

# Songlines

*Notes from the musical staff*

## Singing our meaning, meaning our singing

I'm directing the Women's Chorale at Otterbein College this fall, and one of the songs we are doing is a setting of Walt Whitman's poem *Song of the Open Road*. It starts, 'Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road. Healthy, free, the world before me.' I can't think of a much better song to ask a mainly freshman choir to relate to. The piece quickly came alive, as the singers really engaged with the words that they were singing.

The same sort of thing happens at church, both with Summit's choir and with the congregation, when the words before us have a meaning that we can relate to. Pastor Linda pays a lot of attention to whether the hymns that we sing fit well with the theme and spirit of the service as a whole, and it's great when it works and you can really hear the meaning coming through in people's singing. Of course, a good tune helps too, but meaningful and well written lyrics are an essential part of a strong worship service.

Two Summit events this fall also draw together meaning and music. First, the **annual choir concert in aid of Neighborhood Services** takes place this year on Remembrance Sunday, November 11, at Holy Name Church, Patterson Ave, just north of Summit (starting 7 pm). This year's theme is spirituals, which are deeply suited to an evening when we remember those who gave their lives in war, and also raise money for families living in poverty here in Columbus. Summit's choir is one of about eight church choirs taking part in a program that combines multi-choir songs and contributions from the individual choirs. Do come – it's always a powerful and uplifting occasion.

This November, there is also the chance to hear the **Columbus Women's Chorus in concert** at Summit. CWC is another great example of a group who loves to sing what they mean, and mean what they sing. If you have never heard them, take the chance to come along for their fall concert on Sunday November 18, in the sanctuary. Doors open at 3 pm for a silent auction of holiday gifts and assorted services, with folk music by hammer dulcimer player Kendra Ward and her partner Bob Bence. The choral part of the program, entitled 'Singing our Dreams', runs from 4 pm for one hour, and includes lullabies, prayers, visionary songs, and show tunes. Something for everyone!

**Thanks** and welcome to students Alex Hall, Adrienne Strong, and Alex Varga for bringing their musical talents to Summit. The two Alexes are the guitarists whom you see alongside Lori and Cheryl; Adrienne sings in the choir. Thanks too, to Josh Gautsche for playing drums, and to all the choir regulars who put many hours of their time into rehearsing music for each Sunday morning. It's great to work with you all.

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