

Notes from the Music Department

If you have access to our Singing the Living Journey hymnal (the teal one) you might notice that Rose Sanders is credited with writing the lyrics and music for our opening hymn, "**There's a River Flowin' in My Soul.**" Today's program properly gives the credit to Faya Ora Rose Toure, the name chosen by Rose Sanders when she stepped away from her "slave name" in 2003. She is a Harvard educated lawyer, the first African American judge in Alabama, a Civil Rights Activist, community worker, a founder of the National Voting Rights Museum in Selma, Alabama, and host of a weekly radio show, Faya's Fire. Somehow she has found time to write over 40 plays focused on issues facing young people and communities and 200 songs that use the power of the music to get out her message as evidenced in today's hymn. The important line? "And it's tellin' me that I'm somebody..." "**I'm somebody.**"

When we sing our beloved "**Spirit of Life**" with its repeated request for the Spirit of Life to "come unto me," an interesting question often comes up. Why is the pronoun not "us?" As always, knowing the back story helps. Composer and activist Carolyn McDade wrote this song in 1981 as a prayer when she "felt like a piece of dried cardboard that had lain in the attic for years. I walked through my house in the dark, found my piano, and that was my prayer: May I not drop out." Powerful! This song, whether used as a personal plea for sustenance and strength or as a heartfelt communal prayer, continues to bring us together as we search for guidance, comfort and purpose in our lives.

A side note: Carolyn McDade feels strongly about having her music or words changed. Her advice if you wish different lyrics or additional verses? Write your own song.

A final question before I wrap up today's program notes..... Why do you suppose the contemporary English composer, Pam Wedgwood, chose the whimsical title, "**Who Split That Apple?**" for her music that I chose for today's Postlude? What might that title refer to? Was she thinking of making applesauce? Are we still carrying on about Adam and Eve? Did George Washington do damage to an apple tree in addition to that proverbial (and lied about) cherry tree? Was Martha involved? Is William Tell on the loose? Is Microsoft about to take over Apple? Did Steve Jobs do something nefarious before he left us?

What would my title be? How about "**A Fun Piece that People Would Enjoy Listening to On a Very, Very Cold Sunday Morning?**"

Stay warm, everyone!

Margaret