

**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Archives and Special Collections
Archives of the Center for Jewish Culture**

**Tifereth Israel Congregation (New Bedford, MA), Records, 1923-2003
(Bulk, 1947-2003)**

**CJC/MC 26
Manuscript Collection**

Extent: 4.6 linear feet (8 manuscript boxes, one photo box and one oversize box)

Historical note: By 1921 the Jewish community in New Bedford had grown to such an extent, that, in addition to the two already existing conservative congregations, Chesed Shel Emes and Ahavath Achim, a new Synagogue was needed to serve the changing community. Some of the members of the Ahavath Achim congregation organized to form a new, more modern congregation. The Charter for the new Synagogue was granted on November 17, 1921, and Tifereth Israel ("The Glory (Beauty) of Israel") was officially organized. Its first location was on the corner of Sixth and Madison Streets. The cornerstone for the new Byzantine style building (designed by Nat C. Smith) was laid on September 16, 1923, and it was dedicated during a weeklong celebration from September 8 through the 14, 1924. Rabbi Nochman S. Arnoff was the first Rabbi of this new congregation, elected on July 27, 1924, and the first Cantor was M. Halperin. Rabbi Arnoff conducted the first late Friday evening service on October 24, 1924.

The Board established an educational program shortly thereafter. Rabbi Alexander Burnstein was elected to replace Rabbi Arnoff on January 30, 1927, but only stayed with this congregation for 2 years before returning to New York. Cantor Boris Alper came to the congregation in 1928, and formed the first mixed choir. He passed away in 1947. Rabbi Bernard H. Ziskind was elected to replace Rabbi Burnstein. Under his leadership and ministrations, Tifereth Israel modernized while maintaining its traditions. Prayers in English were incorporated, and families were encouraged to sit together in the pews, thus allowing men and women to worship together. The educational system was improved to focus on the religious education of adults. During WWII, Rabbi Ziskind joined the corps of Jewish Chaplains serving the armed forces, and returned when the war was ended.

The programs of the Synagogue flourished and needed additional space beyond the Synagogue itself. Thus, the Langshaw property on County St. was acquired, and plans were begun to relocate the Hebrew and Sunday Schools, Boy and Girl Scout troops, Synagogue offices, the Sisterhood Library, and the Community Center.

Once again, a growing community with changing needs necessitated a move to a larger facility. A new \$1,500,500 structure to house the Tifereth Israel congregation was constructed on the corner of Brownell and Hawthorn Streets, and dedicated in a ceremony, which took place from May 22 through June 5, 1966. The new edifice not only housed the circular Sanctuary, but also a daily chapel, auditorium, social hall, library-museum, Boy and Girl Scout hall, offices, and classrooms in the Rabbi H. Ziskind School of Judaism. The School has a separate entrance on Hawthorne St., and was designed to be the center of youth activity in the Synagogue.

Rabbi Ziskind retired after more than 30 years of service, and Rabbi Theodore Gluck became the leader of the congregation at the new location. Also around this time, Chesed Shel Emes permanently closed because of redevelopment in the area surrounding their Synagogue, and some of the members of that congregation joined those of Tifereth Israel. Rabbi Ziskind passed away in 1968. Cantor Aaron Marcus joined the congregation on August 15, 1967, and fulfilled both the duties of Cantor and Rabbi for an interim year following the resignation of Rabbi Gluck in 1969. Also in 1967, the congregation helped organize the Jewish Convalescent Home.

Beginning in 1970 with Rabbi Bernard Glassman as the new spiritual leader, the Tifereth Israel congregation greatly expanded its programs. The continued modernization of religious services saw the increased participation by women. The first women to serve on the Board of Directors were elected in 1973, and women were first counted in the *minyan* shortly thereafter. In 1985, Evelyn S. Kroudivid became the first female President of the Congregation.

By 1972, changes in the Jewish Community necessitated the move of the Community Center from County St. to facilities at the Synagogue. The Synagogue also rented classroom facilities to the City of New Bedford and Town of Dartmouth during the late 60's and mid to late 70's to defray building expenses. Expanding programs and increased maintenance of the Synagogue gave rise to the need for the hiring of an Executive Director; Jack Berg filled this new position created in 1988. Rabbi Glassman retired in 1995 and was followed by Rabbi Moshe Ulmer. Rabbi Ulmer served the congregation for only two years and was succeeded by Rabbi Raphael Kanter in 1997.

The *Community Bulletin*, published annually by Tifereth Israel, includes reports on the major activities of the congregation and other Jewish institutions, namely the Jewish Welfare Federation, the Jewish Convalescent Home, B'nai B'rith, Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Helping Hand, other congregations, Brandeis University, the Jewish Community Center, Hadassah, and the Free Loan Association. The monthly publication, *Tifereth Israelight*, also provides a medium for communication within the community. *Community Bulletin* is located in CJC/MC 39 and *Tifereth Israelight* makes up Series III of this collection. Records of the Tifereth Israel Sisterhood are processed as a separate collection, CJC/MC 37.

Another publication, which serves as a general source of information about happenings in the Jewish community is *News and Views* published by the Jewish Community Center, located in CJC/MC 21.

Scope and Contents note: Divided into three series, the collection consists of subject files, arranged alphabetically (Series I); records of the Building Fund Committee (Series II); and the publication *Tifereth Israelight* (Series III). The subject files contain copies of the bylaws and charter. Fundraising for the new building, dedicated in 1966, was spearheaded by General Chairman Alan Ades, who donated the records that make up Series II.

Access: Unrestricted

Acquisition: Donated by various individuals, but most notably Shirley Cohen, and Alan Ades. Acc. No. 01-10 from Alan Ades, April 2001.

Repository: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Claire T. Carney Library Archives and Special Collections, Archives of the Center for Jewish Culture, 285 Old Westport Road, N. Dartmouth, MA 02747. Telephone: 508-999-8686.

File list

Series I: Alphabetical Subject files

Box 1

1. Annual Meetings
2. Arnoff, Rabbi Nachim, Street Dedication, 1991
3. Burnstein, Dr. (Rabbi) Alexander J., 1967
4. Bylaws and Charter, 1974
5. Circumcision Record, 1923
6. Cornerstone Inscription, 1923
7. Couples' Club, 1967
8. Dedication/Anniversaries, 1971-1986
9. Dedication/Anniversary Books, 1924
10. Dedication Books, 1966
11. Dedication Program Notes, 1966
12. Description of New Synagogue, (nd)
13. Fire Damages Settlement, 1951
14. Glassman, Rabbi Bernard
15. Glassman, Rabbi Bernard, Lectures, 1981
16. Gluck, Rabbi Theodore, article, 1967 (folder 17 – dedication photographs – moved to box 10)

Box 2

18. Holocaust Memorial, 1997-1998
19. Jewish Community Mailing Lists, 1974-1977
20. Jewish Welfare Federation, 1895-1991
21. Land Surveyor's Report and Invoice, 1961
22. Landau, Abe, Lectures on Anti-Semitism, 1978
23. Lecture Series Newsletter, (nd)
24. Letter to Congregation, re: New Synagogue, (nd)
25. Membership List, c. 1946
26. Membership lists, 1966-1985, 2001
27. Memorial Plaques, name list, (nd)
28. Memory Books, 1977-1988
29. News Clippings, photocopies, c. 1923-1985 (originals in oversized box)
30. Photographs, 1966
31. Programs and Flyers for Events and Services (New Bedford Community), 1920-1998
32. Programs and Flyers for Events and Services (Tifereth Israel) 1923-2001
33. Strategic Plan Report, 1996-1998
34. United Synagogue of America, Membership, 1944
35. Ziskind, Rabbi Bernard H., papers and clippings, 1930-1966

Series II: Records of the Building Fund Committee, 1959-1976

Box 3

36. Annual Committee Reports, 1968-1969
37. Building Fund papers, 1960-1968
38. Consecration Service Program, 1966
39. Dedication Dinner, Invitations and Reservations, 1966
40. Dedication Dinner, Program, 1966
41. Dedication Pledges, 1966-1967
42. Fundraising Materials, nd (see oversize box 4)
43. Financial Statement, 1976
44. Ground Breaking Ceremony, 1964
45. Land in New Bedford Survey, 1959
46. Memorials, 1962-1963 (folder 47 – photographs – moved to box 10)
48. [Bernard H.] Ziskind School of Judaism, Dedication Ceremony Program, 1966
49. [Bernard H.] Ziskind School of Judaism, Testimonial Dinner Correspondence, 1964-1966
50. [Bernard H.] Ziskind School of Judaism, Testimonial Dinner Invitations and Reservations, 1965
51. [Bernard H.] Ziskind School of Judaism, Testimonial Dinner Programs, 1965
52. [Bernard H.] Ziskind School of Judaism, Testimonial Dinner Receipts, 1965

Series I and II (Oversize)

Box 4

Fundraising Materials, (nd)
News Clippings, original, 1923-1985
Scrapbook, 1926-1960

Series III Publication *Tifereth Israel*light, 1947-present

Box 5

1. 1947-1959
2. 1960-1966
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Box 6

- 14. 1978
- 15. 1979-1980
- 16. 1981
- 17. 1982
- 18. 1983-1988
- 19. 1989
- 20. 1990
- 21. 1991
- 22. 1992
- 23. Jan-Aug 1993
- 24. Sept-Dec 1993

Box 7

- 25. Jan-May 1994
- 26. Jun-Dec 1994
- 27. Jan-May 1995
- 28. Jun-Dec 1995

Box 8

- 29. Jan-May 1996
- 30. Jun-Dec 1996
- 31. Jan-May 1997
- 32. Jun-Dec 1997
- 33. 1998
- 34. 1999
- 35. 2000
- 36. 2001
- 37. 2002
- 38. 2003

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Box 10

Photographs