

Cantors Across North America are Singing for More S'mores



After an incredibly successful campaign to raise "camperships" in 2009 and 2010, members of the American Conference of Cantors will once again "sing for s'mores" to help raise funds to send kids to URJ camps during the summer of 2012.

In 2009-10, Reform Cantors across North America raised over \$50,000 added to the URJ Camp scholarship fund. These funds will help children affiliated with Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) synagogues attend URJ-sponsored summer camps.

Members of the ACC and Guild of Temple Musicians performed in concerts to raise awareness of the importance of the URJ's camping movement and to raise much needed scholarship funds.

The ACC and the URJ established the initiative in early 2009 when the URJ leadership and camp directors expressed concerns that children might not be able to attend camp during the 2010 summer because of the economic climate. The ACC asked its members across North America to hold concerts to raise funds for a scholarship fund to be divided among the Union's North American Camping System.

"Our children are the future of the Reform Movement and we must keep them invested. I know of no better way than through the URJ camp program, which the campership initiative will facilitate. The Cantors wonderful gift of voice will allow hundreds of Reform Jewish teens to have a summer camp experience which would otherwise not have been within their family means," said Peter J. Weidhorn, Chairman of the Union for Reform Judaism Board of Trustees.

Concerts were previously held in, Deerfield, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; New Orleans, Louisiana; several locations in Long Island, New York; Santa Barbara, California; Tallahassee, Florida; Plantation, Florida; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Los Gatos, California; San Rafael, California; Portland, Oregon; Washington, D.C.; and Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

"With this initiative, the members of the American Conference of Cantors demonstrate their understanding of the power of Jewish camping and showing their commitment to deepening Jewish Identity by making Reform Jewish camping available to those who might not be able to attend," said Rabbi Dan Frelander, Senior Vice President, Union for Reform Judaism. "The entire Reform Movement appreciates the ACC's profound act of leadership and their faith in the future of North American Judaism."

On March 7, 2010, Chicago-area ACC members, cantorial soloists, youth choirs, and song leaders joined together at Congregation B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim in Deerfield,

Illinois to raise over \$18,000 to be split between Olin Sang Ruby Union Institute Camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin and the national ACC-URJ Campership Fund.

Cantor Jennifer Frost of BJBE and a member of the ACC Executive Board, welcomed over 400 parents, children, and camp supporters who between ticket sales, raffle sales and bake sale purchases raised more money for camperships than any other single concert in North America. Participants included Cantors Amy Zussman, Diane Yomtov, Ross Wolman, Scott Simon, Pavel Roytman, Arik Luck, Menahem Kohl, Kim Harris, David Goldstein, Jennifer Frost, Miriam Eskenasy, Lynda Dresher, Michael Davis, and soloist Ilana Axel. Gregory Shifrin accompanied on piano.

“It was the perfect mix of kids, cantors and sing-a-long,” commented Maxine Sukenik, president of Temple Chai, Long Grove, Illinois, who attended the concert with many from the surrounding community. Selections from the program included “And the Youth Shall See Visions” composed by Debbie Friedman; “Yism’chu” composed by Cantor Robbie Solomon; “Hava Nashira” composed by Josh Nelson; and “Let the Heavens Be Glad” composed by Rob Weinberg.

“This was a remarkable event bringing together people of all ages from the youngest child to grandparents celebrating Jewish music with the cantors of our community in order to provide scholarships for the camps of the reform movement,” commented Jerry Kaye, Director of OSRUI.

On December 5, 2009, in Los Gatos, California, at Congregation Shir Hadash, Cantors Kay Greenwald, Devorah Felder Levy, Leigh Korn, David Margules, Rita Glassman, Lauren Bandman, and soloists Meeka Simerly and Barry Reich sang for a very appreciative audience. On December 6, 2009, in San Rafael, California at Congregation Rodef Sholom, Cantor Martin Feldman, Elana Jagoda, and special guest Dan Nichols joined the cast from Saturday’s concert to perform again. The repertoire represented a wide variety of music, and each cantor had a unique style and presentation. Together the San Francisco Bay area cantors raised more than \$5,000.

In Long Island, New York, on December 13, 2009, six different choirs from four different synagogues came together at Temple Sinai. Louis Bordman, director of Eisner and Crane Lake camps spoke about the URJ camps. As a prize for the raffle, a free session at one of the camps was donated. The afternoon concluded with music by Yom Hadash, a Jewish Rock band. Participating cantors and congregations included Cantor Gabi Arad, Temple Sinai of Roslyn Heights; Cantor Claire Franco, Community Synagogue of Port Washington; Cantor Guy Bonne, Temple Tikvah; Cantor Rebecca Goren, North Country Reform Synagogue and Cantor Sheila Rubin, Temple Avodah. Long Island cantors and their choirs raised \$4,300. A second concert was held on the South Shore of Long Island, at Temple Avodah featuring Cantors Judy Naimark, David Katz, Steven Sher, Sheila Rubin and soloist Dan Rosenfeld. Their concert raised an additional \$1,550.

Cantor Tanya Greenblatt hosted a concert at Temple Israel in Tallahassee, Florida on December 13, 2009. Cantor Jacqueline Rawiszzer from Congregation for Reform

Judaism in Orlando joined Tanya along with talented young people from both congregations. The concert featured Broadway hits and Chanukah favorites. North Florida cantors raised more than \$1,700.

The Midwest was also represented by Cantor Rebecca Robins, Cantor Karen Berman, Cantor David Barash, Cantor Deborah Martin, Marsha Fensin, Arlene Spanier, and Hazzan Jeremy Stein at a concert at Temple Sinai, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, held on December 5, 2009.

Cantor Richard Cohn hosted a concert at Temple Emanu-El in Dallas, Texas, with Cantors Roslyn Barak and Mo Glazman on December 13, 2009.

Families interested in receiving scholarship funds should apply through their camp during the application process.

For further information regarding the ACC or this project, please visit the ACC website at www.accantors.org. The ACC, representing over 450 Reform Cantors across North America, is an affiliate of the URJ (www.urj.org), representing over 900 Reform Jewish congregations across North America.

[Download the Press Release Here!](#)

If you would like to host or take part in a Campership Concert, there is still time! Please contact Kerith Spencer-Shapiro at cantorkshapiro@mac.com and the ACC can help you as you plan your concert.

This list includes information for ACC-URJ Campership (camp scholarship) Concerts to be held across North America. More dates and locations will be added as the ACC office receives the information. Please contact info@accantors.org for more information. To make a donation to the fund, follow this [link](#).