



Announcing From the Mediterranean to the Northern Lights: Jewish Journeys Together online series – May 31, 2026

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to announce the launch of our upcoming series, ***From the Mediterranean to the Northern Lights: Jewish Journeys Together***. Join us for our special four-part virtual series exploring Jewish life, history, and culture across diverse regions stretching from the Mediterranean to Northern Europe. Through engaging presentations and vivid storytelling, we will journey to communities in Turkey, Finland, Norway, and Mallorca (Spain), discovering both the unique character and shared heritage of Jewish communities.

Our series begins on Thursday, June 11, at 12:00 pm ET with “**Xueta Island Film Screening and Q&A with Filmmaker.**” ***Xueta Island*** is a documentary film that explores Inquisition history, Jewish revival, and identity. Some Catholics on the Spanish island of Mallorca (Majorca) have been discriminated against for centuries because their surnames have a connection to a Jewish heritage. They not only endured stigma and humiliation: they were also deprived of fundamental rights as citizens. While a few have been inspired to return to the faith of their ancestors, their recent entry into the leadership of the local Jewish community has caused an unforeseen controversy among its members. A link to watch the film will be sent two days before the Director Talkback with filmmaker Dani Rotstein on June 11.

The series continues on July 9 at 12:00 pm ET, with a **Jewish Norway Tour**. 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. 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.

Our next program will be on August 13 at 12:00 pm ET for our **Jewish Izmir Tour**. Izmir’s Jewish community is small but vibrant, preserving traditions through religious and cultural activities. Jewish presence in Izmir dates back centuries, with a major influx of Sephardic Jews after the 1492 Spanish expulsion, shaping the city’s economy, culture, and intellectual landscape. Our presentation will be given by **Jacob Ceki Hazan**, a Turkish-Italian Sephardic Jew with deep Mediterranean roots and a family network that spans the globe. Jacob who goes by “Ceki” was born and raised in Izmir and was among the last graduates of the city’s final Jewish primary school.

The series concludes on September 17 at 12:00 pm with our **Jewish Finland Tour**. The Finnish Jewish community is a small but active community that encompasses a synagogue, a Jewish school, Chabad house and sports activities by the only Maccabi in Europe that did not stop operating during World War II. Finland is the northernmost Jewish community in Europe and its traditions and active Jewish life is as diverse and alive as in any big city elsewhere. **Beto Guzman**, our guide, is originally from Mexico but has lived in Helsinki since 2015.

Complete descriptions of each session along with registration links are found on our website (walnutstreetsynagogue.org/mediterranean-to-northern-lights). You will need to register for each session individually and we will send Zoom links a few days before each session. There is no charge.

This series is made possible by a grant from the Congregation Ahabat Shalom Religious Fund and other generous donors.

L'Shalom,

Edward Medros
President, Walnut Street Synagogue

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