

Timeline of events up to 1977

A timeline of events in the history of the Reform movement, compiled by the United Progressive Jewish Congregation of Johannesburg in 1977, hence the Johannesburg bias. The author may have been Rabbi Walter Blumenthal, based on an earlier timeline compiled in 1954 by United Sisterhood leader Ethel Smith.

Max Franks. Chairman 1932-1936	School at Temple Israel named after him.
1935: First communal pesach seder at shul. Since become a tradition at all the progressive shuls	1943: Setting up of Alan Isaacs Camp
First Hebrew and Judaism classes	1943: Cape Town Jewish Congregation initiated
1936-1940: Isidore Greenberg chairman	Michael Cassell. Chairman 1943 – 1946, era of huge expansion, then left for Cape Town.
1936: Building of Temple Israel almost bankrupts movement	1944: Benny Stalson, vice principal of the Hebrew School appointed General Secretary of the movement
1940-45: War years: Sisterhood's first "tikkun olam" – providing billeting for soldiers, regardless of religious denomination	1944: Springs congregation initiated (Temple Emeth)
Free membership for men and women in uniform	1944: HUC confers Doctor of Divinity honorary degree on Weiler.
Membership begins to rise for first time	1945: Establishment of North Eastern Congregation (Temple Shalom) First service August 31
1941-1943-Chairman Max Marx	1946: Rev (later Rabbi) Isaac Richards
1943: Rabbi Weiler given title of Senior Minister	1946. Establishment of United Jewish Reform Congregation of Johannesburg.
1943-1946: Rabbi Dr S Rappaport, German fugitive becomes Weiler's assistant. Fell out with Weiler, joined Orthodox.	1946: MC Weiler (initially Jabulani) School Centre in Soweto built. Architect ML
September 1943: Unexpected death of Max Marx, dynamic chairman at height of his powers.	

- Bryer, member of Temple Israel committee
- 1948: Opening of Temple Shalom building designed by Harold Le Roith
- 1948-1949. Chairman LE Joseph, dies in office. Replaced 1950 by SJ Geffen
- Massive Independence Day service to celebrate State of Israel, also memorial service to late General Smuts
- 1950: Building of Alan Isaacs building facilities completed
1950. Rabbi David Arrow arrives to take over Temple Shalom
- 1950: Production of first South African version of the Union Prayer Book, used for next 30 years.
- 1951: Visit of Rabbi Abba Silver, major international Zionist figure and leader of biggest US reform congregation. Mayor in audience.
- 1951: Pretorial congregation established
- 1952: Reform congregation established in Germiston, with first service November 1952.
- 1952: Walter Blumenthal departs for HUC to study to become first locally-born Reform rabbi.
- 1953: Victor Brasch becomes president
- 1953: Visit of Menachem Begin
- 1954: Establishment of North Western Hebrew Congregation (Temple Emanuel). Consecration service: November 19th
- 1954: 21st anniversary celebrations of movement at Carlton Hotel.
- 1955: Opening of East London Progressive Congregation, first rabbi Rabbi A Ungar (deported less than two years later).
- 1956: Establishment of Bulawayo Jewish Reform Congregation.
- 1956: Establishment of a Mishnah Study Circle
- 1956: Establishment of Bnei Torah Service, nine male and female, three years post-barmitzvah.
- 1957: Montagu Country Club, founded by Benny Stalson, opened by Rabbi Weiler.
- 1957: Opening of Temple Menorah building in Pretoria.
- July 1957: Induction of Rabbi Walter Blumenthal to minister to congregation in which he had grown up.
- 1957: Weiler's final act: Opening the MC Weiler Hall at Alan Isaacs Camp.
- 1957: Rabbi Weiler departs on Aliyah.
- Rabbis who arrived in 1957: Phillip Rosenberg (Post Elizabeth), Curtis Cassell (Bulawayo) Nathaniel Jacobs (Pretoria).
- 1959: Induction of Rabbi R Zimmerman by Rabbi M Miller (chairman of central ecclesiastical board) (resigns 1962).
- 1959: Rabbi Elton appointed Mayor's Chaplain to Jewish Mayor Alex Gorshel.
- 1961: Camp Caplan established on 25 acres of land in Magaliesburg.
- 1961: Rabbi Elton appointed senior minister of Temple Israel

- 1962: Visit from Dr Solomon Freehoff, President of WUPJ.
- 1962: Rabbi Opher of Chicago arrives to take up post of Chief Minister.
- 1962: Rabbi Elton departs to settle in UK.
- 1962: Opening ceremony for new Temple Shalom building designed by Harold Le Roith.
- 1963: Reform Temple Men's Association (later called Brotherhood) established.
- 1964: Induction of rabbis Super (Feb), Rosenberg (March) and Sonnenfeld (June). Rosenberg quits after 6 months, Sonnenfeld next year.
- 1964: Rabbi Blumenthal quits TE after seven years and moves to Springs.
- 1964: Chief Minister Rabbi Opher resigns to return to USA.
- 1964: Richard Lampert goes abroad to study to become rabbi.
- 1964: Rabbi Super opens Klerksdorp Reform Congregation.
- 1965: Reform Temple dedicated in Bloemfontein, June 1965 by Rabbi Blumenthal.
- 1965: Opening and consecration of Temple Sinai in Germiston.
- 1965: Rabbi Blumenthal appointed rabbi of Temple Shalom, 6th August.
- 1965: Rabbi Super signs controversial Concordat with Orthodox leadership following months of animosity. Repudiated by his colleagues.
- 1965: Building operations start at Temple Emanuel new synagogue.
- 1965: Richard Lampert returns (as Rev) to serve Temple Emanuel, seconded from Leo Baeck while still pursuing rabbinic studies
- 1966: Foundation stone of Temple Emanuel laid on 22nd May and first High Holy Days celebrations held in shell of building
- 1966: Full-time youth director, Alan Morris, appointed in March.
- 1966: Opening of the Wall of Remembrance at West Park.
- 1966: Special service at TI to mark 25 years of service by Benny Stalson.
- 1967: Opening of Temple Israel new sanctuary on August 6th 1967. Consecrated by Rabbi Super.
- 1967: SA Reform movement's official Haggadah produced by Rabbi Super.
- 1967: Property in Sandringham purchased for what is to become Temple Sinai. First services held in Sandringham.
- 1967: Temple Emanuel Hebrew School renamed Benny Stalson Hebrew School.
- 1968: Official opening of Temple Sinai.
- 1968: Rabbi Super earns his D-Litt form UNISA with thesis on Immortality in the Babylonian Talmud.
- 1968: 75th birthday celebrations for Jerry Idelson at TE featuring his compositions.
- 1968: Golden Jubilee celebrations attended by Rabbi Weiler and the famous scholar Rabbi Gunther Plaut of Canada.

- 1968: Rabbi Weiler remains in country throughout High Holy day period, preaching at all the Temples.
- 1970: Rabbi Blumenthal represents SA at first Reform Rabbinat meeting in Jerusalem and repudiation of anti-Zionist Pittsburgh Platform of 1885.
- 1971: Purchase of five acre site in Morningside for future Temple David
- 1971: Ordination of Rabbi Richard Lampert at Temple Emanuel, 3 September, first Reform Jewish ordination performed in SA (by Weiler, Super, Blumenthal).
- 1971: Plaque to Rabbi Weiler's late son Major Adam Weiler unveiled at Temple Israel in his presence.
- 1971: Rabbi Alex Friedmann, third S African to be ordained a Reform Rabbi, at Temple Shalom, 5 November.
- 1972: Temple David formally opened in August 20th .
- 1973: Formal completion of building programme at Temple Shalom, including Joel Alswang wing of the Rabbi Weiler Hebrew School.
- 1974: Rabbi Benzion Isaacson appointed to Temple David.
- 1974: Death of Jerry Idelson in June.
- 1975: Rabbi Super goes on Aliyah, following a round of farewells at each shul in JHB.
- 1975: Rabbi Charles Wallach inducted at Temple Shalom, 3 October.
- 1976: After disagreement over who to appoint to follow Rabbi Super as Chief Minister, the post is left open.
- 1977: New Temple David sanctuary opened and consecrated.
- 1977: Formation of the Democratic Zionist Association, political wing of SA Progressive movement (later to become Arzenu). Chair: Isaacson.
- 1977: Rabbi Lampert leaves for Australia. Rabbi Wallach leaves for England and his congregation, Sinai, is closed.
- 1977: Rabbi Adi Assabi pays his first visit and leaves a considerable impression.