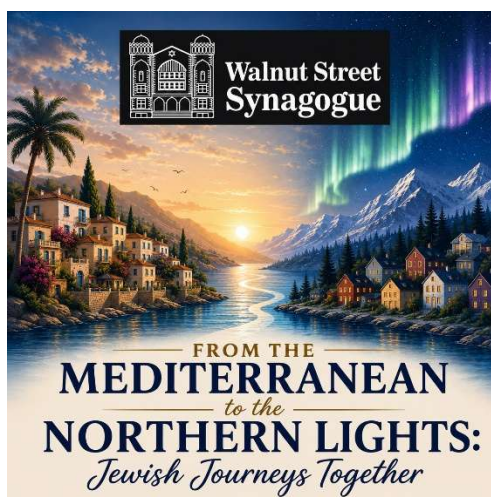




From the Mediterranean to the Northern Lights series returns in July, Upcoming Programs, Shul Tours and More – June 15, 2026

FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO THE NORTHERN LIGHTS: JEWISH JOURNEYS TOGETHER



Jewish Norway Tour

Thursday, July 9, 12:00 pm ET (online)

Our series continues with a tour of the Jewish community in Norway. The Jewish presence in Norway began in the mid-19th century, after the repeal of the 1814 constitution's "Jew Clause" in 1851 — a change driven by poet and activist Henrik Wergeland. Early Jewish settlers, many from Eastern Europe and Denmark, established communities in cities such as Trondheim and Oslo. The Trondheim synagogue, once a train station, stands as a symbol of survival and adaptation. During the Holocaust, over a third of Norwegian Jews were deported and murdered, leaving deep scars on both cities' communities. Post-war years saw a gradual rebuilding of Jewish life, balancing tradition with the realities of modern Norwegian society. Today, Trondheim and Oslo reflect a blend of resilience, migration, and living heritage.

Our guide, **Louise Kahn**, is a Norwegian-born Jewish social entrepreneur, cultural organizer, and civic leader focused on strengthening Jewish identity and dialogue in Europe. Born and raised in Norway in a Jewish family with strong Zionist roots, she later moved to Israel, where she has been based since young adulthood. Kahn is the founder of Kos & Kaos, a Nordic Jewish network that creates platforms for open conversation, intellectual exchange, and community-building around issues such as antisemitism, identity, and the public discourse surrounding Israel. She is also the founder of Compass North, an initiative focused on connecting Nordic Jewish voices, fostering cross-border collaboration, and addressing contemporary challenges facing Jewish communities in Northern Europe. Through roundtables, debates, and cultural programming, her work aims to counter polarization and create space for nuanced, inclusive dialogue. Her work sits at the intersection of identity, technology, and civic engagement, with a particular focus on amplifying underrepresented perspectives and strengthening Jewish communal resilience in Europe.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jewish-norway-tour-tickets-1989621841487?aff=oddttdcreator>

Learn more about the series here - <https://walnutstreetsynagogue.org/mediterranean-to-northern-lights/>

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!



Jewish Life in the Confederate South – The Diary of Emma Mordecai

Thursday, June 18, 3:30 pm ET (online)

Emma Mordecai was a complicated figure: both a staunch defender of Judaism, and an ardent Confederate nationalist and slave owner. Her life, as vividly captured in her wartime diary, is a good example of the messiness of history and the ambiguous place of Jews in the antebellum and Civil War South. Come join us for a discussion of *The Civil War Diary of Emma Mordecai*, a book initiated by the late Dr. Dianne Ashton, Professor Emerita of Philosophy and World Religion at Rowan University and completed after her passing by Dr. Melissa R. Klapper, Professor of History at Rowan University.

Dr. Melissa R. Klapper is Professor of History and Director of Women's & Gender Studies at Rowan University. She is the award-winning author of numerous books about American Jewish women and the history of childhood, including *Ballots, Babies, and Banners of Peace: American Jewish Women's Activism, 1890-1940* (NYU, 2013), which won the National Jewish Book Award in Women's Studies, and *Ballet Class: An American History* (Oxford, 2020). She is a frequent lecturer in both academic and community settings. Her new book, *Jewish Women at Home in the World: Gender, Judaism, and American Identity in the Rise of Mass Tourism*, will be released this fall.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/RCtshDP8TWa6YJrxfCDQ6g#/registration>

Holy Loopholes – Adaptation and Integrity in Jewish Law

Part 7 - Sunday, June 21, 3:30 pm ET (online)

Part 8 - Sunday, June 28, 3:30 pm ET (online)

(online in partnership with the Orange County Jewish Community Scholar Program)

Join us for a provocative and engaging series on some of the most eyebrow-raising practices in Jewish law — from the Eruv and selling Chametz to Heter Iska, Prozbul, Shemitah sales, Shabbat elevators, and more — beginning with an opening session titled “Are the Clever Jews Trying to Fake Us Out?” We start with the nagging question many people have when they encounter these practices: are these authentic expressions of halachic seriousness, or just brilliant religious workarounds dressed up to look legitimate? With honesty, nuance, and intellectual rigor, this series will explore how generations of rabbinic thinkers confronted real human needs while remaining deeply anchored to the framework of Jewish law, revealing that what may first look like legal sleight-of-hand often opens into a much deeper story about responsibility, creativity, and the moral life of halacha.

Marc Michael Epstein, winner of CSP's 4th Annual Maimonides Award for Excellence in Adult Jewish Education and the 2015 National Jewish Book Award in Visual Arts for *Skies of Parchment, Seas of Ink*, grew up in Brooklyn in a family of Slonimer and Lubavitcher Hasidim and Romanian socialists. Since 1992 he has taught at Vassar College as Professor of Religion (and founding Director of Jewish Studies), offering courses on medieval Christianity, Jewish texts, and the interplay of religion, art, and politics. An Oberlin and Yale graduate with research at the Hebrew University, he is the author of numerous studies of Jewish visual and material culture, including *The Medieval Haggadah: Art, Narrative, and Religious Imagination*, named a Times Literary Supplement “Best Book of the Year.” Formerly Director of Hebrew Books and Manuscripts at Sotheby's, he now consults internationally for libraries, museums, auction houses, and private collectors; his newest book is *People of the Image: Jews and Art*.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Cu3Xn9DKR5SnUOfuGE2urA#/registration>

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Challapalooza: Boston's Jew-ish Music Festival

Sunday, June 21, 11:00 am to 8:00 pm ET

(in-person program in Cambridge, exact location to be provided with tickets)



From 11:00 am to 8:00 pm Challapalooza will have Boston's greatest Jew-ish bands including Yiddish song band *Levyosn*, Old-Time dance band The Ruth and Ben String Band and many more! Alongside the music festival, teachers will present thought provoking and no-barrier-to-entry classes on anything from Jewish weaving, to Mishnah, to Klezmer history. Also present will be kosher food trucks and Jew-ish art makers selling their wares and tables from local Jewish organizations, synagogues and artists.

More information and tickets here - <https://www.challapalooza.org/>

SHUL TOURS

If you live in the Boston area and have never seen our historic shul, or haven't visited in a while, or if you plan to visit the area, we welcome you to see our shul in person! Tour our historic synagogue that was built in 1909 and was added to the National Register of Historic Place in 1993. Come see our 1,109-seat sanctuary with its painted ceiling and wall frescoes, murals and carved wood Aron Kodesh. Check out our collection of Judaica, artwork, photos, documents, books, posters and plaques that come from our synagogue, synagogues in Chelsea that have closed along with fraternal, social and educational organizations from Chelsea and elsewhere in Greater Boston. Please follow the link below for more information and to request Individual/Family or Group tours.

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

YAD CHESSED



Yad Chessed helps Jewish individuals and families who struggle with financial hardship pay their bills and buy food. As a social services agency rooted in the Jewish values of kindness (chedsed) and charity (tzedakah), they are committed to helping those in need navigate a path toward financial stability while preserving their privacy and dignity. They provide emergency financial assistance, grocery gift cards and compassionate advice for those trying to make ends meet. Hundreds of families and individuals throughout the state rely on Yad Chessed to provide for their essentials, and even at times, a Jewish burial for a loved one. Members of our community, as well as others in the Jewish community, who need assistance may contact Yad Chessed by phone at 781-487-2693 or by Email at intake@yadchedsed.org for a confidential conversation. Questions can be directed

to info@yadchessed.org.
Support Yad Chessed - <https://givebutter.com/yadchessed>

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/>

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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