

AMASONG
PRESENTS

I SING TO KNOW THAT LOVE IS NEAR

Saturday April 20, 2024

4:00 PM

at First Presbyterian Church
204 W. Prairie Ave., Decatur

Amasong, Champaign-Urbana's
Lesbian/Feminist/Non-Binary Choir,
sings songs of Love and Hope for our time

Sponsored by



The Peacemaking Committee
of First Presbyterian Church



PFLAG of Decatur



Decatur Pride



The Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Decatur

April 20, 2024

Order of Concert

Hotaru Koi

Japanese folk song

Come, come, firefly
Over there the water is foul, bitter
Over here the water is sweet
Come, come, firefly

Mother's Day Proclamation

Julia Ward Howe

Women who had lost their sons in the US Civil War began Mother's Day after the war ended, in protest of the carnage.

Arise, then, [...] women of this day! Arise all women who have hearts whether [our] baptism be that of water or of tears!

Say firmly: We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies. Our husbands shall not come to us, reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause. Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.

We, women of one country, will be too tender of those of another country, to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs. From the bosom of the devastated earth a voice goes up with our own. It says: Disarm, Disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice.

Blood does not wipe out dishonor, nor violence vindicate possession. As men have often forsaken the plough and the anvil at the summons of war, let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of council. Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead....

In the name of womanhood and of humanity, I earnestly ask that a general congress of women, without limit of nationality, may be appointed and held at some place deemed most convenient, and at the earliest period consistent with its objects, to promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace.

Appeal to Womanhood throughout the World, 1870

Mrs. McGrath

**Trad. Irish
arr. Meagan Smith**

Soloists: Sara Bowen, Carolyn Applebaum, Alana Smith, Kathleen Fuller,
Jennilee Benda, Hannah Perhai-Josek
percussion, Mari McKeeth; tin whistle, ærin tedesco

“O Mrs. McGrath,” the captain said, “Would you like to make a soldier out of your son Ted?
With a bright red coat and a three-cocked hat, now, Mrs. McGrath, wouldn't you like that?”

With your too-ri-a, fol-de-rid-dle-aa, too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-aa
With your too-ri-a, fol-de-rid-dle-ah, too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-aa

And so she lived there by the shore for the space of seven long years or more,

till she spied a ship sailing into the bay. "There's my son Ted, will you clear the way?"
With your too-ri-aa....

"O captain dear, where have you been? And have you been sailing the Mediterreen,
and have you news of my son Ted? Is he alive or is he dead?" With your too-ri-aa....

Then up comes Ted without any legs and in their place, two wooden pegs.
She kissed him a dozen times or two, crying "Holy Moses, it isn't you!" With your too-ri-aa....

Oh were you drunk, or were you blind when you left your two fine legs behind?
Or was it walking on the sea wore your two fine legs from the knees away? With your too-ri-aa....

I wasn't drunk and I wasn't blind when I left my two fine legs behind.
Twas a cannonball on the fifth of May swept my two fine legs from the knees away.

"Oh, Teddy, my boy," his mother cried, "Your two fine legs were your mother's pride,
and I'd rather have you back the way you used to be than the King of France and his whole navy!"
With your too-ri-aa....

All foreign wars I do proclaim live on the blood and the mother's pain.
And by hea'ns I'll make them rue the time they swept the legs from a child of mine!

With your too-ri-a, fol-de-riddle-aa, too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-aa
With your too-ri-a, fol-de-rid-dle-aa, too-ri-oo-ri-oo-ri-aa

Dreams

Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes* published by Alfred A. Knopf/Vintage.
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Oy Khodyt Son/The Dream Passes By

**trad. Ukrainian
arr. Sarah Tenant-Flowers**

The Dream passes by the window, and Sleep by the fence
The Dream asks Sleep: "Where should we rest tonight?"
Where the cottage is warm, where the child is tiny.
There we will go and rock the child to sleep.
May the cat purr and the child sleep. The cat will purr, the baby will sleep.
And we have a warm house and a tiny child.
Come to us to spend the night and rock the baby.
Come to us, come to us, come to us.
The Dream passes by

Days of War

Sit with me birdie, in the tall tree
The news is bad, and there's no relief
How do you fly to the enemy?
And sing your song so tenderly?
Oo ... these days of war

When I fly to the enemy
The fear is high cuz you don't agree
Tempers flare, and the cry is war.
And no one listens anymore
Oo, in these days, in these days of war

Little bird, do you fly in fear
up and away from the hatred here?
Do you see a meeting ground
between our camps where you touch down?

I Worried

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers
flow in the right direction, will the earth turn
as it was taught, and if not how shall
I correct it?
Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven,
can I do better?
Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows
can do it and I am, well,
hopeless.
Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it,
am I going to get rheumatism,
lockjaw, dementia?
Finally, I saw that worrying had come to nothing.
And gave it up. And took my old body
and went out into the morning,
and sang.

words and music, Moira Smiley and Seamus Egan

Kelsey, Fin, Alana, Kathleen, Angie, soloists
MJ Walker and ærin tedesco, guitarists

Oh, yes sometimes I fly in fear
And I sing so softly so you cannot hear,
but I sometimes see your meeting ground
beneath the smoke and the battle sounds
Oo ... in these days of war
Oh little bird why do you fly away

And leave me alone in this silent day?
And how do you sing in these days of war
where no one listens any more?

Well I fly because I must carry on
To love, to feed, to make my home
and I sing to know that love is near because
anger holds the hand of fear
O, courage take the hand of fear

Mary Oliver

Singalong

Where Have All the Flowers Gone**Pete Seeger**; *lyrics adapted*

Where have all the flowers gone? Long time passing.
Where have all the flowers gone? Long time ago.
Where have all the flowers gone? Gone to lovers, every one.
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?
Where have all the lovers gone? Long time passing....
Gone to soldiers, every one. When will they ever learn?
Where have all the soldiers gone?... Gone to graveyards, every one.
Where have all the graveyards gone? ... Gone to flowers, every one.
When will we ever learn? When will we ever learn?

Rich Man's House**Anne Feeney**

Well I, went down to the rich man's house and I,
Took back what they stole from me
Took back my dignity
Took back my humanity
Now they're under my feet....
Ain't gonna let the system walk all over me!
Well I, went down to the supreme court...
Well I, went down to the voting booth...

Love is Love is Love is Love**Abbie Betinis**

Love is love is love is love
Oh, love, love, love – all we need is love, love, love
Ubi Caritas et amour – where there is love....

Kristina**ærin tedesco**
Sung by ærin and Lud**Be Like the Bird****text, Victor Hugo,**
music, Abbie Betinis

Be like the bird, that
Pausing in her flight awhile
On boughs too slight
Feels them give way beneath her,
And sings, and sings
Knowing she hath wings.

Dig My Grave**traditional, Ando Islands, Bahamas**

Dig my grave so long and narrow.
Make my coffin so neat and strong.
But two to my head, but two to my feet, Lord, but two to carry me whenever I die.

O, my little soul gonna shine like a star, Lord, on Mount Calvary.

Remember

Joy Harjo

Remember the sky that you were born under,
know each of the star's stories.
Remember the moon, know who she is.
Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the
strongest point of time. Remember sundown
and the giving away to night.
Remember your birth, how your mother struggled
to give you form and breath. You are evidence of
her life, and her mother's, and hers.
Remember your father. He is your life, also.
Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth.
Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their
tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them,
listen to them. They are alive poems.
Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the
origin of this universe.
Remember you are all people and all people
are you.
Remember you are this universe and this
universe is you.
Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.
Remember language comes from this.
Remember the dance language is, that life is.
Remember.

from *She Had Some Horses* by Joy Harjo. Copyright © 1983 by Joy Harjo
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Sing Out My Soul

text, William Henry Davies; music, Marques L.A. Garrett

Brandon Young-Eleazar, conductor

Chung-Ha Kim, pianist

Sing out, my soul, your songs of joy;
Sing as a happy bird will sing
Beneath a rainbow's lovely arch
In early spring.

Think not of death...
Strive not for gold...

Train up your mind to feel content,
What matters then how low your store?
(It matters not)
What we enjoy, and not possess,

Makes rich or poor.

Ah Zumbah/This Heart of the World

Lisa Young
ærin tedesco, soloist

This piece begins with syllables used when learning South Indian percussion. Those syllables are joined by a vocal imitation of the Brazilian Reco-reco. Then follows bits of melody using sung nonsense syllables.

Ah zumbah, Zumba or dm bor um bor
Gong gor-or zoh weh yah, yah, yah
Oy rafey, oy rafah, zumboy ah-ya

And our voices will awaken this heart of the world
Ever waiting for the whisper and the call
And as we listen closely leaning into the divine
The sweetest indication of love will soar

And we will raise this heart of the world
Yes, we will raise this heart of the world
We're gonna raise this heart, we're gonna raise
We're gonna raise this heart of the world