

Psalm 96 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.

³ Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

⁴ For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

⁵ For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

⁶ Honor and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

When Pat Tomlins asked me to coordinate the worship service this morning—a service filled with music, I thought that it would be nice to have a little message to go along with the music. And so, I thought, it would be nice to say a little bit about singing.

Thanks to the internet, I found an article called 7 Biblical reasons why singing matters. The article says that we are obeying God when we sing; that singing ties us together as a congregation; that we are spiritually strengthened when we sing.

But, that didn't seem like the message for this morning.

I went on to read other articles that discussed why singing is physically good for our bodies—singing releases endorphins and oxytocin, body chemicals that make us feel happier, less depressed and lonely. Singing can improve our heart rate. One article even says that if people sing together, their heart rates can sync with each other. Better posture, a good workout for your lungs, and better circulation; a boosted immune system, cleared sinuses and a longer life are included in the benefits.

Those things did not seem like the message for this morning either.

The sound of our voice is not really too much more than air from our lungs blowing across the “strings” that are our vocal cords. And yet, voices are individual—as individual as our fingerprints. With them, we can express our thoughts, hopes, dreams, love and prayers. We can praise God together. I have never heard another voice exactly like that throaty, cigarette-enhanced baritone of my precious dad. I know that you have voices that you can hear, as well—your mom, dad, sister, brother, friend—someone you don’t have any more.

I listened Friday evening to the amazing, soaring voice of Martina McBride in concert as she shared a new song she had written, I also realized that it is not just our voices that are such individual, wonderful things, but that over the several thousand years of human creation, probably billions of songs have been sung. And, yet, with melody, harmony, rhythm, tempo, style, instruments, you could create a new one this afternoon that is not the same as any before. That is a miracle!

At 2:30 am (not normally a time on my normal waking hours) a couple of nights ago, it was if a light suddenly shone into the center of me, illuminating the actual, wonderful miracle of the human voice, and the gift of singing that I have for so long taken for granted. I just cannot believe that I didn’t realize it before.

And so, whether you believe that we sprung into humanity on the sixth day of creation or think we evolved over thousands of years, --just imagine for a moment, the first time those early human beings figured out that their voices could blend in harmony---I believe that the gift of song is a miracle and a blessing.

This morning I, and I hope all of us, stand in awe and wonder of the human voice and its gifts to God’s creation.

Benediction:

Nineteen years ago, I think, Melanie Hancock and I began working as directors of the youth choir at Sunrise, which we called the Shiners. Little ones learn at different rates, and the skill of singing is no different. There was one little boy in the choir had a little trouble staying in tune. But, that didn't stop him from singing with a lusty voice—to the extent that the other children, shushed him sometimes.

But from that child, I learned one of the most profound spiritual lessons of my life. Clarke and I were teaching Sunday School at the time. One morning, we had a large sheet of paper on the wall, where the children were to write down what gifts they had that they could give to God. The little boy from the choir wrote that he could give his gift of singing.

So, whether you are “in tune” for us humans or not, I believe that God hears the songs of our hearts, and that is what matters the most—that's the gift of music.

May you always feel the embrace of God

May your life reflect Peace, Joy and Abundance

May your heart radiate with Love and Light

May your soul sing each and every day

May your every step be guarded and guided by God's Amazing
Grace

And may God bless you in all ways, always.

Amen