



BETH ISRAEL CONGREGATION  
625 North Avenue  
Washington, Pennsylvania 15301  
(412) 225-7080

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Founded in 1890  
Affiliation - United Synagogue of America

LOCATION - Washington, Pennsylvania is located twenty-five miles southwest of Pittsburgh and is the hub of a network of primary and secondary highways. A highspeed road enables downtown Pittsburgh as well as Greater Pittsburgh Airport to be reached in thirty minutes. The city proper has a population of approximately 20,000 residents and the surrounding townships bring the total population to approximately 40,000. The membership of the Congregation is drawn from this larger area as well as from nearby suburban areas.

Washington itself possess a hospital equipped with 627 beds plus an extended care facility of 92 beds. There are 50 physicians and 33 dentists. In addition, the city has a library and cultural center boasting of over 95,000 volumes. It is also the residence of the oldest college west of the Allegheny Mountains, Washington and Jefferson College. Among its student body of 1,000 is a large percentage of Jewish students. The city further includes eleven motels, a downtown area of one hundred stores, and five shopping centers adjacent to the city.

CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP - The Jewish community of Washington is a fairly stable one, being made up of many families which number third-generation members living in the community. The Congregation numbers 130 family representatives, including 50 couples and 50 single or widow/widower members. *Thirty* ~~Twenty~~ of the families have children. Of the adult membership, 32 males are members of professions and additional members are included in the teaching profession. The religious school includes 35 children, ranging from kindergarten through tenth grade. The children attend both Sunday morning instruction and weekday Hebrew classes. Because nearby suburbs are growing rapidly, the Congregation has real potential for increased membership.

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PHYSICAL FACILITIES - The present Beth Israel Synagogue was built in 1954 and has a current value in excess of \$600,000.00. It houses a large sanctuary seating over 200, a small chapel, a library with over a thousand volumes, two social halls, ten classrooms, the Rabbi's study, two kitchens (one for dairy and one for meat) as well as additional rooms. Adjacent to the Synagogue is the home for the Rabbi, valued in excess of \$50,000.00. It is a 3-bedroom home with 1½ baths and an integral garage.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS -

Beth Israel Sisterhood (affiliated with Women's League for Conservative Judaism)

B'nai Brith

B'nai Brith Youth Organization

Hadassah

Zionist Organization of America  
H ashachar (Young Judaea)

Youth have participated actively in BBYO leadership training, and several have attended Camp Judaea and Tel Yehudah, plus study in Israel. Sisterhood assists with a Youth Activities Fund.

The Washington Jewish community is part of the United Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh and participates in its annual campaign, as well as the campaign for Israel Bonds.

RABBINICAL LEADERSHIP - The Beth Israel Congregation has had strong ties with its rabbis, among whom were Dr. Jakob J. Petuchowski, Professor of Rabbinics at Hebrew Union College and Dr. Marc E. Samuels, a graduate of Jewish Theological Seminary. The most recent occupant of the pulpit, Rabbi David J. Matzner, remained with the Congregation over ten years, resigning recently to retire in Israel. Because of Washington's proximity to Pittsburgh, the Rabbi of the Congregation has always enjoyed close association and professional contact with the Greater Pittsburgh Rabbinic Fellowship.

Aryah Wineman, PH. D., a JTS graduate, served from August, '78 to August, '79.

SERVICES - Services at the present time are conducted at 8:30 o'clock P.M. on Friday evenings and 8:30 o'clock A.M. on Saturday mornings. A Sunday Minyan is held at 10:00 o'clock A.M.

Weekday services are held when arranged, usually only during a Shiva period. Festivals and Holydays are observed. A cantor has customarily been engaged for the High Holydays only. On all occasions, the rabbi leads the chanting, and members actively participate.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS are an important aspect of each organization's activities, and regular Adult Education programs have also been led by our rabbis--Bible study, Hebrew for adults, discussion groups, etc.

PRESIDENT is Sherman H. Siegel, Esq., who is also chairman of the Rabbinic Search committee. He can be reached by mail at the Synagogue, by telephone at his office (412) 228-8818, or his home 222-1466.

September, 1979