

My name is Martin Herman. I am first generation American. My father was born in, what was then called Eastern Prussia. My mother was born in this country and my father came here when he was about 10 years old. I was introduced to music early in my life. My parents were great music lovers, always music in the house. I was more interested in music as a manifestation of culture. And then at *Wayne State*, the then director of that college had heard about me, contacted me... I came out... I saw what they were doing, got very interested in what they were doing, and something happened that could never happen today. I came for an interview on a cold February morning in 1962. I gave a talk and one of the classes I was taken out to lunch. I was walked around the campus and I was offered the job. I'd been lucky in my life. Every job I've ever had came looking for me, I never went looking for a job.

Detroit, when I first came here, was a very different city than it is today. It's gone through a whole series of changes. I do not consider myself to be a very observant Jew, although I am a reasonably observant Jew. And when my parents died in 1989, the *Isaac Agree Downtown Synagogue* was the only remaining synagogue in the City of Detroit and the only place I could go to, say the Kaddish prayer to mourn for my parents, for 11 months morning and afternoon. After I'd finished saying the mourners prayer, I said, well, they were here when I needed them. The least I can do is stay and contribute, not thinking for the moment that I end up contributing as I had... and I did... I became a member, I became active, and gradually I was drawn into the operation of the synagogue. And because I had been brought up in a traditional home, I was aware of the practices... and the way services were conducted. It kind of fell to my lot, when the organized Jewish community was not really much interested in the Downtown synagogue or the Jewish presence in the City of Detroit. I took to maintain it, I got some grants from foundations and so it was enough to keep the lights on at least from about 2000 until about 2010 or 11. At that time the younger

people who now occupy leadership positions in this synagogue came into the city and became involved here.