



American Conference of Cantors

Organizational Information



History and Mission

Founded in 1953, the American Conference of Cantors is a thriving professional organization that currently represents over 450 cantors in North America and around the world as *k'lei kodesh* (holy vessels), serving the diverse needs of *K'lal Yisrael* (the Jewish people). The ACC exists to support its members in their sacred calling as emissaries for Judaism and for Jewish music. We draw upon the energies and aspirations of our members through a shared and dynamic vision of programs and initiatives that respond to the needs of the greater Reform community. The ACC is a recognized 501c3 organization.

The ACC inspires its members to embrace a multi-faceted vision of the cantorate. This vision is realized through programs and initiatives that will ensure a strong and successful organization. Each such effort is conceived according to carefully determined goals and criteria. Through our members we provide our communities with a compelling experience of text, music, learning, relationship to one another and connectedness to God. We establish our organization as a self-assured and securely funded entity, acting in full partnership with other representational bodies of the Reform Movement and worldwide Jewry.

The GTM, founded as an affiliate organization of the ACC in 1989, supports and encourages more than 250 synagogue musicians throughout North America. The GTM works to advance the professional development of their members. Opportunities are provided for members to share perspectives on topics related to evolving ideas in synagogue music; for ways to promote the best Jewish worship experience; and for sharing the musical compositions of Guild members.

Cantors bring an additional dimension to their congregations. They serve as worship leaders, pastors to their congregants, teachers to children and adults, partners with rabbinic and educational staff in programming and life cycle/cultural events, and communal leaders. The ACC/GTM Convention program offerings are designed to update and enhance the skills of the cantors and synagogue musicians in attendance so they continue to perform their responsibilities to the utmost of their abilities. Outside of the traditional workshops, worship services, and programs, special concerts are planned to expose our host community to the beauty of American Jewish Music. Our most recent host communities include Boston, Memphis, Chicago, and San Francisco.

In recent years, the ACC/GTM Convention has attracted a significant majority of its membership to our annual gatherings. The attendees are professionals who bring their knowledge and love for Jewish music back to their congregations and communities. They are teachers of our children and adults, in addition to bringing beauty and spirituality to our Sabbath and Festival Worship.

Relationships with Other Organizations

The American Conference of Cantors is an affiliate organization of the Union for Reform Judaism, which represents over 900 Reform Congregations in North America. The Guild of Temple Musicians is an affiliate organization of the ACC.

Why support the ACC?

Jewish music transcends time and space. As stewards of Jewish Music, cantors, with the support of other synagogue musicians, fill our congregations with song while serving the diverse needs of the Jewish People in our country and around the world. The ACC and GTM provide the framework that enables our members to continue their sacred work with heart and passion—ensuring that the next generation of Jews will continue to enjoy and benefit from the music of our people.

During the annual ACC/GTM convention, participants are able to partake in a variety of scholar-led and peer-led workshops that will enhance them as musicians, teachers, performers, composers, tutors, and Jewish leaders. Past scholars-in-residence have included Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, scholar-in-residence of Congregation Emanu-El of San Francisco; Dr. Tish Davis-Wick, an expert in workplace communications; Rick Recht, Jewish singer and composer; Joyce Rosenzweig, Jewish composer and teacher; Walter Whitman, director of The Soul Children of Chicago; Rabbi Daniel Freeland, Senior Vice President—Union for Reform Judaism; Cantors Benjie Ellen Schiller and Stephen Richards, Jewish composers and teachers; Carolyn Figel and Danny Jones, Jewish early childhood experts; Rabbi Jeffrey A. Summit PhD, Ethnomusicologist and rabbi; Dr. Joshua Jacobson, Jewish composer and conductor; and Anita Diamant, Jewish author. Future scholars-in-residence include Rabbi Steven Kaye, professional and organizational development expert; and Alan Morinis, anthropologist, filmmaker, Mussar expert and teacher.

Financial support of the ACC/GTM convention will allow the planning committee to continue to provide excellent scholars and teachers for not only this year but many years to come.

For more information on the American Conference of Cantors or Guild of Temple Musicians, please contact our managing director, Rachel Roth, at rroth@accantors.org or 847-781-7800.