

The Synagogue Journal

1856-2006

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Issue 3

Early Alternatives

1 "Jewish Synagogues"

Credit: Eagle Almanac, 1889 (image coming)

This listing of synagogues in the City of Brooklyn includes the congregation's name, address and minister's name.

2 "A Row in a Synagogue"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, November 16, 1866, Page 3 (Scroll to paragraph 3)

Describes the lawsuit between Baith Israel president, Solomon Furst, and Rabbi Ekan Herzman.

3 "Temple Israel"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, December 6, 1869, Page 2

In incorporation proceedings, it was noted that the new congregation would be known as "Temple Israel" and that the name had a different meaning from "Berith Israel," which meant the "House of Israel."

4 "Thirtieth Anniversary of Beth Elohim"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, October 25, 1891, Page 2 (See Id 49)

This detailed summary of Beth Elohim's history includes the names of founders who came from Baith Israel.

5 "Beth Elohim"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, February 21, 1870, Page 4

Describes Beth Elohim's service. (See Issue 2, article 5 to compare to the practice at Boerum Place)

6 "Reform and Orthodox. The Opposing Hebrew Schools of Thought"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, August 21, 1884, Page 12

7 "The Jewish Day of Atonement"

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, October 11, 1883, Page 4

Achai-Israel congregation on Columbia Street may be Talmud Torah Anshei Emes, the congregation which merged with Baith Israel in 1905. Neither the Brooklyn Eagle nor Eagle Almanac have records of Anshei Emes.

8 "Synagogue Dedicated" – Congregation Ahavith Achim

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, September 13, 1873, Page 4, (Scroll to paragraph 6)

9 "A New Jewish Temple" – Dedication of Congregation Beth-El of Greenpoint

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, September 12, 1887, Page 2

10 "Coney Island's First Synagogue" – Ahawath Aaron Congregation

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, December 2, 1889, Page 5

11 "Synagogue for Rockaway" – Temple Israel

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, January 15, 1900, Page 7

12 "New Hebrew Congregation" – Shaari Zedek

Credit: Brooklyn Eagle, October 29, 1902, Page 6

In this issue ...

We look at several **early alternatives** to Congregation Baith Israel during the nineteenth century. Through the pages of the Brooklyn Eagle, we find details about the: differences and similarities in practice among the synagogues; the organization of new congregations; the development of the Jewish community.

Baith Israel is known as the "Mother Synagogue of Brooklyn" because many Brooklyn congregations were established by former Baith Israel members or students. The men who organized Beth Elohim, broke from Baith Israel in 1861, the same year the Southern states broke from the Union. During this time of dissension, factions were often volatile as the fight in the synagogue demonstrates. Beth Elohim's customs in its first years did not appear to be so radically different from Baith Israel's. Both conducted their services in German and the women were seated separately from men. The most visible difference was that the men wore hats during services. As Brooklyn developed, many Baith Israel families moved from the South Ferry - Downtown Brooklyn area to build Jewish communities and synagogues in places where there were none.

Kane Street Synagogue will continue to explore the congregation's history and the development of Jewish life in Brooklyn on March 5 at our historic sanctuary in Cobble Hill. The symposium, Keeping the Faith in Brooklyn: The Beginnings of the Jewish Community in the City of Churches, will bring together a diverse group of Borough historians, archivists, librarians and representatives from area synagogues and churches. Please plan to join us Sunday, March 5.

Carol Levin, Editor
historicaljournal@kanestreet.org

About the Journal ...

"The Synagogue Journal" is a one-year online publication at www.kanestreet.org/historical_journal.html, designed to highlight the Kane Street Synagogue congregation's rich historical record. It will draw primarily on original source material: oral histories, minute books and financial ledgers, souvenir journals, newsletters, and stories of the nineteenth century from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle Online TM, Brooklyn Public Library.

Each week in 2006, the Journal will explore a specific theme, related to the congregation's experience. Articles will illustrate the three historic periods: the first fifty years as Congregation Baith Israel at both the Atlantic Street and Boerum Place sites; the middle years with Rabbi Israel Goldfarb as spiritual leader of the consolidated Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emes at the present location, and the last fifty years, as the synagogue evolved to be the congregation that we know today.

Journal readers who take in the entire series will view the panorama of our special synagogue's experience in Brooklyn, the City of Churches: the constants, the changes and the cycles. Our intention is to foster greater understanding about synagogue customs and rituals and explore the development of the oldest Conservative congregation during its proud history.

Those of you who have watched the congregation grow over the last decades and guided its course have a treasured perspective. We welcome your reminiscences, letters and photographs to help shape the BIAE story. Special thanks to Kane Street Synagogue webmaster, Dugans Martinez for putting the Journal online. For further information, please contact us at: historicaljournal@kanestreet.org.