

Notes from the Music Department

Our traditional Flower Communion service originated in 1923 under the leadership of Dr. Norbert Capek and his wife, Maja, founders of the modern Unitarian movement in Czechoslovakia. Each member of the congregation would bring a flower to their church in Prague where it was placed in a large central vase. At the end of the service each congregant would take home a different flower, thus symbolizing the uniqueness of each individual and the coming together in communion to share this uniqueness. When the Nazis took control of Prague in 1940, they found Dr. Capek's gospel of the inherent worth and beauty of every human person to be, as Nazi court records show, "...too dangerous to the Reich for him to be allowed to live." Dr. Capek was sent to the Dachau concentration camp, where he was tortured during a Nazi "medical experiment" and eventually was gassed late in 1942. This gentle man suffered a cruel death, but his message of human hope and decency lives on through his Flower Communion. "**Color and Fragrance**" is just one of the Universalist Unitarian hymns written by Dr. Capek.

Our Postlude, "**Garden of the Earth**" was used as one of the featured songs in *Earthbeat*, the landmark album by the Paul Winter Consort and the Dmitri Porovsky Ensemble from Russia, then the Soviet Union. In this first album of original music created by Americans and Russians together, the two groups combined their distinctly different musical styles to create a melding of Russian circle songs and folk melodies, Brazilian and African influences along with the western jazz harmonies implemented by the Winter Consort. The album was nominated for a Grammy in 1988.

Garden of the Earth

There's a garden 'round the Earth, there's a home beneath the sun;
In the beauty of this garden, we will hear a thousand songs.

Many voices, many tongues, from the mountains to the sea;
Sing of beauty all around us, in this ancient harmony.

For the glory of the Earth, for the glory of the sun;
We will sing of life together, and forever live as one.