



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

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**A Finding Aid to the  
Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester  
(Chappaqua, N.Y.) Records**

**Manuscript Collection No. 728**

## Collection Summary

<b>Title</b>	Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester (Chappaqua, N.Y.) Records
<b>Dates</b>	1925-2000
<b>Collection Number</b>	MS-728
<b>Repository</b>	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester (Chappaqua, N.Y.)
<b>Extent</b>	4.4 linear feet (11 Hollinger boxes)
<b>Language of the Material</b>	English

## Administrative Information

**Biographical Sketch** The 45 founding families of Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester came from 28 different communities. How they found each other went unrecorded. What we do know is that they began meeting formally in 1949 after deciding that north Westchester County needed a Reform congregation. They initially held services in Chappaqua's Congregational Church. Rapid growth prompted a move to the Presbyterian Church in Mt. Kisco. Their growth in membership continued, and in 1954 they returned to Chappaqua, this time as the new owners of the Congregational Church. The church was converted into a synagogue that provided a home to the fledgling congregation until 1972.

The now-mature congregation had, in the interim, purchased nine acres of wooded property which at one time belonged to Horace Greeley. They contracted with renowned architect Louis I. Kahn, of Philadelphia, to design a synagogue. Dedicated in May of '72, the congregation continues to use this facility today. The 23,000 square foot building, completed at a cost of \$1.1 million, was intended to house 450 families. Though the congregation exceeded this number long ago, the current structure meets their needs admirably. As well, the rabbi lives on the property, in a house sheltered by trees on its own acre of land.

The researcher will frequently encounter the name Chaim Stern in the pages of this collection. Stern became Beth El's rabbi in 1968. Known for his love of Jewish liturgy, he wrote services for any and all occasions during his tenure at Temple Beth El. Chaim Stern was the editor of the original Reform Prayer Book, *Gates of Prayer*. He served as Beth El's senior rabbi for 33 years, from 1968 through 2001, at which time he passed away. Temple Beth El's other religious leaders have included Rabbi's Solomon Kahn Kaplan, Murray Saltzman, Alan Katz and Dennis Ross.

**Scope and Content** The collection offers a comprehensive picture of how a well-to-do congregation in upstate New York got its start, then went on to thrive. Through the pages of its monthly news bulletin, the researcher gets a broad, accurate sense of this congregation's keen desire to express itself Jewishly, in all facets of life, while at the same time partnering with its non-Jewish neighbors at every given opportunity. The congregation's fullest expression of Jewish living can be found in the copious amounts of continuing education materials in the collection. Their senior rabbi, on the other hand, found his greatest satisfaction in writing liturgy. The student of Jewish liturgy will find much that is interesting in the collection's liturgy series.

**Arrangement** The collection is divided into four (4) series: A. Continuing Education; B. Congregation History; C. Congregation Newsletter; D. Liturgy.

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

**Preferred Citation** Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester (Chappaqua, N.Y.) Records and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-728. Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester (Chappaqua, N.Y.) Records. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Provenance** Received from Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester, Chappaqua, N.Y., 2005.

**Processing Information** Processed by Vicki Lipski, June 2006.

## Index Terms

**Subjects** Adult education / Jews -- New York (State) -- Chappaqua / Liturgies / Reform Judaism / Synagogues -- New York (State) -- Chappaqua

**Personal Names** Stern, Chaim, 1930-2001

**Corporate Names** Temple Beth El of Northern Westchester (Chappaqua, N.Y.)

## **Series A. Continuing Education, 1966-1980**

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

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of materials written during the 1960s and 1970s. The exception would be the three books and one pamphlet, all written in Hebrew, that were most likely part of Rabbi Stern's personal library. The rest of the series is made up of books and papers intended for the use of congregation members and a newspaper series called "Chronicle Classroom," excised from the pages of the Yonkers Jewish Chronicle.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 1. Folder 1. B'nai mitzvah/confirmation, 1970-1971
- Box 1. Folder 2. Confirmation plaques, miniature, 1966-1967
- Box 1. Folder 3. Continuing Education: Questionnaire No. 1., undated
- Box 1. Folder 4. Continuing Education: The Common Sense of Religious Faith, undated
- Box 1. Folder 5. Continuing Education: Critical Issues Facing Reform Judaism, 1972
- Box 1. Folder 6. Continuing Education: How About This, 1973
- Box 1. Folder 7. Continuing Education: The Jewish Home, 1980
- Box 1. Folder 8. Continuing Education: Martin Buber - Selected writings, undated
- Box 1. Folder 9. Continuing Education: A Portion of Paradise, undated
- Box 1. Folder 10. Continuing Education: Questions about Judaism, undated
- Box 1. Folder 11. Continuing Education: Questions and Answers about Judaism, undated
- Box 1. Folder 12. The Jewish Processional: A Drawing by Zevi Blum, undated
- Box 1. Folder 13. The Jewish Response to Christian Evangelism, undated
- Box 1. Folder 14. Jewish Studies in American Colleges and Universities, undated
- Box 1. Folder 15. JFTY Spring Conclave, undated
- Box 1. Folder 16. Warsaw Ghetto Uprising - 30th Anniversary Commemorative Publication.
- Box 1. Folder 17. Miscellaneous Continuing Education.
- Box 2. Folder 1. Yonkers Jewish Chronicle. Chronicle Classroom, 1977-1979
- Box 2. Folder 2. Yonkers Jewish Chronicle. Chronicle Classroom, 1977 September - 1978 June
- Box 2. Folder 3. Jewish Sources: The Concept of God in Rabbinic Literature [Hebrew].
- Box 2. Folder 4. Prayer on Har Ha-Tzofim [Hebrew].
- Box 2. Folder 5. Thirtieth Anniversary Volume. Ha-Doar. Second Chapter, Tractate. Baba Metziah ("ehlu Metzut") of the Talmud [Hebrew].

## **Series B. Congregation History, 1951-2000**

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

**Scope and Content Note** Consists of a brief history of the congregation, fundraising events, and newspaper articles covering congregational life in the 1950's and 1960's.

**Arrangement** The series is arranged alphabetically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 3. Folder 1. Congregation membership information. Rough draft, undated

Box 3. Folder 2. Fortieth anniversary commemorative yearbook, 1989

Box 3. Folder 3. Fundraising, 1953-1968

Box 3. Folder 4. Newspaper articles, 1956-1957

Box 3. Folder 5. Photographs, 1951, 1956, undated

Box 4. Folder 1. Scrapbook, 1968-1969

## **Series C. Congregation Newsletter, 1955-1994**

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

**Scope and Content Note** Though Board of Directors' minutes are not a consistent feature, the researcher can nevertheless gain detailed knowledge about congregational life at Temple Beth El from its pages. There is, unfortunately, a nine-year gap between 1983 and 1993. The 1961-1964 issues are also missing. With these exceptions, every year's issues, from 1955-1994, are included in the collection.

**Arrangement** The series is arranged chronologically.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

Box 5. Folder 1. Beth El Bulletin, 1955 June - 1958 June

Box 5. Folder 2. Beth El Review, 1958 September - 1959 December

Box 5. Folder 3. Beth El Review, 1960; Beth El Bulletin, 1965, 1960, 1965

Box 5. Folder 4. Beth El Bulletin, 1966

Box 6. Folder 1. Beth El Bulletin, 1967

Box 6. Folder 2. Beth El Bulletin, 1968

Box 6. Folder 3. Beth El Bulletin, 1969

Box 6. Folder 4. Beth El Bulletin, 1970

Box 6. Folder 5. Beth El Bulletin, 1971

Box 6. Folder 6. Beth El Bulletin, 1972

Box 7. Folder 1. Beth El Bulletin, 1973

Box 7. Folder 2. Beth El Bulletin, 1974

Box 7. Folder 3. Beth El Bulletin, 1975

Box 7. Folder 4. Beth El Bulletin, 1976

Box 7. Folder 5. Beth El Bulletin, 1977

Box 7. Folder 6. Beth El Bulletin, 1978

Box 7. Folder 7. Beth El Bulletin, 1979

- Box 7. Folder 8. Beth El Bulletin, 1980
- Box 7. Folder 9. Beth El Bulletin, 1981
- Box 7. Folder 10. Beth El Bulletin, 1982
- Box 7. Folder 11. Beth El Bulletin, 1983
- Box 7. Folder 12. Beth El Bulletin, 1993-1994

## **Series D. Liturgy, 1925-2000**

**Extent** 1.6 linear feet (4 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Composed of Rabbi Chaim Stern's writings, liturgy provided to him by other rabbis who knew of his interest, and writings and correspondence having to do with the revision of Gates of Repentance and the writing of Gates of Prayer, Part II.

### **Box and Folder Listing**

- Box 8. Folder 1. Confirmation service, 1973, 1989
- Box 8. Folder 2. Cornerstone consecration service, 1970
- Box 8. Folder 3. Dedication service, 1972
- Box 8. Folder 4. Hanukkah service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 5. Havdalah service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 6. High Holy Days prayers, poems and meditations, 1971
- Box 8. Folder 7. High Holy Days. Rosh Hashanah, undated, 2000
- Box 8. Folder 8. High Holy Days. Yom Kippur, undated
- Box 8. Folder 9. Installation service, 1968
- Box 8. Folder 10. Shabbat morning service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 11. Shabbat (Friday night) service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 12. Shabbat (Friday night) service, 1989
- Box 8. Folder 13. Simchat Torah service, 1972
- Box 8. Folder 14. Sisterhood Sabbath service, 1989
- Box 8. Folder 15. Special service, 1970
- Box 8. Folder 16. Special Shabbat service for Israel, undated
- Box 8. Folder 17. Sukkot service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 18. Torah blessing.
- Box 8. Folder 19. Tu Bishvat Service, undated
- Box 8. Folder 20. Women's guild Sabbath, 1971
- Box 9. Folder 1. Boy Scout Sabbath. National Jewish Committee on Scouting, undated
- Box 9. Folder 2. A Creative Service Based on the Experiences and Feelings of the Los Angeles Eisendrath Mitzvah Corps, 1969
- Box 9. Folder 3. Dedication service, undated
- Box 9. Folder 4. Installation service - Senior Rabbi Herbert Bronstein (North Shore Congregation Israel, Glencoe, Ill.).
- Box 9. Folder 5. Meditations on High Holy Days and Festivals. A. Alan Steinbach, D.D.

(Temple Ahavath Sholom, Brooklyn, N.Y.).

Box 9. Folder 6. Meditation services, undated

Box 9. Folder 7. Miscellaneous blessings, readings and services. Temple Beth El.

Box 9. Folder 8. Ordination service (Leo Baeck College, London, England), 1967

Box 9. Folder 9. Peace services, undated

Box 9. Folder 10. Readings, undated

Box 9. Folder 11. Reconciliation service. Interdenominational, 1969

Box 9. Folder 12. Rosh Hashanah services (Temple Sholom of West Essex, Cedar Grove, N.J.), 1970, 1971

Box 9. Folder 13. Selichot service. Rabbi Kurt Metzger (The Monroe Temple of Liberal Judaism, Monroe, N.Y.), undated

Box 9. Folder 14. Service for affixing mezuzah (Temple Beth Israel, Fresno, Calif.), undated

Box 9. Folder 15. Services commemorating Ghetto Uprisings (Temple Emanuel, Cherry Hill, N.J.), 1964

Box 9. Folder 16. Service, Contemporary. Commissioned by the Adult Education Committee of Temple Beth El, undated

Box 9. Folder 17. Services, Liberal Jewish Synagogues, London, England; Shabbat Family Service, 1925-1964, undated

Box 9. Folder 18. Shabbat service.

Box 9. Folder 19. Shabbat service. Action - The Life of Judaism by Sandy Eisenberg.

Box 9. Folder 20. Shabbat service. Dedicated to the Spirit of Protest in Judaism.

Box 9. Folder 21. Shabbat service at Federation Conference, 1963

Box 9. Folder 22. Shabbat service. Hasidism and Modern Man by Herbert Bronstein.

Box 9. Folder 23. Shabbat service for New Temple Youth, 1969

Box 9. Folder 24. Shabbat service. A Night in the Gardens of Spain.

Box 9. Folder 25. Shabbat service on Unity by Sandy Eisenberg and Bob Ruskin.

Box 9. Folder 26. Shabbat service. The World of Hasidism (Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, D.C.).

Box 9. Folder 27. Special service on the theme of the Messiah.

Box 9. Folder 28. Weekday and evening services, 1957, undated

Box 9. Folder 29. Women's Shabbat. Sarah's Hidden Voice: Recovering and Discovering Women's Spirituality.

Box 9. Folder 30. Yom HaShoah service, undated

Box 9. Folder 31. Yom Kippur services, 1969, undated

Box 10. Folder 1. Gates of Repentance. Correspondence. Joseph Glaser/Eli Wiesel, 1974

Box 10. Folder 2. Gates of Repentance. Questionnaire, undated

Box 10. Folder 3. Gates of Repentance. Partial bibliography, undated

Box 10. Folder 4. Gates of Repentance. Poems, prayers and readings, undated

Box 10. Folder 5. Gates of Repentance. Correspondence. A-B, 1972-1977

Box 10. Folder 6. Gates of Repentance. Correspondence. C-K, 1974-1977

Box 10. Folder 7. Gates of Repentance. Correspondence. L-R, 1974-1977

Box 10. Folder 8. Gates of Repentance. Correspondence. S-Z, 1968-1977

Box 10. Folder 9. Gates of Repentance. Miscellaneous, 1976-1977

Box 11. Folder 1. Draft of Gates of Prayer, Part II. pp. 1-75.

Box 11. Folder 2. Draft of Gates of Prayer, Part II. pp. 76-151.

Box 11. Folder 3. Draft of Gates of Prayer, Part II. pp. 152-225.

Box 11. Folder 4. Draft of Gates of Prayer, Part II. pp. 226-323.

Box 11. Folder 5. Gates of Prayer, Part II. Correspondence, A-Z, 1973

Box 11. Folder 6. Gates of Prayer, Part II. Revisions.

Box 11. Folder 7. Gates of Prayer, Part II. Miscellaneous, 1973, undated