

Magnificent dome until the fire of 1965

INSTITUTIONAL SYNAGOGUE and WEST SIDE INSTITUTIONAL SYNAGOGUE (1917-2017)

**A Fast-Paced Century of Spirituality
Infused With Warmth, Wit, and Enthusiasm**

by Rabbi Aaron Reichel, Esq.



Facade before fire of 1965, with ☆ & dome



W.S.I.S. interior now

About This Publication

It is virtually impossible to include a reference to the names of all of the people who contributed so much time, talent, and treasure to the Institutional Synagogue and the West Side Institutional Synagogue during this past century. This monograph summarizes and supplements the publications of 1984 and 1987, in particular, as enumerated in the Bibliography that appears toward the end of this monograph. Another publication, *Centennial Profiles in Leadership*, is being published simultaneously with this one, and supplements it.

Many of the people who were active in the course of the past century are only looking down from above, now, on how the W.S.I.S. continues to build on its achievements of the past. For simplicity, and because some have moved away and are no longer in contact with us, we are not indicating in the text which of these people are no longer alive, but we pay them our deepest respect and express our strongest possible levels of appreciation.

One person's "fake news" is another person's authentic news, and vice versa. Every participant in the synagogue has his/her own agenda and perspective, and claims that are made by one person do not necessarily contradict claims by another person; there is enough room for shared contributions. We will therefore include original quotations from submissions by the participants who are alive, and cull documented material from or about those who are no longer alive. You the reader can judge for yourself and, more importantly, learn more about the synagogue from the inside by participating, create incontrovertible facts on the ground and in the synagogue for future generations and monographs. If you discover what you believe are errors or omissions (or credit given where it is or was not due), please inform us, and take it as a challenge to begin laying the groundwork for the next centennial monograph, and to make everything so much better in the future that no error will occur or survive the perusal of any future author or editor.

The monograph summarizes the past century in a nutshell, and, together with the accompanying *Profiles in Leadership* allows the rabbis and presidents who are still alive to present their accomplishments in their own words, lightly edited and condensed, but not endorsed as to claims which are not always consistent -- or humanly possible. This monograph minimizes duplication of what has already been written and photographed in the past (see bibliography, below), and includes **new features** not included in the prior monographs to be referenced below, notably: (1) Clarifications and corrections of observations made in prior publications about the synagogue and its founder, by fact-checking where the facts are beyond dispute; (2) A bibliography of significant references to the synagogue and its founder, in the course of the synagogue's first century; and (3) Comments specifically written about the synagogue for this publication by three of the leading historians of Judaism in America.

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PREFACE

Much has been written in the course of this past century about the historic game changer of a synagogue known originally as the Institutional Synagogue (I.S.) (founded, 1917), the West Side Branch of the Institutional Synagogue (founded, 1926), and the West Side Institutional Synagogue (W.S.I.S.) (founded, 1937).

This monograph summarizes what made the synagogue so historic and special, and how the spirit of the founders lives on to pave the way for future generations yet unborn. More than a summary of the first century of the Institutional Synagogue and its evolution into the West Side Institutional Synagogue, this monograph attempts to demonstrate not only that the values that are infused in the synagogue are timeless, but also that the focus has always been not to repeat the past, but rather to apply the timeless values of the eternal Torah to the present, and to inspire every person to make the most of their current opportunities, and to make the future even better, more meaningful, more user-friendly, more dramatic, and more exciting than the past.

Over the years, many Jewish community centers were set up for this purpose, but they generally focused on secular, social, and athletic pursuits for Jews in name only, without seriously attempting to maintain the living religion of Abraham, Moses, and the *Chofetz Chaim*.

THE FERTILE BUT FALLOW SOIL

It has been noted, with tongue in cheek, that the Atlantic Ocean a century ago had become one vast *genizah* (repository of holy Jewish objects) as a result of Jews fleeing the pogroms of Europe to immigrate to America, the Golden Land, discarding all associations of the past, including their *tefillin*, literally going to the decks of the ships taking them to America (when they could get out of the steerage where they were kept most of the time) and throwing these holy objects overboard.

Most of the Jews who did decide to maintain their religion attempted to transfer their traditions to the New World, maintaining the language, cultures, and dress of their native countries. But many if not most of the new Jews living in America, especially the youth, had no interest in the religion of their ancestors, and certainly no interest in the language, culture, and dress of the people who had persecuted them. Most American Jews were not only sliding into the melting pot, but getting completely corroded and dissolved in it, without even a taste of the Judaism they left behind. At most, they had an aftertaste, a bitter one, and even *that* would disappear in the next generation.

ENTER, RABBI HERBERT S. GOLDSTEIN

Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein was so charismatic and so focused on giving the young English-speaking Jews an environment they could relate to as Jews and as Americans that he became the English-speaking rabbi of the even-then influential Kehilath Jeshurun Congregation (K.J.) together with the legendary Yiddish-speaking Rabbi “*Ramaz*” Margolies immediately upon graduating the then-religiously borderline Jewish Theological Seminary as valedictorian (and acquiring traditional ordinations from traditional rabbis as well, a trifecta including uniquely for a seminary graduate, ordination by Rabbi *Shalom Elchanan* Jaffe, President of the *Agudath Harabonim*, who wrote in the unprecedented document of ordination that it would be revoked retroactively if Goldstein were to accept a pulpit with “mixed seating”). Earlier, Goldstein was salutatorian at P.S 2 and obtained a B.A. and M.A. from Columbia University. He became the first director of the Central Jewish Institute (C.J.I.) that was set up as an appendage to the K.J., to serve many of the functions of the Y, the Young Men’s [and Women’s] Hebrew Associations.

But after a while, Rabbi Goldstein developed greater aspirations. He wanted to go where the people were, and influence not just some local Jews, no matter how rich and influential they may have been, but rather the Jews of a whole community, and eventually the whole country. At that time, the most populous city in the world was Warsaw; the second most populous concentration of Jews was within the Lower East Side of New York, dominated by Jews who had just come off the boat and focused on staying

alive and making ends meet. The next most populous community of Jews was the then upscale Harlem, incredible as that may seem today, and it was there that Rabbi Goldstein set his sights, stunning the members of the wealthy K.J. community and resigning from the prestigious K.J. and the C.J.I. to launch a new movement in Harlem to be known as the Institutional Synagogue. He was just 27 years old at the time.

THE ORIGINAL INSTITUTIONAL SYNAGOGUE

The original I.S. (founded, 1917) was more than a synagogue and more than a Jewish Community Center. It was the launching pad for a Jewish revival movement, bringing unaffiliated Jews of all generations and age groups, particularly the young, into the fold, long before the Lubavitch movement and various *kiruv* organizations began doing essentially the same thing. It was considered revolutionary then, even more so than it is now!

Each generation has to use the available means to attain the intended ends. Long before television and the Internet changed our lives, people actually derived their entertainment from events they could attend in person. Rabbi Goldstein therefore began his massively successful recruitment efforts by introducing not masses on Sunday mornings but massive revival meetings Sunday mornings, capping parades and marching bands orchestrated to generate enthusiasm for Jewish values and traditions with perhaps an early and Americanized version of the Lubavitch *fahrbrengens*, with scouts as ushers. These events were aimed to a great extent at young people whose jobs, in the pre-welfare days of the 6-day work week, allowed for the Sabbath on the “wrong” day, and compelled many to feel they had to work on *Shabbat* for their survival. The revivals didn’t merely educate with words of Torah, but also entertained, Americanized, uplifted, and recruited. The first I.S. building was quickly outgrown, and the building that was renovated to become the no-frills center of the movement was designed to house a gym and a pool, so that many people drawn to the gym and/or the pool were eventually drawn to the Hebrew School and the *shul*. Unlike virtually all other synagogues of comparable majestic size, no attempt was made to provide opulence -- just opportunities.

The pied piper of the I.S. and his loyal followers were remarkably successful. In the I.S.’s peak years, 67 social clubs were in operation simultaneously (with a requirement, at some points, of beginning each meeting with Jewish content), a Hebrew school with close to 1,000 students, a day camp in the summer (Camp *Ta-a-noog*), and an estimated 3,000 people entering the synagogue building’s portals daily.

Rabbi Goldstein managed to get an incumbent Member of Congress with the initials of I.S. (what are the odds?), Isaac Siegel, as the president at the founding of the organization, and Siegel remained as the president – though not as a Member of Congress -- even after Rabbi Goldstein himself left the neighborhood to establish the West Side Institutional Synagogue. Siegel didn’t merely lend his name as a figurehead, but was very actively involved, and even hosted his own *kiddush* every *Shabbat* in his own home after the services! (Note: The later *Kiddush* Clubs that take place during the services can’t claim to convene in the home of an incumbent Member of Congress, but it is hard enough to recruit good people to be presidents nowadays without imposing upon them the requirement of first becoming a Member of Congress (later a judge), nor the role of personal home host of the *Kiddush* Club as well! The evolution of the *Kiddush* Club is undoubtedly still in progress, with the debates about whether they are good for the Jews or bad for the Jews – and for the synagogue – likely to continue well into the coming century, and to be resolved only with the coming of the Messiah – after being treated to a powerful *l’chaim*!

Meanwhile, with the coming and expanding of the subway lines, many people began moving out of Harlem, further from the inner city, and others began moving closer to the inner city. By 1926, so many Jews had moved from Harlem to the Upper West Side that a West Side Branch of the I.S. was founded, first leasing quarters at 260 West 83rd Street, and later at 148 West 85th Street. By and large, the people at the branch were wealthier and more established than the people remaining in Harlem, and to a great extent subsidized the I.S. itself. Rabbi Goldstein often alternated between the I.S. in Harlem and its

branch, along with Rabbi Isadore Goodman who assisted him. (Note: See, below, what Rabbis Goodman and Grossman had in common!)

The synagogue attracted world class athletes as mentors and coaches. I.S. coach Harold Florence was a U.S. record holder, in his day, for the Medley Swim, and his I.S. successor Jake Silverman smashed six records as the national champion. A brother of Benny Leonard, long-time undefeated lightweight boxing champion of the world, was a regular at the I.S., and a club at the I.S. was named after the famous celebrity boxer, who occasionally worked out at the I.S. as onlookers cheered for him to knock out his sparring mates!

We are not aware of any ordinary I.S. members achieving fame and fortune in the world of athletics, though the famous physicist by the name of Dr. Herbert Goldstein was reputedly named after Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein by members of his synagogue. I.S. athletic teams did, however, stand out, at least in the Jewish athletic leagues in the vicinity, winning and repeating as champions, one amassing more than double the number of points as its nearest competitor, the famous 92nd Street “Y.” At one point, the captain of the I.S. swimming and basketball teams simultaneously captained the same respective teams of the secular De Witt Clinton High School.

The rabbi at the I.S. who succeeded Rabbi Isadore Goodman in working under Rabbi Goldstein and later alternating with him and then staying at the Harlem building as long as it remained a synagogue and beyond was Rabbi PHILLIP Goodman. And beyond? Yes, indeed, the Harlem I.S. people had such strong ties to the synagogue and each other that they continued to meet at least once a year for decades after it completed its last service. As the neighborhood changed, the I.S. in Harlem was able to function partly from subsidies from the West Side branch and partly from rental proceeds of a local public school that leased classroom spaces the I.S. no longer needed at that point. When the public school got its own building, the I.S. could no longer function in Harlem, and sold its building.

WEST SIDE INSTITUTIONAL SYNAGOGUE (W.S.I.S.)

It may seem unbelievable to Upper West Siders today that as of 1937, “from 85th Street down to 47th Street, on the West Side [of Manhattan, in New York City], there [was] no Orthodox or even Conservative congregation, worshipping according to the *Ashkenazik* ritual. Worse still, there [was] no large school... to provide the growing child with a Jewish education. Nor [was] there a social center... for entertainment and cultural inspiration.” Yet this was precisely what was recorded by perhaps the most authoritative source on the subject of Orthodox Jewish Congregations in America – the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America – in the September 1937 issue of its periodical, *The Orthodox Union*. By the time this issue was published, however, it was already outdated, at least in part, because the previous month, the W.S.I.S., at 120-138 West 76th Street, had opened the doors to its recently acquired and renovated building for the first time.

As the big doors swung open, the founders, whose ambitious and idealistic plans hinged on the synagogue’s immediate impact on its community, were actually setting in motion a turning point not just in the nature of the neighborhood, but in the future of Orthodoxy. The official founding meeting of the WSIS took place on May 13, 1937. At the second meeting – held in the rabbi’s home, a week later – the treasurer reported that a check had been issued for a \$5,000 down payment on the \$200,000 purchase. Ah the prices in those days!

The building selected to house the W.S.I.S. could hardly have been a less likely possibility, for two reasons: The search committee had originally decided to select a site no further south than 77th Street. And the St. Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church and Parish House at 120-138 West 76th Street would have looked rather Christian even without a cross at the top of its limestone façade. The original I.S. structure in Harlem had been “converted” from a “typewriter building.” A typewriter is as religious as the person pressing its keys. More was needed to change the spirit of a church into a synagogue than merely replacing the cross with a Star of David (later knocked down anyway by firefighters in 1965). (Note: Jewish law, incidentally, as interpreted by most decisors, including, for example, the *Magen Avraham* and

the *Mishna Brurah*, forbid converting a synagogue into a church, but permit the reverse. So how about the original I.S. building? Title to it was taken by a bank before it was converted to a church.)

The edifice on 76th Street had been built in 1889. Nearly half a century later, it was still called “the handsomest and most imposing church structure erected by the Methodists in New York City.” The great American artist, C. Y. Turner, had painted murals on the interior walls. Reputedly, they were the only religious-themed murals ever painted by this artist. Clearly, there was no one highlight to the magnificent structure. In fact, there were 40 highlights – all natural – in the sense that the huge dome covering the structure incorporated 40 windows, a highly symbolic number to adherents of the Mosaic Code. Significantly, as we will see later, there were electric lights supplementing the natural lighting up there. From a religious point of view, the murals would have been perfectly acceptable for a synagogue had they not depicted human images. Beautiful as the murals were, and despite the fact that they portrayed four of the greatest Old Testament prophets and that each had been lined, in back, with a mass of 500 pounds of lead, for protection from inclement weather, the murals had to go.

Another important change involved the built-in organ. Rabbi Goldstein insisted that it be removed, and not merely reserved for use for “secular” purposes. He didn’t want to leave a temptation for future generations. Always one to put a positive “spin” on every action, instead of focusing on – or even mentioning – the removal (which could have generated negative reactions, among some people), he focused on the positive fact that the removal would permit the addition of 100 seats (to the right and left of the pulpit) to accommodate more congregants comfortably, and to bring many women closer to the ark. (Note: These seats were removed in 1987 or thereabouts, when they were generally unoccupied, but can of course be restored at any time, as the need will arise.)

ROLES OF WOMEN

Although the I.S. and the W.S.I.S. were always Orthodox, they always gave women an opportunity to shine, each in the perspective of its own generation. A century ago, a woman who wanted to rise to be immersed in Jewish leadership or scholarship had few alternatives other than to lead a women’s group or to marry a rabbi. This of course is no longer the case, although there is certainly room for argument as to how far to push the envelope. Rabbi Goldstein’s wife, Rebecca (known as “Betty”), was in the forefront of Jewish leadership. Her mother, Jane Fischel, had been among the Women’s Suffragettes fighting for the right to vote. Betty Goldstein fought many fights for many causes, including the right to eat kosher food produced by national companies. Her husband, the rabbi, as national president of the Orthodox Union, was the incumbent when the OU’s kosher food endorsement program began, but it is incumbent upon the males to concede that the initiative came from his wife as National President of the Women’s Branch of the OU, who said she was tired of telling her children what they could NOT eat. She and other women were in the forefront of convincing companies to accept rabbinic supervision so that their products – now in the 1000s – would be kosher. The book - *The Rabbi’s Wife – The Rebbetzin in American Jewish Life*, has 8 *rebbetzins* on its cover – one being Rebecca Fischel Goldstein. The iconic photo is scheduled to appear once again in a forthcoming issue of the OU’s *Jewish Action*.

In Rabbi Goldstein’s wedding address to his daughter, Josephine, who married his successor Rabbi Dr. O. Asher Reichel, he urged her to become “the power behind the throne.” Was he implying something about his own marriage, and the role of his own wife? We can’t know for sure, but many people who were interviewed for Rabbi Goldstein’s biography observed that he would never have been so successful without the roles played by his wife (sometimes behind the scenes but often very publicly). She lived her last years in a wheelchair, but many people said she accomplished more in a wheelchair than most men would accomplish without one. Her favorite song was “Count Your Blessings.” Rabbi Goldstein pushed that wheelchair for many of their twilight years, and told people that he was taking his sweetheart for a ride in her limousine!

The index to the biography of Rabbi Goldstein intentionally includes dozens of entries on the roles of women within the original I.S. Today, of course, the synagogue has the services of a *yoetzet halacha*, Shiffy Friedman, and the roles of women are very apparent as documented in sections of this

monograph that follow. The main contacts for activities at this point, are Odit Oliner, Bari Erber, and Ariel Yarmus, three most active activists.

RABBIS

Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein, DD, Continued, Rabbi, 1917—1960; Sr. Rabbi, 1960--1965; Rabbi Emeritus, 1965—1970

It is impossible to record, in less than a *page*, the achievements and personality of a person whose early years fill one book, *The Maverick Rabbi*, and whose middle and later years overflow a sequel yet to be completed. Actually, two encyclopedias tried to do it (see Bibliography, below).

Readers of this monograph were introduced to the rabbi and his unique rabbinic credentials a few paragraphs above. The Jewish world a century ago got its first public view of a young Rabbi Goldstein when he challenged the leadership of the then Orthodox-Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary in his valedictory address, which was headlined in the New York Jewish weeklies. Goldstein did so by pledging his loyalty to the Seminary to the extent that its professors would remain loyal to the Torah. Touche!

Rabbi Goldstein was more than just a rabbi with more than one degree of ordination. He was also, at various times, a pioneer, an evangelist, an orator, a Bible teacher, a homiletics professor, a chancellor (of 2 academic institutions), an author (of a Bible commentary that went into 3 printings, and other books), and a fund raiser. He taught the first two generations of American-born Orthodox rabbis how to preach and how to lead beyond the pulpit, as professor of homiletics at the rabbinical school affiliated with Yeshiva University.

The highlights of Rabbi Goldstein's life, **in addition to the many mentioned elsewhere in this publication**, include having been a co-founder of the National Conference of Christians; on the executive of the Religious Zionists of America (which he is credited with having named); president of many sub-organizations of the Agudath Israel of America (mostly raising funds for projects in Israel); chancellor of the Harry Fischel Institute for Research in Talmud (long the primary producer of judges for Israel's religious court system) and of the World Academy (later re-named the *Yad HaRav Herzog*), most noted for publishing the *Talmudic Encyclopedia*. He also was president of the Harry and Jane Fischel Foundation.

Rabbi Goldstein was an activist in the forefront of activities exposing fraudulent "kosher" butchers, enabling people to observe the Shabbat (through legislation and employment bureaus, and fighting calendar reform), co-launching, as president, the *shatnes*-testing organization, and building *yeshivot* throughout the country (as one of only 2 pulpit rabbis on the original advisory board of *Torah Umesorah*, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools.

The following books by Rabbi Goldstein were published: *Bible Comments for Home Reading* (the Five Books of Moses first individually in English, and then republished twice together with the Hebrew texts and the Shabbat morning prayers), *Bible Comments on the Book of Joshua*; *Between the Lines of the Bible* (on the 613 commandments), *Forty Years of Struggle for a Principle* (the biography of Harry Fischel, republished and supplemented in 2012).

In addition, the following mini-books by Rabbi Goldstein were published: A translation of Luzatto's classical work, *Praise for Righteousness* (with Goldstein's then fiancée, distributed at their wedding); and *Comments on the Ethics of the Fathers*.

Rabbi Goldstein's signature greeting when meeting congregants on the street, was "What's the good word?", always staying away from *lashon horah* (negative vibrations), and initiating every conversation with a positive spin.

Rabbi Dr. O. Asher Reichel, DHL, Assistant Rabbi, 1947—1953; Associate Rabbi, 1953—1960; Rabbi, 1960—1985; Rabbi Emeritus, 1986—2012

People who note that Rabbi Goldstein was Rabbi Reichel's father-in-law were and may be inclined to assume that he was given the position to share the pulpit with his mentor based on nepotism – that is, until they find out that Reichel was the valedictorian at Yeshiva College, *and* he won the awards for Talmud *and* Ethics. He had *two* Masters degrees (one in Hebrew literature at YU and one in education at NYU) and one doctorate in Hebrew literature (at YU). He was first offered the job at the W.S.I.S. by its president well before he met Rabbi Goldstein's daughter, and he had leadership positions in a most unusually diverse assortment of organizations. To name a few: President of the Student Organization of Yeshiva, at Yeshiva College; Assistant Head Counselor at Camp Mesifita, which was associated with *Yeshivas Torah V'Daath*, and counselor of the bunk unofficially known as “the bunk of the future *Roshei Yeshiva*”; the number 2 person at the Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education, which in effect was the Lubavitch's *kiruv* (outreach) organization, and the Director of its New York Region, organizing “release time” to give public school students a taste of Torah (as substantiated, in part, by its stationery in the 1940s) *before* the last Lubavitcher Rebbe became THE rebbe; long-time Chair of the Board of Education of the Manhattan Day School; rabbi of the Park East Synagogue; rabbi of the Young Israel in Cincinnati; Regional Co-Chair, Educational Commission, Rabbinical Council of America; Chair of the Board of the Harry and Jane Fischel Foundation. (**Note:** Okay, subtract one point for nepotism on the last item.)

Rabbi Reichel was asked to continue to occupy or reoccupy the pulpits at the prestigious Park East Synagogue and the Young Israel in Cincinnati at the same time that he was re-offered the position at the W.S.I.S. He actually took a step **DOWN** to accept the position at the W.S.I.S. since he had been the only rabbi at the other synagogues but was relegated to the status of assistant rabbi in his early years at the W.S.I.S. as he shared the pulpit of his mentor, in part so that his wife could be near her mother whose health was ailing.

Rabbi Reichel wrote what has long been considered the definitive biography of Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Halevy, author of the classic traditional Jewish history series of books, the *Dorot Harishonim*. The original book was published by the Yeshiva University Press, with a Foreword by President Rabbi Dr. Samuel Belkin, translated into Hebrew and published by the Mossad Harav Kook.

At the W.S.I.S., Rabbi Reichel initiated programs and organizations for every age level, and was the principal of a Hebrew school with an impressive faculty (see below).

First Seriously Considered Proposed Merger with Lincoln Square Synagogue Made and Rejected

In the 1980s, after Rabbi Riskin of the Lincoln Square Synagogue went on *aliah*, committees were organized at the W.S.I.S. and the L.S.S. to consider a merger, with Rabbi Reichel to have been designated Senior Rabbi, and Saul Berman to have been designated Rabbi. Both synagogues ended up feeling too much pride in their own identities to enable the merger to come through. Instead of the SYNAGOGUES merging, some of the CONGREGANTS merged when Rabbi Moshe Morduchowitz, the first acting rabbi of the L.S.S. in the post-Riskin era, who had also served as the rabbi of the L.S.S. *Hashkama minyan*, was unanimously hired by the W.S.I.S. in 1986. Rabbi Morduchowitz succeeded Rabbi Reichel, with his blessing, and Rabbi Reichel was unanimously elected the Rabbi Emeritus, a title he held until he passed away in 2012, so there was either a Goldstein or a Reichel as the rabbi or the rabbi emeritus of the L.S. and W.S.I.S. for the first 95 years of the existence of these synagogues.

Rabbi Moshe Morduchowitz, 1986-1999

Rabbi Moshe Morduchowitz was always on the fast track. He entered the first grade at 4 years of age; he began high school at 11; and Yeshiva College at 15. He then spent 9 years in the class of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik at Yeshiva University, the last 3 as the Rav's assistant, teaching the review classes to his classmates.

After brief stints as the rabbi of Congregation Ramath Orah, near Columbia University, and Congregation Beth Israel, in Malden, Massachusetts, he served the L.S.S. in the capacities referred to above and founded the Yeshiva of the West Side, which he brought to the W.S.I.S. He also chaired the Judaic Studies Department at Touro College, and taught at the City College of New York.

Rabbi Morduchowitz sought out and was mentored by some of the most successful transmitters of Torah in America, each in his own way, notably, for example, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, of Yeshiva University (as noted above); Rabbi Avi Weiss of The Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, and much later, of *Chovevei*; Rabbi Isadore Twersky, of Harvard (where Rabbi Morduchowitz was granted a Master of Philosophy degree); Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, of the Lincoln Square Synagogue (later Chief Rabbi of Efrat); and Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, of the Carlebach mystique. Rabbi Morduchowitz managed to emulate the signature features of each.

His attitude toward money was not typical. He did not ask for money for some of his services outside of the synagogue, like at life cycle events, as noted by some of his former congregants of more modest means, and he could be unconventional in the way he spent money to recruit new members. Rabbi Morduchowitz was known to bring a classic book on Jewish mourning to a house of mourning when he felt it was needed, which he paid for out of his own money, according to one of the past W.S.I.S. presidents.

Rabbi Rafael Grossman, DD, 2002—2005

Rabbi Rafael Grossman's first memory of the founder of our synagogue was when Rabbi Grossman's father first immigrated from Europe and needed some help in rebuilding his life, which Rabbi Goldstein provided. Then, after Rabbi Grossman established a reputation as the builder of the largest Orthodox Jewish Congregation in America – in Memphis – when Rabbi Grossman heard that the W.S.I.S. was in need of a rabbi to rebuild it, he decided to return the favor – in addition to his desire to live closer to his children and grandchildren. Rabbi Grossman was also a first rate scholar and a national leader, having been president of the Beth Din of America, the Rabbinical Council of America, and the Religious Zionists of America. Although he only served the W.S.I.S. for fewer than 3 years, he impressed virtually everyone with his erudition, sincerity, warmth, and nonjudgmental approach. He “restored the daily minyan, and increased the weekly attendance on Shabbat.”

Rabbi Grossman authored *Binah: The Modern Quest for Torah Understanding, on the Book of Genesis*. His scholarly papers appeared in numerous journals and volumes, and his weekly column, “Thinking Aloud,” appeared in *The Jewish Press* and on numerous websites, to the point where “it was read by approximately 500,000 people, making him one of the most widely read Jewish columnists in the world” at some point.

Speaking of centennials, Rabbi Grossman was one of 10 rabbis to be honored at the centennial celebration of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn, 2005—2012

Undoubtedly, virtually nobody else, before or since, was hired by a major synagogue, based on in-person impressions and personal charisma more than anything else, and left, after only 6 years, with comparable tremendous accomplishments. He had come when the synagogue seemed to be dying, and revived it to the point where the shul was filled not just with congregants but also with exhilaration and enthusiasm, to the point where, during Rabbi Einhorn's tenure at the W.S.I.S., he was hired by the Orthodox Union and designated as its primary contact person for inspiring new growth and programming in synagogues. The original Institutional Synagogue had been a prototype combination of institutions centering around the synagogue; the West Side Institutional Synagogue became a prototype of creative programming within the synagogue center, which other synagogues have tried to emulate once again.

Rabbi Einhorn came to the W.S.I.S. brimming with erudition, energy, emotion, charisma, creativity, warmth, and wit. He tried to “always try something new, something fun.” For example, he

created a series of *Shalosh Seudot* whereby he developed annual themes that lasted throughout the year, such as the study of a different *Chassidic rebbe* at every *Shabbat* afternoon *Shalosh Seudot*, and then he actually brought some to the synagogue in person. He did the same with contemporary rabbis, never one to shy away from bringing competitors to the synagogue, but secure enough to do so, just as his cantorial counterpart in the synagogue, “*Chazzan Zevi*” Muller.

Above all, Rabbi Einhorn built up the membership, created a strong young leadership movement, and brought an extensive amount of learning and Torah to the W.S.I.S. But most remarkably, he created a palpable sense of excitement so that the synagogue literally rocked with enthusiasm every *Shabbat*.

He wrote: “One of my most famous lectures while there was a social sermon -- it was an experiment where we all collaborated to create my speech [<http://jewishweek.timesofisrael.com/crowd-sourcing-the-sermon/>]

To the extreme sorrow and disappointment of everyone at the synagogue, as President Andrew Fox later observed, “we were victims of our own success.” Rabbi Einhorn was so successful that, after 6 years in the fishbowl of the Upper West Side, David Fishof’s prodigal son-in-law was weaned away from the W.S.I.S. with “an offer he couldn’t refuse,” to his home town of Los Angeles to become the Dean/Rosh Yeshiva of Yavneh, which is both a synagogue and a school. While there, he already set the record, last month, for the longest *shiur* in recorded history (19 consecutive hours, with a different intriguing topic each hour on the hour). None of his *shiurim* at the W.S.I.S. lasted for more than an hour or so, except for on *Shavuot* night, 6 hours straight.

Rabbi Joshua Strulowitz, 2012—2014

Rabbi Strulowitz wrote: “I’m very proud of many things we did at W.S.I.S. First, we modernized the *mechitzah*. When I arrived the women were very unhappy with the *mechitzah*. It was a yellow tinted glass that made it difficult to see and hear. I formed a team of women to help choose a new design, reached out to a designer, and our President, David Fiedler, generously donated the funds to make it happen...

“...We hired new youth directors, created numerous programs throughout the year, started a *Yom Haatzmaut* street fair and much more... I wanted all members to feel important and valued and worked hard to connect them to the Shul. I feel that we did that, and were able to bring in many new families to the Shul as well. We also brought in a Rabbinic Intern, Daniel Sherman” ... who stayed on and succeeded Rabbi Strulowitz.

“I always tried to operate with dignity and integrity, and I can proudly look at the good I did in my time with fondness.”

Rabbi Daniel Sherman, Rabbinic Intern 2013—2014; Assistant Rabbi 2014—2015; Associate Rabbi 2015—2017; Rabbi 2017--present

Rabbi Sherman follows a rich tradition at our synagogue, winning the Talmud Award at the rabbinical school affiliated with Yeshiva College and then distinguishing himself in many other ways. He is the Co-Director of *Torah Letzion*, which assists high school students to afford a gap year in Israel. Previously, at Camp *Nesher*, he served as the Head of Staff *Beit Medrash* Program, *Chinuch Rebbe*, and Assistant Athletic Director. He is pursuing a Master’s degree in Modern Jewish History.

Rabbi Sherman’s tenure as the official rabbi of the synagogue is still in its nascent stages, but he has already had an impact, notably expanding membership and helping to develop community-wide events, such as *Yom Haatzmaut* and *Yom Hashoa* programs, numerous *chesed* programs, and stabilizing and strengthening the *Shacharit minyan*. Rabbi Sherman’s dynamic full-length and fast-paced mini-*shiurim* and sermons have become a draw for those seeking Torah from across the community.

Rabbi Sherman observed: “The history of the W.S.I.S. imposes an exciting responsibility to adhere to the shul's legacy of serving as the spiritual, religious, and social home of the Upper West Side community. Following in the path set before me by my illustrious predecessors doesn't mean doing everything in the exact same way as they did. But rather, every decision that we make must be in line with the aforementioned three-pronged ethos that they set. Our sacred mission is to continue to ensure that those aspirations continue into the next century, G-d willing.”

Assistant and Associate Rabbis and Rabbinic Interns:

Rabbis Isadore Goodman (later to become rabbi of the Baron Hirsch Synagogue, in Memphis -- see Rabbi Grossman, above -- and Regional Rabbi of London, 2nd only to the chief rabbi of England), Philip Goodman (see above; also authored numerous books while working for the Jewish Welfare Board), Emanuel Lifschitz (who took a leave of absence to serve in the U.S. Navy during World War II), Zev Zahavy (see above), Philip Harris Singer (later, president of Vaad Ha'Rabonim of Brooklyn, and father-in-law of film maker Robert Avrech), O. Asher Reichel (see above), Jonathan Feldman (later, Director, Manhattan Jewish Experience), Chaim Eisenstein (later, Rebbe, Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh), and Daniel Sherman (see above).

Rabbis Reichel and Einhorn occupied the pulpit without any assistant rabbis or interns. Rabbi Sherman is assisted by a *Yoetzet Halacha*. Rabbi Grossman had an assistant rabbi for a while. The other senior rabbis had assistants most of the time, though with varying titles.

What it meant to be an assistant rabbi at the WSIS

The position of assistant rabbi, or a variation of same, was considered so desirable, in terms of prestige and the opportunity to be mentored by Rabbi Goldstein, that (1) Rabbi Reichel gave up two opportunities to serve as the primary rabbi in order to serve as a mere assistant rabbi at the W.S.I.S. – along with other functions he served there (as discussed elsewhere; there was more to the story), (2) Rabbi Zev Goldstein not only changed his employer in order to become an assistant rabbi at the W.S.I.S., but he even changed his name in order to do so (as noted above). Legend has it that the senior Rabbi Goldstein said that this would avoid confusion if checks would come to the synagogue earmarked for Rabbi Goldstein. There is still an ongoing debate as to whether he was joking or not. There is also an ongoing debate as to whether Rabbi Zahavy was planning to change his name to the Hebrew anyway, but did so coincidentally at the exact time he was hired as the assistant rabbi, or because of what was just described. The decision may have also been influenced by (a) the general desire not to have such a common name as Goldstein, and (b) the pleasing alliteration of Zev Zahavy. As a further footnote to this footnote to history, Rabbi Zahavy named his first son Tzvi, who became a very accomplished rabbi, professor, and author in his own right, but the elder Zahavy evidently resisted the temptation to spell his son's name Zvi, to continue the alliterative tradition, in deference to the fact that doing so might encourage people to mispronounce the name which is pronounced with a “t” at the beginning even though some people spell it with a “Z” at the beginning. Rabbi Zev Zahavy and Rabbi Reichel in effect switched positions, since Rabbi Reichel left the Park East (then known as *Zichron Ephraim*) to join the W.S.I.S. shortly after Zahavy left the W.S.I.S. to serve briefly at the Ohab Zedek before becoming the rabbi of the Park East. The two rabbis were destined to share their destinies another way, both becoming the first people in history to receive a Masters degree in Hebrew Literature from the Harry Fischel School for Higher Jewish Studies at Yeshiva University. Since the degrees were conferred alphabetically, Rabbi Reichel was named first. Had Rabbi Zahavy not changed his name, his name would have come first!

All of the above factors are objective. Subjectively, serving as the assistant rabbi at a major influential synagogue, especially on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, in New York City, provides prestige and exposure, and is a steppingstone to becoming appointed as the primary rabbi at other major synagogues. It also enables rabbis and their families to benefit from access to all the advantages of living in the most Jewish city outside of Israel.

YOETZET HALACHA

Shiffy Friedman

Shiffy Friedman is a graduate of Nishmat's Miriam Glaubach Center's U.S. Yoatzot Halacha Fellows Program. She has taught at the SAR Academy and now teaches at the Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School. She has a dual M.A. in Education and Jewish Studies from New York University. She is available for consultation and has already demonstrated a wide range of knowledge, analytical ability, and personal sensitivity. She and her husband, Rabbi Noam Friedman, live with their children in Morningside Heights, where they serve as the OU-JLIC couple at Columbia/Barnard Hillel.

CHAZZANIM

Cantor Zalmon Yavneh, the son of a cantor, immigrated to America at 18 years of age, studied cantorial music under several masters in America, and then became the official cantor of the original Institutional Synagogue in 1926, at 22 years of age. He held the congregants spellbound with his classical and Chassidic melodies, and with some that he composed on his own even though he never learned how to formally read music.

Chazzan Yavneh's nephew, Cantor Elliot Yavneh, recalled being in a taxi in Israel, and heard the announcer inform the listeners, over the radio, that he was about to play a recording of Cantor Zalmon Yavneh's original composition of the prayer *Machnisei Rachamim*, and observed that the great Cantor Naftali Hershtik, of the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem, had announced he planned to sing it during the then-coming *selichot* services! Years later, Hershtik's successor at that synagogue heard *Chazzan* ELLIOT Yavneh's voice in the audience, asked him whether he was related to *Chazzan* Zalmon Yavneh, and asked for the sheet music to *Chazzan* Yavneh's composition of *Machnisei Rachamim*! Cantor Eliot responded that *Chazzan* Yavneh used to improvise, so they couldn't accommodate "a *chassidishe* guy who was prepared to write down the sheet music as soon as the *Shabbat* would end." This is still not the end of the story. This melody is the lead melody of the only record Yavneh ever cut, *The N'shomo* Cantor, which is available through Cantors World of our synagogue's own congregant, Charlie Bernhaut, who not only has the original record in this collection, but transcribed it onto a CD for posterity.

Chazzan Zalmon Yavneh modestly said he was just a *shliach tzibbur*, a representative of the congregation, but he was thought of so highly not just by his congregants but even by his peers – assuming he wasn't peerless – that he was elected President of the Jewish Ministers Cantors Association of America, a/k/a *The Khazonim Farband*, and then Honorary President for life. He sang at many concerts, and for many charities and other organizations.

Cantor Yavneh was so durable that after he retired, he was still able to lead the services after his successor passed away in 1966, and did so as cantor emeritus until about 2 years before he passed away at the age of 75.

Cantor Zev Muller "*Chazzan Zevi*," as he is affectionately known, is widely considered "the crown jewel of our synagogue." Since *Chazzan* Zevi joined our synagogue in 2007, he has elevated our *davening* with his beautiful dramatic voice. But he does much more.

The *chazzan* has been referred to by our president – and others -- as "the whole package." He gives of himself to the shul on many levels, from community outreach to initiatives beyond those taken by most other *chazzanim*. His activities personify the concept of a *shul* encompassing all aspects of communal life. He befriends one and all. Beyond the call of duty and the sound of his voice, he trains old and young to join in formal and informal choirs, with user-friendly melodies. He is secure enough to invite the best of his colleagues to join him on the cantor's platform in the center of the synagogue and in

concerts at and beyond the synagogue. *Chazzan Zevi* is among the leading Cantors of this generation. He has scheduled a cantorial convention for the very first *Shabbat* after the centennial celebration, to be hosted in our *shul*, when he will be joined by his world-famous uncle, *Chazzan* Binyamin Muller of Antwerp, and his cousin the Chief Cantor of Europe, *Chazzan* Yisrael Muller of Brussels.

Our *chazzan* provides links on the W.S.I.S. website and emails to various musical compositions for all types of occasions. These links encourage the congregants to learn and participate in the Yom Kippur and Shabbat services, and in between. <https://www.wsisny.org/chazzan>

When you hear *Chazzan Zevi*, you can feel his emotions come through. He has a familiarity with the language of the *davening*, and its nuances, having lived and learned in Israel. *Chazzan Zevi* studied the Talmud at the highest level that even few practicing rabbis can claim. He studied at what some consider the Harvard of the *yeshivot* in Israel, *Ponevezh*, as well as at the renowned *Beis Medrash Gavoha*, in Lakewood. He is now studying for a Ph.D. in Computational Neuroscience at Columbia University.

Chazzan Zevi loves the synagogue, its members, and its history. He feels fortunate to be a *Chazzan* in a shul where people are unassuming, easygoing, and express their appreciation. He and his wife, Chaya, have made many friends and valued relationships over the years and are proud to call the W.S.I.S. “our home and community.”

A list of cantors who served the synagogue with distinction appears below, but one lay *shliach tzibur* who filled the gap at one point – maybe more than one point – when the synagogue was “between cantors” was Arthur Rogers, a one-time president of the synagogue, who did something that would be appreciated by congregants the world over – he made tapes to familiarize new cantors with the melodies dear to the hearts and ears of the congregants. [Note: Innovation is nice, but certain melodies become ingrained in congregants, no matter where they are. Two cantors, who will be named but not identified, refused to learn the synagogue’s melodies that had been sung there by *Chazzan* Yavneh for decades, and by some of his successors, and the *chazzanim* who refused to harmonize with the past were literally drowned out by the loyal – rebellious? – majority, who sang the melodies they adored so loudly that they drowned out the *chazzan*, in each instance, who was singing his own tunes.]

In between Chazzan Zalmon and Chazzan Zevi (neither one of whom generated z’s when on the bima; nor did Rabbi Zev Zahavy), we were fortunate to have the services of the following *chazzanim*; Peter Barron, Heshy Brody, Joseph Ellner, Chaim Kiss, Shimon Kugel, Daniel Najman, Joel Selter, Itzhak Silverman, Eric Stern, and Yisroel (“Srulli”) Williger.

Lay *chazzanim* have included Robert Hofbauer, Rabbi Samuel Intrator (“lay” in terms of his *chazzanut*, he was a full-fledged rabbi, having served as such in the Carlebach *shul*), Isadore Lauer, Arthur Rogers, Irving Silver, T. J. Zuckerman, and Dr. Robert Weiss.

PRESIDENTS

Member of Congress Isaac Siegel, 1917--1941

There was only one president in the history of the original Institutional Synagogue: Member of Congress – and later Judge – Isaac Siegel. He even remained the president of the synagogue in Harlem after the West Side Branch was formed, and after the West Side Institutional Synagogue became an independent entity. His roles are integrated into discussions above. Most notably, he was a very active president, not just a figurehead lending his name and his title, even – especially – while serving as an incumbent Member of Congress.

As a Jewish Member of Congress, he did not hide his Jewishness or vote against Jewish interests the way so many Members of Congress do today. When the U.S. was arming for World War I, Siegel authored the legislation to provide for up to 20 Jewish chaplains in the American Expeditionary Forces. Until then, the American military had few rabbis serving as chaplains. In later years, Rabbi Goldstein served on the Board that evaluated the applications of people to serve as chaplains.

One more factoid. Siegel's seat in Congress was next occupied by Fiorello La Guardia, who later became the mayor of New York who appointed Siegel to a judgeship.

President Lester Udell, 1937--1965

President Lester Udell was the president of the West Side Institutional Synagogue from its founding through 1965, which means during and beyond the entire tenure of the Synagogue's founding rabbi as an active rabbi! His son Arthur noted, as we went to press with this publication, that "the synagogue was my father's life for close to 40 years," bridging the Harlem heydays to the West Side Goldstein and golden years. Lester Udell had been such a dominant fundraiser that for years, the competitive congregants only vied for the designation of fundraiser number 2.

Outside of the synagogue, Udell signed so many affidavits to save Jews from the holocaust that two members of the FBI visited his office to find out how one person could make such commitments. His son recalled that he answered very simply, "to save Jews," knowing the consequences of such commitments, and with such simple sincerity that no action was taken against him as a result.

Udell was the head of a major suit and coat business, and he was known to distribute suits to yeshiva students for the holidays, and to immigrants escaping from the holocaust. He was so popular – and not JUST among the recipients of free suits – that it was said he could have run for mayor (and presumably won).

The Rest of the Presidents

After that, the following people served as president of the WSIS: Samuel W.. Siegel (though his title was formally Chairman of the Board, presumably since his term began while President Udell was still alive, and it was probably unthinkable at first for anyone other than the founding president to have the title of president), Jacob Kinzler, Isaiah O. Zucker, William Foont, William T. Steinlauf (who fought off the first proposed merger with the L.S.S. and promoted the alternative of bringing in Rabbi Morduchowitz), Arthur M. Rogers, Herbert Schwarz, Freddy Heiser, Richard Wigler, David Ohayon (who fought off the proposed takeover by the L.S.S. and other institutions), Jacques Ohayon, Richard Siegel, Shalom Maya, Andrew Fox, David Fiedler, Joshua Olshin.

Presidential Memoirs

Note: Credit was taken by various people for many wonderful achievements. Some overlap; some conflict. No attempt will be made here to judge as which claims are correct, and how to apportion credit. Each surviving president was asked to present his memoirs in his own words. They were merely lightly edited and in some cases paraphrased and/or condensed. Substantially unabridged presentations appear in the accompanying publication, *Centennial Profiles in Leadership*. See further disclaimers, above.

Richard Wigler, 1996--1998

Richard Wigler was the first president from among the people who had not been a congregant or a member of the WSIS during the Goldstein-Reichel years. He came in during the Morduchowitz years and was involved in a wide gamut of synagogue activities. He also was in the center of passionate disputes about certain operational issues dealt with by the rabbi and his supporters within the synagogue, and how certain fundamental functions were implemented. But overall, a lot got done in his administration and he left with great *Hakarat HaTov* (appreciation) on behalf of his family and lifetime friends.

David Ohayon, 1998-2004

David Ohayon did far more as a president than most presidents, and most presidents told him he did far more as a retired president and “regular” member of the synagogue than most presidents! He personally was involved in staving off organizations that wanted to take over the synagogue when it was down, in putting the synagogue back on the map with the acquisition of a permit to make the area in front of the synagogue the place to be for the whole West Side on *Simchat Torah*, in getting good and reliable tenants, and in arranging for repairs of the synagogue itself, work on the ballroom, the classrooms, the boiler, the air conditioning, you name it. He consolidated various Kiddush clubs into one, and has been one of its main forces in creating a camaraderie that is so important to any synagogue, and especially to one like ours whose strong point is its warm atmosphere. He also put his money where his mouth is. He estimates he spent at least a million dollars of his own money in the past 30 years on behalf of the synagogue, and he raised 10 times that amount (counting rentals). Perhaps his greatest legacy has been his imbuing his synagogue activism to his daughter, Bari, who continues the family tradition of leadership, now as a vice-president.

Jacques Ohayon, 2004–2005

Although he succeeded his brother, he was very much his own man. Together with Rick Siegel (his successor) and David Locker, he hired Rabbi Einhorn, and for this alone “deserves a special wing in Gan Eden,” since Rabbi Einhorn turned the shul around more than anyone else, from the brink of dissolution to the heights of eclipsing its competitors. He also hired *Chazzan* Chaim Kiss. He helped organize a children’s program in the ballroom, and an annual singles barbeque on *Sukkot* in his home down the block from the synagogue.

“I served in many roles [at the W.S.I.S.] through the years, including Assistant *Gabai* to Chet Lipson, marketing the *shul* to the Upper West Side, and since I was trained in culinary skills, I decided to make all the *kiddushes* and fund them myself! [Note: when not individually sponsored] They set the bar that has since been the standard to which other synagogues have striven to meet. I decided that if we had the best *kiddushes* along with Rabbi Morduchowitz, we would begin to attract the ‘Herring and *Chulent*’ lovers on the West Side – yes, it worked!! [Note: The *kiddushes* featured – and continue to feature – much more than herring and *chulent*.]”

Rick Siegel, 2005--2006

Rick makes no claim to be related to the Congressman Siegel who founded the I.S. or to the Samuel W. Siegel who founded the Manhattan Day School and was the chairman of the Board of the W.S.I.S. “I am only related to Bugsy.” [Note: For the record, and for those without a sense of humor, Rick makes sure to add: Actually, “I would say that while I am not related to Bugsy Siegel, I find it humorous when I am asked.”] Rick was one of the key people to arrange for Rabbi Einhorn to become the rabbi of the W.S.I.S., and was the first president who began his administration with Rabbi Einhorn in the pulpit (see above for how it happened), and together helped bring the synagogue “from rock bottom, like 2 outs and 2 strikes in the bottom of the 9th,” on its way to its status as a synagogue that really rocked, literally and figuratively.

Shalom Maya, 2006--2009

By all accounts, Shalom was a most energetic and devoted president, welcoming every new congregant, and then doing everything in his power to keep that person happy. The only unanswered question about his term in office is how he managed to find so many hours in the day to do all that he did for the synagogue. Perhaps Maya’s most significant act as president was to “discover” *Chazzan* Zevi, and not let him slip away. Now, *Chazzan* Zevi is not just the voice of the W.S.I.S., but to a great extent its most recognizable face as well. Maya’s presidential predecessor David Ohayon may have said it best, “Shalom brought Shalom to the shul.”

Andrew Fox, 2009--2011

Andrew Fox helped bring Rabbi Einhorn to the point where the synagogue had the momentum to rise above all its competitors. He helped put the synagogue on a sound financial footing, and, more

dramatically, to create the aura that made the synagogue so outstanding, to the point where there was such a sense of excitement and electricity in the air during the *davening* that the atmosphere created by the rabbi, the chazzan, and the president made it feel like a presidential candidate at a national convention bringing the crowd to a frenzy as he reached the climax of his acceptance speech. Andrew also managed to arrange for the funding and implementation of a major repair in the synagogue ceiling in his 3rd week on the job, and the renovation of the ballroom in his 4th month on the job. Had he stopped there, he would have already done a lot. But the congregation enjoyed the benefits ever after, and what he accomplished with Rabbi Einhorn in terms of the branding of the synagogue was no less impressive and appreciated.

David Fiedler, 2012--2016

After the tumultuous (in a positive sense) and exciting days of the Fox administration, David restored a sense of traditional dignity to the synagogue. No less important, he encouraged people moving into the neighborhood from the Five Towns and other areas to consider making our *shul* their spiritual home, and in many cases, they liked what they saw enough to do so, despite the stiff competition in our vibrant neighborhood. David has also been a mainstay of the *Kiddush Club*. But above all, he feels a special sense of pride in having pushed the synagogue to hire a rabbinic intern named Daniel Sherman who worked his way up to become the incumbent spiritual leader of the synagogue.

Josh Olshin, 2016--present

“When Rabbi Strulowitz left, we hired our former intern Rabbi Sherman initially as an interim Rabbi while we put together two search committees and reviewed numerous rabbinic candidates over what became a two-plus year period. Eventually, Rabbi Sherman's sincerity, intellect, and commitment won over the membership, and by an overwhelming membership vote it was determined we did not need to go outside and that he was the right fit for our community. Since taking this step, under Rabbi Sherman's leadership, the W.S.I.S. has solidified a position of stability and steady growth.

“During the last few years, the *Shul* has placed a strong emphasis on programming, from academic programming... bringing in quality speakers... to youth programming and family activities (carnivals, street fairs, cooking competitions etc.). We recently took the step of hiring an Events Programming Director to ensure that this continues on a successful path. Also, in recent years there has been a heightened consciousness at the *Shul* and its membership with respect to our role as a source through which *chesed* can be provided, both in terms of stepping up for individual members in need as well as taking on larger *chesed* projects (such as *Masbia* Soup kitchen, raising money for fire victims in Israel, etc.). We have also strengthened our daily *Shaharith minyan*, to the point where it has now become a reliable *minyan* well attended by both congregants as well as other community members.

“Regarding other signature characteristics of the *Shul* in recent years, we have an emphasis on being ‘family friendly,’ we are committed to maintaining an open, accepting and non-judgmental atmosphere, we run the services with a bit of a *laissez faire* and unstructured approach, there is a strong social component to our Saturday morning service, including an active *Kiddush Club* and a regular hot *kiddush* lunch every week which usually ensures a big crowd. And of course, notwithstanding the chatter level, which may not always be ideal, we all appreciate our wonderful Chazan Zevi, who makes our davening so special, most particularly during the high holidays and moments of our weekly service such as *Kedusha*, or the prayer for the State of Israel, where he evokes a unique sense of spirituality that I think most anyone walking into the Shul can connect with,

Rabbi Goldstein's vision of a *Shul* that is a center of our communal life, far beyond just being a place to pray, is still as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. It very much guides the actions of the Trustees and is something we hope and expect will be nurtured and developed further as we enter our next 100 years.

The Current WSIS Board of Trustees

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Chet Lipson

More than what his title suggests, Chet Lipson is our long-time *Gabbai*, and, to many people, he is and has been THE friendly and smiling face of our synagogue. May our Good Will Ambassador continue for many years into the future as well!

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES

Shabbat Services

Rabbi Goldstein urged his students at Yeshiva University to preach trim 10-12 minute sermons, and he generally practiced what he preached. [Note: Rabbi Joseph Lookstein of the Kehilath Jeshurun, who also taught homiletics at Yeshiva University, was known to teach his students to trim their sermons to 18 minutes. It appears that different students recall different time limits recommended by each rabbi, and both of these rabbis have been quoted to urge their rabbinical students attempting to penetrate the minds of their future congregants to compare themselves to people drilling for oil. “If you can’t reach your goal after a certain period of time, stop boring.”]

For many years, one or sometimes two *Shabbat* services at the main synagogue were led by young men, whose photographs appeared in advance in the synagogue news weekly, announcing their respective roles, as cantors and guest preachers. For decades, Rabbi Reichel arranged for young men to lead ALL of the main services *Shabbat* afternoons, in terms of cantors and Torah readers, again, with announcements in advance of their roles in the synagogue news weekly.

The services throughout the past century have generally been relatively fast-paced, by the standards of each generation, and the congregants relatively warm, friendly, and informal, which is quite amazing considering the turnover between the congregants of a century ago and those of today. Although there may be more junior congregation services meeting simultaneously in the building than ever before, for different age groups, children continue to be made to feel at home at the main services for adults in the

main synagogue, and they all gather together at the cantor's platform to chant the closing *Adon Olam* prayer with gusto and enthusiasm.

Our services aren't complete without our famous hot *kiddushes*, noted for their food, their atmosphere, and a separate place for children to eat and enjoy whatever children do. Also see Kidzone below.

Open *Beit Medrash*. Starting this year, we offer our congregants the opportunity to spend some time in our well-stocked *Beit Medrash* for a little fit of Shabbat afternoon study. It is stocked not just with books but with soft drinks as well, to help people deal with the hard issues they may grapple with as they analyze the texts.

Daily Services

The synagogue sustained three *minyanim* every single weekday morning for about three decades, from 1937 until 1967, and for a while it even hosted four such services, a relatively unprecedented and rarely repeated record, especially for Manhattan. People from other neighborhoods knew that they could always find a reliable and convenient *minyan*, and would plan their days accordingly. Among the congregants who came at some point were the noted award-winning author, Herman Wouk (who also wrote a blurb that appears on the dust jacket of the hard cover editions of the biography of Rabbi Goldstein), and Yeshiva University President Norman Lamm (who had previously been the rabbi of The Jewish Center, but who at some point moved further downtown). He wrote a blurb for the dust jacket of the new edition of the Harry Fischel biography, probably among the last blurbs he ever wrote on behalf of any publication. Again, young people were often encouraged to lead the services. Daily minyan attendance has generally gone down in many neighborhoods, but our *minyanim* are being revived, notably by our rabbis, over the years, and by David Ohayon and now Jeffrey Jankelovits. In addition, the rabbi often gives mini-shiurim after the prayers, most suitable to the fast-paced world of New York in the 21st Century. In general, he follows a tradition made famous by our founding rabbi (as described above), getting right to the point and not dragging out his presentations as many members of the clergy still have a tendency to do, even now!

Holiday Highlights

Until the fire of 1965 (see below), the synagogue was like a furnace throughout the High Holidays and the summer and much of the time before and after, because there was no air conditioning in the main synagogue. Nevertheless, it was overflowing for the high holidays, to the point where for many years the synagogue ran two sets of "overflow" services on the High Holy Days – one in its own ballroom, and one in the Grand Ballroom of what was then called the Manhattan Towers Hotel (now known as The Opera Apartments). At President Udell's suggestion, the synagogue paid a surcharge on the condition that the hotel's bar would be closed during the time periods when services would be conducted. (Note: It would seem that the concept of a *Kiddush Club* has evolved a long way since then, although two sobering distinctions exist: We have no *Kiddush Club* on Yom Kippur either, and we don't have to pay for individual drinks at the *Kiddush Club*!)

For many years, Rabbi Goldstein's son Gabriel ran the overflow services in the synagogue ballroom, blew the shofar, and read the Torah. Isidore Lauer, in the early years, and Irving Silver, in later years, were regular members of the synagogue, but blessed with far from regular voices. They each served as the main cantor for the overflow services for many years and as the alternate cantor, occasionally, at Shabbat services.

Throughout most of the active Goldstein and Reichel years, people were encouraged to bring their own food to the *Sukkah* on *Sukkot*, but there were catered breakfasts in the *sukkah* weekday mornings, partially subsidized by the synagogue. All you could eat, including all the lox and bagels you wanted, and an omelette of your choice, all for \$1 at least as late as in the 1960s. Catered meals are now served in the *Sukkah* very often on *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov*.

Throughout the Goldstein and Reichel years, the senior active rabbi hosted a festive *Shmini Atzeret* party in his home in the afternoon, getting people into the spirit of the joyous *Simchat Torah* holiday that followed a few hours later. The weather was often mild, but the Reichel children were put in charge of a coat room, with formal numbered tickets, even before they were old enough to babysit or have any other job. The most frequent comment by congregants picking up their coats after “may I have my coat” was “sorry I can’t tip you because it’s a holiday.” The children barely knew the concept of a tip when they began, so they didn’t really know what they were missing!

People – especially young people -- come from all over the world – except from Israel -- to be on the West Side for *Simchat Torah*. Some people were afraid to gather outside in large crowds after 9/11, and the city even took measures to limit such crowds particularly after 9/11, but our synagogue managed to get a permit and become THE place to be especially on *Simchat Torah* night, and increasingly between *Simchat Torah* holidays as well. The kids have their Candyland, and all is well, fun, and tasty, for people of all ages then in particular, and throughout the year as well.

In an era of “*shul* hopping,” an open house for all the congregants would become in effect an open house for the entire West Side community, which might be rather daunting, and which might discourage future rabbis from having to open their houses in this manner. *Shul* hopping wasn’t as prevalent decades ago as it is in the Internet age because (1) the Internet allows people to “let their fingers do the walking,” in advance, even though this term was coined for phone books before the Internet age, (2) most people used to invest in a single synagogue or two and were only or primarily on their mailing lists, (3) people relied on oral announcements of special events in the synagogue, which they obviously had to hear in person, or on written newsletters which were not sent to as many people as are reached routinely on the Internet, (4) there are more guest speakers and scholars in residence competing for people to attend the synagogue, (5) there are more major synagogues in the neighborhood than ever before, some with multiple minyanim; (6) there are more elaborate *kiddushes*, reaching the level of complete meals, at more major synagogues than ever before, (7) rabbis and cantors have contracts that allow them previously unimaginable amounts of days off on *Shabbatot* and holidays, during which they can supplement their incomes by serving as guest rabbis and cantors elsewhere, so their fans have to check the Internet in advance to see if their own rabbis and cantors will be present. (8) Some synagogues actually close down completely for major holidays since many if not most of their congregants go to hotels for these holidays and the other synagogues in the area can easily absorb and accommodate the few that remain in the city, and are even eager to do so in the hope of attracting them in the future.

There was more “*shul* hopping” on *Simchat Torah* than on other holidays, in general and especially regarding congregants of the W.S.I.S., for a few reasons: (1) It is a festive occasion that extends the service. (2) Some synagogues extended it longer than others so that after one service would end at one synagogue, the congregants could go to another synagogue without (a) missing anything at their synagogue or (b) being “disloyal.” (3) Some Orthodox synagogues relaxed their standards on this holiday (a) in terms of lowering the *mechitza* separating the men from the women, (b) eliminating the *mechitza*, (c) allowing women to kiss the Torah during the festivities, and (d) even allowing women to carry the Torah, which was revolutionary throughout much of the past century, for an Orthodox synagogue, (4) The I.S. had a policy of *shnuddering* – having people called to the Torah announce contributions to the synagogue at that time – not every *Shabbat* as in many synagogues, but once a year, on *Simchat Torah*, so some people conveniently avoided this at that time by choosing this morning to go “*shul* hopping.” The *shnuddering* actually went not to the synagogue itself but as annual honoraria to the *clay kodesh*, to certain employees, but not to the two main rabbis, who were presumably considered above getting glorified tips at this point. (They often did get honoraria upon officiating at rites of passage, however.)

The W.S.I.S. for many years had so many congregants that even though the Torah readings went through a few cycles on this day to enable every eligible person present to get an *aliyah*, the only way every eligible person could be accommodated at the W.S.I.S. for many years was by calling groups at a time for each *aliyah*. The additional Torah readings in other rooms that occur in many synagogues didn’t

occur at the W.S.I.S., possibly due to the exception to the *shnuddering* rule discussed above. Significantly, “rogue” Torah readings to get around the system did not take place.

For many years, the W.S.I.S. and the Lincoln Square Synagogue had combined *sedorim* which averaged no more than about 250 participants each night, with Rabbi Reichel generally officiating the first night with his synagogue’s cantor, and Rabbi Riskin the second night with his synagogue’s cantor. (Note: This estimate was published in the WSIS Jubilee monograph in 1987, after the founding rabbi of the L.S.S. had moved to Israel, and it was distributed shortly after Rabbi Morduchowitz left the L.S.S. with his “following” of former L.S.S. members, and became the rabbi of the W.S.I.S., and nobody from either synagogue came to the author/editor – directly or through an intermediary -- to challenge or dispute this estimate.) On one occasion, when the W.S.I.S. was between cantors, the writer of this monograph, who had attended Yeshiva University’s Cantorial Training Institute but was not a professional cantor, was entrusted to lead the public chants. Cantor Goffin of the L.S.S. was present, but not in an official capacity. For some odd reason, perhaps unintended intimidation, the person entrusted to lead the chants was not up to his even generally limited level of powerful singing, so Cantor Goffin shrugged his shoulders, as if to say “what the _____” (to put it mildly), and proceeded to lead the chants at the W.S.I.S. *seder*, for probably the only time he led a W.S.I.S. event.

For some context, in the peak years of the W.S.I.S., when it conducted *sedorim* on its own, long before the L.S.S. was founded, the W.S.I.S. attracted 600-700 participants to its *sedorim* at the Riverside Plaza Hotel. In later years they were conducted at the Esplanade Hotel and other venues, and sometimes in the W.S.I.S. ballroom, as was the case as recently as a few months ago, arranged by David Ohayon (whose major contributions to the synagogue as president and beyond are discussed above). When the W.S.I.S. ran the *sedorim* alone – through the end of its third decade, Rabbi Goldstein usually officiated the first night, and the rabbi with whom he shared his pulpit the second night. The *mah nishtana* was recited by one child in Hebrew, and one in English.

More Opportunities to teach and to learn

Talmud classes were offered by a variety of rabbis over the years, most notably by the pulpit rabbis as well as Rabbi Samuel Horwitz, Rabbi Moishe C. Pekier, Chazzan Zevi Muller, Isaac Allen, Esq., Joshua Goldberg, and Yudi Weinberg.

In 1940, Rabbi Goldstein organized a Layman’s Institute for Jewish Studies at the synagogue, offering courses for adult men and women in history, philosophy, ceremonials, Hebrew, prayer, liturgy, Mishna, Prophets, and the Talmud. There was a formal four-year course of study, and graduating men were entitled to be called to the Torah with a special title. Graduates included Dr. Benjamin Goldstein (no relation to Herbert S.) and Harold Kaplan (later to become the synagogue’s executive director).

In 1986, Rabbi Morduchowitz brought his Yeshiva of the West Side to the West Side Institutional Synagogue when he became the synagogue’s rabbi, and it also offered a variety of courses.

For many years, Rabbi Goldstein taught a Bible Class Monday nights, and attracted people to attend who were not normally inclined to study the Bible in the middle of the week (or a Monday) or the middle of the night – or even early in the evening – by preceding the class with a presentation by a celebrity, sometimes another rabbi but very often somebody who was as far from religion as could be, such as famous entertainers and athletes, but Rabbi Goldstein used them for his purposes, much as he had said early in his career that he would bring a jazz band to the synagogue if he thought it would bring potential congregants (though not to participate in actual services). It was claimed that Rabbi Goldstein never missed teaching a class for nine consecutive years, and only accepted speaking engagements on Sunday if he could catch a train the next day in time to teach that class Monday night.

Other classes were given at other times, some by people known to the current generation, such as Lawrence Kobrin and Rabbi Morton Garfiel.

Guest Speakers

Here is a sampling of guest speakers and scholars-in-residence who addressed the congregants of the synagogue, over the years:

Member of Congress Bruce Barton, Sol Bloom (discussed below), Bernard Botein, Isaac Siegel, Bruce Barton, Jonah J. Goldstein, Jerrold Nadler, Stephen Solarz (had celebrated his bar mitzvah in the synagogue, son of columnist in W.S.I.S. newsletter). **Member of Congress-Elect** Samuel Marx (an active original Institutional Synagogue member who died before he could take office). **U.S. Attorney General** J. Howard McGrath. **Chief Judges** David Edelstein (a synagogue member, chief judge of federal district that includes Manhattan; writer of the Preface of the biography of Rabbi Goldstein; Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen (of rabbinical courts in Haifa; son-in-law of the founding rabbi of the W.S.I.S. **Judge or Justice** Bernard Botein, Harry B. Frank (member of Board of W.S.I.S.), Ruchie Freier (first chassidic woman judge; her first speaking engagement at a synagogue since becoming a judge) William Herlands (member of Board of W.S.I.S. and president of U.O.J.C.A., now called O.U.), Max Salomon, Isaac Siegel (see above), Otto A. Rosalsky. **Governor** W. Averell Harriman. **Mayors of N.Y.C.** Michael Bloomberg, Rudy Giuliani, Robert Wagner, Jimmy Walker. **Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem** Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen (see above). **Borough President of Manhattan** Hugo Rogers (1947). **University Presidents** Samuel Belkin (Yeshiva), Bernard Lander (Touro), Nicholas Murray Butler (Columbia), George N. Shuster (Hunter), Harry N. Wright (CCNY), Herbert Hawkes (Columbia College). **Chief Rabbis** Shear Yashuv Cohen (see above), David Lau. **Rabbis** Shmuley Boteach, Zev Brenner, Naphtali Carlebach (Feb., 1940; father of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach); Shlomo Carlebach, Zevulun Charlop, Samuel Chill, Yoseph Kahanaman (head of Ponevezh Yeshiva), Max Kirshblum, Isaac Lewin (Chairperson of Executive of World Agudah and father of Orthodox legal superstar Nathan Lewin), Adam Mintz, Jacob Rosenheim (president of World Agudath Israel, 1945), Jacob J. Schacter, Baruch Simon, Adin Steinsaltz (author of sweeping new edition of the Talmud), Steven Weil (of OU, and narrator of historical section of WSIS centennial video), Tzvi Hirsh Weinreb, Mordechai Willig. **Reverend** Everett R. Clinchy, Exec. Director of Natl. Conference of Christians & Jews. **President of the Muslim Brotherhood** (undoubtedly not today's organization by that name) Dr. G. Kheirallah. **Professors** Adena Berkowitz, Naomi Goldstein Cohen (only surviving daughter of founding rabbi; wife of Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen), Louis Feldman, Ike Herschkopf ("psychiatrist to the stars"), Sidney B. Hoenig (one of Rabbi O. A. Reichel's doctoral sponsors), Nathan Isaacs (of Harvard), David Pelcovitz, Jacob J. Schacter, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin. **Boxing Champion** Benny Leonard (who also sparred in the Institutional Synagogue Gym, had a brother at the I.S., and an I.S. club named after him). **Others:** Marty Appel, Abraham Balfour, Ron Blomberg, Joel Cohen, Roger Daltrey of "The Who," Irving Davidson, John Frank, Harry Hershfield, Malcolm Hoenlein, Mrs. Edward Jacobs (Natl Pres of Hadassah 1930-1937), Charlie Harary, Ludwig Lewisohn, Leonard Lyons, Benjamin Mintz, Dr. Samuel Nirenstein, Michael G. Tress (leading holocaust era activist), Pierre Van Passen, Alan Veingrad, Frank L. Weil, and Mayer Weisgal.

Guest dignitaries

Chief Rabbi of Israel Abraham Isaac Hacohen Kook, Chief Rabbi of Israel Shlomo Goren (brother-in-law of Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen, see above), Robert Daltrey of The Who and featuring guest Joshua Nelson, Rock Gospel Chazan, David Fishof, Producer of VH1 Rock N' Roll Fantasy Camp, Elan Atias, lead singer of Bob Marley and The Wailers, and Ellen Foley, "Paradise by the Dashboard Light" Co-Singer, Rabbi Hebroni of the Hebron Yeshiva, Israeli Parliament members Joseph Burg (also a cabinet member) & Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz (whose signature appeared on Israeli currency) & Menachem Porush & Itche Meir Levin (signer of Declaration of Independence) & Chaim Moshe Shapira (cabinet minister and signer of Declaration of Independence), Rabbi Eliezer Silver.

Hebrew School

The WSIS Hebrew School was modeled on that of the original I.S. (see above). In 1943, enrollment was in the vicinity of 200. Classes met three times (for a total of 5½ hours) each week. For more than 2/3 of the Hebrew School's existence, Rabbi Reichel was the principal. The staff at one time included such prominent personalities as Jacob Breuer, then the principal of the Yeshiva Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the wife of Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik, the then-future Rabbi Dr. Jason Jacobowitz, and

Jack Verschleiser. (Note: Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik spelled his name differently than Rabbi J. B. Soloveitchik). The roster of teachers at the original Institutional Synagogue, incidentally, had included the future wife of Rabbi Joseph Lookstein. Two of the innovations introduced by Rabbi Reichel were a departmental system (exposing students to a variety of teachers), and switching some classes from Sunday to Saturday afternoon – the best way to “teach” the Sabbath experience is to experience it. The high school department was conducted exclusively in Hebrew, at one point (which can’t always be said even as to the Yeshiva University High School), and the kindergarten was so popular that it sometimes had a waiting list.

For decades, Rabbi Reichel – occasionally with the assistance of a youth director – oversaw all kinds of cultural, social, and athletic activities, including Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon bat mitzvah celebrations (way before they became widely accepted), basketball games, Purim carnivals, and a game room.

Day School – and Manhattan Day School

In 1921, Rabbi Goldstein had publicly advocated the establishment of a parochial all-day school offering both a full religious and secular education. Some people back then considered such a school un-American, despite its encouragement of good citizenship. In 1939, Rabbi Goldstein sought to actualize his earlier dream by launching the W.S.I.S. Day School headed by his assistant rabbi, Emanuel Lifschitz, who served as principal. In 1943, a separate building was purchased for the school at 30 West 74th Street, and the school became a community project, a separate entity with the active support of Rabbi Goldstein and two of the other rabbis of major synagogues in the community – Rabbi Jung of the Jewish Center and Rabbi Hoffman of the Ohab Zedek. The Certificate of Incorporation of the Manhattan Day School (MDS) was drawn up by W.S.I.S. Trustee Samuel K. Beier. The president of the new school, from its founding in 1943 until his death in 1974, was the long-time W.S.I.S. vice-president and the one-time W.S.I.S. Board Chairman, Samuel W. Siegel.

Kidzone

Our kids take center stage, not just figuratively but literally as well (especially when they gather around the bima Saturday mornings to lead in the spirited closing of the services with the grown-ups). There are groups for different ages Saturday mornings and other events that make kids develop a positive attitude and WANT to come to the synagogue throughout the year.

Young professionals

You don’t have to be young to feel welcome at the WSIS, nor do you have to be a professional – though it helps! – but young professionals have a special niche at our synagogue. Check out our Bulletin and our website to find out where you can meet people to check out, network, and socialize with.

The West Side Institutional Review and the current weekly Bulletin

From Day One in 1917, until 1962, the *Institutional* (as it was known in Harlem) and *The West Side Institutional Review* (as it was known at the W.S.I.S.) was generally published every week, except during the summer. The first editor in Harlem was officially Rabbi Goldstein (though there is reason to believe he delegated much of the work). The first editor at the WSIS was George L. Livingston. Rabbi Goldstein became the official editor a few years later, although on similar terms as in Harlem. For 39 years, Rabbi Reichel assumed full responsibility for all aspects of the publication. In the early years, 2000 copies of every issue were mailed out each week, including to the many servicemen serving in World War II. Through October 1984, when the *Review* was still a monthly, it published every reported birthday, anniversary, graduation, and other rite of passage, as well as photos of every bar mitzvah, bride, special anniversary couples, and other special events. In recent years, we keep the community connected by means of the Internet, supplemented by a printed Newsletter, in color (definitely not done 100 years ago!) that they can touch – and read – during the services – but not during the sermon or the Torah reading.

A byline was given to Sanford Solarz, for years, in connection with a kosher gossip “Getting Personal” column that consisted, essentially, of achievements and social events of congregants. The achievements of one young man seemed to see print with above-average regularity – Stephen Solarz, the

columnist's son, who celebrated his bar mitzvah in our synagogue and eventually went on to become the U.S. Member of Congress of the largest community of Orthodox Jews in the country.

Gabbais

Gabbais have included Alfred Florsheim (the mentor of many who followed him), Evan Markowitz, Richard Wigler (before becoming president), Jacques Ohayon (before becoming president), and now Chet Lipson and Steven Hirsch.

Rebecca F. Goldstein Women's League

The Women's League, named in honor of Rebbetzin Goldstein in 1961 (but generally referred to as "the Women's League" by women who never met Mrs. G or even knew about the full name assumed by the organization at one point), has served many functions over the years, helping with the synagogue's budget and building funds, and notably subsidizing the original Day School, floral decorations on *Shavuot*, mini-Torahs and/or flags, and candies for the children on *Simchat Torah*, *groggers* and *hamentachen* for the children on Purim, decorations and *kiddushes* for the *Succah*, and donations for the needy on Passover, and supported children's villages for orphans in Israel, many survivors of the holocaust and of soldiers killed in Israel's wars. In recent years, events have generally focused on women's issues.

For many years, the organization was affiliated with the Women's Branch of the Orthodox Union. Rabbi Goldstein was the national president of the Union itself while his wife was a founder and long-time president of the O.U.'s national Women's Branch. Their daughter, Josephine (Rabbi Reichel's wife) was a long-time anchor of a presidium at the W.S.I.S. Women's League. She was offered the presidency of the Women's Branch nationally, but declined while remaining a Board member nationally, and continuing to serve as the long-time national president of the Agudah Women of America, even though she did not fit the stereotype of the rank and file of that organization!

The Men's Club

The Men's Club conducted monthly meetings and public forums, and helped raise money for the synagogue and launch careers of young talent by sponsoring the annual Youth Concert, featuring such then-new faces as Itzhak Perlman, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, Larry Bakst, Neil Shicoff, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, and Stephen Texon (a former baal Musaf at some of the W.S.I.S. Youth Sabbaths).

Mr. & Mrs. League

The original I.S. famously had 67 clubs at one time, but not one geared exclusively to young couples per se, nor did the W.S.I.S., until Rabbi Reichel founded it, joined it, and opened each monthly meeting with his patented "Gems from the *Sedra*." Most notably, this organization ran an annual bazaar and decorated the *succah*.

Singles

Many programs were run for singles, most notably the Sinai League and the Elite Club, which attracted young people from all over the metropolitan area. There were *Shabbat* lunches at the synagogue and Friday night get togethers in the home of Rabbi and Rebbetzin Reichel for many years.

Dinners

Of course every dinner was special, but, to paraphrase an observation by photographers, one taste is worth 1,000 words. Although we hope this monograph is tasteful, it cannot substitute for participation at every dinner. On at least one occasion, a half an hour of the proceedings were broadcast live over the radio, and on at least two occasions, about 1,000 people participated in person. In recent years, the W.S.I.S. has often dispensed with the seated dinners where people are stuck next to one or two couples all night, and often can't even hear what they are saying over the sounds of entertainment on a loud speaker. So some of the recent dinners have taken the format of a huge, impressive smorgasbord where people can mingle with each other like at an extended *kiddush*. They have also featured auctions of various goods and services, some of a Jewish nature, some universal.

Kiddushes at the WSIS in general

A few people seem to take the credit for establishing regular lavish *kiddushes* at the synagogue (see above), which attract congregants in an extremely competitive neighborhood, and which have since been emulated by other synagogues.

Opera

The W.S.I.S. was one of the few organizations to buy out the entire Metropolitan Opera House for a benefit performance annually. At one point, only two other organizations did so, one being the Yeshiva University Women's Organization, whose most active leaders included Rabbi Goldstein's mother-in-law, and his first wife, as well as the person he married after his first wife passed away. The W.S.I.S. held this distinction for nearly 3 decades, generally selling all or nearly all the tickets (except for 200 reserved for members of the armed forces on leave, some years). One year, the synagogue had to turn away 700 people who could not be accommodated.

The streak came to an end only when the "new" opera house ended the practice of permitting individual charities to take over the entire house.

A partial list of artists who performed at WSIS benefit performances includes Licia Albanese, Carlo Bergonzi, Giuseppe DiStefano, Eileen Farrell, Nicolai Gedda, Jerome Hines, Dorothy Kirsten, George London, Gionvanni Martinelli, Robert Merrill, Zinka Milanov, Jarmilia Novotna, Jan Peerce, Roberta Peters, Ezio Pinza, Leontyne Price, Regina Resnick, Giorgio Tozzi, Richard Tucker, Jon Vickers, and Leonard Warren.

Vaad Hatzalah and Other Relief Activities

Most American Jews of the holocaust era are correctly faulted for not having done enough to help their fellow Jews at that terrible time. At the W.S.I.S., the rabbi and the president were among those criticized for doing TOO MUCH! In addition to raising large sums of money and paying more than their own fair share, they also both signed so many affidavits of support that government officials took them to task, and impliedly threatened to take them to the cleaners – or worse – if they wouldn't come up with plausible explanations. Rabbi Goldstein responded by taking government officials into the majestic synagogue with him, and assuring them that virtually every congregant could be counted on for support in granting or obtaining jobs for holocaust survivors so that they wouldn't become burdens on our society.

Rabbi Goldstein has generally not been credited, in most holocaust books, with his roles in rescuing fellow Jews from the holocaust, and even was outrageously criticized for not doing enough, by people who did far far less. This is in the process of being rectified. A prominent historian has been commissioned to document the roles of Rabbi Goldstein during the holocaust. Please G-d it will be published well before the next centennial.

One of the leading Americans who devoted his life to rescuing Jews from the holocaust, who HAS been given due credit, was Mike Tress. An entire section of his book, *They Called Him Mike*, is entitled "Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein," and Tress even credits the rabbi with a major role in arranging for the financing of the famous Kastner train transporting Jews to freedom (though not necessarily in the notoriously controversial decisions as to which Jews would be saved).

Long before Rabbi Goldstein became a rabbi, or even an adult, he became personally close to Sol Bloom, the impresario who rose to become the Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives during the holocaust, and continued to have a close relationship with him until the Congressman passed away, after choosing to have the funeral at the W.S.I.S. Bloom has been criticized for not publicly urging President Franklin D. Roosevelt (who was idolized by most American Jews) to do more to help European Jews (who were slaughtered so outrageously especially during World War II). Bloom did a lot to help European Jews and American Jewish soldiers behind the scenes, however, and to a great extent due to the general and very specific communications he had with Rabbi Goldstein, especially during the War.

Rabbi Goldstein was a Board Member of the Vaad Hatzalah (the organization devoted exclusively to rescue work during the holocaust), and was referred to, at least informally, as the *Rosh Hamedabreem*, the English-speaking spokesperson in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere, for the leading European advocates of holocaust rescue, most notably, Rabbi Avraham Kalmanowitz of the Mirrer Yeshiva. To what extent this role was formalized, if any, continues to be a matter of further research.

W.S.I.S. in the Forefront of backing the War Effort During the Holocaust

As of late 1944, the W.S.I.S. had sent 216 of its own young people to fight in the war and risk making the supreme sacrifice. The synagogue was so involved with its service personnel overseas that, in a single issue of *The Review*, it published photos of servicemen; mail from servicemen; an article by a chaplain entitled “Loyalty Viewpoint,” a war editorial, an honor roll of reinforcements, and a request for more names for “the servicemen’s mailing list.” The rabbi made sure to send them copies of the *Review* and to correspond with many of them personally. Among those who the rabbi corresponded with were Danny Weiss (later president of the O.U.), Morty Langer, and Buddy Friedman. The latter was killed on D Day, and a Jewish War Veterans Post was established at the W.S.I.S. in his memory.

United Jewish Appeal

When *The Jewish Week* – known for its “special relationship” with the U.J.A. -- ran a series of profiles featuring individual U.J.A. leaders, the very first article featured the W.S.I.S.’s own perennial U.J.A. Chairperson Herman H. Cohen. Other major contributors included Abraham M. Druckman and Jacob Kaplan.

Yeshiva Appeals

In a single appeal, Rabbi Goldstein and President Udell once raised money for 104 *yeshivot* – 40 in pre-state Israel, 40 in Germany, 21 in Hungary, and one each in France, Italy, and Belgium. Closer to home, Rabbi Goldstein developed a close rapport with Rav Aharon Kotler of Lakewood, then known as the “*Manhig HaDor*” (the leading rabbi of the generation, particularly within the “Yeshiva World”). By no coincidence, a disproportionate number of plaques at the Lakewood Yeshiva bear the names of leading W.S.I.S. lay leaders, notably Siegfried Bendheim, Henry L. Kraushar, Moses Langer, Joseph Shapiro, and Lester Udell.

Charities in Israel

The W.S.I.S. helped found a whole vocation-training oriented religious children’s village in 1950 – the first sponsored by an American synagogue – to help rebuild our people from the devastation of the holocaust. Although *Sdei Chemed*, near *Rishon L’Tzion*, was the most well known children’s village sponsored by the W.S.I.S., at Rabbi Goldstein’s initiative, by 1959 the rabbi and the synagogue had established 14 child care institutions in Israel. “...from the North to the South of Israel you will find signs of buildings stating “Established by the West Side Institutional Synagogue of New York.”

The other major pet project of the rabbi and the synagogue was the “World Academy” (known, in Hebrew, as the *Emet Yad HaRav Herzog*) which is best known for its sponsorship of the ongoing *Encyclopedia Talmudit*. Rabbi Goldstein was the organization’s founding chancellor, and arranged for its main fund raising office to be based in the W.S.I.S.

The Building Annex

Rabbi Goldstein arranged for the laws of New York to be amended to allow for the renovation of the synagogue annex that houses an expanded ballroom in 1958 (detailed in the 1987 monograph). The cornerstone laying ceremony was headlined with the participation of Governor W. Averell Harriman. A photo of the governor speaking in the main sanctuary likewise appears in the 1987 monograph, along with the names and roles of the other participants in the ceremony. The photo also appears in the W.S.I.S. centennial video, screened for the first time June 3, 2018.

Fire!

On a rainy Friday night (not rainy enough!), November 26, 1965 – Thanksgiving Weekend – a 3-alarm fire that originated in the electrical wiring in the dome of the W.S.I.S. gutted the main sanctuary,

and the water damage from putting out the fire affected the annex and the basement as well. The fire made the front page of virtually all the New York dailies except the *New York Times* (which made up for the omission by publishing a 46-column inch article on March 10, 1968 describing the reconstruction). Rabbi Reichel refused to be interviewed at the scene because of the Sabbath, and arranged for services to be held at a nearby hotel, complete with a most memorable bar mitzvah the next day. It didn't hurt that the Manhattan Towers Hotel (which hosted W.S.I.S. auxiliary high holiday services) was owned by a member of the synagogue. After that, everything continued in the slightly waterlogged and barbecue-smelling synagogue annex until the reconstruction was completed.

Rebuilding of the Main Sanctuary

Gone is the dome at the top. In came a new set of stained glass windows all along the front of the synagogue, and brass chandeliers similar to those in a historic Amsterdam synagogue. The seating was rearranged to bring the women closer to the action, and an arching decorative sounding board was installed above and around the ark to provide state-of-the-art acoustics.

Mortgage heroes

Without divulging confidential information, suffice it to say that two of our heroes in terms of getting a mortgage in this century, on good terms, when most people either didn't have comparable influence or were reluctant to use their influence in this area – or both -- were Barry Kirshenbaum and Chaim Lazarus. The latter also donated the current *bima* (more than just a platform) that is the centerpiece of the synagogue.

Facilities for the Living and for the Dead

The synagogue, the ballroom, and other parts of the building are available to the members of the community for rental when not otherwise in use.

The Yemenite Synagogue of Manhattan, a/k/a/ Congregation Tifereth Yisrael, now rents out what used to be called the Daily Synagogue of the W.S.I.S., with the plaques of the WSIS decedents remaining on the walls. Sam Domb and his sons, congregants of that synagogue, have also been helpful to the WSIS itself and to additional synagogues and religious institutions, in renovations and other important ways.

Mt. Eden Cemetery, in Westchester, has a whole section with plots still available for members of our synagogue. The person currently in charge of the cemetery could only name two true celebrities buried there – Jan Peerce, the opera legend, and Congressman Sol Bloom, the legendary entertainment impresario referred to above, whose funeral was held at the W.S.I.S.

Chesed

Among our proudest distinctions are that our warmth extends beyond our smiles, and our services extend beyond the lips in our smiles (we do not just parrot lip service). “We take our *tzedaka* as seriously as we take our *kiddushes*!” We don't suffice with a standard *chesed* fund, to help people in need in general, but we get the whole community involved in whole projects to help specific individuals in times of extreme crisis. We arrange meal trains to help families with newborns, and bereavement assistance to help families through crises at the end of life, and we are there for everyone in between as well. In particular, we have made a name for ourselves, and more than one meal for those in need, with our *Masbia* activities (see below).

2 Masbia events per year – by Rabbi Sherman

The W.S.I.S. aspires to become a central hub of *chesed* within the community, and our partnership with *Masbia* has allowed us to do that. We have had three events during the past year and a half. Before *Rosh Hashana* we put together packages of dough, yeast, oil, and other items a family may need in their food preparation for the *Yomim Noraim*. However, the bigger event is when we cut, chopped, scrubbed, and sliced 1,000 lbs of vegetables to be used at the soup kitchens. It was incredible to watch people from around the community, spanning all ages, get involved in the important work. We were reported in the press both years!

Security

In the past, security was for paid professionals. David Locker and Avi Fogel organized volunteers made up of WSIS members, under the auspices of CSS.

Largest Major Donors and Fund Raisers

We have chosen not to list the names of the largest major donors and fund raisers in the course of the past century since (1) every donor and fund raiser was and is appreciated, (2) each according to his or her own means; which we don't know and which we don't judge; (3) there have been so many; (4) there is no way to draw a meaningful line between large and small, especially considering the changing value of currency; and (5) the best way to cover all bases is to encourage you to re-read this monograph and to read the resources in the bibliography that appears below, notably the book that was published in 1984 and 1986; the monograph that was published in 1987; and the Centennial Profiles in Leadership which is being published simultaneously with this monograph, on June 3, 2018, on the occasion of the centennial of the Institutional Synagogue and the West Side Institutional Synagogue. *Todah Rabbah*, thank you very much, and it is never too early to start providing funds for future programs of the synagogue, and memoirs and related material for future books and monographs about the synagogue.

Corrections and Clarifications of Historical Record

Rabbi Goldstein has often been referred to as the first American Orthodox rabbi, but this is incorrect. He was the first rabbi born and educated exclusively in America, to have been ordained by a rabbinical seminary. He was also ordained by two traditional rabbis, Rabbi Shalom Elchanan Jaffe, and Rabbi Dr. Zadok Kapner. Rabbis Drachman and Schneeberger had been educated in Europe; and the first American born Rabbi Bienenfeld was taught by his father, not in a rabbinical seminary. The first American-born ordained at Yeshiva University reached this milestone in 1919, long after Rabbi Goldstein reached his.

Rabbi Jaffe (see above), one of the rabbis who ordained Rabbi Goldstein, has been referred to as a vice-president of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis; in fact, he rose to the presidency of that organization and then was granted the title Hon. President for the duration of his life. He also served as the rabbi of the historic *Beth Hamedrash Hagadol*, which, incidentally had been renovated by Harry Fischel, according to a plaque that continued to hang on the wall of the main sanctuary until the fire that essentially burned down the building May 14, 2017.

The identity of the donor of the first building of the Institutional Synagogue in 1917, who was anonymous at that time, was revealed in the biography of Harry Fischel (see Bibliography). Fischel generally had a flair for the dramatic and set up a Foundation to perpetuate his name, so donating something anonymously seems out of character, on the surface. So why the original anonymity on this occasion? Undoubtedly in order not to impede the fund raising for the new synagogue, since had the identity of the donor of the anonymous donation become public knowledge at the time the donation was made, other potential donors would have been likely to use this donation as an excuse not to donate anything themselves on the grounds that the new synagogue's expenses would be covered by the rabbi's father-in-law. They could have been, but this was not the model that Rabbi Goldstein had in mind. The identity of the donor was revealed in the Fischel biography presumably since by the time it was published, the Institutional Synagogue had been fully established and funded. Incidentally, perhaps in order to protect the I.S. from people who might use the relationship to Fischel as an excuse not to make donations to the I.S., Fischel was never on the Board of the I.S., never an officer, and never even a Guest of Honor at an I.S. dinner, nor was he disclosed behind the scenes as an anonymous donor to any later I.S. event, purchase, or object.

The Institutional Synagogue was not in fact the first synagogue or community center to house a synagogue, a "YMHA," a "YWH," and a Talmud Torah in one building. According to an expert in

Jewish synagogues and community centers, David Kaufman, who wrote *Shul with a Pool*, Rabbi Goldstein's Institutional Synagogue "ought to be seen as the culmination of a process... It was, in fact, the end result of the half century evolution of East European immigrant Judaism on American soil. From *landsmanshaft shul* and *heder*, to the community synagogue and Talmud Torah, to the youth synagogue and Jewish school-center, and finally, to the all-inclusive modern Orthodox synagogue-center, as exemplified by the Institutional Synagogue of Herbert Goldstein."

Encyclopedia Judaica, 2nd edition, refers to Harlem as a totally black neighborhood in the 1930s. (Note: A different word for black appeared in the original edition of the encyclopedia, which was then considered as neutral and "politically correct" as the term black is today, in this context.) This statement that essentially appears in both editions is false. The Institutional Synagogue continued to function in Harlem until 1941 (although without Rabbi Goldstein), so the neighborhood of Harlem couldn't possibly have been "totally black" in the 1930s.

Both editions of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* are also incorrect in stating that Rabbi Goldstein transferred his activities to the West Side in 1937, since he transferred some of his activities to the West Side in the 1920s, and didn't transfer ALL his activities to the West Side even in 1937, since the main branch continued in Harlem, as noted above, until 1941.

Both editions of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* are also incorrect in stating that the branch that had been established before 1937 was known as the West Side Institutional Synagogue; in fact, the branch was known as the West Side BRANCH of the Institutional Synagogue as long as it was still a branch.

The fourth error of both editions of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* is categorizing Rabbi Goldstein as belonging to "the right wing of the Orthodox rabbinate." He moved to the right as he aged, but he made a name for himself as president of the national organizations referred to elsewhere in this monograph as what we would now call a centrist rabbi, and for his times he may have even been considered on the liberal side of the spectrum, especially in his early years.

The Institutional Synagogue's swimming pool was sometimes referred to as an Olympic-sized swimming pool. This is not literally the case, but it is not incorrect based on the following: It is true that an Olympic pool is 50 meters long, and the I.S. pool was 62 FEET long, but a review of the literature dealing with Olympic pools reveals that "an Olympic-size swimming pool is used as a colloquial unit of volume, to make approximate comparisons to similarly sized objects or volumes. It is not a specific definition, as there is no official limit on the depth of an Olympic pool." It should be noted that it is a stretch to consider the sizes similar, but that the depth of an Olympic pool has not always been limited.

Ethel Segerman was a past Women's League president whose name was inadvertently not included in the 1987 monograph. Nobody else's name was reportedly omitted from any list in that monograph.

HISTORICAL TRIBUTES

Three of the most noted historians on American Jews in the past century submitted observations specifically intended for this monograph:

From Professor Jeffrey Gurock:

In my several works on the history of Orthodoxy in the 20th century, Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein has played a prominent role. In fact, it is impossible to chronicle the history of Orthodoxy and perhaps American Judaism generally without references to this important, creative figure's many contributions. For me, Rabbi Goldstein's career intersects with at least three major story lines. First, in my *When Harlem Was Jewish, 1870-1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979) and in my recent iteration

about the uptown community, *The Jews of Harlem: The Rise, Decline and Revival of a Jewish Community* (New York: NYU Press, 2016), Rabbi Goldstein's creativity in establishing The Institutional Synagogue – an early work of what we call *kiruv* – is discussed extensively. Then, in my biography of Prof. Mordecai M. Kaplan that I authored with Jacob J. Schacter- *A Modern Heretic and a Traditional Community: Mordecai M. Kaplan, Orthodoxy and American Judaism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) I identify Rabbi Goldstein as among the first public critics of Reconstructionist Judaism. And in my book, *Judaism's Encounter with American Sports* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), I trace how Rabbi Goldstein's "come to play stay to pray" helped create the Synagogue Center movement of importance to all Jewish movements.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not note that the work of Harry Fischel, Rabbi Goldstein's father-in-law—the first great Orthodox philanthropist is noted in each of these and other works.

Jeffrey S. Gurock, Libby M. Klaperman Professor of Jewish history, Yeshiva University

[Note: Rabbi Goldstein, for the record, actually exposed Kaplan's alleged heresy to Orthodox principles while Kaplan still claimed to be Orthodox, long before Kaplan had to leave the Jewish Center he had founded, and long before Kaplan identified his views as reconstructionist.]

From Professor Jonathan Sarna:

I have revised the text from my AMERICAN JUDAISM [for this monograph] as follows... In 1917, Rabbi Herbert Goldstein opened what he called the Institutional Synagogue in the upscale Jewish community of Harlem, as part of his effort to bring Jews back to Orthodoxy. He had previously held "monster revival meetings" at the Regent Theatre, complete with bands and a rousing sermon, in an effort to win over unaffiliated Jews.... features of the Institutional Synagogue would be found in many a subsequent synagogue-center, including the well-known "Jewish Center" founded a year later on Manhattan's West Side. The synagogue-center aimed to subsume the functions of an entire Jewish community within the portals of a single neighborhood synagogue.

Professor Sarna is the Joseph H. and Belle R. Braun Professor of American Jewish History at Brandeis University.

[Note that this historian confirms what the author of this monograph has been asserting – that the Institutional Synagogue began operating a year before the Jewish Center did. Ironically, the Jewish Center was the first to talk about its synagogue, to raise funds for it, and to start building its ultimate edifice, but didn't begin operating until after the W.S.I.S. did. Ironically, the Jewish Center began to celebrate its centennial in 1917, the year of our centennial, and we are celebrating our centennial the year of The Jewish Center's actual centennial, in terms of when it began operating.]

From Professor David Dalin:

The Institutional Synagogue came to be viewed by many as the prototype of the Modern Orthodox Synagogue Center. In his thoughtfully-written and insightful Centennial history of the I.S. and the W.S.I.S., Rabbi Aaron Reichel makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the history and evolution of the Modern Orthodox Synagogue in the United States. At the same time, he illuminates the influential and enduring legacy of Rabbi Herbert S. Goldstein who, during his illustrious 43-year active rabbinate at the I.S. and the W.S.I.S., was the only person to have served as national president of the Rabbinical Council of America [which he had co-founded and served as its first president], the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, and the Synagogue Council of America [which he had co-founded].

Rabbi Dr. David Dalin, Senior Research Fellow of the Bernard G. and Rhoda G. Sarnat Center at Brandeis University, is the author, co-author or editor of twelve books, most recently *Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court, from Brandeis to Kagan: Their Lives and Legacies*. Professor Dalin has taught at

various universities, including George Washington University, Princeton University, Stern College of Yeshiva University and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

[Note that Rabbi Goldstein became the first major rabbi to resign from the Synagogue Council in deference to the ruling of the *Moetzet Gdolei HaTorah* many years after his most prominent roles in its formation and leadership.]

A Personal Note from the Author

I was privileged to have served the synagogue in many capacities while my father was the rabbi – when he was out of town, filling in by delivering sermons and officiating at rites of passage; and, when he was present, conducting auxiliary and overflow services, as needed; assisting, occasionally, with the *Review*; acting as a general (and sometimes very specific) troubleshooter; and continuing to serve as archivist and historian of the synagogue, in conjunction with *The Maverick Rabbi*, the biography I wrote about the early years of Rabbi Goldstein (and actually focusing on the Institutional Synagogue itself), the sequel that is still in formation, previewed in part in this publication, about the rabbi's middle and later years, the monograph of 1987 (the 50th – jubilee year of the W.S.I.S.), and the Centennial Profiles in Leadership (published simultaneously with the publication of the present monograph) (see Bibliography). I look forward to recording, for posterity, and participating in a future that will be even brighter than the synagogue's glorious past.

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New [as of 1962] Jewish Encyclopedia, photographic entries for 2-page themes for *Davnen* (praying) (pp. 104 & 105), Phylacteries (pp. 364-365), and *Viddui* (official prayers of confession) (pp. 502-503) were photographed in the West Side Institutional Synagogue. New York: Behrman House, 1962. The first two photographs include W.S.I.S. V.I.P. (and long-time V.P.) Samuel W. Siegel, and, who knows? Maybe the 3rd one as well, showing two individuals completely enveloped beyond recognition under their prayer shawls. Rabbi Reichel was offered an opportunity to be photographed for this encyclopedia, for posterity, but declined in order not to be seen as taking the spotlight away from Rabbi Goldstein.

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Reichel, Aaron I. *The Maverick Rabbi*. Norfolk, Va.: 1984, 1986. The book focuses on the early years of Rabbi Goldstein and the Institutional Synagogue from start to finish. The second edition of this book was dedicated to Rabbi Dr. O. Asher Reichel upon his receiving the Rabbinic Leadership Award at the annual Dinner of the Manhattan Day School March 2, 1986. According to the MDS "News and Notes," Vol. 2, No. 2, issued in the summer of 1986, this "most successful scholarship dinner ever drew 530 guests," all of whom received a copy of the book. The president of the school at the time was Fred Ehrman, who had been given a copy of the book to read and evaluate during a trip to Israel shortly before the dinner. The book *Meditations of a Maverick Rabbi* was written by a completely different unrelated rabbi, though it was published coincidentally in 1985.

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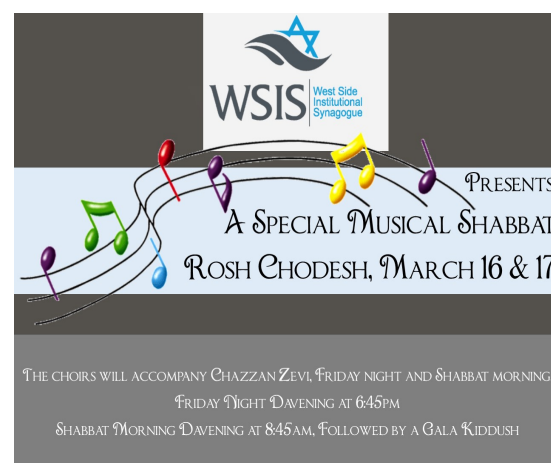
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THE CHANGING RABBINATE



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Photos on back cover, left to right, repeatedly, Rabbis Herbert S. Goldstein, O. Asher Reichel, Moshe Morduchowitz, Rafael Grossman, Shlomo Einhorn, Joshua Strulowitz, Daniel Sherman (the incumbent), Presidents Isaac Siegel, Lester Udell, David Ohayon, Jacques Ohayon, Rick Siegel, David Fiedler, and Joshua Olshin (the incumbent). The other live former presidents opted not to submit photographs. Photographs of deceased former presidents not shown on the cover appear in the 1987 Monograph.

Photos above, left to right, repeatedly, Chazzan Zalmon Yavneh record cover, Chazzan Zev Muller performance announcement, Yoetzel Halacha Shiffy Friedman, author of this publication Rabbi Aaron I. Reichel, Esq., Director of Community Relations and Gabbai Chet Lipson, Special issue of Jewish Action of the Orthodox Union on the Changing American Rabbinate featuring a cover story with Rabbi Goldstein in the center, flanked by his father-in-law and WSIS benefactor Harry Fischel and his son-in-law and successor Rabbi O. Asher Reichel.

