A Selection of University Synagogue Speakers Over the Years

Adam Abakar, Darfuri activist
Rabbi Barbara Aiello on “The Secret Jews of Italy”
Lalo Alcaraz, comic artist
Trudy Alexy on her book “The Mezuzah In the Madonna’s Foot”
Ambassador Sven Alkalaj from Bosnia on Judaism in his life and work
Ed Asner, actor in a one-man play and again in “The Soap Myth”
Rabbi Arik Ascherman, Executive Director of the Israeli organization Rabbis For Human Rights
UCSD Professor Laurence Baron on “Christianities of Compassion and Complicity: Religious Reasons for Persecuting and Protecting Jews During the Holocaust”
Professor Michael Bazyler of Whittier Law School and California Court of Appeal Justice Richard Fybel on “From Legal Barbarism to Nuremberg”
Journalist Gal Beckerman on his book “When They Come for Us, We’ll Be Gone: The Epic Struggle To Save Soviet Jewry”
Professor Arthur Benjamin on “Mathemagics”
Professor Stephen Berk on "Jesus, Masada and Yavneh"
Professor Eli Berman on “Radical, Religious and Violent: Economics and Terrorism in the Middle East and Afghanistan”
Danielle Berrin, Jewish Journal columnist, on “Hollywood Jews”
Elizabeth Bettina on her book “It Happened In Italy: Untold Stories of How the People of Italy Defied the Horrors of the Holocaust”
Ken Blady on “My Son, the Barber-Surgeon: Jews and Medicine”
Psychoanalyst Dr. Hedda Bolgar on “What I’ve Learned Over The Past 103 Years”
The Honorable Thomas Borer, Swiss Ambassador to the United States, on “The Swiss Role In the Theft of Jewish Property”
Rabbi Anne Brener, author of “Mourning And Mitzvah”
Bishop Tod Brown, Catholic Diocese of Orange, and Professor Michael Barenbaum, American Jewish University, on “The Passion: The Death of Jesus and The Jews”
Dr. Jerry D. Campbell, President of Claremont University, on “Creating The World’s First Jewish/Christian/Muslim Seminary”
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Chapman University Law School Dean Tom Campbell on “Is Progress Possible Across Ideological Lines?”

Dr. Tony Campolo on “A Citizen’s Guide to Faith and Politics”

UCI Professor of Law Jennifer Chacon on “Immigrant Communities, Language and Memory”

Stand-up comedian Joel Chasnoff

Naomi Chazan and former Deputy Speaker of the Knesset

UCLA Professor Dr. Shai Cherry on “Jesus, Judaism and Christianity: History and Myth”


Former UCI Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky, Professor Laurie Levenson and Justice William Bedsworth on “The People vs. Eve: A Trial,” “The People vs. Rebecca and Jacob: A Trial” and “The People vs. Moses: A Trial” with Rabbi Arnold Rachlis, Reverend Dr. Paul Tellstrom and Dr. Tammi Schneider.


Idan Cohen, Israeli choreographer, and dancer Noa Shiloh

Marthe Cohn on “Behind Enemy Lines: A Jewish Spy in Nazi Germany”

Professor Norman Cohen on “Hineini: Making the Bible Come Alive As We Confront Our Own Relationships”

Roger Cohen, New York Times columnist, on “The Arab Spring: Israel In A Transformed Middle East”

President James L. Doti, Chapman University, on “Life Lessons for Leadership”

Veteran actor and playwright Tom Dugan performing “The Nazi Hunter – Simon Wiesenthal”

Former Presidential Candidate and former Governor Michael Dukakis on “America’s Next Four Years And Beyond”

Georgetown Law Professor Peter Edelman on “Searching For America’s Heart”

Former Assistant Secretary of State Stuart Eizenstat on “Imperfect Justice” on Jewish assets looted by the Swiss and others during the Holocaust

Jordan Elgrably and Mariam Atash Nawabi on “Americans and the Middle East: Bridging Political and Religious Divides – The Art of Cultural Diplomacy”
A Selection of University Synagogue Speakers Over the Years

Professor Rachel Elior on “Demystifying Jewish Mysticism”

Choreographer Diane Elliott on blending dance and liturgy

David Epstein, historian, on “Jews of the West”

Rob Eshman, former Jewish Journal editor, on “Jews Gone Mild” about the challenges and opportunities facing American Jews today

The Honorable Nabil Fahmy, Egyptian Ambassador to the United States, on “The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Prospects For Peace in the Middle East”


Professor Leonard Fein on “Now That We Can Be Who We Said We Would Be If Only We Could Be: Are We?”

Professor Rabbi Reuven Firestone, Hebrew Union College, on “What Does Islam Really Say about Judaism and Christianity?”

Tirzah Firestone, rabbi and Jungian therapist, on her book, “The Receiving: Reclaiming Jewish Women’s Wisdom”

Ari Fleischer, President Bush’s former Press Secretary

Mike and Mitchell Flint on their documentary “Angels In The Sky”

Jonathan Safran Foer on his book “Everything Is Illuminated”

Dennis Fritz, author of “Journey Toward Justice,” about being found innocent after 10 years in prison by the Innocence Project

Prof. Maurice Friedman on Martin Buber and Hasidism

Rabbi Capers Funnye, Michelle Obama’s cousin, on “The Black Jewish History Of America”

Isaiah Gafni, Professor of Jewish History at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, on “Is Judaism Really a Religion?”

Former Los Angeles District Attorney Gil Garcetti on “Therefore, Choose Life: The Moral And Economic Benefits of Abolishing The Death Penalty”

Dr. Howard Gillman, Chancellor of University of California, Irvine

UCI Chancellor Howard Gillman and UC Berkeley Dean of Law School Erwin Chemerinsky on their book “Free Speech On Campus”

Stephen Glass on “Shattered Glass: A Story of Deceit and A Journey Towards Rehabilitation”

Peter Goldmark on "Time to Get It Right: Climate, Energy and Security Policy in the 21st Century"
A Selection of University Synagogue Speakers Over the Years

Ambassador Bradley Gordon, Director of Policy and Government Affairs at AIPAC, on “Ancient Affinities: The Historic Jewish Connection to the Land of Israel”

Howard Gordon, writer and producer of television shows “Homeland” and “24,” on “Terrorism, Anxiety, Politics and Popular Culture”

John Gray on his book “Why Mars and Venus Collide”

Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg on “The Triumph of Life: Judaism’s Vision”

Rabbi Steve Greenberg, the first “out of the closet” gay Orthodox rabbi in history, on “Gayness and God”

Gidi Grinstein, a member of Prime Minister Barak’s Peace Negotiating Team and Executive Director of Project Re’ut, a Tel Aviv Think Tank, on “Making Peace Between Israel and Its Neighbors”

Dr. Eric Handler on “The Invisible Problem: Orange County Homelessness”

Sam Harris, atheist and neuroscientist, on his book “The End of Faith: Religion, Terror And The Future Of Reason”

Gary Hart, former U.S. Senator, on “Are There Any Truly Just People Today?”

Naama Haviv, genocide scholar, on “From The Holocaust to Darfur and Congo....Never Again?”

Laura Hillman, Schindler’s List survivor, on “I Will Plant You A Lilac Tree”

Dr. Rick Hodes on “Saving Lives In Ethiopia One Person At A Time”

Dr. Stanley Hordes, New Mexico State Historian, on “Secret Jews of the American Southwest”

Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai on “The Centrality of Tel Aviv to Israel’s Future”

David Jacobsen on being a hostage in Lebanon

Israeli educator Lauren Joseph on “Ensuring Equality For Both Jews And Arabs In Israel”

Dr. Sadullah Khan on “Islam In America and The World”

Dr. Zachary Karabell on his book “Peace Be Upon You: The Story Of Muslim, Christian and Jewish Co-existence”

Professor Steven Katz, Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies at Boston University, on “The Messianic Idea in Judaism”

Dr. Sharon Keller on “Women of The Bible”

Author Faye Kellerman

Thomas Keneally, author of “Schindler’s List”
A Selection of University Synagogue Speakers Over the Years

Professor Reuven Kimelman, Brandeis University, on “The Sabbath, Sexuality and Salvation”


Yaakov Kirschen, Jerusalem Post editorial cartoonist, on “The Latest News and Other Jokes: A Stand-Up Analysis Of Israel, Iran and Anti-Semitism”

Ezra Klein, editor of VOX and MSNBC and Washington Post journalist, on “America: Thanksgiving and Change”

Gerda Klein on her book, “All But My Life,” on the Holocaust, along with her husband, Kurt Klein, the American GI who liberated her

 Israeli Rabbi Michael Klein-Katz on “Jerusalem: Holy City to Three Faiths”

Actress, Comedian and Writer Annie Korzen

Journalist and Professor Joel Kotkin on “How Should A Divided Jewish Community Respond to President Trump?”

Professor Josh Kun on “And You Shall Know Us By The Trail Of Our Vinyl: The Jewish Past As Told By The Records We’ve Loved And Lost”

Madeleine Kunin, former Vermont Governor, on her book “Pearls, Politics and Power: How Women Can Win and Lead”

Dr. Hartley Lachter on “Was Maimonides A Radical?”

Martin Landau, actor and star of “Mission Impossible,” “Crimes and Misdemeanors” and “Ed Wood”

Former Los Angeles Dodger Manager Tommy Lasorda on “Bleeding Dodger Blue: What I’ve Learned About the Power of Motivation Through My Years As a Baseball Player and Manager”

British Jewish leader, social activist and educator Clive Lawton on “The Truth About Europe And The Jews”

Prof. Edmund Leites on “Judaism And Psychoanalysis”

Dr. Michael Lerner, editor of Tikkun Magazine, on “Jewish Renewal”

Former Senator Carl Levin (D-MI), Chair of the Armed Services Committee, on “America’s Role in the World”

UCSD Professor Thomas E. Levy on “Archaeology Illuminates The Bible”

Leon Leyson, youngest survivor on Schindler’s List

Professor Elizabeth Loftus, Distinguished Professor of Social Ecology at UCI and a member of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, on “Holocaust Memories: Pain and Truth”
A Selection of University Synagogue Speakers Over the Years

Dr. Wendy Lower on “Hitler’s Furies: German Women In The Nazi Killing Fields”

Gal Luft and Anne Korin - two of America’s leading energy security advocates

Frank Luntz, political analyst, on “What Americans Really Want… Really”

Poet Andrew Lustig on “I Am Jewish”

Gavriel Mairone, founder of the Global Justice Group, on “Global Justice: Following Terrorist Dollars”

Professor Armand Mauss on "Everything That You Ever Wanted To Know About Mormonism And Its Relationship To Judaism"

Cliff May, political analyst, on “Terrorism, Totalitarianism and The War of Ideas”

Dr. Jack Miles, UCI Professor of English and Religious Studies, on his books “The Biography Of God” and “Judaism In The Norton Anthology of World Religions”

Professor Kristen Monroe, UCI, on “Altruism and Righteous Rescuers” and “Nurturing Altruism: Lessons For Ourselves and Our Children From Studying Righteous Holocaust Rescuers”

Professor Deborah Dash Moore, Vassar College, on “GI Jews”

Dr. Stephen Morse, Director of Bio-Terrorism for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, on “Bio-Terrorism: Myth and Reality”

Dr. Michael Newdow, atheist, on “Challenging “Under God” In the Pledge of Allegiance”

Chris Nicola on “The Secret of Priest’s Grotto: A Holocaust Survival Story”


Irene Opdyke, a Righteous Holocaust Rescuer

Dr. Norm Ornstein, American Enterprise Institute Congress expert, on “The Broken Branch: How Congress Is Failing America and How to Get It Back On Track,” “American Politics: Now and In The Future,” “American Politics in The Age of Obama,” and “How Did We Get Here? Where Do We Go From Here?”

Dr. Shalom Paul, Hebrew University Professor of Bible, on “The Garden of Eden: Myth and Reality”

Dr. Judea Pearl, father of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, on his son’s life and work and his vision for a more peaceful and tolerant world.

Rabbi Ariel Picard, an Orthodox rabbi; Father George Khoury, Chairman of the Israel Interfaith Association (Haifa) and President of the Ecclesiastical Court in Haifa and Galilee, and Imam Ghassen Manasra, Founder and Director of Ansar Al-Sunnah, a faith-based movement in Israel.
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advocating moderate Islam and interfaith dialogue on “Abrahamic Voices of Peace from the Holy Land”

The Piven Family - Jeremy, Shira and Joyce - performing “An Evening Of Jewish Stories”

Valerie Plame, former covert CIA agent, on her book “Fair Game” about the conspiracy to destroy her career by leaking her identity to the media.

Rabbi Uri Regev on “The Dangers of Jewish Fundamentalism to Israeli Democracy”

Sharon Rennert, granddaughter of Holocaust resistance fighter Tuvia Bielski, on the movie “Defiance”

Professor Wade Clark Roof, an expert on contemporary religion and religious pluralism

Director Asaf Ron and Program Director Ulfat Haider for Beit Hagefen Arab Jewish Cultural Center in Haifa on “Israeli Jews and Arabs Are Creating A New Israel”

Writer Danny Rubin on the 25th anniversary of his film Groundhog Day

Tibor Rubin, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient

Anthony Russell, African American Jew By Choice Yiddish singer

Carl St. Clair, Pacific Symphony Music Director and Conductor, on “The Spirituality of Music”

Rabbi Sandy Sasso on “Nurturing the Religious Imagination of Children and Adults” and “Jewish Stories of Love and Marriage”

Leonard Saxe, Brandeis University Professor, on “Intermarriage: Becoming the Most Inclusive Community That We Can Be”

James Schamus, Former CEO of Focus Features and a writer, director and producer, on “My Wife Is A Terrorist: Lessons in Storytelling from the Department of Homeland Security”

Dr. Mel Scult on “The Radical Judaism of Mordecai Kaplan”

Rabbi Sid Schwarz on his books “Jewish Megatrends: Charting the Course of the American Jewish Community,” “Finding a Spiritual Home,” “Judaism and Justice: The Jewish Passion to Repair the World”

Attorney Randol Schoenberg on “The Recovery of Nazi-Looted Paintings from Austria”

Bruno Serato, owner of the Anaheim White House restaurant, on “Feeding the Kids in America”

Daniel Siedemann, Israeli civil rights attorney, on “Jerusalem: The Key to Peace”

Israeli journalist Chemi Shalev on “Israel: Democracy, Religious Liberalism And Listening To The Concerns Of The American Jewish Community”

Rabbi Rami Shapiro on “Shiviti: Living In The Presence of God”
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Michael Shermer, Scientific American columnist, host of the television series “Exploring the Unknown” and author of “The Science of Good and Evil”

David Shneyer, spirituality teacher and composer, on his innovative folk, country and bluegrass Jewish melodies and spiritual teachings

Dr. Daniel Siegel, psychiatrist and professor at UCLA, on “Mindsight and the Biology of Morality”

Jonathan Shapiro on “Liars, Lawyers and the Art of Storytelling”

African Rabbi Gershom Sizomu on “Abayudaya: The Black Jews of Uganda”

David Solomon on “Women Who Have Changed The Jewish World”

Professor Raphael Sonenshein on “President Obama, Congress and the Jewish Agenda”

Joel Stein, former Los Angeles Times humor columnist, on “Writing Jewish: Why I Feel More Jewish As A Columnist Than In Real Life”

Eli Stokols, White House Reporter for The Wall Street Journal and MSNBC political analyst, on “Covering An Administration In Which Truth and Reality Are Increasingly Subjective and Fraught”

Rabbi Michael Strassfeld on his book “Embracing Judaism As A Spiritual Practice”

Musician and Professor Yale Strom on “Klezmer Music – Its History and Culture”

Chapman University Chancellor Daniele Struppa on “Elie Wiesel”

Doug Suisman, Rand Corporation architect of a future Palestinian state

Craig Taubman and his Band performing a Hanukkah concert

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin on “The Sky Is Not Falling: God, Love And Money In Times of Crisis”

Rabbi Marvin Tokayer on “The Exotic Jews of China, Japan and India”

Kenneth Turan, LA Times film critic, on “The World of Yiddish Film and Culture” and “Not To Be Missed: 54 Favorites From A Lifetime of Film”

Ethiopian Jewish singer Alula Tzaddik

Linden Waddell, actress/singer performing “Hello Again! The Songs of Allan Sherman”

Hebrew University Law Professor Mohammed Wattad on “Being an Israeli Arab: Everyday Life, Legal Hurdles, Recent Elections and Possibilities for Peace”

Reverend Jim Wallis, author of the bestseller, “God’s Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong And The Left Doesn’t Get It” and “Rediscovering Values On Wall Street, Main Street And Your Street: A Moral Compass For The New Economy”

Senator Elizabeth Warren on “The Future of America”
Mikey Weinstein, Military Religious Freedom Foundation founder, on “The Dangers Of Christian Religious Fundamentalism”

Arnold Weiss, actor, “A Visit with Viktor Frankl”

Rev. Mark Whitlock, minister and economic development officer for the First African Methodist Episcopal (FAME) Church in L.A. and Pastor of Christ Our Redeemer AME Church in Irvine, on Dr. Martin Luther King Shabbat and “Black Lives And All Lives Matter”

Former U.S. Consul General to Jerusalem and State Department Coordinator for Counter Terrorism Ambassador Phil Wilcox on “Israel and Palestine: Perpetual Conflict Or Can Obama Make Peace?”

Dr. Bernd Wollschaeger on his book “A German Life”

Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary

Ron Young, Executive Director of the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, on “Bringing Peace To The Middle East”

Jane Ziegelman on her book ”97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families In One New York Tenement”

Dr. Aviva Zornberg, author of “Genesis: The Beginning of Desire”

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