

Music team action plan

Music Action Team:

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Our assignment from the Congregational Conversations team was:

- ? - how can we encourage diversity in music at Beacon,
- ? - what is the best way to maximize participation,
- ? - please consider the existing choir PLUS other options for music at Beacon,
- ? - how do we re-envision music at our Sunday services

We reviewed all the ideas gathered in the Congregational Conversations, interviewed people who expressed interest in the Music Action team including:

Minister: Rev Meg

Choir Director: Faith Veikle

Musician: Ming-Xuan Chung

Members of the congregation: Gord Kristjanson, Susan White, Phil Campbell, Elizabeth Campbell, Margaret Smith, Feb 25 coffee discussion group

Introduction

The predominant request from the Congregational Conversations was for Beacon to experiment with different music. However preferences for what kind of different music varied widely. The team's conclusion is that Beacon's music should reflect a wide variety of genres and push our traditional boundaries in order to reflect the diversity to which we aspire.

The feedback from the congregation is outlined in the two topics below. The proposed actions can be pursued simultaneously and are not stand alone.

Topic One: Music at our services

A) Adding new songs for the congregation to sing

Action A1: Create an online registry of songs (google doc or equivalent)

- a) to be used as a reference for Worship Service Committee
- b) anyone in the congregation can add song suggestions to this list
- c) request via Beacon this Week and/or during a service that people add suggestions to the song list
- d) periodically host a coffee discussion table after the service to brainstorm songs to add to the list
- e) all suggested songs would need to be vetted by a member of music committee, or volunteer with musical knowledge, before being tried at a Sunday Service
 - parameters for songs in the registry
 - good song melody that people like to sing
 - comfortable range for congregational singing
 - not too complex in structure or phrasing, good rhythm, speed, cadence
 - can sing joyfully or with feeling
 - words are meaningful, align with Beacon's values, reflect contemporary sensibilities
- f) as a trial, we started a list to go in the song registry with a short list of popular songs suggested by Gord and a selected list John started from the first half of the teal hymnal (attached)

g) other sources to consider:

- karaoke videos to use for the whole congregation to sing (Ming-Xuan said he could lead these and Tyler confirmed he can provide tech support)
- music committee already has a list of hymns in the grey and teal books that are familiar to the congregations ([List of Hymns Beacon - Aug 1, 2019](#)); these can be vetted using the parameters noted above (see e)
- the UU Musician's Network database for both free songs and new UU songs we can pay for <https://www.auumm.org/page/database>
- the Beacon choir inventory (attached) has a few popular/familiar songs and some books
- h) if there are songs suggested for the congregation to sing, that are considered too difficult, they could be considered as material to be performed by Ming-Xuan, or other Beacon musicians, or presented as YouTube recordings
- i) cost to Beacon could be admin. assistant time to post the list, possible purchase of music Ming-Xuan might need to accompany the congregation, possible modest contribution to SOCAN (<https://www.socan.com/about/>) for a license to use copyright-protected musical material (Carol would research this if requested by the board.)

Action A2: Continue to have song leaders: Ming-Xuan, minister, other volunteer song leaders

B) Promote music performances at the services from within our congregation

Action B1: Keep an online registry of Beaconites who are interested in singing and/or playing musical instruments registry (google doc or equivalent)

- a) use the list the choir committee already has, last updated May 2023 (called Musical Skills Inventory, attached)
- b) anyone in the congregation can use this list to find people to play and sing with
- c) Worship Service leaders use the list to directly ask performers (already doing e.g., Bill & Kate)
- d) cost to Beacon could be admin. assistant time to post the list

C) Bring outside music to Beacon

Action C1: Start an online registry of ideas of outside music sources to bring diverse music selections to Beacon

- a) anyone in the congregation can add suggestions
- b) suggester should be prepared to follow up: contact, find out if an honorarium is needed, coordinate with Worship Service Committee re a date
- c) examples: a choir they sing in, people they know enough to ask, high school choirs wanting performance practice, performers they have heard, for example Keyside Singers suggested by Glenn Wootton
- d) cost to Beacon could be some honorariums, and any admin. assistant time required to post the list

Action C2: At least once a year have dedicated singing service, for example invite Patti Powell as service speaker

Topic Two: Opportunities to sing together once choir funding ends:

Action: Use Beacon this Week, Newsletter, Facebook page, service announcements to encourage:

- home-hosted sing alongs (similar to Peggy Lunderville's summer singing service)
- volunteer led choir or smaller singing groups (voluntarily initiated as was done post-covid, and was done at the start of Beacon)
- small group vocal or instrumental ensembles to get together for fun with the possibility of performing at a Beacon service. Those interested can find each other on the Musical Skills Inventory described in Action B1. Possibility of practicing with Ming-Xuan before the service starts on Sundays.
- cost to Beacon could be some extra rehearsal time for Ming-Xuan to work with small groups.

Possibility:

- suggestion from Congregational Conversations that Beacon choir become community choir that performs at retirement homes, has non-Beacon members, and is funded by participants. CUC Sharing the Faith grant, and Beacon's growth fund. This would require interested volunteers to pursue this. If they wish to apply for the Sharing the Faith grant this year, the deadline this year is March 31 (Application Form: [Sharing Our Faith Application \(Word\)](#))

Attached:

Trial congregational song registry
Beacon Choir Songs inventory
Beacon Musical Skills inventory