

Why We Sing

“Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!” (Psalm 150:6)

Singing has always been at the heart of Presbyterian worship. When we sing, we are doing more than making music—we are offering back to God the very breath of life given to us. The word Spirit comes from the Latin spiritus, meaning “breath.” Each time we draw breath to sing, we remember that God’s Spirit fills us and sustains us. Singing becomes an act of gratitude: “I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being” (Psalm 104:33).

The psalms themselves are songs, given to God’s people as prayers to be sung. Paul encourages the early church to “sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16). Singing proclaims our faith in a way that words alone cannot—it carries the Word deep into our hearts and out into the world.

When we sing, we do so as one body in Christ. Each voice, whether strong or soft, blends into a greater whole. Together, we embody the truth of Romans 15:6: “so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Singing unites us across differences, allowing us to pray, lament, and rejoice together as a community of faith.

God, in infinite wisdom, designed singing not only to lift our spirits but also to strengthen our bodies. Singing calms anxiety, steadies the breath, and even synchronizes heartbeats when done in community. As Isaiah reminds us, “those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength” (Isaiah 40:31). Singing together is one way God renews us.

For Presbyterians, singing is not a hobby or an optional part of worship—it is essential. It is prayer, proclamation, and praise. It is the Spirit’s breath moving through us, uniting us with one another and with the communion of saints who have sung before us.

So, let us take a deep breath. Let us lift our voices. And let us sing to the Lord a new song.

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