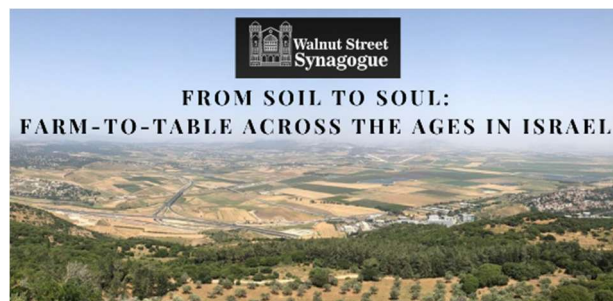




From Soil to Soul: Farm-to-Table series continues online Wednesday evening, Ideals of Freedom Series returns in March, Upcoming Programs and More – February 9, 2026

FROM SOIL TO SOUL: FARM-TO-TABLE ACROSS THE AGES IN ISRAEL



Modern Innovation – Tech Meets Tradition
Wednesday, February 11, 7:00 pm ET (online)



Israel leads the world in agricultural technology, and this session reveals how ancient principles meet modern ingenuity. Discover hydroponics, vertical farming, desert irrigation, and the work of BioBee, an Israeli startup using natural predators instead of pesticides—exported globally as a model of sustainable farming. We'll also feature the Asif Culinary Institute in Tel Aviv, where culinary archives, seasonal menus, and food culture intersect. Asif bridges the past and future, preserving recipes while reimagining food as an expression of creativity, sustainability, and national identity.

Gila Levitan moved to Israel in 2005. She decided to become a licensed tour guide in order to pursue her passion for exploring and travelling around Israel. Gila is very curious and likes to know all the little details and being a guide enables her to teach people about a place that she loves. Gila loves to add touches of local culture to her tours, off the beaten track places and local delicacies - the best way to travel she believes is to taste new flavors and make new friends. Gila is proud to have been awarded the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for the past five years in a row.

Register here -

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-soil-to-soul-series-modern-innovation-tech-meets-tradition-tickets-1978941333801?aff=oddtcreator>

Part 4 - Farm to Community – Food Justice & Urban Agriculture, February 18 at 7:00 pm ET (online) **Register here** - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-soil-to-soul-farm-to-community-food-justice-urban-agriculture-tickets-1978941771109?aff=oddtcreator>

Learn more about the series here - <https://walnutstreetsynagogue.org/from-soil-to-soul/>

IDEALS OF FREEDOM SPEAKER SERIES



“Filthy, Un-American, and Often Dangerous:” Antisemitism and the Emergency Quota Act of 1921
Wednesday, March 4, 7:00 pm ET (online)

After the destruction of World War I, hundreds of thousands of European Jews sought to escape violence and poverty by emigrating to America. American consuls in Europe viewed these desperate Jews through a deeply antisemitic lens, fearing that they were radicals trying to enter and destroy the country with help from an international Jewish conspiracy. Acting on these fears, officials at the State Department worked with Congressional leaders to release reports that publicized the dangers of Jewish immigrants and ultimately led to the passage of the 1921 Emergency Quota Act. That legislation was instrumental in establishing the quota system that would keep desperate European Jews out of the country only a decade later, as they attempted to flee the Holocaust.

Kirsten Fermaglich is Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Michigan State University. Her most recent book, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America* (New York University Press, 2018) was awarded the Saul Viener Book Prize by the American Jewish Historical Society in June 2019. From January 2022 through June 2023, she served as a National Archives Distinguished Fellow, tasked with studying antisemitism in the United States federal government. Fermaglich is also the author of *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares: Early Holocaust Consciousness and Liberal America, 1957-1965* (Brandeis University Press, 2006) and the co-editor of the Norton Critical Edition of Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (2013), with Lisa Fine. From 2016 through 2021, she was co-editor of the journal, *American Jewish History*, along with Daniel Soyer and Adam Mendelsohn. She currently serves on the board of the Association for Jewish Studies. *Community partners – Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors, Massachusetts Antisemitism Synagogue Task Force (MAST), Orange County Jewish Community Scholar Program (CSP)*

Register here - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/antisemitism-and-the-emergency-quota-act-of-1921-tickets-1977620146093?aff=oddtcreator>

Learn more about the series here - <https://walnutstreetsynagogue.org/ideals-of-freedom/>

CSP

We are pleased to be a partner congregation of the Orange County Jewish **Community Scholar Program (CSP)**. Please join us at an upcoming program!



From Sand to Skyline: An Urban Tel Aviv Exploration

Part 2 – Culture: Foundations: From Colonies to City Streets - Tuesday, February 10, 3:30 pm ET (online)

Tel Aviv is a city built on layers of history, architecture, culture, and flavor. Join renowned tour guide Gila Levitan for two eye-opening virtual journeys that takes you far beyond the guidebooks.

Part 2 – Culture: Foundations: From Colonies to City Streets - Explore the first bold steps beyond Jaffa's walls—the American and German colonies, Neve Tzedek, and the old train line turned Park HaMesila. Contrast the charm of Florentin's bohemian vibe with the creeping edges of gentrification in this dynamic portrait of Tel Aviv's earliest neighborhoods.

Originally from Sydney, Australia, **Gila Levitan** moved to Israel 20 years ago, transitioning from a career in physiotherapy to becoming a top-rated tour guide, celebrated on TripAdvisor. With her passion for detail and love for teaching, Gila will enrich your knowledge and inspire your next adventure. Don't miss this chance to uncover the lesser-known treasures of Israel with one of the country's most acclaimed guides.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/srllSUeJS1qwVESmxiHAKg#/registration>

Derfner Judaica Museum – The Best Little Museum You Never Knew Existed

Thursday, February 12, 3:30 pm ET (online)

The Derfner Judaica Museum is a true hidden gem—an intimate “jewel box” of a museum overlooking the Hudson River on the campus of The Hebrew Home at Riverdale in the Bronx. In this session, we'll take a vivid journey through its remarkable permanent collection—nearly 1,000 works that tell the Jewish story through art, ritual, and everyday creativity. Centered on beautifully crafted objects made for synagogue and home—metalwork, textiles, ceremonial implements, and more—the collection reveals how Jewish communities across time and place transformed tradition into visual form, blending sacred purpose with local style, personal artistry, and bold imagination. From historic ritual masterpieces to striking modern interpretations, the Derfner reminds us that Judaica isn't static—it's a living, evolving language of meaning. Come discover the objects, the artisans, and the unexpected stories that make this museum such a powerful celebration of Jewish material culture.

Dr. Sharon Keller, CSP's 15th Annual One-Month Scholar in Residence (January 2016) and the recipient of the 5th Annual CSP Maimonides Award for Excellence in Jewish Education, is a captivating and unconventional educator who brings the ancient world to life. With a PhD in Hebrew and Judaica Studies from New York University (NYU) —where she specialized in the Bible and the Ancient Near East—Dr. Keller has held faculty positions at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Hebrew Union College, NYU, and Hunter College. She currently teaches in the Comparative Literature Department at Hofstra University, where she continues to explore the ancient Mediterranean through courses on biblical literature, Egyptology, and archaeology.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/DTDvGyQISOS-xt0XaC5scg#/registration>

Soviet Jews: From Revolutionaries to Refuseniks

Part 3 – Under Stalin: Terror, War, and the Destruction of Jewish Public Life - Sunday, February 15, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Part 4 – The Thaw, the Struggle, the Exodus: Soviet Jews from the 1950s to the 1990s - Tuesday, February 24, 1:00 pm ET (online)

The story of Soviet Jews is not a story of a single identity or a single role. It is a story of builders and critics, of loyal citizens and disillusioned dissidents, of idealists who believed in the Soviet dream and victims crushed by the very system they helped create. Across seven decades, Jews stood on every side of the Soviet project — as passionate revolutionaries, administrators, cultural leaders, soldiers, skeptics, silent conformists, targets of repression, and ultimately as the men and women who helped bring Jewish life back to the world stage.

Evgenia Kempinski is a professional Jewish tour guide, born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia. With over fifteen years of experience guiding Jewish heritage tours in her hometown, she has developed a deep passion for uncovering and sharing the stories of the Jewish Diaspora. With her family she spent six enriching years living in Israel and now resides in Barcelona, continuing her mission to connect people with Jewish history and culture around the world. She is the founder of the Online Jewish Travel Club, a vibrant community that brings together Jews from different countries through a shared love of travel, art,

and Jewish heritage.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/join?meeting=rmrcJR0mSAqJuoFyISrC7A#/registration>

COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAMS

Insights for our Future – Live Community Briefing

Thursday, February 12, 12:00 pm ET

(online program presented by Combined Jewish Philanthropies)

Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) 2025 Greater Boston Jewish Community Study provides a comprehensive look at data across our community. The study was one of the largest community studies in CJP's history and it will serve as an invaluable resource to help better understand changing demographics, attitudes, behaviors, and more. It is a reflection of where we are today and a call to action about how our community can build its future together.

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/insights-for-our-future-live-community-briefing-tickets-1982307940412?utm_campaign=37191797-fy26-cjp-cs25-community&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz--uhmqgAOkN9HHO0ONLYJn3NWQICf0Sf8-wqCth8HZ15i3LTUXx_4MNhx9P8-nMEuN5jsrobyWlyDP5y9Io2dZArU15IZy96VqX-cCYDJzBuO0EwWiY&hsmi=402281153&utm_content=402281153&utm_source=hs_email

Imagining Early American Jews

Tuesday, February 17, 6:00 pm

(online program presented by the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors)

Join the Jewish Heritage Center for a talk with Dr. Michael Hoberman regarding his upcoming book, *Imagining Early American Jews*. Dr. Hoberman will discuss popular interpretations of early Jewish American history. He will discuss how the Jewish experiences of the American Revolution, the institution of slavery in the early republic and antebellum period, and westward migration have been imagined and commemorated. He will explore how interpretations and representations of the past are key to understanding Jewish American history and identity. Dr. Hoberman is a professor of English Studies at Fitchburg State University and has published several books on Jewish American history, including *New Israel/New England: Jews and Puritans in Early America* and *A Hundred Acres of America: The Geography of Jewish American Literary History*. His articles can be found in *Tablet Magazine*, *The Jewish Review of Books*, and other popular and scholarly venues.

Register here - https://hubs.americanancestors.org/imagining-early-american-jews?utm_campaign=18167937-FY26%20JHC&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz--LPg5XscBFk4qUzSZKB605Wzc3xWXbRiiCTqZFoFs-vzjfUmeOAQ1MVQhkQQ7B4IHcb6MTkBoSV9XVIhxzuA2Xf39f_A&hsmi=397399891&utm_content=397399891&utm_source=hs_email

GIVING

Please visit our Giving page to send tributes, recognize yahrzeits and make other general donations to support the Walnut Street Synagogue and help us preserve, maintain and secure our 116-year-old building. Donations can be made online or through the mail. Tributes and other donations may be recognized on our Giving Page unless otherwise requested.

<https://walnutstreetsynagogue.org/giving/>

YAD CHESSED



Matanot LaEvyonim – Gifts for People in Need

The Walnut Street Synagogue is pleased to be participating again this year in Yad Chessed's Purim Campaign. From now until Purim Day (11:00 am on Tuesday, March 3), you can donate tzedakah to Yad Chessed to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of Matanot LaEvyonim. For over 35 years Yad Chessed, has worked to address the needs of Jews in Greater Boston and beyond who struggle with financial and food insecurity. With the support of donors and partner organizations, Yad Chessed's team of social workers provides swift emergency financial assistance, grocery gift cards, and compassionate care, advice, and referrals to those in need. Yad Chessed aids more than 2,400 Jewish individuals across Massachusetts annually. The mitzvah of Matanot LaEvyonim is central to the spirit of Purim and reminds us that we are obligated to offer a helping hand to those in our midst who need it most. Yad Chessed will use donations raised to fund vouchers that can be used on Purim Day so our neighbors in need can purchase food and celebrate the holiday.

Donate online here - <https://givebutter.com/YadChessedPurim2026>

You may also mail a donation to Yad Chessed at: *(Please include the word "Purim" and "Walnut Street Synagogue" on your check memo.*

333 Nahanton Street
Suite 315
Newton, MA 02459

Any questions: email info@yadchessed.org or call: 781-613-3413

For more information about Yad Chessed's Purim Program visit www.yadchessed.org/purim/

VISIT US ONLINE

Website

<https://walnutstreetsynagogue.org/>

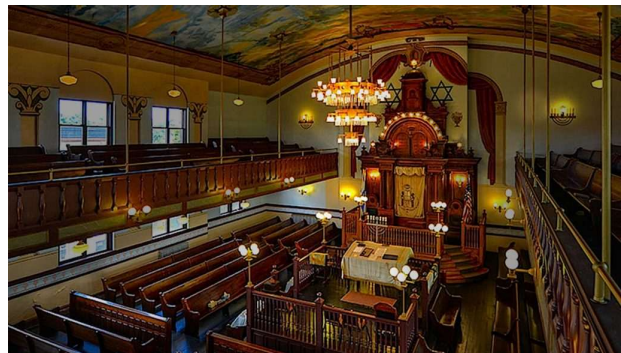
Facebook Page - Walnut Street Synagogue

<https://www.facebook.com/WalnutStreetSynagogue>

Facebook Group - Jews of Chelsea, MA Then and Now

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChelseaJews>

The Walnut Street Synagogue is the center for Jewish history, education and culture serving Chelsea, Greater Boston and beyond and is the historic home of Congregation Agudas Sholom. (added to National Register of Historic Places in 1993)



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