

There is something magical about music, isn't there? It has the power to change our moods, to bring back memories, to bring people together across difference, to inspire us. I said there's something magical about music, but I don't think it's magic at all. I think it is a perfect example of the beauty of God's creative and loving nature. It is living proof that God's creativity is reflected in us and in the ways we make music together as a people and as a planet.

The author of our Psalm this morning knew the holy power of song. They knew that only music could capture the deepness of gratitude and the beauty that God deserved in praise. You might know that the Psalms were originally written to be sung or chanted. Ancient people knew the power of music and rhythm and recognized that music was a worthy way of offering God praise. The psalmist calls upon all of God's creation to sing and make music – the sea and everything in it, the rivers, the mountains, all of the world's inhabitants, reminding us humans that we are not the only ones God created or loves.

Music and art is evidence of the imagination of God and the creativity that God instilled all creation. Our capacity for creativity and imagination gives me hope when things feel hopeless. I am reminded that even if I can't see how a situation will improve or a problem will be fixed, that God has imbued within us an imaginative power that reflects the creativity of the Divine. Yesterday there were protests, marches, and rallies in more than 700 cities across the United States denouncing the practice of separating immigrant families who are seeking asylum at the border. As Mark Twain is credited with saying "History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes." Many of us look at the way we are detaining children, putting them in large cages, having them sleep on concrete with mylar blankets, refusing to hold them or comfort them when they are crying and we hear the rhyme of the tragedies of the past... we hear the rhyme of Japanese internment camps; we hear the rhyme of the children of African slaves being forcibly removed from their parents and then sold to the highest bidder; we hear the rhyme of Jewish children in concentration camps. Hearing these rhymes, tens of thousands of people took to the streets yesterday in one attempt to stop the rhyme

before it gets worse and to call for the reunification of families. These people are imagining a new reality.

Creativity, imagination, and maybe especially music, have the power to be our conduit to the righteousness, faithfulness, and justice of God. It is often in the midst of creative moments – painting, dancing, singing, making music, or being witnesses to these creations, that we feel the movement of God’s Holy and creative spirit stir within us. As we seek ways to bring about more love and less hate, more connection, and less separation, more acceptance and less intolerance, a wider table instead of a taller fence, we are also seeking God’s salvation. I don’t mean the idea that salvation equals eternal life in heaven. Eternal life is rarely what is meant when the scriptures talk about salvation. Instead, it is the idea that we can be saved from that which binds us and keeps us from living a full and abundant life. It is the idea that God might save us from apathy, save us from despair, save us from hopelessness, save us from the dehumanizing actions of caging children, save us treating our fellow human beings as something less than God’s beloved children. And in doing so, restoring our own sense of humanity and beloved-ness. Saving us from looking back and wondering what could have been, if only we had said something or done something different.

So, let us sing a new song. Let us tune our ears to the rejoicing music of the bird’s song, the peaceful humming of lake waves on the shore, the cleansing and rejuvenating praise of raindrops falling on the earth. Let us remember that in our rejoicing, in our singing, in our trumpet blasts and drum beats, we embody God’s creative and loving presence. Let us sing praises to God and rejoice that we are created with the beauty and imagination to find a way out of no way, to see light in the darkness, and to embody Christ’s love for every human in every corner of the earth. May it be so. Amen.