

CANTOR DAVID LIPP was born in Madison, Wisconsin, and moved to Jerusalem with his family for one year when he was seven. They returned to Israel when he was 10 years old and his step-father had been appointed to head the biology department at the University of Haifa. “I attended three high schools,” he says, “in Jerusalem, Madison and then in Minneapolis, where I lived with my biological father and pursued a degree in music,” which he received from the University of Minnesota in vocal performance, *Summa Cum Laude*.

Before embarking on a career as a cantor, David Lipp was an actor performing in local and regional theatre and music comedy in the Midwest. He had always been interested in performing and had taken theater and acting classes in high school and performed with an improv group that put together a show about teenage pregnancy. He spent five years after college doing improv and working 20 hours a week at a station for the blind. “I was a broadcaster,” he says, “and tried to be an actor. I finally got a role in Biloxi Blues that forced me to be an equity actor and move to Chicago. However, I began to realize it was just not what I wanted to do.”

Although his family was always proudly Jewish, he decided at that time he wanted to become more observant. Several people suggested he might want to consider becoming a cantor. Still not terribly sure that was to be his chosen path, he went to New York and interviewed at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). It was then he realized that becoming a cantor would be more of what he is. He is widely recognized now as a gifted musician and singer.

Cantor Lipp was ordained by the JTS in 1994 and joined Congregation Adath Jeshurun as Hazzan the same year. He reflects that being a cantor has allowed him to be an impresario and to connect with people using a more eclectic musical vision that keeps them interested and involved. “I can go from traditional cantorial music to other types of Jewish music and reach people where they are.” He explains that in the golden age of cantorial music, the cantor was entertainment for the congregation as many people did not have the money or social cache to hear artistic music elsewhere.

This musical style has limited application in our day. “The music that seems to connect with people now,” he says, “is eclectic: country, rock and even Ugandan expression. Jewish music must react with its surroundings and provide more ways for people to find Jewish values and aesthetics.” The

Cantor has established a reputation as an inspiring leader of worship and a transmitter of the Jewish musical tradition - from ancient to contemporary.

Cantor Lipp currently leads worship services, prepares young people for their bar and bat mitzvahs and teaches synagogue skills to both children and adults. He officiates at all life-cycle events and directs the synagogue's youth and adult choirs. Besides doing pastoral work, he directs the Adath Jeshurun Choir and prepares and sings in concerts each year.

He also teaches at the Melton Adult Mini-school and in other adult education settings. For the past 18 years, he has directed, produced and taken a starring role in Adath Jeshurun's Annual Music Festival, and also was the featured soloist for one of Louisville's finest volunteer choruses, *Voces Novae*, on their first CD, *Soul of the Synagogue*. He currently serves on the Executive Council of the National Cantors Assembly.

In 2019, Cantor Lipp was appointed to serve as the President of the Cantors Assembly for two years. He was also honored for 25 years of service to his congregation.

Cantor Lipp is an expert on Jewish poetry in the Golden Age and on the interplay of Christian, Jewish and Islamic culture in medieval Spain under Islamic rule. In his view this led to a Renaissance of Hebrew scholarship and poetry which lives in Jewish liturgy and music to this day.