

PEACEMEAL

| A Volunteer Effort of the Portland Peace Choir |

MISSION STATEMENT

The Portland Peace Choir strives to exemplify the principles of peace, justice, equality, stewardship of the Earth, cooperation and unity.

We sing music from diverse cultures and traditions to inspire peace in ourselves, our families, our communities and the world.

In This Issue

- PPC Fall Concert in the Works
- Saturday Market Gig Recap
- Reykjavik Peace Festival ... Update
- Professor Jones Returns!
- Exercises to Improve Your Voice
- The Story Behind the Song—"Because"

Kids Learn About Peace Through Music

1 World Children's Chorus is an international non-profit program founded to raise money to support an orphanage in Kenya. More than 3000 students from the US, Kenya and Jamaica have participated in the program since its inception in 2009.

The program's mission is to demonstrate and promote peace through the performing arts, with an emphasis on "the transformative experience of choral singing and drumming." In the US the program has choirs in Los Angeles, New York and Portland, and has produced two CDs to date, with the profits from sales going to benefit the orphanage in Kenya.

Locally, the program is based in Lake Oswego and West Linn, and the founders say they have accomplished more in one year in Portland than they have in three years in Los Angeles.

We will have more about this interesting and exciting program next month.

What's Old Is New ... PPC To Hold a Fall Concert

To those who have been with the choir for more than a few years, having a Fall concert is not a new idea; for the rest of us it's something we haven't done before. In the early years of the choir, there were two annual concerts, one in the Fall and another in the Spring. We moved away from that practice a while back, deciding to focus on one longer yearly concert (in addition to the annual Joint Choirs Concert in February) and several community gigs throughout the year. This year, we're going to try going back to having a Fall concert as well as a Spring one, with each concert being a little shorter than the ones we've done the past several years. This decision came about, in part, in response to concerns expressed by many choir members about our concerts being too long, with too much new music to memorize.

The Fall concert this year will focus on songs many of us have sung in the past and know well, including *Great Trees*, *Earth Song*, *At the Unnational Monument*, *Pride and Music Lead the Way*, with the only new song being *Because*. In another departure from our traditional policy, again in response to members' requests, singers will be able to use sheet music while we perform most of these songs, with only two songs

cont'd on p. 2





Who Said That?

I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity – to see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that.

~ Paul McCartney

A choir is made up of many voices, including yours and mine. If one by one all go silent then all that will be left are the soloists ... It makes for poor harmony and diminishes the song.

~ Vera Nazarian

Then the singing enveloped me. It was furry and resonant, coming from everyone's very heart. There was no sense of performance or judgment, only that the music was breath and food.

~ Anne Lamott

Sing, then. Sing, with shoulders back, and head up so that song might go to the roof and beyond to the sky. Mass on mass of tone, with a hard edge, and rich with quality, every single note a carpet of colour woven from basso profundo, and basso, and baritone, and alto, and tenor, and soprano, and also mezzo, and contralto, singing and singing, until life and all things living are become a song.

~ Richard Llewellyn

The only thing better than singing is more singing.

~ Ella Fitzgerald

The woods would be very silent if no birds sang except those who sang best.

~Henry van Dyke

continued from p. 1

being sung "off-book" ... *Pride and Music Lead the Way*, two of the choir's favorites.

The concert will also feature local storytellers Anne Rutherford and Norm Brecke, who will be regaling the audience (and the choir) with some of their stories in between our songs. This is an exciting new opportunity to expand our community connections as we partner with local community artists.

At intermission there will be a sweet and savory bake sale in the church's basement. There will be a sign-up sheet at the next couple of rehearsals; members are encouraged to sign up to bring treats (whether home-made or otherwise) to help the choir raise money to support our operations and especially our scholarship program.

All in all, our Fall Concert promises to be a new adventure for all of us, and we hope you'll join us and bring your friends, family and neighbors along ... the more, the merrier!

Sing for PEACE ... The Song Is LOVE ... Follow-Up

Thanks to everyone who participated in the recording of John Lennon's song "Love" at our rehearsal on October 4. The recording has been sent to the Reykjavik Peace Festival for inclusion on their web page for this year's celebration.

Thanks also to all those who came out to Director Park early on a chilly Monday morning to sing the song at the same time as all the choirs in the world who participated in this year's Peace Festival. We had a great turn-out and a lot of fun singing.

On Monday, October 9th a group of 15 people from PPC and some of their friends gathered at Director Park in downtown Portland to sing together for world peace. The occasion was the Reykjavik Peace Festival, who sing for peace on John Lennon's birthday. We practiced a couple times, then sang and recorded "Love", accompanied on guitar by Jeff Jones and Kristin Gordon George.

Three years ago a group of people in Iceland held the first Reykjavik Peace Festival. At that event Yoko Ono donated the John Lennon song "Love" to all the choirs of the world. That group has requested that all interested choirs join together each year to sing "Love" on Lennon's birthday, with the hope that choirs around the world will join them in their hope for peace. This year they set a time of 5:00 pm GMT, which is 10:00 am Pacific Time.

cont'd. on p. 3

continued from p. 2

Not many people in the Portland area can get time off work on a Monday morning. So, a group of Portland Peace Choir members sang and recorded the song on Wednesday, October 4th, at our regular practice. Also, later in the day on Oct 9th, the Portland Scandinavian Chorus sang and recorded the song too, at their regular practice. These recordings have been sent to the folks in Iceland, along with our recording from Director Park.

This year, on very short notice, there were about 85 people in Portland who participated in this year's "Sing for Peace" event. I was very pleased with this turn-out and thank all who chose to participate. I hope to make this an annual event. I am proposing that next year PPC add "Love" as a standard and learn it in four and eight parts. I also hope to increase the overall participation in the event by a factor of ten. Anyone who is interested in helping turn this vision into a reality please let me know.

~Darrell W.



Singers who braved a cold Monday morning to sing "Love" for peace: (from left) Darrell W., Michael B., Chris P., Dianna S., Barbara B., Penny B., Jeff J., Linda L., Martha R., Carole M., Kristin G., Leon M. and Valorie V. Not shown in the photo: Susan W. (our intrepid camera person) and Carol A.

Singing in the Rain! PPC at Saturday Market

The date: Saturday, October 21. The time: 1:30pm. The place: Portland Saturday Market. The event: PPC Singin' in the Rain ... A small but appreciative audience of shoppers (not all of them family and friends of PPC members) sat under cover in the food service area of Saturday Market as more than 30 PPC members (too many to actually fit comfortably on the stage) sang some of our favorites and Standards, as well as a couple of impromptu "sunshine" songs. Despite our typical Oregonian weather, we had a lot of fun singing and trying to stay dry. Here are some photos from the gig, courtesy of Sandy L.



Left: Getting everyone on the stage was a tight fit! Look at Kristin getting soaked while directing us ... what a trouper!



Above: Kristin directing from a bit of cover she found. (But mostly she was out in the rain like the rest of us.)

Right: Raindrops keep fallin' on our heads—if you look closely, you can actually see the rain!



Above: Look at these brave (slightly soggy) singers! True Oregonians all! Many thanks to Sandy, who had to stand out in the rain to get these photos.



Left: Music Lead the Way (out of the rain, maybe?!). Again, look closely and you'll see the rain!

PPC Happenings

Fall Session: Join us **Wednesday evenings, 7-9pm** in the lobby of the Mt. Hood Wing at the Courtyard at Mt. Tabor for our regular weekly rehearsals.

***Location Change for 11/15 rehearsal & sectional:**
Bistro Room at the Courtyard at Mt. Tabor. Use Main Entrance

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

Sectionals with Kristin

Sectionals are held at 6:30pm every week except for the first week of the month when we do Happy Half Hours.

11/8: **Soloists** – Anyone interested in trying out for a solo, or just interested in seeing what the solos will be in this season's repertoire, please come to this session.

11/15: Sectional time may be used to support what's most needed to prepare for the concert.

Offsite Sectionals: come help your section to polish your part in preparation for the concert!

Altos: Date and time to be announced.

Sopranos: Sunday, November 12, 1—3pm, at Carrie's house: 3916 NE 71st.

Tenors/Basses: Sun., November 12 (1—2 basses, 2—3 tenors & basses, 3—4 tenors) in the Activity/Community Room at the Courtyard at Mt. Tabor.

Fall Concert: Saturday, 11/18, 7-8pm. Our Fall concert will be held at the Waverly Heights UCC church, 3300 SE Woodward. Call time TBA. We will hold a bake sale at the intermission. Invite your family and friends! (See the lead article above for a partial list of the songs we'll be performing.)

Prof. Jones' Music Terms TM



More about reading Music

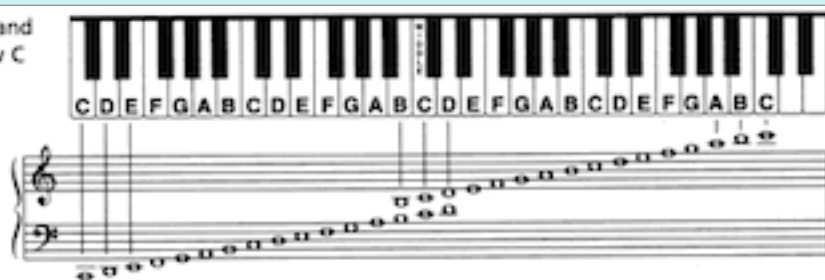
In previous issues we talked about the notes in the treble clef, the notes in the bass clef, the relationship between the two clefs, and the grand staff with the treble clef above the bass clef plus a few notes in between. Now let's talk about how these written notes relate to actual instruments and voices.

Notes on the piano: A good place to start is with the piano, because it is laid out in a way that is visually understandable. The keys on the piano play notes that go up in pitch from left to right.

Without using any ledger lines above or below, the grand staff represents about 21 white keys and 16 black keys, covering about 3 octaves near the middle of the piano. (It's actually a little to the left of center.) If we add a few ledger lines above and below, we can extend it to cover 4 octaves, as shown here. (An octave is the interval from one note to the next note of the same name above or below it in pitch. For example, C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C goes from one C to another C an octave higher.)

Coincidentally, this is also the range of notes found in most choral music.

All the notes on the grand staff from bass clef Low C to treble clef High C:



That's all we have room for in this issue. Next time we'll talk more about this and other topics.

Opportunities to Sing or Listen

- November 5, 9:00–11:30am & 1:00–4:30pm: Homemade Jams: The Workshop.** Resonate Choral Arts is a non-profit women's choir founded and led by our director, Kristin. In cooperation with Artichoke Community Music, a non-profit music organization, and the Regional Arts and Culture Council, they are offering a workshop on songwriting for local artists. The morning session will feature performances by local singer/songwriters for inspiration, and the afternoon session will be a songwriting lab. The workshop is aimed at songwriters (ages 13+) and anyone with an interest in the creative process. For more information and tickets, visit ResonatePDX.org.
- November 6, 8–11pm: Choir!Choir!Choir!** at the Alberta Rose Theater, 3000 NE Alberta St., Portland. This concert's theme will be "Free Fallin': the Songs of Tom Petty", in honor of his recent death. Tickets are \$20 (\$21 at the door). For tickets and more information, go to albertarosetheater.com.
- November 10, 7–9pm** 2nd Friday 60's and 70's Harmony Singers at Friendly House, NW 26th & Thurman St. (**FREE**) This is a Meet-up Group especially for people who like to sing harmony! You don't have to join – just show up! Several PPC members have been attending these sessions, but we'd STILL like to see more altos and sopranos! Songbooks are provided or join the Meet-Up group and download the e-version (which includes links to youtube videos of all songs!) <https://www.meetup.com/Song-Circle-Folk-Music-singalongs-from-the-60s-70s/>
- November 17, 7–9pm** 3rd Friday Song Circle at Friendly House (**FREE**) This is a larger group with a variety of musicians (all acoustic). Singing this month is from the "Rise Up Singing" songbook! Bring your own copy if you have one – we do have some loaner copies available to share. Use the info link from 2nd Friday's Meet-Up page (above) for address, map.
- November 18, 7:00pm: PPC Fall Concert.** Held at Waverly UCC, 3300 SE Woodward, Portland. Admission is free with suggested donation. Sweet and savory bake sale at the intermission. Tell your friends and neighbors!
- November 18, 7:30pm** Consonare Chorale's Fall concert, Resounding Truths: What Lies Within, at Imago Dei Community, 1404 SE Ankeny, Portland. Go to <http://portlandsings.com/> for tickets and more information. (Yes, this is at the same time as our Fall Concert).
- November 19, 1:30–3:30pm** Portland Sings! with Mark Bosnian in the coffeehouse at TaborSpace. Cost: \$5-10 sliding scale. Go to <http://portlandsings.com/> for location address and digital songbook download. Bring your laptop or e-devices, or you can print a copy or look on with a friend. Check out the songbook on the website for the variety of songs we sing.

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:

barbaraPPC@comcast.net

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

Suggestions:

How about letting PPC members put paid ads for their businesses in the newsletter? I know several choir members who run businesses and it would help them out and raise a little money for the choir.

Please keep chatting down during rehearsals so everyone can hear what Kristin is saying.

Christmas Revels Tickets On Sale!

Celebrate the Winter Solstice with a mythic journey into the music, dance and traditions of Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland.

Enjoy favorite Revels traditions: Morris dancing, the children's chorus, audience sing-alongs, a hilarious Mummings play and new life-size puppets.

[Click here](#) to buy tickets online now, or call the Box Office at (503-274-4654, ext. 0)

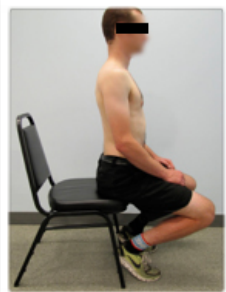


Improve Your Singing Voice With These Exercises

by Michael Burke

I am certainly not an expert when it comes to singing, but I've found that applying the same core stabilization strategies I teach my chiropractic patients has helped me be a better singer. Here are some tips I hope you find helpful.

Sit up straight. If you are seated when singing, there are a few things you can do to increase your lung capacity and the power of your breath, not to mention decreasing strain on your back and neck. Scoot forward until you are sitting at the front of the chair on your ischial tuberosities (your butt bones). Bring your feet back until your heels are almost directly under your bottom. This will cause your pelvis to roll forward and should put an arch in your low back. Relax and feel your body, including your neck, balancing over your pelvis. (It may take several seconds or more to arrive at this relaxed and balanced state.) You can then bring one foot forward until it is flat on the floor with the knee bent to about 90°. It may take some practice before you feel entirely comfortable and stable in this position. If you feel you must sit back against the chair's backrest, position your butt as far back into the chair as you can by arching your back and allowing the backrest to push into your mid to low back. This works especially well when there is a gap between the seat and the backrest, like a folding chair. It also helps to bring one or both legs back along the sides of the chair.



Stand up straight. This does not mean you should stand in a rigid position. Rather, it is helpful to overemphasize good standing posture and then relax. First, squeeze your shoulder blades together and down at the same time, as if you are trying to put them in your back pockets. Holding hands behind your back and pulling down with your arms to pull your shoulders down is helpful. (*If you have a shoulder problem, then instead of holding your hands behind your back you should bring your arms up from your sides to shoulder level, turn your palms up, and spread your fingers.*) Second, hold that position while tucking your chin. To do so, pull your chin in toward your Adam's apple (the cartilage in the front of your neck that protects your vocal cords) and hold the head in a slightly down-nodding position. Another way to do the same thing is to point the crown of your head toward the sky. Third, inhale deeply, starting by expanding your abdomen (not just your belly; expand in 360° all around your midsection). Then let your lower rib cage expand, and finally allow the increasing volume of air to expand your upper chest. Remember to continue squeezing and pulling down the shoulder blades and tucking your chin while you inhale. Don't hold your breath! When you can't stand it anymore – or maybe just short of that point – relax and let the air rush out. You should find yourself standing up straighter than when you started, and with much less effort. Repeat this exercise whenever you notice tightness in your neck, shoulders, and back, or if you find yourself slumping.



Plop. That's right, I said plop. Okay, I confess. This is not a core stabilization exercise. I learned it from a voice teacher who gave a workshop for the Portland Peace Choir several years ago, but it goes well with the next tip on abdominal bracing. In order to plop correctly you must first exhale completely. Use your abdominal muscles to push the air out through your mouth. Create some resistance to the escaping air by putting your teeth together. If you sound like a leaky tire you're doing it right. Once you've fully exhaled you will probably notice a desire to inhale. If you don't feel this immediately wait a few seconds before breathing in. I guarantee you will want to inhale. But wait! Here comes the plop. You must inhale by relaxing your abs and opening your mouth and throat.

Don't try to breathe in. Rather, allow your belly to expand. This will cause your diaphragm to drop, creating a sudden vacuum in your lungs. The air will rush in! This helps you to sing from your diaphragm.

cont'd on p. 7

continued from p. 6

Abdominal brace-and-breathe. Hold your fingertips under your ribs so that you can feel the bottom of your rib cage. Inhale normally and note the feeling of your chest rising away from your fingers. Then exhale and feel the ribs descend. Do this again, but as you exhale use your abs to bring the rib cage down. It helps to think of pushing your rib cage down against your fingers. On the next inhalation keep your rib cage in the descended position as you breathe in. No, it's not impossible, but you must continue bracing the abs while, at the same time, allowing the abdomen to expand in all directions as you did in the stand-up-straight exercise. *Plopping* also helps. When first learning this it is usually easier if you lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor or bed. Practice in sitting and standing positions too.



I have found that using the brace-and-breathe technique together with the *plop*, while maintaining the proper sitting or standing posture, has helped me to be a better singer. (Opinions of my singing may vary.) These techniques also have helped reduce strain on my neck and back while singing. I hope you will find them helpful too. If you would like some personal assistance with these techniques I'm happy to help before or after rehearsals.

~mb

The Story Behind the Song: "Because"

"Because" is a song written by John Lennon (credited to Lennon-McCartney) and recorded by the Beatles in 1969. It features a prominent three-part vocal harmony by Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison, recorded three times to make nine voices in all, to create the song's characteristic rich harmonies. It first appeared on the album *Abbey Road* (1969), and it was the last song recorded for that album.

The song begins with a distinctive electric harpsichord intro played by producer George Martin. The harpsichord is joined by Lennon's guitar (mimicking the harpsichord line), then vocals and bass guitar enter. "Because" was one of few Beatles recordings to feature a Moog synthesizer, which was played by George Harrison. It appears in what musicians refer to as the "mini-bridge", and then again at the end of the song. Producer George Martin talked about the complexity of making the recording, *"Between us, we also created a backing track with John playing a riff on guitar, me duplicating every note on an electronic harpsichord, and Paul playing bass. Each note between the guitar and harpsichord had to be exactly together."* Paul McCartney and George Harrison both said it was their favorite track on the album. *"They knew they were doing something special,"* said engineer Geoff Emerick, commenting on the complexity of the recording process, *"and they were determined to get it right."*



According to Lennon, the song's close musical resemblance to the first movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* was no coincidence: *"Yoko was playing Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' on the piano ... I said, 'Can you play those chords backwards?' and wrote 'Because' around them. The lyrics speak for themselves. They're clear. No imagery, no obscure references."*

It's also highly likely, according to music historians, that Lennon's harmonies were heavily influenced by Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys' harmonies on their 1966 album *Pet Sounds*. After that album was released, Wilson says, John Lennon rang him and told him it was the greatest album ever made. The Beach Boys' trademark sound involved multi-layered harmonies like those we hear in "Because".

~bb

Resonate Choral Arts ... Empowering Women Through Song

Resonate Choral Arts is a non-profit women's choir founded and led by our director, Kristin Gordon George. They are, as their website tells us, *"a group of dynamic women who embrace lifelong learning, collaboration and connection through music."* One of their goals is to connect high school-aged young women with adult women in the community and encourage them to create and perform meaningful art. Members try to push their limits and create *"beauty, ease, depth and connection; to grow in skill set, confidence and capacity for fun."*

Resonate choral Arts has some great events coming up that may be of interest to Peace Choir members.

Homemade Jams: The Workshop

Sunday November 5, 9:00-11:30 and 1:00-4:30, at Artichoke Community Music, 2007 SE Powell Blvd., Portland, OR 97202. This workshop will include presentations in the morning by Lee Aulsen of Bevelers, Luz Elena Mendoza of Y La Bamba, and Anne Weiss, as well as an opportunity to present a song in the afternoon. For more information & tickets at ResonatePDX.org or check them out on Facebook.

Homemade Jams: Fighting Pretty Concert Preview and Work Party

Monday, November 20, 7 p.m. Work Party; 7:45 Concert, Metropolitan Community Church, 2400 NE Broadway, Portland, OR 97222. [Fighting Pretty](http://FightingPretty.org) is an organization that supports women who are battling cancer by sending them "Pretty Packages" ... care packages intended to empower these women and remind them of their strength and beauty while they are fighting for their lives. Resonate will provide live music for a work party, hosted by Fighting Pretty. Choir members and additional volunteers will help put together "pretty packages" that that will go to women battling cancer. Come help empower women in our community, and check out a free preview of Resonate's collaboration with local female songwriters.

Homemade Jams: The Concerts

Resonate Choral Arts presents choral arrangements and collaborations with all-local female singer-songwriters! These songs include winners of Resonate's Songwriting Contest, and artists presenting at the November Songwriting Workshop. Collaborators include songwriters Lee Aulsen, Jessa Campbell, Jana Crenshaw, Avery Hill, Elena Luz Mendoza, Nikole Potulsky, Tehya Reid, Anne Weiss and Ali Weley; and arrangers Kristin Gordon George, Ali Ippolito and Rachel Sakry.

The concert will be held on two days, at 7:30pm on Saturday, December 2 at Artichoke Community Music, 2007 SE Powell; and at 2:30pm on Saturday, December 9 at Curious Comedy Theater, 5225 NE MLK Blvd. Doors open at 2 for the Saturday show for a Raffle & Resonate's End of Season Party.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$7 for students and seniors.



PEACEMEAL is a volunteer publication of the Portland Peace Choir

Barbara Burnett: Editor, Writer, Designer

Thanks to Jeff J. (aka Prof. Jones) for his hard work to educate us about music