



Bridge to Peace

Pray For Peace: This song was inspired at D.L.T.I., *Davvenen* Leadership Training Institute, during the Shabbat morning service. The melody for *Sha-a-lu Sh'lom Yerushalayim* popped into my head when I read the liturgy, and I left the service for a few moments to go to the bathroom, stepped into the stall and recorded it into my phone!! The melody for that part stayed there in my phone for quite some time until I discovered it by accident and began singing some countermelodies. Dana B. and I first sang it at Friday Evening Services after the silent prayer; she staying on the bottom part and me joining her with the Hebrew, then the English prayer for Jerusalem. It all fit quite nicely together in the end. The prayer is meant for Shabbat Morning and can be adapted for *Yom Yerushalayim*, *Yom HaAtza-ut*, *Kabbalat Shabbat*, as an anthem or any occasion in which our prayers are focused on peace for the world and toward Jerusalem, our spiritual home. It can easily be sung by youth, teen or adult choirs! When my dear friend Katya Gohr was ordained as a Rabbinic Pastor, I sang the song with her in celebration and named the song for her! This song is for Reb Katya Gohr.

Bim Bam: Since I was a child I've been singing the old melody for this *Niggun*. While staying up at my summer home in the Redwood Forest on the Klamath River in Del Norte County, California, I was celebrating Shabbat alone. The beauty of the trees and sound of the breeze gave me this melody, and I recorded a video of the first part of the song. When I returned to my congregation, I introduced the simple tune to my youth choir who loved it! When I brought it to Sam, we recorded the two parts together and decided a third was needed. Sam wrote the *bidi bidi bidi bidi bim bam* and that's how the song came together! The *Niggun* is simple enough to teach to any age choir or group and be sung with the congregation and is appropriate for *Kabbalat Shabbat*, the Shabbat table, song-leading sessions or any occasion where the spirit of Shabbat is being brought into our hearts!

Bring Healing Down: For two years I worked as a Chaplain Intern at Georgetown Medstar University Hospital in Washington, D.C. It was a Catholic hospital where I worked with people of all faith traditions and beliefs. My regular rounds were done in the elective limb surgery ward, leg, knee, hip and back surgeries, but I also did many overnight shifts where I served all areas of the hospital including I.C.U., Trauma and Emergency as well as Neonatal I.C.U. This prayer was inspired by an African American family in need of prayer after their son unexpectedly lost his leg to accident. I had heard the term "bringing healing down" chanted and prayed by many of the Christian and Baptist clergy, and the melody for this prayer spontaneously wrote itself as I was at the bedside of my patient with his family surrounding him. From that time on I used it to pray with most non-Jewish patients and families. While recording the prayer, we decided to add the Hebrew equivalent to each verse, a social justice component and the Halleluiah Jewish gospel style feel which is so signature to my music. Now I use the prayer as part of my chaplaincy work in nursing homes and assisted living centers. This prayer is a healing and social action zipper song and can be used interactively with groups or individuals as they add their own wishes of "what to bring down" to their hearts and spirits. Hebrew can be substituted with English words for God, Yah, Holy One of Blessing, God our Father, Allah or any other name for G-d of those praying.

Esau Enai: This melody hung around a LONG time before it became a prayer. I wrote the melody up in Klamath and recorded it on my phone as I do with most of the tunes that pop into my head. As I was attending an OHALAH Conference in Broomfield, CO, the *Niggun* made itself known to me again as a healing psalm. When a member of my Adult Choir, Darrow Glockner passed away, I decided to set Psalm 1 to the melody and sing it at his funeral and minyan service. I conceived of the English interpretation as I was beholding the beauty of Colorado and the Rocky Mountains. This song is dedicated to Darrow and his love for me and my music, which he expressed openly and lovingly through his life, his voice and his spirit. It can be used at any time when a psalm is appropriate, *Se'eudah Sh'lishit* in the afternoon of Shabbat, at a minyan, funeral, unveiling or *Yizkor*. This song is for Darrow.

Bridge To Peace: This prayer has very special meaning to me which is why it ended up as the title track of this collection. While on an overnight shift at GUMH I was doing my rounds on the Orthopedic Surgery floor I had the honor of meeting an amazing woman who had a toe amputated because of an infection she caught getting a pedicure! She happened to be Jewish and we immediately bonded and began a very special relationship as patient and chaplains many times do. Over the next year or more I followed her progress as she returned many times to be treated for the infection which just wouldn't be put down. On one of my

final overnights at the hospital, I again saw her name on my rounds sheet. When I entered the room she greeted me with a great smile and the words: “My angel. You always seem to arrive just when I need you the most.” The next moment she was crying and telling me they had taken her leg off just below the knee. “That’s the end of that infection, she said cheerily. I’m glad to be done with it.” We cried and prayed and talked that night and as I walked from her room this melody came to me. The next morning when I went back to check on Max, I sang her the song and we breathed, cried and laughed together. The song was not complete until my *Mashpiah*, My spiritual director Hanna Tiferet Siegal suggestion to me that it needed a second verse to take us over the bridge and into the heart healing which this song brings when two or more people connect in holy space together. This prayer can be sung at the bedside, for a healing service, funeral or *yizkor*, as an anthem for healing as a *Misheberach* or at any time sacred space is being held for peace and healing. The song is dedicated to Max.

Reaching For Peace People of all faiths and backgrounds will find inspiration in this beautifully message of faith, unity and peace. This arrangement was created by Greg Murai, who passed away suddenly last year.

Lo Milchama: The genesis of this song happened after the Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting. I was so distressed and angry about all the news I was hearing every day about gun violence, and the Hebrew *Lo Milchama* kept jumping into my head. I wrote the first verse of the song and the *Lo Milchama* and *Lo Yisa Goi* parts, which can be sung as a round. When we got it into the studio Sam encouraged me to write a second verse and the song was finally complete. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out that the theme of non-violence and peace should and MUST be at the forefront of our work as liturgical and ritual leaders, social activists and educators as well as clergy in our goal of *Tikkun Olam*, repairing our world. This song is an anti-gun-violence peace anthem and is appropriate to be sung at rallies, worship and concerts where non-violence, anti-gun violence and peace are themes.

Shalom Rav: I had been thinking about an upbeat *Shalom Rav* and one morning while I was working out to Tony Horton’s P-90x this bouncy tune popped into my head. I brought it to my youth choir and they took to it so I continued to develop the prayer and use it occasionally as a call and response them. When I sang it to Sam, along with so many other melodies as we were choosing the songs for this collection, he LOVED it! So I decided to add it and create an upbeat, enthusiastic rousing prayer for peace where everyone can sing, clap and shout SHALOM! This prayer is part of the *MaAriv* Service liturgy and is appropriate when the theme and mood of the service is joyous and participatory! It can also be sung for choir festivals and anytime peace is the theme!

You Are Holy: For years I had been seeking a new melody for the third blessing of the *Shabbat Amidah Ata Kadosh* whose theme is the holiness of Shabbat. The opportunity came to write this song when my dear friend Ben Bederson was in surgery and I was anxious about the outcome. While I waited for word from the family this melody for You Are Holy/*Ata Kadosh* presented itself in the form of an English prayer. When I visited Ben in the hospital the next day I sang it to him at bedside and Ben’s daughter Dana was right there with me. Since then it has become our song and we share it whenever possible as the third prayer of the *Amidah*. Dana’s voice is heard on the recording with me and her love and spirit as well as Ben’s and the entire Druin-Bederson family are embedded in the song. It is the third prayer of the *Shabbat Amidah* and can be used any time that prayer is sung. It’s also great for Thanksgiving Services, Holy Days and Festivals. This song is for Ben.

Oseh Shalom: During my time as a Chaplain Intern I worked with a priest from Nigeria. We were all required to plan and lead interfaith worship services as part of our internship and he was always offering chants in his native tongue. After attending the URJ Biennial in Orlando I heard this tribal opening in my head and then taught it at a drumming circle at Yoga Sanctuary in Punta Gorda that day. The folks in the circle loved the melody so I set about writing an English counterpart they could sing, since most of them were not Jewish. When I finished the song the *Oseh Shalom* third part wrote itself fairly easily. Again, I took the song to my Youth Choir and they immediately learned it, so I knew it had hit quality. This prayer can be used any time *Oseh Shalom* is sung and can also be used for Interfaith and Social Action settings where peace and unity are a theme. The Hebrew segment can be omitted when using in Interfaith or Chaplaincy settings where English may be more appropriate. When using with an Interfaith setting the Jewish choir can sing the Hebrew and other non-Jewish choirs can sing the other two parts! Good of choirs of all ages!

Beneath The Wings of Shechinah: I wrote the melody for this song many years ago and had never recorded it. When Sam heard the song he immediately chose it for the collection. It was inspired by the many wonderful people and communities I’ve had the honor to serve over the past 28 years of congregational life. Most recently I sang this song for my Rabbi, Michael Feshbach, as he moved on from Temple Shalom to his next assignment calling in St. Thomas. It is an anthem which contains the blessing: *Adonai Oz l’amo yitein* which also appears in the *Kabbalat Shabbat* liturgy and can be sung then or at any occasion where a blessing of transition or prayer of Thanksgiving for community is honored. This song is for Rabbi Michael Feshbach!