From the Seattle Dance Team to All Prospective Musicians:

We decided to create a letter from all of us outlining what we would like from you who wish to contribute your talents to our DUP evenings. Thank you so much for your interest! It is your energy and enthusiasm that helps keep the Dances fresh and vibrant. We deeply appreciate your willingness to contribute your talents and join us in this ever-learning experience. Playing music for the dances is not necessarily about great music (although this can happen from time to time) but more about creating music that will support the dance and guide the dancers thru the dance so that they can focus on the meditation and prayer.

As leaders and musicians engage in practicing for the evening, we are not only communicating about the music and those logistics, but are in the process of creating a container for the dance that will soon occur. We hope to create an atmosphere where love, harmony and beauty may flourish. If you find yourself becoming angry, upset, etc. it would be appreciated if you would remove yourself gracefully. It is important that you address your concerns with the leaders/musicians involved as soon as possible, but not directly before a dance meeting.

As you know, we have a number of dance leaders and musicians contributing. The mix of energies is different every week. At times some participants have been uncomfortable with the way things have gone. So here is a summary of what we would like to see in our musician support.

First and foremost, when we are musicians we are supporting the Dance Leaders for the evening, and maybe most importantly, the dances and the dancers. It is the Dance Leader’s vision and inspiration that is being brought forward. We try to give each other the respect to be attentive when we are in the circle and not leading. Musicians should always try to be attuned to the Dance leader. If one doesn’t feel particularly attuned to a dance or the way the leader is presenting it one can always bow out. If we can do this we have found that the experience of the Dancers is smoother and better, and that is the most important goal we have, to create an experience of real Joy and real Peace through the Dances.

Secondly, we would like you to make every effort to be on time when you are a musician for the night. 6:30 is our scheduled time for attunement and rehearsal. If you can’t be there by then, please come in quietly and join the group. If you feel a need to make an apology, please make it brief (or put it off until after the meeting) and enter into the breath of the attunement in progress. If a Dance has already been rehearsed or is close to completion, plan to Dance instead on that one (unless the leader specifically authorizes your playing).

Our rental period at Keystone is 6:30-10pm (with the exception of the Aramaic night, when we rent from 6:00). The church administration is very firm about these times. Other organizations may be renting other parts of the building before our start time, so the building may be open. We have agreed to not enter before our rental period, regardless of the comings and goings of others.

To support our contracted end time, please remove instruments and accessories from the Dance room soon after the closing. (This supports decorators in packing up.) Likewise, pack up all of your possessions by 9:55 and have them gathered for departing.
Thirdly, it is the Dance leader’s call as to how much and what type of accompaniment they want for the evening and for each Dance. If there are several drummers, guitarists, woodwind players, etc., you may end up dancing some of the Dances. Hopefully, you can consider that a bonus.

Fourth, we generally have a guitar anchor and drum anchor for each evening. These people are responsible to the Dance leaders for the evening. Some leaders are very comfortable with orchestrating the music for the evening; others want the anchors to fulfill this function. We will try to let you know who to follow, and please do that. Please do not get offended or feel slighted if you’re not included in a section or a Dance. We contribute in many ways but primarily by our presence and devotion no matter what position we are in.

Fifth, when accompanying a Dance, please remember to watch the Dance Leader and take your cues from him or her.

Once again, thanks so much for your interest and willingness to contribute. We hope this note helps your understanding of what it means to be a musician for the Dances, and the protocol for putting together an evening at the Wednesday night Dances of Universal Peace. We hope this letter clarifies our intentions and contributes to everyone’s understanding of our procedures in order to reduce any confusion or lack of clarity about what’s desired and expected and to make the process better for everyone.