

May 14, 2023

## Notes from the Music Department

We welcome our guest minister, the Rev. Suzelle Lynch, and extend a very special thank you to her for also volunteering to take on the responsibilities of songleading.

This is a very special Sunday indeed!

Our opening hymn contains a radical statement of inherent worth and dignity: "There's a river flowin' in my soul and it's tellin' me that I'm somebody." In the words of Harvard educated attorney, civil rights and education activist, songwriter and playwright Rose Sanders who has changed her "slave name" to Faya Ora Rose Taure, "When you are feeling discouraged, when you are feeling tired, just go and sing the Civil Rights songs. You'll be inspired to struggle another day. Because freedom is in the struggle."

For the Postlude, Rev. Suzelle will sing "**We Are One**" from "**Beauty Calls Us Together**," a cantata she and several others composed to honor the legacy of the Rev. Norbert Capek and his wife Maja who began the annual Flower Communion tradition one hundred years ago in Prague, Czechoslovakia. Her lyrics remind us that "We are one, we are free, we are here." Also in her words: "let us continue to shape a faith that fiercely and gently calls forth beauty and kinship in easy times and in times of heartrending challenge."

The Reverend Suzelle Lunch 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, an award winning activist duo whose songs have been sung for the Dalai Lama, praised by Pete Dinklage and covered by Holly Near.

Ruben Piirainen 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.

## We Are One

We are here, and a new faith is dawning.  
We are here, many hearts filled with hope.  
We are here, joining freely together,  
Siblings and strangers, cousins and neighbors.  
Creating new traditions, shaping what will come.  
We are here, we are here, we are one.

We are one though each of us is differ'rent.  
We are one, each with blessings and needs.  
We are one, bringing beauty to the table,  
Siblings and strangers, cousins and neighbors.  
Nurturing each other, singing harmony.  
We are one, we are one, we are free.

We are free, liberated from old symbols.  
We are free, free to learn, grow, and serve.  
We are free, like flowers in the gardens,  
Siblings and strangers, cousins and neighbors.  
Growing in courage to face the great unknown.  
We are free, we are free, we are home.

We are home, respecting one another.  
We are home, sharing all that must be done.  
We are home, in the voices of our children,  
Siblings and strangers, cousins and neighbors.  
Loving one another, what could be more clear?  
We are home, we are home, we are here!  
We are free, we are home, we are here!  
We are one, we are free, we are here!