

Notes from the Music Department:

Our Music Meditation for today, “**Mother Spirit, Father Spirit,**” is one of over 90 hymns written by Dr. Norbert Fabian Capek during his lifetime, three that are included in our **Singing the Living Tradition** hymnal. Dr. Capek (1870-1942) and his family fled their native Bohemia and settled in the United States in 1914. It was there that he discovered and converted to Unitarianism. After World War I, he and his wife, Maja, moved back to the new Czech Republic where he founded the Unitarian church of Prague and served as its minister. He is revered as the Father of Czech Unitarianism. In 1941, Norbert and his youngest daughter, Zora, were arrested by the Gestapo and charged with the capital crime of listening to foreign broadcasts. He was taken to the infamous Dachau Camp where he was executed in 1942. Before his death, Dr. Capek’s courage in the face of torture and starvation was a source in inspiration to his fellow prisoners. At the end of the war, prisoners who had survived testified that the Unitarian minister could not have been sent to a place where he was more needed. His words had fortified them as they held on despite the grim rigors of the camp.

The melody and lyrics work together in this haunting hymn to create an air of mystery, wondering and mysticism. Its combination of theism and humanism, nature and community, all roll into one, speaking deeply to the questions: ‘what to give you, what to call you, who am I?’

### **Mother Spirit, Father Spirit**

Mother Spirit, Father Spirit, where are you?  
In the sky song, in the forest, sounds your cry.  
What to give you, what to call you, what am I?

Many drops are in the ocean, deep and wide.  
Sunlight bounces off the ripples to the sky.  
What to give you, what to call you, who am I?

I am empty, time flies from me; what is time?  
Dreams eternal, fears infernal haunt my heart.  
What to give you, what to call you, O, my God?

Mother Spirit, Father Spirit, take our hearts.  
Take our breath and let our voices sing our parts.  
Take our hands and let us work to shape our art.