A Finding Aid to the
Joseph Rauch Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 91
**Biographical Sketch**

Joseph Rauch was born in Podhajce, Galicia, Austria on December 25, 1880. Little is known of his childhood in Austria, but it is known that his family came to the United States ahead of him and that Rauch traveled alone to the United States to meet them when he was 12. They settled in Galveston, Texas, where Rauch lived in an atmosphere that was radically different from that of the Eastern Seaboard where most immigrant Jews settled. Later in his life Rauch would comment that he felt his childhood in Texas gave him a perspective on American life that other immigrants, who lived in the East, were unable to obtain.

Rauch and his family eventually moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he studied at the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College, and was ordained a rabbi in 1905. Rauch continued his studies in later years at the University of Chicago, Columbia University, Cambridge University in England and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned a Doctor of Theology degree. In 1944, the Hebrew Union College awarded him with an honorary Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Following his ordination in 1905, Rauch moved to Sioux City, Iowa to become rabbi of Mt. Sinai Temple. He remained there until April, 1912 when he accepted a call to become rabbi at Congregation Adath Israel in Louisville, Kentucky, where he remained for 44 years, until his death in 1957.

In 1942 the congregation, as part of the 30th anniversary celebration of his rabbinate in Louisville, elected him rabbi for life. Also, in 1953, the congregation decided to name the chapel in their newly built education building in his honor.

Throughout his career Rauch was a tireless participant in organizational and civic activities. He was active in the Central Conference of American Rabbis, serving on the executive committee and serving as chairman of the CCAR's Special Publication Committee. Rauch was also a founding member of the World Union for Progressive Judaism in 1926, delivering the inaugural sermon at the WUPJ's founding. He also gave the principal address at the WUPJ's 25th anniversary and was the first honorary life member elected by the organization. In addition, Rauch was active in many other major organizations, including the Jewish Welfare Board, the YMHA, the International Prison Congress and the Hebrew Union College Alumni Association, of which he served as president.

In Louisville, Rauch, in 1918, was an organizer of the Louisville Federation of Social Agencies. In 1922 he became a member of the Louisville Free Public Library Board of Trustees, served 18 consecutive terms as president and led a successful drive to end segregation in the Library system. Rauch was also a member of the University of Louisville's Board of Trustee from 1933-1946 and served on numerous other local committees and organizations.

Rauch was very active in inter-faith work, often preaching in Protestant pulpits and always striving for better understanding and communication between Christians and Jews. Rauch traveled often, crossing the Atlantic 57 times after his arrival in America. He also authored two books, The Origin and Development of the Apocalypse in the Bible and The Meaning of the Torah.

Rauch was married to Etta Rosenfelder. He died on February 18, 1957, in Louisville, Kentucky.

**Scope and Content**

Documents the career of Joseph Rauch, rabbi, community leader, and founding member of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The bulk of the collection consists of sermons, but also includes correspondence, congregational records, personal and miscellaneous items.
Arrangement
Organized into four (4) series: A. Sermons and Addresses; B. Correspondence; C. Congregational Records; D. Personal.

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Preferred Citation
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Joseph Rauch Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-91. Joseph Rauch Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance
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Index Terms

Subjects
Jews -- Kentucky -- Louisville / Judaism -- Relations -- Christianity / Rabbis

Personal Names
Rauch, Joseph, 1880-1957

Corporate Names
Congregation Adath Israel (Louisville, Ky.) / World Union for Progressive Judaism

Media
Sermons

Series A. Sermons and Addresses, 1900-1956

Extent
3.2 linear feet (8 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note
Consists of sermons, addresses and lectures given by Rauch. Also included in this series are eulogies, statements of appreciation and prayers.

Arrangement
The sermons in boxes 1-3 are arranged alphabetically by title. The sermons in boxes 4-8 are in ledgers that have been numbered and are arranged chronologically according to the first dated sermon in each ledger.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. A.
Box 1. Folder 2. B.
Box 1. Folder 3. Ca-Cl.
Box 1. Folder 4. Co-Cr.
Box 1. Folder 5. D.
Box 1. Folder 6. E.
Box 1. Folder 7. F.
Box 1. Folder 8. G.
Box 1. Folder 9. Ha-he.
Box 1. Folder 10. Hi.
Box 1. Folder 11. Ho-Hu.
Series B. Correspondence, 1907-1957

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Arrangement Letters arranged alphabetically by the name of the person or organization. The letters within the folders are arranged chronologically.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 9. Folder 4. Cincinnati [University of], 1953
Box 9. Folder 5. Committee on the Referendum for Budgeting, 1941
Box 9. Folder 15. World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1937-1956

Series C. Congregational Records, 1906-1956

Extent 0.4 linear feet (1 Hollinger box)

Scope and Content Note Consists of materials gathered by Rauch during his 44 year tenure as rabbi of Congregation Adath Israel in Louisville, Kentucky. The materials pertain to activities and organizations of the congregation but are in no way either the complete or official records of the congregation.
Box and Folder Listing

Box 10. Folder 1-6. Bible study class, 1923-1929, undated
Box 10. Folder 7-12. Confirmation, 1917-1956, undated
Box 10. Folder 13. Holiday and special services [B-S], 1927-1951, undated
Box 10. Folder 15. Religious School, 1922-1956, undated

Series D. Personal, 1913-1957

Extent 1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Consists of items pertaining to Rauch's personal life and interests. Of particular interest are the diaries of Rauch's many trips abroad.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 11. Folder 1. Appointment book, 1924
Box 11. Folder 2. Crusade for Children, 1956-1957
Box 11. Folder 3. Funeral records, 1921-1952
Box 11. Folder 4. Last will and testament, 1955
Box 11. Folder 5. Marriage records, 1941-1957
Box 11. Folder 6-7. Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1950
Box 12. Folder 1-5. Travel diaries, 1913, 1933-1936
Box 13. Folder 1-3. Travel diaries, 1936-1938, 1949
Box 13. Folder 4. Personal miscellaneous, 1926-1957, undated
Box 13. Folder 5. Clippings.
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Subject Tracings

Note: The following list of subjects is a selective index to many of the topics and individuals in the JOSEPH RAUCH PAPERS. It is selective in that it only attempts to draw attention to the more significant items in the collection. It does not attempt to list every subject or individual nor does it try to indicate all places that a listed subject or individual appears in the collection. When used in conjunction with the Box and Folder list, the Subject Tracings should help the researcher locate topics. References are to boxes and folders: e.g., 2/13 means Box 2, Folder 13.

Alexander, Jerome 9/2
Anti-Semitism 1/1, 10

Berkowits, Henry J. 9/3
Blaustein, Jacob 9/5
Brandeis, Louis D.
Brickner, Barnett R. 9/10

Church Peace Union 9/2
Central Conference of American Rabbis-Commission on Jewish Education 11/8

Education 1/6; 2/2; 3/1; 11/5
Eisendrath, Maurice N. 9/10

Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society 9/6
Hebrew Union College 9/12

Isserman, Ferdinand M. 9/15

Krock, Arthur 9/6
Ku Klux Klan 2/3

Marcus, Jacob R. 9/2
Mattuck, Israel 9/9
Montagu, Lily H. 9/15

Nazism 1/8; 2/3

Russia 1/4; 2/13; 3/5, 8

Schulman, Samuel 9/3, 12
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Subject Tracings

Wolsey, Louis 9/3

Zangwill, Israel 3/8
Zionism 1/4; 2/9; 3/8