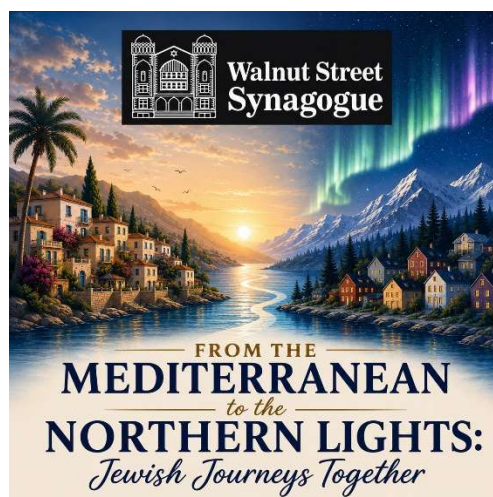




From the Mediterranean to the Northern Lights series returns on Thursday, High Holidays, Upcoming Programs, Shul Tours and More – August 10, 2026

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/>

HIGH HOLIDAYS

Watch for our announcement in the coming days with details of services in our historic sanctuary for the High Holidays.

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!



Berlin's Forgotten Trailblazers – The Jewish Women Who Shaped a City

Tuesday, August 11, 1:00 pm ET (online)

The story of Berlin's extraordinary Jewish community is often told through the names of great men: Mendelssohn, Geiger, Einstein, and others. Yet behind this familiar history stands another remarkable story: generations of bold Jewish women who challenged expectations, broke barriers, and transformed the cultural life of one of Europe's most dynamic cities. From the brilliant salon hostesses of the 18th century who shaped intellectual society, to the daring writers, artists, poets, and cabaret performers of the Weimar era, Berlin's Jewish women navigated a world that marginalized them twice over and still left an unforgettable mark. Join us as we rediscover their voices, their creativity, and their rightful place at the center of Berlin's Jewish story.

Ronen Altman Kaydar is an Israeli tour guide, author and translator, living in Berlin since 2010. He completed an M.A. in Philosophy and History of Science and Ideas and taught Creative Writing at the Helicon School of Poetry (among others). Altman Kaydar published a novel (*Chaos Butterflies*, 2000), a book of poetry (*Bite Marks*, 2007), a novella published as an e-book (*A Creative Life*, 2014) and a non-fiction book about Jews in Berlin (*Berliner Rebels: How Young Jews Changed the History of the City*, 2022). His poems and stories were published in periodicals and anthologies, translated into English, German, Russian and Arabic and set to music by renowned composers. Altman Kaydar has been guiding individuals and groups in and around Berlin since 2011. He specializes in taking high-class groups through the interplay between history, memory and the current layout of the city. He has guided, amongst others, groups from the Jewish Agency, Jewish Federation, Humanus network of Minnesota, Camerata Pacifica and many more.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/l75-ek24SBGzYS3Jfrkg3A#/registration>

The Torah in the Tarot

Thursday, August 13, 1:00 pm ET (online)

What if one of history's most mysterious decks of cards was hiding a forgotten Jewish story? Join author Stav Appel as he explores his provocative thesis that the original Tarot de Marseille, the artistic foundation of modern Tarot, may have served as a secret tool for preserving Jewish learning during centuries of religious persecution. Examining the Jean Noblet Tarot created in Paris around 1650 through a Jewish historical lens, Appel reveals what he believes are hidden connections to Hebrew letters, Torah narratives, ritual objects, and Jewish holidays embedded within the cards' imagery. This fascinating presentation invites us to reconsider the origins of Tarot and explore the possibility that a hidden world of Jewish memory and symbolism has been waiting to be discovered for nearly four centuries.

Stav Appel is a data retired scientist and a lifelong student of Torah. Earlier in his career he was the director of the Israeli Palestinian coexistence organization Nitzanei Shalom, and the director of

International Service Programs for American Jewish World Service. He holds an MBA from the Yale School of Management and has studied Biblical Hebrew at Hebrew University and Yale Divinity School. After a chance encounter with an old deck of Tarot cards, Stav began to explore the origins and meaning of the biblical references he recognized in its images. He is now a frequent speaker and popular writer on the *Torah in the Tarot*, the lost and forgotten Judaic origins of the mysterious Tarot de Marseille. He currently resides in North Salem, NY.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/join?meeting=bnk1m-kjRUe5nZxkhhDDgA#/registration>

Living In the Present Tense

Sunday, August 16, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Join celebrated Israeli author and filmmaker Etgar Keret for a timely conversation about Israel, storytelling, identity, and the strange realities of living through historic times. Keret will share personal insights on daily life in Israel, the emotional and political complexity of the current moment, and the role of humor, imagination, and storytelling in times of uncertainty. The conversation will also explore Keret's new role in New York as director of the Jewish Theological Seminary's groundbreaking MFA program in Creative Writing and what it means to build a new home for Jewish storytelling at this moment in history. Blending wit, vulnerability, and sharp observation, Keret offers a perspective on Israel and Jewish identity that is both deeply personal and profoundly human.

Etgar Keret is one of the foremost writers of contemporary Israeli literature. His books have been published in some fifty languages and won numerous awards. In addition to being an internationally acclaimed virtuoso of the short story, Etgar explores a variety of storytelling techniques, including plays, screenplays, songs, animated and live-action films, comic books and choreography. Etgar is an Associate Professor at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He is excited to guide the Jewish Theological Seminary's MFA program's vision and mentor emerging storytellers.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/join?meeting=W6O5lqnaS7udjOy3RWFUyA#/registration>

Exploring the Masterpieces of Art in Rome, Florence, and Venice

Part 2 - Thursday, September 3, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Part 3 - Thursday, October 1, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Join acclaimed artist Tobi Kahn for a captivating three-part adventure through the artistic soul of Italy, where every stone, canvas, and canal tells a story. From the eternal layers of Rome, where ancient sculpture, Renaissance genius, and contemporary vision meet in the Vatican Museums, Galleria Borghese, Musei Capitolini, Palazzo Barberini, and MAXXI; to Florence, the birthplace of the Renaissance, where Michelangelo's David, Botticelli's Birth of Venus, and Brunelleschi's soaring Duomo forever changed the way humanity sees beauty; to the magical waterways of Venice, where Byzantine splendor, Renaissance masters, Murano glass, delicate lace traditions, and daring engineering created a city unlike any other. Together, we will explore not only Italy's greatest masterpieces, museums, and architectural wonders, but also the artists, patrons, ideas, and innovations that transformed Italy into one of the world's most extraordinary centers of creativity and civilization.

Tobi Kahn is an internationally acclaimed painter and sculptor whose work has been featured in more than 70 solo museum exhibitions and is included in major collections worldwide, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Phillips Collection, The Jewish Museum, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Yale University Art Gallery. A longtime educator, Kahn has taught fine arts at New York's School of Visual Arts for over 30 years and lectures internationally on visual language, creativity, and art as a source of healing. He holds a BA from Hunter College and an MFA from Pratt Institute. His upcoming solo survey exhibition, *Quest for the Essence*, will be presented at the Boca Raton Museum of Art from November 2026 through April 2027.

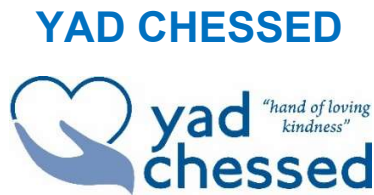
<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/join?meeting=2obaW3gRTICNkjSMd2ZrAQ#/registration>

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 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 (chesed) 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)



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