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Congregation Beth El

In 1850 twelve German immigrant families founded Michigan's oldest Jewish organization, the Beth El Society, at the Detroit home of Isaac and Sarah Cozens. Beth El was first led by Orthodox Rabbi Samuel Marcus. During the 1850s, as social and political turmoil gripped the nation, Judaism faced change. In 1856 Beth El members moved away from strict Orthodox doctrine by adopting new bylaws and embracing Reform Judaism. The changes permitted men and women to sit together during services and sing together in choirs. Rabbis taught services in English rather than in German. In 1873 Beth El helped charter the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which brought together Reform synagogues across the nation.

Significant Date:

Statehood Era (1815-1860)

Registry Year: 2001 **Erected Date:** 2001

Marker Location

Address: 7400 Telegraph Road

City: Bloomfield Hills

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Oakland

Township: Bloomfield

Lat: 42.53138100 / **Long:** -83.28706300

Web URL:

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Temple Beth El

Built in 1973, Temple Beth El is one of two synagogues designed by internationally acclaimed architect Minoru Yamasaki, who designed New York City's World Trade Center. Yamasaki designed the soaring temple to represent the meeting tents of the ancient Israelites. The two hundred panels, created by steel cables dissecting the concrete walls, symbolize the number of times per day Jews are to thank God. Organized in Detroit in 1850, the Beth El Society met in homes and storefronts before purchasing its first house of worship in 1861. Beth El member Albert Kahn designed two of the congregation's former synagogues, built in Detroit in 1903 and 1922. Beth El erected this building in Bloomfield Hills to accommodate its members, many of whom had moved to the suburbs.