

Advent Devotional December 24, 2023

Scripture

Psalm 150

- 1 *Praise the Lord!*
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament!
- 2 *Praise him for his mighty deeds;*
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!
- 3 *Praise him with trumpet sound;*
praise him with lute and harp!
- 4 *Praise him with tambourine and dance;*
praise him with strings and pipe!
- 5 *Praise him with clanging cymbals;*
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- 6 *Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!*
Praise the Lord!

Devotion

Tracy Riggle Young, Senior Director of Enrollment Services

Visitors to our home, particularly in this season of Advent, quickly recognize that music is the heartbeat of our family dwelling. Silence and quiet are hard to come by as music permeates my children's bedrooms and the Alexa constantly hums while my husband is working his magic in the kitchen. Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker," classic folk songs from James Taylor, and Taylor Swift's latest re-release have become the heartbeat of our home. Music is for us all a mode of expression: a way to process the stress of a given day, a coping mechanism to help us deal with our emotions, a brief escape from the monotony of the day, an encouraging beat to inspire an impromptu dance party and, perhaps most of all, a way to connect more fully to God and one another.

The psalmist reminds us, in the book's final appeal, to praise God in all aspects of our lives. We are told that this praise can take many forms—from clanging and clashing symbols to the light strum of the strings and harp. In this season of preparation and hopeful anticipation, may we all find space to fill our lives with music. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the season, create moments to partake in the sounds and songs of worship. Let us come together united in one voice of praise in the small moments of music that bring us all together.

Prayer

God of all creation, on this eve of Christ's birth, ground us in your Spirit. Soften our hearts to one another as we exchange tokens of our love and adoration. Slow our minds and stress so that we may rest in wonder of you and your creation. Strengthen us in our commitment to praise you in all things. Inspire us to worship you with song and sound so we may never forget you as the ground of our being. Amen.