

African choir kids sing for their schooling at EastRidge

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Through song, African children receive an education they would not otherwise have.

The African Children's Choir is the oldest travelling children's choir in the world, as far as choir manager Tina Sipp knows.

They just celebrated their 30th anniversary and are currently on their TransCanada tour. The choir stops in Stouffville at EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church, 12485 Tenth Line, Aug. 19. Show time is 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Admission is by free-will offering.

"We believe in these children and are unabashedly raising money for these children," Sipp said.

Children who are invited to join the choir are ages seven to 10 and come from the many programs the choir's parent organization – Music for Life – supports in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.

"These are all children who would not otherwise receive an education," according to Sipp, who added choir members have their education paid for from elemen-

tary school to post-secondary.

"The point is, they just need an opportunity. They have all the tools to be successful, they just need to be given an opportunity," she said.

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By investing in a child's education, they invest in the future of Africa, according to Sipp.

The choir's current tour started at the beginning of March in P.E.I. and will end mid-November on Vancouver Island.

While touring, the children have to attend classes, led by adult teacher/chaperones, but they also get to do some sightseeing. Most recently they went to Niagara Falls.

"They're very much present in the day they're experiencing," Sipp said of the African culture.

While the show will educate the audience on the struggles children face in Africa, there will also be a lot of high-energy traditional African

worship songs, along with some traditional spiritual and gospel favourites.

The choir performed in EastRidge in November 2012.

Josh and Tori Bissell, children of lead pastor Scott Bissell, each chaperoned recent choir tours.

The African's Children Choir has performed before presidents, heads of state and the Queen of England as well as alongside Paul McCartney, Annie Lennox, Keith Urban and Mariah Carey.

For more information, go to www.africanchildrenschoir.com

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