

Singing Your Song?

Psalm 105: 1-3

Preached by Carolyn Bohler
Redlands First United Methodist Church
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Some of you, like Jon Matthews, enjoy entering marathons in different cities or just jogging along paths in many different places.

I don't run, but I do swim, slowly, and I have enjoyed swimming in a number of different pools: the Drayson Center here, once on the top floor of a downtown skyscraper in Denver, and, for many years at the downtown YMCA in Dayton, Ohio. The very last time I swam at the Y before moving to California, something quite sacred happened. After swimming, as I was washing my hair in the locker room, I heard a song coming from the shower stall next to me—a woman was *singing her song*, at the top of her lungs. It was beautiful, an unabashed Spiritual. Soon I heard a voice from the other side of me! Another woman had *joined* in the same song! *Stereophonic spiritual surround sound* in the showers of the downtown Y!

Memory is an interesting phenomenon. We recall sacred moments with vividness. One time in Atlanta, Georgia, I had to awaken quite early to check out of a hotel and get to the Metro in order to catch a plane. At the hotel, I stood in a short line at a little stand for a cup of coffee at 6 a.m. The coffee-dispensing woman was *singing her song*—not with her voice, but with her “willing hands, open heart, and gracious spirit!” [References Meditative thought on bulletin] Several of us early-bird customers commented on her pleasant demeanor, to which she responded, “This is *my* place, every morning at 6 a.m.” Her song was a spiritual—*all inner songs are spirituals*.

Most of us do not sing our songs every day of our lives. We go through life stages or times when in fact we are not *singing our songs* very much at all. Certainly we may have a personality temperament which we could work on a bit, to be more open to expressing our God-given gifts; however, circumstances just do create situations in which we might go for a while without “singing” from our souls.

I started to tell you a dream and to say it was a dream of “a friend of mine,” but then I decided to be straight—to acknowledge that this was a dream I myself had a while back. In my dream I find a very little bird that I had forgotten about. I realize in my dream that I had not remembered to feed the bird for months. I hold the bird in my hand; it is barely alive. The little thing is just bones, not even any feathers are left. No food, no water for ages. The dream made me quite sad. I pondered—was the bird in my dream in some way myself? Was I not *singing my song* soulfully? The experience led me to resolve to make some changes.

This life that God keeps creating tends to bring forth our inner songs, so consistently and so often that altogether we certainly create a symphony. When we notice another person truly belting out their spiritual song, or when we are “in tune,” singing our own sacred song, we can easily have empathy with the Psalmist we just quoted in unison: “O give thanks to God! Sing to God! Sing praises!”

Sometimes our not singing our song is accompanied with not feeling close to God. If we do feel close to God, that tends to help us to sing our songs. Yet, if we are not singing our song that does not necessarily imply that we do not feel close to God. That is, we can be close to God and at the same time be starved or weakened by earthly circumstances.

Noticing when others “whistle while they work—or play,” like the two women who sang in the shower at the Y, reminds us to check our own song-meter. We can ask ourselves, “Am I singing my song?” Do I need any mid-course adjustments in my living or relating so that my spiritual dimension is allowed to soar?

Our inner song is created by God and carries us forward, upward, inward and toward each other. We are grateful for all our musicians who today, and every Sunday, sing, ring, or play from their souls. Let us all do whatever is in our power, with God’s persistent help, to find soul food for ourselves as we continue to sing, or perhaps to reclaim, our spiritual song.