



KIDS LOVE TO SING!

By John Ellis, President of the Fairfield County
Children's Choir Board

Photos courtesy of Fairfield County Children's Choir

For the past thirty years, hundreds of young people ages 8 - 18 have been singing their hearts out every Wednesday evening at Fairfield Woods Middle School. In the past few months, they took their talents to exciting venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York and the Preservation Hall in New Orleans. Thousands of Fairfield County youth have experienced and shared the joys of music as far afield as Europe, California and Hawaii, while also serving the local community in numerous ways. In fact, Music Director and Founder, Jon Noyes, says that "two of the most important and rewarding annual events we participate in are the Fairfield Holocaust Commemoration and singing in December at Operation Hope and the Bridgeport Rescue Mission."

The Fairfield County Children's Choir was founded in 1995 to "provide children the opportunity to participate in a musical experience which is challenging, rewarding and enjoyable." They celebrated the achievement of that mission with the presentation of their annual Spring Concert on May 10, 2025 at Carnegie Hall. The program featured over 300 choristers and

alumni, along with Guest Artist and composer, Dr. Raymond Wise from Indiana University, who led the world premiere of his own composition, *The Gift of Song*.

Dr. Wise introduced the song with these words, "Upon being commissioned to compose a gospel song for the Fairfield County Children's Choir, I began to reflect on what narrative could best encapsulate their mission and achievements as they celebrate their significant 30th anniversary. I explored their website, delved into their mission statement, and viewed various videos. The predominant theme that emerged was their unwavering commitment to engage, train, and support children of all ages while reaching communities around the world through the power of song. This song is a tribute to perseverance, celebrating three decades of musical contributions. It is my hope that this commissioned piece encourages them to persist in sharing their gift of song, which brings light and hope to the world."

The FCCC has four different choirs: the Chorus, Chorale, Concert Choir and Chamber Singers. The latter group tours each year in the summer (excepting 2020 and 2021 when the pandemic kept them from attending the World Choir Games in France and Belgium.) After a few years of touring closer to home (Boston/Cape Cod, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.), the group flew to New Orleans in June for the Crescent City Choral Festival, which included twelve choirs from around the United States.

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One highlight was their performance with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band in which the students sang *Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans*, *Basin Street Blues* and *The Saints Go Marching In*, with numerous soloists taking a few improvised vocal jazz choruses!

Graduating senior, Scarlett Robbins, said this about the choir: "For me, FCCC is more than just a group of kids who rehearse together on Wednesday nights, this choir is a place where I feel strong and supported - working with conductors and fellow singers who motivate me to rise to the challenge of difficult repertoire and high expectations. Over the past nine years I've made so many memories, bonding with my choir friends and performing in incredible places, but what really sticks with me are the feelings that I associate with a successful FCCC performance. There's the pride of getting to sing in famous places like Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, the simple joy of making an audience member smile, and the indescribable feeling of singing in a group of talented musicians who are just as dedicated to our sound as I am. Choir is truly a team effort, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of the incredible group that is FCCC."

For more information, visit SingFCCC.org To register for an audition, contact Manager@SingFCCC.org



Dr. Raymond Wise leading the choir at Carnegie Hall



The FCCC Chamber Singers in New Orleans

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