

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

Beauty Calls Us Together

A cantata honoring 100 years of the Flower Ceremony

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About the Authors

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: <u>https://www.uua.org/worship/holidays/flower-ceremony</u>

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 <u>www.auumm.org</u> for more information. Fees may be remitted at <u>www.paypal.me/suzellelynch</u> or through Venmo @Susan-Lynch-120 . You may also mail a check to the contact address below.

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Flower ³Prelude

Ruben Piirainen











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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









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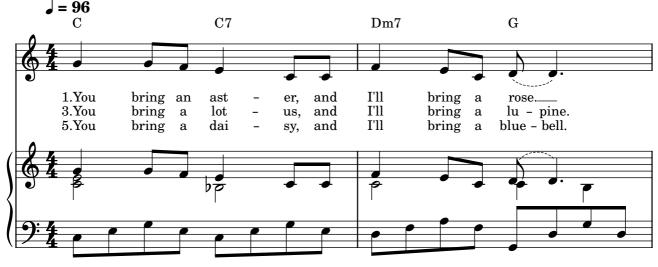
Introduction to "You Bring an Aster" by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

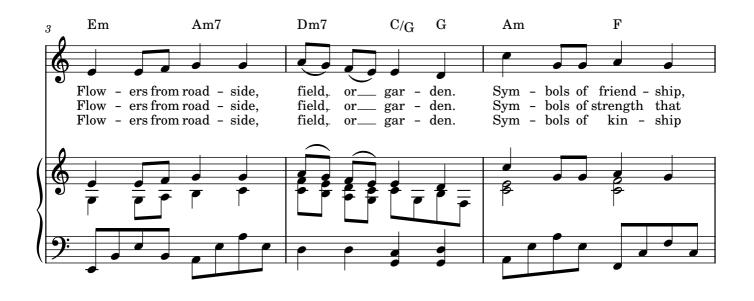
A great many Unitarian Universalist congregations celebrate the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) each spring. We love the way it brings earth's colorful beauty into our midst, and it reminds us of the power of working together despite all the forces that conspire to divide us. We love to observe each 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.

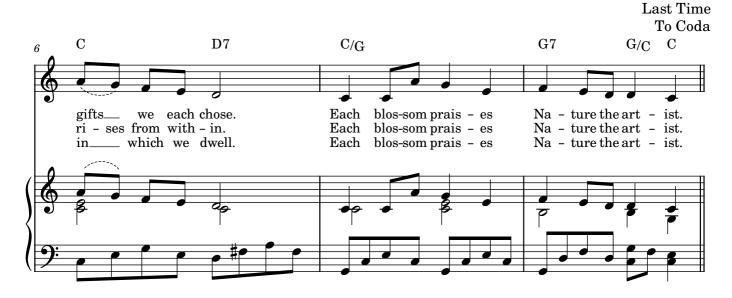
Our first song, "You Bring an Aster," is a hymn that brings to life the messages and meanings of the Flower Ceremony (Flower Communion) with a simple upbeat melody.

You Bring an Aster

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







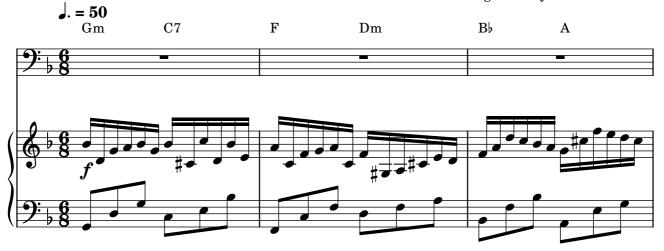
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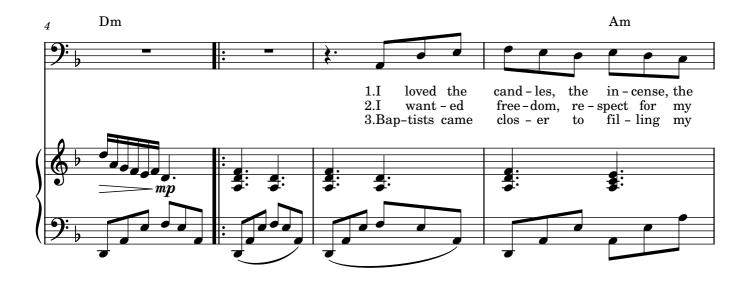


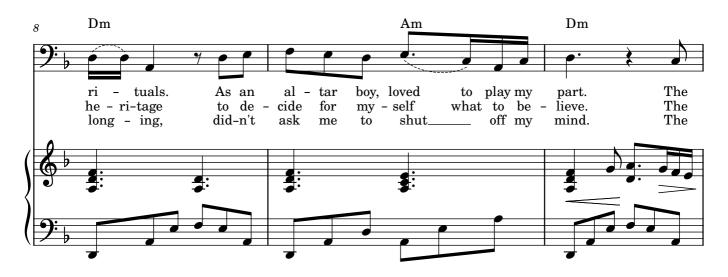
Introduction to "Čapek's Journey" by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

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

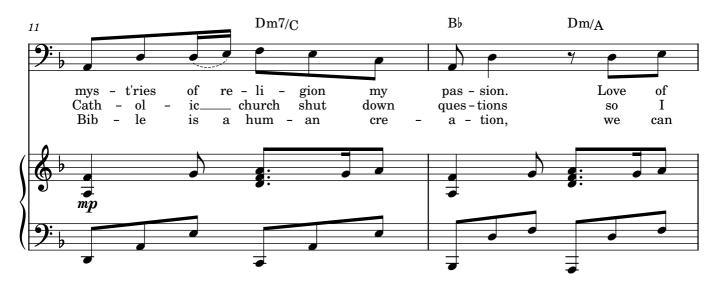
Melody and lyrics by Kathryn Canan Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

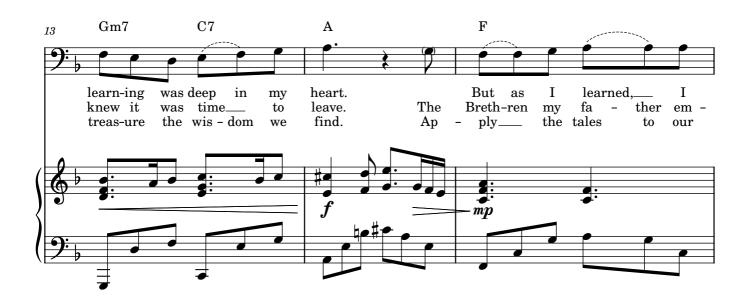


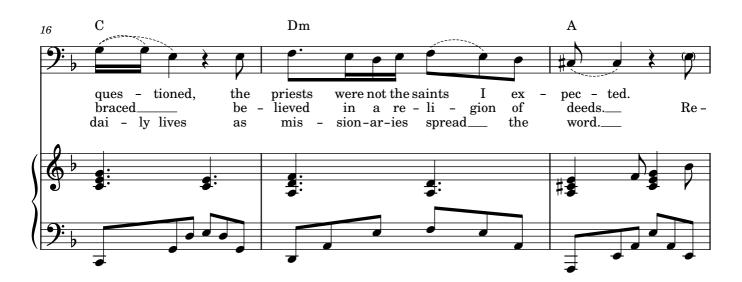


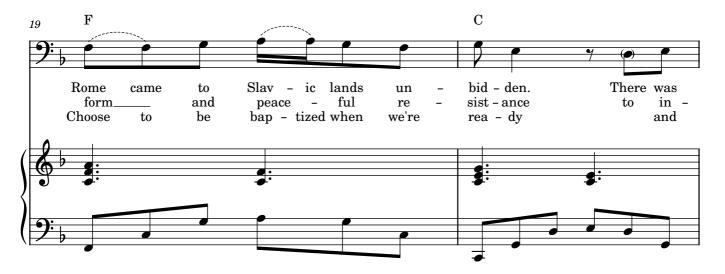


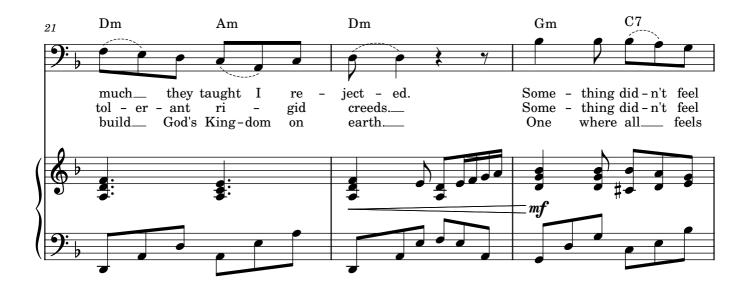
Čapek's Journey (from Beauty Calls Us Together) © 2023. All rights reserved. Contact Rev. Suzelle Lynch (uurevlynch@gmail.com, 414-426-6567)

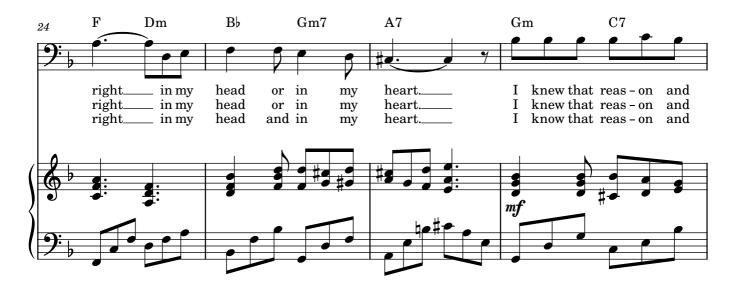


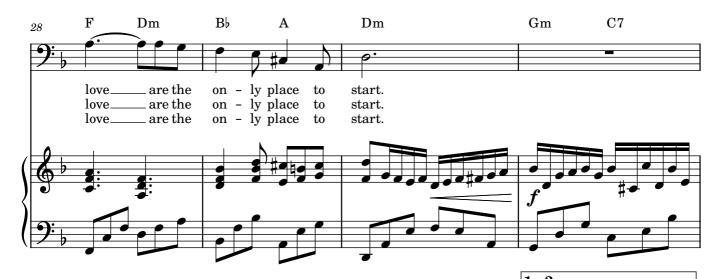






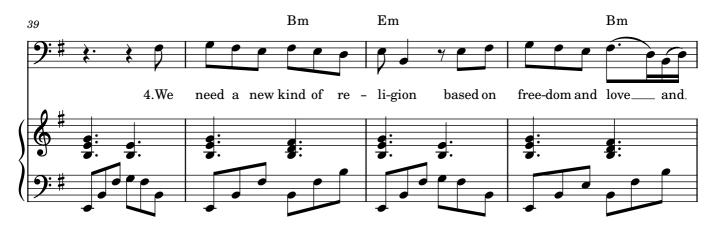


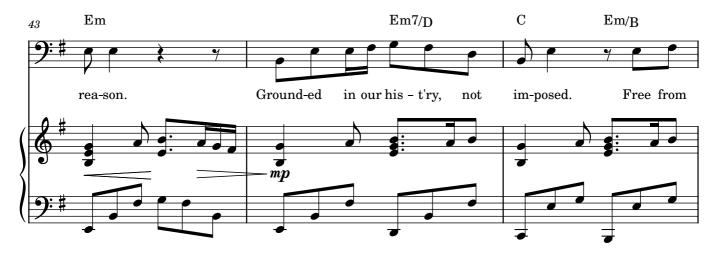


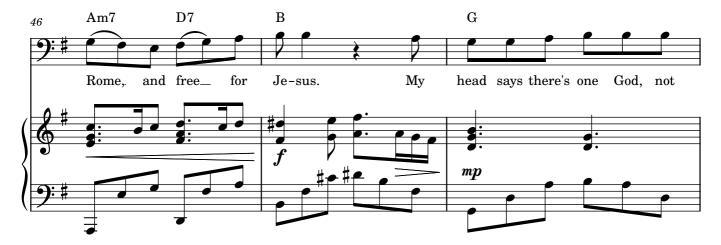


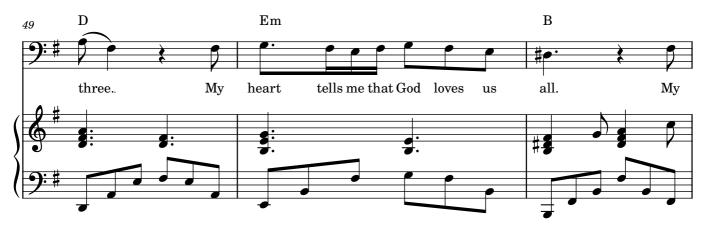


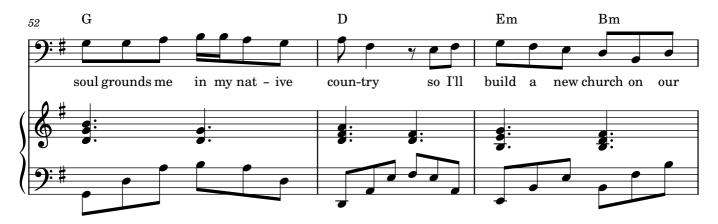


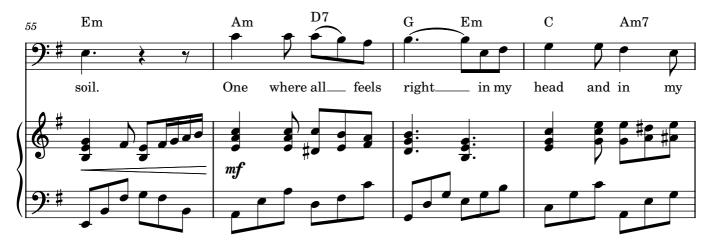


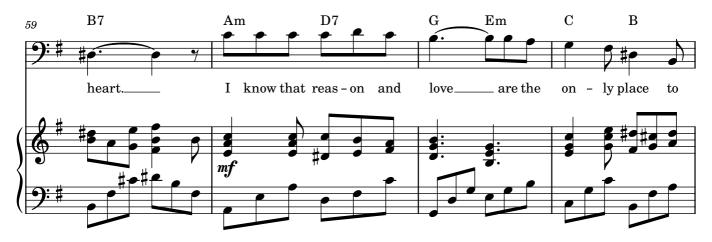




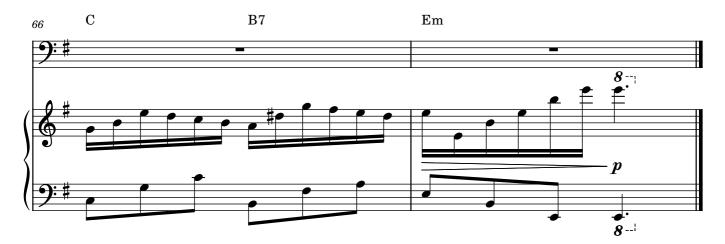












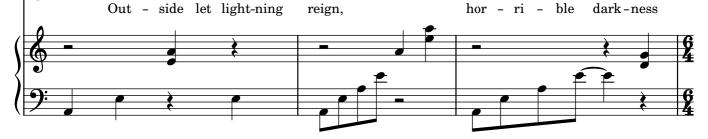
Introduction to "In the Depths of My Soul" by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

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.

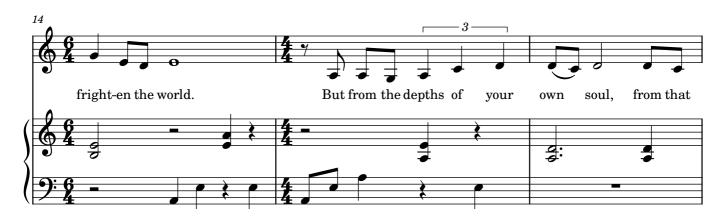
In the Depths of My Soul

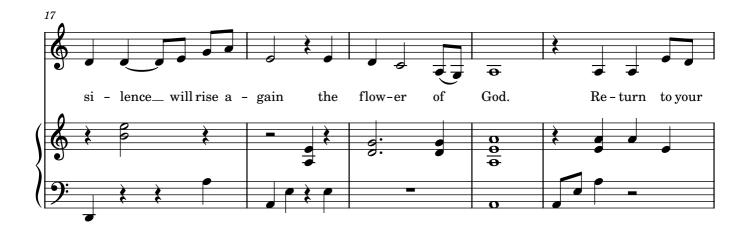
Words by Norbert Čapek, translated by Richard Henry Music by Kathryn Canan & Anne Merdinger

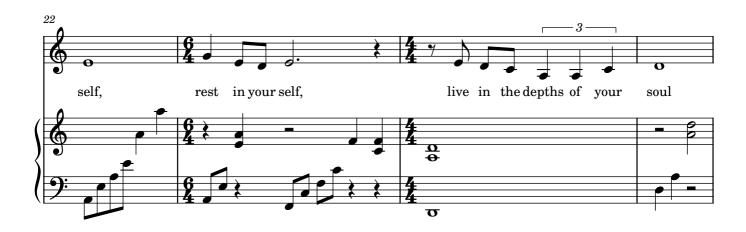


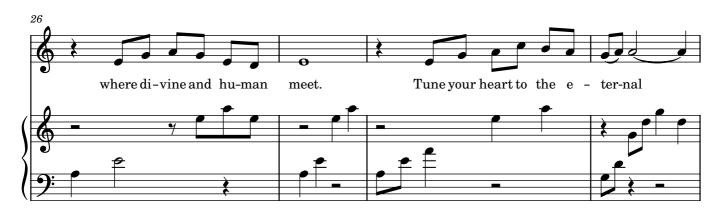


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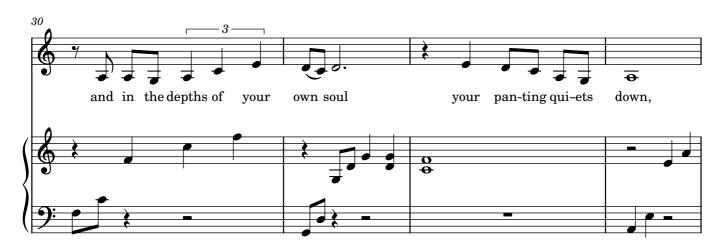


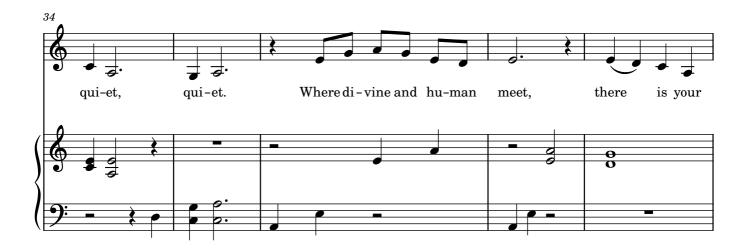


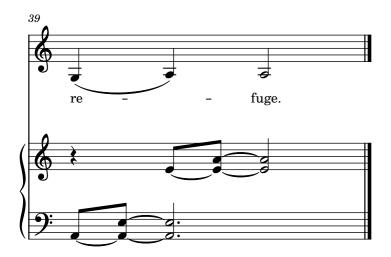




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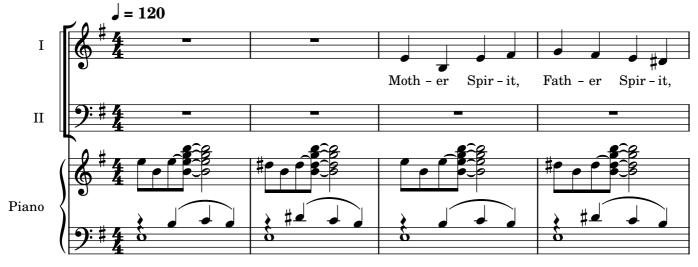
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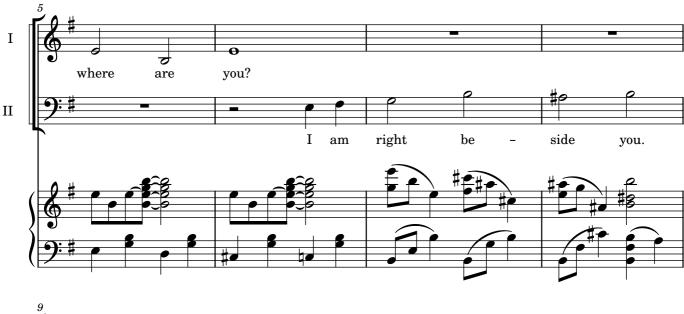
Introduction to "Mother Spirit, Father Spirit/Beloved" by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

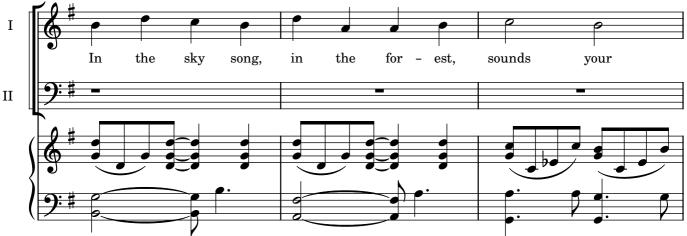
The words and melody of hymn number 8 "Mother Spirit, Father Spirit" in the UU hymnal "Singing the Living Tradition" were written by Norbert Čapek, translated into English, and adapted into the familiar song with its questions and images of earth's beauty. Čapek's hymns tell us that he felt the spirit 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

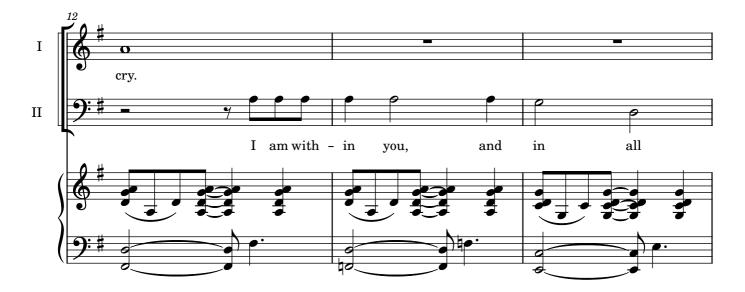
Melody by Norbert Čapek & Rev. Suzelle Lynch Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen Words by Norbert Čapek, tr. Paul & Anita Munk, English version by Richard Frederick Boeke Words used by permission of the Unitarian Universalist Association Additional lyrics by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

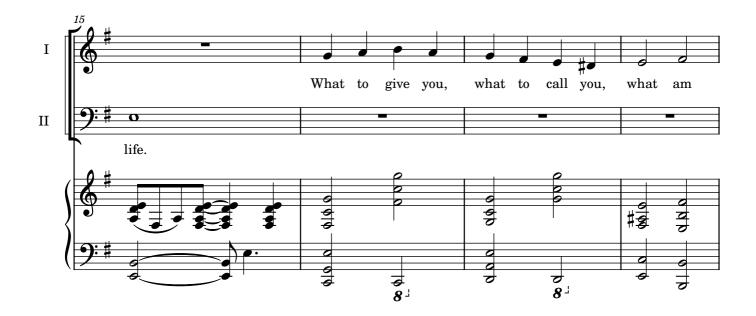


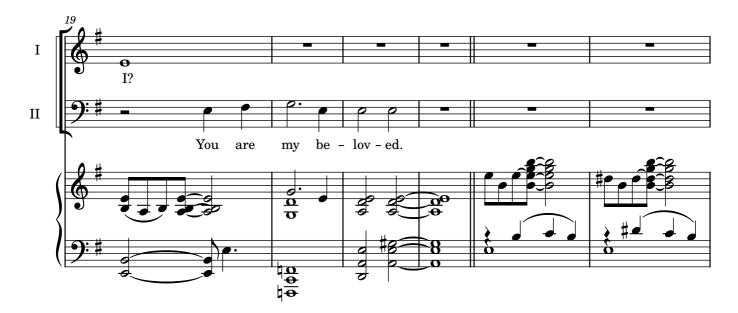


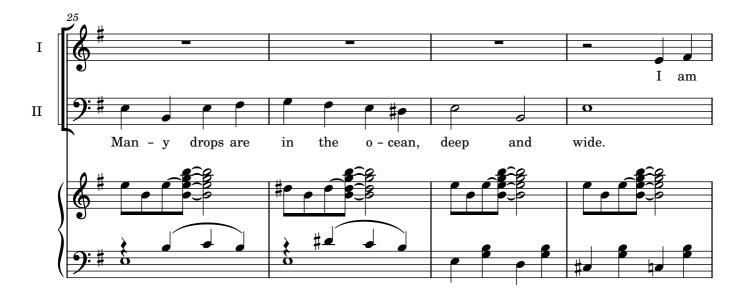


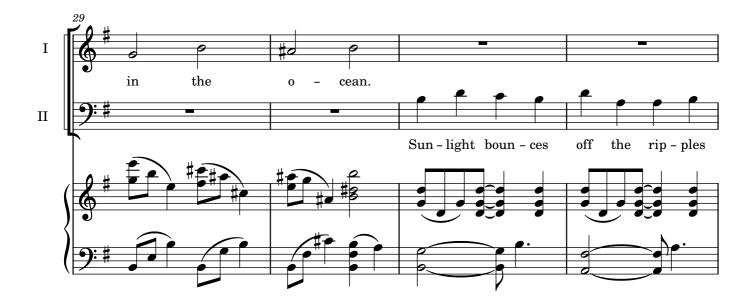
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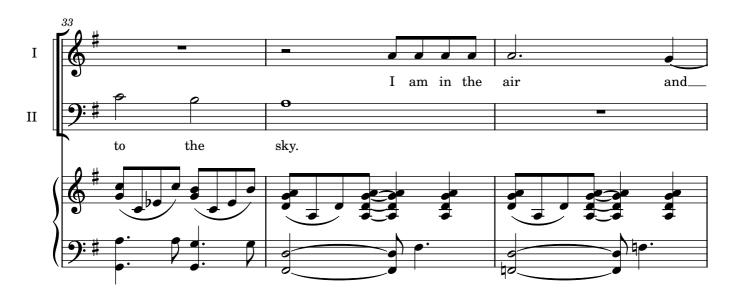






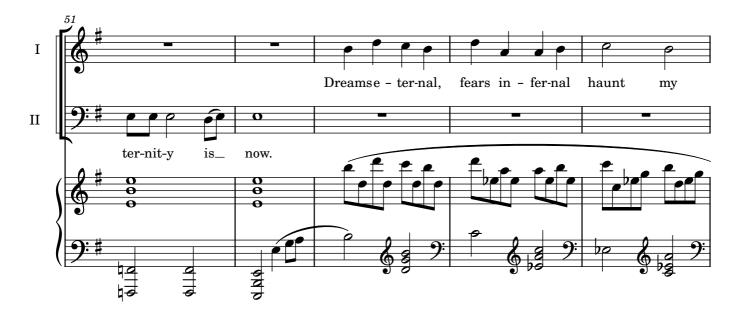


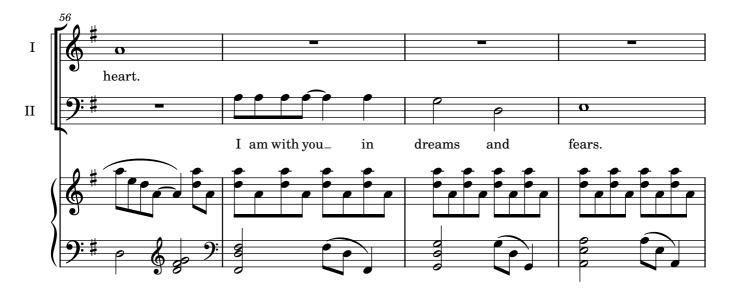


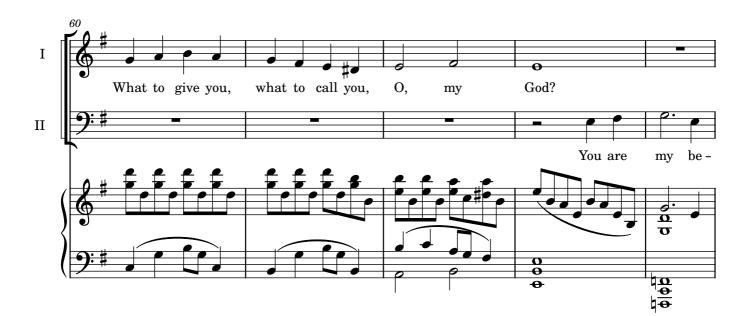




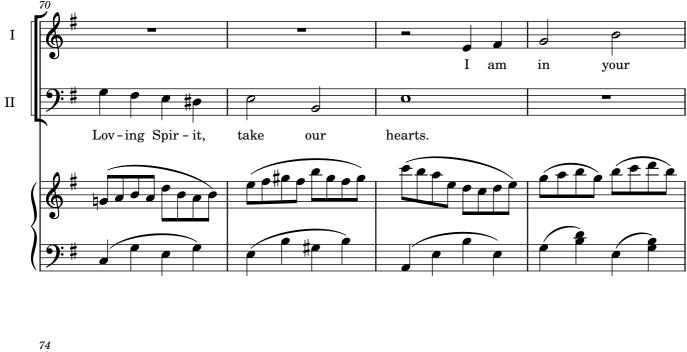
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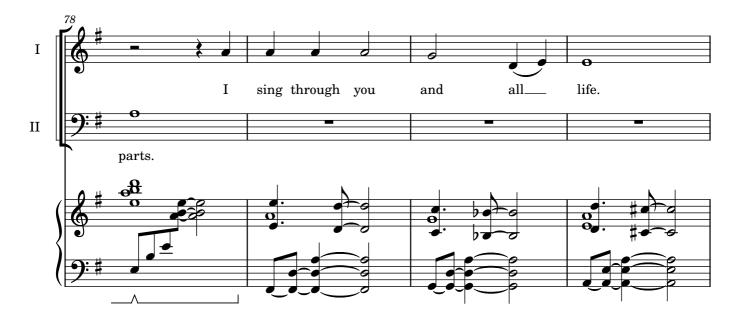


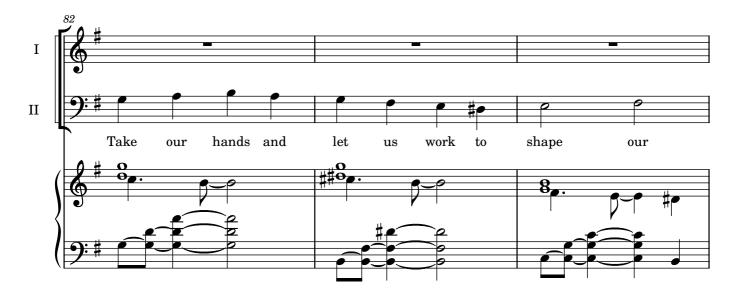






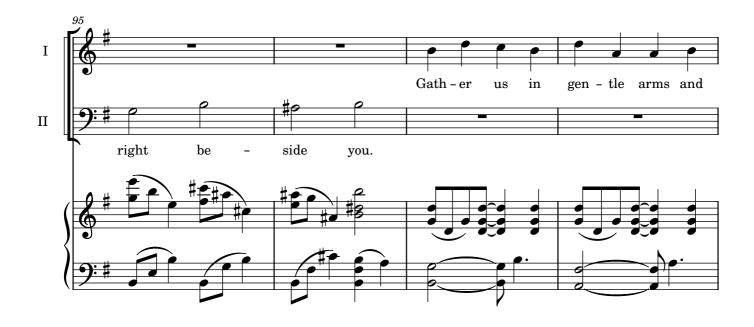


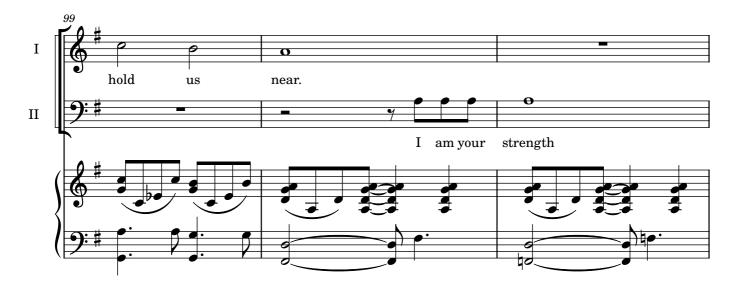


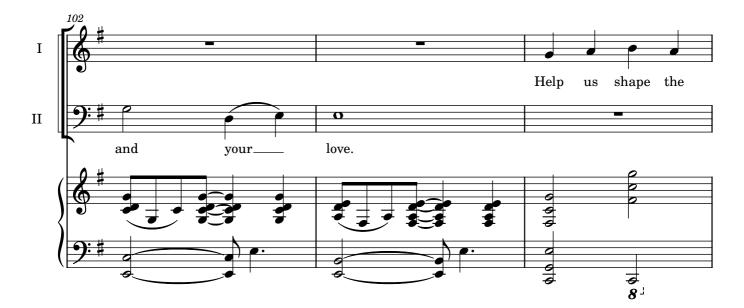


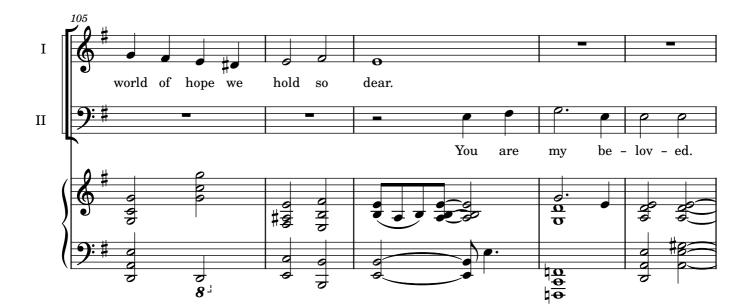


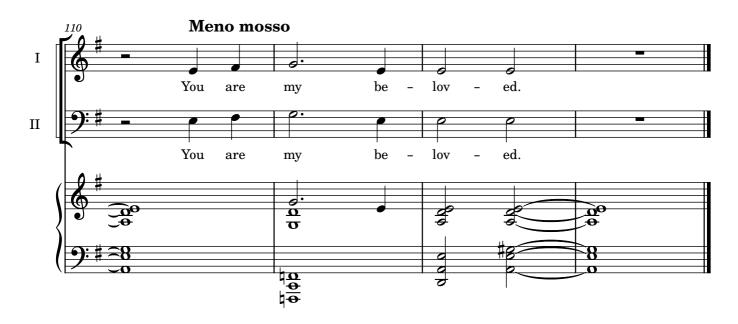










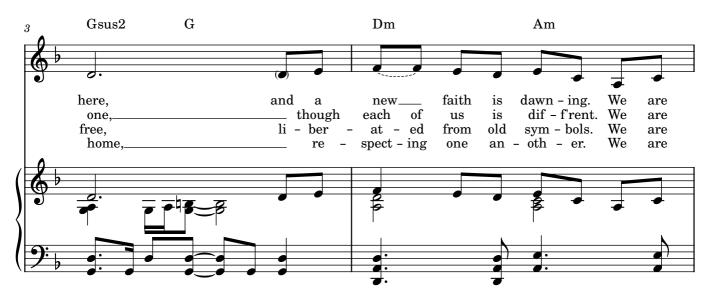


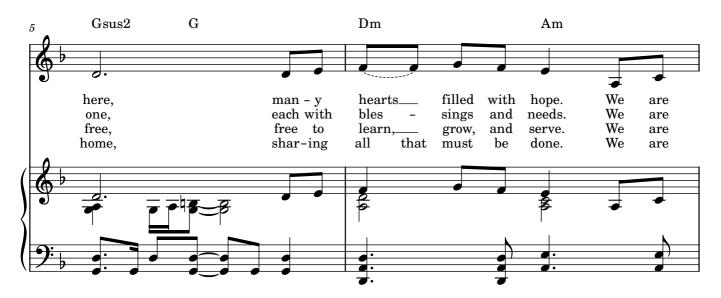
Introduction to "We Are One"

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. We Are One

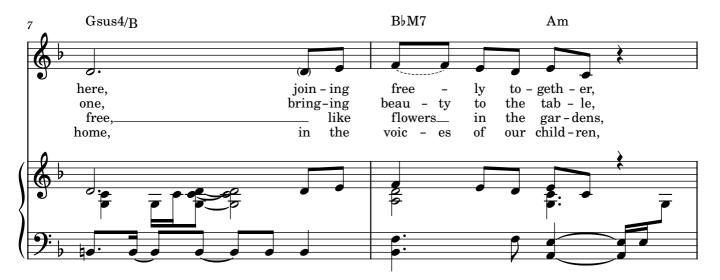
Words and melody by Rev. Suzelle Lynch Musical arrangement by Ruben Piirainen

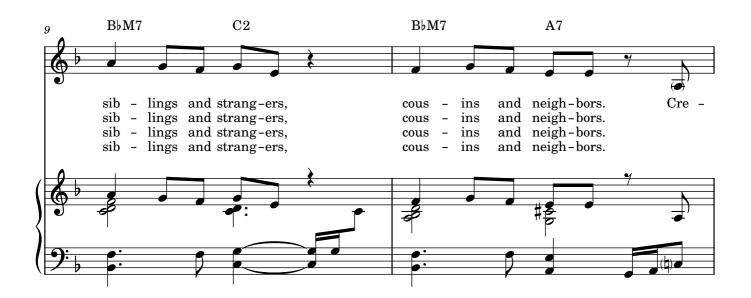


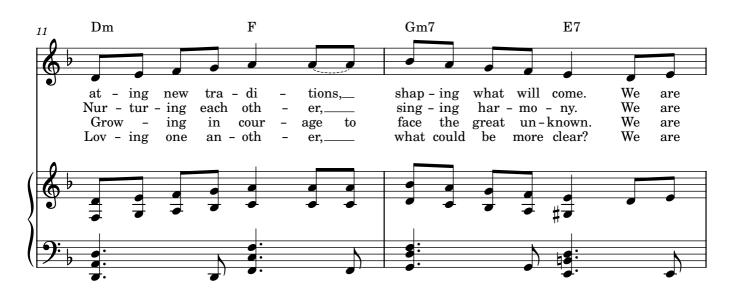


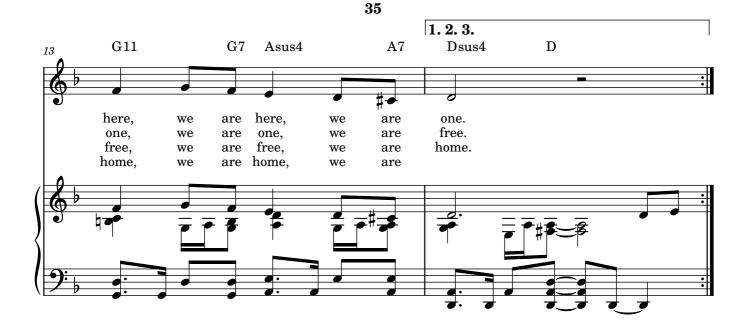


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CLOSING by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

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.