

**Temple Sharey Tefilo–Israel Congregation**  
**Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest Archives**

Prepared by Jill Hershoin (4-11-08)

**Record Group: 1**

**Collection Number: 13-98**

**Creator:** Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel

**Inclusive Dates:** 1874-1996

**Extent:** 8 cf

**Abstract:**

Historical records of Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel, Orange, New Jersey. This collection includes Board, Sisterhood and Men's Club Minutes, photographs, as well as financial information and publications.

**Acquisition information:**

Acquired by the Society in 1998

**Preferred Citation:**

Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel Collection, Jewish Historical Society of MetroWest

**Access restrictions:**

The collections of the Society shall be available for examination and study by any member of the public under the normal security procedures and other special procedures established for the protection of the specific collections.

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**History:**

Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel has enjoyed a long and memorable history within the MetroWest Jewish community. Unlike present day suburban Temples and Synagogues, Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel was founded by the Harris family in and remains in the suburbs of Newark, NJ. At a time when most Temples flocked to the metropolis, Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel built a firm foundation in the suburbs. For most of its long history dating back to the 1887, the Temple remained a united and cohesive unit. The Temple had several homes within the Oranges, gradually moving from Orange to East Orange and finally South Orange, where the Temple remains today.

Throughout its history, the Temple has gone through many changes. At its inception, the services alternated between Orthodox and Reform prayer rituals. By the 1880s mixed seating was the norm within the Temple. As the years progressed, more “classical reform” rituals were practiced. Until the late 1930s wearing a prayer shawl and yarmulke was discouraged. Several families were not happy with the lack of traditional rituals and by the 1940s Temple Israel was founded from the secession of these families.

Temple Israel represented a more traditional approach to studying Judaism as prayers and services were conducted in Hebrew and the rabbi wore a yarmulke and tallis. Rabbi Weiner introduced the importance of serious study of the Torah and his lectures made him known as a scholar within the community. He served as rabbi for the entire existence of Temple Israel and upon the merger in the 1980s; he was retained as rabbi emeritus.

Meanwhile, Temple Sharey Tefilo’s historical rabbinical staff was well-known. The staff included: Rabbi Aaron Wise and his world-renowned son, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Rabbi Samuel Kaplan (who was tragically killed in a car accident), Rabbi Marius Ranson, Rabbi Avraham Soltes, and Rabbi Pierce Annes. Each one of these rabbis contributed a tremendous amount of scholarly and humanitarian work to the community.

The 1960s brought a spirit of experimentation to the Temple. Under the guidance of Rabbi Annes, “an exhilarating, experimental climate, receptive to the avant-garde of music and arts to enhance the Sabbath service, became the trademark of Temple Sharey Tefilo” (Centennial Anniversary Journal, 1975). Some of the unique practices included: conducting a service in dance, a Shabbat rock service, a contemporary loose leaf prayerbook was produced, the performance of Rabbi Weiner’s play “The World of Chassidim”, and other innovative practices were introduced during this time.

The blending the Temple families into a single congregation occurred in 1982, when the 500 members of Sharey Tefilo carried their Torahs into the Temple Israel sanctuary.

### **Scope and Content:**

Temple Israel of Orange and Maplewood merged with Temple Sharey Tefilo in 1982 to form what is now known as Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel. To better understand the collection, it was decided to arrange the collection by each synagogue as its own series.

While some documents were not accessioned with this collection, some photocopies of the materials have been placed here as reference, and have been noted in the Past Perfect database. Please contact the Temple to view originals.

\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*

Accession number 40-04 Victory Scroll Temple Sharey Tefilo (WWII era) (from Israel, via Lenore Halper) and has been transferred to this collection - See Box 12 folder 10

Accession number 24-98 Florence Seglin Collections has been transferred to this collection - See Box 6 folders 2 and Box 12 folder 11

Of interest is the Temple Sharey Tefilo's Newsletter announcing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s upcoming lecture (April 28, 1961) B 11 F 3

While some documents were not accessioned with this collection (minutes, in particular), some photocopies of the materials have been placed here as reference, and have been noted in the Past Perfect database. Please contact the Temple to view originals.

The collection consists of 13 legal sized archival storage boxes and 3 clamshell archival boxes used to store oversized photographs.

The collection includes: constitutions of both Temple Sharey Tefilo and Temple Israel as well as the constitution of the merger of the two congregations. In addition, the collection also contains extensive minutes of Temple Israel of the Oranges and Maplewood dating from 1953 to 1982 and from Temple Sharey Tefilo from 1934 to 1940; a minutes ledger from the predecessor to Temple Sharey Tefilo's Sisterhood from 1884-1925; correspondences and committee reports; merger discussions dating back to 1975; publications of both Temples (very few from the merged entity); special religious services, original play: "The World of Chassidim" by Rabbi Weiner; etc.

Some materials of interest include:

Finance – Budget for 1928

History - Written history and a publicity brochure (1920s?)

Photographs – Teatron Group Production with Harold Littman

Nehemiah Mark Artwork

OS Photos – Temple on Cleveland Street (late 1800s), founding fathers (Harris Family, 1874), Orange Station with founding members (1865 or 1874) B11 F9

This collection is comprised of paper, hard-bound books, and photographs and is divided into thirteen series as follows:

- I. Administrative
  - a. Annual Reports, 1976-1980
  - b. Building
    - 1. Construction, 1961-1963
    - 2. Essex School
  - c. Constitutional Amendment
  - d. Employees
    - 1. Rabbi Search
    - 2. Rabbi Weiner
  - e. Meeting Minutes and Reports
  - f. Merger
  - g. Misc.
  - h. Officer Lists, 1974-1975
- II. Committees
- III. Correspondences
- IV. Events
  - a. Announcements and Invitations
  - b. Cornerstone Dedication Ceremony, 1964
  - c. Misc.
  - d. "Mostly Medieval"
  - e. President's Ball, 1953
  - f. Procession of Torahs
  - g. Production: Israel, Torah, and the Holy One, Blessed Be He Are One
  - h. Program: Rabbi Kaplan Memorial, 1929
  - i. Program: Rabbi Soltes
  - j. Program: Rabbi Weiner
  - k. Special Services
  - l. "The World of the Chassidim"
- V. Finance
- VI. History
- VII. Membership
- VIII. Men's Club
- IX. Membership
- X. Photographs
  - a. Board of Trustees
  - b. Building
  - c. Choirs
  - d. Education
  - e. Free Soviet Jews Demonstration
  - f. Functions – 1940s – 1980s
  - g. Functions – Misc.
  - h. Holiday Celebrations
  - i. Meetings
  - j. Men's Club
  - k. Personalities

- l. Nehemiah Mark
- m. Misc.
- n. Rabbis
- o. Service
- p. Sonnenschein, Mollie and Joseph
- XI. Publications
  - a. Bulletins and Temple Topics
  - b. Passover guide
  - c. Rabbi Soltes: "Invocation: "A Sheaf of Prayers"
- XII. Press
  - a. Newspaper Clippings
- XIII. Religious School
  - a. Bulletins
  - b. Bar/Bat Mitzvah (Confirmation Classes)
  - c. Teaching Documents
- XII. Sisterhood
  - a. Administrative
    - i. Constitutional Amendment
    - ii. Meeting Minutes and Reports
    - iii. Membership Lists/Officer Lists
    - iv. Misc.
  - b. Correspondences
  - c. Events
  - d. Finance
  - e. Publications
    - i. Getting to Know You – Journal
    - ii. Misc.
    - iii. Victory Scroll
  - f. Press
    - 1. Newspaper Clippings
- XIII. Suburban Youth Group

**Conservation Notes:**

Some photographs need to be removed and flattened once space in the archives is provided.

**Removals:**

None

**Organization:**

Materials are arranged alphabetically, then chronologically within series.