



President—Melvin Stone
Vice-President—Daniel Singer

Treasurer—Benjamin Hirshon
Secretary—William Perlin



Cantor Kurt N

BROTHERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH EL

*"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when
brothers dwell in unity." Psalms, Chapter 133*

Temple Beth El's Brotherhood organization combines the best elements of prayer, sociability, and learning into a brief weekly program open to all men of Jewish faith in the community.

Weekly meetings are held each Sunday at the Temple starting at 8:30 a.m. with the morning prayer service. Breakfast is served at 9:00 a.m. with a speaker or a discussion period following until 10:15 a.m.

Breakfasts are served by members of Temple Beth El Sisterhood, working on donors projects for their group. They are prepared by Sam Silverman and Dave Cutler. The menu is varied every week and is deliciously prepared.

Brotherhood conducts no business meetings and engages in no social, civic or fund-raising projects, leaving this area of activity to other groups. This permits Brotherhood to concentrate on its triple aims of prayer, fellowship and education for its membership.

Sunday programs range from the appearance of noted speakers from beyond the Temple and the City to intimate study groups during which portions of the Torah are discussed under the guidance of Rabbi Leiman. The fields of Jewish education, literature and culture and the inner workings of the Temple, itself, are all likely to fall into Brotherhood's program agenda in the course of a season.

President this year is Melvin Stone. Other officers and members of the Executive Committee are Dan Singer, vice president; Ben Hirshon, treasurer; William Perlin, secretary; Sam Silverman, David Cutler, Sam Goldfarb, William Cohen and William Bernstein.



Mr. Spiegel
Molly Finkel
Mrs. Spiegel
Betty Scherman
Mr. Herman

YOUTH CL



AT STUDY



Cantor Kurt Messerschmidt

OUR CANTOR AND TEMPLE CHOIRS

Temple Beth El is honoring Cantor Kurt Messerschmidt during its Bar Mitzvah Year on the occasion of his Tenth Anniversary of service with our Congregation.

Under his leadership all aspects of the Temple's Jewish musical life have developed in an outstanding manner. Our Religious School reflects the inspiration and joy in Jewish melody, which Cantor Messerschmidt has imparted to our youth through the years.

Special credit is extended to the devoted members of the Adult and Youth Choirs who, under our Cantor's splendid and resourceful direction, contribute so greatly to the beauty and inspirational value of our Religious Services.

Our warmest good wishes are extended to the Cantor on this occasion for his outstanding personal contribution to Temple Beth El until the present day.



ADULT CHOIR

Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Elowitch, Joseph Stillman, Mrs. David Nectow, Molly Finkelman, Mrs. Abraham Simonds, Mrs. Maurice Mersky, Mrs. Jack Spiegel, Mrs. Lewis Kriger, Julius Elowitch, Cantor Kurt Messerschmidt, Miss Betty Schwartz, Dr. and Mrs. Michael Field, Mr. Carl Lerman, Mr. Carl Smith, Mr. Herman Levin, Mrs. David Brand.

YOUTH CHOIR



Harriet and Linda Caplan, Deborah Sapiro, Lois Fineberg, Dorothy Stern, Donald and Ronald Levi, Joseph Bornstein, Ronald and Richard Blumenthal, Mark Levine, Eva Messerschmidt, Janet Shur, Jean Marcus, Phyllis Schultz, Avis Small, Stanley Sax, Peter Cohen, Jeannie and James Klein, Susan Levi, Philip Simonds, Cary Mack, Linda Yormack, Maxine Farber, Duane Polisner.
Only in Bar Mitzvah Choir: Robert Fineberg, Ilene Elowitch.

TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Temple Beth El Religious School has served since 1949 as a training center for future members of the congregation. Its program of studies, in accordance with directives of the United Synagogue, transmits basic Jewish skills and attitudes to the younger generation. Supplementing the formal classroom program, the Junior Congregation provides children with opportunities for religious growth by enabling them to participate and assume leading roles in worship services.

Organized in 1949, with an enrollment of 60 children, the Religious School has passed through various phases of growth. By 1954 it had 205 children, organized in seven classes.

OUR TEACHERS



Left to right, Maurice Rubinoff, Benjamin Band, Mrs. Edward Weisberg, Edward Weisberg. Absent, Mrs. Irving Remar.

Ernest Braun, the school's first teacher, was joined in 1950 by Joel Corn, and they comprised the full-time teaching staff until 1953. Canton Kurt Messerschmidt has served as a member of the staff since 1950, and in 1952, Edward Weisberg and Benjamin Band were added as part-time teachers. In 1953, the Religious School, for the first time, had three full-time teachers, Norman Krasner, Abraham Eckstein and Gerald Eckstein.



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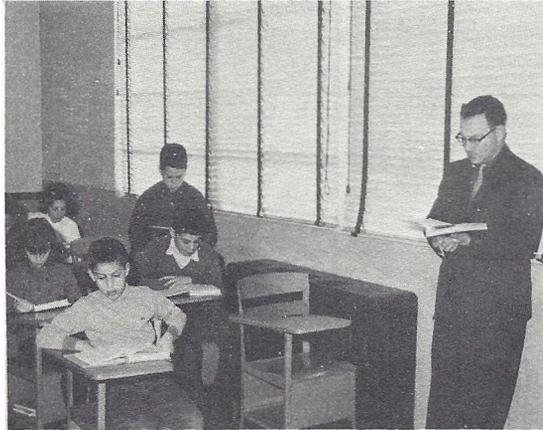
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The staff of the Religious School was reorganized in 1954 with three full-time teachers, Mrs. Miriam Hagai, Israel Rubin and Benjamin Band. The following year, Miss Sarah Simonds and Wallace Jaffe became associated with the school. Benjamin Haimowitz served as a teacher from 1956 to 1960, and our most recent addition to the staff is Maurice Rubinoff.



A recent development in our Religious School program has been the organization of a Pre-Religious School Program for children below the age of eight. In 1957, the first class, with 46 children, was admitted under the direction of Mrs. Edward Weisberg. In 1960, the Sunday School was organized in two grades, and Mrs. Irving Remar was added to the staff. The second grade aims at providing elementary Hebrew instruction as a prelude to the Religious School program.

During its course of development, our Religious School has expanded its course of instruction and sharpened its emphasis on the enduring values of Judaism, to enrich the lives of our children and to enable them to make their contribution to the further enhancement of our heritage.

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"All thy children shall have the knowledge of the Lord, and great shall be the peacefulness of thy children." Isaiah, Chapter 54



BETH EL MEMORIAL PARK

The final link in the chain of complete religious service offered its members became a reality as Temple Beth El entered its 13th year. On September 18, 1960 a new cemetery, Beth El Memorial Park was formally dedicated.

This dedication culminated nearly 13 years of strenuous efforts by a group of Temple members seeking to provide a type of burial service and interment in the developing tradition of Conservative Judaism.

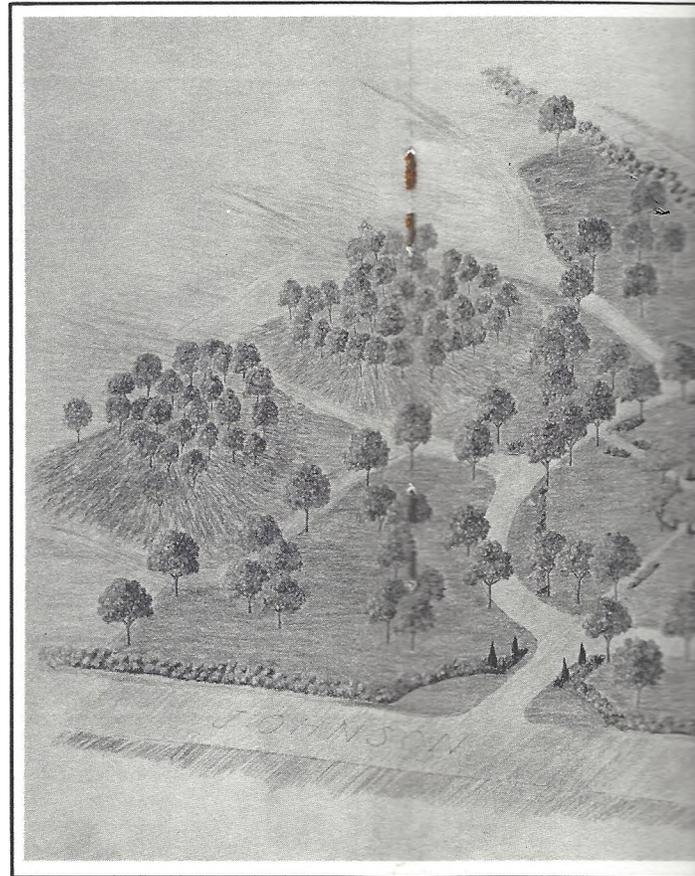
Long hours of planning and work were spent on the project before title was finally secured to 39 acres of land on outer Congress Street at Johnson Street, Portland. Most of the land preparation was completed before winter. Landscaping will be resumed in the spring of 1961.

Beth El Memorial Park will have no headstones, no curbing around burial plots. Dignified bronze plaques will be used throughout the Park. Trustees estimate the Park will be adequate for the needs of the Portland Jewish community, at the present population rate, for 500 years.

Perpetual maintenance will be guaranteed for the Memorial Park through proceeds of a trust fund now being established at a Portland bank. A portion of the purchase price of each space will be invested through the fund. Earned proceeds will be turned over by the bank to cemetery trustees for maintenance purposes. Thus there will be no assessments for this service.

Temple Beth El's Memorial Park owes its existence primarily to the efforts of Edward D. Sacknoff, who worked unceasingly for nearly 13 years to bring it to reality as a Temple Bar Mitzvah year accomplishment. Others working with Mr. Sacknoff, Chairman of the Trustees, are Silas Jacobson, William Cohen, Melvin Stone, Melvin Jacobson, Milton Mack, Mitchell Burns, Samuel Silverman, Bernard Lewis and Maurice Sandler. Executive Advisor is Harry Cowan.

*"The memory of the righteous
shall be for a blessing."
"Unless the Lord builds the House,
Those who build it labor in vain."
Psalms, Chapter 127*



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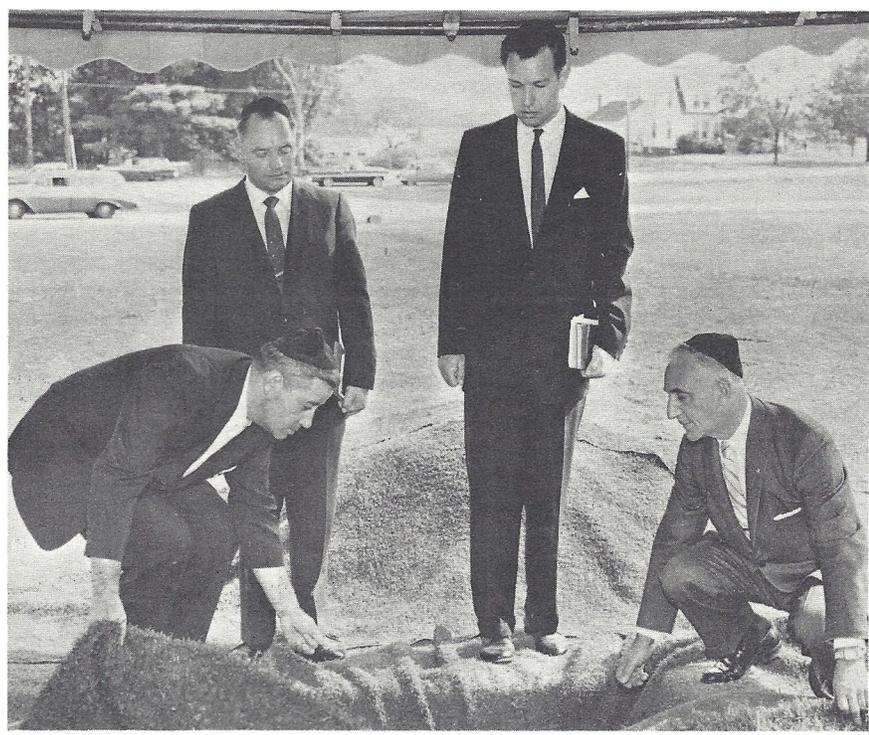
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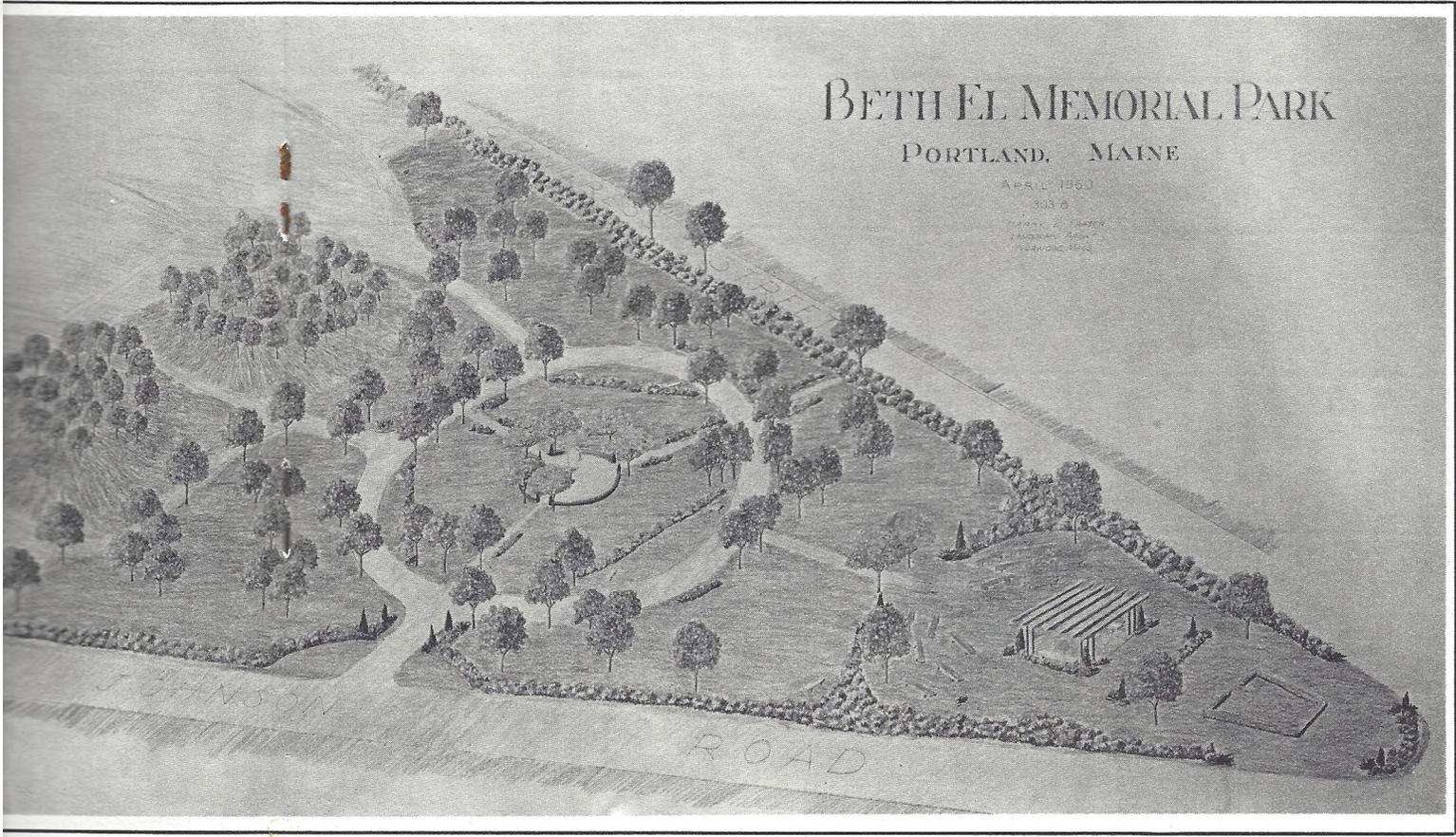
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Dedication Service



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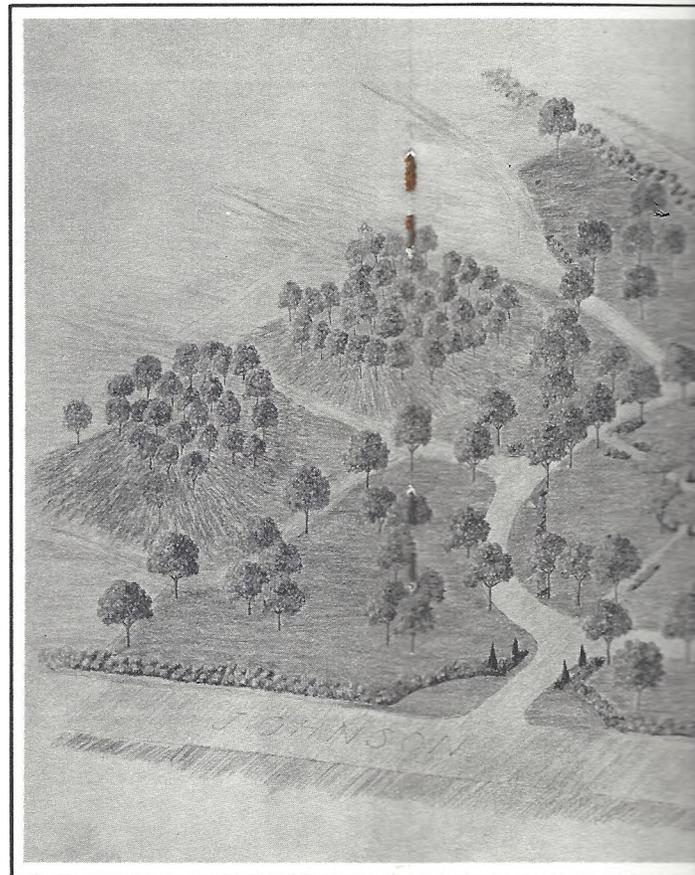
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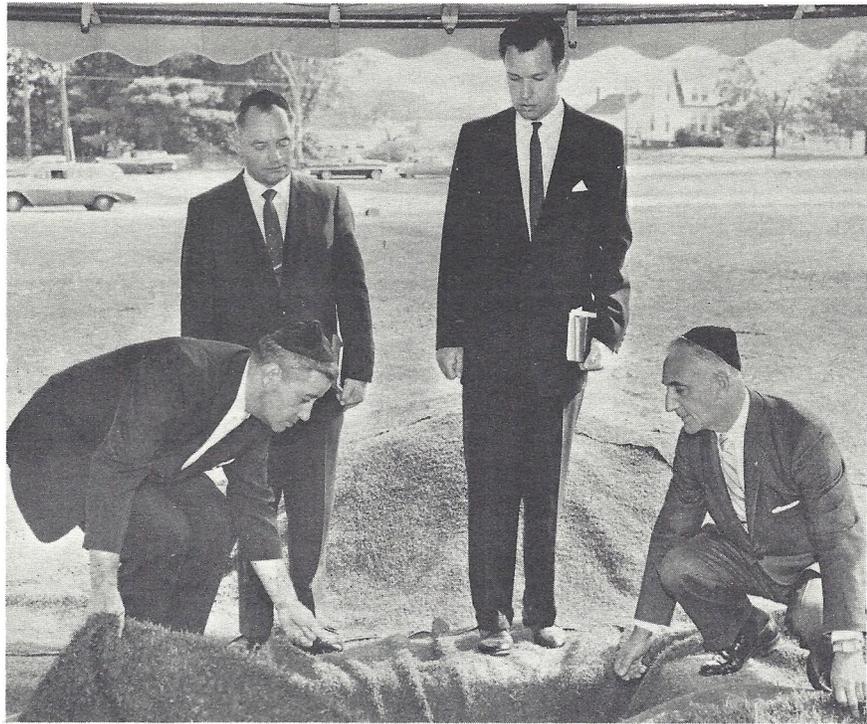
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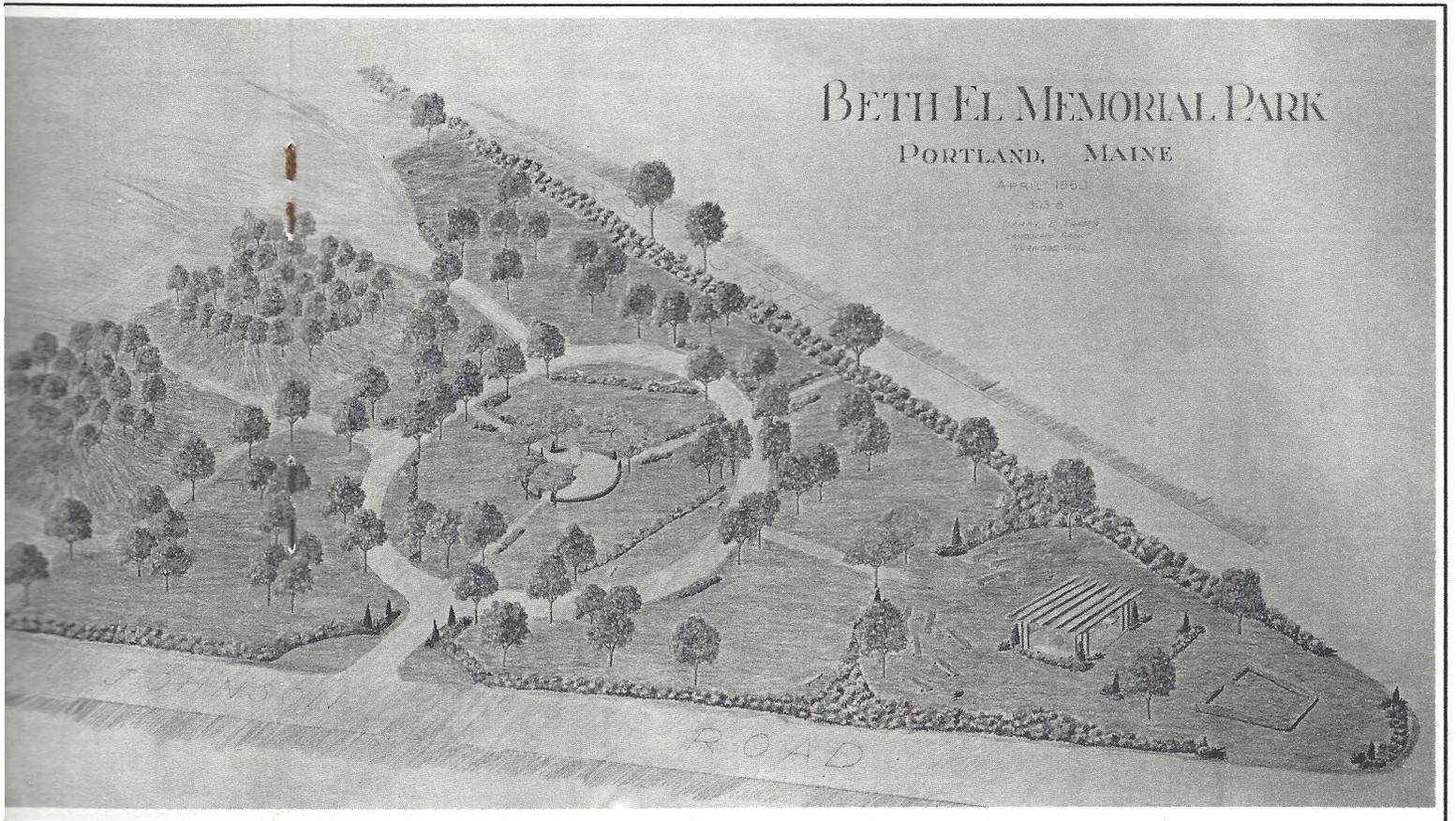
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Dedication Service



OUR STORY

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Shortly after the Dedication Ceremonies took place in December 1950, the Congregation was permanently established in its new and present Temple. Interior decorations and furnishings were soon installed and the building took on a note of beauty and dignity.

Under the direction and guidance of Rabbi Ephraim I. Bennett, the groundwork was established for religious and educational activities. New committees were formed, with a marked increase in the amount of workers. A great surge of interest and enthusiasm was evident.

Many Jewish families in the community observed with interest the growth of Temple Beth El. They realized that the rich traditions of Judaism could be practiced with dignity and made more meaningful in keeping with the modern way of life, and they soon became a part of this Movement.



A Confirmation Class with the Cantor

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Membership records in 1951 indicate two hundred and ninety-eight families, while at the present, membership has reached the figure of three hundred and seventy-four families.

An expanded Religious Services Committee assumed a most important aspect of Temple endeavor. From the deliberations of this Committee came the interpretations and standards by which Temple Beth El members could best be served. Through its decisions the Temple would grow as an integral part of the national Conservative Jewish Movement.

Desirous of maintaining an atmosphere of quiet reverence and decorum during the High Holiday Services, the first Junior High Holiday Services were created in 1951. The age group decided on was from six years to Bar Mitzvah and Confirmation age. The rule was established that only young people aged thirteen or over be admitted to the Main Chapel during High Holiday Services.

Through the ensuing years these Junior Congregation Services have been most successful on the High Holidays, as well as on every Sabbath during the school year. We particularly commend the teachers of the Religious School and those members of the Congregation who give of their time and effort to this endeavor.

The Confirmation of the girls which has taken place during Shavuot in the past years is remembered as a beautiful and impressive ceremony.

This year, however, has brought an interesting and progressive change. In place of Group Confirmations, we are pleased to have individual Bat Mitzvah Services which take place on Friday evenings.

Cantor Kurt Messerschmidt was engaged in the Fall of 1951 and remains with us as our present Cantor. From his efforts has emerged an able and diligent volunteer Adult Choir of men and women.

Also trained by the Cantor is a fine Youth Choir, participating in Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Services.



Model Seder

As Temple Beth El progressed, the need was felt for the development of its cultural programming, and a successful Adult Education Program was instituted. A few of the prominent speakers who have appeared at the Temple in recent years were: Dr. Salo Baron, Maurice Samuels, Dr. Mordecai Kaplan, Dr. Immanuel Ben-Dor, Baruch B. Benjamin of New Delhi, India, and Dr. Abraham S. Kotsuji of Japan.

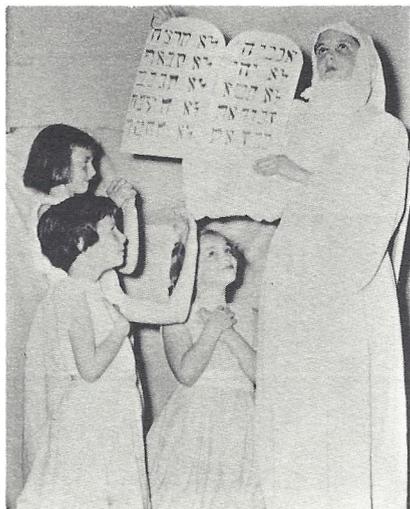
In the winter of 1953 Rabbi Bennett resigned to accept a post in another city. A reception was tendered Rabbi and Mrs. Bennett on February 15th in the Social Hall of the Temple. In the years following, Rabbi Chertoff and Rabbi Lewis M. Grossman served our Temple. Rabbi Raymond Leiman, our present Rabbi, came to Temple Beth El in 1959.

The United Synagogue Youth of Temple Beth El originated in 1953. On December 4th at a Friday Evening Service, two adult representatives from the National Committee of the United Synagogue Youth Movement addressed the Congregation. At that time the Portland Chapter was enthusiastically organized.

One of the most pleasant memories of this activity was the first Havdalah Service presented by this group. One remembers the candle-lit Social Hall, the sincere concentration of the young people as they participated in the Service, and the great enthusiasm prevalent that evening. Members of the Sisterhood beamed with pleasure as they put on the supper and dance which followed.

This Chapter has grown, with a Junior group added, and is supported by the Temple and Sisterhood. Its activities are supervised by a Youth Commission, as well as by Adult Advisors, and it is an integral part of the New England Region of the National Organization of United Synagogue Youth.

Enhancing the beauty and significance of the liturgical music at the Friday Evening Services, as well as on other religious occasions, is a fine organ. This instrument was a gift to Temple Beth El in 1953 by Jacob H. Berman, Charlotte B. Wernick and Ruth Berman Dworkin, in memory of Marie L. Berman, and is known as the Marie L. Berman Memorial Organ. It was formally dedicated on Friday evening, May 8th, of that year. The Temple has since engaged a permanent organist.



Shavuot Tableau



The Spirit of Rosh Hashanah

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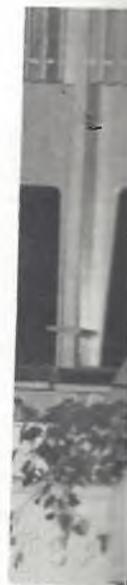
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A sectional Succah was built in 1955 and is set up in the courtyard each year during the Festival Succot. It has been beautifully decorated by members of the Sisterhood and has become a meaningful addition to our Holiday observance.

Efforts on behalf of brotherhood with the non-Jewish community have been most rewarding. Visits of church groups to Temple Services, the exchange of pulpits by Rabbi and ministers, and the inauguration of the first Union Thanksgiving Service in 1955 held at our Temple and attended by over four hundred people of many faiths are an indication of successful effort in this area. The affiliation of the Rabbi with the Ministerial Association of Greater Portland has helped to create a friendly inter-religious atmosphere.

In the interest of service to our Jewish Community, Temple Beth El participates in all phases of Jewish endeavor. The Congregation has opened the doors of the Temple for many events which might assist and further the religious and social welfare of our people.

Temple Beth El enjoys the highest respect of the entire community.

Finally, though it is pleasant to look back on our past accomplishments, our continual efforts must and shall be for the future.

Through the able leadership of Rabbi Leiman, the plans for religious growth and our extended programs in all phases of Temple endeavor are advancing steadily.

Mazel Tov, and on to our next milestone, our Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, with God's Help!



GRADUATING CLASS 1961



David Berenson, Steven Bogg, Laurine Clenott, Jill Cohen, Cheryl Ebenstein, Ilene Elowitch, Maxine Farber, Pearl Figa, Romek Figa, Robert Fineberg, Leonard Finn, James Freundlich, Scott Jacobson, Stephen Lerman, Mark Levine, Martin Mack, David Matluck, Elliott Nathanson, Gail Nemon, Martene Nemon, John Packet, Phyllis Polner, Leslie Potter, Claire Rodman, Deborah Sclar, Lawrence Spiegel, Neal Stillman, Joy Sulka, David Vinick, Ruth Weissman and Lawrence Wernick.