

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso has served, along with her husband Rabbi Dennis C. Sasso, as spiritual leader of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck since 1977. In June 2013 she became Rabbi Emerita and is the Director of the Religion, Spirituality and the Arts Initiative at Butler University and Christian Theological Seminary. After receiving her B.A. and M.A. from Temple University, in 1974 she was the first woman ordained from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. In addition to being the first woman to serve a Conservative congregation, she and her husband are the first practicing rabbinical couple in world Jewish history. Rabbi Sandy earned her Doctorate of Ministry from Christian Theological Seminary. The recipient of several honorary doctorates (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College; DePauw University; Butler University; Franklin College; and Christian Theological Seminary), in June 2013 she received a Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

In addition to her extensive contributions to the needs of her congregation, Rabbi Sandy has been active in the arts, civic and interfaith communities of Indianapolis and beyond. She has been president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association and the Indianapolis Board of Rabbis. She is a past president of Gleaners Food Bank and has served on the board of Planned Parenthood. She received the Spirit of the Prairie Award from Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, and in 2014, was honored with the Heritage Keepers Award from the Indiana State Museum for her leadership and work in the arts and humanities in Indiana.

Rabbi Sandy has written and lectured on women and spirituality, and the discovery of the religious imagination in children. She is the author of several nationally acclaimed children's books, including *God's Paintbrush*, *Adam and Eve's First Sunset* and *In God's Name*, and *Creation's First Light*. She released both a new children's book, *Anne Frank and the Remembering Tree*, and a new adult piece, *Jewish Stories of Love and Marriage—Folktales, Legends, and Letters*, co-authored with Peninnah Schram.

Rabbi Sandy teaches Religion and Judaism at Butler University and Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. She serves on the board of advisors of Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis; the board of directors for the Julian Center, an agency providing support and counseling services to victims of domestic violence; the Indiana Humanities Council; and the Patachou Foundation. She is a member of the Lake Family Institute Advisory Board and past chair of the Spirit and Place Advisory Board—the annual festival celebrating the Arts, Religion, and Humanities. Rabbi Sandy also edited *Urban Tapestry, Indianapolis Stories*, and she and her husband, Dennis, write a monthly column in *The Indianapolis Star*.

Rabbi Sandy has been honored as one of the “Influential Women in Indiana” by the Indianapolis Business Journal and was featured among “Indy’s Most Influential Clergy” by NUVO News Weekly. She is the recipient of the “Sagamore of the Wabash,” the highest civilian honor awarded by the Governor of the State of Indiana. Rabbi Sandy is

also the recipient of the 2013 Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association Lifetime Rabbinic Service Award.

She and Dennis are parents of David and Debbie and grandparents of Darwin, Ari and Levi.

Martin D. Schwartz

Martin David Schwartz was born on March 27, 1917 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was raised in Muncie, Indiana, where he attended Jefferson Elementary School and Muncie Central High School. He graduated cum laude from Harvard College in 1938 and received his master's degree in social science from Ball State University in 1962.

After graduating from Harvard, Mr. Schwartz began working for the Schwartz Paper Company, a business that his parents had started in 1920. He moved to Washington, D.C. in August 1941, where he headed the Coarse Paper Distribution Unit in the Office of Price Administration. In January 1943, he entered active duty in the United States Navy, first serving in the Bureau of Ships in Washington, then overseas. He became executive officer of the naval amphibious base at Plymouth, England, where he remained until the end of the war. He returned to Muncie after the war to take over for his father as president of the family business—a position he held until his retirement in 1985. He also organized and started several businesses in Muncie and elsewhere in Indiana and began a decades-long career of local and national civic leadership and philanthropy.

Martin worked with the American Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam (AMVETS), receiving the Ray Sawyer Award for Outstanding and Distinguished Service for his involvement with the Americanism Program. He served as a member of the Indiana State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. He was a founding member of the World Business Council, the Indiana Committee for the Humanities (now the Indiana Humanities Council), and the Federation of State Humanities Councils.

Martin's lifelong interest in the American Jewish experience led to his involvement with several Jewish organizations, both nationally and locally. He was an overseer for Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. With several other Harvard alumni, he was instrumental in the creation, in 1978, of the Harvard Center for Jewish Studies. He is an honorary member of the board of the Indiana University Jewish Studies Program in recognition of the support that he and his wife have given to that program over the years. He also was a mainstay of Temple Beth El in Muncie. He served for many years on the temple's Board of Trustees, on numerous temple committees, and two terms as temple president. In addition he astutely managed the temple's endowment fund. He also commissioned a Jewish oral history project that resulted in the publication of several articles and the book *Middletown Jews*, edited by Dan Rottenberg.

With his tireless energy and wide-ranging interests, he was active in many other community activities as well. He was on the boards of the Muncie Boys Club, Muncie Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross, Junior Achievement, Muncie Symphony Orchestra, and Muncie Civic Theater Association, which he also served as president. He was a trustee of the Muncie Public Library for 14 years.

Helen B. Schwartz

A native of New York, Helen Berger Schwartz graduated from Hunter College High School and attended the Julliard School of Music and Wellesley College. She and Martin Schwartz met in New York in 1940 and were married soon thereafter. After a short stay in Muncie, the newlyweds moved to Washington, where they lived while Martin served in the Navy during World War II. They moved back to Muncie in 1946. Mrs. Schwartz lived the rest of her life in Muncie as a businesswoman and community leader as well as a wife and mother. She was vice president of Schwartz Paper Company during all the years her husband was president. She also shared her husband's interest in education, both Jewish and secular, in community service, and in social action.

Mrs. Schwartz was a member of Muncie's first Human Rights Council and also a member of the United Way Recreation Committee. She chaired a United Way committee that developed, with donated materials and labor, a playground and mini-park for a neighborhood that previously had no recreational facilities. She was a founding and active member of the Riley-Jones Women's Club and a member of the club's Community Resources Committee, which examined ways the social and governmental agencies of Delaware County could best address the county's needs. She established Hoosier Bounty, an organization that provided thousands of meals a year to public agencies in order to feed people in need. *Midwest Living* magazine recognized her for that accomplishment.

Like her husband, Mrs. Schwartz served Muncie's Temple Beth El in several capacities. She was on the temple Board of Trustees for many years and a vital member of various committees. She also was the temple's first woman president. In 1985, she directed Temple Beth El's year-long centennial celebration, a project partially funded by the Indiana Humanities Council. She was active in the temple Sisterhood locally. She also served as vice president of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (now called Women of Reform Judaism).

Joint Activities

The obituary for Mrs. Schwartz notes that she and her husband "were each other's alter egos." They traveled widely together. Both were longtime members of the Young Presidents Organization and later the World Business Council (now the World Presidents Organization). They jointly organized and led seminars for the World Business Council in several colleges of Oxford University. They also participated for years in the Zimmerman Institute for Jewish Studies, led by the New York faculty of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

In 1980, Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz established and endowed a national prize administered by the Federation of State Humanities Councils to reward the best public humanities programs in the United States. The Schwartz Prize is awarded to up to three state councils each year.

The Schwartzs' interest in furthering Jewish education led them to endow activities at both the Harvard Center for Jewish Studies and the Indiana University Jewish Studies program. At Harvard, they set up the Martin D. and Helen B. Schwartz Lecture Fund to support scholarly lectures and publications at that prestigious institution. At Indiana University, they established the Helen and Martin Schwartz Lectures in Jewish Studies, the Helen and Martin Schwartz Scholars Program, and the Helen B. Schwartz Fund for New Scholarship in Jewish Studies. They also funded a new program in pastoral counseling at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in memory of their daughter Susan Schwartz Prigozen.

Their local philanthropy includes establishment of the Martin D. and Helen B. Schwartz Fund at the Community Foundation of Muncie and Delaware County and long-term support for Ball State University and the University Libraries. The University Libraries web site announces:

Martin D. and Helen B. Schwartz have a long history of supporting Ball State University and the University Libraries. Contributions include the funds to enable Archives and Special Collections to have prints made of more than 2,000 photographic negatives, providing a rich resource for local history enthusiasts, local and national journalists, scholars, faculty members, and students. University Libraries has since digitized the photographs and made the images available to researchers in the Ball State Digital Media Repository.

Other contributions to the University Libraries include the establishment of the Nancy K. Turner Fund, the donation of the Martin Schwartz Papers and Schwartz Paper Company Records to Archives and Special Collections, and a bronze sculpture by Hungarian artist Imre Varga titled Raoul Wallenberg in Budapest. Through the Muncie Community Foundation, Mr. Schwartz has given grants to support the purchase of rare books and manuscript material for Archives and Special Collections and the translation, transcription, and digitization of the Felsenstein Family Papers, which document the lives of a German Jewish family during World War II and the Holocaust.

In memory of his late wife, Helen, Mr. Schwartz provided funds to create the Helen B. and Martin D. Schwartz Special Collections and Digital Complex, which provides a high-tech collaborative learning space for Ball State students and faculty.

While both husband and wife are individually worthy of recognition, much of what they accomplished was a joint effort. We therefore hope they might be recognized together.