



March 2019

Dear Friends,

The people of God sing. God calls us to worship and we often respond in songs of praise. God's people have sung hymns in honour of the Almighty since the time of Moses and before. Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn together at the Last Supper. The early church sang hymns as part of their regular gatherings.

Music has enormous power to engage the emotions, and the bible resounds with praise and thanks to God through music. God has a passion for singing and the bible contains over 400 references to singing and 50 direct commands to sing.

In the Old Testament music played a number of different roles, including assisting in the memorisation of God's Word and in reminding God's people of their history, fallenness and salvation. In the New Testament God's people gather together to express their praise to him and to build one another up in faith.

There are three ways singing serves God and the Word

1) Singing can help us remember words.

Ever notice how easy it is to recall the words of songs you haven't heard for 20 years? We store literally hundreds, even thousands of songs in our memory vaults. I remember a friend who used to put exam data to music. As I fought my brain to remember, maths calculus, and all sorts of information she would gaily hum her way through the exam - with good results! Music has an unusual mnemonic power. We remember patterns in music much better than patterns in words alone. Rhyme, meter and song are the most powerful mnemonic devices which help us to remember words.

2) Singing can help us engage with words emotionally.

Music is a language of emotion in every culture of every age. It is capable of effecting us in profound and subtle ways. We sing when we're happy, sad, to give us courage, change our mood, or just for the joy of it.

3) Singing can help us use words to demonstrate and express our unity.

The first two points can be accomplished when we sing by ourselves, but this point needs other people.

"Be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Ephesians 5:18-20

Music is the natural overflow of a heart in fellowship with the Lord. The songs the church sings are not simply a musical exercise; they come from the heart and not just in the mouth. Some say they can't sing but, however good or bad the sound that comes from your mouth you should sing for a *Spirit-filled* Christian is a singing Christian.

Fenny Compton - Songs of Praise - Singing Sunday

5pm on the first Sunday of each month.

(Methodist church until further notice).

- Learn new songs and hymns,
- You choose the songs & hymns
- Join the choir (adult and children) 4pm for choir practice.

Let us come before the presence of God with music in our hearts and thanksgiving on our lips. Amen.

Rev'd Nicki

Take a Spiritual Journey

Do you have faith in God? Are you spiritual? We invite you to come take a sacred journey of spiritual exploration. The spiritual life is all about paying attention. The Spirit of God is always speaking to us, but we need to slow down, stop, and give more than lip service to what God is saying. We need to get off autopilot and take time to look and listen with the eyes and ears of the heart. We need to stop and give ourselves time to do this.

“Jesus said, ‘Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly’ (Matthew 11: 28-30).

Tuesday 7.30pm in the Chapel of Ease, Northend for 5 weeks from 13th March to 9th April. We will explore ways to encounter God through various spiritual disciplines. For more information contact Rev’d Nicki.