

In honor of the 25th JMR theme **Our Fathers, Our Brothers, Ourselves: Building Bridges**, several of the younger JMR men reached out that year to JMR “elders”, and interviewed them about their feelings and recollections about JMR, with the intention of sharing those insights at JMR in whatever creative form came out of those interactions. One of the “young bucks”, Cobi Waxman, interviewed David Strauss, whom Cobi had known since growing up in the same Jewish congregation as David and continuing to cross paths with David in Menschwork circles even after that. They decided to memorialize their discussions in the form of a song. David wrote a verse, sent it to Cobi, and Cobi would respond with his own verse. When they eventually put the words to music, they each chose musical styles and melodies that were meaningful to them, while coming together in a chorus that was energetically embraced by JMR attendees when it was performed at JMR 25. You can hear it [by clicking here](#), and the lyrics are below:

My Conversation With You

<p><u>David’s verse:</u> I could say I came to JMR at first to be with guys Who seemed to want know me when they looked deep in my eyes; I could tell you I was role-bound and I wanted just to feel What light I’d spark in others if I let myself be real; So Cobi, do I just reflect the time I came of age Or did your soul feel longing at a similar life stage?</p>	<p><u>Cobi’s verse:</u> It’s funny David that you should ask While I thought to figure out life’s blurry tasks; It was with these men something Jewish I found Reflection, expression, shared longings, astound; It was you who asked me several moments in time To see what it could bring to your life down the line; You did not say it in a way so direct But I got the call show up and connect;</p>
<p><u>Chorus:</u> Our paths appear different Circumstances not the same Yet there’s a space that can hold All the stories that remain</p>	
<p><u>David’s verse:</u> For years I took all that I could away from JMR But once I started giving back I grew much more by far. By working with the men who build these weekends we hold dear, I found I built relationships that strengthen every year. As I opened up in ways it took a lifetime just to know, I wonder, Cobi, how has your involvement helped you grow?</p>	<p><u>Cobi’s verse:</u> Purpose, commitment to a group as a whole; Perhaps filled an empty space in my soul. A way to plug-in to my heritage; Seemed I could make better usage. Of the wisdom of men who are living and learning, How to swim in the stream of our ancestors’ journey. Learning how to love my fellow men each day Feelin’ their expression and the way they display</p>
<p>[Chorus]</p>	
<p><u>David’s verse:</u> Then Menschwork was conceived and we both found that we could hear it Compassion is our passion, with integrity and spirit The chance to meet our brothers even after JMR Means Menschwork will inspire us both, even from afar And to see you, Cobi, carry on confirms that we’re still growing And to have directly touched you warms my heart to overflowing</p>	<p><u>Cobi’s verse:</u> I’ve known you David since I was small, Now our work is shared for benefit of all What a great new stage this can be Where young and old in each other we see</p>
<p>[Chorus]</p>	