

“After coming home from the hospital, the Singers sang to me in our garden, which was again very spiritual and healing. But this time, it was highlighted by the appearance of goldfinches fluttering around us and joining in our singing with their tweeting.”

— singer

**“I am sending you light
to heal you, to hold you...”**

“Singing with the By Your Side Singers at my mother’s bedside and at her memorial service gave me a profound sense of support, love and peace. To this day I am deeply grateful.”

— family member

I had forgotten how incredibly powerful it was to be sung to.”

— singer



**“May you be filled
with loving kindness
May you be well...”**

Songs of By Your Side Singers

Here are some of the songs we offer. If you have a favorite song(s) you would like sung, we can accommodate.

Blessed Spirit of My Life
Comfort Me
Dona Nobis Pacem
Filled with Loving Kindness
Hashiveinu
I Am Sending You Light
I Know This Rose Will Open
*If Life Is Sacred**
Just to Be Is a Blessing
May I Be Filled with Loving Kindness
*By Your Side**
Return Again
Spirit of Life
There is a Balm in Gilead
*There Is a Love Holding Me**
There’s a Light in the Darkness
There’s a River Flowin’ in My Soul
The Twenty-Third Psalm
Ubi Caritas
*Healing Song**
We All Come from One
Winds Be Still
Hineh Ma Tov
Open My Heart

*Composed by BYSS member

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Unitarian Universalist

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By Your Side Singers

Founded in 2009



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A Pastoral Care Choir

By Your Side Singers is First Parish's pastoral care choir. Through our gentle singing, we offer a musical presence to people seeking comfort and support during times of illness or transition.

When invited to parishioners' homes or hospital rooms, we come in groups of three or four to share soft, soothing songs. Our singing has evoked smiles, tears, laughter — even dancing!

**“Singing with you
is my prayer...”**

Who We Are

BYSS is a group of men and women singers, many who also sing in the First Parish choir but some who do not. We meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Co-leading the singers with First Parish Music Director Beth Norton is Laurie Corelle.

We invite you to join us. By Your Side Singers welcome adults who love to sing and long to serve through music.



Our Process

In our twice-monthly meetings, By Your Side Singers rehearse gentle songs and chants from our hymnals and other sources. Through our singing meditation we practice the gentle support and comfort with one another that we offer when visiting parishioners. Our

**“Just to be is a blessing...
Just to live is holy”**

rehearsal circle has a lounge chair in the center. Sitting in the chair while being sung to helps us learn the special sensitivity that is part of this kind of singing.

Call for Us

Any trying time of change or transition may be made less stressful with the gentle support of being sung to. To arrange a visit or to answer any questions, please contact a minister, a pastoral care lay minister, or Music Director, Beth Norton at music@firstparish.org.

From Personal Experience

At the founding of the then-called “Threshold Choir” at First Parish, I was intrigued by its concept and purpose, which is why I joined. The evenings of practice were for me very relaxing, not only through the simple and soothing music, but also by the congeniality of the members, the exchange of experiences and Beth Norton's excellent instructions. It was like meditation.

Then I had a very serious accident at home that hospitalized me for six weeks. During this time the By Your Side Singers came to the

**“Find a stillness, hold a stillness
Let the stillness carry me...”**

hospital to sing to me. During practice, I had not realized how emotionally touching this experience could be. We were all moved to tears. For the moment, I forgot my pain and



weak condition by going spiritually inside of me. It felt like a healing in my body and soul. The harmonious and comforting music had a very calming and peaceful effect on me that lingered on for a long time.”