



J[↑] Street | **20**
CONVENTION | **26**

*Building Tomorrow:
Regional Peace & Resilient Democracy*

CONVENTION PROGRAM

February 28–March 3 | Washington, DC



Save the Date

2027 J STREET NATIONAL CONVENTION

November 6 — November 9, 2027

WASHINGTON, DC

Registration will open October 1, 2026



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LEGACY OF PEACE SOCIETY

The Legacy of Peace Society honors those who have made a planned gift to the J Street Education Fund — helping to sustain a pro-Israel, pro-peace, pro-democracy American movement committed to Israel’s future as the democratic homeland of the Jewish people.

If you’re here at the Convention, we know you share J Street’s values and care deeply enough to take action. But the work we are all engaged in — advancing diplomacy, equality, human rights and a just, lasting peace for Israelis and Palestinians — is long-term and multigenerational. It requires sustained commitment over time, beyond any single moment or campaign, and defines our legacy for the future. **That’s why we hope you’ll consider joining J Street’s Legacy of Peace Society to ensure that this work, and the values behind it, endures for generations.**

There are many simple ways to make a legacy gift:

- **A bequest in your will, living trust or estate plan**
- **An IRA or other retirement account**
- **Bank accounts or investment assets**

Planned gifts have no immediate impact on your finances and can offer meaningful tax benefits — enabling you to make a lasting and impactful gift beyond what may be possible today.



For more information, please scan the QR code, visit jstreet.org/joining-legacy-peace-society or contact giving@jstreet.org.



AGENDA

Saturday, February 28

1:00–9:00PM

*Congressional CD
(Lobby Level)*

REGISTRATION OPEN

6:00PM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE
Welcome to the Convention

Word on the Street Live at Convention brings J Street’s weekly Substack video podcast into the heart of the event — live, in person, and open to all. Stop by to watch candid, fast-paced conversations with movement leaders, activists, policy experts and faith leaders grappling with the toughest questions facing Israel, Palestine and US policy today.

*Ballroom Lobby
District B*

EXHIBITOR TABLES OPEN (6:00–9:00PM)

6:45PM

*Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)*

J Street Community Havdalah

Kick off our 2026 National Convention with a meaningful, musical J Street Community Havdalah. Through this immersive experience, we’ll close Shabbat together and step into the week ahead grounded, energized and ready to bring our whole selves to our shared mission of building a world rooted in justice, equality, peace and democracy.

7:30–9:00PM

*Regency
Ballroom
(Lobby Level)*

OPENING NIGHT

Building Tomorrow: Choosing Rehumanization — Stories of Moral Courage

The opening night for J Street’s 2026 National Convention — Building Tomorrow: Regional Peace & Resilient Democracy — brings together courageous Israeli and Palestinian voices who are living with the consequences of violence, loss and political failure. Nonetheless, these leaders are choosing partnership and rehumanization. Through personal testimony, shared reflection, music and movement-building, the evening traces a journey from trauma and grief toward empathy, solidarity and active peacebuilding.

Rather than abstract debate, this plenary centers lived experience and human connection, challenging us to see one another fully and to imagine what collective healing and a shared future might require. It sets the moral and emotional foundation for the days ahead, affirming that peace is not only a political project, but a human one.

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| OPENING REMARKS | Jeremy Ben-Ami , President, J Street |
| ROLL CALL | J Street U National Student Board |
| REMARKS | Elana Kaminka , Parents Circle Families Forum and Our Generation Speaks |
| FEATURED PRESENTATION | Rula Daood , National Co-Director, Standing Together |
| | Uri Weltmann , National Field Organizer, Standing Together |
| FEATURED PRESENTATION | Maoz Inon , Co-CEO, InterAct International |
| | Aziz Abu Sarah , Co-CEO, InterAct International |
| PERFORMANCES | Jerusalem Youth Chorus |

AGENDA

Sunday, March 1

7:00AM-8:00PM

Congressional CD
(Lobby Level)

REGISTRATION OPEN

7:00AM

Bryce
(2nd Floor)

Shacharit Egalitarian Morning Service

7:45AM-8:45AM

MOVEMENT BREAKFAST MEETUPS

Thornton AB
Congressional B
Grand Teton

Reform Movement

Conservative Movement

Reconstructionist Movement

Convention participants who identify with the Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist movements are invited to start the day in conversation and community. Enjoy breakfast with the head of your movement to hear updates and share ideas, challenges and inspiration from your denominational and leadership work.

8:00AM-8:55AM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE — TAKE 1

Ballroom Lobby,
District AB

EXHIBITOR TABLES OPEN (8:00AM-5:00PM)

8:00AM-9:00AM

Ballroom Lobby
(Ballroom Level)

All Attendee Breakfast 

Coffee, conversation and connection. Meet select J Street Senior Staff and J Street Policy Center Fellows for informal morning chats to jump-start your day.



Sunday, March 1

9:00AM-10:15AM

BREAKOUT BLOCK ONE

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

The J Street Policy Center Presents: Israel's Political Crossroads: A Preview of the Upcoming Elections

One of the most consequential elections in Israeli history is fast approaching, and much remains unclear. This is the first election since Netanyahu's far-right coalition declared open war on the country's judicial system, and the Israeli public will certainly seek to hold the coalition accountable for the security failures that led to October 7 and its disastrous handling of the war that followed. Netanyahu's Likud party somehow still leads the polls but currently appears to have no clear route to forming a majority coalition. Naftali Bennett, a former settler leader turned leader of the anti-Netanyahu camp, remains a distant second and would likely have to rely on the Arab parties — with whom he has vowed not to cooperate — to form a government. A panel of experts on Israeli politics will join us to make sense of it all: What would a viable alternative coalition without Netanyahu look like? Could Bennett break with his past commitments and realign the political landscape? What happens if no one succeeds in forming a coalition? And will Netanyahu manage to sideline some Arab parties from participating in the elections?

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

Building Democratic Power through Civil Society in Israel

Israeli democracy is under immense pressure. Years of political turmoil, attacks on judicial independence and anti-democratic legislation have strained the resilience of Israel's civic institutions. Yet a vibrant network of activists, organizers and community leaders — many supported by the New Israel Fund — continues to defend democratic values, promote equality and strengthen Israel's social fabric at this critical moment. This session will explore how Israeli civil society is advocating for civil rights, minority rights and human rights for all. We will examine the key challenges to, and opportunities for, renewed democratic momentum in Israel. Together, we will discuss: What is civil society doing today to reinforce democratic norms, protect the right to vote and advance equality for all? How do activists on the ground safeguard minority rights amid acute polarization? And what role should the American Jewish community play in bolstering Israeli democracy and supporting one of the only pillars of Israeli democracy still functioning independently — civil society?

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

The Intersection of America First & Pro-Israel, Pro-Peace

For over a decade, voices on the right have rarely criticized counterproductive Israeli policy, advocated for steps that would advance prospects for a two-state solution or even acknowledged the humanity of Palestinians. That has changed since October 7, and now, more and more conservatives are questioning the "Israel-right-or-wrong," blank-check approach. While a portion of these America-Firsters certainly are driven by an antisemitic streak, that cannot explain away the breadth of this sea change. How is pro-Israel politics changing on the right? Are there opportunities for the pro-Israel, pro-peace camp to work with these voices and influence the Trump administration and the broader political dialogue? Or is that route too full of pitfalls?



9:00AM-10:15AM (continued)

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

Taking Back the House

With fresh momentum after decisive wins this past November, 2026 opens with the Democrats on strong footing. In this session, we'll break down the battleground, analyze how redistricting has impacted the map and trace the path toward a majority in the House.

Congressional A
(Lobby Level)

Listening from the Heart

Join Parents Circle Families Forum (PCFF) for a session that requires your active participation to gain tools and resources to facilitate meaningful conversations about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in your own communities. Practice empathic listening in groups and pairs, and learn from Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers working on the ground for reconciliation. This "Listening from the Heart" program fosters understanding, empathy and constructive dialogue, addressing the polarization and divisiveness observed in universities, work places, synagogues and other communities. Learn from the people most impacted by violence who work every day for reconciliation, and begin to listen and lead from the heart.

Thornton
(11th Floor)

Leadership Track: Torah, Tikkun, and Turnout: Organizing in Synagogue Communities (OPEN TO J STREET LEADERS ONLY)

Synagogues are the most time-efficient and effective places to find pro-Israel, pro-peace, pro-democracy individuals who may engage in our work. There is a lot of potential to grow the impact of our movement by organizing strategically within our own synagogue communities. This session will exploreh:

- Organizing best practices for developing relationships in a synagogue community
- Designing synagogue events and follow-up that will both educate participants and grow the movement.
- Addressing challenges, such as working in synagogues that decline to partner with J Street or have very vocal opponents.

Columbia C
(Ballroom Level)

IDEAS STAGE

Join us at the Ideas Stage, where bold thinking meets real-world impact. Featuring the 2026 J Street National Convention Champions of Change Exhibitors and featured authors who are shaping the future through ideas, dialogue, and action. Come discover new perspectives, engage in meaningful conversations, and be inspired by leaders who are driving change — one idea at a time.

9:00-9:30AM

AUTHOR CORNER

The Necessity of Exile by Shaul Magid moderated by Nati Faber

9:35-9:55AM

BOOK SIGNING

9:35-9:50AM

EXHIBITOR

New Jewish Narrative

10:30AM-12:30PM

Regency
Ballroom
(Ballroom Level)

SUNDAY PLENARY

Building Tomorrow: Leadership, Courage and the Architecture of Regional Peace

At a moment of profound reckoning after the Israel-Hamas war, this plenary examines what it will take to 'build tomorrow' and who must lead that work now.

Bringing together American Jewish leaders, Israeli political figures, regional statesmen, US policymakers and international experts, the session confronts the moral and political stakes facing Israel, Palestinians, the United States and the American Jewish diaspora. It grapples with the devastation in Gaza and the urgent challenges of security, stabilization and reconstruction, alongside regional pathways to break cycles of violence and endless conflict.

Through high-level conversations on US policy and America's role on the global stage, the plenary explores the future of the US-Israel relationship, the resilience of the rules-based international order and how Israel's upcoming elections will shape the democratic future of the state — including prospects for establishing a Palestinian state and a durable regional peace.

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| WELCOME REMARKS | Marci Gerston , Board Member, J Street |
| REMARKS | Rabbi Rick Jacobs , President and CEO, Union for Reform Judaism Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal , CEO, USCJ and Rabbinical Assembly Rabbi Deborah Waxman , President and CEO, Reconstructing Judaism |
| FEATURED VIDEO | Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa , Former Palestinian Foreign Minister |
| FEATURED CONVERSATION | Ehud Olmert , Former Prime Minister of Israel |
| MODERATED | Noa Landau , Haaretz Deputy Editor-in-Chief |
| REMARKS | Maj. Gen. (ret.) Yair Golan , Leader of the Democrats Becka Wall , Director of Multimedia Strategy, J Street Meirav Solomon , President, J Street U National Student Board MK Dr. Mansour Abbas , Chairman of the United Arab List (Ra'am) |
| FEATURED CONVERSATION | Philippe Sands KC , Visiting Professor, Harvard Law School Susan Glasser , Staff Writer, <i>The New Yorker</i> |
| INTRODUCTION | Peter Frey , Board Chair, J Street |
| REMARKS | Senator Chris Van Hollen , Maryland |

AGENDA

Sunday, March 1

12:45PM-1:45PM

Ballroom Lobby

All Attendee Lunch   

Columbia C
(Ballroom Level)

IDEAS STAGE

12:45-1:15PM

AUTHOR CORNER

East West Street by Philippe Sands
moderated by Hannah Morris

1:20-1:40PM

BOOK SIGNING

1:20-1:50PM

AUTHOR CORNER

Why Fascists Fear Teachers by Randi Weingarten
moderated by Tali deGroot

1:55-2:15PM

BOOK SIGNING

1:15PM-2:50PM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE — TAKE 2

1:00PM-1:45PM

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

Interactive Music & Dialogue Workshop with the Jerusalem Youth Chorus



Sunday, March 1

2:00PM-3:15PM (continued)

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

BREAKOUT BLOCK TWO

The J Street Policy Center Presents — The Future of Gaza — Security, Governance and Reconstruction

The Gaza ceasefire is in place, but the humanitarian situation is still horrific. Violence and destruction have continued, and progress is stalling without US pressure. Nowhere near enough aid is entering the Strip, and the Israeli government has placed excessive bureaucratic requirements that could effectively ban dozens of international aid organizations from operating, along with UNRWA. The best route forward is the 20-point plan that all sides have agreed to, yet progress is undermined as Netanyahu refuses to work with the Palestinian Authority, and Hamas reasserts control in Gaza rather than disarming. This panel will dive into opportunities for a new future in Gaza and the many pitfalls that must be overcome. How can we stabilize the ongoing humanitarian crisis? What is the role of the US right now? How can we avoid the mistakes of GHF and the traps set by maximalist leaders, and how can we implement the postwar plan in Gaza to create lasting peace and security in the region?

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

On the Frontlines: Standing up for Palestinian Rights

Palestinian communities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are facing escalating threats — including settler violence, home and community demolitions, displacement and increasing restrictions on movement — that place their basic safety and human rights at risk. In the face of rampant increases in violence, Israeli and international human rights organizations are working to support vulnerable communities: providing legal assistance, building infrastructure and even putting their bodies on the line to offer protective presence on the ground. This session will explore the fight for Palestinian rights amidst extreme violence. What does support for and partnership with Palestinian communities under occupation look like in today's conditions? And what role should the United States and the global community play in safeguarding rights and ensuring accountability?

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

Organizing for Victory

This session will dig into the mechanics of turning Democrats' energy into real votes. We'll break down what effective voter mobilization programs actually do, why some approaches outperform others and outline how on-the-ground organizing can position Democrats to regain control.

2:00PM-3:15PM (continued)

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

STUDENT ONLY SESSION: *Inside the Movement – Israeli & Palestinian Activists at a Critical Moment*

At a moment of crisis and possibility, this student-only session brings you directly into conversation with Israeli activists working on the ground for peace and justice. In a candid panel moderated by Joseph Hillyard and Ezra Briskin, these organizers will speak to the realities they navigate every day, including the risks, the breakthroughs, the public mood and the hard choices facing the movement right now. Together, we will explore what effective activism looks like in Israel today, how diaspora students can engage responsibly and what it means to stay committed to a vision of shared security and dignity for Israelis and Palestinians. This conversation will give students a clear look at the realities shaping the movement and what it will take to move forward.

Congressional A
(Lobby Level)

In the Desert: The Role & Responsibility of International Diaspora Jewry

Join J-Link, the international progressive Jewish network, as we examine today’s Israel-Diaspora relationship. Extremists in Israel are working to undermine democracy and continue to act in ways that fly in the face of our Jewish values. Post-October 7 domestic politics in many countries have made it increasingly challenging to hold any pro-Israel banner. And while right-wing Zionists continue to support and advance their agenda in coordination with their Israeli partners largely unabated, liberal and progressive supporters of Israel across the globe continue to debate internally and with others about what their relationship with Israel should be. As international Diaspora Jewry, how do we engage with Israel, and what is our responsibility to the Jewish state — especially in moments of disagreement? How do we support our Israeli allies while simultaneously maintaining the space at home for our Jewish, democratic and pro-Israel values?

Columbia C
(Ballroom Level)

IDEAS STAGE

2:00-2:15PM

EXHIBITOR

New Israel Fund

2:20-2:35PM

EXHIBITOR

Our Generation Speaks

2:40-2:55PM

EXHIBITOR

Breaking the Silence



3:30PM-4:45PM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE – TAKE 3

BREAKOUT BLOCK THREE

The J Street Policy Center Presents: No Longer a Creeping Annexation – Smotrich’s Unprecedented Transformation of the West Bank

Prime Minister Netanyahu’s coalition agreement with Bezalel Smotrich granted the far-right Finance Minister a second role in the Defense Ministry, which effectively made him the czar of the West Bank — an unprecedented move many decried as de facto annexation. Three years into his role, our panel of experts will highlight the record-breaking settlement construction blitz that followed, as well as the explosion of illegal outposts, settler violence and systematic displacement of Palestinians. At what point does de facto annexation become legal, de jure annexation? How much of what Smotrich and his allies have done in the West Bank is reversible, and how do we reverse it? What tools exist to fight back against the far-right’s stated effort to bury the viability of a future Palestinian state? Hear from leading experts and activists tracking the realities in the West Bank every day.

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

The J Street Policy Center Presents: The Path to the 23-State Solution – Postwar Regional Integration

After two years of war, the Middle East is undergoing major realignment. Assad was toppled in Syria, and Hezbollah has been degraded in Lebanon, opening the door to potential rapprochement with Israel. The Trump administration is also pushing for Saudi Arabia and other countries to join the Abraham Accords. These developments present a historic opportunity for a 23-State Solution that would fully integrate Israel into the region, establish Palestinian statehood and bring long-term stability to the entire Middle East. Additionally, a comprehensive regional agreement would provide enormous security, intelligence and economic benefits. However, none of this is possible without an Israeli government willing to make serious progress towards a Palestinian state. Our expert speakers will discuss the potential for a 23-State Solution, examining the future of Syria and Lebanon and prospects for Israel-Saudi normalization as well as what steps Israel would need to take with the Palestinians to make this solution a reality.

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

Midterm Moves Toward a Senate Majority

With Trump less popular than ever and a rash of retirements, the Senate is more in play for Democrats than even the most optimistic pundits thought at the beginning of the cycle. In this session, we’ll look at the ever-broadening Senate map, talk through the most competitive primaries and assess potential wins and losses in the Senate.



3:30PM-4:45PM (continued)

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

Allyship in a Post-October 7 World: How to Build Jewish-Inclusive Coalitions for the Sake of Democracy

From antisemitic rhetoric and acts to strong criticism of Israel, tensions are high between the American Jewish community and progressive circles. These tensions, largely gaining prominence after October 7 and the war in Gaza, are informing the guidelines of who to partner with and who to shun. With American democracy — an issue that should concern every Jewish American — on the ballot in the 2026 midterm elections and in 2028 as well, can we overcome our differences? What are our red lines? Where do we (re)build bridges? And how do we come together to defeat hate and defend democracy?

Congressional A
(Lobby Level)

A Time for Peace: Roundtables with Israeli & Palestinian Peace & Shared Society Leaders

Even in moments of deep crisis and collective grief, Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilders continue their work to preserve channels of cooperation, rebuild trust and sustain the possibility of a shared future. This session offers a space for direct conversation with leaders across the peace and shared society ecosystem, providing insight into the human relationships and grassroots initiatives that keep hope alive. Engage directly with peace leaders to hear: What does peacebuilding look like during times of fear and trauma? How do personal relationships enable broader political momentum? What strategies are today's peace leaders employing in this current inflection point for Israel-Palestine?

4:00PM-5:00PM

Thornton
(11th Floor)

JSU College Senior & Young Professionals Happy Hour

This meetup is for undergraduate seniors, graduate students and recent college graduates. Here, you'll get a chance to network with J Street leaders and learn about opportunities to stay engaged with J Street.

4:50PM-5:00PM

Bryce
(2nd Level)

Mincha Egalitarian Afternoon Service

5:00PM-7:00PM

Off-Site

REGIONAL MEETUPS

Midwest

The Dubliner • 4 F St NW, Washington, DC

New England

Hamilton's Bar & Grill • 233 2nd St NW, Washington, DC

Mid-Atlantic & Florida

Present Company Public House • 438 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC

West Coast

Union Pub | Front Bar • 201 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC

Capital, South & Mountain West

Union Pub | Back Bar, Side Room & Patio • 201 Massachusetts Ave NE, Washington, DC

5:30PM-6:30PM

Congressional B
(Lobby Level)

Len Hill Education Program Alumni Happy Hour
(PROGRAM ALUMNI ONLY)

7:00PM

Bryce
(2nd Level)

Maariv Egalitarian Evening Service

7:30PM-8:30PM

Thornton
(11th Floor)

2026 J Street National Convention PAC Event With Roy Cooper

(SEPARATELY TICKETED EVENT)

We're thrilled to invite you to the marquee JStreetPAC event of the National Convention: a reception with Roy Cooper! Cooper is running for the open Senate seat in North Carolina, one of the most competitive races in the country. If there's any chance at retaking the Senate, it's contingent on Roy winning in November.

AGENDA

Sunday, March 1

7:30PM-8:30PM • EVENING PROGRAMMING

*Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)*

Film Screening: Coexistence, My Ass!

Winner of Sundance's Special Jury Award for Freedom of Expression; short-listed for the Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary.

Albi, an organization that supports paradigm-shifting narratives by and about Palestinians and Jews, was proudly involved with this film from day one through all six years of filming. Noam, the film's fiercely funny protagonist, was in Albi's inaugural cohort of Fáros Fellows, its flagship artist program that comprises a two-year residency. The challenges that Noam faces over the course of the film have been shared by every artist of conscience working in, on, and about Israel-Palestine over the past 30 months. Join Albi's Director of Partnerships, Isaac Kates Rose, and another fiercely funny Fáros Fellow, Israeli poet and performer Yossi Zabari, in a conversation about comedy and courage in times of crisis.

ABOUT THE FILM: Noam Shuster Eliassi grew up the literal poster child for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process before making a hard pivot to stand-up comedy and political satire. But as the region sinks deeper into devastating violence, she must meet the moment by challenging her audiences with hard truths that are no laughing matter.

*Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)*

Film Screening: The Sea

Winner of the 2026 Ophir Award for Best Picture

This Jewish-Palestinian collaboration earned 13 Ophir nominations, with Khalifa Natour winning Best Supporting Actor and Best Actor going to young Mohammed Ghazawi. But when The Sea won Best Picture, and thereby became Israel's official Oscars submission, a political firestorm was sparked. Join Libby Lenkinski, the founder and president of Albi — an organization that supports Israeli and Palestinian filmmaking — for a post-screening conversation about how the Minister of Culture chose to put The Sea in his crosshairs, how the government has since tried to set fire to the institutions and infrastructure of Israeli cinema as we know it and why the fight for a free and independent Israeli-Palestinian film industry is more vital than ever.

ABOUT THE FILM: The Sea delivers a deeply tender father-son odyssey in which a Palestinian boy's dream of seeing the sea collides with the painful realities of occupation.



Phonebanking for Daniel Biss

Location and Specific Time TBA

Join JStreetPAC to participate in a phonebanking event for Daniel Biss. Daniel Biss is the mayor of Evanston, IL running to succeed retiring Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky in Illinois' 9th Congressional District. The primary will take place on March 17th, and it's crucial that J Street shows up for a true champion of our values and helps to get out the vote.



←
*Scan QR Code
for more information
+ RSVP*

7:30AM–8:30PM

Congressional CD
(Lobby Level)

REGISTRATION OPEN

7:30AM

Bryce
(2nd Floor)

Alternative Shacharit Egalitarian Morning Service

8:00AM–10:15AM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE — TAKE 4

Ballroom Lobby,
District AB

EXHIBITOR TABLES OPEN (8:00AM–2:00PM)

8:00AM–9:00AM

Ballroom Lobby
(Ballroom Level)

All Attendee Breakfast 

Coffee, conversation and connection. Meet select J Street Senior Staff and J Street Policy Center Fellows for informal morning chats to jump-start your day.

Congressional B
(Lobby Level)

Finance Committee Breakfast (FC COMMITTEE ONLY)

The Finance Committee is invited to an exclusive breakfast, featuring Abby Curran Horrell, the Executive Director of House Majority PAC (HMP).

Columbia C
(Ballroom Level)

IDEAS STAGE

8:15–8:45AM

AUTHOR CORNER

The Holy and the Broken: A Cry for Peace from Land that Must be Shared
by Ittay Flescher
moderated by Eve Lifson

8:50–9:10AM

BOOK SIGNING

8:50–9:05AM

EXHIBITOR

American Friends of
Combatants for Peace

9:15AM–10:30AM

BREAKOUT BLOCK FOUR

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

The J Street Policy Center Presents: US Policy Toward Iran After the 12-Day War

The 12-Day War in 2025, regime corruption, human rights abuses and economic devastation produced a mass uprising and brutal crackdown in Iran. Last summer, Israel and Iran fought a deadly war for twelve days that culminated in the US bombing of Iran’s nuclear sites. The war produced civilian casualties on both sides, billions in damages, and displaced thousands. This was followed months later by mass protests that was suppressed by an unprecedented level of regime violence. In 2026, prospects for renewed war with Iran remain high. Despite the operational successes of the past two years, the first Trump administration’s decision to walk away from the Iran nuclear agreement, combined with the 12-Day War, has created a dangerous and unstable situation. Our expert speakers will discuss the implications of the 12-Day War and US bombing, the recent wave of mass protests against the regime and the ensuing crackdown, the future of the Islamic Republic and its nuclear weapons program and how to reduce the risk of renewed conflict and reopen a diplomatic path forward.

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

The Arab Vote: Palestinian Citizens of Israel Moving the Political Needle

Palestinian citizens of Israel (PCI) — over 20% of the population — hold a crucial yet often overlooked role in shaping Israel’s political trajectory. Their electoral participation, civic engagement and leadership can influence policy, coalition-building and democratic resilience at a moment of deep polarization. With another national election approaching, Arab turnout may be pivotal — potentially determining whether Israel continues under Netanyahu or shifts toward a different political future. In recent years, Jewish-Arab political cooperation has seen dramatic fluctuations — from moments of unprecedented partnership to periods of mistrust and fragmentation — revealing both the possibilities and fragilities of shared political engagement. How are Arab voters impacting Israeli politics today? What obstacles limit their political influence, and how can they be overcome? What role will Jewish-Arab partnership play in Israeli elections this year?

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

Campus Life in a Changing Political Era: Student Experiences, Activism and Leadership

College campuses have become a focal point in national debates as the Trump era reshapes the political and cultural landscape. Post-October 7 and the Gaza War, students are navigating a complex environment marked by heightened polarization, increased scrutiny of higher education and evolving movements around Israel-Palestine. This session brings together student leaders to share firsthand experiences of campus life during this moment — from responding to political pressures and confronting bigotry, including antisemitism, to building communities rooted in dialogue, justice and democratic values. Students will reflect on what it means to organize, learn and lead in this climate; how they engage their peers in nuanced, pro-peace advocacy; and what they hope to see from educators, community partners and elected officials. This session will offer a grounded and multifaceted look at the realities shaping campus life today and how J Street U is helping students meet the challenges and opportunities facing college students today.

9:15AM-10:30AM (continued)

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

Defenders of Democracy? An Accounting of the American Jewish Response to Trump's Agenda

The reelection of Donald Trump raised fears for many Americans, and a significant majority of Jewish Americans, regarding threats to American democracy. Now, over one year into the second Trump administration, those fears have been realized. With lessons learned from the first term and a Republican congressional majority, the White House has swiftly executed plans inflicting great — and possibly irreparable — damage to democratic norms and institutions. Compounding these concerns has been the lack of action by Jewish institutions in defense of our democracy. Experts say American Jewry has been its safest when our democracy is at its strongest, so what is the organized Jewish community doing? Where are we falling short? How can we do better, and what is needed to make it happen?

Israel-Palestine on the Campaign Trail

The 2026 midterm cycle has been full of discourse about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — but to what end? In this session, we will discuss the differences between social media discourse and electoral action, and hear from experts about how much J Street's issues are actually impacting both the primary and general elections.

The Role of Israeli Expats in Securing Democratic Elections in Israel

(THIS SESSION IS EXCLUSIVELY IN HEBREW)

The 2026 elections will be a pivotal moment for Israel's future and will determine whether it remains a liberal democracy committed to the values of its Declaration of Independence. As Election Day approaches, we are seeing growing efforts by extremist forces aligned with the Netanyahu government to undermine the democratic process: From spreading disinformation and alternative narratives that obscure responsibility for the failures of October 7 and the conduct of the war, to attempts to intimidate voters and suppress turnout — particularly in Arab communities. This panel will bring together experts and organizers working directly on the ground to strengthen democratic processes ahead of Election Day. The conversation will focus on the unique position of Israelis living in the United States.

Thornton
(11th Floor)

Columbia C
(Ballroom Level)

IDEAS STAGE

9:15-9:45AM

AUTHOR CORNER

Tablets Shattered: the End of an American Jewish Century and the Future of Jewish Life
by Joshua Leifer
moderated by Emily Kaiman

9:50-10:10AM

BOOK SIGNING

9:50-10:05AM

EXHIBITOR

Shalom Aleinu

10:10-10:25AM

EXHIBITOR

Hand in Hand

10:30-10:45AM

EXHIBITOR

A Council for a Livable World

11:00AM-12:30PM

Regency
Ballroom
(Ballroom Level)

MONDAY PLENARY

Building Tomorrow: Bridging Communities to Protect Democracy & Advance Peace

At a time of profound strain on American democracy and the global order, this plenary brings together leading civil rights voices, Jewish communal leaders, US lawmakers and policy leaders for conversations about what it will take to 'build tomorrow.'

Together, we will examine the responsibilities of leadership in protecting democratic norms at home, shaping US policy that advances peace and security abroad and renewing America's standing as a global driver of democracy and human rights. We will explore how longtime allies can navigate new moral and political challenges, including the evolving civil rights landscape, the struggle for Palestinian rights, the rise in antisemitism and the pressures placed on free expression in an age of polarization.

As the 2026 midterm elections approach, these conversations are not theoretical — they are a call to action. At a moment when democratic institutions are being tested at the ballot box as well as in policy debates, this plenary will underscore the power of sustained civic engagement to shape the direction of the country. We will focus on how building broad, values-based coalitions and mobilizing engaged communities can help defend democracy, advance justice and ensure that the next Congress reflects American leadership capable of advancing regional peace and shared security.

WELCOME REMARKS

Nancy Reichman, Vice Chair and Chair-Elect, J Street Board

REMARKS

Senator Brian Schatz, Hawaii

OPENING REMARKS

Randi Weingarten, President, AFT

PANEL DISCUSSION

Reverend Al Sharpton, President & Founder, National Action Network

Amy Spitalnick, CEO, Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Rabbi David Saperstein, Director Emeritus, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Maya Wiley, President & CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Jeremy Ben-Ami, President, J Street

MODERATED BY

CONVERSATION WITH

Ambassador Michael Ratney, Senior Advisor, Center for Strategic and International Studies

and **Ambassador Yael Lempert** President for Outreach of the Middle East Institute

MODERATED BY

Ilan Goldenberg, Senior Vice President and Chief Policy Officer, J Street

REMARKS

Patricia Gordon MD, J Street Board Member

CONVERSATION WITH

Congressman Sean Casten, IL-06 and **Congresswoman Madeleine Dean, PA-04**

MODERATED BY

Hannah Morris, Vice President of Government Affairs, J Street

INTRODUCTION

Michael Young, Political Committee Chair, J Street Board

REMARKS

Senator Chris Murphy, Connecticut

12:45PM-1:45PM

Ballroom Lobby
(Ballroom Level)

Lunch 

LUNCH BLOCK

From October 7 to Israel's 2026 Election

Join Amir Tibon and Noa Landau of Haaretz for an exclusive breakout session combining personal testimony from the October 7 Hamas attack with a wide-ranging discussion of what lies ahead for Israel politically, militarily and diplomatically. As the country enters a pivotal election year, Amir and Noa will explore the challenges shaping Israel's future, the unique role of the American Jewish community at this critical moment and how Haaretz is covering one of the most consequential periods in the country's history.

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

Navigating J Street with Jeremy Ben-Ami

Join J Street President Jeremy Ben-Ami for an engaging introduction to our mission and impact as the leading pro-Israel, pro-peace, pro-democracy organization in the United States. This comprehensive session explores J Street's powerful work — from political advocacy and strategic engagement to grassroots activism and community-building. Learn how we build influence, drive change and empower advocates like you to help shape a just, democratic future for both Israelis and Palestinians and here at home.

Congressional AB
(Lobby Level)

Exhibitor Lunch Round Tables

Join our Champion of Change and Ally in Advocacy level exhibitor organizations for lunchtime roundtable conversations. Meet with their staff and hear directly about their work, new and ongoing initiatives and how they're working toward building a better tomorrow.

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

IDEAS STAGE

12:45-1:15PM

AUTHOR CORNER (NO SIGNING)

The Future is Peace: A Shared Journey Across the Holy Land
by Aziz Abu Sarah and Maoz Inon — moderated by Yael Patir

1:15PM-1:50PM

District B

WORD ON THE STREET LIVE — TAKE 5

1:30PM

Bryce
(2nd Level)

Mincha Egalitarian Afternoon Service

2:00PM-3:15PM

BREAKOUT BLOCK FIVE

What is Driving Antisemitism in this Country?

Join the Nexus Project as we take a clear-eyed look at the forces shaping this moment, examining how the Trump administration, the far-right, the far-left, the Israeli government and American Jewish organizations have each shaped the antisemitism landscape. No easy narratives and no sacred cows — just an honest, grounded examination of responsibility, impact and what it will take to confront antisemitism and the broader threats facing American democracy with seriousness and integrity.

Columbia A
(Ballroom Level)

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

The J Street Policy Center Presents: Prospects & Pitfalls in Palestinian Politics

The future of Palestinian governance continues to dominate the debate over how best to build on the Gaza ceasefire toward statehood and regional peace. It is well established that the Palestinian Authority (PA) has issues: lack of legitimacy, internal corruption and problems with incitement. Meanwhile, this Israeli government consistently undermines and attacks it. Parties agree that the PA needs reforms, but it is currently the only viable option for governing Gaza, and Palestinians need an accountable and functional government to build a state. Meanwhile, Hamas has violently reasserted control over parts of the Strip while continuing to send mixed signals about future disarmament. While some reforms have begun, what other steps are necessary to build capacity for the PA to govern effectively? New elections are needed, but who will the next generation of Palestinian leaders be?

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

Congress in the Aftermath of the Israel-Gaza War

In the wake of October 7, Congress became an epicenter of the political and societal fractures reshaping the United States. Lawmakers convened headline-grabbing hearings targeting universities, cast unprecedented votes on military aid to Israel, and forced gotcha votes blurring the lines between antisemitism, anti-Zionism and Islamophobia. The Israel-Palestine debate has not only intensified, it has transformed congressional politics. Where does the debate stand today? What has this period revealed about how Congress operates under pressure — and about what members are responding to? Join us for a candid assessment of the shifts, the stakes and what comes next.

2:00PM–3:15PM (continued)

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

Israeli Public Perceptions: The Closest & Farthest from Peace

Across Israeli society, public attitudes toward peace and Palestinian statehood are shaped by a complex mix of trauma, identity, security concerns, ideology and political messaging. While public discourse often includes negative attitudes toward Palestinians and sharp skepticism about peace, in-depth research conducted by aChord Center reveals a more nuanced and pragmatic set of attitudes. Beneath surface-level doubt lie quieter undercurrents: openness, a desire for stability and security and a willingness to consider a regional political-security arrangement that includes the establishment of a Palestinian state. This session explores the layered reality of Israeli public opinion: How do Israelis view the prospects for peace post-October 7? Where does the Israeli liberal-democratic camp stand on this issue and how can Israeli leaders utilize opportunities to advance support for peace?

Congressional A
(Lobby Level)

STUDENT-ONLY J STREET U SESSION: The Congressional Perspective

At a moment in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is fraught with difficulty and charged with opportunity, Congress can play a crucial role in advancing peace, security and freedom for Israelis and Palestinians. Legislators must also confront the Trump administration’s undemocratic attacks on free speech and expression, for which it has grotesquely hijacked the serious issue of antisemitism.

Thornton
(11th Floor)

Leadership Track: Leading Through the Midterms — Growing Your Chapter’s Influence

The 2026 midterm elections present a pivotal opportunity to establish meaningful congressional checks on Trump’s agenda. The administration has emboldened Netanyahu’s right-wing government, targeted immigrants, and undermined judicial independence, while Republicans in Congress have abdicated core oversight responsibilities. Flipping the House and Senate would restore congressional authority and constrain the president’s most extreme policies.

This session will explore how chapter leaders can channel this urgency into sustained organizing at home — building relationships with candidates, mobilizing volunteers, shaping local narratives, and strengthening the infrastructure needed not just to flip seats, but to sustain advocacy and translate electoral wins into real policy impact. What does it take to turn campaign momentum into enduring power — and to advance J Street’s mission while energizing and growing your chapter?

3:30PM–4:45PM

ADVOCACY DAY TRAINING

Capitol A
(Lobby Level)

Midwest & New England

Capitol B
(Lobby Level)

Mid-Atlantic & Florida

Congressional A
(Lobby Level)

West Coast

Columbia B
(Ballroom Level)

Capital, South & Mountain West

Thornton CDE
(11th Floor)

BOARD ADVOCACY DAY TRAINING

5:00PM–6:00PM

Off-Site

Political Professionals Happy Hour (INVITE ONLY)

Thornton AB
(11th Floor)

Diplomats & Policymakers Happy Hour (INVITE ONLY)

GALA: PURIM WITH A PURPOSE

(Separately Ticketed Event)

Monday, March 2

6:00PM

COLUMBIA B (BALLROOM LEVEL)

A Megillah Remix – A Purim Story (Abridged & Unfiltered)

Join this fast-paced, playful take on the Purim story — told through an abbreviated Megillah reading with slides and humor. Perfect for those looking to tap into the spirit of Purim without committing to the full scroll. Come for the laughs and energy as we set the tone for the Gala dinner.

6:30PM–8:00PM

BALLROOM LOBBY (BALLROOM LEVEL)

Dinner Reception

DO A PURIM MITZVAH WITH MAZON

Purim includes the mitzvah of Matanot La'Evyonim — giving to those in need. During the Gala, J Street is proud to partner with MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger to offer a meaningful way to fulfill this mitzvah. Visit the MAZON table to write a postcard as part of a national campaign to collect 47,000 postcards, representing the 47 million Americans experiencing food insecurity, and urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to protect vital anti-hunger programs. Each postcard represents 1,000 people and carries a simple message: No one deserves to go hungry.

7:15PM

COLUMBIA B (BALLROOM LEVEL)

The Whole Megillah – A Traditional Reading & A Lot of Fun

Join us for a full, traditional Megillah reading rich with ritual, storytelling and lively communal energy. Taking place toward the end of the dinner buffet, this reading will flow seamlessly into our main Purim Gala program — carrying the story's twists, triumphs and joy straight into the celebration ahead.



Monday, March 2

8:00PM–9:00PM

REGENCY BALLROOM (BALLROOM LEVEL)

Evening Program: Purim with Purpose

The evening program ties together our Convention with a gathering that reflects the values, voices and stories that have shaped it. Through remarks from Members of Congress and the presentation of the Tzedek V'Shalom Award, the evening highlights the enduring connection between Jewish values and public leadership.

At its heart is The Stories We Tell: Jewish Identity, Culture and Public Life, a thoughtful conversation that explores how storytelling — personal, cultural and political — shapes who we are in this moment. Together, these voices offer a resonant conclusion to the Convention — grounded in justice, animated by dialogue and focused on the stories that continue to guide the Jewish community forward.

9:00PM–10:00PM

BALLROOM LOBBY (BALLROOM LEVEL)

Dessert Reception

Tuesday, March 3

8:00AM–4:00PM

Off-Site

ADVOCACY DAY

Congressional B
(Lobby Level)

LUGGAGE STORAGE

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS

The following speakers will appear on the MainStage at the 2026 J Street National Convention. Through their leadership, ideas and lived experience, they help illuminate a path toward *Building Tomorrow: Regional Peace & Resilient Democracy* — and the possibilities of a more just, secure and democratic future for all.



Senator Adam Schiff (D-CA)

U.S. Senator Adam Schiff was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 2024, after two decades of service in the House of Representatives. He serves on the Agriculture, Judiciary,

Small Business and Environment and Public Works Committees, and is a member of the Senate National Security Working Group. Born in Massachusetts, Schiff moved to the Bay Area as a child, later graduating from Stanford University and Harvard Law School. Later, he settled in the Los Angeles area, where he met his wife Eve, and served as a federal prosecutor as well as in the California State Senate.



Rev. Al Sharpton *National Action Network*

As one of the preeminent civil rights leaders of our time, Reverend Al Sharpton serves as the founder and president of the National Action Network (NAN), anchors PoliticsNation on MS NOW, hosts the nationally-syndicated radio shows “Keepin’ It Real” and “The Hour of Power,” holds weekly action rallies and speaks out on behalf of those who have been silenced and marginalized. Rooted in the spirit and tradition of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., NAN boasts more than 100 chapters across the country to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for one standard of justice, decency and equal opportunity for all.



Alan Solomont *J Street Board of Directors*

Ambassador Alan D. Solomont is the Dean Emeritus of Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life.

He served as United States Ambassador to Spain and Andorra from 2009-2013. Prior to that, he was Chairman of the bipartisan Board of Directors of the Corporation of National and Community Service. Active for many years in the Democratic Party, Amb. Solomont served as National Finance Chairman of the DNC in 1997-1998. He is a past Chairman of the Board of Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston and was a Board member of the New Israel Fund for many years. He was honored by the Israel Policy Forum in 2001. Amb. Solomont’s professional career was in the field of eldercare. He is a graduate of Tufts University and the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. He is married to Susan Lewis Solomont. They have two grown daughters and reside in Weston, Massachusetts.



Amer Mohammed *The Jerusalem Youth Chorus*

Amer Mohammed is the Executive Director of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus (JYC), an Israeli-Palestinian music and dialogue project that has brought

a message of shared humanity from the streets of Jerusalem to the global stages of TED, America’s Got Talent, and beyond. Through the co-creation of music and sharing of stories, JYC empowers young singers from East and West Jerusalem to become leaders in their communities and inspire work for a just peace. Even in times of war, JYC has continued to meet — and its singers’ commitment to one another has only grown. In addition to bringing more than a decade of JYC experience to his work as a leader in the peacebuilding field, Amer is a lawyer with an MBA focused on organizational management, and brings structural insights as well as lived experience to the challenge of uplifting the voices of a just, shared future



Amy Spitalnick *Jewish Council For Public Affairs*

Amy Spitalnick is the CEO of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the national convener of Jewish coalitions working across communities to build

a just and inclusive American democracy. A nationally-recognized leader on countering antisemitism, hate and extremism and protecting democracy, Amy previously served as Executive Director of Integrity First for America, which won its groundbreaking lawsuit against the neo-Nazis, white supremacists and hate groups responsible for the Charlottesville violence. Amy has extensive experience in government, politics and advocacy, including as Communications Director and Senior Policy Advisor to the New York Attorney General; spokesperson and advisor to the New York City Mayor; and J Street’s first press secretary. She serves on the Boards of Directors of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Tufts University Hillel and PERIL at American University, as well as on Tree of Life’s Academic Advisory Council and Bedrock’s National Leadership Council.



Aziz Abu Sarah *Interact International*

Aziz Abu Sarah is Founder and Co-CEO of InterAct International, a nonprofit dedicated to Middle East Peace. He is a peacebuilder, author,

entrepreneur, National Geographic Explorer, TED Fellow and renowned speaker and trainer on conflict resolution and responsible travel. Aziz is also the co-founder of MEJDI Tours, a travel company on a mission to transform tourism into a global force of citizen diplomacy. He has won numerous awards, including from the United Nations, the Institute of International Education and the Explorers Club. Aziz is consistently named one of the world’s 500 most influential Muslims by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre in Jordan. He has written opinion pieces for The New York Times, The Washington Post, Al-Quds and Haaretz.



Becca Wall *J Street*

Rebecca (Becca) Wall joins J Street after over 15 years of experience in nonprofit digital communications, and has built social media and

digital strategies and programs at organizations like Reproductive Freedom for All, Indivisible, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the National Immigration Forum. A native New Yorker, Becca holds a degree in Communications: Media + Government from American University. She lives in Washington, D.C. with her family, and can often be found reading, trying a new recipe or working on an embroidery project.



Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hi)

Brian Schatz is Hawaii’s senior United States Senator. Since joining the Senate, he has focused his work on helping workers, veterans and families and has led key legislation on health

care, climate change and technology. Senator Schatz chairs the Indian Affairs Committee and serves on the Appropriations Committee; the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee; the Foreign Relations Committee; and the Select Committee on Ethics. He also serves on the Senate Democratic Caucus’s leadership team as Deputy Conference Secretary and Chief Deputy Whip. Prior to his service in Congress, Senator Schatz was Hawaii’s Lieutenant Governor and served for eight years in the Hawaii State House of Representatives. Senator Schatz grew up in Honolulu and received his bachelor’s degree from Pomona College.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT)

Senator Chris Murphy is the junior United States Senator for the state of Connecticut. After serving for three terms in the US House of Representatives, Murphy was elected to the Senate in 2012 and has been a vocal advocate for affordable health care, sensible gun laws and a forward-looking foreign policy. Murphy sits on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committees, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Appropriations Committee, where he serves as the ranking member for the Subcommittee on Homeland Security. Since President Donald Trump resumed office in January, Murphy has been a leading voice in the US Senate calling out the brazen corruption and illegality of the Trump White House.



Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

Senator Chris Van Hollen was elected to the United States Senate by the people of Maryland in November 2016. Chris Van Hollen is committed to fighting every day to ensure that the state of Maryland and our country live up to their full promise of equal rights, equal justice, and equal opportunity. Senator Van Hollen believes that every child deserves the opportunity to pursue their dreams and benefit from a quality education, and that anyone willing to work hard should be able to find a good job. That's why his top priorities include creating more and better jobs, strengthening small businesses, and increasing educational and job training opportunities for individuals of all ages and in every community.



Rabbi David Saperstein *Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism*

Rabbi David Saperstein is director emeritus of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, having served as its director and counsel for 40 years. Designated by Newsweek Magazine as the most influential rabbi in America and by the Washington Post as the “quintessential religious lobbyist on Capitol Hill.” Under Rabbi Saperstein, writes J.J. Goldberg in his book *Jewish Power*, the Religious Action Center “has become one of the most powerful Jewish bodies in Washington.” The first rabbi in American history to have been designated a US Ambassador, during the second term of the Obama Administration, Rabbi Saperstein served as the United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, carrying out his responsibilities as the country’s chief diplomat on religious freedom issues. In this capacity, he served as a principal advisor to Secretary Kerry and President Obama on issues of international religious freedom and traveled widely as America’s advocate for religious freedom and for the security of religious minorities across the globe. From 2019-20, Rabbi Saperstein served as the President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, the international arm of the Reform Jewish Movement. He remains today the senior advisor to the Union for Reform Judaism.



Rabbi Deborah Waxman *Reconstructing Judaism*

The first woman rabbi to head a Jewish congregational union and seminary, Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., became president and CEO of Reconstructing Judaism in 2014. Since then, she has drawn on her training as a rabbi and historian to be the Reconstructionist movement’s leading voice in the public square. Through visiting numerous congregations, making public appearances in person and online and writing for *The Forward*, *The Times of Israel*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *HuffPost*, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency* and other news and academic outlets, Rabbi Waxman projects a vision of Judaism that embraces all people and inspires Jews to be strong allies to the most vulnerable among us. In 2016, Rabbi Waxman was named to the annual “Forward 50” list of most influential Jews by *The Forward*. Rabbi Waxman leads the Reconstructionist congregational union through close collaboration with the Board of Governors, the leaders and congregants of the nearly 100 affiliated Reconstructionist communities and her extraordinary colleagues in the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association. She also serves as the sixth president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, the movement’s sole seminary and a key part of the Reconstructing Judaism organization.



Ehud Olmert *Former Prime Minister of Israel*

Ehud Olmert served as Prime Minister of the State of Israel from 2006 to 2009. Olmert was born in 1945 in Israel, and is a graduate of the Hebrew University in Psychology, Philosophy and Law. He served in the Israeli Knesset from 1973 to 1998 and again from 2003 to 2009 and was elected twice as Mayor of Jerusalem. He was elected Prime Minister in 2006 as the leader of

Kadima, where he led Israel during the Second Lebanon War. His primary priority as Prime Minister was a peace agreement with the Palestinians. In November 2007, he attended the Annapolis Peace Conference led by President George W. Bush, and in 2008, he proposed peace to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on the basis of the two-state solution. Olmert has agreed together with Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa to propose a framework for a cessation of the war in Gaza and a two-state solution for the Israel-Palestine historical conflict.



Elana Kaminka *Parent Circle Families Forum*

Elana Kaminka is the mother of Lieutenant Yannai Kaminka, age 20, who was killed defending the soldiers under his command and neighboring communities in the Gaza envelope on October 7, 2023. During the week of mourning for her son, she reached out to neighboring Palestinian communities in a plea to recognize each other’s pain and stop the cycle of violence. She is now an active member of the Palestinian Israeli Bereaved Families Forum, through which she regularly speaks with groups in Israel and overseas. She believes that empathy is a muscle and developing it is a critical component of any solution to the conflict in the Middle East.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Hannah Morris
J Street

Hannah joins J Street after earning a M.A. in German and European Studies from Georgetown's School of Foreign Service. There, she focused on German-Israeli relations and wrote a thesis comparing the special relationships Israel shares with the U.S. and Germany. She also served as a graduate intern at the U.S. Department of State in the Office of Central European Affairs and as an AJC Goldman Fellow in Warsaw, Poland. Prior to moving to D.C., Hannah worked in New York City at Big Tent Judaism, writing curriculum and developing programs to make the Jewish communal world more welcoming to the less-engaged. In her extra-curricular time, Hannah serves on the AJC ACCESS DC board, participates in a book club and speaks with Germans who will let her practice. Hannah is native of Houston, TX and now lives in Washington, D.C.



Ilan Goldenberg
J Street

Ilan Goldenberg is Senior Vice President and Chief Policy Officer at J Street. He is a seasoned foreign policy and national security expert with two decades of experience advising American leaders on the Middle East, US-Israel relations, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran. A prolific writer and commentator, Ilan has authored 15 reports on US policy in the Middle East when he served as the Director of the Middle East Security Program at the Center for a New American Security. His writing has been featured in leading publications, including The Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Politico, The Atlantic, and Haaretz. He has also appeared as a commentator on CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, and CBS. He is currently the author of the Dialogue and Dissonance Substack Newsletter.



Jackie Dentino
Friends of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus

Jackie Dentino is a US-based arts administrator and flute teacher. She holds a B.A. in Music Performance, Flute from the joint music program at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Music in Cleveland, OH and an M.S. in Arts Administration. Jackie is committed to using music for social justice and has a great interest in applied ethnomusicology. She oversees all fundraising efforts for the Jerusalem Youth Chorus, as well as the operations and communications for the organization's US 501(c)(3), Friends of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus.



Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal
USCJ and the Rabbinical Assembly

Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal serves concurrently as the CEO of both the USCJ (the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) and the Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative rabbis. Through the strategic alignment between the two organizations, he aims to strengthen and grow the impact of Masorti-Conservative Judaism. Rabbi Blumenthal was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1999, and served for over 20 years as the Founding Rabbi of Shaare Torah Congregation in Gaithersburg, Maryland. In addition to his background as a teen and later as a professional in USY, he has a history of helping to create innovative organizations in the DC area, including The Den Collective (engaging young adults), Ramah DC Day Camp and the Montgomery County Executive's Faith Advisory Council. He continues to live in Gaithersburg with his wife, Marci; has 2 young adult children, Jory and Renana; and spends his free time cycling, reading and searching out the latest innovations in prayer experiences and Jewish music.



Jeremy Ben-Ami
J Street

Jeremy Ben-Ami is the President of J Street, bringing to the role both deep experience in American politics and government and a passionate commitment to the state of Israel. Ben-Ami's family connection to Israel goes back 140 years to the first aliyah when his great-grandparents were among the first settlers in Petah Tikva. His grandparents were one of the founding families of Tel Aviv, and his father was an activist and leader in the Irgun, working for Israel's independence and on the rescue of European Jews before and during World War II. His political resume includes serving in the mid-1990s as the Deputy Domestic Policy Advisor in the White House to President Bill Clinton and working on seven Presidential and numerous state and local campaigns including helping to manage a Mayoral campaign in New York City in 2001. For nearly three years in the late 90s, Jeremy lived in Israel, where he started a consulting firm working with Israeli non-profit organizations and politicians. Ben-Ami received a law degree from New York University and is a graduate of the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.



Joshua Malina

A co-star on NBC's *The West Wing*, and ABC's *Sports Night*, Joshua also appeared in Aaron Sorkin's *The American President*, *Malice*, and the Broadway production of *A Few Good Men*. More recently, he played David Rosen in Shonda Rhimes' *Scandal*, and President Siebert on *The Big Bang Theory*. His 400 episodes of television include *Inventing Anna*; *American Horror Story*; *American Auto*; *Shameless*, and *The Larry Sanders Show*. Joshua's film appearances include *Bulworth*, *In The Line Of Fire*, *And A Few Good Men*. In 2023, he starred on Broadway in Tom Stoppard's Tony-winning *Leopoldstadt*. He recently appeared in the international premiere of Nathan Englander's play *What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank* at London's Marylebone Theatre. Joshua starred in the film *Ethan Bloom*, which had its world premiere at the 2025 Miami Film Festival. Joshua is a proud board member of the progressive Zionist organization *New Jewish Narrative*.



Congresswoman Madeleine Dean (PA-4)

Madeleine Dean was born and raised in Glenside, Pennsylvania. She graduated from La Salle University and earned her law degree at Widener University. For nearly ten years, she was a professor of writing at LaSalle University. Congresswoman Dean then served as a State Representative for six-and-a-half years before being elected to Congress in 2018 to represent Pennsylvania's Fourth District, Berks and Montgomery Counties. Now in her fourth term, Congresswoman Dean serves on the House Appropriations and House Foreign Affairs Committees. In Congress, Madeleine remains focused on decency and the common good — that means addressing issues that affect Americans deeply, including gun violence, the opioid epidemic, education and college affordability, and women's issues.



Dr. Mansour Abbas
Ra'am

Dr. Mansour Abbas is an Israeli politician and the Chairman of the United Arab List (Ra'am), which he represents in the Knesset. In April 2021, he was appointed Chair of the Knesset Special Committee on Arab Society Affairs. In the same year, Dr. Abbas made history as the first Arab political leader in Israel to join a governing coalition, marking a significant milestone in Arab political participation in Israeli public life. Prior to his parliamentary career, Dr. Abbas was engaged in community reconciliation, mediation and social reform initiatives within Arab society, with a focus on strengthening social cohesion and addressing internal community challenges. Dr. Abbas is a qualified dentist by profession.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Maya Wiley
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Maya Wiley is the President and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights and The Leadership Conference Education Fund – a coalition of more than 240 national organizations working to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all people in the United States. A nationally-respected civil rights attorney and racial justice advocate, Wiley has been a leading voice on democracy, equity and social justice. She has served in senior roles across government, philanthropy, higher education and the nonprofit sector, including as the first Black woman to serve as Counsel to a New York City mayor. Wiley previously ran for Mayor of New York City in 2021 and has been a litigator at the ACLU and NAACP Legal Defense Fund. She is a former legal analyst for NBC News and MSNBC and the author of the memoir “Remember You Are A Wiley.”



Maoz Inon
InterAct International

Maoz Inon is Co-CEO of InterAct International, a nonprofit dedicated to Middle East Peace. He is an Israeli peace activist and entrepreneur. He was honored with the prestigious Franco-German Human Rights Prize and the Shared Living Award from Abraham Initiatives. Inon has spoken on Capitol Hill, at US universities and at the European Parliament. He has written pieces for The Washington Post, Al Jazeera, Haaretz and more. Inon has founded several peace-focused initiatives within Israel and the Middle East.



Marci Gerston
J Street Silicon Valley

Marci Gerston is the Co-Chair of J Street’s Silicon Valley Chapter. She is also the Co-Chair of J Street’s Regional Advisory Committee and sits on the boards of J Street and the J Street Action Fund. Marci is currently an independent member of the Advisory Council of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Bay Area; she was a long-time member and past chair of JCRC Silicon Valley before it joined with JCRC Bay Area in 2024. Marci previously held leadership positions with the Jewish Council of Public Affairs (JCPA) and People Acting in Community Together (PACT), a faith-based social justice organization in Santa Clara County, as well as at Temple Emanu-El, San Jose, where she has been a member for over twenty years. Marci is a retired attorney who lives in Los Altos, California and Ashland, Oregon with her husband, Joel. They have two adult children.



Micah Hendler
The Jerusalem Youth Chorus

Micah Hendler is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus (JYC), an Israeli-Palestinian music and dialogue project that has brought a message of shared humanity from the streets of Jerusalem to the global stages of TED, America’s Got Talent, and beyond. Through the co-creation of music and sharing of stories, JYC empowers young singers from East and West Jerusalem to become leaders in their communities and inspire work for a just peace. Even in times of war, JYC has continued to meet — and its singers’ commitment to one another has only grown. Beyond Jerusalem, Micah collaborates with organizations working to build community and bridge divides across the US and around the world. He is currently writing Impossible Harmony (HarperCollins, 2027), to tell the story of JYC as a proof of concept and call to action that it is not too late to build a shared future where all our voices are heard.



Ambassador Michael Ratney
Center for Strategic and International Studies

Michael Ratney served for over three decades as a distinguished U.S. diplomat, most recently as the U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Ratney served as the U.S. Consul General in Jerusalem, as Chargé d’Affaires of the U.S. Embassy to Israel, as Special Envoy for Syria, as well as postings in Baghdad, Beirut, Casablanca, Doha, Mexico City, Tunis, Bridgetown, and Washington DC. Ratney is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the American Academy of Diplomacy. He serves on the Board of Governors of the Middle East Institute and on the Board of Directors of AMIDEAST. He is a Distinguished Fellow with the Israel Policy Forum and a Senior Advisor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He earned degrees from Boston University and George Washington University.



Michael Young
J Street National Board of Directors

Michael D. Young has been active with J Street since 2015 and currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Board’s Political Committee. Michael has served as a Board member of the Alliance for Middle East Peace (“ALLMEP”) as well as on the Board of the Israel Policy Forum (“IPF”). He also served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Legal Services NYC, which is the largest provider in the US of free civil legal assistance to low-income persons; and is currently Chair of the Board of Trustees of GlimmerGlass Opera Festival. Michael is a Harvard Law School graduate and is a founder, shareholder and arbitrator/mediator with JAMS, the largest private mediation and arbitration firm in the world. He and his wife (Debra L. Raskin) own an apartment in the German Colony in Jerusalem and they otherwise live in the Brooklyn Heights section of New York City. They have two adult children, a daughter-in-law and a grandson.



Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi
House of Representatives (CA-11)

Nancy Pelosi served as the 52nd Speaker of the House of Representatives, having made history in 2007 when she was elected the first woman to serve as Speaker. Pelosi made history again in January 2019 when she regained the Speakership – the first person to do so in more than six decades. Pelosi has represented San Francisco in Congress for 38 years. Currently serving as the Representative for California’s 11th Congressional District, she is fighting For The People to lower costs, grow paychecks and create jobs. She is the architect of generation-defining legislation, including the Affordable Care Act and the American Rescue Plan, and a defender of democracy at home and abroad. Married to Paul Pelosi, she is a proud mother of five and grandmother of ten.



Nancy Reichman
J Street National Board of Directors

Nancy Reichman is Professor Emerita in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at the University of Denver. Her research focuses on the barriers and opportunities for women’s equity and advancement, particularly in the legal profession; workplace policy and practice for low-wage workers; the regulation of performance in business and sport; and global environmental regulations. Reichman was senior editor of the socio-legal studies journal, Law & Policy, from 2006-2018. She served as Research Director for the Colorado Women’s College from 2018-2020. In addition to her active involvement as the incoming Chair of the J Street National Board of Directors, Dr. Reichman is a member of Denver’s Racial Equity Council and the Women Donor’s Network. Recent community involvement includes memberships in the Denver Women’s Commission (2015-2019) and the Colorado Judicial Performance Commission (2016, 2018). She chaired the Colorado Pay Equity Commission from 2010-2014.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Nicole Malina
J Street

Nicole Malina was thrilled to join the J Street Southern California team in 2019. Originally from New York, Nicole has worked in development and nonprofit administration in California for over twenty years, holding capacity-building roles in diverse communal institutions and in support of various progressive causes. These include serving as Director of Development for the Alpert Jewish Community Center in Long Beach and overseeing a major donor program at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Nicole is a member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Family & Children's Service of Long Beach and has served on the boards of the Jewish Federation of Greater Long Beach and Long Beach Hillel. She is also a recipient of the Neuburger Award for Young Leaders. She enjoys spending time with friends and family, volunteering with shelter animals and collecting vinyl records. She holds a B.A. in Ethnic Studies from the Gallatin School at NYU.



Noa Landau
Haaretz

Noa Landau is the Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Haaretz, Israel's oldest daily. Since joining Haaretz in 2009, she served as a reporter, commentator and senior editor, including as the editor of Haaretz English edition. Landau is also the founder of Haaretz21, an organizational project aimed at amplifying underrepresented voices and stories of Arabs/Palestinians in Israel. Before joining Haaretz, Landau worked as a journalist for Galei Tzahal radio, Channel 10 TV and Maariv. Overall, she has been a journalist for more than 20 years. Landau studied Political Science at the University of Tel Aviv. She is also an Advisory Board member and alum of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. She was chosen as one of 50 most influential women in Israel by the local Forbes magazine.



Patricia Gordon, MD
J Street National Board of Directors

Patricia Gordon MD (Harvard '78, UCLA School of Medicine '82, Cedars-Sinai Internship '84) was a radiation oncologist for 27 years. She was a partner at Beverly Hills Radiation Oncology. Her commitment to saving women's lives in the developing world has brought her to an additional career as an international women's health advocate. She founded CureCervicalCancer, which trains local healthcare professionals to screen and treat women for precervical cancer. The organization has established 106 sustainable and ongoing CureCervicalCancer clinics in 10 countries around the globe, screening more than 170,000 women and treating nearly 10,000 women for pre-cervical cancer. In 2021 she was voted a CNN Top 10 Hero of the Year. She helped to establish the JStreet Len Hill Congressional Delegation to Israel, which was one of her late husband's last wishes.



Peter Frey
J Street National Board of Directors

Peter, currently the Chair of J Street's National Board, has been a leader at J Street for over a dozen years. He was Co-Chair of the NYC Chapter for four years, joined the National Board in 2016 and was elected Vice Chair in 2021. He is a retired partner of TRG Management, an emerging markets asset management company. Prior to this, he spent 17 years at JP Morgan. When he left JP Morgan Chase in 2001, he was Co-Head of U.S. Fixed Income Sales. Peter is currently a member of the New Israel Fund International Council and a former board member of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Jewish Currents Magazine, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation and of Exit Art. Peter grew up in Vienna, Austria, received a BA in Economics in 1982 from Vassar College and an MBA in International Finance in 1984 from The Wharton School. He lives in Greenwich Village with his wife Carrie Shapiro.



Philippe Sands KC
Harvard Law School

Philippe Sands KC is Professor of Law at University College London and Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard. He is a practicing barrister at 11KBW, appears as counsel before the International Court of Justice and other international courts and tribunals and sits as an international arbitrator. His books include "East West Street: On the Origins of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide" (2016), "The Ratline: Love, Lies and Justice on the Trail of a Nazi Fugitive" (2020) and "The Last Colony: A Tale of Exile, Justice and Britain's Colonial Legacy" (2022). His latest book, "38 Londres Street: On Pinochet in England and a Nazi in Patagonia," was published in April 2025. His work is translated into more than 30 languages.



Randi Weingarten
American Federation of Teachers

Randi Weingarten is president of the AFT, a union of 1.8 million teachers; paraprofessionals and school-related personnel; higher education faculty and staff; nurses and other healthcare professionals; local, state and federal government employees; and early childhood educators. Prior to her election as AFT president in 2008, Weingarten served for 11 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, representing approximately 200,000 educators in the New York City public school system, as well as home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education. Weingarten taught history at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn's Crown Heights neighborhood from 1991 to 1997, and helped her students win several state and national awards debating constitutional issues. Weingarten was included in Washingtonian's 2022 Washington's Most Influential People, and in 2013, the New York Observer named Weingarten one of the most influential New Yorkers of the past 25 years. Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. She worked as a lawyer for the Wall Street firm of Strock & Strock & Lavan from 1983 to 1986.



Rabbi Rick Jacobs
Union for Reform Judaism

Rabbi Rick Jacobs (he/him) is president of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the most powerful force in North American Jewish life. The URJ leads the largest and most diverse Jewish movement in North America, reaching more than 2 million people through 825 congregations, 14 overnight camps, the Reform teen youth Movement NFTY and the Religious Action Center in Washington, DC. For more than 150 years, the URJ has been at the forefront in promoting an open, progressive Judaism. A longtime and devoted creative change agent, Rabbi Jacobs spent 20 years as a visionary spiritual leader at Westchester Reform Temple (WRT) in Scarsdale, New York. Before that, during his tenure as the rabbi of the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue, he created the first homeless shelter in a New York City synagogue. Rabbi Jacobs is regularly featured in media outlets such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, Ha'aretz, The Forward, NPR and CNN, among others.



Rula Daood
Standing Together

Rula Daood is the National Co-Director of Standing Together, a member of its elected leadership and a Palestinian citizen of Israel. Born and raised in the Galilee village of Kfar Yasif, Rula began her professional life as a speech pathologist before becoming a committed political activist, organizing around Jewish-Arab partnership in Israel's mixed cities. Daood's leadership of Standing Together has played a critical role in the movement's dramatic growth and success. Alongside Alon-Lee Green, she was recently featured as one of TIME magazine's 100 emerging global leaders of 2024.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Congresswoman Sara Jacobs (CA-51)

Congresswoman Sara Jacobs is in her third term in Congress and proudly serves California's 51st Congressional District. Congresswoman Jacobs is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where she serves as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Africa, and is also a member of the House Armed Services Committee. Congresswoman Jacobs also serves as Founding Co-Chair of the Protection of Civilians in Conflict (POCC) Caucus; Vice Chair of the New Democrat Coalition's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Working Group; and Vice Chair of the Congressional Equality Caucus, where she is Co-Chair of the Transgender Equality Task Force. Prior to serving in elected office, Congresswoman Jacobs spent years working to address, minimize and prevent conflict, instability and inequality around the world. She worked in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations; in the Innovation Unit at UNICEF; in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations at the US Department of State; and as a foreign policy advisor to Secretary Hillary Clinton during the 2016 presidential campaign. Congresswoman Jacobs also served as the Founding CEO of Project Connect, a nonprofit dedicated to mapping schools and their internet connectivity around the world, which has since become one of UNICEF's flagship programs.



Congressman Sean Casten (IL-6)

As a scientist, clean energy entrepreneur, CEO and now as a Member of Congress, Representative Sean Casten has dedicated his life to fighting climate change. In Congress, Representative Casten draws on his two decades of experience as a business leader to reduce emissions while creating jobs, lowering energy costs for Americans and spurring economic growth. Representative Casten serves as the Vice Ranking Member on the House Financial Services Committee and is a member of the Joint Economic Committee. He also serves as Vice-Chair of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition (SEEC) and is a Co-Chair of the Sustainable Investment Caucus.



Susan B. Glasser
The New Yorker

Susan B. Glasser, a staff writer at The New Yorker based in Washington, DC, writes a weekly column on life in Washington and is a host of the "Political Scene" podcast. Glasser has served as the top editor of several Washington publications, including Politico, where she founded the award-winning Politico Magazine and Foreign Policy, which won three National Magazine Awards, among other honors, during her tenure as editor-in-chief. Before that, she worked for a decade at the Washington Post, where she was the editor of Outlook and national news. She also oversaw coverage of the impeachment of Bill Clinton, served as a reporter covering the intersection of money and politics, spent four years as the Post's Moscow co-bureau chief and covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. She started her journalism career in the 1980s, as an intern at the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call, which she later edited. Her books include "Kremlin Rising," "The Man Who Ran Washington" and "The Divider," a best-selling history of Donald Trump in the White House, which she co-wrote with her husband, Peter Baker.



Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA)

Senator Tim Kaine was elected to the Senate in 2012 and serves on the Armed Services; Budget; Foreign Relations; and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committees. As a senator from one of the states most closely connected to the military and the father of a Marine Reservist, Tim is focused on crafting smart defense strategies and reducing the risk of unnecessary war. He works to ensure that the military has the resources it needs to keep the country safe and that servicemembers and veterans receive the benefits and care they have earned. He has also been the leading voice against presidents starting wars without a vote by Congress. Tim grew up working in his father's ironworking shop in Kansas City. His parents taught him the value of hard work and showed him how small businesses and technical skills strengthen this country every day. After graduating from the University of Missouri, he started his public service career by running a technical school founded by Jesuit missionaries in Honduras. He trained teenagers to become carpenters and welders, equipping them with skills to lift up themselves and their communities.



Uri Weltmann
Standing Together

Uri Weltmann is the National Field Organizer for Standing Together, part of the national leadership of the movement and a founding member of Standing Together in 2015. A long-time peace and anti-occupation activist, he also has a background in neighborhood community organizing and LGBTQ political organizing. Born in 1984, he lives in Tel Aviv with his partner and their two daughters.



Yaara Mokady Reiss
The Jerusalem Youth Chorus

Yaara Mokady is an alumna of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus, where she currently serves as a Dialogue Facilitator, Program Coordinator, and member of the musical staff. Mokady has a strong background in music education and inclusive pedagogy, with experience working with children with special needs. In parallel to her educational work, Mokady is an active performer. She holds an M.Mus in Classical and Contemporary Harp and sings and plays in professional ensembles.



Ambassador Yael Lempert
Middle East Institute

Ambassador (ret.) Yael Lempert is the Middle East Institute's Vice President for Outreach. She served for over 27 years as an American diplomat, including as the US Ambassador to Jordan from 2023 to 2025. Other previous positions include Acting Assistant Secretary of State and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs (2021-2023), Chargé d'Affaires at the US Embassy in London (2021), and Deputy Chief of Mission in London (2019-2020). Other overseas assignments include Jerusalem, Tripoli, Cairo, Baghdad and Shanghai. Lempert served on the National Security Council staff of three presidents, including as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for the Levant, Israel, and Egypt from 2014 to 2017.

MAINSTAGE SPEAKERS



Yair Golan
The Democrats

Yair Golan is an Israeli politician, leader of the Democrats party and a senior military officer. He served as deputy minister of economy in the thirty-sixth

Israeli government and served as a Member of the Knesset from 2019–2022. He is a reserve major general (Aluf) in the Israel Defence Forces. An infantry officer by profession, he served as IDF deputy chief of staff, GOC Home Front Command and GOC Northern Command. In May 2024, Golan was elected as the leader of the Israeli Labor Party on a platform of merging with the Meretz party. On June 30, 2024, the two parties announced an agreement to form a new party, the Democrats. The agreement, which designated Yair Golan as leader of the new party, was approved by both parties' congresses in July 2024.

To explore the full lineup of convention speakers, please see the J Street Convention app.



Yossi Zabari
Independent Artist

Yossi Zabari is a queer Jewish-Arab performer, comedian, and writer from Israel, now based in Switzerland. For over two decades, he has performed

in Hebrew and English, headlining stages across Israel, Europe, and the United States. His work blends stand-up comedy, spoken word, and storytelling, often incorporating live, original music and collaborations with ensembles to create bold, socially engaged concerts. Drawing on his experiences as an Israeli, an Arab-Jew, a queer person, and a gay father living abroad, Zabari explores identity, politics, and belonging with humor, honesty, and nuance. He has appeared on Israeli television as both a comic and spoken word artist and regularly performs at festivals, universities, and cultural institutions. His work is unfiltered and incisive, balancing European class with some Middle Eastern sass.



Yousef Sharabati
The Jerusalem Youth Chorus

Yousef Sharabati is an alumnus of the Jerusalem Youth Chorus (JYC). In addition to his participation as a singer, he has contributed to the organization

through volunteer work. He has been involved with JYC for five years and believes the organization plays an important role in creating a safer and more aware environment in Jerusalem.



J STREET IS HIRING

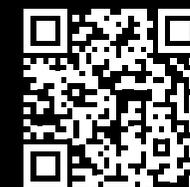


Building Tomorrow Starts With You

Regional Peace. Resilient Democracy. These aren't just ideas we talk about at this Convention — they're what we work toward every day at J Street.

If you're energized by the conversations here, inspired by the leaders on this stage, and committed to shaping a better future, bringing that passion to our team.

This is your moment.



Learn more, explore open roles and apply!

jstreet.org/careers

Senior Fundraiser

New York, NY (Hybrid)

Grow the relationships that fuel our movement. Use your passion for our work to fundraise, tap into new communities, and help move the needle on the issues that matter most.

Assistant or Deputy Regional Director for New England

Boston, MA (Hybrid)

Help grow our movement in New England. Recruit leaders, mobilize communities, make Congress listen.

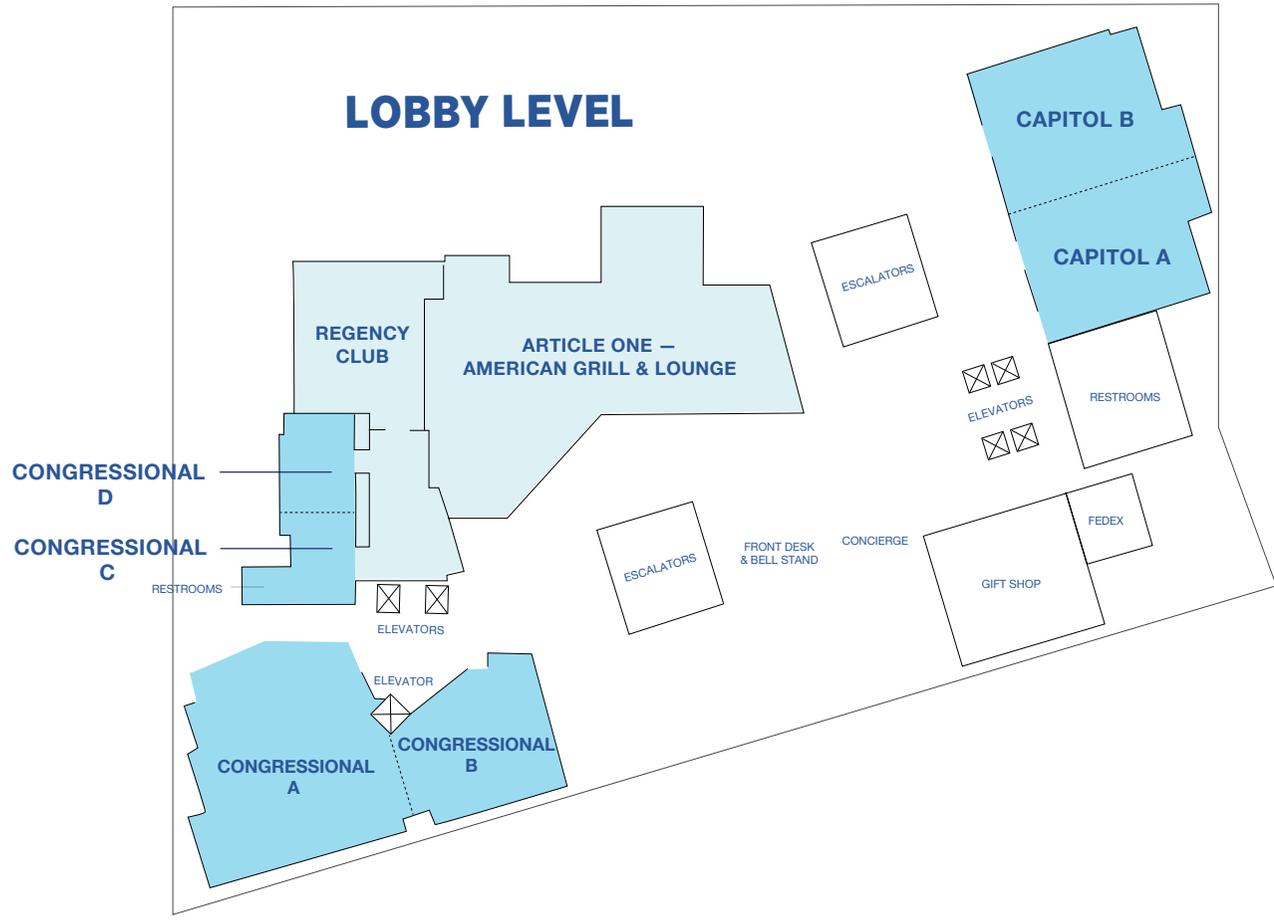
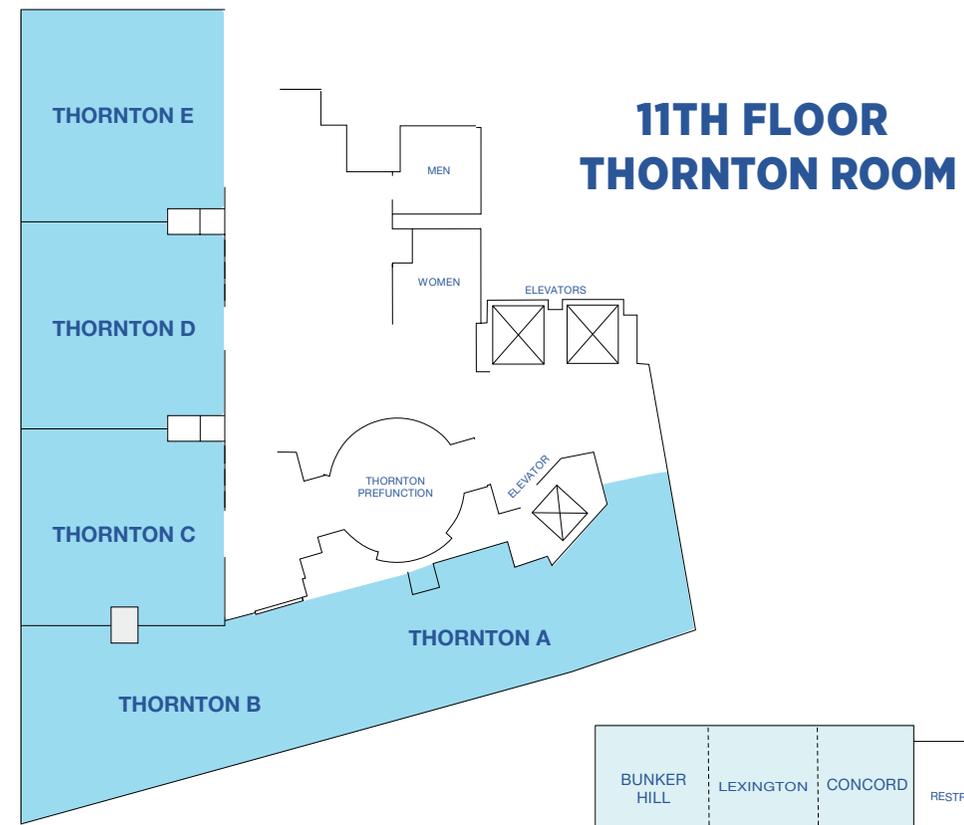
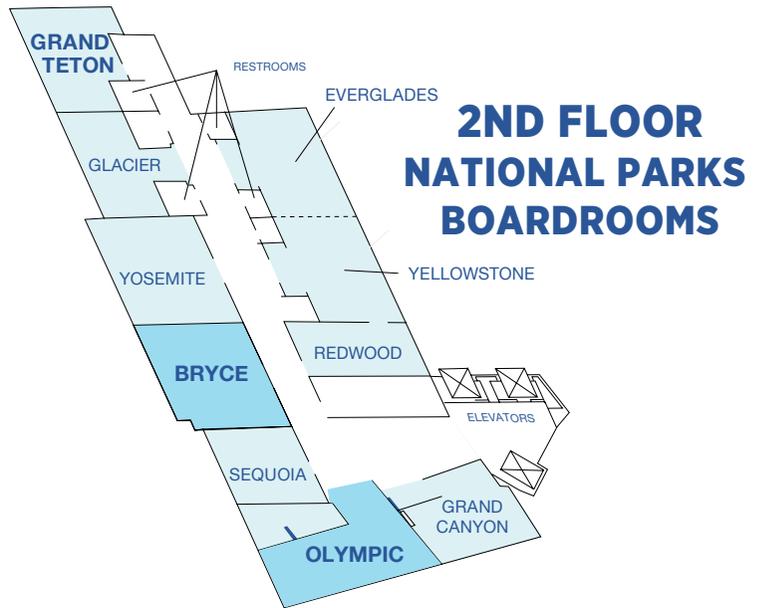
BRING YOUR PASSION TO THE TEAM

Be part of what's next and build a career with purpose.

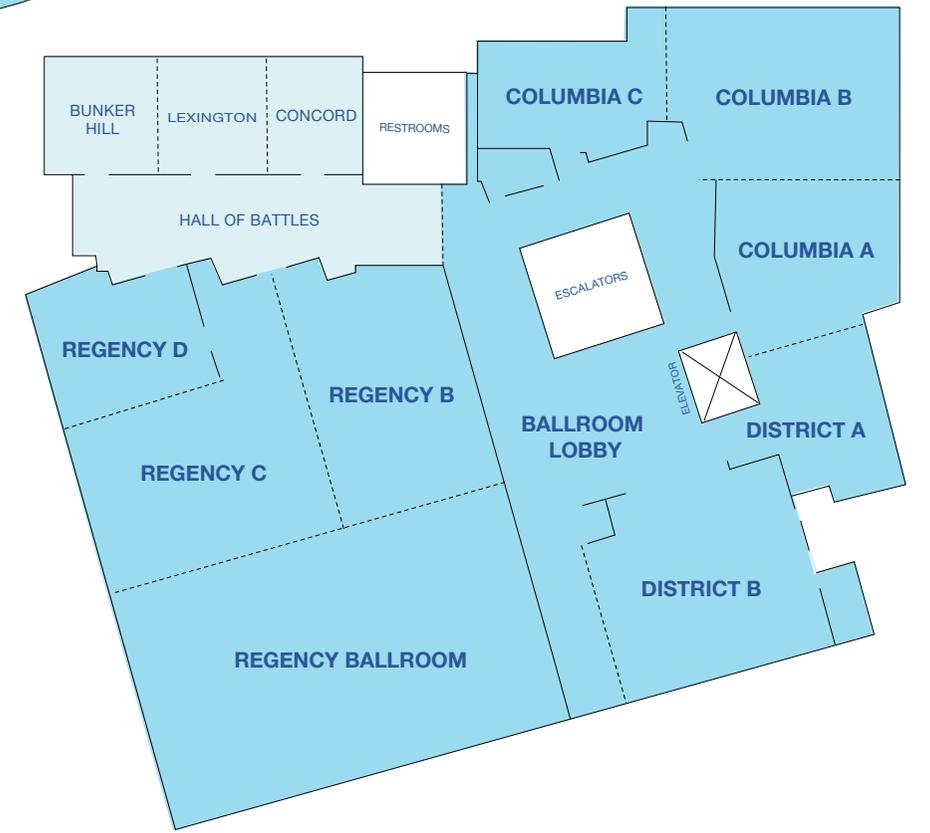
HOTEL MAP

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BALLROOM LEVEL



J STREET'S POLICY AGENDA for the Trump Administration



As J Street heads into 2026 and three more years of the Trump Administration, we will need to continue to stand up for our pro-Israel, pro-peace, pro-democracy values.

Many of the domestic and foreign policies of the Trump Administration are in direct contradiction to J Street's values and will have deeply damaging effects for Israel and Palestine. Where we have overlapping interests, we will support bipartisan cooperation with the Administration. Where the Administration's policies run counter to our interests, we will vigorously oppose them.

J Street's key policy priorities for the new year include:

- ➔ Implement the Gaza ceasefire in full, invest in rebuilding Gaza, and build a viable governing and security alternative to Hamas.
- ➔ Oppose settlements, annexation, and settler violence. Take steps to improve the situation in the West Bank and set conditions for a Palestinian state.
- ➔ Pursue a "23-State Solution," which ends Israel's conflict with its Arab neighbors, while also creating a Palestinian state that would be Israel's 22nd Arab neighbor.
- ➔ Support transactional diplomacy with Iran while continuing to apply economic and international pressure on the regime to facilitate a managed transition.
- ➔ Support US security assistance to Israel in a manner that ensures US interests and values are advanced.
- ➔ Advocate for American and Israeli democracy and democratic institutions.
- ➔ Counter antisemitism in the United States while supporting free speech.
- ➔ Preserve the international liberal order and work through international institutions when possible.

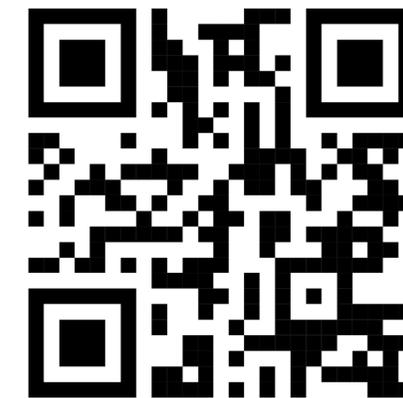


Scan this QR code to read the J Street Policy Center's full memo outlining our 2026 policy agenda for the Trump Administration.



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