

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

MUSIC MATTERS

Arnprior Community Choir Newsletter



Issue 3 - 201103

A Message from Lisa

November...already?!

As a singer, conductor and teacher, November is a hectic time of preparation. Choosing Christmas songs for the studio recital; booking performance spaces for rehearsals and performances; submitting *Sing Noel* newspaper articles; organizing special guest musicians to join us at ACC rehearsals; polishing the tricky bits in each holiday song. On top of this, solo performances to practice and prepare. People often say to me throughout the December holiday season that I must be crazy busy and run off my feet. I always answer, "November! November is the craziest month with sleepless nights and very long days. I dream about unrehearsed sections and wrong notes; cancelled lessons due to colds; potential snow storms on a Tuesday night."

December is a breeze. The hard work is done, and I just get to enjoy. November 2020 will feel very different. I may have fewer gray hairs and bags under my eyes, but I truly love the challenge of putting all the pieces together. I love to see my students choose the perfect Christmas song to learn and sing for their family. I love the look of pure amazement (and shock!) when a choir section finally nails the entrance they've struggled with. All of us at ACC are missing one another and our mutual love for *Sing Noel*. I encourage you to sit in a quiet place and reflect on concerts past! Maybe drag out your red scarf or your favourite holiday tie (with NO blinking lights thank you!) and relive the hard work that goes on in November in order to present a one of a kind, fantastic, much anticipated community Christmas event. Now, bring on the goodies!!



Let Music Surround Us

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This segment of **MUSIC MATTERS** reveals what we have in store for you this month.

Week One is always our newsletter.

After that we have lots of surprises up our sleeves.

The sky's the limit! Don't miss a minute.



MUSIC MATTERS

ACC's Monthly Newsletter



Vocal Types. What am I?



In this session, we'll discover and learn about the various vocal types and classifications. Did you know there are six common types and eight types in total? Can you guess the rarest voice type? We will also learn how vocal tone, range, vocal weight and even anatomy determine not only the choral section you should be singing in, but also the songs that will suit you best. I'll even show you how to figure out your range! Are you truly an alto? Should you switch from bass to tenor? Zoom with us to find out!

<p>VOICE TYPE: BASS</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: E2-E4</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Johnny Cash, Barry White, and Bing Crosby</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: BARITONE</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: A2-A4</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: John Legend, Hozier, Michael Buble, David Bowie</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: TENOR</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: C3-C5</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Freddie Mercury, Sam Smith, Jason Mraz, Stevie Wonder</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: COUNTER TENOR</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: E3-E5</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Bruno Mars</p>
<p>VOICE TYPE: CONTRALTO</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: E3-E5</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Nina Simone, Annie Lennox, and Lalah Hathaway</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: ALTO</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: F3-F5</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Amy Winehouse, Lana Del Rey, and Tracy Chapman</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: MEZZO SOPRANO</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: A3-A5</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Bette Midler</p>	<p>VOICE TYPE: SOPRANO</p> <p>COMFORTABLE RANGE: C4-C6</p> <p>FAMOUS SINGERS: Beyonce, Ariana Grande, Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston</p>

Coming this Month ...

MUSIC MATTERS



Ian Guenette

My Favourite Choral Works

For this session, I will present some of my favourite choral works from past and present. I'll briefly talk about the composers, styles, and historical contexts of each piece. Discovering these components of some of the greatest choral works in history can help you better understand the characters and feelings the composer is trying to portray. After we explore some of these components, I'll play my favourite recording of the piece. I'm looking forward to discovering these pieces in more depth with you!

November Concert

Organ Extravaganza!

featuring:

Ian Guenette, organ

Lisa Webber, mezzo-soprano



Join us as we discover the majesty of the pipe organ. For this mini concert, Ian will talk about the history of the organ and its place in the world today. He will also explain the different sounds of the organ, demonstrating each one with a short piece that utilizes that specific sound.

Lisa will perform three Christmas songs with organ accompaniment. The beauty of voice and organ together will prepare us for December.

Come discover why the pipe organ is like having an orchestra at your fingertips!





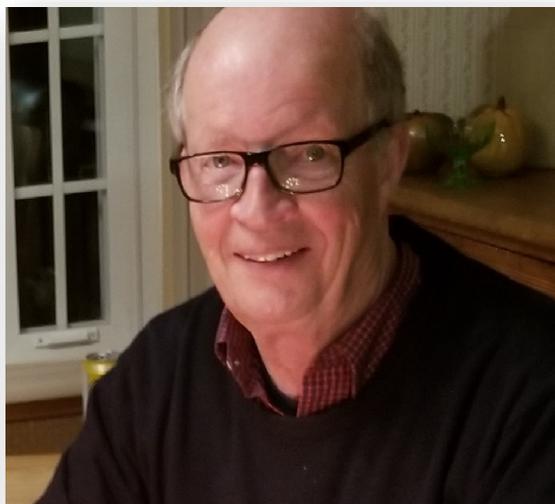
Ian Guenette, Accompanist

really amazing feeling. From that moment on I knew I would always want to be involved with choirs, whether it be church, community, or theatre. I have been fortunate enough to be involved with all 3!

Outside of music, some of my hobbies include photography, cooking, being out in nature & being on the lake, among other things! I am honoured to be your accompanist and enjoy every minute of it!

I began taking piano lessons with Maureen Young in Carleton Place when I was 7. Ironically, I hated it at first. My parents almost pulled me out of lessons as I wasn't progressing, and wasn't interested in continuing. Then, after about a year, something clicked, and I started to really love lessons. The rest is history. From that moment on I don't remember ever not wanting to do music as a career. I was fortunate to have great teachers and mentors throughout high school. I discovered the organ when I was 13 and was hooked immediately. The immense power of the instrument really drew me in.

My first experience with singing in choirs was when I joined the University Chorus at McGill University. I immediately loved the connection that singing in a choir gives you - harmonizing with others is a



Myles Henderson, Publicity

The ACC has been a wonderful change in my life. I welcome the discipline of rehearsal and the precision of our performances. I've had the pleasure of meeting and conversing with many interesting, friendly and compassionate choristers. I'm truly fortunate to be singing between two talented musicians, Martin and Chris. I am slowly learning how to read music but I'm sure I will never be able to actually hear what I am reading. "Psst Chris or Martin, give me the note!"

Finally, and I am always surprised when it happens, our music makes me smile or gives me goose bumps. Sometimes it comes real close to bringing tears ... and occasionally a song will bring me back to a time when life was easier, my expectations unlimited and tomorrow was always a sunny place just down the road.

My father was in the RCAF and we moved every two years. I went to 11 different schools in four countries. Musically, I sang in two church choirs and played trombone for two years in a high school band.

I worked in the Solicitor General's Department for 30 years, my career split evenly between investigations and training. Once retired, Jacqui and I formed a Driver Evaluation Company. We spent the next 15 years conducting Winter Driving, Collision Avoidance and Driver Evaluation Courses from Halifax to Vancouver.

We lived in Kinburn for 26 years before moving to Arnprior in 2014. In 2017, a friend suggested we take in a Christmas Concert in Arnprior. The choir proceeded onto the stage, Lisa was introduced, Sing Noel began and ... I enjoyed every moment! I remember thinking that for the next performance, never mind attending I would love to be singing!

"Getting to Know You ..."

I was born at home in the coastal mountains of Chile into a family of 14. As I grew up, I admired my mother, who would play her guitar and sing about life and joy. I loved music and sang in choirs throughout high school and university. My first job was teaching high school math, which eventually led to an administrative position at a university in Temuco. There, I oversaw post-secondary preparatory studies and a large cultural outreach program. This is where I met my husband, a Canadian musician that we hired for the program. "I decided to hire him permanently," which resulted in my immigrating to Canada and the arduous task of learning English in Sudbury's Link program.

Then, a few years later, in 2012, we decided to retire to Arnprior. I joined the ACC in 2013, singing in the alto section and later becoming section leader. It was wonderful for me to get back to singing and there have been many highlights, including an Ottawa performance of Mahler's 2nd symphony and singing in the Ottawa Music Festival with several members of our choir.

We enjoy great camaraderie in the alto section. The friendship and laughter compliment the joy of singing. I always look forward to our rehearsals and to the excitement of presenting our music in concerts. The wonderful community spirit in our choir is displayed at our post-concert receptions, where everyone contributes wonderful food and treats. It has been my pleasure to help organize and coordinate these receptions for the past 2 years.

I have sung in school and church choirs my whole life. In 2012, after singing for 19 years with Woodroffe United Church, my husband Mike and I moved to Arnprior. I missed choral singing so much and was delighted to join ACC with other friends in January 2016. Lisa made us feel so welcome as did the other choir members. I knew I had found my "home."

Tuesday nights are my special time as I look forward each week to rehearsal. I have learned so much from Lisa's leadership and at our annual choral music workshops. I feel accomplished when we learn that difficult descant. But even more important is the camaraderie with my fellow choristers. Oh, we do laugh and have fun. I come home exhilarated!

I can't believe I have already had the pleasure of being in 8 concerts with ACC! So much hard work and organization go into those concerts. The feeling of elation when we finish that last song is what keeps me coming back.

MUSIC MATTERS



**Iris Candelaria,
Dessert Musicale Reception**



**Maggie Kerkhoff,
Soprano Section Lead**

Marg Stubington, Choral conductor, Pianist and Educator.



Hello ACC!

My name is Marg Stubington. I conduct the Canadian Centennial Choir (CCC) and the First United Church Choir. CCC is a 70-voice mixed adult auditioned choir and the First United choir has 30 members. I also lead CAMMAC Ottawa-Gatineau's Annual Concert of choir and orchestra which involves close to 100 amateur players and singers each year. Some of you sang in the very successful inaugural CAMMAC Ottawa Valley Concert last September organized by ACC's Michael Hoffman and Rosalind Spencer. You may also recognize me since I have spent time with ACC giving a workshop or two and I attended last season's fantastic Christmas concert (which was sold out) and waved and cheered a lot from the back row.

I have had the privilege of leading choirs for many years. I love this work and most of the time it does not even feel like work. Choral music has been a constant in my life, right alongside playing the piano. At this point, I am not sure which I love more. Just like many of you, I can be absolutely transfixed by the beauty, power, tenderness of a piece of music – sometimes instantly reminded of certain people and events from my life.

I'll start with a joyous performance of **Baba Yetu**, composed by American composer Christopher Tin. It is the theme song from the 2005 video game Civilization IV (!) and the lyrics are the Lord's Prayer in Swahili. Here it is sung by the Stellenbosch University Choir (South Africa) at a 2018 competition in Wales: <https://youtu.be/PCa8RxaOPW8>

Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal is an arrangement of an American folk tune from an 1835 collection of songs called "Southern Harmony" by Alice Parker (b.1925). She has spent her life researching and arranging spirituals, mountain songs and early-American folk songs.

<https://youtu.be/RiWHiuza1gE>

Craig Hella Johnson is the director of the wonderful choir, Conspirare, based in Austin Texas. He has written many gorgeous arrangements including Dolly Parton's **Clear Blue Morning**

<https://youtu.be/V2hE6lGfkDU>

CCC invited Franco-Ontarian choral composer Marie-Claire Saindon for a Q and A two weeks ago. She joined us on Zoom and shared some of her music with us. **Le train d'hiver** (The Winter Train) is a very clever piece for SSAA choir which won a composition competition at her high school, De LaSalle many years ago. This performance is from 2011 and the composer is singing in the choir:

<https://youtu.be/8E4MqHuGaRU>

There are so many great choral composers in Canada. I have commissioned works and I love programming Canadian choral music. **Tabula Rasa** is a gorgeous piece, sung in Spanish, by Don MacDonald. Tabula Rasa means "blank slate". A quiet moment when a mother sees the potential of her child.

<https://youtu.be/J77aNNhNZTA>

I'll close with some music from Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978, Norway) with a beautiful setting of Lake Isle of Innisfree by W.B. Yeats, scored for SATB choir, acoustic guitar, piano and string quartet.

<https://youtu.be/ao11wgXm2d4>

Leading choirs can be exhilarating, physically challenging and often very moving. Imagine standing right in front of a large group of children, teenagers, adults - any combination - singing their hearts out, and sending all that wonderful sound and emotional energy towards you! An incredible experience. (I do miss that terribly, as we live through COVID-times, but we will be back creating music together!)

Choirs are full of passionate musicians who say they hate to miss a rehearsal; for many, it is the highlight of their week. They show up in the worst snowstorm, when there is extreme stress in their lives, when they are grieving a loss, even when recovering from hip or knee surgery and really should have stayed home! The music lifts them up; the community they belong to supports them. I love this care and support that choirs offer their members.

*"If a choir is only about singing and performing there will be no choir for a while.
If choir is about teaching and learning, growing, connecting, community, cultural exploration and transmission, and innovating, we will find a way to have choir."*

—Kellie Walsh, Choral Canada

Thanks for the invitation, Lisa Webber.

See you all in 2021 at a choir rehearsal or a choir concert somewhere!

Marg



2020 - 21 is ACC's 30th Anniversary.

Until we can meet again in person, the Anniversary committee wishes to share their ideas for future celebrations.

Join in the exciting countdown!



Our Music Library is 30 Years Old Too

ACC has an impressive music library. Currently housed in Chris and Kathy Tonkin's basement, we have over 10 large filing cabinets and several banker's boxes filled to the brim with sheet music. From ABBA to Country, from Remembrance Day to Christmas, from Broadway to Classical we have a vast and diverse library. **It is so big it is currently insured for \$30,000!** That's amazing!



Our librarian Gail Timms, (fondly known as *The Music Nag*) collates, files, organizes, copies, distributes, and collects hundreds of pieces of music every term.

A formidable job that she does extremely well and with good humour.

Each season I combine old favourites from the library as well as newly discovered arrangements to create challenging and interesting programs. Two songs we have used for close to 30 years are "Peace/Peace, Silent Night" arranged by Fred Bock and "The Benediction" composed by Ralph Johnston. These two staples are perfect for *Sing Noel* and the annual Remembrance Day cenotaph service.

The contents of these file cabinets tell our story. A wonderful sense of history resides in these cabinets and each file is a treasured part of the Arnprior Community Choir.

Lisa Webber, Director

Mary Gwyn Brown, 30th Anniversary Committee

At that first meeting of a very mixed group of us for the 30th Anniversary Committee, I'm sure we were all wondering, "Why me? What am I supposed to offer, I haven't been part of the choir for 30 years!" However, it was just like choir practice with Lisa smiling, encouraging, and sharing some of her thoughts about what she was thinking for a 30th anniversary year. We all started thinking and the ideas kept popping out!

Last year, I mentioned an idea for a weekend choir retreat. Unfortunately that has to be postponed until next year so keep it in mind!

Now, I get a chance to tell you about another idea. 30 years is a long time and many of us realize that our music is not entirely new every year. We have an extensive music library to choose from and some pieces go back a long way, possibly even the 30 years! Our contribution to the Arnprior community history and our growth as a choir seem to have occurred in step.

I think we need to celebrate our growth and history in the community. What better way than to present this as an historical concert. Start the concert by performing one of the first pieces that the choir performed in public. "Peace, Peace/Silent Night" is a signature song that we sing to close many of our Christmas concerts. What if we perform that gradually, starting with original choir members and adding as more members joined over the years, each of us stepping in on the year we joined the choir! That could be blended with our history of growth matching the town of Arnprior! Not only would we learn about the choir, but also a lot about the Town of Arnprior.

Oh, we were so full of ideas, sometimes hard to contain them all. Stay tuned for more!



30 *Years of Singing*
Let Music Surround Us



Here are the answers to October's Quiz. How did you do?

1. Name the muscle that engages when we take a deep, low breath?
The diaphragm
2. What is Ian's favourite genre of music? Which composer would he choose to perform?
Baroque and Bach!
3. What is the best vocal exercise for smoothing out our upper and lower registers?
Slides! Sing intentional slides of a Perfect 5th (Do – So) or Octave (Do – Do) to create a seamless transition from your low to high register
4. In the time signature 6/8, how many eighth notes can be found in one bar of music? Bonus: how many "pulses" do we typically count in 6/8 time?
Six eighth notes. In one bar of 6/8 we usually feel two pulses
5. List all the words that are "diphthongs" in this song lyric. "She's like the swallow that flies so high" (Newfoundland Folksong)
like (ah-ee); swal-low (oh-oo); flies (ah-ee); high (ah-ee)
6. Name two differences between a community choir and a church choir.
Here are a few differences: Time given to rehearse a piece. For church choirs, you present a weekly anthem. Commitment. Community choir members join, register and plan for both rehearsals and concert season. Church choristers are depended upon for both a weekly rehearsal and a weekly church service. Song choice. Choosing appropriate level of difficulty is essential when presenting music each week, with unknown numbers in attendance
7. When you have a very long phrase or section in choral singing and the director says you cannot breathe for 20 bars (!) what can the singer do to create the desired effect?
Stagger breathe. Take a breath when your neighbour does not. Lisa also suggests taking the breath when you are not totally empty and actually staggering!
8. Name the 2019 documentary that features an organ competition following young organists in search of success. (Ian has several friends in this film, and he was even cheering them on in the audience!)
"Pipe Dreams". Google it! A fascinating watch .
9. When exercising fast, clear consonants, should you use a voiced consonant or a voiceless consonant?
Voiced. Examples of voiced consonants are "M, N, V, Z". Sing a scale using these consonants. Try "Zing-a-mama". You can sing a pitch on a voiced consonant .
10. How many altos does it take to change a lightbulb? (Don's session joke of the week! I'm an alto, and I actually got a chuckle over this one!)
None!!! "IT'S TOO HIGH" (Thanks Don)

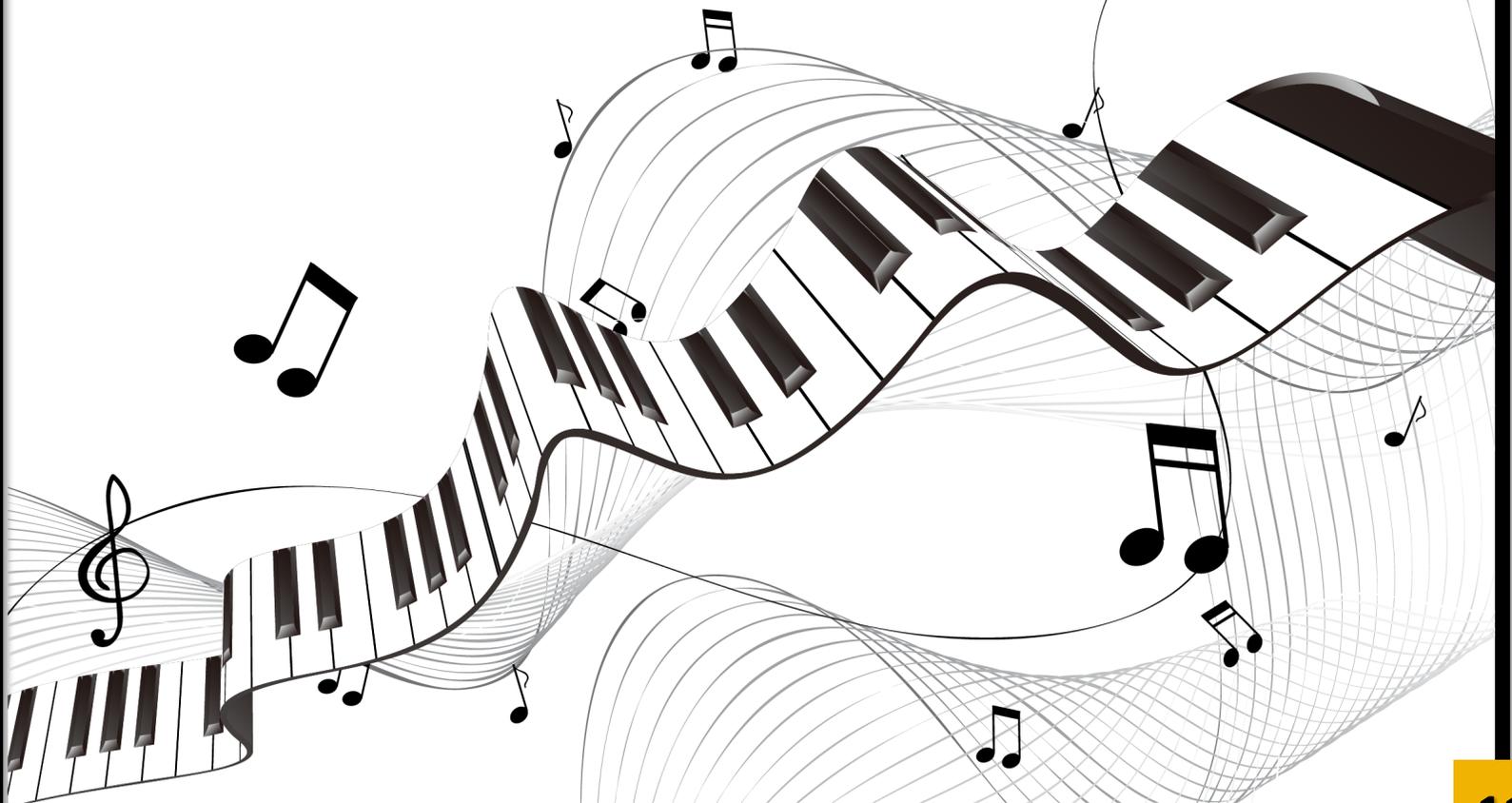
You'll find the answers in next month's Christmas newsletter.

November Quiz

Do you know who made these songs famous?

We give you the song title, you name the singer

1. Hound Dog
2. Tiny Dancer
3. Respect
4. Both Sides Now
5. Ring of Fire
6. I Fall to Pieces
7. Man in the Mirror
8. My Way
9. Me and Bobby McGee
10. Haven't Met You Yet

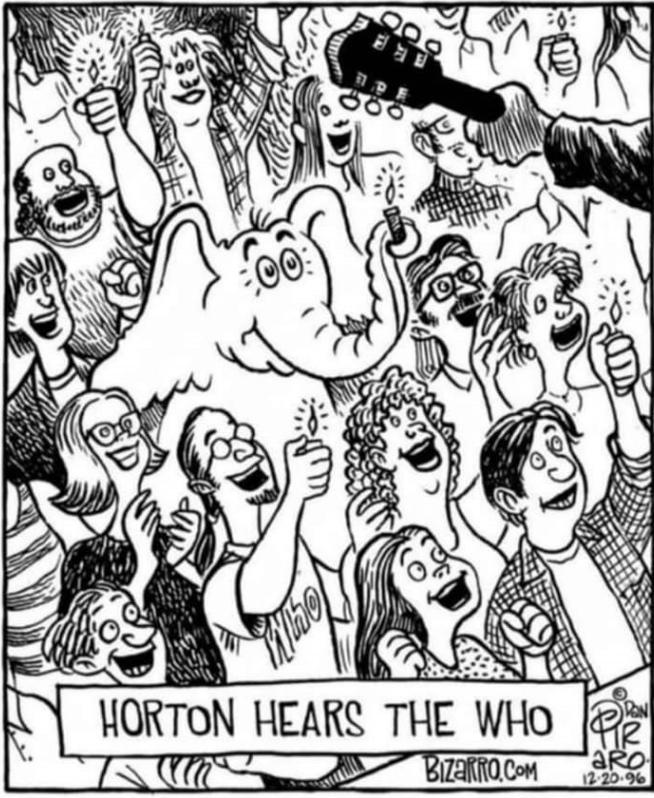


MUSIC MATTERS

Feelin'

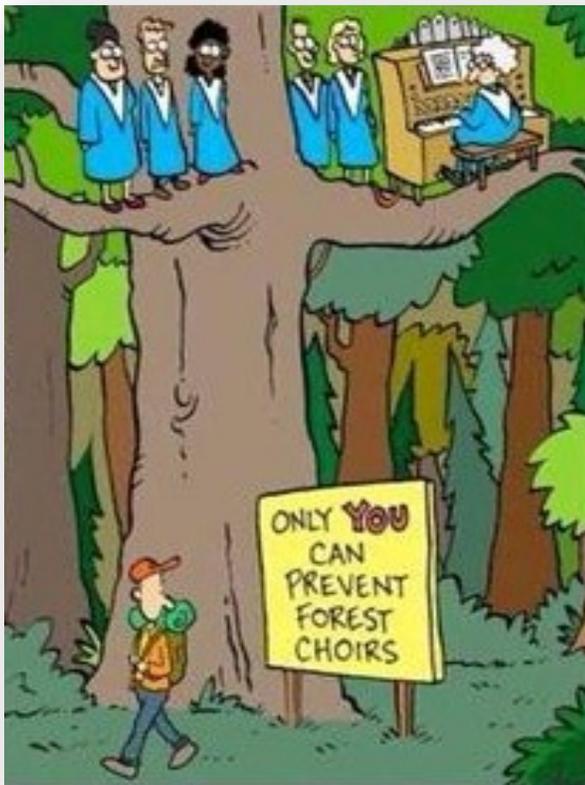


... and Goofy



After fifty years as the church organist, Gladys made a genuine effort to adjust to the new worship format.

I hate it when I'm singing a song and the artist gets the words wrong!



Justin Trudeau meets Bono

