

May 7, 2023

Notes from the Music Department

WELCOME BACK, BRIAN!!!!!!

And.....Kudos to Kara Hall for again sharing your vocal talents with us. According to the instructional book that accompanies our gray *Singing the Living Tradition* hymnals, having a songleader is crucial to the success of the sound of the congregation. (An even more important factor according to these experts is the playing of the hymn in its entirety before singing. The ears prepare the voice.) Thank you to all who have volunteered for this important leadership role!

Despite being separated from each other by over two centuries, Maria Hester Park, Dennis Alexander and Pam Wedgwood have lived or are living amazingly similar lives as prolific composers while pursuing active teaching careers. Maria Hester Park (1760-1813) wrote pieces such as today's "**1st movement from Sonata No.2 in F Major**" using the stylings of the Classical Period of Music (think Mozart and Haydn) while Modernists Alexander and Wedgwood write in a more descriptive manner using titles such as "**Longing**" and "**Starry Night**" to reflect the intent and focus of their music.

"**Peacherine Rag**" was published by the popular ragtime composer, Scott Joplin in 1901. Joplin's life (1868-1917) spanned the unsettled post Civil War years through much of World War One. In spite of the prejudice and racism that existed during those Jim Crow years, Joplin successfully managed to become the most well known composer of the new and popular musical genre, ragtime. "**Maple Leaf Rag**" is arguably the most famous of his compositions but "**Peacherine Rag**" was the piece of Joplin's that was most played during the 1904 World Fair in St. Louis.

Music Making Opportunities

The **UU Choir** meets Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 in our well ventilated atrium where we prepare a variety of music to share with the congregation approximately once a month. No audition nor the ability to read music is required - just bring your desire to be part of our close knit community of singers as we create joyous harmonies.

An additional possibility for group music making happens Monday evenings from 7:00-8:00 in the Drum Haven located at 1005 Steuben St. No previous percussion experience or musical background is necessary for membership in our **Drum Club**. All drums and other authentic small percussion instruments are furnished. Our time is spent in fairly equal parts of hand drumming techniques and skills building alongside fun drum circle improvisational activities and games. Community building is always present.

"Singing is a natural activity and peculiarly suited to humans. For while birds improvise melismatic lines, donkeys bray and hyenas laugh, only humans have the ability to ally words to melody and produce songs for a community to sing.

We sing because we can."

- John Bell