

*The*  
**Arts** at First Presbyterian Church  
*presents*

# Simple Gifts

Two Women  
Twelve Instruments  
One really good time

*April 16, 2021*  
*7:00 pm*

# Simple Gifts

## Two Women Twelve Instruments *A Really Good Time*

*Linda Littleton.....Almost everything*  
*Karen Hirshon.....Everything else*



Two women plus ten instruments equals one good time, and you're in for a very special treat! Karen Hirshon and Linda Littleton play a wide variety of ethnic folk music, and you'll hear selections that range from lively Irish jigs and down-home American reels to hard-driving Klezmer freilachs, haunting Gypsy melodies, and exotic Balkan dance tunes. Throughout their performance, Simple Gifts puts their own distinctive stamp on traditional tunes, creating some of the finest arrangement in folk music today.

Based in State College PA, Linda Littleton and Karen Hirshon have performed as Simple Gifts since 1995. Their performances include appearances at the Smithsonian, Longwood Gardens, Hershey Theater, National Theatre, Philadelphia Folk Festival, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Ontario Center for Performing Arts, Old Songs Festival, Pennsylvania Consort Society, and dozens of schools and colleges throughout the region.

**Simple Gifts** has recorded six albums. Their newest, "Crossing Borders: Music of Many Lands," received a national award from Indie Acoustic. Their previous album, "Time and Again," won a bronze star (third place) in the Crossroads Music Awards. Their recordings include traditional music from Romania, Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Scotland, France, Sweden, Denmark, and America, plus original compositions

Simple Gifts founding member **Linda Littleton** began her musical studies with classical violin lessons at age seven. Over the years, she has studied with Joanne Zagst Feldman, Ray Montoni, and Geoffrey Michaels. As a student at Princeton University, Linda majored in philosophy, with a minor in music and a specialty of Philosophy of Music. She has a strong background as a classical violinist, having served as Principal Second Violin in the Nittany Valley Symphony. In addition to violin, Linda plays hammered dulcimer, bowed psaltery, 5-string banjo, and recorders.

**Karen Hirshon** was raised in a family that emphasized church music, and she grew up singing and easily harmonizing hymns. At age 10, she began violin lessons, and three years later, her fascination with blues and American folk music lead her to study folk guitar. As a student at Grinnell College in Iowa, Karen designed her own specialty "Traditional Music in American Culture" within the field of American Studies, combining history, anthropology, and music. She studied and was influenced by ragtime, classical, American string band music, African drumming, blues, gospel, and jazz. During the 1970's, Karen toured nationally with the bluegrass band Whetstone Run and helped found the American old-time group, Rustical Quality String Band, with which she has released two albums. Over the years, Karen has picked up baritone fiddle, mandolin, banjolin, banjo-guitar, and a variety of percussion instruments.

Visit Simple Gifts at [www.simplegiftsmusic.com](http://www.simplegiftsmusic.com)

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Join us again on May 14, 2021 when we present the Potomac Alumni Brass Ensemble

We thank the following contributors and helpers for their generosity and support.

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