared for Christians; their Indian Guide program was held on Friday nights and other programs were in conflict with Jewish holidays. It was also explained to them that although the children wanted to meet at a facility other than the Temple, they wanted to retain their Jewish identity.

The power structure of the "Y" Board had no contact with Jews and with the ministerium traditionally opposed to the Sunday opening of the "Y", negotiations on this issue, although handled with great sensitivity on the part of the Jewish leadership, bogged down in a hopeless series of meetings that went on for six months.

It might be explained here that although the United Fund of Westfield supported the YMCA, efforts to get funding for Jewish children's activities from the United Fund had been rejected. The Men's Club and the Sisterhood of the Temple were providing funding for all community youth activities. There were no paid professionals at that time, only the dedication of Temple members such as Julie and Elaine Zack, Dorothy Ehrich, Saul Drittel, Anne Glasser, Chet Fienberg, Carolyn Weil and others.

One of the significant gains to come out of this experience was that, although Temple members were involved with the negotiations, the Christian community became aware that there was now a united effort of all the Jewish groups in the community, represented by the Jewish Community Council. A barrier was broken because the Jewish community became recognized as an entity, an important difference between that and the heretofore powerless efforts of individual Jews attempting to gain acceptance.

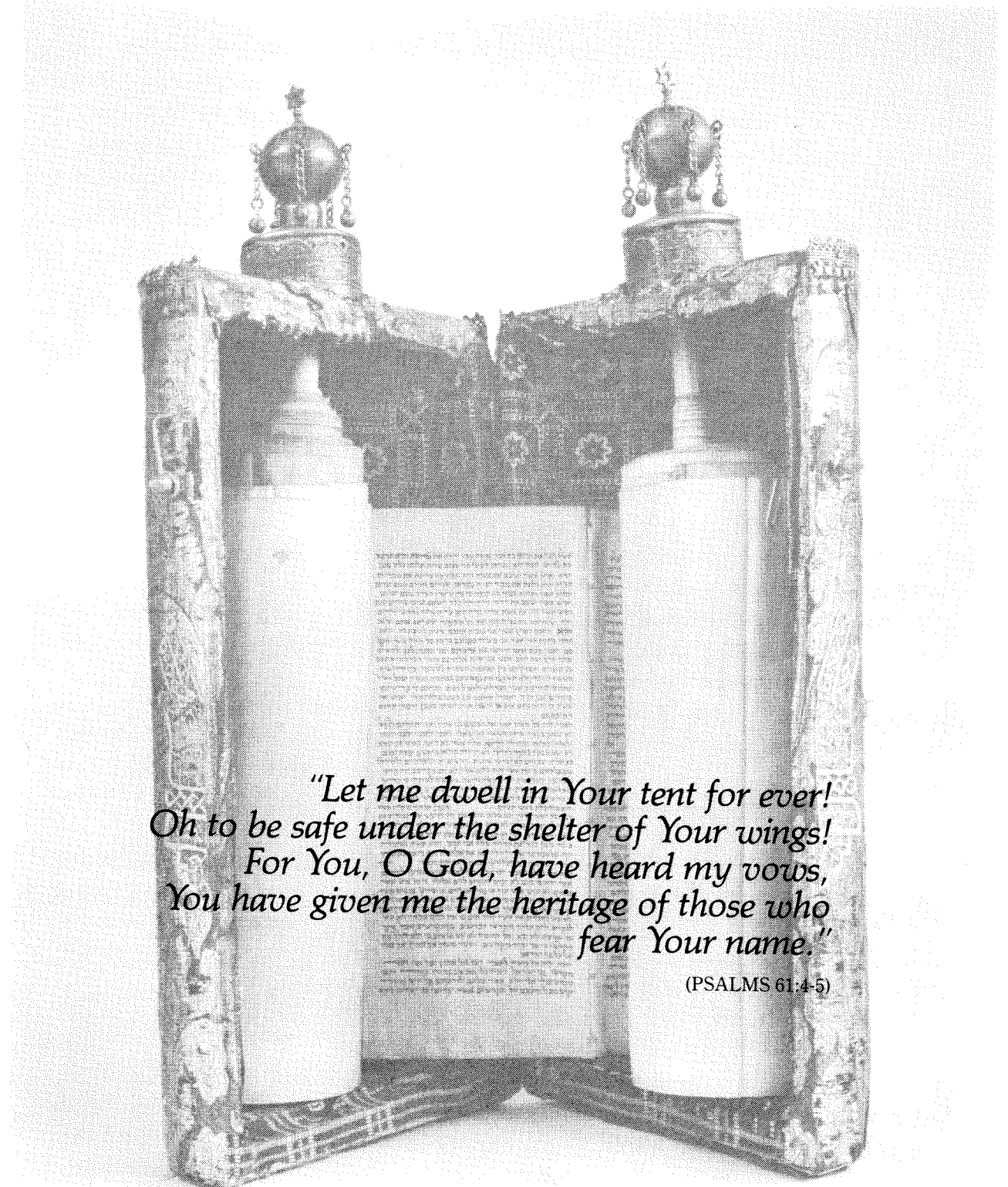
On July 18, 1968, the Executive Committee of the YMCA announced that leaders of the Jewish community would be informed that the facilities of the "Y" could be made available to them at reduced cost on a regular basis at mutually agreed times.

Shelly Glickman's efforts in this situation was a demonstration of his belief in quiet, unpublicized, behind-the-scenes personal contact with Christians of good faith. He believes that his Christian friends were helpful in resolving this difficult situation in a peaceful and satisfactory way.

The recently established YMHA in Westfield was able to secure funding from the United Fund, a happening undoubtedly rooted in the history of the sacrificial efforts of others who paved the way.

In 1969, Rabbi Kroloff gave a sermon on the dilemma of Russian Jewry. Elie Wiesel, who had been to the Soviet Union in 1967, was speaking out about this massive Jewish community that would be lost unless world Jewry responded.

The Rabbi's sermon did not fall on deaf ears. Diana Cohen's immediate response was: "What can we do?" The story of what Temple Emanu-El was to do developed in the early seventies and, although the theme of the next decade reflects another aspect of Jewish life in Westfield, the sixties' theme of reaching out to world communities, vis-a-vis Soviet Jewry, will continue to be explored in the next chapter.



*"Let me dwell in Your tent for ever!
Oh to be safe under the shelter of Your wings!
For You, O God, have heard my vows,
You have given me the heritage of those who
fear Your name."*

(PSALMS 61:4-5)

DECADE III: THE SEVENTIES

Alternatives and Experimentation

In 1970 Woody Allen, tuned into the rhythms of the times, said: "Nothing is working like it used to. Not only is God dead, but try getting a plumber on weekends." Irreverent and perhaps petulant he, nevertheless, was to become the comedic spokesman of a nation that could only hope to laugh at its dilemmas.

The Black Panthers were committing murder and getting away with it; the authority of the police was diminishing as they had to face accusations of violating the rights of demonstrators.

Four students died at Kent State University and the trial of the Chicago 7 made certain names familiar to everyone and uncomfortable for Jews – Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, and attorneys William Kunstler and Leonard Weinglass.

More than 100,000 students stormed Washington in protest of United States forces entering Cambodia. They could not reason how this horrifying act was to end the Vietnam War, its stated purpose to the American people.

In August of 1970, feminists paraded in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the Women's Liberation Movement was launched with the proposal of the ERA.

In 1971, the General Assembly of the United Nations voted Red China in and Chiang Kai-Shek out. In 1972 Nixon was to visit China.

In June of 1971, a quiet news item revealed a puzzling Watergate break-in. Nixon and Agnew defeated the McGovern-Shriver ticket. Very few people had heard of Watergate.

Henry Kissinger led the Paris peace talks with the North Vietnamese, frustratingly drawn out over demands for the size and shape of the conference table, yet ultimately leading to the withdrawal of the last U.S. ground forces in Vietnam.

Americans showed signs of yearning for the past, this reflected in Broadway's most profitable success of the season, a revival of "No, No, Nanette."

Bernstein and Woodward of the *Washington Post* broke the full story of Watergate; Agnew resigned over charges in another issue of illegally receiving monies. The nation painfully watched as Nixon and his people crumbled in defeat.

Reminiscent of the fifties, and significantly setting a tone for the decade of the seventies, campuses were again silent. A malaise of discouragement and alienation seemed to affect students, resulting in the attitude of non-involvement.

With the loss of the new frontier and the disillusionment over Watergate, a national passivity was to characterize much of the seventies. People were left to find a niche for themselves and they tended to do this in a practical way. As interest in the liberal arts diminished students became more concerned with getting ahead in life, their values becoming more materialistic. Politically, this attitude led more and more toward a conservative trend.

Since these societal changes are never isolated but cross over into all areas of life, Judaism was also to be affected by the emerging trends. The response of Judaism was a gradual recognition of this change and was to reflect itself in a decade of alternatives and experimentation in Jewish life. This was necessary if Judaism was to flourish as a viable life style and to be meaningful to people at a time when they most needed it. The challenge was there and had to be met.

No definition of a decade, of course, begins at the beginning and in examining the life of Temple Emanu-El in the seventies, events and attitudes of the time have to be seen in their gradual progression.

The role that Israel was to play in enriching the lives of world Jewry became poignantly evident in Westfield when in February 1970 the first Temple pilgrimage, led by Rabbi Kroloff, took off for Israel. Nineteen couples shared an extraordinarily moving experience that began from the moment of departure when the bus pulled away from the Temple parking lot.

The group's experience was so moving and filled with a spirit of such rapport that they came back not only enriched themselves by it, but somehow conveying to and sharing with the Temple family the excitement of what it meant to go to Israel. This event was an auspicious one to start off the decade, for it revealed how Israel was to inspire and reinforce the commitment of Jews to their Jewishness.

Gabe Malkin, who was on this trip with his wife Muriel, came into office as president in 1970 imbued with the spirit of that experience. As already noted, Gabe had been in charge of the architecture and construction of the new Temple building. His background of engineering in the building industry, of course, suited him perfectly for that role, and because he demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the demands of that undertaking, it was inevitable that he would be drawn onto the Board of Trustees and to the presidency.

During Gabe's term of office, the Temple plant was well taken care of for he brought his knowledge of the industry to bear on its needs. His view of his role as president continued in a similar tradition to the previous administration. He felt a sense of purpose in maintaining Temple life and that it was his duty as well as that of the officers to cherish and encourage this devotion among the membership. He wanted people to come to the Temple and to participate whether or not they agreed with the actions of the officers or the rabbi.

Gabe's attitude about the role of women in Temple life was also an enlightened one. Under his administration, Annette Rindner became the first woman to receive an *aliyah*.

During this period the traumatic "Spiro Agnew" incident occurred, another cause for dissension, some viewing it as an embarrassment and others a worthy and even noble chapter in this history.

The New Jersey State Committee of the Republican Party sought to rent the Temple social hall for a fundraising affair. There was some hesitation by the leadership about whether to rent for political functions and also because the rabbi and others were opposed to the administration's Vietnam policy. However, an ethical reluctance to refuse a rental to opposing views as well as the fact that the Temple's building variance was based on an agreement that its social hall would be available for public functions influenced the decision to rent the facility to the Republican Party.

When the Temple's Senior Youth Group heard about this, although they also were not opposed to the rental, they decided to hold a peaceful, non-violent demonstration against the administration's Vietnam war policy in front of the Temple. They asked the rabbi to join them and, after giving it thought, he decided to do so.

A young member of the group took it upon himself to call a radio station about the intended plans; because of this the incident received wide publicity on national radio and television, resulting in the cancellation of the committee's rental at the Temple.

Had the event taken place with the intended peaceful demonstration, the opinion was that a valuable experience would have occurred both for the public and the participants at a time when people were seeking every way they could to express their feelings about the war. Since events have proven that the power of the American people ultimately influenced the ending of the Vietnam War, this "Spiro Agnew incident" can be seen in the light of that history.

In September of 1970, the youth of this Temple received a boost to their lives with the arrival of the first professional youth director, a man who had a significant impact on them because of the uniqueness of his character and personality. A committee, chaired by Sam Mallor and including Jerry Staffin, Shelly Glickman and Saul Drittel, was interviewing candidates for this first important position; it was offered to Lennard Thal. A student at Hebrew Union College, he and his wife Linda were encouraged by the committee to make their home in Westfield.

This turned out to be a good decision for the Thals, who developed strong and longlasting friendships here, and for the youth program since Lennie's home, situated near the high school, became a warm and welcoming place for students to drop in for afternoon chats.

Although the youth programs had not done well for several years, Lennie was delighted to find on his arrival a strong group of juniors and a board of dynamic, intelligent and committed young people such as Jimmie Kestenbaum, Joyce Shapiro, Gary Lewis and Nancy Siegel. He also was moved by the support he received from such congregants as Shelly Glickman, who as Youth Committee chairman, worked so well with him, and Jerry Staffin and Harold Cohen whose labor of love was the construction of an office for Lennie in the youth lounge.

Lennie was able to inspire and direct the youth into successful programs that integrated them more fully into the life of the Temple, such as the Soviet Jewry candlelight march to be referred to more fully later. Also, through the Religious School, they simulated a kibbutz experience by helping the fifth graders to build a model kibbutz fifty feet in diameter in the social hall. They experientially went through the flight to Israel, including passport control, and finally arrived to "live on the kibbutz." Other activities allowed senior youth group members to work as counsellors to sixth grade youngsters, an activity that was repeated in subsequent years. Another innovation was planned college trips for young people going through the standard confusion of where to go to college. One year's excursion with *Shabbat* and Hillel experiences took the students through the New England area and other years, New Jersey, Eastern Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. areas.

A major activity, chaired by Sarah Intriligator, was work in behalf of Bangladesh refugees. The young people raised large sums of money by gathering sponsors for miles walked, an idea not common at the time.

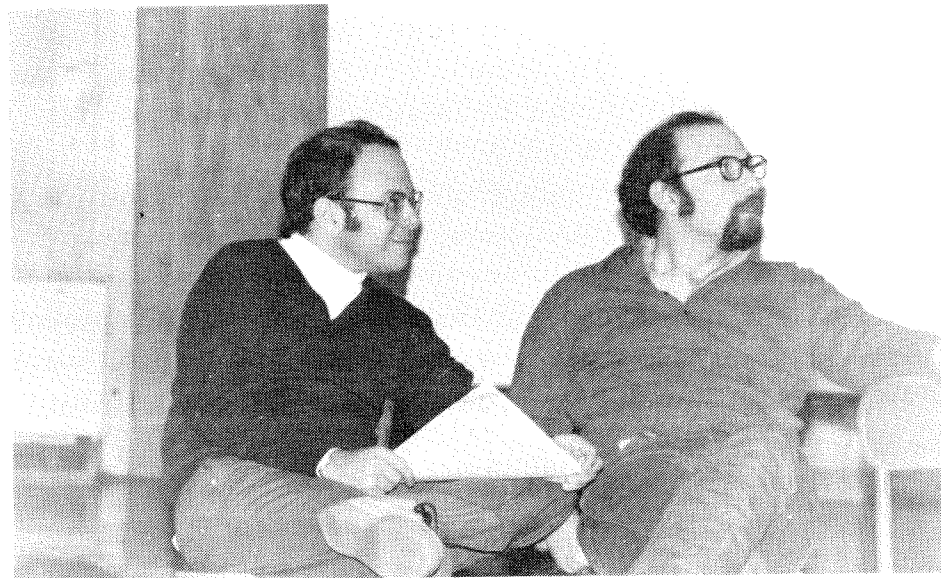
Lennie's impression of the youngsters was that they showed remarkable motivation Jewishly and intellectually, influenced by coming from homes that stressed education and achievement. In following their careers since his departure, Lennie feels that this observation has been borne out in large measure.

After Lennie's first few months at Temple, he was invited to participate in leading the religious services, giving sermons and involvement with adult education, all activities not standard to the role of a youth advisor. Lennie was at the Temple for a year when his training at HUC required him to have a rabbinic internship. In view of this, the Temple set machinery into motion to permit him to become student rabbi as well as youth adviser for an additional two years, thereby enlarging his own experience. He gave unstintingly of himself to the congregation at large. Rabbi Lennard Thal is now the Associate Dean of the Los Angeles campus of Hebrew Union College.

Lennie's successful tenure with Temple Emanu-El, established a precedent for his role and at his departure, Lennie was to be responsible for attracting Joel Soffin, now the rabbi with Temple Sholom in Succasunna, New Jersey, to the same position. He too was most successful in that role, contributing a great deal to the youth and to the congregation. He and his wife Sandy also made longlasting friendships at Temple Emanu-El.

Joel led the first *Bat Mitzvah* class for adults. It met one night a week for a year and a half of study in Jewish history, philosophy, literature and Hebrew language. For many, this was their first intensive systematic study of their religion and culminated in an extraordinarily moving service at which time each *Bat Mitzvah* chanted from the *Torah*. The participants were deeply grateful to Joel for making this experience possible for them.

Warren Stone, now rabbi of the Stephen S. Wise Temple in Los Angeles, recalls with great love his and his wife Elaine's experience in Westfield when Warren assumed the above role. He makes particular reference to the fine tutelage of Rabbi Kroloff, the friendship of the rabbi and his family and of the many congregants who took Warren and Elaine into their homes for *Shabbat* dinners, the youth retreats and trips, the many moments of dialogue and prayer during the *Shabbat minyanim*, the party given to him by the Ehrichs upon his ordination. Westfield was a nourishing and loving place for a young rabbinical student to start his life's work.



Rabbi Kroloff left,
with Rabbi Joel Soffin

Following Warren Stone, and in the same tradition of the now well established role, came Bruce Fenster who was appreciated by the youth.

In the summer of 1970, eighteen Temple youngsters went to Israel, three Temple families spent the entire summer there and Elsie and Adolph Gross moved to Israel.

A desire for creativity in religious services was realized at the High Holy Days when Barbara Feisman was invited as cello soloist for *Kol Nidre* and also for the interim service for Yom Kippur. Enhancing their religious experience, the Senior Youth Group conducted its own Rosh Hashanah service in the "Uptight" youth lounge, the services written by the youngsters and conducted by them under the guidance of Lennard Thal.

A new service for Yom Kippur, "Temple Teach-In," was created for the purpose of congregant involvement. Clearly, if the "outside" was drifting into alienation and passivity, Temple life would provide the opportunity for commitment and involvement, a traditional Jewish attitude of *l'chaim*.

Since the Social Action committee was always Jewishly oriented toward involvement, Diana Cohen's already stated concern for Soviet Jewry was now taking direction.

In late December of 1970, several Soviet Jews who made an unsuccessful attempt to hijack a plane to Israel were put on trial in Leningrad. The Six Day War had been an impetus for pride and consciousness raising for many Soviet Jews. The Leningrad trials created a realization among several Westfield Jews that the possibility of another Holocaust existed behind the iron curtain. This time there could be no excuse of lack of knowledge.



The March For
Soviet Jewry through
Westfield

In the absence of Rabbi Kroloff who was on vacation, Lennard Thal called an emergency meeting regarding Soviet Jewry. Diana Cohen and Annette and Jack Rindner attended; also Harold Cohen, representing the Board of Directors and Harold Wasserman who was Adult Education Chairman. Because Lennard Thal was Youth Advisor, he invited concerned teenagers Carl Buchner, Marty Feldman and Barry Cohen. Harris Gilbert was Social Action Chairman.

In January, 1971, a response to this meeting was the first public demonstration the Temple ever had, a march in behalf of Soviet Jewry through the town of Westfield to Mindowaskin Park, creating a major impact on the larger community and on Westfield.

Jewry. Ministerium and public officials participated along with a responsive and determined crowd of several hundred people.

In October of 1971, a second march as a continuum of this kind of action was conducted as part of *Simchat Torah*. A service was held at the Temple, followed by a candlelight march with *Torah* scrolls, culminating with a plea for Soviet Jewry in Mindowaskin Park.

Other activities of the Social Action Committee were to continue through the years. Soviet families were adopted, correspondence with prisoners of conscience and with refusniks were encouraged, as were letters to congressmen to help raise their consciousness of the issues. Through social action, efforts were enlarged by joining other concerned groups. There was involvement with demonstrations in New York, the Temple sending representatives to Solidarity Day, with youth group programs and public school programs. An essay contest on this subject was won by Adam Buchsbaum. Joint activities with the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation were enlarged. Irene Buchner has long been associated with this cause through years of dedication and was later to share this role with Jackie Rose and Robin Birnhak.

Temple Emanu-El's concern for Soviet Jewry, did not go unnoticed. In 1976, Diana and Harold Cohen were approached by an unstated organization to go to the Soviet Union. Probably because their commitment was known and because of their facility with both Hebrew and Yiddish, they were asked to make contact with Soviet activists. The purpose was to take books and information to the activists that would give them support and encouragement and enable them to learn about Israel's history, Hebrew and Jewish traditions. It was also important for them to know there was a world-wide support system in their behalf. Diana and Harold were also to bring out names of potential applicants for emigration so they could be assisted.

This trip was an inspiration for the Cohens, helping to reinforce their commitment and enabling them to intensify further community activities. When in 1977, Ed and Gert Lewis decided to visit the Soviet Union, they received information from the Cohens that enabled them to visit activists and continue this important work. Lennard and Linda Thal made a similar journey.

The continued efforts of Temple Emanu-El in behalf of Soviet Jewry is a proud record of commitment, concern and action and, as always, it took the right leadership to do the right thing at the right time when it was most needed.

The seventies saw a surge in the musical life of the Temple. In 1971 an adaptation of "Fiddler On The Roof" was presented in honor of the Temple's twentieth anniversary, with Gerry Weiss and Phyllis Corwin in lead roles. In 1973, under the professional direction of Marcie Decker, and with a large cast of talented congregants, "Milk and Honey" was presented. Among the notable leads were Don Decker, Sonia Lewis and Harriet Saltzman.

Another memorable musical evening, under the direction of Jill Spasser, was the *Chai* celebration of Cantor Decker's anniversary with Temple Emanu-El, a gay evening of Yiddish songs.

In 1972, Jill Spasser was to affect the musical life of this Temple profoundly when she became the director of the choir. Under her leadership, the choir has grown to thirty-two volunteer members who respond to this area of Temple service because of their love for music and because of the intense musical learning opportunity they have with Jill. The rapport of the group is such that they come together as close knit friends sharing the opportunity to learn about synagogue music. They have also performed together at a cantorial convention in Pennsylvania and in a choral festival in New Brunswick.



The Temple choir
with Cantor Don S.
Decker and Jill
Spasser.

Through the Al D. Finkelstein Memorial Fund a service, The Circle of Hope, was composed for Temple Emanu-El by Cantor Charles Davidson. This service has not only been performed in the Temple, but represents Temple Emanu-El's contribution to the world of sacred Jewish music, a cherished distinction.

Jill Spasser became the chairperson of the Music Committee and a board member involved with many other areas of Temple life. She was able to take the initiative for and execute a full range of creative programs which, in the area of music, she has done most successfully in coordination with Cantor Decker's role as leader of musical activities for the Temple. Jill's own development in Jewish life has led to her return to school as a cantorial student at Hebrew Union College and upon graduation, she expects to devote herself to a professional cantorial career.

In 1972, Harold Cohen assumed office as president. His commitment to social action and to Israel created an environment in which both these areas were able to flourish under his administration. The warmth of his personality, his analytic capabilities and good judgment were all brought to bear effectively on his office.

Harold's superb wit belies a deep aspect to his nature. Harold Cohen can talk about questions of God and belief and be funny at the same time. There was a time when he questioned his belief in God. This was important to him in order to justify his participation in prayer and Temple life. He eventually concluded that even if there were no God, if he acted as though there were, his life would benefit as a result. This did not answer the problem of why be Jewish, but he decided that he did not have that problem. Harold always knew the color of his uniform, he just didn't know whether to put it on. Evidently, these questions have been resolved since Harold's commitment to Jewish life has been long evident at Temple Emanu-El.

At an *Oneg Shabbat*, Harold experienced an embarrassing moment. He went up to a member to introduce himself, asking if the member was new. The member replied, "Must you ask me this every year?" This experience was a pointed indication of how the Temple had grown and how difficult it had become to keep in meaningful contact.

Harold Cohen's personal response to this dilemma was a way of returning to the customs of the past when the Temple was small. He started to bake *challahs* for *simchas* and encouraged the idea in the Temple by teaching a course on *challah* braiding at a *Yom Hamishpacha* event. Harold's *challahs* have been admired at many Temple occasions.

Interestingly, it was during Harold's presidency that a letter appeared in the Temple bulletin pointing out that the "bigness" of the Temple breeds anonymity. These were the early signs of the seventies indicating to leadership that new ways of responding to the needs of the membership would have to be created. How this was to develop will be explored later.

As already pointed out, social action activities were thriving during this period, a fortuitous situation since the 1973 Yom Kippur War occurred and the Social Action Committee, with Diana Cohen as chairperson, swiftly took action. The Arab oil boycott was an issue that concerned Jews and non-Jews and this was an opportunity to educate the public about Israel's strategic position to the United States and to world Jewry. This was accomplished through a series of teach-ins.

Other activities concerned the plight of the migrant workers in California in their battle for better working conditions and pay. Efforts to achieve a Temple boycott of certain lettuce and grapes were denied by the board, but many individuals did respond through the committee's efforts and the issue, although disruptive, brought the matter into the sphere of Temple awareness.

In 1974, the Social Action Committee invited Albert Vorspan of the UAHC for a weekend to explain social action issues to the Temple family and also to help unite them around some of those issues. One of his topics was the setback of the Black-Jewish relationship and it was his urgent message that it is in the interest of all minorities to work together as the only way to achieve power. It was an electric weekend, one that is still talked about.

When Eugene Rosner was to take over the chairmanship of the Social Action Committee, he found that the "passive seventies" determined new directions for the committee. A special Holocaust research area was established in the Westfield High School library, funded by an initial gift and continuing with an annual contribution from the Jack Rindner Fund. In addition, the public school authorities agreed to the suggestion that the Holocaust be included in the curriculum of the High School and the junior highs.



At the Temple's 25th Anniversary celebration. From left to right: Sam Mallor, Gale Malkin, Ike Daniels, Harold Cohen, Sid Mele, Nathan Stritzler, Alan Goldstein, Seymour Kreuger, Fritz Leher

Other activities have been a food collection program for the poor, with Lowell Peyser active in this area. Representatives of the committee, along with members of the Senior Youth Group, attended a Conference of Conscience in Washington, sponsored by the UAHC. Two outstanding speakers, Morris Abram and David Schoenbrun, were brought to the Temple by the Social Action and Adult Ed Committees. The speakers were inspiring in their interpretations of the "passive seventies," giving understanding and a sense of direction to those who attended.

In 1974, Alan Goldstein came into the office of the presidency. Alan has been described as possessing a brilliant mind and an ability to handle difficult and sensitive situations with the wisdom of Solomon and the compassion of Abraham. During his tenure, these qualities

served the congregation well as he had to find solutions to problems that were polarizing the congregation. He had an ability, with a few words, to step into a situation and find a reasonable compromise solution. Since Alan's opinions are highly respected, he is often referred to by others as a source of strength and wisdom.

Alan's name has been linked to social action so that inevitably his commitment enabled social action to flourish under his administration. Yet Alan feels that during the second year of his presidency, the community was going through a period of withdrawal into the self and it was his objective to get them back into themes of prophetic Judaism.

He also considered it an obligation that there be good communication between lay leaders and the rabbi, which he personally fostered openly and forthrightly. Another accomplishment of this administration was the establishment, officially, of a no interference policy with the rabbi's right to speak from the pulpit as he chooses.

This year, Alan was awarded the coveted Than Cohen Award for outstanding service; he is only the second recipient in the history of the Temple to receive this honor.

The year 1974 must also be remembered as the year of the Temple's first *Yom Hamishpacha*, a family day in celebration of Israel's anniversary. This first event was chaired by Marge and Chet Fienberg and Nancy and Dave Bregman. Dave, who was to become president in 1978, recalls this event as the highlight of anything he has ever done for the Temple, especially citing the opportunity to work with the Fienbergs.

Chet Fienberg's name is one that is mentioned frequently. Extremely well liked, he is a soft spoken, competent man who has been called upon through the years whenever a special task needed to be done. Chet never says no. He has a way of taking on a job and seeing it through, regardless of any problems. His recognition in the community extends also to his work for B'nai B'rith and Israel Bonds.

A private conversation in the late sixties between Dr. Thelma Warshaw and Rabbi Kroloff, marked an important occasion in the history of this Temple. The rabbi recognizes Thelma as one of the first women in the congregation to understand the coming revolution of women. He encouraged her to join him in a discussion from the pulpit. This experience had a great impact upon his own consciousness raising and although it was a while before he began to push for change in the congregation, he did so very readily once he realized that it was just and proper.

This development that saw the first woman wear a *tallit* on the pulpit, to the present day when Temple Emanu-El elected Zelda Kahn as its first woman president was to take hold with virtually no opposition, a tribute to the progressiveness of every branch of the Temple in meeting the needs of the times. This has been evident by the creative participation of women in all areas of Temple life and has been especially evident when seeing women such as Jill Spasser, Jackie Rose and Diana Cohen reading or chanting magnificently from the *Torah*.

Ellen Lewis, a product of the Temple's Religious School, went on to achieve the ultimate Jewishly by becoming the first rabbi this congregation has produced. Ellen has had an outstanding record of achievements and honors and is presently the assistant rabbi at Temple Emanu-El, Dallas, Texas. She is married to Rabbi William Kraus and is also the mother of a baby son named Gideon.

During the period of this growing awareness, Terry Kroloff was a symbolic role model of the young mother/homemaker, attempting to reach her own intellectual and professional potential which she did studiously and with a quiet determination, shaping her own identity and destiny as an individual. As women in the community began to look for new directions for themselves, Terry's accomplishments became an object of admiration.

Since achieving her M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature at Drew University and establishing her own successful business producing employee publications for banks and corporations in the New Jersey and New York area, Dr. Terry Kroloff has also found time to contribute to the community in the areas of Jewish literature and feminism. She has done so on a high and professional level.

Innovations were going on rapidly and the time had finally come when attention had to be paid to the feelings of people that the Temple's "bigness" was keeping them from feeling at home.

Susan Kreitzer moved to Westfield from California where she and her husband Michael were members of Temple Valley Beth Shalom, headed by Rabbi Harold Schulweis, the influential proponent of the *Chavurah* movement. Susan spoke to Rabbi Kroloff about this and when he mentioned the idea in a sermon, Selma Wasserman liked it and wanted to do something about it.

The rabbi put Selma in touch with Susan and her good friend Linda Slove and these three women, through hard work and persistent dedication, made possible the innovation of the *Chavurah* movement for Temple Emanu-El which officially began in 1974.

The success of this program reached the point where today there are fourteen *chavurot* involving approximately 140 families. Its purpose is the formation of small groups to study, celebrate, socialize and enjoy Jewish living together. Although the composition and emphasis of the *chavurot* differ, all of the groups have certain elements in common. These are that all the members view themselves as part of an extended family and that participation in the *chavurah* leads to greater involvement in Temple life. Another element is that most *chavurah* activities have Jewish content, enhancing the participants' knowledge of their Jewish heritage.

Stephen and Jackie Rose eventually assumed the leadership of this successful program as chairpersons of the Chavurah Coordinating Committee, overseeing to this day its continued growth, development and relationship to the Temple at large.

In 1973, Jill Spasser became chairperson of the Adult Education Committee. Her early emphasis was in the area of Jewish culture, bringing to the Temple music programs, leading Jewish dancers and playreadings by Jewish actors.

There was then a shift to emphasizing weekends with scholars in residence, such as Rabbi Larry Hoffman of Hebrew Union College who spoke on "The Quest for Meaning In Our Lives," Michael Chernick of HUC on Jewish Mysticism and Rabbi Zalman Schachter of Temple University, a mystic who taught people how to dance to the service, and *daven* with the liberal prayer book. Rabbi Eugene Borowitz explored views of being Jewish through the writings of Malamud, Roth, Bellow and Wiesel. These were intense, in-depth weekends making it possible to have more substantive exposure to great Jewish scholars.

Some of these weekends occurred during Kim Kimerling's chairmanship of the Adult Education Committee. With his interest in Jewish education, he also began to stress courses in basic Judaism and subjects on Israel and Jewish identity. He was particularly excited about bringing to the Temple the famed photographer Roman Vishniac for a Sunday brunch program as well as a Russian refusenik Mark Oshel.

The 1970s were a time of challenge for the Ritual Committee. The trend was toward a more traditional observance of rituals and customs, while at the same time giving continued support to experimentation with creative new approaches.

At the beginning of the decade, under the chairmanship of Marvin Fein, the committee established a set of procedures for honors on the *bimah*. Dissatisfaction with the Union Prayer Book led Rabbi Kroloff to compile prayers and readings to be used for *Selichot* services, *Simchat Torah* and many *Shabbatot*. He also introduced the booklet *New Prayers for the High Holy Days* which was very well received and used for several years.

When the Central Conference of American Rabbis published *Gates of Prayer* for *Shabbat* and festivals and *Gates of Repentance* for the High Holy Days, the Ritual Committee voted to purchase both books with the Hebrew opening, this choice a response to traditional observance. When David Kabakow was chairman in 1975, the Committee established a formula for the selection of honorees, the selections based on the office to be honored rather than the particular individual.

Perhaps the most exciting innovation in 1976 was the establishment of the Saturday morning *minyan* held in the Lehr library. The *minyan*, originally started by Joel Soffin as an occasional study service, developed into a full weekly service under the leadership of the assistant rabbi, the student rabbis, Kim Kimerling and Jill Spasser. The latter prepared a song book for use by the group. The emphasis is on creativity, the format reflecting the desires of the participants, including a *d'var Torah*, an ethical instruction and *Shabbat z'mirot*.

Most recently, the group decided that the service would be led by a member whether or not a rabbi was present. The warmth and affection that the people feel for one another is

perhaps one of the most meaningful aspects of the Saturday *minyanim*. This has grown not only as a result of praying and studying together, but also because of the sharing of tragedies as well as the celebration of *simchah*.

Those congregants who have chosen to attend the Saturday *minyanim*, never feel that Temple Emanu-El is "too big." They feel that this experience has been unique and fulfilling.

The remarkable aspect of Temple life is the availability and willingness of certain individuals to find and develop areas of service that suit their particular talents and serve the needs of the Temple at the same time.

In 1974 Selma Benjamin became chairperson of the Judaica shop, a function of Sisterhood, and has continued in that capacity to this day. When Selma took over the shop, it was open only on Sunday and Monday nights. Today, it is open five days a week and on evenings when there are meetings. Not surprisingly, sales have quadrupled in that time.

Many people have noted that this Judaica shop is more complete than that of other synagogues, attracting buyers from a wide area. Selma's constant search for beautiful and meaningful Judaica is reflected in the shop's variety of prayer books, *menorot*, *seder* plates, *mezuzot*, *tallitim*, *yarmulkas*, *tallit* bags, jewelry, *Shabbat* candlesticks and games and toys for children relevant to the Jewish holidays.

Selma's husband, Abe Benjamin, can also be seen at the shop, the two of them an ideal mama and papa devoted to their business with a love and devotion that is beyond the call of duty. They are always available at home for requests and willingly make appointments at the shop even when it is closed. The Judaica shop under such loving management has flourished remarkably in the seventies.

Another congregant who put her personal interests and talent to the service of the Temple was Ina Herman. The Sisterhood's original cookbook had sold out and they wanted to produce another, up-to-date edition for fundraising purposes. Ina's considerable knowledge of food, nutrition, cooking, baking and her experience as a teacher and lecturer on these subjects made her ideally qualified. The Sisterhood tapped Ina for this enormous task in 1973, she agreed to it and by September 1976, "Not By Bread Alone," was published.

In the process, a committee of volunteers who enjoyed cooking was brought together by Ina to cooperatively prepare "teaching dinners" for the purpose of testing recipes. This created a social and cohesive group committed to the project for the three years it took for completion and as an offshoot, the group continued together with the creation of their own Temple *Chavurah*.

The book was professionally executed with the voluntary talents of many people who enjoyed their association with the project. The book received prestigious publicity and has been sold at the Temple and in local stores; and by mail order sent to many areas in the United States and abroad.

In 1976, David Kabakow became president. He brought to the office a rich family background of deep commitment to Jewish causes, and a vision and perspective of how the synagogue fits into the larger Reform movement.

This perspective inevitably influenced his participation in a broad spectrum of service to the community. On the Temple board since 1968, Dave is also a vice-president of the New Jersey UAHC Regional Board and active in many national activities of the UAHC. He is also on the executive board of the Jewish Federation of Central N.J. where he serves as chairman of the Synagogue-Federation Relations Committee.

Dave's presidency was characterized by a concern with the financial base of the Temple. Dave, successful in the commercial real estate business, had an awareness that business administrators are generally concerned about the finances of institutions around the twenty-fifth year. Their peak of growth levels off then, lasting about seven years. Dave, applying his expertise, was concerned that the Temple be cushioned against such a precarious position in order to avoid any regression of Temple growth or curtailment of its rich and abundant programs. With the economy exacting its toll on the Temple also, this kind of foresight and planning was crucial.

Examining the financial condition of the Temple, he and Don Wortzel, treasurer, realized that since the Temple had retired off all but \$70,000. of its unpaid building debt, the Temple had no financial cushion. Dave felt he would be remiss not to consider rebuilding the "rainy day" fund that was no longer available.

With Don Wortzel the planner and Dave Kabakow the one to implement it through the board, a Foundation Fund was established. Interest on half the money was used in the budget to offset any need for a dues increase and the other half was put aside for capital improvement.

Another accomplishment of his administration concerned the "ability-to-pay" dues structure of the Temple. Due to circumstances beyond anyone's control, it developed that this multi-level dues structure was no longer feasible. Dave and his committee—Joe Fox, Chet Fienberg, Dick Lane and Zelda Kahn—studied the situation and determined that a more equitable new system was needed. The result is the present dues structure with a moderate category for the thirty and under congregant without children in the school, a category for the senior citizen and the larger one—dues category for all others.

Dave, another one of Chet Fienberg's admirers, pays special tribute to this well loved man. Dave also feels that the death of Fritz Lehr during his administration was a heavy blow. Dave's sensitivity to these two special men was also part of the joy he had in serving the Temple as president.

In 1977, Rabbi Howard F. Seldin-Sommer came to Temple Emanuel-El as Director of Education. Two months later he married his wife Amy. The rabbi feels that the Temple

fulfilled his expectations for learning and the sharing of ideas and hopes for Jewish education. It has also given him the opportunity to act as an assistant rabbi under the excellent guidance of Rabbi Kroloff. He expects to assume his own pulpit in the summer of 1982 after serving five years in Westfield.

Rabbi Seldin-Sommer's contribution to the Religious School has been considerable and will leave its mark even after his departure. He has worked very well with Bob Fuhrman, chairman of the School Committee, and with the committee's thirty people, an excellent mixture of past members and younger people.

It is the rabbi's conviction that if the children aren't excited about Jewish learning and the adults are not involved, there can be no future for Judaism. With the deterioration of the larger Jewish community through lowered birth rate and intermarriage, education is the only option left to reverse the trend. On his arrival, the rabbi noted the success of the junior and senior high school program that had been switched to Monday nights, separate from the rest of the school. A series of elective courses was made available to the students such as the Holocaust, modern Israel and comparative religion. The students appreciated their special status as young adults and the program was working well.

However, too many children felt bored in Religious School. This had to be turned around in a progressive and developmental way so that they would feel they were learning something new each year, that they would be enthusiastic and experience a sense of accomplishment. The focus was on family education involving a partnership with the teachers and the rabbi. Weekend retreats at a hotel in the Catskills meant family learning together and adult education in the Religious School meant that parents could come into the school and learn what the children were learning and how to work at home with them.

The problem in suburban religious education has always been that it is generally not a high priority, but one of many options of extra curricular activities open to children. It is up to the parents to get the children to school and the school has to provide imaginative programming to get points across. For example, when studying about the immigration waves, an Ellis Island simulation experience was created. Children dressed as immigrants, assumed their identities and went through the processing. The children experienced the frustrations, bureaucratic problems and the agony of name changes. The teacher thus moves from the role of lecturer to guide and the classroom becomes a forum of learning rather than a place for the passive reception of information.

Another innovation was a creative Passover workshop as an alternative to the model Seder experience of previous years that did not work well. There was a progression through the *Haggadah*, very well organized, with families coming to experience this together with the children.

The rabbi's observation is that parents are often ambivalent about authority with their own children, that the children perceive this and it gets transferred to the child-teacher relationship. This can often cause a comparable wrestling with God as an authority, then questioning the point of prayer, a process leading to despair. The rabbi's answer to children is that the search is the challenge and his response to parents is that it is not imperative to have all the answers.

With the characteristic passivity of the seventies spilling over even into Religious School life, too often the impetus for learning must come from the teachers and the professional leadership rather than the students. This is unlike the sixties when students took matters into their own hands.

These are some of the creative and enthusiastic thoughts of Rabbi Seldin-Sommer that have been introduced into the Religious School, a significant contribution for these times.

Rabbi Seldin-Sommer pays tribute to the contribution of Linda Rolleri to the Religious School. She served from 1970 to 1980 as more than school secretary, but as the "right hand" to the educational director and as one of the students' and teachers' best friends.

On September 10, 1978, the Temple library was named in memory of Fritz Lehr. Thirty years after the founding of the Temple, the Lehr library continues to be a vibrant place of growth and diverse activity. The major refurbishing of the library in 1977 gave it a greatly enhanced appearance and the task of converting the numbering system from Dewey to the Weine Classification System was also undertaken.

Dedication to the needs of the library has been the devoted responsibility of Lynn Turiel and Dot Ehich. The library, like so many aspects of Temple life, has a history as long as that of the Temple itself.

That the library continues to be a vital part of Temple life is due to the past efforts of devoted congregants as well. At an earlier time Ruth Spector and Helen Kalish recatalogued books and did a laborious inventory.

Today, an excellent reservoir of books exists for adults, young people, and children, on all subjects and phases of Jewish life. What the library needs most is for members to use it and to borrow books often.

In 1978, Dave Bregman became president. A to-the-point description of Dave is that he's a *mentsh*. He cares about people and believes that they must be treated with respect. His love of Judaism, symbolized by his endeavors with B'nai B'rith and Israel Bonds as well, also reflects this caring. His openness and kindness pervaded the congregation leadership during his administration, making these qualities a significant aspect of his tenure.

During this period, Dave and his administration had to face a unique challenge. Rabbi Kroloff was to take his first sabbatical for a period of six months, from February through July of 1980. Dave's administration was charged with the responsibility of preparing for this so that Temple life would run as smoothly as possible.

The rabbi was missed but not because there were problems. A year of planning, and even rehearsals, went into this so that problems would not occur. This was possible because of the extraordinary dedication of the officers of the Temple as well as the professionals and staff.

Evelyn Cohen, the Executive Director of the Temple for the past twelve years, was a rock of dependability. She was a storehouse of information and could readily respond to any inquiry relating to every aspect of Temple life. Her retirement in 1981 will be a loss to the Temple, but Evelyn's multitude of friends here are happy for her well deserved rest and wish her well.

Donna Choyne is also well known to this congregation for the past eight years. She gave unstintingly of herself, making up also for the unexpected departure of the rabbi's secretary. Custodian Joe Reiss, the most beloved and dedicated caretaker this Temple ever had, also made an important contribution to the harmony of this period.

Dave Bregman is very proud that during his administration the board gave approval to invite students to the Religious School from Temple Beth El of Elizabeth whose school population had grown too small to continue classes.

Dave encouraged involvement of the vice-presidents with the rabbi and himself by inviting them to a monthly luncheon at which Temple matters could be discussed. He received approval from the board to have the immediate past presidents of the Sisterhood and Men's Club continue to serve on the board for one year after they are out of office. This gave the board the advantage of their experience and expertise.

Dave Bregman loves this Temple, is extremely happy in it and continues to be a vital part of it.

Before continuing the narrative, recognition must be accorded to certain congregants whose unique contributions to the story of this Temple have not yet been noted.

Milton Wasch adored the Temple the way a boy loves a toy and, because of this, the Temple was able to serve as a source of much strength for him during his fatal illness. Mildred and Milton Wasch gave the Temple the largest bequest it ever received, providing a perpetual endowment for the senior youth program. The youth lounge, named in his honor, is a fitting memorial to Milton Wasch who loved the young people of this congregation.

Helaine and Ike Heller, through the UAHC, established The Heller Family Scholarship Fund to enable children from all over the United States of demonstrable need to go to Israel on National Federation of Temple Youth programs. The purpose of the fund is to enhance leadership qualities for the future benefit of the American Jewish community.

Fran and Herb Brody, noted philanthropists, have always responded to the special needs of the Temple. Herb's generous heart comes from his feeling that life has been good to him and he is appreciative of it. He is particularly conscious of the embattled position of the

Jew in the world and directs much of his energies to Jewish life. Herb is president of Supermarkets General Corporation. Herb, together with Fran, are national leaders of State of Israel Bonds, UJA, American Friends of the Hebrew University, Deborah Hospital and Fight For Sight.

Other Temple members also distinguished for their generosity are Terry and Dave Tanenbaum, Irving and Horty Sedwin; also Esther and Howard Apter who generously sponsored the successful Jan Pearce concert, open to the entire community, on the occasion of the Temple's twenty-fifth anniversary.

Eileen and Stanley Nathanson are perceived as pillars of the community. Eileen never refuses a request for service. She is especially noted for instituting the *Mitzvah* Committee in 1971, a response to the needs of bereaved families. The women on the committee take charge of the meal of consolation which greets the family on their return from the cemetery. It is one of the most gratefully received services in the Temple. Stanley, serving for many years on the ushering committee, has also handled the ritual arrangements. Stan, of course, is noted for his stage performances both in the Temple and in the community. Stanley and Eileen have guided the Temple's support of Israel Bonds.

Irving Nussbaum, noted violinist, is an endearing and gentle man who has enriched the religious experience of this congregation with his *Kol Nidre* music and other musical performances.

Mayera Cohen, noted for her ability and dedication to the catering of many Temple functions, is responsible for instituting two well received holiday programs in the community. Passover seders are held at the Westfield Convalescent Home and Jewish patients at Overlook Hospital are visited and presented with plants. Chanukah is also celebrated at these institutions, with the help of the youth group. Mayera has the distinction of being the first recipient of the Sisterhood's "Woman of the Year" annual award.

Rita Kessler, a long time Temple historian, has chaired many Temple functions. Lilyan Weiss, also noted for her willingness to respond to such tasks, is the coordinator of the Temple's thirtieth anniversary celebration. Others noted for chairing major events are Enid Rosenblum and Phyllis Rachbach. Enid also organized and conducted a junior choir and Phyllis produced the program for Rabbi Kroloff's tenth anniversary celebration.

Bette Weil was coordinator of the large needlework tapestry referred to earlier in the book. The tapestry, in the form of a star within a star, was designed by Edith Anderson Feisner, a noted artist in the field of textiles and ecclesiastical designs. The sewing was executed by thirty-six Sisterhood members. The star, depicting the development of Judaism, is a focal point for visitors to the Temple who invariably ask questions about it. Bette Weil is presently preparing a magnificent needlepoint *chupa* for the Temple.

Rabbi Ira Youdovin and his family are welcome members of this congregation. Rabbi Youdovin, Executive Director of the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), feels an obligation to this community, speaking often from the pulpit and leading discussion groups.

Miriam Charme had the distinction of instructing young Sasha Kviko, the first Russian child to become a *Bar Mitzvah* at Temple Emanu-El. The memorable event was an occasion for celebration with the entire congregation participating.

Miriam, a noted Yiddishist, is active in every phase of Jewish life, teaching Yiddish, speaking for the Jewish Federation and representing the Temple at the League of Religious Organizations in Westfield. Upon her own initiative, she conducts a program of Jewish studies for several area churches. This program has been popular and enthusiastically received.

Also noted for his prestigious position in the community is Michael Diamond, the current president of The League of Religious Organizations.

Simon Kaplan, during his administration as Men's Club president, established a Temple Blood Bank. It is typical of Simon, a warm and caring person, to have thought of this important service to congregants and their families.

Ellen Isaacman Albertson has the distinction of being the first and only congregant who was consecrated, confirmed, married and holds office in this Temple.

Mrs. Rose Friedman, age 94, is the oldest person to join the congregation. Her acute interest in people and her dynamic and warm personality grace this Temple. She is the mother of Mildred Hamilton, Executive Director of the Jewish Family Service. Mildred has worked closely with Rabbi Kroloff in developing family life programs for the benefit of the congregation.

The new-born child of Debbie Holz was named at the Temple. Debbie's grandparents are David and Hannah Berse and her parents are Gurson and Jacqueline Berse. This represents a significant milestone for the Temple since this child is the fourth generation of the Berse family at Temple Emanu-El.

The five daughters of Bud and Judy Bronston, educated in the Temple Religious School, reflect distinction on the school because of their exceptional commitment to Judaism and to Israel. Beth, the oldest, was the first Eisendrath International Exchange student to go to Israel from the Temple in 1968. Her experience influenced the whole family, strengthening their commitment to Judaism and Israel. As a result, the Bronstons were determined to send Jan, Deborah, Ruth and Sue to Israel for periods of six months to one year. They accomplished this through E.I.E. and Hadassah programs. Beth joined the Lubavicher community. Jan, now a social worker, has lived in Israel since 1974 and holds dual citizenships.

Congregants have also contributed to the distinction of Temple Emanu-El because they have gone on to professional Jewish communal work. Fran Gold is the editor of the award winning publication, *The Jewish Community News*, serving twenty-one Jewish communities in the central New Jersey area. Diana Cohen is on the staff of the Jewish Federation of this area and Annette Rindner is a staff member with the National Council of Jewish Women.

Steve Dropkin is now a Jewish music specialist. The state song leader for JFTY, Steve travels throughout the United States doing programs for youth groups, conclaves and adult retreats and services.

In 1980 Claire Angel, a fine pianist and impresario of Mostly Music, Inc., brought to the Temple sanctuary a well received chamber music concert series. This was open to the public at large with some people experiencing the special mood of the sanctuary for the first time. Claire has also performed in the sanctuary with Irving Nussbaum on the High Holy Days.

Many congregants of distinction have gone on to higher levels of communal work, as volunteers, both locally and nationally, some in Jewish life and others in the larger community.

Herb Ross, long noted for his work on the Temple Cemetery Committee and, after years of distinguished service to the area chapter of B'nai B'rith, is now slated to reach one of the highest offices of B'nai B'rith in 1982 when he will become president of District #3, the second largest district in the world.

Stanley and Harriet Sloane were the conscience of this community in their work for Israel and UJA. Stanley is on the national board of UJA in several distinguished capacities. He is also on the board of The Jewish Agency, chairman of the board of the Jerusalem Academy and on the board of Ben Gurion University. Harriet was named to the highest office as national chairperson of UJA, Women's Division, a rare distinction.

Betty Seidel, a past president of Westfield Hadassah, is noted for her work in behalf of UJA locally. A past president of the women's division of the Jewish Federation, she continues to be active in the Federation campaigns. Betty is also a national board member with the women's division of the Council of Jewish Federations.

Herb Seidel serves as Secretary of the board of the Jewish Federation. He is vice-chairman of the Federation campaign and chairman of campaign of the Westfield-Mountainside area. He has also served as chairman of Israel bonds and is on the national cabinet of the Joint Distribution Committee.

Other distinctions are Bob Berenson, Kiwanis president; Jack Cohen, Chamber of Commerce president; Harry Kaplan and Dr. Sol Cohen, Board of Education members; Dot Ehrich and Stella Liebesman, Westfield Adult School board; Marilyn Napack, Lee Schoenfeld and Mary Schlesinger, Mobile Meals; Lil Geller, Westfield Community Center

board; Honi Robins, Westfield Day Care Center board; Carolyn Weil, Dr. Bill Liebesman and Dr. Martin Diamond, Children's Specialized Hospital board; Dr. Sandy Reiss, president of the medical staff of Overlook Hospital; Dr. Harold Wasserman and Dr. Bob Kaycoff, board of Rahway Hospital; Morris Kamler, Herb Kessler and Alan Gutterman, Westfield Town Councilmen; Dick Samuel, Member of the Democratic National Committee; Susan Fuhrman and Shelly Glickman, United Fund board; Shirley Kamler, president ladies auxiliary American Legion and Morris Kamler, past president; Toby Bernstein, Ann Glickman, Dot Ehrich, Miriam Blonsky, Joan Wright, Linda Rapp, Fran Wilfson, Lynn Turiel, Fran Gold, Bernice Fein and Ceil Ehrich, all PTA presidents. Al Wolin, a municipal prosecutor in the early seventies, was appointed a Union County District Judge in 1980. Larry Weiss is a Superior Court Judge.

In Mountainside Abe Suckno and Lou Parent were elected to the Town Council. Lou Parent is also on the board of Children's Specialized Hospital; Eli Hoffman was a Democratic candidate for Town Council and active in the Democratic Party. Walter Averick, appointed by the mayor to the Planning Board and Bill Gutman to the Board of Adjustment where he also served as chairman for a number of years.

The maturing of Temple leadership through the years has led to the development of an enriching relationship with the UAHC. This association has enabled the rabbi, the cantor, educators and Temple lay people to learn from their colleagues and counterparts at national biennials where they are encouraged to reach higher levels of quality in their work. When exposed to such national influence, the local community benefits. When youngsters from this community participate in trips, they are exposed to youngsters from the entire Reform movement, enlarging their experience and horizons.

Rabbi Kroloff, on the Board of Trustees of the UAHC, believes it is his obligation to encourage this development which he has done through the years. He refers to Harris Gilbert, for example, as one of the ablest leaders in the national movement. His exceptional intellect and ability have brought him to the highest level of activity with the UAHC where he is a member of the Board of Trustees. He is chairman of the National Committee on Energy, on the Executive Committee of the Commission on Social Action and chairman of the Task Force on National Concerns. Harris was also New Jersey State Chairman of Common Cause and serves in several major capacities of that organization.

Other congregants involved with the UAHC are mentioned elsewhere. This relationship of Temple leadership with UAHC has brought many good things back to the Temple and in turn the Temple has an obligation to the UAHC. It meets this obligation by a nominal taxation to congregants appearing on the quarterly dues statement.

This congregation's connection to the land of Israel has steadily grown through the years in a variety of ways. The number of congregants and their children who travel to

Israel is such that if a Temple member walks down Dizengoff Street in Tel Aviv, someone from Westfield is bound to come along. Israelis, in fact, think that Westfield is a large city with tens of thousands of Jews.

In the last thirty years, the Reform movement has played an important role in promoting this attachment of Reform Jews to the land of Israel. Inevitably, Reform was to take a look at the exclusionary practices of the whole Orthodox establishment in Israel, and demand recognition of the rights of Reform Jews. Rabbi Kroloff's sermons in recent years have dealt with this. It is his view that his commitment to Israel is best served by speaking out on the issues.

Another important way, in his view, to support Israel is through the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA, an anagram for the Hebrew word meaning "to the land"). Every membership in this organization means a vote in the World Zionist Congress and, therefore, a voice in policy. This is the political process by which Reform institutions, camps and programs can get a fair share of the funding in Israel. Over 300 members from Temple Emanu-El, one of the highest percentages in the country, have joined ARZA, chaired locally by Larry Stern.

The development of Reform in Israel, through ARZA, reflects an indigenous progressive evolution of Judaism. The Israelis are firm about this and are not trying to reproduce an American version of Reform. The first Israeli born rabbi was ordained in Jerusalem in the spring of 1980. Almost every Israeli knows about this and many respect what Reform is trying to do. Another important accomplishment of this movement, also capturing the imagination of the Israelis, is the Reform Kibbutz Yahel in the southern part of the Negev, populated by young Israelis and Americans.

Rabbi Kroloff's rising concern with the number of mixed marriages and the numbers of distraught families in the congregation made him realize that his trial and error minimal training in counselling was inadequate to meet the growing needs of the congregation. As a result, he entered into a professional two year training program in New York at the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry where he became certified as a marriage and family counselor. The academic courses were excellent and he saw clients in the outpatient clinic there, under outstanding supervision. This program also qualified him for clinical membership in the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists with its rigorous admission qualifications.

His own personal development as a result of this experience led him to a desire to organize a whole range of speakers in this field for the benefit of the congregation. He did this through an excellent relationship with the Jewish Family Service through the years and anticipates its continuation. His sermons have also reflected the kind of personal openness that congregants could identify with.

As pointed out earlier in this book, the rabbi has been disarmingly frank about himself. He is aware, for example, that there is sometimes a negative reaction in the congregation to his strong leadership. The rabbi came to Temple Emanu-El at a time when it sorely needed strong leadership and this is the quality he brought to it. He was the organizer, the administrator and the leader and less the open counsellor and friend.

The rabbi feels that anyone going into the mental health field is also working out his own problems. He acknowledges that this was so in his case and he likes to feel that he went through a significant personal change for the better in developing a more spontaneous, warmer and more emotional side of himself. He sees this as a lifetime opportunity for change and growth which he hopes to continue by staying open and participating in further training programs. He hopes to continue to reach out to people, especially new people, and hopes to have the opportunity of spending time with new families in order to get to know them and have them get to know him.

One of the earliest efforts to help integrate new members was through the Welcome and Orientation Committee, established by Lou Walker and Mel Intriligator. They and their wives, Helene Walker and Esther Intriligator, organized a number of activities such as pot luck suppers and cocktail receptions. They were attended by both new and old members and these activities were designed to help acquaint new members with the Temple's many programs.

The thrust of the Temple's alternatives in the seventies was an effort to create closer ties with congregants. The rabbi's expressed interest in getting to know congregant families is part of this concern. The views of a few congregants who joined the Temple in the seventies are summarized here. Hopefully they represent the feelings of a larger number so that better communication may be possible:

There is a strong desire to be part of a Temple within the community of residence. Several congregants expressed negative, even distasteful, remembrances of Orthodox and Conservative affiliations in their backgrounds. These related to limitations on friendships and, in spite of rigorous religious involvement, a feeling of distance from the experience. One member recollects *aliyahs* being sold to the highest bidder. Another recalls her Orthodox background as stifling, its requirements couched in negatives. Another couple refers to the lack of family participation in the service at the Conservative Temple they belonged to.

Another congregant, his family Holocaust survivors, rejects the concept of God, unable to reconcile what happened to his family. Yet he comes to Temple Emanu-El for the sake of his children. They delight in the possibility of full family participation and attended Purim services with a child in the stroller. They are pleased with the Religious School and respond warmly to the rabbi's sermons and to the full participation of women in the service.

A congregant, the son of immigrants and raised in an Orthodox home, finds meaning and serenity in the Temple's *Shabbat* service, enjoying the *oneg* as well. He is comfortable with the abundant use of English in the service and feels part of what is going on because it can be understood. His wife, in spite of several years of Hebrew school education as an adolescent, finds her deepest learning occurred in the adult *Bat Mitzvah* class.

Joining a *Chavurah* was a meaningful experience for another couple and their children. Several expressed positive feelings about their children's involvement in the Temple as well as the school. They see in their children the development of solid Jewish identity. Others expressed the rewards of volunteering their services in behalf of the Temple. This has resulted in closer and warmer ties with other congregants as well as a sense of gratification in contributing to the welfare of the Temple.

In spite of the expression of some negative views, there was a consensus that these could be overcome through the process of involvement. There was also a recognition that a willingness to express feelings to the rabbi or board members, was another way of helping Temple Emanu-El to achieve an environment that was meaningful to all.

In 1980 Zelda Kahn became the first woman president of Temple Emanu-El. Although Zelda feels that she is less proud of being a woman president than she is in awe of being president of this great Temple, she is perceived by others as having achieved a singular honor. Zelda comes into this office with a passionate commitment to and the most extensive involvement with the Reform movement of any preceding president.

To name only a few of her credentials: Zelda was president of District #4 of the New Jersey Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, a board member of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, on the board of the World Union For Progressive Judaism and a member of the Commission on Social Action, a past president of Temple's Sisterhood and on the Board of Trustees of the Temple since 1969.

Zelda's commitment comes out of certain guiding principles in her life which give meaning to everything she does. She believes, for example, that a combination of faith and good works are essential. Without faith, good works are not meaningful and just having faith and not doing something is not fulfilling the requirements of that faith. She believes strongly that to be a Jew means to be affiliated with a Temple. Her observation is that secular Judaism perpetuates secularism and not Judaism.

Zelda's goals for the Temple during her administration are directed in two major areas. One is a reorganization of the Temple's office procedures. This is an essential undertaking in order to respond properly to the needs of a congregation now at the 800 membership level.

Her second priority is reflected in the theme created by Zelda for the Temple's thirtieth anniversary: "Celebrating the Past—Creating the Future." It is Zelda's conviction that

attention must be paid to the needs of all the congregants—those who have been members for thirty years as well as those who have joined more recently. Preparations must also be made for those who will join in the future.



Zelda Kahn, first woman president, with Rabbi Kroloff in 1980, the final chapter of this history.

Zelda felt that things augured well for her administration when in August 1980, the Kiryat Ono youth band from Israel, on extremely short notice, performed at the Temple with 800 people in attendance. Rabbi Kroloff had called Zelda from Israel at seven in the morning to say that a booking for the group's American tour was unexpectedly cancelled and the fifty-two young people and five adults had no place to stay. They were housed and fed and welcomed into the homes of Temple Emanu-El congregants who enjoyed them tremendously. This experience and the concert turned out to be one of the great highlights in the life of this Temple.

Zelda was also pleased to welcome the new student Rabbi-Youth Director, Arnie Gluck, and his wife Sara. They are already a well liked addition to the Temple family.

In reviewing the history of the Jews of Westfield, there is clear evidence of much progress in the sense of pride in the Jewish community. There is a strong feeling of self-respect and a willingness to stand up for what is right within the Temple or the larger community. People are more comfortable with prayer and Jewish tradition. More Jews are trying to live Jewish lives, rich in customs, at the Temple and in their homes.

There is a strong commitment to Israel and to the totality of the Jewish people wherever they live. The children in the school also have a strong commitment to Israel and a

knowledge of and appreciation of the meaning of the Holocaust. This continues to have a powerful influence on them as well as on adults.

The 1980s represent a challenge in serving Jews whose life styles are varied. The nuclear family, with husband, wife and 2.3 children, is no longer the sole member unit. The needs of others must be met – single parent families, single persons, senior citizens, families without children. Widowed and divorced people constitute more and more of the congregation.

According to Ed Yanowitz, membership chairman, a special committee is reviewing membership growth. The Temple looks forward to the gradual absorption of an increased membership. It can accommodate 1000 or even 1200 members with its present facilities. The committee is focusing attention on ideas for appropriate use of the facilities and also on the varied composition of the membership. More and more members are coming from wider geographical areas extending further out into Union County and now embracing Scotch Plains, Fanwood, Cranford, Union, Elizabeth, Clark, Watchung, and many other towns. These members will need reaching out to in order to make them feel at home.

The exhortation of the prophets that Jews respond to human suffering through social action is an aspect of Temple life that will require continued understanding and growth.

The problem of interfaith marriage is a continuing issue. This and the declining birth rate are a threat to Jewish survival. Motivating young people to marry in the faith, have children and raise them as Jews are also challenges for the eighties.

With caring and well guided deliberation and in the same spirit of compromise that prevailed at its formation, Temple Emanu-El can continue to be a monument to the oneness of the Jewish people.

This is the challenge and the opportunity in the next decade.

The End

Acknowledgements

The enthusiasm of the congregation for this history was heartwarming. Many people were helpful and cooperative and good enough to see me personally. Rabbi Spicehandler sent a tape from Jerusalem and Rabbi Lennard Thal a tape from California. I spent two delightful hours with Rabbi Jack Stern in Scarsdale. Rabbi Kroloff gave me numerous hours of his time, an enriching experience for me personally. Rabbi Warren Stone wrote a loving letter from California. Cantor Decker and Rabbi Seldin-Sommer lovingly gave me their valuable time also, as did all the living presidents, except one who was not available. Zelda Kahn was my mentor and a valuable source of information. Lilyan Weiss, coordinator of the 30th anniversary, was also my mentor. I interviewed former congregants via telephone to New York and Florida and had correspondence with others. Many founding members were good enough to see me personally and were very helpful and enthusiastic about this history.

My husband, Walter Averick, was my first reader. His enthusiasm and loving support were always encouraging and his excellent suggestions were very helpful. Abe Benjamin was exceptionally helpful in reading the first draft for grammatic corrections. Carol Wolf and Selma Wasserman were both personally supportive and did an outstanding job in the areas of their research. Carole's work at the Westfield Library was especially enlightening. Esther Intriligator and Ruth Spector also did an exceptional research job with the Temple bulletins. My dialogues with Bea Reiss, Shelly Glickman, Annette Rindner, Addie Prince and Diana Cohen were of immeasurable value. Mildred Mytelka was good enough to do some helpful typing; and Marvin Gershenfeld to supply a photo of the star tapestry.

There were telephone conversations too numerous to mention, but the following were particularly informative: Dr. Bernard Feldman, Dr. Murray Babbitt, Dr. Ira Greifer, Betty Lester, Ed Wilson, and Nettie Wallack.

There were many delightful interviews with the following people: Ruth and Sid Spector, Lil Lerman, Joyce Tischler, Bea and Harry Jaffe, Gussie Silberman, Edith Lehr, Gurson and Jacqueline Berse, Jerry and Anne Glasser, Danny Bliwise, Jack Cohen, Shirley and Morris Kamler, Betty and Herb Seidel, Selma and Harold Wasserman.

The researchers who submitted information in the areas of their Temple experience also made a significant contribution to this work. They are Selma Benjamin, Maxine Bradie, Buddy Bronston, Irene Buchner, Paula Dropkin, Dottie Ehrich, Ina Herman, Kiki Kass, Edith Lehr, Lil Lerman, Jack Rockett, Jackie Rose, Linda Slove, Jill Spasser, Joyce Tischler, Lynn Turiel, Lou Walker, Harold Weiss, Jane Wolin and Ed Yanowitz.

Kay Wiener's contribution of the cover drawing was the result of considerable research and a willingness to interpret artistically the spirit of the book. She was open at all times to the sharing of ideas, resulting in the beautiful rendition on the cover.

Susan Kreitzer's interviews with the newer congregants were of great interest and value, a sensitive contribution; also her work with Henrietta Selbst. Most of all, I am indebted to her for her willingness to photograph the Temple's Judaica which she did with graciousness and considerable talent.

Harvey Wiener played a special role in this work. He is the publisher. But he is more than that. His innate good taste, his sensitivity as a person and his commitment to the quality of this book went beyond the dream I dared to dream.

To all the above people, my deep gratitude and thanks for helping to make this enormous undertaking the rewarding experience that it was for me personally. I am confident that Rabbi Kroloff and the entire congregation appreciate your efforts as well.

E. A.

The Founding Members of Temple Emanu-el

Dr. and Mrs. Murray Babbitt	Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lockfeld
Mr. and Mrs. Gerson Barondess	Mr. and Mrs. Paul Meisel
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Berke	Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Meltzer
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Bernstein	Mr. and Mrs. Karl Millman
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Bernstein	Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Newall
Mr. and Mrs. David Berse	Mr. and Mrs. William Needell
Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Berse	Mr. and Mrs. Morton Newburgh
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Brown	Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Ox
Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Cohen	Mr. and Mrs. David Schimmel
Mr. Jerry Craft	Mr. and Mrs. Philip Schneck
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Epstein	Mr. and Mrs. Herman Seiden
Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Feldman	Mr. and Mrs. Harris Shapiro
Mr. and Mrs. Irving Freiman	Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Silberman
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Fritz	Mr. George Spector
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Gettis	Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Stritzler
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Goldstone	Mr. and Mrs. James Victor
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Greifer	Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wallack
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Jaffe	Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Weintraub
Mr. and Mrs. Morris Kamler	Mr. and Mrs. Henry Weiss
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Klion	Dr. and Mrs. Sidney Winett
Mr. and Mrs. Julian Levy	Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Wyatt
	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wyatt