



Beauty Calls Us Together

*A cantata
honoring
100 years of the
Flower Ceremony*

1923 ~ 2023

For speakers, two soloists, two-part choir,
congregational singing, and piano

Words and music by
Rev. Suzelle Lynch
Kathryn Canan
Ruben Piirainen
Anne Merdinger
Norbert Čapek

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FOREWORD by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

About *Beauty Calls Us Together* by Kathryn Canan, Rev. Suzelle Lynch and Ruben Piirainen

Beauty Calls Us Together is a song cycle with accompanying readings created to be used with the Unitarian Universalist Flower Ceremony (also known as Flower Communion). It was composed in 2023 to honor the 100-year anniversary of the Flower Ceremony, an annual ritual that celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community. The Flower Ceremony originated in 1923 and was created by the Rev. Dr. Norbert Čapek, of The Congregation of Liberal Religious Fellowship in Prague, Czechoslovakia. *Beauty Calls Us Together* is intended for use by Unitarian Universalist congregations. More information about the Flower Ceremony, examples of how it is celebrated, and additional resources may be found here: <https://www.uua.org/worship/holidays/flower-ceremony>

Beauty Calls Us Together may be used in its entirety, or its musical pieces and readings may be used individually or in combination with other elements in worship services, concerts, or presentations. It may precede or follow the Flower Ceremony ritual itself. We request that the musical compositions not be altered, nor new arrangements made, without permission of the authors and composers.

A fee on a sliding scale of \$30 -50 is requested for use of *Beauty Calls Us Together*. This fee entitles the user to make copies of the work for ongoing use by a single congregation. Fees collected in excess of development costs will be contributed by the composers to the scholarship fund of the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries (AUUMM) which supports UU music and worship arts professionals, leaders, and those they serve. See www.auumm.org for more information. Fees may be remitted at www.paypal.me/suzellelynch or through Venmo @Susan-Lynch-120 . You may also mail a check to the contact address below.

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3
Flower Prelude

Ruben Piirainen

$\text{♩} = 132$

mp

cresc.

f

mp

cresc. *f*

Flower Prelude

(from Beauty Calls Us Together)

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21

rit. *p*
a tempo

27

mf

33

mp

37

cresc.

41

f
p

Flower Prelude

(from Beauty Calls Us Together)

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INTRODUCTION by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

Imagine the courageous people of a war-weary nation, finally free to reclaim and renew their spirituality and culture after “the war to end all wars.” Imagine their hunger for soul-filling music and a message of unity that reaches across all lines of difference. Imagine their longing for a community where their gifts and needs would be embraced. One hundred years ago, The Congregation of Liberal Religious Fellowship in Prague, Czechoslovakia, was the community of their dreams.

The Prague Congregation of Liberal Religious Fellowship was founded by the Rev. Dr. Norbert Čapek and his wife Maja. Dr. Čapek, a brilliant writer and preacher, avid singer and eager student was born into his mother’s Catholic faith in Bohemia, and grew up in a home flavored by his father’s history with the Moravian Brethren. Norbert Čapek grew up thirsting for a faith free from hypocrisy; a faith that would respect his mind and help him give voice to his convictions.

As an adult, Čapek served Moravian and Baptist religious organizations, growing more religiously liberal with each passing year. He left Bohemia under government threat and accepted a call to serve a Baptist church in New York City... until one day in 1919. That day he wrote in his diary: “I cannot be a Baptist anymore, even in compromise. The fire of new desires, new worlds, is burning inside me.”

In 1921, inspired and empowered by connections he made with the American Unitarians, Dr. Čapek and Maja returned with their children to their native land to build the new religious movement they dreamed of.

That religious movement caught fire in a nation alive with freedom and longing for change. The Prague congregation’s liberating message and vibrant music drew thousands to worship. Yet something was missing. A new ritual was needed to unite the diverse and eager crowds.

Čapek crafted a ceremony he described as “a new experiment in symbolizing our Liberty and Brotherhood (sic).” He asked each congregation member to bring a flower to church—from their garden, field, or roadside. Gathered in one vase, their combined beauty was dazzling, yet each blossom retained its uniqueness. And then, as Čapek wrote, “(W)hen they go home, each (person) is to take one flower just as it comes without making any distinction where it came from and

whom it represents, to confess that we accept each other... without regard to class, race or other distinction; acknowledging everybody as our friend..." This compelling ritual of individual free will, the beauty of diversity, and the power of unity was held for the first time on the anniversary of the Prague fellowship's founding, June 24, 1923. It became known as the Flower Ceremony (or Flower Communion), and the Prague Fellowship celebrated it annually as they continued to grow and thrive.

But all was not peaceful in Czechoslovakia. World War II brought great troubles, and in 1939, Maja Čapek came to the United States to raise funds to help war refugees. She brought the flower ceremony (flower communion) with her to the Unitarian church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and soon the tradition spread to congregations across the country.

Norbert Čapek stayed behind in Czechoslovakia to help his people – he nurtured their spirits with his message of their inherent worth. But the Nazis found his message dangerous, and arrested him for treason in 1941. He was sent to Dresden prison and then to the concentration camp at Dachau. Čapek kept his spirits strong by sharing his poetry, music and the flower ceremony with other inmates, but the Nazis put him to death a year later.

This year we honor the 100th Anniversary of the first Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) with music composed to celebrate the blessings of diversity, the beauty of freedom and dignity, and the power and strength of the religious movement founded by Norbert and Maja Čapek; a movement that continues to thrive today.

7
Interlude

Ruben Piirainen

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The score is divided into four systems of four measures each. The first system (measures 1-4) begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The second system (measures 5-8) features a forte (*f*) dynamic starting in measure 7. The third system (measures 9-13) continues with a dynamic range from *f* to *p*. The fourth system (measures 14) concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The notation includes various melodic lines, arpeggiated chords, and sustained bass notes.

Interlude

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Introduction to “You Bring an Aster” by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

A great many Unitarian Universalist congregations celebrate the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) each spring. We love the way it brings earth’s colorful beauty into our midst, and it reminds us of the power of working together despite all the forces that conspire to divide us. We love to observe each other’s faces as we choose a flower – especially the faces of children. We remember that just as each flower is unique, so is each person’s life unique and worthy. Together, the flowers form a bouquet that would not be as beautiful if even one flower were left out; we know that’s how it is with our community, too. Each and every one of us is part of our community’s beauty and purpose; each and every one of us is valued and respected. In addition, the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) reminds us that we can and we must work to shift our world toward greater peace, equity, sustainability, and justice; that we can and we must help liberate others.

Our first song, “You Bring an Aster,” is a hymn that brings to life the messages and meanings of the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) with a simple upbeat melody.

You Bring an Aster

Words and melody by Rev. Suzelle Lynch
Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

♩ = 96

C

C7

Dm7

G

1. You bring an aster, and I'll bring a rose.—
3. You bring a lot of us, and I'll bring a lupine.
5. You bring a daisy, and I'll bring a blue-bell.

3

Em

Am7

Dm7

C/G

G

Am

F

Flow - ers from road - side, field, or gar - den. Sym - bols of friend - ship,
Flow - ers from road - side, field, or gar - den. Sym - bols of strength that
Flow - ers from road - side, field, or gar - den. Sym - bols of kin - ship

Last Time
To Coda

6

C

D7

C/G

G7

G/C

C

gifts we each chose. Each blossom praises Nature the artist.
rises from within. Each blossom praises Nature the artist.
in which we dwell. Each blossom praises Nature the artist.

9 G7 C C C7 F/C Fm/C

2. A flow - er is gi - ven and we hear beau - ty's call, though
4. To - geth - er we're strong - er than we can be a - part, em -

12 Dm7 C/E F E7

each one is dif - f'rent, each bles - ses all.
brac - ing the spir - it in our neigh - bors' hearts.

14 Am C/G F D/F# Dm/F C/E

Shar - ing the flow - ers, our fac - es glow, lov - ing one an - oth - er, com -
Ev - 'ry one need - ed if we are to see, rich - ness of dif - f'rence in

⊕ Coda

17 F/G G C/G G7 G/C C

mu - ni - ty grows. Each blos - som prais - es Na - ture the art - ist.
our un - it - y.

Introduction to “Čapek’s Journey” by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

Unitarian Universalism is a living faith tradition, meant to grow and change with the wisdom and knowledge of the times and with the life experiences of our congregations’ members. We come to this faith from many places; some of us without formal religious training, some after years spent with other religious paths and practices. Norbert Čapek brought a rich life of religious scholarship and service to the Unitarianism of his time. In our next song, “Čapek’s Journey,” we hear his heartfelt search for a faith of integrity that could also serve the needs of his people. Listen for the compelling refrain: “Something didn’t feel right, in my head or in my heart. I knew that reason and love are the only place to start.”

Čapek's Journey

Melody and lyrics by Kathryn Canan
Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

♩. = 50

Gm

C7

F

Dm

B \flat

A

4 Dm Am

1. I loved the cand - les, the in - cense, the
2. I want - ed free - dom, re - spect for my
3. Bap - tists came clos - er to fil - ling my

8 Dm Am Dm

ri - tu - als. As an al - tar boy, loved to play my part. The
he - ri - tage to de - cide for my - self what to be - lieve. The
long - ing, did - n't ask me to shut _____ off my mind. The

11

Dm7/C B \flat Dm/A

mys - tries of re - li - gion my pas - sion. Love of
Cath - ol - ic church shut down ques - tions so I
Bib - le is a hum - an cre - a - tion, we can

mp

13

Gm7 C7 A F

learn - ing was deep in my heart. But as I learned, I
knew it was time to leave. The Breth - ren my fa - ther em -
treas - ure the wis - dom we find. Ap - ply the tales to our

f *mp*

16

C Dm A

ques - tioned, the priests were not the saints I ex - pec - ted.
braced be - lieved in a re - li - gion of deeds. Re -
dai - ly lives as mis - sion - ar - ies spread the word.

mp

19 F C

Rome came to Slav - ic lands un - bid - den. There was
form and peace - ful re - sist - ance to in -
Choose to be bap - tized when we're rea - dy and

21 Dm Am Dm Gm C7

much they taught I re - ject - ed. Some - thing did - n't feel
tol - er - ant ri - gid creeds. Some - thing did - n't feel
build God's King - dom on earth. One where all feels

24 F Dm Bb Gm7 A7 Gm C7

right in my head or in my heart. I knew that reas - on and
right in my head or in my heart. I knew that reas - on and
right in my head and in my heart. I know that reas - on and

28 F Dm B \flat A Dm Gm C7

love — are the on - ly place to start.
 love — are the on - ly place to start.
 love — are the on - ly place to start.

32 F Dm B \flat A Dm 1., 2.

35 3. Gm7 C7 F#m7 B7 Em

39 Bm Em Bm

4. We need a new kind of re - li-gion based on free-dom and love — and.

43 Em Em7/D C Em/B

rea-son. Ground-ed in our his - t'ry, not im-posed. Free from

mp

46 Am7 D7 B G

Rome, and free_ for Je-sus. My head says there's one God, not

f *mp*

49 D Em B

three.. My heart tells me that God loves us all. My

mp

52 G D Em Bm

soul grounds me in my nat - ive coun-try so I'll build a new church on our

mp

55 Em Am D7 G Em C Am7

soil. One where all feels right in my head and in my

59 B7 Am D7 G Em C B

heart. I know that reas - on and love are the on - ly place to

63 Em Am D7 G Em

start.

66 C B7 Em

Introduction to “In the Depths of My Soul” by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

Music was a joy and a lifeline for Norbert Čapek. The texts of seven hymns he wrote while incarcerated in Dresden prison are preserved in the book, “Norbert Fabian Čapek: A Spiritual Journey,” written by Richard Henry. Henry notes that in Čapek’s hymns we sense his premonition of his fate – yet they are full of hope and beauty. “In the Depths of My Soul” adapts one of Čapek’s hymns and sets it to a meditative, chant-like melody. The words remind us that in difficult times, solace is waiting deep within us.

19
In the Depths of My Soul

Words by Norbert Čapek, translated by Richard Henry
Music by Kathryn Canan & Anne Merdinger

$\text{♩} = 80$

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano accompaniment is written in grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked as quarter note = 80. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature starts in 4/4 and changes to 6/4 at measure 4. There are three triplet markings in the vocal line. The lyrics are: 'In the depths of my soul, there where lies the source of strength, where di - vine and hu-man meet, there, qui-et your mind, qui-et, qui-et. Out - side let light-ning reign, hor - ri - ble dark-ness'.

In the depths of my soul,

there where lies the source of strength, where di -

vine and hu-man meet, there, qui-et your mind, qui-et, qui-et.

Out - side let light-ning reign, hor - ri - ble dark-ness

In the Depths of My Soul

(from Beauty Calls Us Together)

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14

fright-en the world. But from the depths of your own soul, from that

17

si - lence_ will rise a - gain the flow-er of God. Re - turn to your

22

self, rest in your self, live in the depths of your soul

26

where di-vine and hu-man meet. Tune your heart to the e - ter-nal

30

and in the depths of your own soul your pan-ting qui-ets down,

34

qui-et, qui-et. Where di-vine and hu-man meet, there is your

39

re - - fuge.

Introduction to “Mother Spirit, Father Spirit/Beloved” by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

The words and melody of hymn number 8 “Mother Spirit, Father Spirit” in the UU hymnal “Singing the Living Tradition” were written by Norbert Čapek, translated into English, and adapted into the familiar song with its questions and images of earth’s beauty. Čapek’s hymns tell us that he felt the spirit of life and love with him always, and in this new song a voice of the spirit answers each question – journeying with Čapek, and with all of us. Because the spirit of life and love is expansive, not limited by gender, the language has been updated. We invite you to listen for the diverse, divine voices that sing, "You are my beloved."

Mother Spirit, Father Spirit / Beloved

Melody by Norbert Čapek & Rev. Suzelle Lynch

Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

Words by Norbert Čapek, tr. Paul & Anita Munk, English version by Richard Frederick Boeke

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Additional lyrics by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

$\text{♩} = 120$

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each with three staves. The top staff (I) is the vocal line, the middle staff (II) is the bass line, and the bottom staff (Piano) is the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The lyrics are: 'Moth - er Spir - it, Fath - er Spir - it, where are you? I am right be - side you. In the sky song, in the for - est, sounds your'.

I
II
Piano

Moth - er Spir - it, Fath - er Spir - it,

5
I
II
Piano

where are you?
I am right be - side you.

9
I
II
Piano

In the sky song, in the for - est, sounds your

12

I

cry.

II

I am with - in you, and in - all

15

I

What to give you, what to call you, what am

II

life.

19

I

I?

II

You are my be - lov - ed.

25

I

II

I am

Man - y drops are in the o - cean, deep and wide.

29

I

II

in the o - cean.

Sun - light boun - ces off the rip - ples

33

I

II

I am in the air and

to the sky.

36

I

II

— the sun - light.

What to give you,

39

I

II

You are my be - lov - ed.

what to call you, who am I?

45

I

II

I am emp-ty, time flies from me, what is time?

E -

51

I
II

Dreamse - ter-nal, fears in - fer-nal haunt my
ter-nit-y is_ now.

56

I
II

heart.
I am with you_ in dreams and fears.

60

I
II

What to give you, what to call you, O, my God?
You are my be -

65

I
II

lov - ed. Gent - le Spir - it,

70

I
II

I am in your
Lov - ing Spir - it, take our hearts.

74

I
II

heart now.
Take our breath and let our voi - ces sing our

78

I

II

I sing through you and all life.

parts.

82

I

II

Take our hands and let us work to shape our

85

I

II

You are my be - lov - ed.

art.

91

I Time - less Spir - it, Gra - cious Spir - it, are you here?

II I am

95

I Gath - er us in gen - tle arms and

II right be - side you.

99

I hold us near.

II I am your strength

102

I

II

Help us shape the

and your love.

105

I

II

world of hope we hold so dear.

You are my be - lov - ed.

110

Meno mosso

I

II

You are my be - lov - ed.

You are my be - lov - ed.

Introduction to “We Are One”

To be one is to be in covenant with one another, supporting each other in our free and ever-changing community of faith and action. “We Are One” references our history, affirms our present, and invites us all – “siblings and strangers, cousins and neighbors” -- into a bold future that centers love.

33
We Are One

Words and melody by Rev. Suzelle Lynch
Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

♩ = 90

G11

G7 Asus4

A7

Dsus4

D

1. We are
2. We are
3. We are
4. We are

3 Gsus2 G Dm Am

here, and a new faith is dawn - ing. We are
one, though each of us is dif - f'rent. We are
free, li - ber - at - ed from old sym - bols. We are
home, re - spect - ing one an - oth - er. We are

5 Gsus2 G Dm Am

here, man - y hearts filled with hope. We are
one, each with bles - sings and needs. We are
free, free to learn, grow, and serve. We are
home, shar - ing all that must be done. We are

We Are One

(from Beauty Calls Us Together)

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7 Gsus4/B B♭M7 Am

here, join - ing free - ly to - geth - er,
 one, bring - ing beau - ty to the tab - le,
 free, like flowers in the gar - dens,
 home, in the voic - es of our child - ren,

9 B♭M7 C2 B♭M7 A7

sib - lings and strang - ers, cous - ins and neigh - bors. Cre -
 sib - lings and strang - ers, cous - ins and neigh - bors.
 sib - lings and strang - ers, cous - ins and neigh - bors.
 sib - lings and strang - ers, cous - ins and neigh - bors.

11 Dm F Gm7 E7

at - ing new tra - di - tions, shap - ing what will come. We are
 Nur - tur - ing each oth - er, sing - ing har - mo - ny. We are
 Grow - ing in cour - age to face the great un - known. We are
 Lov - ing one an - oth - er, what could be more clear? We are

We Are One

(from Beauty Calls Us Together)

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13 G11 G7 Asus4 A7 Dsus4 D

1. 2. 3.

here, we are here, we are one.
 one, we are one, we are free.
 free, we are free, we are home.
 home, we are home, we are

15 4. Dsus4 D G11 G7 Asus4 A7

here! We are free, we are home, we are

17 Dsus4 D G11 G7 Asus4 A7 Dsus4 D

here! We are one, we are free, we are here!

CLOSING by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

We are one, we are free, we are here!

Much has changed in the hundred years since the first Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion), but our commitment to the values it embodies grows ever stronger as we continue to shape a faith that fiercely and gently calls forth beauty and kinship in easy times and times of heartrending challenge. As we Unitarian Universalists work to dismantle our culture of oppression and exclusion, learn to truly embrace a multiplicity of cultural worldviews, and shift our historical center to follow powerful, new leadership by those whose voices have been suppressed for too long, we make real the bold vision of Norbert and Maja Čapek and the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion).

Their spirit, courage and commitment live on in us. May we ever remember our continuity with those who struggled, generation after generation, for peace and justice and liberty. As we share our flowers may we always remember the abiding beauty that calls us together, and calls us to ever greater justice and ever greater love.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



The Rev. Suzelle Lynch (she, her) is a semi-retired Unitarian Universalist minister and graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry. During three decades of social justice activism and service to UU congregations in Washington, Wisconsin, Texas and California, she's written many songs, including hymns, Christmas carols, and pagan chants. Her core musical influences include Ella Fitzgerald, punk rock and Emma's Revolution.



Kathryn Canan (she, her) attends the Unitarian Universalist Community of the Mountains in Grass Valley, CA. She enjoys playing historical flutes, recorders, and whistles with a variety of early music and Celtic ensembles. She has recorded an album of medieval English music with Briddes Roune, *Lenten is Come*. Her CSU Sacramento liberal arts master's thesis on Anglo-Saxon medicine makes her one of the world's few experts on diseases caused by elves shooting invisible arrows. Her songwriting, influenced by mentors Emma's Revolution and John McCutcheon, takes the personal to the political, gently drawing listeners into the need for change.



Ruben Piirainen (he, him) is the Director of Music at Unitarian Universalist Church West in Brookfield, WI with music performance degrees from Lawrence University and Bowling Green State University. He is a piano teacher, musical director for musical theatre and opera productions, conductor, and composer. His works have been performed by Opera Carolina, Florentine Opera, and Skylight Music Theatre to name a few.