

The Mountain Dulcimer and Healing Music



by Bonnie Leigh

The mountain dulcimer and Healing Music are very similar. They are both unique and interesting. The mountain dulcimer not only works well in Healing Music because of its beautiful sweet sound, but it also has a history that will catch the interest of many people, especially those who have played an instrument. Healing Music in the medical field is a fairly new profession. Yet, if we take a look back in time, we will find that Aristotle and Plato both had strong beliefs about the healing powers of music and went so far as to write about it. And during Medieval times, the Monks used chants for prayer and to aid the sick. After the two World Wars, volunteers at Veterans hospitals began to play music and sing for patients. Positive responses to this musical support led hospitals to hire musicians directly, and formal music training programs for health care applications began to appear. In 1944, Michigan State University offered the first college degree in music therapy.

As a Certified Music Practitioner, you are trained to play soothing, therapeutic, relaxing music at the bedside of patients as well as hospice patients, which allows a more peaceful and less stressful passing. Music is used as a service for the patient, not as a performance. Different types of music and different beats per minutes are used for different medical situations. This relaxing music not only benefits the patient, but can aid in relaxing the family members in the room, while certain songs can have special meanings and bring up special memories. A Music Practitioner works with the sick and dying patients, while a Music Therapist uses music to aide the recovery of patients, allowing them movement to rhythms for use in muscle movement, singing familiar songs to help lift spirits.

Today, you will find many surgeons will request relaxing music to be played during surgery, mothers about to give birth may request music, and soothing music may be played for some

patients to help them go off to sleep. Many different instruments can be used in Healing Music, but the mountain dulcimer has an unusual, gentle, pretty sound that works wonderfully. Hymns are only played if the patient requests it.

“The Summons” is a pretty Scottish hymn that a chaplain on the hospice floor asked me to learn to play, as it was his favorite. Now I play it often, and it has become one of my favorites.

It’s written with, what I like to call, a “pick-strum” style. This style allows a song to be played pretty, with a lot of feeling.

The Summons

EAA Tuning
Reverse Mixolydian

Scottish Hymn

Tab by Bonnie Leigh

A E A F#m E

Will you come and fol - low me if I but call your name?

E	0	0	0	2	1	0	1		0
A	0	1	0						1
A	0 1	2 4	1 2	0				1	1

A E A F#m A

Will you go where you don't go and nev - er be the same?

	0	0	0	2	1	0	1		0
	0	1	0						0
	0 1	2 4	1 2	0				0	0

D A E

Will you let my love be shown, Will you let my name be known,

	1			3		0			0
	0			3		0			1
	1 2	3 2	3 4	5		2 3	4 2	1 0	1

A E A F#m A

Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

	0	0	0	2	1	0	1		0
	0	1	0						0
	0 1	2 4	1 2	0				0	0

The complete words to the song are:

1. Will you come and follow me, If I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know, And never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, Will you let my name be known.
Will you let my life be grown, In you and you in me?
2. Will you leave yourself behind, If I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind, And never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare, Should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r, In you and you in me?
3. Will you let the blinded see, If I but call your name?
Will you set the Pris'ners free, And never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, And do such, as this unseen.
And admit to what I mean, In you and you in me?
4. Will you love the 'you' you hide, If I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside, And never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found, To reshape the world around?
Through my sight and touch and sound, In you and you in me?
5. Lord, your summons echoes true, When you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you, and never be the same.
In your com-pa-ny I'll go, Where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow, In you and you in me.

About the Author

Bonnie Leigh, CMP, is a Certified Music Practitioner and mentor, helping new students coming into the Music For Healing and Transition Program. Besides graduation from MHTP, Bonnie has Hospice training. As a Practitioner, Bonnie works at hospitals, nursing homes and has private patients.

Besides healing music, Bonnie has been teaching and performing folk music across the northeast since 1991. She has a variety of programs for children to adults with her mountain & hammered dulcimers, guitar, autoharp and spoons. Her gentle voice and style blend together well as a Music Practitioner and a traditional style folk music performer. You'll even find Bonnie dressed in early 1800 period dress as Bonnie plays the mountain and hammered dulcimers in several historical villages and museums each year. Bonnie writes songs of life, family, love and the outdoors. For

more information about healing music, Bonnie's schedule, programs or ordering information you can visit Bonnie's website at www.bonnieleigh.com

Bonnie has made the following recordings and songbooks:

- "Bridge of Flowers" CD/audiocassette, featuring Bonnie performing mostly original songs, accompanied by Heidi & John Cerrigione and Neal & Coleen Walters.
- "Down in the Shady Grove" CD/audiocassette, featuring mountain dulcimer instrumentals of music from 1800s and earlier.
- "Straight from the Heart" CD/audiocassette, with original music and mountain dulcimer instrumentals.
- "Reflections" audiocassette.
- "Bridge of Flowers Songbook" with mountain dulcimer tablature.
- "Down in the Shady Grove Songbook" with mountain dulcimer tablature.
- "The Bonnie Leigh Songbook" - A collection of all originals from the recordings "Reflections" and "Straight from the Heart" with dulcimer songs written in dulcimer tablature.

Bonnie's poetry series:

"It's the Little Things" - booklet with 101 poems of life, family and the outdoors.

"Love, And A Delicate Flower" - booklet with 102 poems of love, nature and everyday life.

"In the Season" - booklet with 103 poems of earth, love and people.

Bonnie's work as Musical Practitioner:

"From My Heart to Yours" - booklet. Thoughts and experiences of a Music Practitioner intern.