



Year End Giving, Upcoming Programs, Individual/Family and Group Shul Tours, Support Israel in Boston and More – November 27, 2023

YEAR END GIVING

We stand with Israel in the fight against terrorism and pray for the safe return of all hostages. Many of us have contributed to relief efforts to support the war's victims in Israel and will continue to do so. As the secular year comes to a close, we hope you will also consider strengthening our Jewish identity and presence here in Chelsea. Your support enables us to maintain our historic synagogue, conduct services and provide high quality programming, ourselves and in conjunction with our strategic partners.

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

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!



The Sephardic Holocaust – The Destruction of the Jews of Greece

Tuesday, November 28, 1:00 pm EST (online)

Although often omitted from standard presentations of the Holocaust, the Jews of Greece suffered one of the highest mortality rates of any Jewish community under Nazi occupation. The largest of all Ladino-speaking communities, Salonica (Thessaloniki), known as the “Jerusalem of the Balkans,” where Jews comprised half of the city’s residents at the turn of the century and where the port closed on Saturday in observance of the Jewish Sabbath, was completely decimated. This lecture will explore the distinctive processes of destruction, possibilities of survival, and the echoes of the memory of this once great community.

Dr. Devin E. Naar is the Isaac Alhadeff Professor in Sephardic Studies, Associate Professor of History, and faculty at the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies in the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. Born and raised in New Jersey, Dr. Naar graduated summa cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis and received his Ph.D. in History at Stanford University. He has also served as a Fulbright fellow to Greece. His first book, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece*, was published by Stanford University Press in 2016. The book won the 2016 National Jewish Book Award in the category of Research Based on Archival Material and was named a finalist in Sephardic Culture. It also won the 2017 Edmund Keeley Prize for best book in Modern Greek Studies awarded by the Modern Greek Studies Association.

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwufuyopz8oG9ES2XKfe2hmASufnP4Y1-wg?utm_source=CSP&utm_campaign=85ac578528-

Danger: Women with Books

Part 4 - Queering The Torah Text: Strange Letters and A Woman's Hand - Thursday, November 30, 7:00 pm EDT (online)

The profession of safrut, of the sacred scribal arts, has traditionally been thought of as “man’s work” both from an halakhic (legal) perspective and from a sociological one. Yet the very first illustrated Scroll of Esther that has come down to us has the signature of a female scribe, women copied Torah manuscripts in book form in societies as conservative as Yemen, and wealthy women in Italy wrote manuscripts, had liturgy “reformed” to reflect specifically female concerns, and are depicted within manuscripts. This series, with Vassar professor Marc Michael Epstein considers the effects (and the perceived dangers) of women who write and illustrate sacred texts.

Part 4 – Queering The Torah Text: Strange Letters and A Woman's Hand – There are still patrons in the world today who commission Jewish manuscripts. Some are ostensibly Orthodox, yet they insist on female scribes. Why? This session will explore the creation of one of the most radical (yet deeply traditional!) manifestations of this impulse, the creation of a Torah scroll full of “strange letters,” a little-known tradition that is being revived in our own day.

Winner of the 2015 Jewish Book Award in Visual Arts for *Skies of Parchment, Seas of Ink: Jewish Illuminated Manuscripts*, **Marc Michael Epstein** is the product of a mixed marriage between the scions of Slonimer and Lubavitcher Hassidim and Romanian socialists, and grew up, rather confused, but happy, in Brooklyn, New York. He is currently Professor of Religion at Vassar College, where he has been teaching since 1992, and was the first Director of Jewish Studies. At Vassar, he teaches courses on medieval Christianity, religion, arts and politics, and Jewish texts and sources. He is a graduate of Oberlin College, received the Ph.D. at Yale University, and did much of his graduate research at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He has written numerous articles and three books on various topics in visual and material culture produced by, for, and about Jews. His book, *The Medieval Haggadah: Art, Narrative, and Religious Imagination* (Yale, 2011) was selected by the London Times Literary Supplement as one of the best books of 2011. During the '80s, Epstein was Director of the Hebrew Books and Manuscripts division of Sotheby's Judaica department. He continues to serve as consultant to various libraries, auction houses, museums and private collectors throughout the world.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAudumrrD4sG9GAal-k7sYGmHAMmywD1RAJ#/registration>

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Israeli Civil Society During War

Part 2 - Thursday, December 7, 12:00 pm EST (online)

Part 3 - Thursday, December 14, 12:00 pm EST (online)

(presented by the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies at Brandeis University)

All are welcome to Join Professor Yehudah Mirsky for a series of conversations with three leading figures from Israeli civil society to hear about how diverse groups of Israelis are responding to the aftermath of October 7th, and what it can teach us about Israeli society as a whole.

Part 2 – Rabbah Yael Vurgan, Rabbi of the Gaza Border Communities

Part 3 – Mr. Mohammad Darawshe, Givat Haviva Center for Shared Society

<https://www.brandeis.edu/israel-center/events/index.html#civil-society>

SUPPORT ISRAEL IN BOSTON

Israel Emergency Fund

Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) has launched the **Israel Emergency Fund** in response to the unprecedented and horrifying attack against Israel was launched over Shabbat and Shemini Atzeret. 100% of donations received will help support victims of terror and address the unprecedented levels of trauma caused by these horrific attacks.

Donate here -

https://give.cjp.org/give/525536/?utm_medium=email&hsmi=277433797&hsenc=p2ANqtz-

[8gOZCCFZuo0azQF8zaBKQdGAcCSLveZd6_d0V0waC554D5ms3kS7MKY-HlyHX9FnmkhRzMMuotkwUmL90yJN57MAxqew&utm_content=277433797&utm_source=hs_email#!/do
nation/checkout](https://www.walnutstreetsynagogue.com/2023-programs-november)

PLEASE WATCH OUR WEBSITE ([walnutstreetsynagogue.com/2023-programs-november](https://www.walnutstreetsynagogue.com/2023-programs-november)) AND THE WALNUT STREET SYNAGOGUE FACEBOOK PAGE AND JEWS OF CHELSEA - THEN AND NOW FACEBOOK GROUP FOR NOTICE OF ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

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 and take a tour! Please follow the link below for more information and to request **Individual/Family** or **Group (new)** tours.

Visitor Information - <https://walnutstreetsynagogue.com/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@yadchessed.org for a confidential conversation. Questions can be directed to info@yadchessed.org.

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

SYNAGOGUE FAMILY

Do you have milestones such as marriages, births, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, special birthdays, graduations, etc. to share with our synagogue family? If so, please submit details to central.walnutstreetshul@gmail.com to be included in our weekly announcements. Photos are welcome!

VOLUNTEER

Do you have time to volunteer and help us grow? Please complete our Volunteer Interest Form. <https://form.jotform.com/202885558815165>

GIVING

Please visit our Giving page to send tributes, recognize yahrzeits and make other general donations to support the synagogue. Donations can be made online or through the mail.

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

VISIT US ONLINE

Website

<https://walnutstreetsynagogue.com/>

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