

# VOICES RISING by the SEA

## ChoralFest at the Ferry Beach Conference Center, Saco, ME



January 2017

### Love is our Theme for 2017

This past summer, we undertook a grand experiment to transform ChoralFest from a week-long series of workshops into a series of rehearsals culminating in a performance. Part of the experiment was having a unified theme for the week, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon: Songs of Darkness and Light". We commandeered the Friday morning chapel service, and our music became message.

This year, the theme for Ferry Beach is "Love". In keeping with that, the theme for ChoralFest 2017 will be "The Colors of Love: Songs from the Heart". Through song and reflection, we will explore the various forms of love, such as Eros, Storge, Agape, Pragma, and Philia.

I am still narrowing my repertoire choices, but I am looking at songs such as "Love is the Water That Wears Down the Rock", "Erev Shel Shoshanim", a setting of Shelley's poem "I Arise From Dreams of Thee", perhaps a movement or two from Pinkham's "Wedding Cantata", a setting of Langston Hughes' poem "I Dream a World", perhaps a Gospel-style selection, something from Broadway, "River in Judea", and "The Gift of Love". Now, I can't fit ALL of that in! So don't get too attached to any of those possibilities!

As you can imagine, there will be a wide variety of styles to keep us engaged throughout the week. Whatever the final selection, it will be fun, meaningful, and memorable.

*Drew Collins*

### ChoralFest is Ten Years Old

This summer's conference marks a milestone for ChoralFest. 2017 will be our 10th anniversary. ChoralFest began as the kernel of an idea in the summer of 2006. Ferry Beach Program Director Fayre Stephenson had been watching several of us singing during the Circle of Music conference and she remembered fondly sing-

ing in her high school glee club. At the same time, she was looking for an adult conference to share the campus with GAYLA, the gay men's group. She talked with me and others and we all agreed that stretching out that joy of singing into a whole week might attract enough singers to constitute a conference. That following summer 35 people signed up and ChoralFest was born.

During these 10 years Fayre's initial belief that days of singing by the ocean would prove attractive has remained true. Drop into our rehearsal room and you'll see that our mouths are wide open; we are concentrating as we connect notes, words and sound; our backs are straight. And when we're not singing, we're smiling or laughing. Our music director Drew Collins is working his magic. And with the ocean glittering just a few steps away, shafts of sunlight streaming through the trees, friendly staff and delicious food – Ferry Beach is also working its magic.

*Suzanne Adams*

### What Does a Musician of the Week Do?

So excited to be the Musician of the Week for ChoralFest and GAYLA this year! It is always my great joy to assume this role and attend ChoralFest, where I get to sing and share with old friends and new.

Here's what you'll find me doing throughout the week when I have my "Musician of the Week" hat on:

- Leading Pick-up choir for morning chapel services (Sunday to Thursday)
- Leading after dinner "camp" songs in the dining hall. See the schedule to see what nights we're singing!

- Assisting with TNT (Talent/No Talent Show) acts for Thursday night
- Coordinating with other musicians

Speaking of other musicians, let me know if you're interested in playing special music for one of the chapel services (gathering music/prelude/postlude) or accompanying after dinner singing on guitar or piano. I'd love to know before the conference so I can plan ahead. Let me know via email at [erolnick.music@maine.rr.com](mailto:erolnick.music@maine.rr.com).

*Ellie Rolnick*

### Meet Adam Robinson, Minister of the Week

Rev. Adam Robinson comes to GAYLA and ChoralFest for our conference from Texas where he was formerly Assistant Minister at First UU Church of Houston and now frequently preaches at Thoreau Woods UU Church in Huntsville. As a gay man, he is particularly excited to be spending the week with the men from GAYLA. He writes, "We all come from different circumstances with life journeys that are as varied and unique as our own finger prints. For some the experience of being gay in this world is easier than others. Even in 2017 some of us still find it uncomfortable or even dangerous to be out, loud and proud."



He hopes that as we come together and share our experiences during the week, that we will learn from one another how to love and be loved even better.



**ChoralFest 2017**  
**July 15 to 21**

Drew Collins, Music/Artistic Director  
Suzanne Adams, Coordinator  
978-241-9450, [sue@gndhome.com](mailto:sue@gndhome.com)