

The Sacred Expressions of Music—Psalm 57: 4, 6-10
June 13, 2021—Music Sunday

We don't know the situation the Psalmist is facing in our scripture this morning. But, it has to be pretty bad, pretty dire to compare it to being set among a pride of lions hungry for human flesh. Do you ever feel like that? Has COVID prompted feelings of being like the prey of the virus, of being hunted by a predator? I wonder if that's how black people feel seeing the George Floyd video? I wonder if that's how Indigenous people feel when the discovery in Kamloops reminds them of the casual disregard for their lives among the settler population? I wonder if that's how Muslims feel when weighing the implications of the simple decision of whether or not to go for a walk, especially after last week's attack in London? I wonder.

Yet, as people of faith, and I have heard this from Muslim leaders this week, we are called to proclaim a truth that is deeper than surface fear that finds expression in hatred and violence. That truth is that love, the love of God, though vulnerable to free will, to fear, to ignorance, to hate, to greed is an ever present, steadfast and enduring reality.

This is what the Psalmist is doing in the latter half of the psalm, proclaiming with song and the playing of instruments, harp and lute that the love of God is a deeper reality. All beauty including music does this, it points a way through and forward if we will but listen and watch. It's why part of the response to George Floyd is the defiance of rap and the lament and comfort of gospel music, it's why drumming and chanting is a part of vigils for the 215 children, it's why the call to prayer and the incantations of prayer are part of the response to the London tragedy. Music, all beauty grounds us in something deeper, life-giving and uniting.

We are so blessed at Parkminster to have such great musical leadership and so many people who are willing to share their gifts of song and instrument that point to this way, that have seen us through these past many months of pandemic and upheaval, that have

helped to keep us together, worshipping and praising. I want to give you an opportunity to express what music, especially Parkminster music has meant to you over these past months, to offer your gratitude. Feel free to type your responses in the chat or ask in the chat to turn on your camera and we'll get you on.

Jeanne Foster : I am so grateful for the music ever week. It lifts my spirits and sometimes moves me to tears. Thank you so much to Neil and everyone who is involved.

Debbie Miethig : Miss it. Minimal exposure. Like the Dunbars saying their voices have deteriorated, so has my playing on the dulcimer. Music is powerful when it can be shared with others in conjunction with others. Hoping all that can happen soon.

Kathleen & Rob : Kathleen - It keeps me grounded.

Deb Siertsema : It allows me to open my voice to sing along and know that no one can hear.

Lani Kerbl : Music at Parkminster: my opportunity to sing in full voice and worship through song. To share my God given gift. Thank you Neil and Parkminster

Joscelyn Alexander : I'm grateful for the impact music can have to lift up anyone. When my kids are feeling down, I can start up a dance party and it helps everyone feel better. If my students are feeling down, we can play music games and as they play their pieces, they perk up and are all smiles by the end of the lesson. It reminds them that they can turn to whenever they have big feelings to express themselves or just to feel better.

Isobel Field : Belonging to an ensemble is so satisfying and comforting-----making music together is each of us contributing to the whole.

Wilma Bakelaar : John is saying that the music at Parkminster invited him/us to join the church and continues to uplift and amaze us in what all our technology can do...Thank you everyone

Mark Demsey : grateful to the Parkminster music, and Parkminster in general, for an anchor in my week.

Lisa Hicknell (she/her) : Just like the line in Earth Song we just performed, "Music and singing has been my refuge." Our virtual choir meetings have been a routine in a time where there have been few routines, a way to keep connected with my Parkminster family, and an opportunity for so much laughter!

Ellen : I am grateful for the community provided by Parkminster at a time when we all often feel alone. In Artistic swimming, music is key to the expression of feelings, as it is at church.

Joe Sheldon : the few weeks we had last fall to play Bells were wonderful.. It pointed out how much we missed it ... NOE the real challenge will be for Neil to retrain us !! !

Roberta Hickey : The music during this time has been truly uplifting.

Roberta Snider : I honour the memory of my Mother through music. It is how my faith has grown throughout my life. I will forever be grateful to Jen Allan and Lee McWebb for introducing me to the Park Minster Choir and congregation. God is great and I praise Him through song.

Nancy : Echoing Mark's comments earlier, the experience of recording with the choir has made it very clear in a new way how we are better together!

Ellen : BTW: I loved the Sax music, who was that playing? I loved to see the bell choir again, music can always touch our hearts in many ways.