

Women's Learning Group

Program Weekly ♦ Fall & Spring
Designed by Rabbi Schachar Orenstein
Coordinated by Gladys Mooallem
Everyone is Welcome!

Spanish Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal
Series **29** • Session N° **8** • Fall **2023** • **5784**
Wednesday • December 6 • 10:00 am

**East meets West:
Bridging the Cultures
through Music**

Join **zoom** Meeting |
This is a recurring meeting ...join anytime...

With Reverend Hazzan Daniel Benlolo
Meeting ID: **849 4697 5701** ♦ Passcode: **FALL2023**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/B4946975701?pwd=MFIVdk4yNm1EU3lCbFdWYmdGZFRtUT09>
Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kqXiFr4wk>
To Reserve or Donate: Office 514-737-3695, 101 ♦ gladys@mooallem.ca



The eighth and final session of Series 29 of the Women's Learning Group's Fall 2023 program featured the cantor of the Spanish & Portuguese synagogue, Reverend Daniel Benlolo. Because he was unexpectedly otherwise engaged, he left us following a heartfelt chat with Gladys in which he offered to sponsor a lunch for the WLG should the WLG return to its pre-Covid in-synagogue sessions. Complimenting the WLG's constituting a cornerstone of the synagogue, the cantor voiced the thoughts of the participants. Indeed, this organization, run almost single-handedly by coordinator, Gladys Mooallem, has been a constant fixture of the synagogue every spring and fall for the last fifteen years, unfailingly presenting expert guests who speak on diverse subjects.

Fortunately for both the cantor and for

the audience, the remarkable choir that Rev. Benlolo founded some years back performed the very evening before at Bnai Brith, a performance which the cantor dedicated to the WLG. Before leaving us, however, Rev. Benlolo offered a prayer for Israel, the IDF, and the hostages.

Accompanied by a pianist, whom Rev. Benlolo introduced, the songs were both in Hebrew and English. Solos by a few choir members and by the cantor as well as piano playing by an audience guest illuminated the special gifts some people have been graced with.

The developmentally-disabled members of the choir conveyed evident pleasure in singing. Many of the songs were inspirational, reminding not just the singers themselves but the audiences that although we are all imperfect, we have purpose and will thrive despite the challenges.

Gigi Bitton for the WLG

Dec. 6, 2023