

## FOREWORD

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Duluth, Minnesota

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It has been a fascinating and rewarding study, and I am grateful for having had the opportunity to do it.

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## TEMPLE EMANUEL STORY

When I was asked by Mr. Samuel Horowitz, President, if I would undertake to clear away many years' accumulation of letters and files in our Temple store room, I readily accepted because of my interest in history in the making. The Tercentenary in 1956 - the celebration of 300 years since the arrival of Jews in American - gave impetus to many cities and organizations to do their histories while pioneers were still with us, or in many cases, at least their children. I also had the desire to see the preservation of important records since I felt that some day our Duluth Branch of the University of Minnesota would grant M.A. Degrees in social sciences and the young people of tomorrow might like to do research in this field and would welcome having material on hand. The demise of many communities in Europe and the increase of the number of Jewish writers dealing in Jewish themes also gave added reason for trying to preserve, for the future, some of our own history, spanning decades of many changes, historically, industrially, and sociologically.

So the sifting process began. Boxes were opened and files gone over. Lists upon lists of members were found, old financial records, letters to and from Rabbis regarding filling the pulpit; much correspondence on cemetery matters, notices showing the ever present pressure to have dues paid, letters of resignation, of complaints, yes, even occasionally of praise, legal papers set aside for more careful perusal, annual reports, letters from the National, resolutions on deaths of members, bulletins of special events, etc. So materials were separated; one box for future study that told of significant changes in Temple procedures or social and religious practices, another for items to send to the Archives at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati - others to be sent to the St. Louis County Historical Society, where a file had been started during the Tercentenary year. (Surely just going through the minutes might have been simpler, if only a record was wanted, but then the attic would not have been cleared away, and it was a necessary task since the accumulation was also a fire hazard.) One could not pass up all this material without some kind of recording and thus, in addition to examples for display purposes, the desire to write the Temple story was born.

Although not a native of Duluth, my own background, that of an orthodox family of an early period of immigration in St. Paul, Minnesota, my education and experience in Jewish community life gave me, I hope, insight and understanding. My husband and I came to Duluth just as the new Temple was being built; joined while services were held at the Unitarian Church. Harry, a Duluthian whom I met at the University of Minnesota, had gone through many of the same experiences as I had - I was influenced by Rabbi Isaac Rypins of Temple Mount Zion in St. Paul; Harry, by Dr. Maurice Lefkowitz in Duluth, both Reform Rabbis. A period at the Cleveland Orphan Home, where Harry conducted Reform Services, also helped to decide where our future lay, religion-wise. Then we decided to come to Duluth to make our home.

What did we find? We found the ritual, the congregation, decorum, no separate seating, no kashras, no family pews, the Prayer Book in English and Hebrew, was to our taste, as well as the Sunday School for our children. We soon became active in the Temple; Harry was a legal advisor and President, I was a Sisterhood President for 3 years, and both of us were long-time Board members.

What furthered my devotion to my self-imposed task was a letter I found among the papers from E.A. Silberstein, President in 1928, asking Harry to do a history of the Temple. Instead, he wrote one of the Jewish community, which is now on file in the County and State Historical Societies, and I was indeed happy to try to complete the job and dedicate this to his memory. Also, in an annual report by A.B. Kapplin, March, 1932, is a paragraph wherein he recommended, "The congregation undertake the preparation of a history of our institution, while pioneer members are still with us, that the history be printed and distributed at a nominal cost. This activity to be sponsored by the Sisterhood or Men's Club and is submitted for their consideration."



A few gleanings at random before we begin the story:

An appeal from the American Jewish Relief Committee for war-torn Jewish Communities in Europe, signed by Louis Marshal and F.M. Warburg, well known names in American Jewish History, another letter mentions refugees in Cuba - history has since repeated itself - the Tuesday Club donated drapes for the assembly room - we were asked to donate to the fire-sufferers of Black Hills. Mrs. Shapiro donated a lowering device for the cemetery, first used for Louis Hammel, one of our pioneers... A bill for a horse sold by Mr. Moses Goldberg to Mrs. Levine for \$75.00... A letter from a social service agency in Buffalo informing us they would not pay for a wooden leg for a client they had sent us... Amusing incidents and sad ones were revealed, and with it all came a feeling of utmost respect for the many dedicated people who gave of their time, energy and where-with-all; that the immigrants and the poor be helped and that a Reform Congregation be maintained. One note said, "As long as there are ten Jews, there will be a congregation."

In an old record book, we found a notation of a loan account of the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society, 1897, probably preceding the Temple Aid Society, which, while a part of Temple, was a separate group and the recognized Social Agency for the Jews in the city... In 1895, a letter from N.C. Summerfield of Little Falls, requested information of Bernard Silberstein, as to our congregation. Louis Ross-Mondschine, B.H. Levy, S.I. Levine, M.J. Edelman, Louis Aronheim, apparently formed a committee, or were the first Board of the Congregation which was chartered in 1911.

The first history of our community was written by Harry W. Davis for the American Jewish World. To quote the part pertaining to Temple Emanuel:

"The Jewish communities of the Eastern Seaboard in the United States remind one of the different layers of rock, like geological layers. At bottom is the layer of the Sephardic community of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews; in the middle is the German Jewish aliyah; and on top, most numerous, maybe a little vociferous as yet, but very important and becoming very powerful, is the third stratum, the Russian Polish Jewish immigration. In Duluth, as in most Western communities, the bottom layer is missing and the beginnings go to the results of the upheaval in Europe in 1848 and the resultant flight of the Jews of Germany to the United States, to the great detriment of Germany and to the great gain of the United States, to the arch of this community was that staunch Jew and perfect gentleman, Bernard Silberstein, who was the founder of the Duluth branch of the family. He was born near Budapest in Hungary and arrived in Duluth on his honeymoon in 1870, looked over this straggling frontier community of a few hundred people and, fortunately, decided to stay. For decade after decade, his name figures thereafter in the Gentile and Jewish community of this city; a very prominent business man, the advisor and, in many cases, the protector of the later comers, a co-worker with Ray Sargent, and the many others who came to build Duluth after the Civil War and built this community, big brother to the poor and down-trodden Polish, Lithuanian, and Rumanian Jews who flocked to these shores after the May laws and pogroms of the nefarious czaristic government of Russia, commissioner of public safety, thirty-third degree Mason. Bernard Silberstein lived to a ripe age and died an honored man. He left his son, Edward A. Silberstein, to carry on the family tradition and the son has even outdone his father; First President of the Associated Charities, president of Temple Emanuel, organizer of the Community Fund and an outstanding Jew of Duluth.

A Hungarian Jew who was to become prominently identified with the life of the community, Ignatz Freimuth, did not arrive until the early eighties. Mr. Freimuth was truly the head of a patriarchal family. He became the owner of the second largest department store in Duluth, was active in mining circles, president of Temple Emanuel for many years; in short, there was hardly any Jewish or non-Jewish activity in which I. Freimuth did not participate. He left a large family to carry on the family tradition and name in Duluth and in a number of other cities.



Many other names of German Jewish families figured in the early history of Duluth, but very few descendants of these families are left here to carry on: Louis Hammel and his wife, a pious Jewess and a kind-hearted soul, wrote their names large on our Jewish community. Mr. Hammel has been dead for a number of years, while Mrs. Hammel and her daughter, Rae Gordon, are now living in Winnipeg. P.H. Oswald ran a cigar store. He is buried in Temple Emanuel cemetery, but it was difficult to get information about him; J.H. Winterfield was a wholesale cigar man, whose place of business was on the present site of the Freimuth Department Store, in a place so tiny that it was known as "The Jumbo Block"; Sig Levy was here, the father of the Levys now in Milwaukee; Henry Leopold, a tailor and Asa Leopold in the furniture business; Phillip Levy, father of Mrs. Louis (Estelle) Zalk, operated the cigar stand in the St. Louis Hotel. Sam Loeb, Isaac Bondy (brother of L.R. Bondy), Ben Heller, J.D. Sattler, and Louis Loeb all joined the tiny community in the eighties. Louis Loeb was president of Temple Emanuel for some time and was a director in one of the large banks of the city and very prominent in business affairs.

This little Jewish community followed the old Jewish tradition that when ten Jews get together they organize a Minyan and so by 1891, Temple Emanuel, a Reform congregation, was organized. This congregation, though small, flourished continuously and is a very vigorous and active congregation today and is more conservative today than it was in 1891."

To quote Universal Jewish Encyclopedia - Vol. 3, pages 608-509

"The first congregation - Temple Emanuel congregation - was organized in 1891. A Reform institution from the start, in 1940 it was under the leadership of Rabbi Burton E. Levinson, a graduate of the Hebrew Union College. The Temple is located on Fourth Street at Nineteenth Avenue East. In 1893 Tifereth Israel Congregation was formed under the leadership of Yankel Levine and Louis Cohen. A second Orthodox Synagogue, Adas Israel, was organized in 1900 with Isaac Cook as its president. The Hebrew Brotherhood Synagogue was founded in 1912. In 1940 the three Orthodox synagogues were led by Rabbi Paul J. Bender."

To Quote - "A Study of the Jewish Community of Duluth", by Joseph M. Papo in 1941,

"The first Jews settled in Duluth in 1870. Natives of Hungary and Germany, they first engaged in various small enterprises and gradually became successful and prominent merchants. They participated actively in civic life and many won honors and distinctions. One such Jewish settler was made Commissioner of Public Safety, and his son was a member of the City Charter Commission. There is only a small number of their descendants now left in Duluth and with very few exceptions they play a minor role in both general and Jewish communal affairs. It was not until the 1880's that Eastern European Jews made their way to Duluth. They started their careers as peddlers and received much moral and financial support from the earlier settlers. Their children are now the recognized leaders in the religious, civic and philanthropic Jewish activities."

Quote from "Jew of Minnesota", by Rabbi Gunther Plaut, 1959 -

"In 1891 enough Jews were in Duluth to found Temple Emanuel. They engaged a functionary named Gluek, then a Rabbi David. K. Eisenberg, followed by a Rabbi Frey. On February 26, 1896, the congregation was incorporated with Bernard Silberstein, president; Dr. Louis Gross, secretary; Joseph Klein, treasurer. Eight years later, in 1904, the synagogue was dedicated. Rabbi Mendel Silber of the Reform camp was installed. In Duluth there was no significant interval between the settling of Western European Jews and those from East European countries - western Jews turned to Reform, while the others built their own congregation."



In a letter to A.B. Kapplin, E.A. Silberstein states that a charter meeting of the Woodlawn Cemetery Association was held and a certificate of incorporation was received, February 26, 1895. He also remembers holiday services in 1893.

Among other notes of historical interest is that Mrs. L.R. Bondy, related to the Silbersteins, was married in Duluth in 1891, and her wedding dress is now in the care of the St. Louis County Historical Society. Members remember that prior to having our own synagogue, Camel's Hall, Odd Fellows Hall, and the Masonic Temple were used. A small church was rented for the holidays and the crosses were covered up. Doctor Deinard of Minneapolis came to perform weddings and to conduct funerals. Did a Mohel come for circumscisions? So far I've been told that doctors performed this service. Sewing classes were held for children in the downstairs of the Adath Israel Synagogue. A club for girls called The Maccbiah Club was formed in 1913. Some of the teachers in our Sunday School were: Elsie Silberstein, Florence S. Giddings, Enid Freimuth, Rose Segelbaum Shapiro, Etta Joseph, Lillian Cook, the Bondy girls, and others.

The next step was the building of a very small synagogue at 7th Avenue East and 2nd Street in 1904. This was later sold to a Greek Orthodox Congregation, was re-modeled, and is still in use. Dr. Maurice Lefkowitz was our Rabbi.

Then came the time when bold steps had to be taken. Mr. I. Freimuth, the President, with the Board confirming, decided a new Temple had to be built. We had outgrown the first building and most congregants had moved Eastward. A campaign was launched, a dinner was held at the Ha'i Vov Club, and pledges were made to the Building Fund. Sisterhood pledged \$4,000. In the interim, the Unitarian Church on 18th Avenue East and 1st Street was rented. Alvin Louchs was our Rabbi. Then came the dedication, a most impressive event. The speaker on this occasion was Rabbi Tobias Schaufarber of Chicago, Rabbi Rothstein of St. Paul, and Rev. Adlard of the Unitarian Church. Only one going through all the correspondence, can have any idea of the work involved: bids for the organ, for the furnichings, architect's drawings, kitchen equipment. But it was finally achieved, albeit with a heavy mortgage. Many congratulatory messages were received at the dedication event, and a new era had opened up. Yes, the future seemed bright, indeed, but little did we know how soon the depression would engulf us.

#### THE BOARD

The Board is the over-all governing group of the Temple. Its first membership reflected the origins of the group which was made up mostly of the German-Jewish element, with a few Hungarians. Later a few of Eastern European background were added. Meetings were held in homes, but often in the room behind the Fitwell Clothing Store, owned by Ralph Cohen and Richard Jacobs, on Sunday mornings. Later the meetings were again held in homes and acquired a dignity lost in the previous years. The size of the Board of Trustees was increased from time to time to allow for greater representation and democratization. The minutes reveal what a small number attended Board meetings and assumed responsibility for the whole. Women became eligible for membership and recently even participated in holiday services from the pulpit. Women have always been part of a minyan. Terms of office too, were changed so that a year had to elapse after two terms of service, to prevent concentration of Temple affairs in the hands of a few, and to allow for new blood and new points of view. Sisterhood and Brotherhood presidents were also added to the Board. Presidents have always carried a heavy load of responsibility - their annual reports weighted with discouragement, appeals for cooperation, but were also aware of compensations. A.B. Kapplin's annual reports are models of organization - his division on necrology was unique as he paid tribute to those who had passed on during the year.



Mr. Kapplin inadvertently caused a change in the by-laws. It was quite common at that time for presidents to remain in office for many terms, but the time had come for a change, so the nominating committee brought in a new slate, and since then, presidents have served for two years. Mr. Kapplin did much for the Temple in those trying times and was especially helpful in obtaining donations from the Wolvin Building (U.S. Steel).

What happened to our membership? Many new names were added to the list, many taken off. We lost members by death, by removal to other cities, others when they entered war service. Some found they could not afford our dues, though every consideration was given, some resigned when dues were raised, some who belonged to two congregations decided their loyalty required just staying with one, some had personal reasons, and some left to join the Conservative Synagogue (Tifereth Israel) when it was formed.

In turn, we obtained new members; New-comers to Duluth, some residents from neighboring towns, some through conversions, through the Religious School, some from other congregations, and the desire for families and friends to be together. Good cooperation exists between Temple Emanuel and Tifereth Israel in regard to dues. We cannot pass up mentioning Charles Oreckovsky's contribution in obtaining new members... Ever on the alert, ever smiling, C.D.O. brought in many of the new members year after year. Mortimer Bondy's name also looms large in the membership role.

It was interesting to note address changes of the membership, indicating the moves from downtown areas, to 10th Avenue areas, and 17th Avenue, and recently to outlying districts, as our Jewish community grew in economic well-being. It is also well to note the increased participation of our leading members in Jewish community life, as well as in the general community.

We also conferred honorary memberships on Mrs. E.A. Silberstein, H.Y. Josephs, the Hirschfields, Mrs. Bessie Levy on her 90th Birthday, and more recently made Charles D. Oreckovsky an honorary Vice President of Temple Emanuel.

Rabbi Wessel was most understanding of the needed changes, and presented a Resolution which is posted in the display album, and these changes began to take place. Not only because of the changes in background of new members, but because psychosocial motivations were also being realized, understood and discussed at National Conventions. Peoples desired more ritual, nostalgia had to be reckoned with, and the old German Reform had to make way for new affirmations. First to make way was the Gentile Choir; my husband's particular peeve was the Nordic tenor who sang Sh'ma Yisroel with a lisp... We tried quartettes, our own choirs, children's choirs, and finally accepted a cantor. Our first cantor, obtained only for holidays, thought he was on the operatic stage. The second one, though well recommended, had to be paid off before he was allowed to sing the second night.

We then organized a Jewish choir in which many of our members participated, also as soloists. Mrs. H.Y. Josephs served many years, and finally, we were fortunate to have a local musician, Nathan Bindler, to serve as cantor, and is still serving in that capacity... Sometimes he had a choir or duet, especially for the holidays, and sometimes not. Among other soloists, who were members, were: Rita Long, Minerva Pepinsky, Eleanor Clarfield, Lester Hallock, Rosalind Laskin, Rhoda Cohen, as well as others not members. In 1966, Debbie Long sang with Mr. Bindler and Marsha Eldot played the Kol N'dre on the violin. We also had special music from time to time... Minerva's father; a well-known violinist from St. Paul, Abe Miller, played for a service, and on occasion Ernest Wassing, his cello. A special song service was rendered by Rabbi Kuppin. Mrs. Ben Levine (Shirley) conducted a successful Children's choir for a number of years which contributed to the pleasure of children's services



and special services. Mrs. Sam Popki (Marge) was in charge of music through many of our rabbi's regimes; conducted choirs and played the organ. Mrs. Ruth Alta Rogers was the organist from 1922 until the late '50s, when she was succeeded by Donald Andrews. The present organist, Mrs. William Crockett took over in 1961 when Mr. Andrews left to further his studies at an Eastern University.

When did we stop selling seats - or have family pews? Or, were seats sold only for the holidays? A note tells of seats sold in April, 1925. When did we start lighting candles at evening services? When did we include Kiddush and Torah services? When did we cease making the pulpit a veritable bower for the High Holidays to honor our dead, substituted instead reading of the memorial roll call, and more recently a memorial brochure distributed prior to the Yiskor service? When did we start having two-day holidays for those who didn't feel right about the second day not being observed, and to have the holidays observed on the exact date rather than the closest Friday night as was the custom in the early days? When did we start week-day Hebrew school, so that Hebrew became a definite part of our religious school curriculum which led to the observance of Bar and Bas Mitzvahs? When did we add a High School Department in addition to our Confirmation Class to try to keep our young people closer to the Temple? Not too long ago, 1961, the religious school had to be divided, and so classes are now held Saturday morning as well as Sunday. We began paying religious school teachers in the '20s, since this was quite necessary to obtain teachers with training and experience and to assure regularity in attendance. However, there were times we had to depend on volunteer services... When did we start brief summer services?

Rabbi Grishman inaugurated a society of young people called "The Shomrim", whose main function was conducting Sabbath Services on Saturday morning. Unfortunately, after the Rabbi's leaving, this was discontinued.

For a number of years many children from the general Jewish community attended our Sunday School. Our doors were open to all. Some parents made contributions to the Temple in appreciation. A fee system was tried, but it was not successful, and when the financial burden became too great, it was decided to ask the Federation for a grant to make up the deficit, which was to help pay for children of non-members. The Council of Jewish Women also contributed. In time the Temple Board adopted a new policy that people had to be members in order to have their children attend our religious school, space no longer permitting an open policy, and proudly we notified the Federation that we would no longer need a subvention. A cradle Roll was instituted. Has it been kept up? What function did it serve? Report cards, teacher's meetings and training institutes, assemblies, holiday celebrations, Chanuka Box Suppers, carnivals, Model Seders were all part of the curriculum.

Prizes have been awarded to Sunday School children for special excellence. Four which are given to Confirmands each year are: The Sam & Annie Cohen Memorial Award; The Harry W. Davis Memorial Award; The Samuel & Bertha Horowitz Award; and the newly established Samuel & Bertha Singer Vision for Youth Award. Not too long ago an audio-visual department was also provided. When Rabbi Rubenstein was here, Mrs. Isadore Simon was welcomed as our Religious School Superintendent, as well as Hebrew Instructor. Upon her retirement in 1962, Marshall Averbok took over the Hebrew instruction, followed by Mansoor Aleyeshmerni, a young man from Iran attending U.M.D. He was followed by Nathan Relles of Superior, Wisconsin. Helping with the Confirmation Classes over the years have been: Walter Eldot, Bess Arnovich, and J.B. Wiener, who is teaching that class at the present time. A tribute to the Sunday School teachers is in order for the high standards which they have maintained. With justifiable pride we record that Merle Singer, one of our Religious School graduates, went on to Hebrew Union College, was ordained in 1966, and now is Rabbi at Temple Sinai, Washington, D.C.



Among the desired changes was more participation in services, and a small mimeographed handbook of responses and songs was pasted in our prayerbooks. We really learned to sing them and regretfully the practice has not been kept up. We still hum along with the Kiddush and feebly with some of the responses, but much has been lost. True, we do have our hymnals, but the result has not been the same.

In 1965 a plan was instituted to have our Hebrew School join with the Ida Cook Hebrew School.

For many years we had public Seders, but these have been given up to a large extent because families were urged to have them in their homes and make it the beautiful home festival that it was intended to be; though we can remember many Temple Seders that were delightful, joyous occasions, with children participating wholeheartedly. They certainly filled a need for those who had no families, men at the Air Base, or strangers in town, and hopefully they will be resumed, perhaps for the second night.

How to maintain the financial affairs was always a continuing problem. First there were dues, meager indeed, with constant drop-outs and requests for reductions. One memo reported that 27 new members were admitted and at the same time 18 resigned. How did we stay solvent? Secondly we had to worry over the mortgage. There were special assessments, loans, Jubilee Fund, donations, bequests, Brotherhood and Sisterhood allocations, memorial funds, loans from the Cemetery Fund, and special big fund-raising affairs like the colorful Biblical affair held at the Spalding, a huge rummage sale for which we were fortunate in getting a strategic location and netted \$6,000; the Kuppim Concert, \$686.00; the Benes Lecture; Keno Parties; dinners, bazaars, plays that revealed much talent (Three Men On A Horse); Jingle Jangle for various prizes; the Cadillac raffle, won by David Gershogol; and always keeping in mind the need to meet the basic budget through membership dues which had to be raised from time to time. Board members and others were urged to remember the Temple in their wills, and they passed a Loyalty Resolution. Memorials are placed on the Memorial Tablets of bronze in the sanctuary. Other funds which have been added more recently to the existing funds are: The Prayer Book Fund, the Beautification Fund, The Memorial Fund, The Scholarship Fund, The Overman Fund, The Abram Fund, The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, and the two Sisterhood Funds, Happy Day and Recording for the Blind. During Rabbi Rubenstein's day, the Bernard Silberstein residence on 21st Avenue East and 1st Street was purchased, but found to be too great an expense and was recently sold, the money kept in case of future need. Our present Rabbi Hamburger prefers an apartment.

And what a hard time we had during the depression! Services were held in the Social Hall to save on heating. The practice of the Board to balance the budget was to cut the rabbi's salary, which was low enough in the first place, and not always paid on time. We also had the misfortune of having our Rabbi Wessel fall and break his hip, so that for the better part of a year we had to do with laymen and ministers conducting the services. Just as we were catching up on our finances, as it is with families, many repairs had to be made. The organ broke down, the roof needed fixing, the assembly room a new linoleum, a ceiling to deaden the sound was a necessity, or the Temple needed painting - the Men's Club pitched in and did some of the work. Somehow, these were all taken care of. Even velvet cushions for the pews were provided and carpeting for the sanctuary.

During the depression, with the growing fears of the Hitler onslaught and the oncoming war, the spread of anti-Semitism certainly had its effect on our membership. But aside from our participation in community efforts through the Anti-Defamation League and Minnesota Jewish Council, leadership of drives by H.Y. Josephs, Harry W. Davis, and E.M. Labovitz before Federation was formed, no special material was found. No doubt sermons and lectures by speakers at meetings covered these subjects...



Our sons went to war when America joined the Allies in 1942 and a bronze plaque in their honor and in memory to those who died is in the vestibule of the Temple.

Finally things began to brighten up. The mortgage had been paid and a mortgage burning dinner was held. A plan was approved to enlarge the Temple, providing more room for our religious school, a proper office for the rabbi, pulpit decorations by Raymond Katz, a well known artist in the field of synagogue art; stained glass windows above the choir loft and decorations on the pews. A library was also provided, which had been started with a Jewish Encyclopedia presented by Mrs. Bernard Silberstein. The small beginnings of a museum, started by Mrs. E.A. Silberstein and to which the Hammel family donated many articles; are now housed in a fine case presented by the Singer family and Mr. David Naymark as a memorial to their wife and mother, Lena Naymark. Mrs. Maurice Blehert has been the devoted Librarian for many years. A special Beautification Fund was established in 1960 to make extensive plans for beautifying and modernizing the sanctuary, with Mrs. Aneta Weisberg King as Chairman.

A piece of sculpture by our cantor, Nathan Bindler, is the beginning, we hope, of a Jewish Art collection. Abe Polinsky, who was president at the time of enlarging the Temple facilities, was the spark plug for raising the funds and a very impressive Dedication Dinner was held to honor the occasion, attended by three of our Rabbis.

Along with finances, how to keep up attendance at services took much discussion time at Board Meetings. Oneg Shabbats were introduced following Friday Night services and have led to increased sociability, as well as Organizations holding special Sabbath Services which increased attendance. But Bar and Bas Mitzvahs still bring out the largest attendance. Services honoring children whose birthdays were in the past few months, have also been featured. Also, the New Year's reception in the Social Hall has replaced the former unsatisfactory method of greeting one's friends on Rosh Hashonoh in front of the Temple. This was really an innovation, but one that has proved most satisfactory. This year, Rabbi Hamburger and his wife invited the congregation to break the fast following the Yom Kippur Services in the Social Hall, which also proved a wonderful innovation, and replaced Rosh Hashonoh afternoon receptions given by former Rabbis. Parlor meetings to explain Temple needs had been tried at times, and Rabbi Grishman introduced "Meet The Rabbi" at a series of home gatherings when he first came. It gave him a good opportunity to learn about his membership and they, in turn, to learn about him, and strangely enough, to learn about each other. But this has not been continued by subsequent Rabbis. He also proposed a short educational course before a couple could become members, on the principle that acceptance should not be based on monetary consideration only. Though this was considered good in theory, it did not work out, mainly because requests to join came just before the holidays and such a course wasn't feasible.

In Adult Education, the road has been a rocky one. The Sisterhood has tried to have classes before regular meetings, the Brotherhood has had luncheon sessions, home classes, evening classes and have been tried with more or less success. Occasionally sermons are omitted and the congregation meets downstairs after services for an Oneg and discussion. All the Rabbis have tried - why has it been so difficult? One may conclude that this is a result of multiplication of social and organizational activities in the Jewish and general community and also, though we hate to admit it, lack of interest. One must conclude that Adult Education can only succeed on a small scale. In the early days study groups chose secular subjects, occasionally Bible Study - which usually ended with the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. Rabbi Wessel inaugurated Sunday Afternoon assemblies, usually a review of a controversial book.

Yes, changes have been aplenty, but what we haven't changed is the wearing of yarmulkas or tallesim, except for the Rabbi, or for those whose need requires it, keeping kosher, or to have the Bar and Bas Mitzvah replace Confirmation, and, of



course, decorum has been kept up. We have continued to publish a mimeographed bulletin, replacing a printed one, which helps to keep the congregation informed, and is an incentive for contributions to various funds. The Temple has served well for weddings, for special joyous occasions, and occasionally for funerals for especially active members whose families requested the Temple.

Through the years there have been some conversions, due mostly to intermarriage, and no definite policy has been laid down by the Board, preferring to let each Rabbi follow his own procedures. Recently a most interesting conversion took place when a young couple, each of different Christian denomination, decided to become Jewish, took a proscribed course, and since have been faithful members of our Temple and active in the small nearby Jewish community where they live.

### Cemetery

In reading many of the letters and discussions pertaining to the cemetery, one could almost believe that the interest of members was more concerned with the cemetery than with the living institution. Many changes in rules have come about, additional acreage acquired, the size of monuments regulated, and the name changed to Temple Emanuel Cemetery from that of Woodland Cemetery. Cemetery Chairmen have been particularly dedicated and among them one must list Ed Silberstein, Maurice M. Cohen, Charles Segelbaum, Ignatz Freimuth, Louis Hammel and Morton Gross.

The Temple has also served as a community center. During Rabbi Plaut's term, several evenings a week were given to young people for ping-pong games and other activities. Rabbi Wessel also sponsored a Boy's Club called the Gamzus. B'nai B'rith, Boy and Girl Scouts, Council of Jewish Women, AZA, Hadassah, and the Zionist Organization held meetings at the Temple. The Council of Jewish Women conducted a summer play center. We also, from time to time, gave help to Superior and the Range cities in their religious activities.

In 1917, leading Jewish figures were attempting to unify our groups into an American Jewish Congress in order to have an official spokesman for the Jewish people during this turbulent period. An election procedure was set up, since this was an attempt to create a democratic organization as opposed to the American Jewish Committee, and we joined in the local effort. Our share of expenses were \$1.50 and the call for this election was signed by Selma Oreckovsky (Mrs. David Pollack). We also protested against massacres in Palestine and religious persecution in Russia - as stated in the Annual Report, 1930.

About ten years ago, the membership of Tifereth Israel decided to change from Orthodox to Conservative, a comparatively new movement in Jewish religious life. There were many discussions as to the possibility of Temple Emanuel joining with them, but this did not materialize, as too many of the changes that would be required were not acceptable to either group.

Going back to 1928, an attempt was made to establish a Jewish Center. A banquet was held at the Hai Vov Club, funds pledged, a lot purchased, but the movement lost momentum. Jack Jacobs and Sam Polans of our membership were active in this, but the Temple Emanuel Board decided we could not join with them.

Our Rabbis, God bless them! We have enjoyed them. We have learned from them. We have been inspired by them, and they from us. Also, we have had our trials and tribulations and have served as stepping stones for many of them to larger and more challenging pulpits. They have had to be all things to all men; participate in the Jewish, as well as the non-Jewish community. After World War I, a refugee Rabbi was



highly recommended to us and found unsatisfactory and remained only a short time. At one time a student Rabbi who filled in for the holidays so captured the interest of the Board that they were ready to engage him. At this point, Mr. E.A. Silberstein protested vigorously in a letter that if this happened, he would leave the committee. Engaging Rabbis was a most arduous task and the men who headed the committees must be given commendation for their labors. Among those who assumed this responsibility were E.A. Silberstein, Harry W. Davis, Maurice Labovitz, Daniel Davis, Daniel Blehart, Abe Polinsky, and Maurice M. Cohen, as well as the presidents under whom they served.

### Sisterhood

And now we come to the Sisterhood, which, in the beginning, was the Temple Aid Society. Its great concern was being their brother's keeper. The East European Immigration had found its way to Duluth, and practically all types of social service were needed, and rendered by volunteers. Transportation was arranged for, homes were found and furnished, as well as jobs. Transients were looked after, foster care provided, sending children and the sick to institutions, such as the Orphan Home of Cleveland, the hospital at Hot Springs, and the Denver T.B. Hospitals. Inmates of asylums were also visited. Other cities wrote requesting help in locating deserting husbands, and asking for investigation, juvenile court cases were looked after. The Industrial Removal Bureau in New York, HIAS and the Council of Jewish Women sought our help with immigration problems. Sewing classes were organized for children to hasten the Americanization process. The volunteers of this period were truly dedicated women and deserved the utmost thanks for their praiseworthy and devoted efforts. Some of them are Estelle Zalk, Fanny Mondschine, Rosa Hammel, Carrie Wetzler, Nelly Bondy, Nettie Silberstein, Rose Silberstein, Reine Freimuth, Anna May Cook, and others. These names are taken from correspondence and committee reports. Not that we did this alone. Other Jewish groups also gave relief, clothing, food and fuel. But we were the officially recognized Jewish local group, and by national welfare organizations. Our leadership helped to organize the Jewish Social Agency, because it became evident that professional help was needed; that there was too much duplication in some cases and neglect in others. At this time, too, Community Funds were being launched on the welfare scene in America and our own E.A. Silberstein, then president of the Associated Charities, was a leading figure in promoting one for Duluth. We were anxious to be in on the ground floor, so the United Jewish Social Agencies came into being with Charles P. Meyers as president, and all organizations were invited to send representatives to the Board. Sisterhood was represented by Mrs. Moses Cook, Mrs. E.A. Silberstein, and Mrs. Louis Hammel. The writer, who had recently come to Duluth and had training and experience in the field of social work, was asked to undertake the task of developing the Agency. She consented on a part-time basis. Another aspect of our welfare work was in relation to legislative matters concerning women and children; mother's pensions and laws relating to hours for newsboys on the streets.

After JSSA was founded, as well as a section of the National Council of Jewish Women, Temple Sisterhood, to which its name was changed from Temple Aid Society, relinquished these welfare activities. But in recent years, it has taken on two projects: A group of women meet weekly to make puppets for the Children's Wards of the hospitals; and, in accordance with its national program, a recording group for the blind, with Mrs. Morton Gross as chairman, has been functioning well with much individual satisfaction to those participating.

Then the National organization was founded, in 1913, and we were glad to join. The Uniongram Program to provide scholarships for students at the Hebrew Union College started at that time and has continued to this day with many fine chairmen. The sending of a sheaf of Uniongrams on special anniversaries has proved to be a welcome addition to our Temple life. Mrs. Leo Popkin served as chairman for this project for many years.



Revealing the period in which many notes were written, were requests to join our Sisterhood. Mrs. J. Agle, in 1912, writes, "I hereby tender my application to become a member of your worthy society"; and the note sent with contributions on the death of Mrs. I. Freimuth, "we have enjoyed many things from her kind and noble heart, her acts of tenderness, and her thoughtfulness, I am sure, will never depart from us." And in response to a condolence note, "May a kind fate save all of them from the dark and cruel hours of loneliness through which I am passing." A bill from Freimuths showed up for a pair of shoes, in 1912, at \$1.25, and coal for a stove at \$4.15 a ton. In 1910, we were asked to provide lumber for a shack for a T.B. patient. For one affair, the minimum admission price was one potato, and the collection would later be given to a children's home... In one letter, several of our well known active women resigned. Why? Were their names omitted in a newspaper report, or were they not properly thanked for something they did? Were they reconciled?

Despite our many social services, we had our own Temple obligations to meet. In 1929, Mr. E.A. Silberstein went before the Sisterhood asking them to undertake a definite sum for Temple. Sisterhood gave \$750.00. Working on money-making projects welded the group into a closer relationship. Among the outstanding events was the Biblical Bazaar at the Spalding Hotel; the Purim Masquerades; vaudeville shows; card parties; the Thanksgiving Dances; all chairmen deserving much acclaim. The Rummage Sales, in late years, with Mrs. A.N. Cook, assisted by Mrs. Louis Kenner, have made real contributions with their sales and Mrs. Cook's clever reports have eagerly been looked forward to at meetings. A more recent addition to our rummage sales were the "Gold Room" sales of especially good clothing in private homes. There was also the Friedman Song Concerts. A really big venture was the opening of a downtown thrift shop, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Arthur Rifkin (Jean). This provided us with a savings fund for special purposes. Regretfully, this had to be given up because it took too much of the members' time, and could only be profitable if done on a volunteer basis. Other large money-making ventures to be remembered were the Hortense Bondy Cookbook back in 1929. Also, the selling of tulip bulbs, Marathon Bridge, and Mahjong games. A New Year's Greeting brochure has helped our finances. For years, Mrs. Eva Nides has faithfully sold the annual art calendar, one of the very early projects of the National organization. The latest project was the sale of traditional Jewish foods at the First American National Bank, and was a huge success, chaired by Mrs. George Jacobs, Mrs. Samuel Horowitz, and Mrs. Lawrence Felsenberg. The foods were made at home and at the Temple and frozen prior to the sale. Mrs. Sidney Karon, as our Ways and Means Chairman, deserves much credit. At one time we had a sizable business women's group which sponsored an annual Chanukah dinner and bazaar, and occasionally there was a Purim Sudah. Particularly active were Mmes. I. Abram, S.B. Copilowish, Hugo Freimuth, Ben London, and Miss Anna Mark. Long before we started our Earning Fund, little Fannie Mondschine always announced her candied citrus fruits for sale; Mrs. Wetzler, her chocolate tortes; Mrs. I. Freimuth, her large cookie pan that could be divided into squares. Tuesday Club, Neighborhood Club, and Birthday Clubs, though small in membership, always came forward to supply special needs. Their gifts were truly amazing, in letters to Mr. Albert Mark, Sec'y, usually signed by Mrs. Bessie Abrahamson. And after the Earning Fund was established, a number of members contributed from ingenious individual projects, as well as earning their contributions by serving monthly luncheons. Recently friends of one of your historians, who achieved a special birthday, contributed to a fund for beautiful new white holiday covers for the Torahs, after which the Sisterhood proceeded to provide funds to purchase new covers for year-round purposes in dull gold material, also very beautiful.

With the Men's Club, Sisterhood co-sponsored Gourmet Dinners, followed by special programs of music and art shows. Outstanding events were a Purim Operetta, written and produced by Aneta Weisberg King, featuring Charles Segelbaum; Shirley Nides' book reviews, and a pageant, "Stranger Than Fiction" in 1964 at which the Sisterhoods of the other synagogues were our guests. A presentation of Holiday



tables in 1930's, to which non-Jewish friends were invited was an unusual event, as was the presentation of an inter-racial panel of women from Des Moines in 1965. We also hosted a State institute, and will never forget the operetta in which Rabbi Rubenstein starred, which spoofed our history; and then the memorable farewell party which was given for them when they were leaving. This event was staged at the now defunct Covenant Club, which, in its time, did much to enhance our social activities. Annual meetings, with their skits, drama readings, and good programs, kept up the level of good organizational life, as did the addition of a bowling schedule.

A Midwest Regional was formed of which we became members, with some of our members having held important posts. We also attended national and regional conventions, kept up our quota for Oconomowoc Camp, and dedicated our Happy Day Fund to that.

During the war periods we did our part. Bundles for Britain, selling of War Bonds, Red Cross help. Mrs. Sidney Berdie was elected Woman of the Year - to a large extent for the service she had given to the Red Cross. We helped with the U.S.O. Canteen, and our record of service was included in a book that was to be published on Jewish participation.

### Brotherhood

Prior to the organization of the Men's Club, Mr. I. Freimuth reported that he had a hard time finding them when the women complained about the Club not helping! It was organized in the 1920s, and a letter from Albert Mark in the club's second year notes progress. Leo Shapiro, when president, wanted to be sure that the club would have jurisdiction over the money that it turned over to the Board. In time they accepted their role as a subsidiary and undertook to furnish a definite part of the Temple's budget. They cooperated with the Sisterhood in annual affairs - Keno parties; arranged for a lecture at the Armory by Alfred Benes, the Premier of Czechoslovakia, who fled when it was taken over by the Nazis. Arnold Nides was chairman of this event. The club also sponsored a concert recital by Rabbi Kuppin and co-sponsored with the Board the big rummage sale held for a week in the vacant Woolworth Store on Second Avenue West and Superior Street. To help earn their quota, they worked with the Variety Theatre, and were given a sizable share of the profits. They also ran a Jingle-Jangle raffle, for which many prizes were given, and another raffle when a Cadillac was offered. Aside from money-making events, they gave Father/Son/Daughter Suppers, and sponsored the Temple Picnic each summer. They held Inter-Faith Dinners with other church groups, and during Rabbi Gordon's stay in Duluth, they sponsored two Annual Institutes for the Clergy - an all day institute with visiting Rabbis lecturing. These drew about 60 area clergymen, Catholic and Protestant, who were all very enthused, and hoping that it would be continued. The Brotherhood also had Bagel Breakfasts at the Temple, as well as luncheons with the Rabbi, at which times the Rabbi has led in vital discussions. The Men's Club has proved to be a training ground for future Temple leaders and Board members.

After World War II, a young married couple's club was attempted, but did not succeed; the same was true with a P.T.A., which ended in an occasional parent's meeting.

### Youth Groups

Interest in our youth has been demonstrated over the years. Rabbi Wessel started a Boys' Club called Gamzus. Rabbi Walter Plaut, who was a replacement for Rabbi Levenson during World War II, encouraged the use of the Assembly for young people's activities. The NFTYs were organized with adult advisors; with the development of Camp Oconomowoc, scholarships were given and regional conclaves were held. Special birthday services have been held for the Religious School children, panel discussions, and Services and Onegs arranged for college students during vacations.



As members of the Community Relations Committee of the Federation, much of our social action is directed through that source. We participated in the early efforts of the Round Table for Christians and Jews, and our members have been active ever since. In the early years, the Sisterhood gave a number of teas, inviting non-Jewish women, alternating with the women of the Holy Rosary and the Pilgrim Congregational Churches, at which time a Rabbi, a minister, and a priest usually held forth. These teas were given up when the Round Table established an annual event for the entire city in which we participated. We have already mentioned the Holiday tables events given by Mrs. Levenson; the panel of Americans presented by a group of Des Moines women and following an outstanding art show and dinner, the church women of Duluth were invited to view the exhibit the next day and to hear a talk by the Rabbi on Ceremonials and questions regarding Judaism in our sanctuary. The LH Luncheons, at which the LH speech contest winners are honored are held alternately at the Temple and Tifereth Israel Synagogue. We remember with pride presenting Richard Wright at a lecture, which was one of the very first attempts to bring a Negro leader to Duluth and to present the cause of his race. Later Carl Rowan was a speaker. Joint Thanksgiving Services were held by the East End Churches for many years, but more recently we have held our own. In 1928, Mr. E.A. Silberstein reported our opposition to released time before the School Board. So attempts were made - some succeeding, some not. A strong Civil Rights commitment has been tried. When Dr. Sacher lectured here in the 30's, he was obtained to speak to a group of ministers, arranged by Rabbi Wessel, and later on Rabbi Silverman also planned an institute for ministers. A number of our members have spoken to church groups - Mmes. Harry W. Davis, Irving Raihill, Isadore Simon, and David Pollack, and also Rabbis, to mention a few. Young people's groups have visited Temple and, in turn, our youth have visited their churches. Inviting the public school teachers for Friday Sabbath dinners, and then to attend services has also been done on occasion.

Max Lavine underwrote the expense of printing a booklet entitled: "This I Believe", a collection of sermons by Rabbi Azriel Grishman, which was distributed to the congregation, as well as to many outsiders requesting it.

The National organizations have, of course, given us much help and we, in turn, have tried to keep up our obligations. They helped us to get new Rabbis; they provided Rabbis for Holidays when we were without, who were usually professors from the Hebrew Union College of the highest caliber, eminent authorities in their field, and who were a real inspiration to us - Dr. Samuel Sandmel and Dr. Eugene Milahi among the more recent ones. Rabbi Michael Aronson, the Blind Rabbi, paid us a visit in the 20's. Sisterhood, too, had speakers from National and Regional, and materials provided have been very helpful, as are the National and Regional meetings, which we attend for inspiration and guidance - and, of course, Camp Oconomowoc, which alone we could never have aspired to.

#### Finale'

And now we come to the present, 1966-67. We have come a long way from our beginnings as a classic Reform congregation and have gradually adapted ourselves to the needs of a changing membership with deep-seated feelings from their past, yet involved in newer trends and currents of thought.

Are we on a new threshold today? Do we fear the future as we find ourselves more involved with general community life and the walls of prejudice and taboos are being broken down? Does Temple Emanuel find itself caught up in the general worries about the loss of our youth, our intellectuals, and intermarriage? Can we hope that the recharging of our area's economy will bring us more members and give us a more optimistic outlook? Our problems have been many, but we have taken them as they came, and as we have survived through wars and depressions, so we must hope that the



inner strength will again see us through. To quote Dr. Jacob Marcus, distinguished American Jewish historian, "The American Jew of the next generation will survive in a comparatively free society; he will be more generous, more tolerant, more educated, and in Jewish terms - more broadly knowledgeable than his grandfather." This, too, must be the hope and vision for Temple Emanuel.

1968

Discussions have been entered into in regard to the possible merger of Temple Emanuel and Tifereth Israel, due to the decrease in our Jewish population and the pessemistic outlook for the future.

The figures as compiled by the Federation show 600 families in 1967, as follows:

300	- 2 people or less
40	- under 40 years
320	- between 40 and 60
240	- over 60

Another indication of our decline is that eight organizations have folded up - one of these a synagogue and its auxiliary. Committees have been appointed by Temple Emanuel and Tifereth Israel, and house meetings have been scheduled by each group separately. The consensus was that more explanation was needed before definite steps could be taken.