

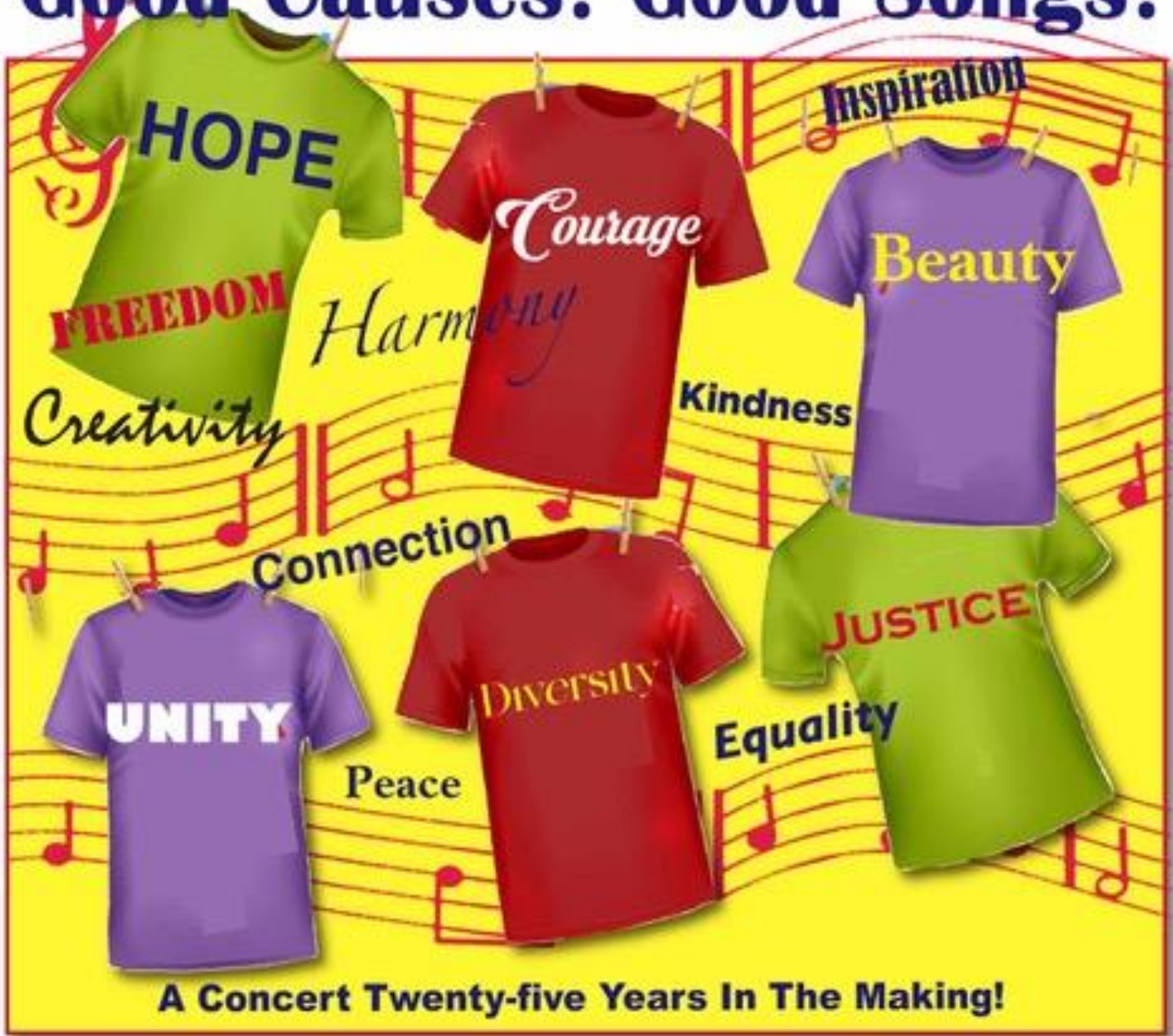
The Teaneck Community Chorus

Steven Bell • Artistic Director

Proudly Presents



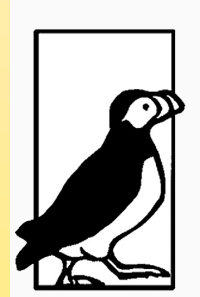
Good Causes! Good Songs!



A Concert Twenty-five Years In The Making!

Sunday • January 21 • 3 PM
Teaneck High School

www.teaneckcommunitychorus.org or Facebook or @teaneckcommunitychorus1



Greetings from the Chorus President

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the Teaneck Community Chorus's 2024 winter concert. We are celebrating our twenty fifth anniversary. This Chorus began with a small group of Teaneck residents with a vision to celebrate the diversity of our community through song. Here we are twenty-five years later still inspired by our mission.

Our concert today, "Good Causes Good Songs", combines songs previously sung over the last 25 years and additional tunes that reflect our commitment to our values. There will be many familiar songs and songs in several languages. We are pleased to have Azaria Best, a Teaneck High School student singing with us today. Collaboration with the Teaneck Schools has always been a joy and we appreciate the support of the Teaneck Schools and Board of Education.

We hope that this concert will provide a respite as well as an inspiration and reminder of all that is good.

Thank you for your continued support through your attendance at our concert today and in the past.

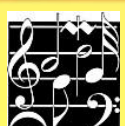
I hope you enjoy the concert and connect with the heart and soul of our music.

Warm regards,

Anita Bluestone

President

Teaneck Community Chorus



Good Causes! Good Songs!

25 Years in the Making!

Program Order

“Good Trouble”.....Thomas Keesecker

“Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor (*Miss Liberty*).....Berlin/arr. Lazarus

“Carefully Taught” (*South Pacific*)....Rodgers & Hammerstein/arr. Bell

“Walk a Mile”.....Pepper Choplin/arr. Mark Hayes

“Cantares”.....Joan Manuel Serrat/Antonio Machado

“Before Too Long”.....Mark Miller/Alena Synkova

Azaria Best-soloist

“Hine ma tov”.....Allan Naplan

“Seasons of Love” (*Rent*).....Jonathan Larson

Gail Smith, Wes Matsui, soloists

“Give Us Hope”.....James Papoulis/arr. Núñez

“Mir zaynen do tsu zingen!”.....Mark Zuckerman

“Turn the World Around”.....Harry Belafonte/arr. Farrow

“(I Am) Just Like You”.....Michel Kinter

“For the Beauty of the Earth”.....John Rutter/F.S. Pierpoint

“Make Them Hear You” (*Ragtime*).....Flaherty & Ahrens/arr. Funk

“Tear Them Down”.....Kirby Shaw

“Va Pensiero” (*Nabucco*).....Giuseppe Verdi

“Love Train”.....Huff & Gamble/arr. Weist & Adamczyk



Artistic Director – Steven Bell

Steven L. Bell has been the Artistic Director of the Teaneck Community Chorus since 2000. He recently retired as the Director of Vocal Music at Teaneck High School where he conducted the Mixed Chorus, Concert Choir, and award-winning Madrigal Singers. He also served as the Instructional Leader of the Teaneck High School Department of Fine and Performing Arts.



He taught AP Music Theory and was the Director and Musical Director of the school's annual musical. He had also taught Choral Methods at Montclair State University. Previously he taught music at Leonia Middle School, the Dwight School in Manhattan, and elementary and junior high schools in Teaneck. In his role as Musical Director, Mr. Bell has been nominated four times as Outstanding High School Musical Director by the Papermill Playhouse's Rising Star Awards and has won this distinction in 2004 for his production of Company at Fair Lawn High School.



Chorus Pianist – Teresa-Marie Gotanco



Born and raised in New Jersey, Teresa-Marie Gotanco is a music educator, director, and performer based in north New Jersey. She is currently in her first year building the music program at Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child in Summit, New Jersey.

Prior to her involvement at Oak Knoll, Ms. Gotanco enjoyed an extensive career as an accomplished pianist, traveling around the

New York/New Jersey region to play for various churches, choral performances, and musicals. Among the musicals she has played for are *Once on this Island*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (for which she also served as Choirmaster and Assistant Musical Director). With a passion for voice science, vocal health, and authentic expression in performance, she has led choirs, taught voice classes, and provided vocal coaching to clients from all walks of life.

Ms. Gotanco has also worked as a professional vocalist since 2018, when she made her professional singing debut as a soprano concertist and soloist with the Princeton Baroque Chorus. In 2019, she was featured as part of a septet at Carnegie Hall under the baton of Mr. John Rutter, and during that summer, she had the privilege of performing at the Apollo Theater in Syros, Greece, during the Festival of the Aegean. Ms. Gotanco holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Rutgers University.



Soloist Azaria Best



is 16 and is a junior at Teaneck High School. During a concert in middle school, she fell in love with singing, joined the school choir and has continued with both vocal and instrumental training since. Azaria's current instruments include the acoustic guitar, her voice, and the violin.

She recently won third place in the 2024 Teaneck Teen Idol singing competition. Previously, Azaria performed on stages at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, Teaneck High School, the Glenpointe Marriott Hotel, and at the Manhattan Vineyard Theatre. Her favorite performance was *The Wiz*, which was a THS production during her freshman year. The show redirected her passion to musical theater, effectively changing her life. Some of her favorite artists are Steve Lacy, Blood Orange, Samara Joy, and Tyler, The Creator. Azaria would like to thank her parents for their encouragement, her friends for giving her hope, and her music teacher Ms. Rondael, who's supported her since middle school. Azaria aspires to study music and the arts in college and plans to make a lifelong career out of it.

Juliette Bowen

Juliette Bowen is a Sign Language Interpreter, who has won the hearts of the Teaneck Community Chorus audiences for over ten years. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hofstra University, a Master's of Education in School Counseling, Herbert H. Lehman College, Bronx, NY and a Master's of Education in General and Special Education, Touro College, New York. She is fluent in Spanish, English, and American Sign Language.



She currently works with multi-handicapped, autistic, blind emotionally disturbed, deaf, and severely learning-disabled students in NYC. Her first experience with the deaf and hard of hearing was when she was approached to add these students to her caseload while counseling in Valhalla, NY. Juliette did not shrink back but willingly accepted the challenge and decided to provide equal access to these students by learning their language. She began working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in 1994 and later counseled and taught at the Lexington School for the Deaf, Queens, NY. She currently interprets for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Clinton Hills, Brooklyn, as well as at Trinity Baptist Church in the Bronx.



Teaneck Community Chorus Singers

Artistic Director
Steven Bell

Pianist
Teresa-Marie Cotanco

Sopranos

Sue Akiska

Barbara Kinter

Maria Adorno

Chi Mei Lu

Ilene Gilbert

Gail Smith

Monica Hodges

Fern Wilensky



Teaneck Community Chorus Singers

Altos

Anita Bluestone

Katy Sastre

Alice Julian

Nadège Stretz

Judy Mars

Eileen White

Ellen Ray

Tenors

Jack Aaker

Wes Matsui

Adina Hirschmann

Patrick Montesano

Justin Lu

Basses

Jeff Pieper

Michel Kinter



Patrons

Founder's Circle

(\$1000+)

Elena Matsui

Wes & Mary Matsui

Director's Circle

(\$500-\$999)

Jack & Margaret Aaker

Gary Ostroff & Ellen Ray

Anita Bluestone & David Lyon

Steven Bell

Gerri Martin

Benefactors

(\$250-\$499)

Judith Bellini

Carole Boutry

Gina Mannix & Patrick Montesano

Michel Kinter

Nadège Stretz

Fern Wilensky



Patrons

Benefactors

(\$250-\$499)

Gina Mannix & Patrick Montesano

Michel Kinter

Chi Mei Lu

Nadege Stretz

Fern Wilensky

Katy Sastre

Monica Schulze-Hodges



Patrons

Friends

(\$100-\$249)

Suzanne & Serhat Akiska

Judith Bellini

Mia Best

Carole Boutry

Juliette Bowen

Janice & Ed Dabney

Pamela DeFeo

Rhonda Eisenberg

Diana Fainberg

Debbie Feldman

Jean & Paul Friedman

Ginger Gordon

Susie Hoffman & Mel Grizer

Jacqueline Kates

Theodora Lacey

Justin Lu

Judy Mars

Jeffrey and Andrea Pieper

Mr. & Mrs. Alan Reiffe

Gail Smith

Ray & Edie Turkin

Roberta & Kari Walker

Eileen & Jim White

Evelyn Wolff & Chuck Ebert



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Barbara KInter

Gene & Gail Matsui

Jack & Sharon Ray

Mark Rinis

Jean Strickholm



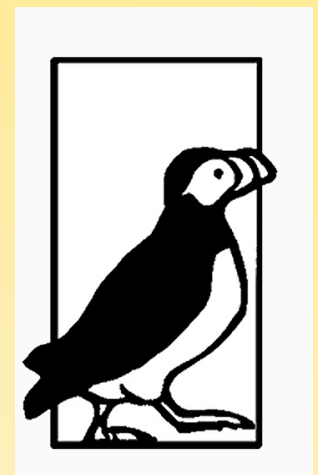


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Program Notes

Good Causes! Good Songs!

25 Years in the Making

GOOD TROUBLE was written by Thomas Keesecker, a retired church musician, to celebrate the life of Civil Rights icon John Lewis (1940-2020). With a gospel feel, it calls us to action to make a better world for everyone.

*We will not be afraid,
Fear and lies will cease,
As we struggle day by day,
We seek love and peace*

GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR is from the poem “The New Colossus” Emma Lazarus wrote in 1883 and inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty. She was a fifth generation Sephardic born in 1849 who believed there is no good or bad immigrant, coining the slogan “Until we are all free none of us are free”. The poem celebrates the fact that the US, after taking the land from Native Americans and Mexicans, and bought from France, was built by immigrants. It ignores the role of African slaves in building elite white southern wealth. Its welcoming premise is increasingly being challenged by a major revival of violence against individuals and officials seeking justice, nativism and anti-immigrant hysteria. The American Jewish Historical Society in NYC has exhibits on Lazarus.

<https://ajhs.org/exhibitions-programs/emma-lazarus-project/>

CAREFULLY TAUGHT is from Rogers and Hammerstein’s classic *South Pacific*, which began a run of 1925 performances in 1949, with Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza as leads. It received 10 Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The 1958 film was shot on Kauai, starring Mitzi Gaynor. The Broadway revival starring Kelli O’Hara in 2008 ran nearly 1000 performances. The two inter-cultural love affairs offended southerners, with David C. Jones of the GA Legislature condemning “half-breeds,” and attempting to outlaw entertainment “containing philosophy inspired by Moscow”. Princeton grad Lt. Cable, loving Liat, a Tonkinese woman he cannot take home to his upper-class family, sings our song which also applies to Nurse Nelly Forbush, in love with Emile deBecque, the French ex-pat with two Polynesian children. She, overcoming her Arkansas background, eventually allows love to trump hate.

Program Notes (continued)

Good Causes! Good Songs!

WALK A MILE. Words and music by Pepper Choplin, a Raleigh resident with 330 church and school choir compositions. It was arranged by Mark Hayes, born in Wisconsin in 1953. This call for basic compassion and understanding of others is repeated so that we don't miss the point.

CANTARES explores human destiny by using a metaphor of a road: This poem is part of a collection known as *Proverbios y Cantares*, or *Proverbs and Songs*. In this collection, Machado focuses on destiny and on many topics that at the time in Spain, the late 1800s to early 1900s, were very controversial. He focused on elements such as nature, time, dreams, and the individual and their identity.

*All things pass and stay forever,
yet we pass eternally,
drawing footpaths in our passing,
footpaths on the restless sea.*

*Never have I aimed for glory,
nor endeavored that my story be for Memory destined.
I have loved my worlds appeasing,
subtly fleeting, gently pleasing,
all with bubbles of a kind.*

*How I like to watch them topping,
glowing out of o ev'ry hue,
soaring up toward the blue,
then abruptly trembling, popping....*

*...Verse by verse, blow after blow...
Gone is the poet, far from this shore.
The clay of strange lands is where he's resting.
As he was leaving, teardrops he bore.*

Program Notes (continued)

Good Causes! Good Songs!

BEFORE TOO LONG This poem was preserved in manuscript in pencil on a scrap of yellowed paper. On the other side is the inscription “Alena Synková” in ink. Alena Synková was born in Prague on September 24, 1926, and was deported to Terezin on December 22, 1942. She returned home after the liberation. The poem on which this song is based is from the book, *“I Never Saw Another Butterfly... Children’s Drawings and Poems from Terezin Concentration Camp, 1942-1944*, published by Pantheon Books. The composer, Mark Miller, is from Plainfield, New Jersey.

*I’d like to go away alone
Where there are other, nicer people,
Somewhere into the far unknown,
There, where no one kills another.*

*Maybe more of us,
A thousand strong,
Will reach this goal Before too long.*

HINE MA TOV is based on Psalm 133, sacred to all three Abrahamic religions. The Hebrew version is well-known as our society has been much enriched by Judaism and Jewish culture. In this disturbing time of increased hate, we stretch ourselves and extend our singing to do an Arabic version. There are 1.4 million speaking Arabic at home and 3.5 million Arabs from various nationalities and religions in the US.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

Good Causes! Good Songs!

SEASONS OF LOVE by Jonathan Larson (1960-1996). Larson wrote the script, music and lyrics for the musical *Rent*, but tragically died the morning of the first preview. This song opens the second act, and the cast sang it as a tribute to Jonathan. This counter-cultural hit musical played 5,123 performances from 1996-2008, winning multiple Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize. A modern *La Boheme*, it explored the lives of youth in Manhattan during the start of the AIDS and homelessness crises. “Measure in love” is suggested as how to assess one’s life and legacy. Harvard Law Profess Joseph Singer devotes a chapter in his book “The Edges of the Field: Lessons on the Obligations of Ownership” to *Rent*’s call for justice for squatters vs. real estate developers, an issue ever more current today in New York City.

GIVE US HOPE music by Jim Papoulis. arranged by Francisco Nunez. The lyrics by Papoulis, Leo Schaff, and Regine Urbach challenge adults to rise up and protect children in this dark and violent time. Papoulis is a NYC based composer and leader of children’s choirs. The quiet and subdued opening gradually builds to a dramatic musical statement with hand claps and solos. He honors and connects classical and traditional forms with non-western sounds, believing music can heal, educate, and celebrate the lives of children.

We look to the future

Help us believe

Look in my eyes Can you feel?

MIR ZAYNEN DO TSU ZINGEN! (We’re Here to Sing!) is a “musical mission statement” written by

Mark Zuckerman in 2000. The song was performed at the at the 2002 International Choral Festival at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, New York City, by Ben Schaechter and the Jewish People’s Philharmonic Chorus.

Today we’re here to sing for you.

We sing music both rhythmic and rich.

And all in Yiddish, the language of the Jewish heart.

With songs both beautiful and tender.

In our songs lives the strength of our people and tradition.

We’re here to bring our heritage to your hearts through our voice.

We hope you take pleasure from our harmonious gift.

Perhaps you like our song. Here we are!



Program Notes (continued)

Good Causes! Good Songs!

TURN THE WORLD AROUND was written by Harry Belafonte and Robert Freedman and arranged by Larry Farrow. Belafonte says he got the message of the piece on a trip to Guinea, where he heard an African story-teller relate the concepts: “We are all part of the fire, the mountain, the river, the sunlight. If we really know who each other is, if we see one another clearly, we can turn the world around.” (For a lively version of the song check out YouTube’s version where Belafonte sings it with the Muppets—in African masks!). Producer Jim Henson considered it his best work. Belafonte performed it at Henson’s memorial in 1990.

(I AM) JUST LIKE YOU: THE GLORIOUS COLORS OF HUMANKIND was written by Oregonian, and TCC member, Michel Kinter. The words “there’s a style for every head” reminds us of singing “different strokes for different folks” by Sly and the Family Stone. Here, “if you look, you’ll see my soul, and you’ll find it looking back”.

FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH The words by F.S. Pierpoint (1835-1917) is a favorite Protestant hymn, here arranged by John Rutter. We have modified the words to reflect our humanitarian philosophy. The author was inspired to write this in the spring of 1863 whilst sitting on a hill overlooking the Avon River in England.

MAKE THEM HEAR YOU is sung by Coalhouse Walker, Jr. in the musical *Ragtime*. He urges comrades occupying JP Morgan’s library to struggle for justice, but non-violently. Lyrics are by Lynn Ahrens, music by Stephen Flaherty and book by Terrence McNally. Arranger Jeff Funk sets it in 4/4 time, marked “With Conviction”. This epic musical follows three families: African-American, white New Rochelle, and Eastern European Jewish immigrant in the tumultuous early 20th century. It gathered 13 Tony nominations but lost best musical to *The Lion King*. Elaborate and costly productions have limited its runs around the world.



Program Notes (continued)

Good Causes! Good Songs!

TEAR THEM DOWN is by Kirby Shaw, renowned singer and composer born in 1942. It is a passionate plea for people to break through artificial barriers of race and class to find that “what really matters lies deep within the heart and soul”.

VA, PENSIERO has been performed by the TCC many times. Also known as the "Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves", “*Va, Pensiero*” is from the opera *Nabucco* by Giuseppe Verdi. It recollects the period of Babylonian captivity after the loss of the First Temple in Jerusalem in c. 500 BCE. Some scholars have thought that the chorus was intended to be an anthem for Italian patriots, who were seeking to unify their country and free it from foreign control in the years up to 1861 (the chorus's theme of exiles singing about their homeland, and its lines like *O mia patria, si bella e perduta* / "O my country, so beautiful, and lost" was thought to have resonated with many Italians). Upon Verdi's death, along his funeral's cortege in the streets of Milan, bystanders started spontaneous choruses of "Va, pensiero". A month later, when he was reinterred alongside his wife at the Casa di Riposo, a young Arturo Toscanini conducted a choir of eight hundred in the famous hymn.

LOVE TRAIN was written by Leon Huff and Kenneth Gamble and arranged by Kevin Weist and Steve Adamczyk. The still performing O’Jays made it popular in 1973. According to the band, “the timeless message of Love Train is that if we pull together, we can make things better for everyone. It went to number one and is still the biggest song we've ever done.”

Good Causes! Good Songs!

25 Years in the Making

Guest Musicians

Singer

Azaria Best

Drummer

Larry Silverman

Concert Production

Production Manager

Jean Friedman

Graphics

Margaret Aaker

Web Master

Laura Downs-Buma

Monica Hodges

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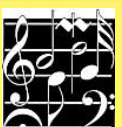
Acknowledgements

We thank the Puffin Foundation Ltd. for their continuing support and partnership with The Teaneck Community Chorus. Their support is appreciated is helping us spread our mission of diversity and talent for the programs we develop.

Thank you to **Jamie Boyle**, for leading the production crew at Teaneck High School. Thanks to the supportive students running lights and audio.

Thank you, **Jean Friedman** for serving as our Production Manager

Thank you to the members of the **Teaneck Board of Education** and **Superintendent, Dr. Andre Spencer**, for continuing our long-standing partnership to increase engagement within Teaneck.





Teaneck Community Chorus

Thank you for sharing this day with us!



Updates and information about TCC
will be posted on:

www.teaneckcommunitychorus.org

<https://www.facebook.com/Teaneck-Community-Chorus-105307001058>

<https://www.instagram.com/teaneckcommunitychorus1/#>

