



AMERICAN CONFERENCE of CANTORS

# Ayelet TOURS

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!

THE PEOPLE OF

# POLAND & PRAGUE

Led by Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation's  
**Cantor Susan Caro**



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**PER PERSON**

Featuring uplifting music and spiritual inspiration by members of the

**American Conference of Cantors**  
**June 26 - July 7, 2022**

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**Original Home of our Torah Scroll**

- \*Face to face encounters with Europe's nascent Jewish communities
- \*Intellectual insight by noted historian **Professor Stephen Berk**
- \*Option to participate in the **Krakow JCC's Ride for the Living Tour**
- \*Coincides with Krakow's famed **Jewish Culture Festival 2022**



For more information and to book online see [secure.ayelet.com/ACC2022.aspx](https://secure.ayelet.com/ACC2022.aspx)

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# Overview

Join **Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation's Cantor Susan Caro** on a unique journey, as together we sing, pray and explore our way through Europe! Ours will be a mission of music and healing, featuring concerts, scholarship connections with local communities and unforgettable touring. Join us as we discover the inspiring people, hidden history and musical heritage of Poland and Prague together!



## Face to Face Experiences:

- **Progressive Judaism in Warsaw:** Meet with *Beit Polska* and *Ec Chajim* and discover the heart of Jewish revival in Warsaw.
- **Discussing the Past, Describing the Future:** Meet non-Jewish Polish youth in the Forum for Dialogue and learn how they work to preserve their town's Jewish past and build a better future.
- **Riding for Life:** Take part in the Ride for the Living, biking the 55-mile journey from Auschwitz to Krakow. (optional)
- **Shabbat of Celebration:** Join over 500 cycling participants, the local Jewish community and guests world-wide for a celebratory Shabbat dinner, the largest in Krakow post-World War II.
- **Jewish Revival in Prague:** Meet with members of *Ec Chajim*, *Bejt Praha*, or *Bejt Simcha*, two of Prague's Progressive Jewish communities, and take inspiration from their dedication to revitalizing Judaism in the city.

## Musical Experiences:

- **Sing a Joyful Song:** Enjoy the harmonious melodies of *Cilil* (pronounced Tslil), the Warsaw and Lodz Jewish community choir! Sing along and learn new melodies as Poland's youth bring Judaism to life.
- **The Greatest Jewish Show on Earth:** Jump into the enlightening cultural and music scene of the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival, the largest in the world!
- **A Fitting Celebration:** Enjoy a festive dinner and farewell concert by the ACC, including greetings from the Israeli Ambassador and remarks from local Jewish community leaders.

## Artistic Experiences:

- **Via the Mezuzah:** Join *Mi Polin*, the hip artist collab, for a pre-War tour of Jewish history in the Praga District.
- **Tasting Kazmeirz:** Delight in the Kazmeirz culinary scene on a tasting tour, enjoying delicacies such as perogie, *zapiorka* and other treats.

## Jewish History:

- **Professor of Knowledge, Doctor of History:** Absorb the knowledge of the legendary **Professor Stephen Berk** who will help frame our days, giving us deep insight into the history and meaning of each city we visit.
- **A Light in Dark Times:** Witness the moving stories of heroism and martyrdom along the Warsaw Ghetto Memorial Route.
- **Standing as a Witness, Vowing “Never Again”:** Visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp for a difficult and emotional tour through the ultimate witness to Nazi barbarity and horror.
- **Synagogues and Cemeteries:** Discover the rich history of the former Jewish quarter of Kazmierz, including its famous synagogues and cemetery.
- **History Preserved:** Stroll through Josefov, Prague’s former Jewish Quarter, and visit its famous synagogues and cemeteries, preserved by the Nazis as a museum to our destroyed culture.

## Local Experiences:

- **Salt of the Earth:** Travel deep underground to the UNESCO Heritage Wieliczka Salt Mines for a tour of Europe’s oldest working salt mine, filled with artifacts and sculpture.
- **History Over a Pilsner:** Discover Plzen and its Moorish Great Synagogue, the second-largest in all of Europe. Meet with locals, pay respects at the memorial to Jewish life lost and visit the city’s famous Pilsner Brewery.



Bejt Praha, Ivan Kohout, Prague





# Itinerary

POLIN Museum Synagogue, Warsaw

DAY 1, Sunday, June 26, 2022

## DEPARTURE

- We depart on our overnight flight to Poland.

DAY 2, Monday, June 27, 2022

## ARRIVAL IN POLAND

- Arrivals throughout the day in **Warsaw**. Transfers will be provided for all arrivals on this day from the airport and central train station (transfer times TBD based on flight list).
- We set out on a **city tour of Warsaw**, including stops to view the **Royal Castle** and **Chopin's Monument** (tours will depart at 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to accommodate different arrival times).
- **FACE TO FACE:** Visit **Beit Polska** and **Ec Chajim**, two progressive institutions situated at the heart of Jewish revival in modern Warsaw. We will hear from **Agata Rakowiecka**, director of the **JCC Warsaw**— currently run entirely by women—to learn about the JCC's exciting programs including **"Boker Tov" Sunday** breakfasts that reignite and revitalize the connection to the Jewish community.
- **ACC OPENING PROGRAM:** We join for our **opening ceremony and concert sing-along**. Joining with the voices of the ACC and the local Jewish community is the Warsaw JCC's own **choir, Clil**, offering a window into the revitalization of Jewish life in Poland.
- We enjoy a **welcome reception and dinner**, catching up with old friends and making new acquaintances.
- Return to our hotel and enjoy the remainder of the evening at leisure to explore Warsaw.

Overnight in Warsaw

DAY 3, Tuesday, June 28, 2022

## WARSAW'S JEWISH PAST

- Breakfast at our hotels.
- We hear from **Prof. Stephen Berk** who opens the day by placing our touring into historical context.
- We spend today engrossed in history through a **Jewish Heritage Tour of Warsaw**. Stops include: Entering the beautiful **Nozyk Synagogue**, the only surviving prewar synagogue in Warsaw; Walking the **Memorial Route of Jewish Martyrdom and Struggle**, including the **Umschlagplatz Monument** where Jews were assembled for deportation during the Holocaust, the horrific **Stawski Street buildings** where the SS was headquartered, and the **Jewish Resistance Bunker at Mila 18** where the resistance fighters made their final stand; Viewing one of the few remaining fragments of the **Warsaw Ghetto Wall**. We also visit the **Okopowa Street Jewish cemetery**, one of the largest in the world.
- **OR...RETURNEE TRACK:** Join the artist collaboration **Mi Polin** for a moving tour through Warsaw's **Praga District** to discover the **traces of pre-War Jewish history** by following the outlines of mezuzahs that once adorned the doorways throughout the neighborhood.
- We take a docent-led tour of the astounding **Museum of the History of Polish Jews (POLIN)**. The museum sits on the former site of the Warsaw Ghetto and features a multi-media narrative exhibition about the vibrant Jewish community that flourished in Poland for a thousand years.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** We host a **memorial service** at the dramatic **Monument to the Ghetto Heroes**, built by the Warsaw-born Jewish sculptor **Nathan Rappaport**.
- Free evening to enjoy the Warsaw culinary scene (recommendations provided by our team or the host hotels for any free night).

Overnight in Warsaw



Auschwitz Birkenau

**DAY 4, Wednesday, June 29, 2022:**

## WARSAW TO KRAKOW

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We discover Warsaw's **Old Town** on a walking tour through the cobblestone alleys. See the medieval buildings reconstructed after World War II, explore the **Old Town Market Square** and view the **Presidential Palace**.
- **FACE TO FACE:** Participate in a special program with the **Forum for Dialogue**, a group working to strengthen connections between Jews and non-Jews in Poland. Led by local non-Jewish youth, we **tour a nearby village to learn about its Jewish history** and how its residents are working to preserve the past and forge a new direction for the future.
- We transfer to the Warsaw train station and board our **train to Krakow** (luggage will be transferred separately for our convenience).
- A **boxed lunch** is included today.
- Upon arrival in Krakow, we check into our hotel and have time to refresh.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** This evening, we hear the inspiring story of the rebirth of Jewish life in Krakow and the creation of the **Krakow JCC** as part of our discussion with **Executive Director Jonathan Ornstein**. ACC members will perform as part of this evening's **opening ceremony for the Ride for the Living** (Read more about the Ride at the end of this program).
- **CULINARY OPTION:** We return to Krakow and lift our spirits with a delicious **culinary tour** of the **Kazmeirz Jewish Quarter**, enjoying local delicacies such as *perogie*, *zapikanka* and other treats. (Separate cost)

**Overnight in Krakow**

**DAY 5, Thursday, June 30, 2022**

## MARKING DESTRUCTION, CELEBRATING REBIRTH

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We travel to **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, the infamous Nazi concentration camp, using personal stories and texts as a guide. We begin our visit with a **memorial service**, followed by a visit to the **museum**. We participate in a guided walk through Birkenau with time for personal reflection, then join as a group at the end of the train tracks for a powerful memorial prayer.
- **Lunch** is included today.
- **Prof. Berk** concludes our day by placing our visit to the most infamous of Nazi concentration camps into its historical context.
- **KRAKOW JEWISH CULTURE:** This evening, choose to delight in Jewish music and culture at the unparalleled **Krakow Jewish Culture Festival**.

**Overnight in Krakow**



DAY 6, Friday, July 1, 2022:

## JEWISH PRESENCE IN KRAKOW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- **PROGRAMMING OPTIONS:**
  - **Ride for the Living participants:** We travel bright and early this morning to the Krakow JCC where we enjoy breakfast together before continuing by bus to Auschwitz to begin our inspiring **55-mile bicycle ride** to Krakow!
  - **Non-Riders:** We take part in a **Jewish heritage tour** of **Kazmierz**, the old Jewish district, where we see the **Old Synagogue**, a massive fortress-like building erected in the 15th to 16th centuries, the **Tempel Synagogue** and the **Ramuh Synagogue**. We continue to **Apteka pod Orlem**, the **Under the Eagle Pharmacy Museum** inside the Jewish Ghetto and hear the story of **Tadeusz Pankiewicz**, recognized as a Righteous Among the Nations. We also pass by **Oskar Schindler's Factory** and the memorial at the former site of the **Plaszow Concentration Camp**.
- We return to our hotel for rest and to meet up with our counterparts.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** As the sun begins to set, we join together for **candle lighting** and **Kabbalat Shabbat** services with the local community, featuring the voices of the ACC.
- **FACE TO FACE/KRAKOW JEWISH CULTURE:** Later this evening, we enjoy an energetic and joyful **Shabbat dinner** together with over 500 cycling participants, including the local Jewish community and guests from around the world – the biggest Shabbat dinner in Krakow post-World War II.

Overnight in Krakow



Jewish Cemetery

DAY 7, Saturday, July 2, 2022

## SHABBAT IN KRAKOW

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** Shabbat morning services will be led by members of the ACC.
- **PROGRAMMING OPTIONS:**
  - **Ride participants:** After breakfast at the hotel, take part in a **Jewish heritage tour** of **Kazmierz**, the old Jewish district, where we see the **Old Synagogue**, a massive fortress-like building erected in the 15th to 16th centuries, the **Tempel Synagogue** and the **Ramuh Synagogue**.
  - **Optional morning tour:** We travel outside the city center to explore the fun and fascinating **UNESCO World Heritage Wieliczka Salt Mines**, dating back 700 years. It is one of the largest and oldest working salt mines in Europe and is on the UNESCO list of the 12 most priceless monuments in the world. (Separate cost)
  - **Optional free time** for exploring Krakow on own, enjoy the amazing market square for a little souvenir shopping.
  - This afternoon, we enjoy a tour of **Wawel Castle**, **St. Mary's Church** and the **Renaissance Cloth Hall**, we continue down the **Royal Way** to the **Krakow Market Square**, the second largest square in the world, in Krakow's ancient city center.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** This evening, we join for **Havdallah and a concert**, celebrating the rebuilding of the Krakow Jewish community with music originating from Poland and Central Europe. We take part in the closing ceremony of the Ride for the Living and the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival.

Overnight in Krakow



DAY 8, Sunday, July 3, 2022:

## WELCOME TO PRAGUE

- Breakfast at our hotels.
- This morning, we transfer to the airport for our flight to **Prague**, the Czech capital known as "the City of One Thousand Spires," filled with Baroque churches, promenades, parks and ancient city walls. Luggage will be sent overnight by truck directly to our hotels.
- Upon landing we enjoy a city tour, encompassing visits to the **Hradcany Castle** and the **Charles Bridge**, as well as the famous **Astronomical Clock** and **St. Vitus' Cathedral**.
- Delve into the stories and mind of **Franz Kafka** as we stroll along the **Golden Lane**, the quaint street that housed castle servants and served as a home to the famous author.
- Dinner on own tonight.
- **CULTURAL OPTION:** Attend a **classical music** concert at one of Prague's majestic concert halls (details & cost TBD).

Overnight in Prague

DAY 9, Monday, July 4, 2022

## TEREZIN AND BEYOND

- Breakfast at our hotels.
- **FACE TO FACE:** Discover the fascinating background of Czech Jewry leading up to the Holocaust with a historical overview by **Prof. Berk**.
- Today, we travel to **Terezin**, the former "model" Nazi concentration camp. We visit the prison **fortress**, the **hidden synagogue** and the **museum** filled with the artwork of former prisoners. We stop by the memorial monument and pass through the town itself in addition to hearing stories and seeing photos of some of the rabbis imprisoned here, including **Leo Baeck** and **Regina Jonas**, the first woman ordained a rabbi.
- A **boxed lunch** is included today.
- **OR...RETURNEE TRACK:** Take a **day-trip to Plzen** and visit the **Great Synagogue**, the second largest synagogue in Europe. Built in the Moorish style, it stands as a testament to the once-great Jewish community in Plzen. We take part in a **special program with the local community** and visit the **River Rock Memorial**, created by a local school, that placed one rock for each Jew from Plzen. We end our day at the world-famous **Pilsner Brewery** before returning to Prague.
- Back in Prague, we enjoy an afternoon at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Prague

DAY 10, Tuesday, July 5, 2022

## JUDAISM IN PRAGUE

- Breakfast at our hotels.
- This morning, we tie together the historical loose ends with remarks by **Prof. Berk**, whose knowledge and insightful presentations have illuminated our journey.
- We tour the former Jewish Quarter known as **Josefov**, with its **Old Town Hall**, **Spanish Synagogue**, **Alt-Neu Synagogue**, **Pinkas Synagogue**, **Maisel Synagogue**, the **Jewish cemetery**, and the **State Jewish Museum** – all standing witness as testament to the Jewish life the Nazis all but extinguished from the area.
- **FACE TO FACE:** Meet **David Maxa**, the first Czech-born rabbi to return to Prague and founder of the local **Congregation Ec Chajim** OR (split group) meet with the leaders of **Bejt Simcha**, Prague's Progressive Jewish community, and take inspiration from their dedication and hard work to revitalize Judaism in this great city.
- Free time to refresh and relax, or do a bit of last minute shopping in this magical city.
- **ACC PROGRAM:** Tonight, we join for a festive **farewell dinner**, followed by a **farewell concert** by the ACC, including greetings from the Israeli Ambassador and remarks from leaders of the local Jewish community.

Overnight in Prague

DAY 11, Wednesday, July 6, 2022

## HERMANUV MESTEC

- Breakfast at our hotels.
- This morning, we travel together to **Hermanuv Mestec**, to discover the roots of our Torah scroll.
- We enjoy a full day in the czech countryside before returning to Prague for an evening at leisure

Overnight in Prague

DAY 12, Thursday, July 7, 2022

## DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the airport for our flight home...

**PRE-TOUR OPTION:** Fly early and attend the opening of the Krakow Jewish Culture Festival!

**The Memories Last Forever!**

Itinerary subject to change



HOTEL & PRICING GRID	DELUXE PLUS
<b>Warsaw – 2 nights</b> (June 27-29, 2022)	Intercontinental (or similar)
<b>Krakow – 4 nights</b> (June 29-July 3, 2022)	Raddison (or similar)
<b>Prague – 4 nights</b> (July 3-7 2022)	Carlo IV (or similar)
RATES:	DELUXE PLUS
<b>Participants</b> (double occupancy, per person)	<b>\$4,760 Check/Cash</b> \$4,902 Credit
<b>Add for Single Room</b>	<b>\$999 Check/Cash</b> \$1,029 Credit

**Included:**

- Hotel stays per the grid above
- All touring and sightseeing per an agreed upon itinerary in a private, deluxe air-conditioned vehicle with an expert English-speaking guide
- Breakfast daily
- 3 dinners including Shabbat dinner with the local Jewish community
- 3 Lunches
- Special tour to Hermanuv Mestec for congregation members only
- Amazing Experiences with local communities
- Assistance & transfers upon arrival and departure (when arriving on main days)
- Entrance fees as per itinerary

**Not Included:**

- Roundtrip airfare, departure taxes and fuel surcharges (Please contact Ayelet Tours for flight assistance)
- Any border taxes or visas
- Tips to guides, driver, and dining room waiters (For more information on Ayelet's tipping policies, visit [ayelet.com](http://ayelet.com))
- Meals not listed above
- Any costs associated with testing or related to proof of COVID/vaccine status
- Any items of a personal nature
- Travel insurance (recommended - group policy available at [ayelet.com](http://ayelet.com))

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** \$100 per person charged if cancelled once booked, plus any applicable airline penalties. \$250 per person charged if cancelled 364-91 days before departure, plus any applicable airline penalties. \$500 per person charged if cancelled 90-31 days before departure, plus any applicable airline penalties. 100% per person charged if cancelled 30 days or less before departure.

For more information and to book online see [secure.ayelet.com/ACC2022.aspx](http://secure.ayelet.com/ACC2022.aspx)



# About

## ABOUT THE AMERICAN CONFERENCE OF CANTORS (ACC):

The ACC, through its support for and cultivation of excellence among cantors, strengthens Reform Jewish life in North America. ACC cantors are equipped to be attentive to the joys and challenges that members within a congregation face over the course of their lives, using both their unique calling to music and prayer and their shared responsibilities for offering spiritual leadership to congregations. ACC members also can help lead their congregations and by extension, the Reform Jewish movement in North America, to a bright future.



The ACC maintains rigorous standards for ordination/certification, offers deep support for the professional needs of cantors, advocates with passion for the evolving role of the cantorial vocation, and cultivates ever-increasing professional excellence among its members.

## ABOUT PROF. STEPHEN BERK:

Prof. Stephen M. Berk is a Professor of History at Union College in Schenectady, New York, Chair of the Department of History, Director of the Program in Comparative Communist Studies and Faculty Advisor to the Jewish Student Organization. He is author of *Year of Crisis, Year of Hope: Russian Jewry and the Pogroms of 1881-1882* (Greenwood Press, 1985). At the present time Professor Berk is writing a book entitled, *Our People Are Your People: American Jewry and the Struggle for Civil Rights 1854-1965*. The book provides an interesting discussion of an extremely important chapter in the history of the civil rights movement and attempts to dispel the myths and misunderstandings that surround the Black-Jewish relationship. Professor Berk is also the author of many articles on Russian History, Russian Jewish History, anti-Semitism and American Policy in the Middle East. Professor Berk is frequently consulted by newspaper reporters and by television and radio stations including the BBC. He has lectured in numerous universities in countless cities and towns in the United States and Israel and is a primary speaker for the UJA, Israel Bonds and B'nai B'rith. Professor Berk is considered an absolutely superb lecturer and teacher. Touring with him has been compared to attending a "traveling university...his lectures are outstanding." He is always informative, interesting and entertaining. He has lectured as scholar-in-residence for Ayelet Tours on many trips to Russia, Spain, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Europe and Israel. It is a privilege to have him with us!



## ABOUT AYELET TOURS:

Ayelet Tours is proud to be the official Tour Missions provider for Hadassah and the World Union for Progressive Judaism. We have been creating and operating Israel and Jewish Heritage tours worldwide since 1986. In planning unique experiences, we partner with a diverse range of clientele – from synagogues, to private families, to universities. To learn more about who we are and what we do, please read our history (<http://ayelet.com/jewish-tours-to-israel/>) and visit our website ([www.ayelet.com](http://www.ayelet.com)).



### ABOUT THE JCC KRAKOW:

The Jewish Community Centre of Krakow was opened in April 2008 by HRH The Prince of Wales and now serves as the focal point for the resurgence of Jewish life in Krakow, which has dramatically increased since Poland's transition to a democracy in 1989. JCC Krakow works to change both the world's perception of Poland and Poland's perception of Jews. The JCC provides social, educational, and community-oriented services to the Jewish community of Krakow, offers programming open to the entire Krakow community to foster Polish-Jewish relations, and acts as a visitor center for hundreds of thousands of tourists, many of them Jewish, who pass through Krakow.



### ABOUT THE RIDE FOR THE LIVING:

Ride For The Living is a comprehensive fitness experience commemorating the Holocaust and honoring the rebirth of the Jewish community in Krakow, Poland. RFTL combines Holocaust education with a memorable 55-mile bike ride from the gates of Auschwitz-Birkenau to JCC Krakow, giving participants the opportunity to immerse themselves in Krakow's Jewish past, present, and future.



### ABOUT THE JCC WARSAW:

Jewish Community Center JCC Warszawa is a people-oriented initiative serving as an environment for Jews, people of Jewish descent and their non-Jewish spouses and friends, fostering exploration of Jewish and universal values leading to building their personal Jewish narratives. The JCC offers a safe space for everyone to become and feel a part of the Jewish community in the atmosphere of openness, pluralism and mutual respect. It encourages people to experience and produce modern Jewish culture and provides experiential Jewish education of highest level, cooperating with top academic figures and educators.



### ABOUT THE FORUM FOR DIALOGUE:

Forum for Dialogue is the oldest and largest non-governmental organization engaged in Polish/Jewish dialogue. Forum's mission, realized chiefly in small towns and rural areas all across Poland, is to inspire connections between modern Poland and Jews living all over the world. We achieve this through original programs run on the ground and international outreach.

Forum  
for Dialogue.

### ABOUT EC CHAJIM AND RABBI MAXA:

Ec Chajim is a new and vibrant Progressive Jewish community in Prague, with members ranging in age from young families through a 95 year old! It was founded in 2019 by Rabbi David Maxa, the first Czech-born Reform Rabbi since World War II, and has since become a thriving community. In 2020, Ec Chajim opened its synagogue building and community center in Prague, and in 2021 became a proud member of the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ). Ec Chajim organizes regular Shabbat services, celebrates Jewish Holidays, plans exciting activities for children and interesting educational events for all ages. It strives to provide a safe and inspiring space for Jews in Prague - both those with Jewish roots as well as their family members and friends.







Jerusalem Synagogue, Prague

***“The history of mankind is the instant between two strides taken by a traveler.”***

– Franz Kafka, renown Czech Jewish author

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