



## **Revisiting (the History of) Jewish Chelsea, Shared Legacies, Jewish Journeys to the Far East, Upcoming Programs, Shul Tours and More – May 12, 2025**

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### **REVISITING (THE HISTORY OF) JEWISH CHELSEA**

Tuesday, May 13, 7:00 pm ET (online)



Join American Jewish historian Dr. David E. Kaufman for an hour-long exploration of the Jewish past of Chelsea, lovingly called 'the Jerusalem of Massachusetts.' Dr. Kaufman will treat this remarkable history in multiple contexts, ranging from how the Chelsea experience exemplifies the Jewish relationship to cities throughout history to his own family history in the Chelsea Jewish community.

Dr. David E. Kaufman is an established American Jewish historian who earned his PhD at Brandeis University in 1994. During his graduate studies, he focused on the history of the Jewish communities of the Boston area and became well known as a popular lecturer and tour guide of Jewish neighborhoods. In the authoritative volume *The Jews of Boston* (CJP, 1995), he published his first major article on the synagogues of Boston. He is also a 'son of Chelsea' as his great grandfather was Asher Bookstein, the unofficial Sofer Stam (Torah scribe) of the Chelsea Jewish community. Dr. Kaufman is excited to be returning to the Walnut Street Shul to give an online talk in which he will give context to his family history by recounting the greater, and often unappreciated, history of the Jews of Chelsea, Massachusetts. Dr. Kaufman was our featured speaker for Chelsea Jewish Heritage Day in September 2024. For those who have attended programs with our partner, the Orange County Jewish Community Scholar Program, you will also recognize Dr. Kaufman as a frequent and particularly eloquent speaker there.

**Register here -** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/revisiting-the-history-of-jewish-chelsea-tickets-1336032261459?aff=oddtcreator>

### **SHARED LEGACIES: AMERICAN LESSONS OF BLACK/JEWISH COOPERATION**

Sunday, June 8, 1:00 pm ET (in-person at Williams School, Chelsea)



*photo courtesy of Menemsha Films*

Join us for a screening of the film, *Shared Legacies*, a moving documentary about the critical historical lessons of the Black Jewish Alliance during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, at the Williams School in Chelsea. Following the film, we will have a conversation with a personal and local perspective featuring Chelsea City Councilor Leo Robinson and Janna Kaplan from Brandeis University. Janna's late husband, Edward Kivie Kaplan (1942-2024) was the son of Kivie Kaplan (1904-1975), a Boston industrialist who was deeply involved in the Jewish social action and in the Civil Rights movements. Kivie Kaplan was elected National President of the NAACP in 1966 and served until his death in 1975. Both Kivie and Edward appear in the film. Kivie's wife Emily was from Chelsea and her family was affiliated with the Walnut Street Synagogue.

**Event website -** <https://walnutstreetsynagogue.com/shared-legacies/>

**Register here -** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/shared-legacies-american-lessons-of-black-jewish-cooperation-tickets-1353947997909?aff=oddtcreator>

## JEWISH JOURNEYS TO THE FAR EAST

Wednesday, June 11, 7:00 pm ET (online)



Join us for the third session in our series on June 11 at 7:00 pm ET when we will visit the Jewish community in Indonesia. We will learn about how the Jewish community in Indonesia is reemerging. Community members are united in rediscovering their identity and developing a minhag from Sumatra to Papua. Each of the vibrant communities have long and diverse Jewish connections with a Judaism unique to their culture and history. Our guide will be Rabbi David Kunin, who along with his wife Shelley and colleague Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky, has worked with the vibrant Jewish community in Indonesia.

**Register here -** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jewish-journeys-to-the-far-east-indonesia-tickets-1263056107819?aff=oddtcreator>

Learn more about the series including information about an in-person series viewing opportunity for those in the Chelsea, Winthrop, Revere and East Boston areas.

<https://walnutstreetsynagogue.com/far-east-travel-series/>

## 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!



### **Creation, Retaliation, Chosenness and Faith – Four Challenges to the Bible**

**Session 2** - Tuesday, May 13, 1:00 pm ET (online)

**Session 3** - Tuesday, May 20, 1:00 pm ET (online)

**Session 4** - Tuesday, May 27, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Join us for a compelling four-part series with Rabbi Dr. Rafi Zarum, based on his recent award-winning book, *Questioning Belief*. In this thought-provoking series, Rabbi Zarum tackles some of the most pressing and challenging questions at the intersection of tradition, ethics, and contemporary thought. Drawing deeply from classical Jewish sources while engaging with modern sensibilities, he offers surprising, provocative, and energizing insights that speak to today's Jewish experience. Over four sessions, we'll explore: what the Creation story teaches us if it's not taken literally, the ethical dilemmas raised by King David's actions and their relevance to modern warfare and shared responsibility, the complex and often misunderstood notion of the Jewish people as "chosen", and what belief means in a Jewish context, even for those who question or reject the idea of God. Whether you're a seeker, a skeptic, or a committed believer, this series will invite you into a rich and honest conversation about faith, identity, and meaning in the modern world.

**Rabbi Dr Raphael Zarum** is Dean of the London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS) where he holds the Rabbi Sacks Chair of Modern Jewish Thought, established by the Zandan family. He lectures in Jewish philosophy and education, and trains teachers and rabbis. Rabbi Zarum has a PhD in Theoretical Physics from King's College London and an MA in Adult Education from University College London. His rabbinic ordination was awarded by the Montefiore Kollel and Rabbi Sacks, and he is also a graduate of the Mandel Leadership School in Jerusalem. Rabbi Zarum regularly writes articles for the Jewish press and essays for journals. His recent book, *Questioning Belief: Torah and Tradition in an Age of Doubt*, published by Koren, was the finalist in the Rabbi Sacks Book Prize, awarded by Yeshiva University. Rabbi Zarum appears on many podcasts and recently launched his own, *Big Questions of Jewish Belief*. He is an acclaimed educator who travels the globe lecturing in many Jewish communities and diverse institutions.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Dbfk8TQYRcq1QYGQh0oc4Q#/registration>

### **The Jewish Legacy of Bulgaria and Greece**

**Session 2** - Thursday, May 15, 1:00 pm ET (online)

**Session 3** - Thursday, May 22, 1:00 pm ET (online)

**Session 4** - Thursday, May 29, 1:00 pm ET (online)

Join us for a captivating four-part series with Jewish heritage educator Evgenia Kempinski as we explore over two thousand years of Jewish history in Bulgaria and Greece, lands where Jewish communities have contributed richly to cultural and spiritual life for centuries. From ancient settlements to vibrant Sephardic centers, this journey will trace a powerful legacy of resilience and creativity.

**Session 2** - We will explore traditions, daily life, and the unique Sephardic heritage that flourished there.

**Session 3** - We will turn to the 20th century to examine the rise of modern Jewish communities, their cultural impact, and the tragedy of the Holocaust.

**Session 4** - We will reflect on the post-war experience and the state of Jewish life in Bulgaria and Greece today.

Don't miss this opportunity to engage with a rich, lesser-known chapter of Jewish history and identity. Evgenia Kempinski is a professional Jewish tour guide, born and raised in St. Petersburg, Russia. With over fifteen years of experience guiding Jewish heritage tours in her hometown, she has developed a deep passion for uncovering and sharing the stories of the Jewish Diaspora. With her family she spent six enriching years living in Israel and now resides in Barcelona, continuing her mission to connect people with Jewish history and culture around the world. She is the founder of the Online Jewish Travel Club, a vibrant community that brings together Jews from different countries through a shared love of travel, art,

and Jewish heritage.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/DNXtkEzVQAGtofOxdewzZQ#/registration>

### **The Golem in the Machine – Modern Questions and Timeless Answers in the Age of AI**

Thursday, May 15, 7:00 pm ET (online)

Every day we encounter technology's two sides: our phones miraculously tell us how to get from place to place, connect us with far-away loved ones, and entertain us, but also distract us from the people right in front of us. Artificial Intelligence (AI) magically answers questions, produces prose, and creates art, but at what cost to our humanity and originality? Together we'll delve into Jewish texts that offer guidance and wisdom for grappling with very modern conundrums.

**Shawn Fields-Meyer** serves as a Division Rabbi for Milken Community School in Los Angeles, working collaboratively with students, faculty and the larger community toward meaningful programs of learning, spirituality and creativity. Rabbi Shawn runs Ruach Nashim, an annual Women's Spirituality Retreat held at Camp Ramah in Ojai. She is the co-author of the book *A Day Apart: Shabbat at Home*. She has taught rabbinical students at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies for over two decades. A native of Portland, Oregon, Rabbi Shawn enjoys hiking, reading biographies, novels, and poetry, and creating visual arts. Her favorite poet is Mary Oliver. She received her B.A. in English Literature from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in Hebrew Letters from the University of Judaism, and Rabbinic ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/KYgL9xx1RdSk4mazCkrmEw#/registration>

### **The Religious Turn – Israeli Art and Judaism**

Sunday, May 18, 1:00 pm ET (online)

In recent years, the Israeli art scene has been buzzing with a renewed fascination for Jewish tradition, spirituality, and religion. But is this resurgence merely a passing trend, or does it signal a deeper cultural and social transformation? As artists increasingly engage with religious themes, whether through reverence, critique, or reinvention, they are reshaping the visual and conceptual language of contemporary Israeli art. To unravel the intricate relationship between Jewish and Israeli identity, we'll start with a historical backdrop before diving into the key artistic shifts of the past fifteen years. Through this journey, we'll uncover the powerful stories these works tell about the evolving soul of Israeli society today.

**Shirel Horovitz** is a multidisciplinary artist creating sculptures, drawings, videos and installations exploring the relations between people and place. She earned her BFA from Bezalel Academy in Jerusalem, and her MA from the interdisciplinary art program in Tel Aviv University. Her works were exhibited in museums and galleries in Israel and the US. She is recipient of the Rabinovich prize 2018 and the Weisman art grant for 2023, and she is currently working towards a solo show opening in The Herzliya Artists' Residence Gallery in 2025. Alongside her art practice, Shirel is the creative director of CSP, a lecturer, teaches art and is an art consultant to a variety of private groups and institutions.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/kNtUcn-1QJmBaX8CFzgMvw#/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.com/visit/>

## GIVING

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

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

## 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](mailto:intake@yadchessed.org) for a confidential conversation. Questions can be directed to [info@yadchessed.org](mailto:info@yadchessed.org).

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

## OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

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

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## 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)*





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