

# PEACEMEAL

| A Volunteer Effort of the Portland Peace Choir |

## In This Issue

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How about actually **using** some of the benefits of singing we've talked about before?

**With everything going on around us, it helps to remember some of the things that singing (especially choral singing) can do for us.**

- Remember that choral singing creates a sense of community and support ... something we can all benefit from right now! Enjoy the support and camaraderie of like-minded people as you sing powerful songs about issues that really matter.
- Since singing lowers stress levels and lessens anxiety, use our rehearsals and your practice at home as a calm, safe, and comforting oasis in your life.
- Singing can take you away from the worries of your life, allowing you to be present in the moment. Concentrate on the lyrics; the messages in the songs we sing are more important than ever now.
- Singing lifts your spirits and elevates the levels of "feel good" chemicals in your brain. Use the boost you can get from singing to combat any negative feelings you may be experiencing.

## Be the Change You Want to See

Ever since last month's elections, there seems to be more darkness than light surrounding us. There are reports of increases in hate crimes around the country, there is violence in the streets, and racist epithets are being scrawled on walls in public places, even here in Portland. In times like these it can be difficult to keep a positive outlook and focus on the good things in our lives, but it's important for us to try. Sitting at home and crying won't accomplish anything except give you a headache.



I think it's important for us to remember that we can effect change by the way we ourselves live our lives and interact with others. We can make a difference, shine a light of love, compassion and peace into the darkness that seems to surround us. It will touch those who see and experience it and help bring light back into the gloom.

It's important to remember that what happened last month is just politics, and that there are many things we can do to counteract the negativity we see spiraling out of control around us; ways in which we can effect positive change, even in small ways. That's the beauty of a democratic society: we are free to express our views and work to change the overall outcome; although we can't change the results of the election, we can change how we react to it and how we allow it to affect us in our daily lives. We can see it as a call to action, an opportunity to shake off complacency and live our ideals.

(cont'd p. 2)



-Jimi Hendrix

**When the Power of Love  
Overcomes the Love of Power  
the World Will Know Peace**

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## Who Said That?

"One discovers the light in darkness. That is what darkness is for. But everything in our lives depends on how we bear the light. It is necessary, while in darkness, to know that there is a light somewhere, to know that in oneself, waiting to be found there is a light. What the light reveals is danger, and what it demands is faith...I know we often lose...and how often one feels that one cannot start again. And yet, on pain of death, one can never remain where one is. The light. The light. One will perish without the light...For nothing is fixed, forever, and forever, and forever, it is not fixed; the earth is always shifting, the light is always changing, the sea does not cease to grind down rock. Generations do not cease to be born, and we are responsible to them because we are the only witnesses they have...The sea rises, the light fails, lovers cling to each other, and children cling to us. And the moment we cease to hold each other, the moment we break faith with one another, the sea engulfs us and the light goes out.

~James Baldwin, "Nothing Personal"

*This quote references a pep talk shared with me by wise women tenor, Barbara J on post-election Wednesday eve.*

-tk

In that vein, here are some ideas to help you keep your spirits up and shine a little light into the darkness:

1. **Be grateful for the good things in your life.** In spite of the chaos around us, there are many things to be grateful for: the freedoms we enjoy, our friends and families, the beauty of music, art and nature, and just being alive are all things to look at with gratitude that can lighten your spirit.
2. **Cut down on negativity:** spend more time with the people in your life that encourage you, comfort you and exhibit a positive outlook rather than the ones that make you feel bad. Don't watch the news if it stresses you out. Remember that it's not all bad ... that's just what the media focuses on because it sells.
3. **Focus on the positive:** in spite of all the violence, anger and despair that we're inundated with, it's not hard to find positive things as well: the laughter of a child, the antics of a pet, a small kindness someone has done for you or that you can do for someone else. These are all small things that can brighten your day if you let them.
4. **Make compassion, tolerance and love a part of your daily life.** Every small act of kindness we show others can help spread joy and lessen pain. Every interaction we have with others has the potential to make a difference in someone's life.
5. **Make time for yourself.** Do whatever makes you feel best: sing, listen to music, read, take a walk, get a massage. Meditation is a wonderful way to step outside the stress of daily life and just \*be\* for a while. Pamper yourself.
6. **Take care of yourself.** It's easier to deal with increased stress when you take care of yourself: mind, body and spirit. It's not necessary to be in peak physical condition, spend hours at the gym, follow a strict diet or be an expert in meditation to take care of yourself. Small positive actions can make a big difference. For example, go for a walk, eat fresh fruit and get plenty of sleep for physical wellbeing. Exercise your mind by solving a puzzle, doing easy math (Sudoku, anyone?), or memorizing a poem (or a song from our repertoire). To nourish your spirit, you can spend some quiet time with yourself, focusing on something you've accomplished, or recall a happy moment.
7. **Inject some fun into your daily tasks.** Everyone has tedious, boring routine things that need to be taken care of, and focusing on the tedium can really get you down. But if you couple these routine tasks with something enjoyable, it can help lighten your mood. Listen to music while you work, or sing along. Plan something enjoyable to do as a reward for completing the work.

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8. **Stop comparing how things are with an ideal image of how you'd like them to be.** Lamenting that things aren't the way we want them to be can bog us down in negativity. Appreciate what is now, celebrate what is good and accept what you're not happy with. Accepting a situation won't change it, but if you appreciate what you have now, you can then try to find ways to make what is bad better.
9. **Unclutter your life.** We've all heard this before in relation to housekeeping, but this doesn't necessarily mean material possessions; it can be material, emotional, digital, spiritual. There is so much noise in our lives, so many things demanding our attention and surrounding us with chaos, that we can become exhausted just trying to deal with everything. Simplifying your life by taking time to understand what's occupying your space, time and thoughts, then letting go of what you don't need or what makes you feel down can make a big difference. Do that housecleaning, donate things to Goodwill, turn off the TV or social media, go walk your dog without your phone. You can even go deeper and try to let go of the negative thoughts you may be holding onto and concentrate instead on positive, uplifting ideas.
10. **Take action.** Think about what you can do to improve things in your own life or in the lives of others. As I've said before, even small things can make a big difference. You don't have to try to change the world, but you can effect positive changes in your own small corner of it. A smile or a kind word can brighten someone's day; donating your time to helping those who are less fortunate than you can brighten their lives and enrich your own; singing songs of peace and love can lift the spirits of those around you.

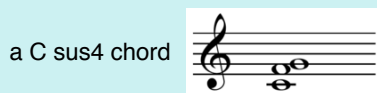
The bottom line is this: yes, there are many negative things going on around us right now, and it's easy to think things are only going to get worse ... and if we let these kinds of thoughts dominate our lives that will certainly happen. We can't control the world or roll back time and change things. But what we can do is to try to "be the change we want to see", fight back against the negativity by doing what we can to bring light, peace and joy into our lives and the lives of those around us. And I think that our choir, coming to rehearsals and singing songs of peace and love with the wonderful people who make it up, is a very positive thing we can all do for ourselves. The songs and the camaraderie we experience when we sing definitely create good energy and lift our spirits and those of anyone who comes to hear us sing.

~ Barbara Burnett

## What Did David Mean By That?

In our continuing effort to demystify some of the music jargon we hear frequently at rehearsals, so those of us who are mostly musically illiterate can understand what's going on, we present a few more terms from recent rehearsals for your edification:

**Sus Chord:** (suspended chord) a chord in which the third is replaced by a note either a step up (fourth) or down (second), for example:



**Suspended:** When a note is carried over from a previous chord. The suspension lasts until that note is resolved (usually by moving it up or down a step). In the example above, the Sus4 Chord could be resolved by moving the 2nd note (F) down a half step to E, forming a C major triad:



**Sustained:** when a note or chord is held for a period of time.

**Coda:** (from the Italian for tail) An ending to a piece of music, outside the main body of the piece. Often used when sections are repeated to indicate when to jump to the actual end of the piece.

### Intervals, steps and chords, oh my!

Last month we defined **interval** as the distance between any two notes and **step** as the distance between a note and the adjacent note. Another way to look at it is the distance between the positions of two adjacent notes on a staff or between two notes one letter apart (e.g. C and D). But what about those other pesky interval-related terms? What is a third? A fourth? A fifth?

A **third** is the distance from a note to another note two letters away (C to E or C to E flat).

A **fourth** is a distance of three letters between notes (C to F or F sharp).

You get the picture. Continuing on, we have fifth, sixth, seventh and octave, which brings us back to where we started. Sort of.

## The Story Behind the Song: Let There Be Peace on Earth

"Let There Be Peace on Earth", was written by Jill Jackson Miller (1913-1995) and Sy Miller (1908-1971). Jackson, who had been suicidal after the failure of a marriage, said that she wrote the song after discovering what she called the "life-saving joy of God's peace and unconditional love. I knew I was loved, and I knew I was here for a purpose."

Initially written for and sung by the International Children's Choir in 1957, the song continues to be the theme for this group of children who represent a host of nations and who continue to perform worldwide. Miller noted that the song was then shared in all 50 states at school graduations, PTA meetings, holiday gatherings, celebrations of Brotherhood Week, Veterans Day, Human Rights Day and United Nations Day. Kiwanis clubs sang it, as well as 4-H clubs, United Auto Workers, the American Legion, the B'nai B'rith and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).



Jill Jackson and Sy Miller (c. 1957)

It received the George Washington Honor Medal from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge for "*Outstanding achievement in helping to bring about a better understanding of the American Way of Life.*" The National Conference of Christians and Jews has also honored the composers with the Brotherhood Award.

The song is performed internationally throughout the year, and particularly during the Christmas season, which has led to it being officially considered a Christmas song. It is included in the hymnals of a number of Christian denominations, and is used in worship services by a denominations that do not otherwise include it in their hymnals.

The original lyrics for "Let There Be Peace on Earth" have been altered on many occasions for differing reasons, including for gender neutrality (where "father" is replaced with "creator", and "brother" is replaced with "family" or "each other"), and secularity (where "God as our Father" is replaced with "Earth as our Mother" or "love as our compass"). Both the gender-neutral and secular alternate lyrics have been copyrighted by the original licensing agent of the song.

~tk

## What's With the Safety Pins?

There's a burgeoning movement in the US for people to wear a safety pin in the face of post-election attacks and harassment. Having to adopt a symbol of anti-violence and anti-bigotry is not exactly what any of us thought we'd be doing in the wake of a presidential election, but it could be one small way to signal that you're an ally (regardless of who you voted for) to someone who probably didn't think they'd be in this volatile situation, either.

If you've never experienced being yelled at to "go back to your country", fear losing your family to deportation, or losing your job for being gay, you need to do a lot more than put a pin on your shirt, though. Donate to organizations that help immigrants, people of color, the LGBTQ community, and women. Volunteer to escort people who feel unsafe in America today. Actually help

the affected rather than participate in a trend that may only make you feel better.

After British citizens voted to leave the European Union (Brexit) in June, the nation experienced a 57% rise in reported xenophobic incidents. An American woman living in Britain tweeted a suggestion that people wear safety pins to show support to those experiencing abuse. Two days later, #safetypin was trending on Twitter.

The "safety pin" symbol was inspired by the 2014 #illridewithyou movement in Sydney, Australia where people offered to sit next to Muslims who felt threatened on their commutes – at the time, there was fear of an Islamophobic backlash after a terrorist attack in Sydney.

Thanks to new tenor Kathie for sharing her big jar of pins.



## Get to Know Your Fellow Singers

See? The bios aren't as scary as you thought. Let's continue to look at them as an opportunity to bring this little community a little closer together. After all, person-to-person is really what it's all about. Time to get involved. Send one in for the next issue – we're looking at you, altos.

**This issue, meet: soprano Trisha L.**

**I was born into a very large family** in Corvallis, Oregon. I have four sisters, two brothers, 20 nieces and nephews (one on the way), for a total of 21. It gets even better being a Great Aunt. In addition to the love of my big family, my life has been enriched by my three best friends who have been in my life for a long time.

I am proud of my great work ethic which, I believe, comes from being raised (for the most part) by a single parent.

In 1979, I graduated from Richardson High school (near Dallas, Texas). One of my treasured times is when I got Roger Staubach's autograph (1st quarterback the Cowboys ever had!)

I've earned an A/A in General Studies from Linn-Benton and a have a year at Oregon State.

Currently, I work at a call center as a Customer Service Rep and am so glad to be working. Yes, I'm one of those voices you get when you have to make *those* calls.

I've been in Portland since 2003 in my very own condo. So happy not to be renting anymore.

I have been with the Peace Choir since its very beginning.  
My current singing goal is to sing the National Anthem at a sporting type event.  
When I get to that point, pray I don't faint.

## What's Trending with Safety Pins

If you wear a hijab, I'll sit with you on the train.  
If you're trans, I'll go to the bathroom with you.  
If you're a person of color, I'll stand with you if the cops stop you.  
If you're a person with disabilities, I'll hand you my megaphone.  
If you're an immigrant, I'll help find you resources.  
If you're a survivor, I'll believe you.  
If you're a refugee, I'll make sure you're welcome.  
If you're a veteran, I'll take up your fight.  
If you're LGBTQ, I won't let anybody tell you you're broken.  
If you're a woman, I'll make sure you get home ok.  
If you're tired, me too.  
If you need a hug, I've got an infinite supply.  
If you need me, I'll be with you. All I ask is that you be with me, too.

## Suggestion Box

This is an opportunity for you, our readers, to tell us your ideas for ways to improve our choir. Please send your suggestion to us at: [traciekorol@gmail.com](mailto:traciekorol@gmail.com) or [barbaraPPC@comcast.net](mailto:barbaraPPC@comcast.net)

We can include your name with your suggestion or keep it anonymous, your choice.

## Suggestion:

### Next rehearsal...

Let's all make a point to talk to someone outside of our section or someone we've never talked to before. Make new friends, and all that.

### The PPC needs its own anthem!

Surely, with all the talent in the PPC –the poets, writers, musicians and otherwise really smart people –we could, together, write a song that exemplifies OUR purpose.

We could start or end each concert with our own tuneful mission statement.



## Opportunities to Sing or Listen

Do yourself a favor! Relax and sing some fun songs with a group or settle in to listen to other talented singers welcome in the holiday season.

- **December 2 – 6-8pm** (FREE) Join Sing Portland! for caroling in Multnomah Village, along Capitol Highway between SW 32nd and 37th Ave., singing holiday standards. Lyrics made available online, so bring your smart phone or iPad.
- **December 9 – 6-8pm** The 2nd Friday 60's and 70's Harmony Singers at Friendly House (FREE). Peace choir sopranos and altos especially welcome! Weather permitting, drinks afterward at a pub around the corner. **For more information, check out their website** <http://www.meetup.com/Song-Circle-Folk-Music-singalongs-from-the-60s-70s/>
- **December 10 – 7pm**, Portland Scandinavian Chorus Winter Concert. Nordia House, 8800 SW Oleson Rd., featuring Christmas songs from Denmark, Finland, Iceland Norway and Sweden in the native languages. Come early for easier parking.
- **December 15 – 6-8pm**, Caroling with Sing Portland! on Peacock Lane. Meet in front of the Walgreens store on the corner of SE Belmont and Chavez (39th Ave).
- **December 16** 3rd Friday Song Circle at Friendly House (FREE) This group is for musicians and singers! We will be singing from the "Rise Again" songbook.
- **December 15 – 21** Portland Christmas Revels: Celebration of the Winter Solstice with an Italian theme this year "Commedia Italiana" [www.portlandrevels.org](http://www.portlandrevels.org) for information and tickets. Or sign up for volunteer activities under "Get Involved" and see the show for free. Get together with friends and volunteer the same night.
- **December 17 – 2:30-4:00pm**, Mark Bosnian's Portland Sings Christmas Party: at Taborspace \$5-10. Link to songbook is at [www.portlandsings.com](http://www.portlandsings.com).
- **Every night except Christmas Day:** The Grotto's Festival of Lights and Christmas Choral Festival: NE 85th and Sandy Blvd. Go online to [www.thegrotto.org](http://www.thegrotto.org) to check the date and time schedule of performers in the chapel each night.
- December 21 – 6-7pm** Sing Portland!
- December 28 – 7-8pm** Portland Interfaith Gospel Choir

## PPC Happenings

**Fall Session:** Join us **Wednesday evenings, 7-9pm** at St. David of Wales for our regular rehearsals.

### Sectionals with DavEd

Our last sectional session of 2016 will be held at 6:30pm, before weekly choir rehearsal ...

**12/7: altos**

**PPC Holiday Party :** Join us at **6:30pm** on **12/14** at Penny Biel's house (12424 NE Rose Parkway) for our annual holiday get-together. Partners/spouses and children are welcome. Bring a potluck dish to share (veggies, fruit, salad, main course, desserts) and your own beverages, as well as plates, cups and utensils.

**Also bring songs you might want to share because how can a group of singers get together and not sing a little!**

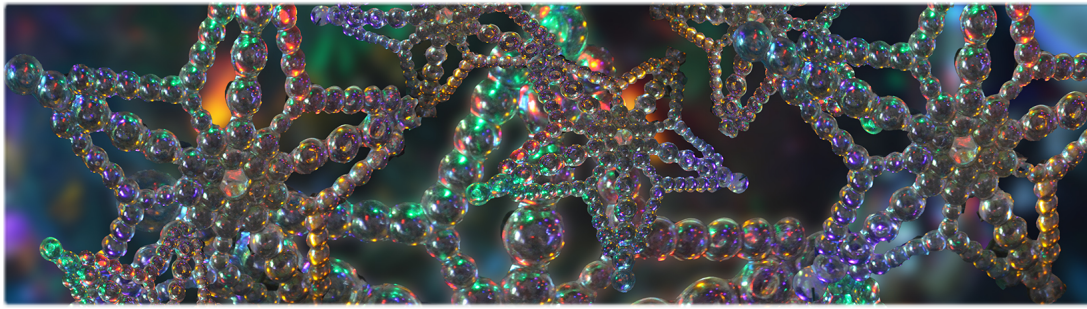
**MLK Celebration gig:** Sunday, **January 15, 2017** at **4pm**, at the Southminster Presbyterian Church, 12250 SW Denney Rd, Beaverton. We will be singing several times during the program.

**Earth Day Celebration:** Friday **April 21, 2017** at **7:30pm** at the Old Church, 1422 SW 11th, Portland.

**Joint Peace Choir event:** on President's Day weekend, **February 18 - 20** in Eugene, with the concert on Sunday at **2pm**. Please let Peter know if you have questions or need for homestays.

More information on what we'll be performing at these events to come.

**Reminder: Don't forget to wear your name tags!**



## Hallelujah Anyone?

Chris P (bass) encourages all of us to dust off our classical chops and get our Hallelujah on at these two performance offerings:

**Sing Along Messiah**, Friday, December 16  
Singing starts at 7pm, doors open at 5:30pm  
Central Lutheran Church, 1820 NE 21st, Portland, OR

All choruses are sung, there are no soloists or orchestra. Arrive early to grab your seat! Copies of the score will be available, or bring your own.

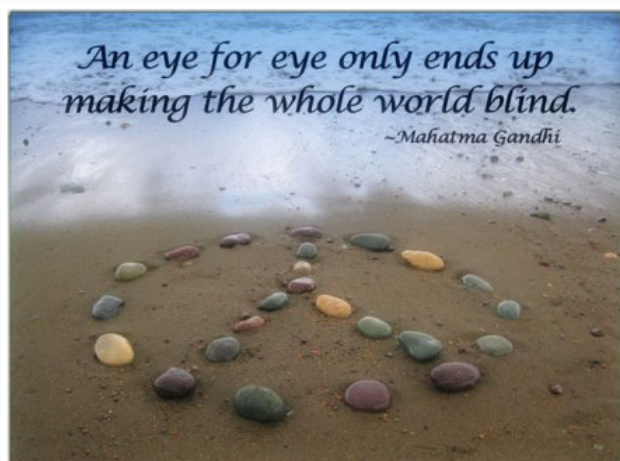
**2016 Sing-Along Messiah** Monday evening, December 19, 2016 at 7pm at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, 9750 SW Terwilliger Blvd., 97219.

The sanctuary will be filled with singers, and a few folks who come along just to listen. Choral scores of Handel's *Messiah* are available if you don't have your own copy. Well-known artists from around the Portland area will add their beautiful voices on the familiar soloist pieces.

A free will offering will be taken to support the services for the poor and elderly at Neighborhood House and food bank in Multnomah Village.

Chris also thoughtfully provided a link to SATB rehearsal tracks:

<https://www.choraline.com/3-steps-to-sing-handel-messiah>



## AROMA REMINDER

*Please remember that our chorus has a fragrance-free policy.* Because we are a large group and some members are very sensitive or allergic to fragrances, it is important that members refrain from wearing scented products to rehearsals or performances.

### Here are a few guidelines for all rehearsals and performances:

Please do not wear perfume, cologne, essential oils, bug repellent, scented aftershave or *any* other products that contain fragrance.

Please do not wear hair products, lotions, deodorants or other products with fragrance as one of the ingredients.

Note that *unscented* is not the same as *fragrance free*. Unscented products have a masking fragrance, which will be noted in the label.

**PEACEMEAL** is a publication of the Portland Peace Choir

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Barbara Burnett: Writer, Designer

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Painting p.7 (top) © Barbara Burnett

Again, thanks to Jeff Jones for help with the musical terms.