



MVE Together Again, **All Vaccinated** and Singing In-Person or Online and **Without Masks** Unless You Want to Wear One



## **A Momentous May for the MVE – Dick Marcus**

Monday May 10<sup>th</sup> started our path to normalcy. The CDC hadn't relaxed recommendations about mask wearing so we wore masks that day. But on Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, after the CDC changed guidelines, as the photos on the former page shows, we got to sing, socially distanced, but without masks. It is amazing how much more air one can take in, and how much longer one can sing in one breath when the masks are off.

It was a momentous May indeed, as the chorus P-team and music think tank unveiled a wide list of songs for every occasion: Scottish songs with claps and stomps; religious songs for weddings, funerals, and other events such as *The Lord's Prayer*; completely new songs for our contest sets; and songs that we seemed to learn very quickly when now back in person. It was fun to take on *All You Need is Love*, from **The Beatles** and feel like you are mastering it quickly. If you go to the member site at [Midwest Vocal Express | Storytelling Through Song \(mve.org\)](http://MidwestVocalExpress.com) you will find 15 songs with two more to come. There are only a few from our old repertoire, such the crowd-pleaser *Drive My Car*.

The next song to work on over **Memorial Day** break is **Timshel**, which is beautiful. If you print out the PDF of the song you will learn much about it.

### **Timshel's Performance Notes**

"**Timshel**" was written and originally recorded by London-based folk/roots-rock band **Mumford & Sons** and featured on their 2009 debut album *Sigh No More*. The song was directly inspired by **John Steinbeck's** novel **East of Eden**, which parallels the **Cain and Abel** story in Genesis.



Timshel is a Hebrew word which translates as "**thou mayest**" and the discovery in the book by a group of Chinese scholars of **Timshel's** proper meaning in connection with the **Cain and Abel** account is an important symbol in **East of Eden's** storyline. **Marcus Mumford** has stated that

Steinbeck is his favorite American author.

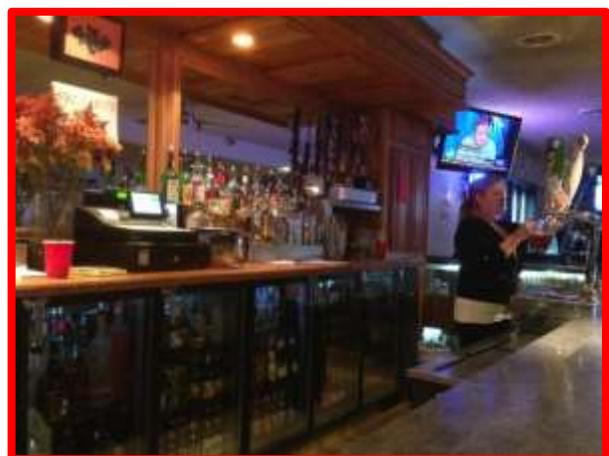
This chart was beautifully arranged by **Katie Gillis** and **Katie Macdonald**, half of **GQ**, a Baltimore-based female barbershop and contemporary *a cappella* quartet. This particular arrangement was featured on the quartet's eponymous debut album and they even filmed a stunning music video for the song, viewable on their YouTube channel **GQ Tube**. Please watch and listen to: [https://youtu.be/-b2-itXk\\_qA](https://youtu.be/-b2-itXk_qA)



Or if you want an acoustical version of **Timshel** by **Mumford & Sons**, go to <https://youtu.be/f8D7MLsNAb8>

### **Our New Watering Hole is:**

**The Brass Tap** is a bit of a haul from our new rehearsal venue at **Elm Grove Lutheran School** ( [945 Terrace Dr, Elm Grove, WI 53122](#) ) so the new place is called **Bougey's Bar and Grill** at 16760 W Greenfield Ave, Brookfield, WI. For a map that shows that **Bougey's** is south of I-94 a bit, and a few blocks west of Moorland Road on Greenfield, please check out this map: [Directions - Bougey's Bar and Grill \(bougeys.com\)](#).



## Mairi's Wedding

"**Mairi's Wedding**" (also known as **Marie's Wedding**, the **Lewis Bridal Song**, or **Scottish Gaelic: Màiri Bhàn** "Blond Mary") is a Scottish folk song originally written in Gaelic by John Roderick Bannerman (1865–1938) for Mary C. MacNiven (1905–1997) on the occasion of her winning the gold medal at the National Mòd in 1934.

In 1959, James B. Cosh devised a Scottish country dance to the tune, which is 40 bars, in a reel. If you look for versions, you will find many dance videos. The one I suggest has a high school choir:

<https://youtu.be/UXXh62z37QQ>



At a recent rehearsal, **Mike Lietke** went over some of the curious Scottish words in our lyrics. Here is a recap of some of the unusual ones.

**Lyrics:** "Step we gaily, on we go, heel for heel and toe for toe, arm in arm and row on row, all to Mairi's Wedding. Over hillways up and down, myrtle green and bracken brown, past the shielings through the town, all for sake of Mairi." (repeat)

NOTES: **Myrtle** is an evergreen shrub; **bracken** is a coarse fern; and **shielings** is a hut used by shepherds or more dialectically summer pastures in the mountains. Anyway, the first part has us going on a dance party through the pathways celebrating Mairi.

**More Lyrics:** "Red her checks as rowans are, brighter eyes than any star, fairest of them all by far, is our darling Mairi."

NOTES: **Rowans** are a mountain ash with bright scarlet berries such as seen in this photo of a lady with berries from a Rowan tree.



**More Lyrics:** “Plenty herring, plenty meal, plenty peat to fill her creel, plenty bonny bairns as weel, that the toast for Mairi.”



NOTES: I suspect that Mike is correct the **Peat** is used for cooking and **Creel** is a wicker basket, like this photo of one for a picnic. Anyway, there is much fish and food for Mairi's party. There is also **bonny bairns as weel**, or *beautiful kids as well* coming along for Mairi, like you might see children as ring bearers at a wedding.

That is all the words, even though we repeat many over again. That is the nature of reel. You might try to read the lyrics a few times to get the feel for the words.

### **What is a Reel?**

The reel is indigenous to Scotland. The earliest reference was in a witchcraft trial of 1590, where the accused was reported to have "*daunced this reill or short dance.*" However, the form may go back to the Middle Ages. The name is probably of Old Norse origins, *rulla*, meaning "to whirl."

After being introduced to Ireland in the late eighteenth century it thrived. Later it was introduced to North America by English, Scottish, and Irish colonists and immigrants. In the United States, reels remain central in the traditions Anglo & African American Old-time music and square dancing, as well as Cajun and Zydeco. Reel music is notated in simple  $2_2$  or  $4_4$  time.

All reels have the same structure, consisting largely of quaver (eighth note) movement with an accent on the first and third beats of the bar. A **reel** is distinguished from a **hornpipe** in two ways. Firstly, they are played with even beats, without an implied dotted rhythm. Secondly, they are played twice as fast, implied by the  $2_2$  time signature.

Like most dance music originating in the British Isles, reels are usually composed in binary form, meaning they have two parts (A and B); in most reels each part is repeated (AABB), but in others it is not (ABAB). Each part (A and B) typically has eight bars, which in turn are divisible into four-bar and two-bar phrases.

SOURCE: [Reel \(dance\) - Wikipedia](#)

## Calendar for June:

**Monday May 31 - No Practice on Memorial Day**

**Monday June 7** - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

**Monday June 14** - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

**Monday June 21** - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

**Tuesday June 22** - Board Meeting on Zoom at 8pm

**Monday June 28** - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

**Monday July 7 - No Practice for July 4<sup>th</sup> observed that day many places**



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** As **Memorial Day** remembers those who we lost in wars and defending the nation, if you wish, you can meditate on this great prayer.

### Hear Our Prayer This Memorial Day

In the quiet sanctuaries of our own hearts, let each of us name and call on the One whose power over us is great and gentle, firm and forgiving, holy and healing...

You who created us,  
who sustain us,  
who call us to live in peace,  
hear our prayer this day.

Hear our prayer for all who have died,  
whose hearts and hopes are known to you alone ...

Hear our prayer for those who put the welfare of others ahead of their own and give us hearts as generous as theirs ...

Hear our prayer for those who gave their lives in the service of others, and accept the gift of their sacrifice ...

Help us to shape and make a world where we will lay down the arms of war and turn our swords into ploughshares for a harvest of justice and peace ...

Comfort those who grieve the loss of their loved ones and let your healing be the hope in our hearts...

Hear our prayer this day and in your mercy answer us in the name of all that is holy.

The peace of God be with you.  
- Austin Fleming