

# The ShabbaTones Chorus

## Jewish Choral Music Through The Ages

Highlands Presbyterian Community Church  
Gainesville, FL

May 15, 2022, 5pm



## About Us

The ShabbaTones Chorus was formed in 2019 out of a desire by the founding members to bring choral music of the Jewish people to life in North Central Florida. The chorus is a community choir and is open to everyone interested in singing Jewish choral music. Our mission is to study a wide spectrum of Jewish choral styles, eras, voicings, nationalities, languages, and levels, both secular and liturgical. Our vision is to preserve choral music of the Jewish people, present it to the public, and touch people's hearts. We value the creation of its beauty, under the baton of our esteemed music director.

If you are interested in singing with us, please email [info@ShabbaTones.org](mailto:info@ShabbaTones.org). We will be welcoming new singers in August. We rehearse Wednesday evenings.

## Our Board of Directors

Richard Sadove, President  
Jesse Lipnick, Past President  
Adriane Isenberg, Vice President  
Elaine Jacobson, Treasurer  
Cynthia Hendelman, Corresponding Secretary  
Margaret James, Recording Secretary  
Shifra Armon, Member  
Franklin Termine, Member

## Choir Members

### Sopranos

Karen Deeter  
Cynthia Hendelman  
Adriane Isenberg  
Elaine Jacobson  
Mary Kladde

### Altos

Karen Cohen  
Margaret James  
Corinne Lipnick  
Zerrin Martin  
Hannah Schenkel  
Heidi Schwiebert

### Tenors

Rick Buncher  
Peter S. Bushnell  
Jesse Lipnick  
Derek Nirenberg  
Kingsley Okere  
Alek Conception Rivera  
Franklin Termine

### Basses

Lafe Arens  
Richard Sadove  
Gabriel Tyner  
Kenrick Watkins  
Shichu Xie

## Front Graphic

Zann Jacobson is a Jewish artist and rabbinic teacher for Pardess Jewish community. You can contact Zann at [www.pardesscommunity.org](http://www.pardesscommunity.org) for prints or a Jewish calendar.

**Psalm 114 (The Exodus)**..... adapted by Joshua Jacobson  
This presentation juxtaposes two renditions of Psalm 114, both in plainchant. One is the Gregorian chant *Tonus Peregrinus* (“wandering tone”) and the other is a Jewish chant found in North Africa and in many European countries. The remarkable similarity of the two traditions points to a common origin in pre-Christian Jerusalem as the chant alternates between Latin and Hebrew.

**The Lord’s Wonders at The Exodus**.....arr. Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory  
By special permission of the authors we present this unpublished work. Text excerpts are from Psalm 114 with paraphrasing. It is in the style of the Gregorian chant with a unison chorus.

*When Sean and I did this originally, it was all!!!!!!! improvisatory. The only thing written down was the chant melody for the singers. – Paul Caldwell*

**The Power of God in His Deliverance of Israel**

When Israel went out of Egypt,  
The house of Jacob from a people of strange language,  
Judah became His sanctuary, And Israel His dominion.  
The sea saw it and fled; Jordan turned back.  
The mountains skipped like rams, The little hills like lambs.

**The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm**..... Herbert Fromm (1949)  
Herbert Fromm was one of the most prominent composers of serious Jewish music to survive the Third Reich. He immigrated to the United States. The arrangement is an appropriate pastoral setting of the text, slow and homophonic.

**Keter (Crown of Holiness)**.....Salamone Rossi (1622)  
Rossi was the violinist and composer for the Gonzaga court in Mantua. Located in Lombardy in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it was the most sophisticated court in all northern Italy. Rossi composed no liturgical music for the church, but his collection of choral music for the synagogue is the only work of its kind and quality to appear before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His published works are a path-breaking collection of Hebrew motets for the synagogue. Keter is a Sephardic Sanctification which refers to things that are above the mind’s abilities of comprehension.

Crown of holiness, acclaimed by throngs of angels on high and by thy holy people assembled. God’s great glory fills the earth. His angels do ask: “Where is His place of glory?” From His abode may He turn in mercy to His people who sing His praises forevermore. Our God is one God: He our Father, He our King, our deliverer. He in his mercy shall proclaim again before all the living: I am the Lord your God. The Lord He shall reign forever, thy God unto all eternity. Hallelujah.

### Three Ladino Love Songs with guest soloist Hazzan Bill Lieberman

After their expulsion from Spain in 1492, and particularly throughout the Mediterranean, Jews brought with them the Castilian language, which exists to the present time. This language of Sephardic Jews came to be known as Ladino, or *Judezmo*, to describe the Judeo-Spanish dialect. Their musical legacy is rich in tradition and consists of a dual repertoire: sacred-sung in Hebrew, and secular- Ladino songs, relating to some aspect of the life cycle (birth, childhood, courting, marriage, and death).

**La Rosa Linda** (The Pretty Rose)..... arr. Allan Small  
The pretty rose floating on the sea. Ah, my beautiful one, please bring me some water.

**Noches, Noches** (Nights)..... Arr. Richard Neumann  
Nights, such good nights. Oh, my mother, what wonderful nights of love!

**Scalerica de Oro.** (Stairways of Gold) ..... Arr. Richard Neumann  
A little ladder of gold for the bride and groom. Even though they have no money, we wish them good fortune (*mazal alto*) and good luck (*mazal bueno*).

**Erev Shel Shoshanim** (Evening of Roses)..... Josef Hadar/arr. J. Klebanow (1956)  
This is an Israeli song, conceived in a “folk” style, and tremendously popular both in Israel and the Diaspora. The text of this secular love song is a paraphrase of verses from the Biblical Song of Songs, in which the poet entreats his lover to join him in the fragrant garden for an “Evening of Roses.”

**A Nign**..... Lazar Weiner/arr. Joshua Jacobson  
Hassidism is a movement within Judaism founded in 18<sup>th</sup> century Poland. Hassidism stresses the importance of spiritual transcendence through meditation, dancing and enthusiastic singing. The ultimate song was the *nign*, a devotional wordless tune sung repeatedly until the devotee had fallen under its trance. “Tshiri bim bam bam” are vocable syllables with no discursive meaning, tremendous spiritual resonance.

*There was once a pauper, Who only with God would quarrel. Wonder upon wonder befell him, Whenever he sang this sort of nign [melody]:  
Tshiri-bim bam bam*

**Zol Zain Sholem** (Let There Be Peace)..... adapted by Joshua Jacobson  
This joyous Yiddish call and response song is from Eastern Europe. The call is for Peace and Freedom for an authentic Klezmer sound.

**Offertory** (Micah 6: 6-8) .....John Ness Beck (1987)  
A staple in the choral library, this is a beautiful, contemplative anthem of self-examination and commitment. Beck was born in Ohio and his works are widely performed across the globe today. The Book of Micah is the sixth of the twelve minor prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Micah describes God's coming judgment on Israel, but it also outlines God's promise to be merciful and restore his people to the land.

With what shall I come before the Lord?

**Medley: Israeli Songs of Peace and Protection**..... arr. Joshua Jacobson  
This medley brings together the two wings of modern Israeli politics - left and right.

**Shir LaShalom** (Song of Peace, 1969)  
Yair Rosenblum and Yaakov Rotblit's song represents the Israeli peace movement connected to "The War of Attrition" which involved fighting between Israel and Egypt et al from 1967 to 1970 in the Sinai. It was inspired by the Vietnam antiwar movement and is a call to action with anti-religious references. It acquired even greater significance after Rabin's assassination at a peace rally after singing this song.

**Al Kol Eileh** (Over All Of These, 1980)  
In Naomi Shemer's song one discovers how the Israeli personal and the national are woven together, expressing the sentiment that has been part of the Jewish experience for centuries: a deep desire to protect loved ones, understanding that terrible things may come, praying for God's grace, alongside the ability to accept the good with the bad; the bitter with the sweet.

**Avinu Malkénu** (musically quoting Jewish liturgy) arr. John Leavitt (2018)  
A prayer recited at services during the Ten Days of Repentance, from *Rosh Hashanah* through *Yom Kippur*. The reference “Our father, Our king” is a request for forgiveness and pardon.

**Around the Campfire**..... arr. Joshua Jacobson  
This medley comprises three songs that have been sung around bonfires by Jews in Israel and America for most of the last century and the present. Their European origins can be heard in the dance rhythms: in the first song the Viennese waltz and in the last two the Romanian *horah*.

Finjan (Gather around the campfire)

Rad HaLailah (Night is coming, our song is raising)

Zemer Lach (A song for you)

**Choral Finale** from *Ester* (1774) .....Cristiano Giuseppe Lidarti  
(1730, Vienna - after 1793, Pisa)

Soloists: Elaine Jacobson, Adriane Isenberg, Franklin Termaine, Richard Sadove

Lidarti composed *Ester* for the Jewish community of Amsterdam for the Feast of Purim along with other works in Hebrew. The libretto was created by Rabbi Jacob Saraval and based on the 1732 libretto for G. F. Handel’s *Esther*. It is believed to be the first work in oratorio form in the Hebrew language. Lidarti’s music was lost until it was rediscovered in London in 1997.

**Choir Director:** Will Kesling

Dr. Will Kesling is Professor and Choral Program Director at UF. He has conducted hundreds of choral ensembles and 46 professional symphony orchestras throughout the world. His talents for weaving together text and music, chorus and orchestra have garnered him international respect. L'ARENA, Verona, Italy – Kesling is baton perfect for Brahms. You rarely have the opportunity to perceive in a maestro a clear vision of the work that is evident by the gestures, at the same time expressive with great precision. NY Daily News – *Definitely Dvořák ...Will Kesling's conducting was truly inspired and impeccably paced; the orchestra played superbly; the massed choruses from FL, TX, GA, ID, IN, NJ, and UT produced stirring sounds;* American Record Guide July/Aug 2020 – *Kesling conducts a lyrical, dramatic performance...* Antonin Dvořák REQUIEM MASS, Op. 89; Gold Medal–2021 Audio Visual Arts Digital International Competition – AVA Digital Awards is an international competition that recognizes excellence by creative professionals responsible for the planning, concept, direction, design, and production of digital communication... Sounds of the Season: Conquering COVID with a Carol produced and conducted by Dr. Will Kesling; The Beijing Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs of the Peoples Republic of China has certified Dr. Kesling to be a High Level Talent and selected him to join the Program for the Introduction of Renowned Overseas Professors by awarding him a 10-year High Talents R Visa.

**Accompanist:** Lee Jeong Heung

Lee Hyun Jeong is known as a very sensitive musician. Since she was six years old, her life has been involved in music. She has been a church musician for most of her life; serving thirteen churches as a music director, soloist, pianist, and organist. She holds a bachelor's degree in voice and piano from a university in Seoul and a Master of Music in conducting from UF. Lee is a very active member in Gainesville Master Chorale and has been featured as a soloist on many occasions. She is the Music Director and Organist at a Presbyterian Church.

**Guest Vocalist:** Hazzan William Lieberman

Hazzan Lieberman is a beloved and longtime Cantor of congregation B'nai Aviv in Weston, FL. He will commemorate the 43rd anniversary year of his cantorial ordination from The Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS). Cantor Lieberman is distinguished by his many academic achievements. Bill earned a BA degree from Brooklyn College, with a concentration in music performance, and a MA degree in music therapy from Columbia University. Additionally, JTS awarded him a Bachelor of Sacred Music, Diploma of Hazzan, and an honorary Doctor of Music degree. Bill is also a recipient of JTS' prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for Exemplary Service. A lyric baritone, trained in classical vocal music and art song repertory, he took voice instruction at the Juilliard School with Elizabeth Bishop. Bill was fortunate to study Yiddish and Ladino song with Lazar Weiner and Joe Elias. A consummate professional, Bill takes pride in his 4-decade membership in the Cantors Assembly, the international organization of Conservative cantors. He is proudly featured on two CD recordings (The Spirit of Israel II and The Best of the Spirit Series) jointly produced by the Cantors Assembly and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Bill is honored to be part of today's program. He is married to Myra and their younger daughter is a graduate of the UF College of Medicine.

## **Instrumentalists:**

Christine Alicot..... flute  
Peter S. Bushnell ..... flute  
Aaron Colverson..... violin  
Stephen Fine ..... viola  
Garrett Hecker ..... percussion  
Mattia Imponenti ..... cello  
Nolan Koskela-Staples .....bass  
Tania Moldovan ..... violin  
Johanna Weiss .....clarinet, soprano saxophone

We appreciate you coming to our concert and supporting our efforts to perform choral music of the Jewish people. We also thank our donors, without whom we could not be able to present this concert. It would be much appreciated if you could support the ShabbaTones future efforts by making a donation online at [www.shabbatones.org/support-us](http://www.shabbatones.org/support-us).

Special thanks to the Jewish Council of North Central Florida (JCNCF) for awarding the choir a grant, which we used to purchase choral music. And many thanks to UF Hillel for allowing us to rehearse in their beautiful space.