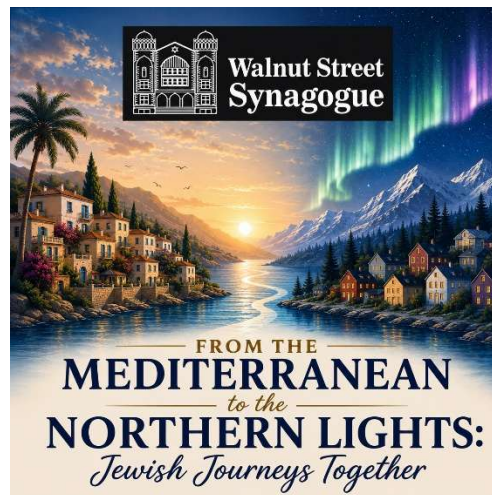




From the Mediterranean to the Northern Lights series returns in August, Upcoming Programs, Shul Tours and More – July 13, 2026

FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO THE NORTHERN LIGHTS: JEWISH JOURNEYS TOGETHER



Jewish Izmir Tour

Thursday, August 13, 12:00 pm ET (online)

Our series continues with a tour of the Jewish community in Izmir, Turkey. 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. A unique aspect of Jewish life in Turkey is the connection to Ladino, the historical language of Sephardic Jews. Though less spoken today, it remains a cultural link to the past. In this virtual tour, Ceci will offer personal insights and historical perspectives on Jewish Izmir, guiding participants through its historic synagogues and exploring the community's evolution, challenges, and unique traditions with visuals, stories, and interactive discussion.

Our presentation will be given by **Jacob Ceci Hazan** who was born and raised in Izmir and is now based in Sweden. Jacob is a Turkish-Italian Sephardic Jew with deep Mediterranean roots and a family network that spans the globe. Jacob who goes by "Ceci" was born and raised in Izmir and was among the last graduates of the city's final Jewish primary school. Though his native language is Turkish, he grew up surrounded by Ladino, French, English, Hebrew, and Portuguese, spoken by relatives who had emigrated from Izmir. After living in several countries, he returned and became an active figure in the Izmir Jewish community as a researcher and project developer. He led Despertar Izmir, an EU-funded Jewish heritage initiative, and manages the community's website, izmirjcc.org. His work centers on educational resource development and learning design for non-profit organizations across Europe, particularly in youth and adult education. Passionate about the power of books, videos, podcasts, and digital tools, he explores how these mediums can inspire meaningful learning experiences and how libraries can evolve to serve diverse communities. Having lived in several countries, he is fascinated by how knowledge is created, shared, and preserved across cultures and generations.

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jewish-izmir-tour-tickets-1989626954781?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true

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

The logo for the Orange County CSP Community Scholar Program is a circular emblem. It features the words "ORANGE COUNTY" in a blue arc at the top and "COMMUNITY SCHOLAR PROGRAM" in a blue arc at the bottom. In the center, the letters "CSP" are prominently displayed in a large, bold, white font against a blue background.

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

The New Syria – New Enemy or New Friend

Tuesday, July 14, 3:30 pm ET (online)

Syria is one of the most consequential and least understood countries in the Middle East, and few Western Jews have had the opportunity to witness its dramatic transformation from the inside. Join Rabbi Asher Lopatin for a fascinating firsthand account of his groundbreaking visits to Syria in 2025, beginning just months after the fall of the Assad regime and continuing through two subsequent missions. Rabbi Lopatin will share the remarkable story of how these journeys came about, what he encountered on the ground, and whether a new chapter in Syria's relationship with the West, and perhaps even with Israel, may be possible. Drawing on candid conversations with government officials, business leaders, educators, cultural figures, and ordinary Syrians from all walks of life, he will offer a rare glimpse into a country long viewed as one of Israel's most implacable adversaries. Combining personal stories, political insight, and on-the-ground observations, this promises to be an extraordinary look inside a nation at a historic crossroads.

Rabbi Asher Lopatin is the rabbi of Kehillat Etz Chayim in Detroit and the Director of Community Relations at the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. He is a Rhodes Scholar with an M.Phil in Medieval Arabic Thought from Oxford University. He has rabbinic ordination from Rav Ahron Soloveichik and Yeshiva University and is a permanent member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Rabbi Lopatin is married to Rachel Tessler Lopatin and they have four children.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/a0eHA7CKQG0HVjdvfZvgsQ#/registration>

The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Vantage Point on Judaism in Antiquity

Part 3 – The struggle on the Calendar: Holy Place, Holy Time, Holy Liturgy, Holy Memory - Sunday, July 19, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Part 4 – Pharisees and Sadducees: Oral Authority or a Written Authority? - Sunday, July 26, 1:00 pm ET (online)

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

The unexpected finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls between 1947-1956 shed a new light on Jewish history in antiquity. Their final authoritative bilingual editions in Hebrew and in English or in Aramaic and in French or English became available only in the last few decades. All the unknown Hebrew and Aramaic manuscripts written on parchment, are a part of a priestly sacred library of authors who describe themselves as “The priests the sons of Zadok and their allies”. In this series we'll discuss the four fold nature of the unknown books, the background of their authors and their purpose, the historical background of their writing in the two last centuries BCE in relation to the bitter dispute on the priestly calendar, and the connection of the scrolls to the ongoing conflict between the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Rachel Elijor is the John and Golda Cohen Professor Emerita of Jewish Philosophy and Jewish Mystical Thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she taught for decades and twice served as Chair of the Department of Jewish Thought. A leading scholar of Jewish mysticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls, her research spans early Jewish mystical traditions, Heikhalot literature, Kabbalah, Hasidism, Messianism, Sabbatianism, and the place of women, slavery, and freedom in Jewish culture and religious history. Prof. Elijor is the author of 20 books and more than 120 scholarly articles, with works translated into multiple languages. Among her books are *The Unknown History of Jewish Women*, *Israel Ba'al Shem*

Tov and His Contemporaries, and *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism*. Her scholarship has received numerous honors, including the Gershom Scholem Prize for Research in Kabbalah and an honorary doctorate from Hebrew Union College.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/1Ncd0M6hRxtBcQPt-cHYA#/registration>

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Jewish Stories of Revere Beach

Sunday, July 26, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm ET

(in-person program presented by the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors at at Rumney Marsh Academy, 140 American Legion Hwy #3, Revere) **NEW LOCATION**

Take a trip back in time to celebrate summers at Revere Beach! Join the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center in Revere for an afternoon of stories, conversation, and history of the Jewish summer community in Revere Beach. This lively event will feature a discussion about the popularity of Revere Beach as a summer destination for the Greater Boston Jewish community in the mid 20th century, opportunities for participants to share memories, and a kosher ice cream social.

More information and register here - https://www.americanancestors.org/events/jewish-stories-revere-beach?utm_campaign=18167937-FY26%20JHC&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz--W9W_Tmh_oBa414mDPwbgu-7uXSyyxDIEQ-qzh2Q7FCxu2PuzpMRXrlZ8-CY6VmNsNmHdmXyKb6isE2limVq5TmLd-Q&hsmi=423239499&utm_content=423239499&utm_source=hs_email

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 (chessed) 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@yadchedded.org for a confidential conversation. Questions can be directed to info@yadchedded.org.

Support Yad Chessed - <https://givebutter.com/yadchedded>

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)



Walnut Street Synagogue, 145 Walnut Street, PO Box 505265, Chelsea, MA 02150-5265
Contact us at: central.walnutstreetshul@gmail.com