

# THE FIRST-EVER SURVEY OF JEWISH CHORAL ACTIVITY IN NORTH AMERICA

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# **FIVE SURVEY GOALS**

- 1. Find out why singers participate in Jewish choral activity
- 2. Obtain demographic and Jewish identity information about singers, both adults and teens in HaZamir: The International Jewish High School Choir
- Learn about Jewish choral activities in synagogues and communities
- Identify existing Jewish choral groups to form a national (international) data base
- 5. Identify priorities at both national and local levels

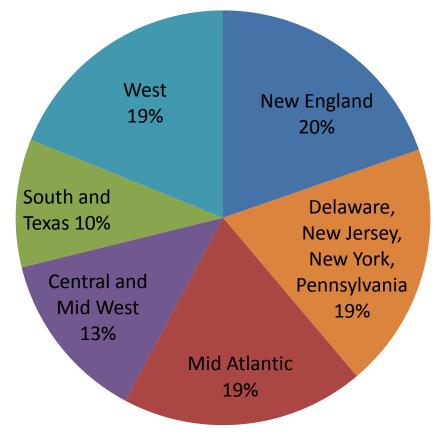
# **SURVEY DISTRIBUTION**

- Survey designed in March-April 2010
- Launched electronically May 2-June 14, 2010
- Link distributed via email to ZCF and Tara lists
- Link announced in cantors' newsletters, news releases, and "viral" e-mail distribution.

# **OVER 2,000 RESPONDENTS!**

- 1,777 singers (including 461 North American Jewish Choral Festival participants)
- 482 professionals (cantors, conductors, composers, rabbis, Jewish educators, etc.)
- 225 Jewish choral supporters (friends, family members, donors)

# 39% OF THE SINGERS LIVE IN THE NORTHEAST



# **MORE FEMALES THAN MALES**

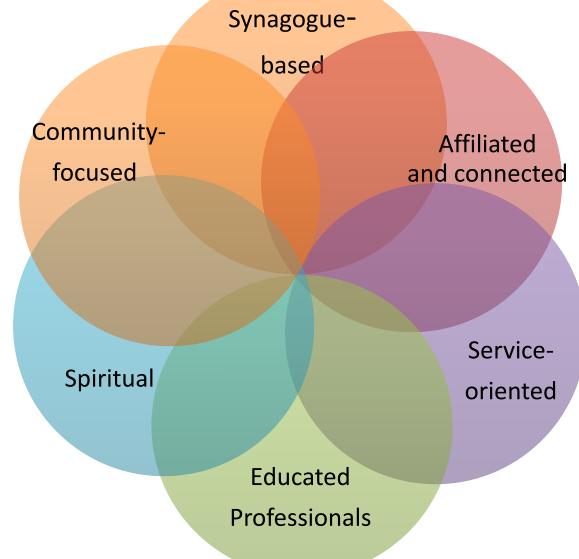
- Across all age groups, women significantly outnumber men in Jewish choral groups
- For singers over age 45, the proportion is roughly two-thirds female and one-third male
- For singers under age 45, the proportion is approximately 60% female and 40% male

# **HIGHLY EDUCATED**

### Education

- 89% have at least a BA
- 38% have MA
- 27% have doctorates
- Extensive additional educational experience
  - Scores of survey respondents listed certificates, ordinations, and degrees beyond the conventional list of choices.

### AS A GROUP, JEWISH CHORAL SINGERS SIT AT THE CORE OF THE MAIN-STREAM AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY. THEY ARE .....



# HOW CHORAL SINGERS COMPARE WITH NJPS 2000-01 RESPONDENTS

	NJPS 2000-01	Jewish Choral Survey
MA, PhD, or Professional degree	25%	62%
Most friends are Jewish	52%	68%
Attend Jewish lectures	47%	71%
Volunteer under Jewish auspices	25%	73%
Jewish giving (independent of Federation)	41%	73%
Regard being Jewish as "Very Important"	74%	84%
Belong to synagogue	46%	88%

Focus on

# THE BENEFITS OF JEWISH CHORAL SINGING

### **Jewish Competence**

#### Answer = "Mostly" or "Clearly describes my experience"

Jewish competence average

It helps me learn about the rich and varied Jewish musical tradition

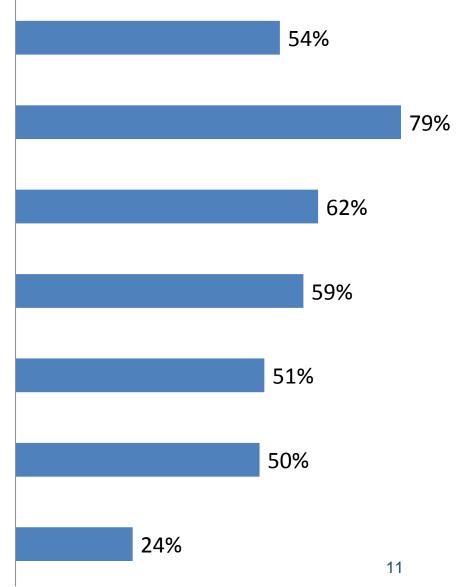
It helps me increase my Jewish knowledge

It helps me find personal meaning in the Jewish texts being sung

It enables me to sing choral texts that are not contrary to my beliefs (e.g., masses and carols)

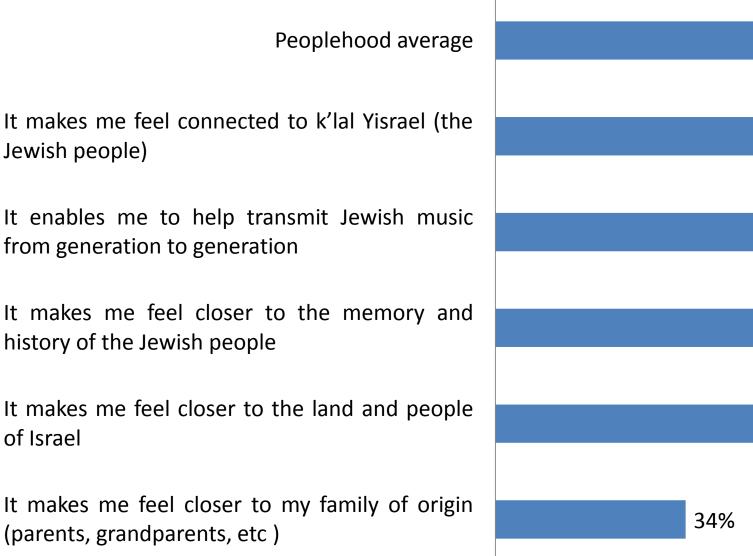
It helps me understand how the words and the music relate to each other

It enables me to understand Israel in new ways Survey of Jewish Choral Activity in North America



### Peoplehood

#### Answer = "Mostly" or "Clearly describes my experience"



54%

71%

62%

58%

47%

## Jewish community

#### Answer = "Mostly" or "Clearly describes my experience"

Community average

It provides me with a community of Jews who share my love of music

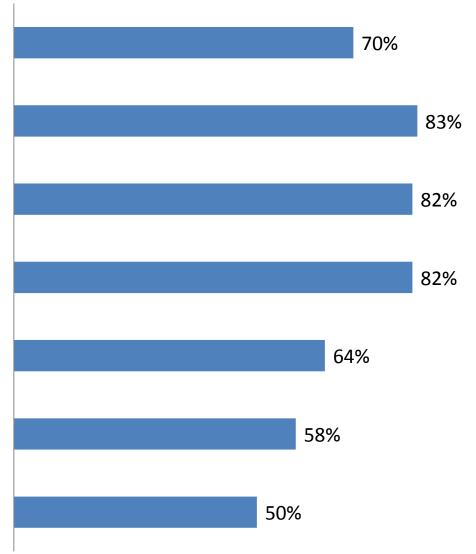
It is something that I contribute to my Jewish community

It connects me with musical peers who share my religious and/or cultural background

It makes me appreciate the diverse range of people in the Jewish community who have musical ability and talent

It bonds me with others who are striving toward a set of common goals

It provides me with a Jewish social network



## **Spirituality**

#### Answer = "Mostly" or "Clearly describes my experience"

Spirituality average

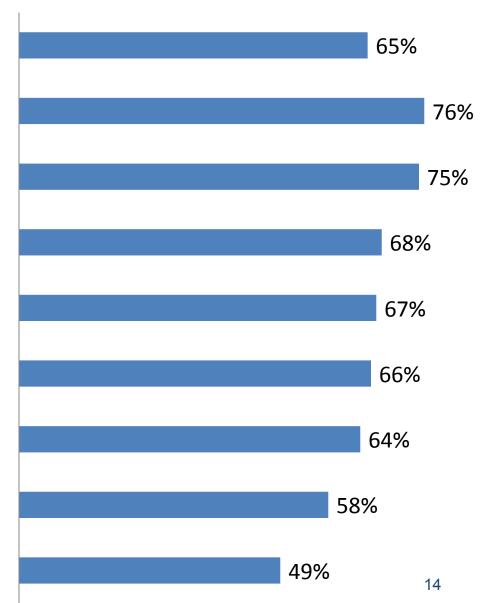
- It gives me a spiritual experience in a Jewish context
- It helps me to connect emotionally with my Judaism
  - It makes me feel more centered or complete
- It lets me express my religious feelings or beliefs through music
- It provides me with a Jewish spiritual community

It enhances my experience of prayer

It connects me to a synagogue

It helps me feel closer to God

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# Integration

The analysis of survey data showed that one statement about the benefits of participating in Jewish choral music stood out from the others:

### "It enables me to integrate my Jewish life with my musical life"

This benefit was important to singers of all ages, but it was <u>the most strongly reported benefit</u> by singers under age 45.

# SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

### A WELLSPRING FOR JEWISH LEADERSHIP

### Jewish choral singers are

- a distinctive subgroup of leadership in the contemporary American Jewish community
- spiritual, intellectual, interested in developing themselves Jewishly and in making connections with other Jews
- Intrinsically group-oriented and collaborative

### A WELLSPRING FOR JEWISH LEADERSHIP

### Jewish choral singers are also

- accustomed to pursuing goal-centered tasks over long periods of time
- dedicated and active in diverse volunteer and community education roles

# THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE

Jewish choral singers under age 45

- are more Jewishly educated and literate than their older counterparts
- visit Israel as much as the older singers
- are equally active participants in Jewish communal life