

**UU Festival Choir  
European Concert Tour  
August 8-20, 2011**

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During August of 2011 the UU Partner Church Council is organizing a musical pilgrimage to Transylvania & Budapest to explore and experience the historic roots of Unitarianism, and connect with our co-religionists through the universal language of music. Beth Norton, Director of Music at First Parish Concord, MA has agreed to direct the assembled choir. Singers will be provided with music and recordings in advance. We will spend the first days of the tour at a beautiful Carpathian Mt retreat getting to know each other, seeing the local sights and rehearsing for the subsequent concerts. Along the way we will visit historic Unitarian sites and places of a more general interest, including:

- Guided walking/bus tour of Budapest and farewell dinner/cruise on the Danube..
- Torda - where the first act of religious tolerance was signed in 1568
- The rock in Kolozsvár that Francis David spoke from when he "converted the whole town's population to Unitarianism."
- Sighisoara/Segesvar – the medieval walled city which is the purported birthplace of Vlad Tepes.
- The frescoed Unitarian church in Szekelyderzs, the world's only Unitarian UNESCO world heritage site.
- Meszko - the "Alabaster Village" made famous by the book of the same name.
- Concerts in Sepsiszentgyorgy, Szekelyudvarhely, Marosvasarhely, Kolozsvar & Budapest.

The trip is open to singers young and not so young, but is limited to 40 participants. Through this trip we hope to foster a new understanding of our historical roots and build deeper relationships with each other and our co-religionists overseas. The tour logistics will be coordinated by the UU Partner Church Council Pilgrimage Service which has more than a decade of experience facilitating the visits of North American UUs to Eastern & Central Europe including numerous concert tours.

In addition to the base tour we are offering for an additional fee optional pre and post trip extensions to Bucharest and Vienna respectively for those who wish to extend their stay in Europe.

**Bucharest Pre-trip Extension:**

1. Saturday, Aug 6 – Arrive OTP Bucharest airport check-in and transfer to hotel. Free afternoon to rest and relax. Evening reception & dinner with UUPCC staff. Overnight Bucharest – Hotel Herastrau\*\*\*(D)
2. Sunday, Aug 7 – Guided Bucharest bus & walking tour with visits to Palace of Parliament, Metropolitan Church (seat of the Romanian Patriarch), Embassy district, and other sites of interest. Group lunch followed by free time at your choice of the Peasant Museum or the outdoor Village Museum. Evening folklore dinner show. Overnight Bucharest – Hotel Herastrau\*\*\*(BLD)
3. Monday, Aug 8 – Free morning. Lunch on your own. PM transfer to airport to join arriving group. (B)

3 day/2 night Bucharest extension package– \$350/person double occupancy (\$50 single supplement) Includes hotels, meals (as indicated), ground transportation, entry fees for specified attractions, guides and interpreters. Fee does NOT include: airfare, alcoholic beverages, gratuities or meals/transportation during free time.

**Proposed Concert tour itinerary. Hotels may change due to availability at time of booking.**

1. Monday, Aug 8 – PM gather OTP Bucharest airport. Please schedule your arrival no later than 4:30pm EET. Transfer to motor coach for 2 1/2 hour drive to Carpathian resort town of Sinaia. Group welcome reception/dinner & orientation. Overnight Hotel Alpin Cota 1400\*\*\*\* (D)
2. Tuesday, Aug 9 – Morning introductions & rehearsal session followed by guided tour of Peles Castle, summer home of Romanian Royal Family. Group lunch in Sinaia with free time to shop and stroll before returning to the hotel for afternoon rehearsal. Group dinner & overnight Hotel Alpin Cota 1400\*\*\*\*.(BLD)
3. Wednesday, Aug 10 – Morning rehearsal session. Day trip to Bran to tour Bran Castle – aka “Dracula’s castle – and shop for tasteless souvenirs. Group lunch before returning to Sinaia for afternoon rehearsal session. Free evening – dinner on your own. Overnight Hotel Alpin Cota 1400\*\*\*\* (BL)
4. Thursday, Aug 11- Morning rehearsal before departing for Sepsiszentgyorgy/Sfantu Gheorghe. En route we tour the Black Church, the largest neo-gothic cathedral in Romania and home to the largest Oriental rug collection outside of Istanbul. Free time to stroll picturesque pedestrian Brasso/Brasov city center. Lunch on your own before continuing on to Sepsiszentgyorgy for rehearsal and evening concert in church which houses the largest Unitarian congregation in the world. Dinner/reception hosted by Unitarian Women’s League before departing for 2 hour drive to Szekelyudvarhely for overnight. Overnight Szekelyudvarhely – Hotel Kukullo\*\*\* (BD)
5. Friday, Aug 12 – Morning rehearsal before departing for day trip to tour the frescoed Unitarian church at Szekelyderzs (a UNESCO World Heritage site) before continuing on to the medieval walled city of Segesvar/Sighisoara – the purported birthplace of Vlad Tepes. Group lunch. Orientation session in citadel (a UNESCO World Heritage site) followed by free time to explore the city and visit the sites of your choice. Early evening return to Szekelyudvarhely for free evening & down time. Dinner on your own. Overnight Hotel Kukullo\*\*\* (BL)
6. Saturday, Aug 13 – Morning rehearsal prior to departure for Worldwide Unitarian Gathering. Service, celebrations, folk dancing & musical concert by Festival choir and others. Picnic lunch/cook-out at Szejkefurdo before continuing on to Marosvasarhely/TG-Mures. Shopping stop en route in “pottery village” of Korond. Dinner & overnight – Marosvasarhely – Hotel Concordia\*\*\*\*(BLD)
7. Sunday, Aug 14 – Sleep – in. 11am Services and concert performance at Marosvasarhely Unitarian Church. Lunch reception afterward with minister and members of congregation. Afternoon walking tour of historic city center with visits to the Teleki Library, Hungary’s first public library, and the spectacular Art Nouveau Cultural Palace. Afternoon downtime. Group dinner at Hungarian csarda with traditional gypsy band. Overnight Marosvasarhely – Hotel Concordia\*\*\*\*.(BLD)
8. Monday, Aug 15 – Departure for Kolozsvar/Cluj after breakfast. En route we visit the Alabaster Village of Meszko made famous by the book of the same name to hear the story of Ferenc Balazs and see the jewel-box church he designed and painted himself. Group lunch. Afterward we stop in Torda to see “The Church of the Edict”. Early evening arrival in Kolozsvar. Dinner & overnight Kolozsvar – Victoria Hotel\*\*\* (BLD)
9. Tuesday, Aug 16 – Morning choir rehearsal followed by visits to 1<sup>st</sup> Church & Unitarian HQ building. Choice of free time in Kolozsvar or hike/picnic lunch in scenic Torda Gorge. Evening concert 1<sup>st</sup> Unitarian Church Kolozsvar with dinner/reception afterward in Unitarian Bishop’s residence. Overnight Kolozsvar – Hotel Victoria\*\*\* (BLD)
10. Wednesday, Aug 17 – Travel day. Morning departure for Budapest. Traditional Hungarian gulyas lunch after crossing the border. Group dinner & overnight Budapest – Hotel Belvedere\*\*\*\* (BLD).
11. Thursday, Aug 18 – AM guided bus & walking tour of Budapest highlights – Castle Hill, Hero’s Square, & Jewish Quarter. Group lunch at 1<sup>st</sup> Unitarian Church followed by rehearsal session. Free evening in Budapest to take in a concert or folklore show. Dinner on your own. Overnight Budapest – Hotel Belvedere\*\*\*\*. (BL)

12. Friday, Aug 19 – Morning orientation with UUPCC staff followed by free day in Budapest to visit the museum of your choice and indulge yourself in one of the city's famous thermal spas. Lunch on your own. Evening concert at 1<sup>st</sup> Unitarian Church. Farewell Danube dinner cruise. Overnight Budapest – Hotel Belvedere\*\*\*\* (BD)
13. Saturday Aug 20 - Airport departures for US, or extend your trip and travel on with us for 3 days & nights in beautiful Vienna. (B)

13 days, 12 nights base trip land package – \$1,650/person double occupancy (\$300 single supplement) + \$150 non-refundable registration fee. Includes hotels, meals (as indicated), accommodations, ground transportation, entry fees for specified attractions, guides and interpreters. Fee does NOT include: airfare, alcoholic beverages, meals/transportation during free time or independent travel, gratuities, or airport transfer at departure.

**Vienna post-trip extension:**

1. Saturday, Aug 20 – depart Budapest after breakfast for Vienna via motor coach (or train depending upon group size). Hotel check – in followed by group lunch. PM guided bus & walking tour of Vienna sights. Free evening to take in a concert or explore the city. Dinner on your own. Overnight Vienna – Hotel Continental\*\*\*(BL)
2. Sunday, Aug 21 – Morning check-in with UUPCC staff for suggested itineraries and assistance with purchasing metro passes. Otherwise free day to explore Vienna on your own. Overnight Vienna – Hotel Continental\*\*\*(B)
3. Monday, Aug 22 – Morning check-in with UUPCC staff. Free day to continue your exploration of Vienna. Farewell group dinner at traditional Viennese restaurant. Overnight Vienna – Hotel Continental\*\*\*(BD)
4. Tuesday, Aug 23 – airport departures (B)

3 day/night Vienna extension package– \$580/person double occupancy (\$75 single supplement) Includes hotels, meals (as indicated), accommodations, ground transportation, entry fees for specified attractions, guides and interpreters. Fee does NOT include: airfare, alcoholic beverages, meals/transportation during free time or independent travel, gratuities, or airport transfer at departure.