

Nov. 21, 2021

Notes from the Music Department

What an exciting day - the annual celebration of our Bread Communion and, in honor of our 150th (almost 152nd) anniversary of our founding, the premiere of "**Find a Stillness**," a solo piano arrangement of one of our favorite meditative hymns. During the sharing of bread, we are reminded to share our unique gifts with one another so all can be nourished. Before the pandemic interfered with, well, everything, I was asked if commissioning a musical piece to commemorate the anniversary would be possible. One of my favorite composers, Todd Monsell, decided that this was a project well worth tackling. Today his beautiful new music will be shared with all of us.

We will first sing the original "**Find a Stillness**" so we will have Carl G. Seaburg's very Universalist Unitarian words in our heads while we listen to Todd's arrangement of the traditional Transylvanian hymn tune.

About Todd Monsell: A native of Long Island, NY, he is a music educator, church musician, conductor, and composer. (You will also hear me play his arrangements of "**Wake Now My Senses**" and "**Amazing Grace**" today). He holds degrees from Hamilton College (Clinton, NY) and the University of New Hampshire (Durham, NH). A lifelong musician, Todd has directed choirs with membership ranging from ages 4 to 84. In 2014, while living in Charleston, SC, he founded the Charlestons, a professional male cappella quartet. Todd, his wife Jessica and their two sons, Julian, 13, and Cameron, 11, recently relocated to Greenville, South Carolina, where he directs the Upper School Choir and teaches music classes at Christ Church Episcopal School. In his words, Todd was "thrilled to be asked to compose a piece for the First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau's 150th anniversary and hopes that the congregation finds it meaningful!"