

Adult Education



Columbia Jewish Congregation

Winter/Spring 2022 Virtual Course Offerings



Virtual Tour of Jewish Rome with Sara Pavoncello

Sunday, January 9, 2022 | 1:00pm

Participants will learn about the history of the Jewish Community of Rome, the oldest in Europe, from its beginning in 161 BCE to modern times. Using pictures, maps and videos, Sara will speak about the bond between Jerusalem and the Colosseum, about the Ghetto that started in 1555 and ended just in 1870. She will explain how this terrible experience affected life and traditions of the Jews of Rome in both good and bad ways. A special focus will be about the Shoah, the Nazi occupation, and how her family and other community members survived. We will learn about typical Jewish Roman traditions such as delicious Kosher recipes, the Giudaico Romanesco (their unique language) and the origin of some of the typical Jewish Roman last names.

[Please click here](#) to register in advance and to receive Zoom connection information.

The Golden Age of Jewish Life in Sepharad/Spain – Guide for the Perplexed

A Virtual Historical Tour with Mike Hollander

Sunday, February 6, 2022 | 1:00 pm

For centuries, the Jewish community of Spain was one the world's most significant. It's creative achievements in the arts, sciences, literature, medicine, diplomacy, etc. were unprecedented for a Diaspora community, largely because of the interaction and integration of the Jewish community in Muslim Spain. What is the legacy of this important community? We will visit some of the more important Jewish centers, including Córdoba, birthplace of Maimonides, Granada, home of the beautiful Alhambra Palace, where Ferdinand and Isabel issued their expulsion order, as well as the beautiful synagogues of Toledo. The presentation will also touch upon the complexity of minority/majority relations, the tension between integration and assimilation, and celebrating the rich legacy of Sephardic Jewry.

[Please click here](#) to register in advance to receive Zoom connection information.

MEET THE AUTHOR SERIES

Hosted by Congregation Torat El in New Jersey

Danny Abebe — From Africa to Zion

Sunday, January 23, 2022

12:00pm

From Africa to Zion is an extraordinary life story, but above all—it is a story about people, about love, and about the importance of family, regardless of skin color or ethnicity. “This is the Ethiopian Israeli memoir we’ve been waiting for.” Danny Adeno Abebe tells us the truth, in all its painful complexity, about the Ethiopian experience in Israel. No Jewish community paid a higher price on the road to Zion than Ethiopian Jews; none has been received more grudgingly by Israeli society. By turns beautiful, agonizing, inspiring and hopeful, this is an essential book for understanding Israel today. This sharply observed and touching book is also the perfect introduction to the complicated, infuriating, and inspiring journey of Ethiopian Jews to Israel – a journey that continues a generation after arrival.

[Click here](#) for more information and to register for Zoom link.

Susan Shapiro — The Forgiveness Tour

Thursday, May 19, 2022

7:30pm

Forgiveness is a very important part of Jewish theology. Susan Shapiro, in *The Forgiveness Tour*, asks the question: Can you forgive the person who hurt you and refuses to apologize or express regret? Shapiro takes the reader on a journey showing how coping with forgiveness eventually leads to forgiving yourself. This is a beautifully written memoir which includes wisdom from men and women of different cultures and backgrounds.

Susan Shapiro is a Professor of Writing at NYU and Columbia. She lives with her husband in New York City and has written 15 books.

[Click here](#) for more information and to register for Zoom link.

Joshua Green — Unstoppable

Thursday, July 21, 2022

7:30pm

Joshua Green pens an epic David and Goliath adventure, *Unstoppable*, a riveting immigrant story, filled with grit, cunning, luck, and determination. From a youth filled with Nazi beatings and deportation, to Auschwitz, Siggi B. Wilzig survived in the darkest places, using his wits to stay alive. After liberation, Siggi goes to work for the US Army, a job that earns him a visa to America. From a humbling position working in a sweatshop, he went on to become the CEO of a New York Stock Exchange company. Joshua Greene is a renowned Holocaust scholar, author, and filmmaker. He has appeared on national media outlets such as CNN, FOX News, and NPR.

[Click here](#) for more information and to register for Zoom link.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire: Out of Tragedy Comes Social Justice

Thursday, February 10, 2022 | 8:30 pm
with Pamela Nadell

Pamela Nadell discusses the fire and its aftermath in her award-winning recent book, *America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today*, recipient of the 2019 National Jewish Book Award “Jewish Book of the Year.” Nadell will discuss East European immigrant women in New York City in the first decade of the twentieth century. It was an event which galvanized the women’s labor movement, transformed New York state workers’ rights and factory safety legislation, and propelled women into the forefront of organizing, social justice activism, and a new trajectory of leadership in America.

[Please click here](#) to register in advance to receive Zoom connection information.

Jews and Tattoos: A Deep Dive Into One of Judaism's Mighty Taboos

Monday, March 21, 2022 | 7:30pm

Have you wondered what Judaism has to say about tattoos? Have you asked yourself "to ink or not to ink" and would like to ground your decision in Jewish values? Do you have tattoos but you are worried you won't be buried in a Jewish cemetery? Or, are you a curious person who loves learning more about Judaism? GREAT...this class is meant for you!

On International Tattoo Day, join **Rabbi Michael Hess Webber** for a deep dive into Jewish texts, old wives' tales, and customs around the topic of tattooing. If you have questions on the topic, you are welcome to submit them in advance and the rabbi will gather materials accordingly. You can email your questions to rabbimichael@columbiajewish.org.

[Please click here](#) to register in advance to receive Zoom connection information.

A Virtual Walking Tour of Jewish Venice

**Sunday, April 3, 2022
2:00 pm**

Luisella Romeo, Registered Tour Guide

The ancient Jewish ghetto in Venice is in the Cannaregio district, one of the most authentic Venetian areas in the city, and yet quite unknown to tourists. In a multicultural and multiethnic city, as Venice was, in an area far away from the center of power, the Jewish ghetto was born in 1516. We will try to understand what distinguished this area from all other Jewish quarters in Europe at that time as well as learn the history of the Venetian Jewish community till nowadays.

[Click here to register](#) to register in advance to receive Zoom connection information.

A Virtual Walking Tour of Jewish Prague

**Sunday, April 24, 2022
Afternoon time TBD**

Dr. Bonita Rhoads, Prague based American

Bonita Rhoads (along with a Czech Jewish Studies PhD) will give a live virtual tour of Jewish Prague. This tour will include the interiors of their well-known synagogues and museums.

[Click here to register](#) in advance to receive Zoom connection information.

AMERICAN JUDAISM



PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE
A Three-Part Series

An Old Faith in the New World: The History of American Judaism

**Thursday, March 3, 2022
8:30pm**

Jonathan Sarna, Brandeis University

A lively presentation on American Judaism from 1654 to the present by the acclaimed scholar who wrote the bestselling book on the subject, American Judaism: A History. Beginning in the colonial era, Sarna recounts the dynamic story of people struggling to be Americans and Jews. He shows how each generation of American Jews has had to wrestle anew with the question of whether its own children and grandchildren will remain Jewish. Bringing the story down to the present, he illustrates how the past can both inform and inspire.

American Jews & White Supremacy: The Present Dilemmas of an Unstable History

**Thursday, March 31, 2022
8:30pm**

Lila Corwin Berman, Temple University

Over the last five years, Americans have reckoned anew with the history of this country's racism and what that history requires from the present. In this talk, Professor Lila Corwin Berman asks how American Jews fit—or do not fit—in these often painful and polarizing conversations. She argues that older debates about whether Jews were "white," should be supplanted by newer efforts to ask how whiteness organizes power and when and how Jews have been included in or excluded from that racialized system of American power.

The American Jewish Present and What it Indicates About the Future: A Sociologist's View

**Sunday, May 22, 2022
1:00pm**

Samuel Heilman, Distinguished Professor, CUNY Graduate Center, Queens College

Professor Heilman will offer a perspective on American Jewry, its numbers, its politics, its family dynamics, its religiosity, and its attachments (or lack thereof) to Israel and speculate about where each is likely to go in the years ahead.

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