

Transylvania Tidbit – Song #352 Find a Stillness

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It's always a thrill for me when we sing one of the Transylvanian hymns in our songbook during a program. Today (August 10) we sang #352 "Find a Stillness" which is a particular favorite of mine. In fact this one is an "earworm". Once I hear it I can't get it out of my head for days.

I also appreciate this song because it was one of the five which Amor and Tom McGuiness and I prepared for a trip to Transylvania in 2009. We rehearsed them in both English and Hungarian, and both Tom and Amor did a great job learning the tricky Hungarian pronunciations. Of course I could have tricked them into singing anything (like the Monty Python sketch "Dirty Hungarian Phrasebook" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6D1Yl-41ao>) but I'm not that evil. We sang all five in both languages at a Sunday service in Sinfalva, and it was a rousing success.

Anyway, I had noticed at that time that the words for #352 are not a direct translation of the Hungarian, which in fact is more downbeat than the words we sing. Here are both, for your interest. If anyone would like to learn to sing the Hungarian, I would be happy to work on it with you.

The lyrics to song #352 and my translation of the Hungarian lyrics are on the Partner Church web page

Song #352

Find a stillness, hold a stillness, let the stillness carry me
Find the silence, hold the silence, let the silence, carry me
In the spirit, by the spirit, with the spirit giving power
I will find true harmony

Seek the essence, hold the essence, let the essence carry me
Let me flower, help me flower, watch me flower, carry me
In the spirit, by the spirit, with the spirit giving power
I will find true harmony

My translation (not intended to be sung!)

To rest, to become calm
We approach you our lord
With our sinful heads bowed in the dust
Trembling and calmed, we gaze upon you our lord

Because in the struggle fresh strength
derives only from you
With our sinful heads immersed in dust
Trembling and calmed, we gaze upon you our lord