



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE  
**AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES**

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**A Finding Aid to the  
Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) Records  
Manuscript Collection No. 713**

## Collection Summary

<b>Title</b>	Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) Records
<b>Dates</b>	1923-2004
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS-713
<b>Repository</b>	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.). Sisterhood B'nai B'rith Women. Annie Weinberg Chapter No. 567 (Blytheville, Ark.)
<b>Extent</b>	3.4 linear feet (6 Hollinger boxes, 1 oversize box)
<b>Language of the Material</b>	English

## Administrative Information

**Biographical Sketch** The first Jewish families began arriving in Southeast Missouri and Northeast Arkansas around the turn of the twentieth century. The first temple records begin with the Ladies Aid Society, which organized May 1923 at the home of the first President, Anne Weinberg. It was through the efforts of the Ladies Aid Society that Congregation Temple Israel was founded and organized. In March of 1925, members of Temple Israel dedicated a Jewish Community House in Blytheville, Arkansas. There men and women of the congregation established Sunday School services for the children and conducted services led by lay leaders from among the men of the group. For the next ten years, these men and women raised funds to hire a Rabbi and build a temple. In November of 1936, the first Rabbi, Rabbi Maurice Lyons, was installed.

The Community House was sold in 1942 and land was purchased at the corner of Chickasawba and 15th Street for the erection of a temple. The outbreak of World War II and ensuing government restrictions delayed the start of construction. However, by 1945 the members of Temple Israel hired Rabbi Alfred Vise, and in July of 1946 ground for the temple was formally broken and the cornerstone laid on August 14, 1946. A year later, on September 7, 1947, members attended the new temple dedication ceremony.

Dr. Alfred Vise continued to serve the congregation until his untimely death in 1957. After his passing, student rabbis from the Hebrew Union College ministered to the congregation.

In 1947, the temple's first bar mitzvah took place. The years after saw many happy eventsDLcongregational dinners, money raising projects, confirmations, bar and bat mitzvahs. During the years that spanned 1949—1990, many groups of school children, ministers, and laymen visited the Temple. Brotherhood services were conducted from the pulpit, and the Sisterhood was busy with activities.

However, by September 11, 1999 The Commercial Appeal reported that fifty-two year old Temple Israel's membership had dwindled to about two-dozen members. These members began to make plans for the dissolution of their Temple, bequeathing stained glass windows, memorial plaques, and Torahs to other synagogues and making plans to sell the temple building. Four years later, on November 23, 2003, Temple Israel closed its doors.

**Scope and Content** The collection describes the governance and activities of the congregation from its beginnings in 1923 until just after the dissolution of the Temple in 2003. Temple members generated the majority of these records. As a result, meeting minutes, financial ledgers, and correspondence make up the bulk of this collection. This collection also contains newspaper clippings, services, programs and publications, membership lists, legal documents, and scrapbooks.

**Arrangement** This collection is arranged in five (5) series: A. General Files; B. Sisterhood; C. B'nai B'rith; D. B'nai B'rith Women - Annie Weinberg Chapter; E. Scrapbooks and Blueprints.

**Terms of Access** The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

**Preferred Citation** Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-713. Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Provenance** Received from Temple Israel through Haim Asa, 1961, additional records from Richard Falkoff, 2004.

## Index Terms

**Subjects** B'nai B'rith Women. Annie Weinberg Chapter No. 567 (Blytheville, Ark.) / Charities / Jewish women / Jews -- Arkansas -- Blytheville / Synagogues -- Arkansas -- Blytheville

**Corporate Names** Temple Israel (Blytheville, Ark.) / Union of American Hebrew Congregations / United Jewish Appeal

**Media** By-laws / Constitutions / Minutes / Scrapbooks

## Series A. General Files, 1950-2004

**Extent** 1.2 linear feet (3 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Included within this series are the constitution and by-laws, meeting minutes, financial ledgers, as well as the documents pertaining to the dissolution of Temple Israel. This series also contains rabbi's biographies, membership lists, memorial lists, a history of the temple, photographs, certificates, a Memory Book and the contents of the cornerstone. Publications produced by Temple Israel, temple services, as well as bar and bat mitzvah services are found in this series. This series also contains nearprint and haggadot. Congregational correspondence also makes up this series. Of particular interest is a letter to Temple Israel from the War Production Board denying the temple's request for "construction of a new church building." Dated July 27, 1945, this letter provides insight to scholars interested in the home-front during World War II.

**Arrangement** Records are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

### Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. Beth Sholom (Memphis, Tenn.) proposal, 1994-1995

Box 1. Folder 2. Board members and membership lists, 1943-2000

Box 1. Folder 3. Board of Directors and general Temple meeting minutes, 1943-2003

Box 1. Folder 4. Building photographs and window descriptions, 1994-2000

Box 1. Folder 5. Building records, 1945-1954

Box 1. Folder 6. Certificates from Temple wall, 1956-1972

Box 1. Folder 7. Confirmations, Bar and bat mitzvahs, 1962-1982

Box 1. Folder 8. Constitution and by-laws, 1950

Box 1. Folder 9. Correspondence, 1943-1960

Box 2. Folder 1. Correspondence, 1961-1989

Box 2. Folder 2. Correspondence, 1990-1993

Box 2. Folder 3. Correspondence, 1994-2004, undated

Box 2. Folder 4. Financial records, 1945-1960, undated

Box 2. Folder 5. Financial records, 1972-1996

Box 2. Folder 6. Financial records, 1975-1985

Box 2. Folder 7. Haggadot, undated

Box 3. Folder 1. History, 1947-1997, undated

Box 3. Folder 2. Holiday books, undated

Box 3. Folder 3. Memorial lists, 1976-2002

Box 3. Folder 4. Memorial lists and financial records, 1975-1985

Box 3. Folder 5. Miscellaneous, 1949-1960

- Box 3. Folder 6. Nearprint, 1946-2003
- Box 3. Folder 7. Plan for dissolution and liquidation, 1995-1996
- Box 3. Folder 8. Services, 1991-2003
- Box 3. Folder 9. Temple Israel, 1956-1957
- Box 3. Folder 10. Temple Israel Bulletin, 1958-1971
- Box 3. Folder 11. Temple Israel Chronicle, 1936-1937
- Box 3. Folder 12. Temple Israel Golden Book, 1959-1994
- Box 3. Folder 13. Vandalism of Temple Israel (photographs), 1991

## **Series B. Sisterhood, 1923-2003**

**Extent** 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** This series is particularly rich, containing a complete set of Sisterhood meeting minutes and Sisterhood board meeting minutes. This set of records covers the years 1923—1982. Extensive material both on Temple Israel and the Sisterhood itself are available in these records. Also interesting and informative are the Temple Israel Sisterhood Yearbooks, which span the years 1960—2003. These yearbooks contain prayers, calendar of temple events, sisterhood officers and board members, committee members, and a roster of members. This series also contains correspondence, as well as nearprint that allow one to better understand the activities of the sisterhood.

**Arrangement** Records are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 4. Folder 1. Board and meeting minutes, 1955-1958
- Box 4. Folder 2. Board and meeting minutes, 1967-1971
- Box 4. Folder 3. Board and meeting minutes, 1971-1976
- Box 4. Folder 4. Board and meeting minutes, 1980-1987
- Box 4. Folder 5. Constitution, 1962
- Box 4. Folder 6. Correspondence, 1957-1994, undated
- Box 4. Folder 7. Financial records, 1981-1985
- Box 4. Folder 8. Financial records, 1985-1992
- Box 4. Folder 9. Jewish Ladies Aid Society financial records, 1924-1926
- Box 5. Folder 1. Jewish Ladies Aid Society record book, 1923-1925
- Box 5. Folder 2. Jewish Ladies Aid Society record book, 1925-1927
- Box 5. Folder 3. Jewish Ladies Aid Society record book, 1927-1928
- Box 5. Folder 4. Jewish Ladies Aid Society record book, 1928-1929
- Box 5. Folder 5. Miscellaneous, 1971-1994, undated
- Box 5. Folder 6. Yearbooks, 1960-1970
- Box 5. Folder 7. Yearbooks, 1970-1980
- Box 5. Folder 8. Yearbooks, 1980-1990
- Box 5. Folder 9. Yearbooks, 1990-2003

## **Series C. B'nai B'rith, 1956-2003**

**Extent** 0.13 linear feet (0.3 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** Included within this series are meeting minutes, membership and financial records, correspondence, certificates, and a constitution and by-laws.

**Arrangement** Records are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 6. Folder 1. Constitution and by-laws, 1956

Box 6. Folder 2. Correspondence, 1944-2003

Box 6. Folder 3. Financial records, 1978-1997

Box 6. Folder 4. Meeting minutes, 1965-1983

Box 6. Folder 5. Miscellaneous, 1958-1958, undated

## **Series D. B'nai B'rith Women - Annie Weinberg Chapter, 1947-1959**

**Extent** 0.13 linear feet (0.3 Hollinger box)

**Scope and Content Note** This series contains a constitution and by-laws, meeting minutes, correspondence, and a history of the Annie Weinberg Chapter No. 567. Please note that the May 17, 1959, chapter meeting minutes, found in folder 9, is located within the 1950 notebook.

**Arrangement** Records are arranged alphabetically and then chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 6. Folder 6. Constitution and by-laws, 1955

Box 6. Folder 7. Correspondence, 1948-1956, undated

Box 6. Folder 8. Meeting minutes, 1947-1959

Box 6. Folder 9. Miscellaneous, 1952-1956, undated

## **Series E. Scrapbooks and Blueprints, 1925-1988**

**Extent** 1.14 linear feet (0.3 Hollinger box, 1 oversize box)

**Scope and Content Note** The scrapbooks include newspaper clippings, correspondence, photographs and other miscellaneous materials. The blueprints are of the Temple building.

**Arrangement** The scrapbooks are arranged in chronological order, with the blueprints placed at the end.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 6. Folder 10. Scrapbook, 1925-1988

Box 6. Folder 11. Scrapbook, 1949-1952, undated

Box 7. Folder 1. Scrapbook, 1949-1967

Box 7. Folder 2. Scrapbook, 1952-1969

Box 7. Folder 3. Scrapbook, 1966-1972, undated

Box 7. Folder 4. Synagogue blueprints, 1946