

Let's Worship Together

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!
Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!
Psalm 98:4-6*

Whether you worship with your hands raised as contemporary songs play or stand still in a pew with a hymnal gently resting in your hands, corporate singing has enriched the Christian community throughout the centuries. The function of worship is multifaceted: it can uplift the spirit, remind us of deep theological truths, and knit a congregation closer together. These dimensions might even provide a unique solution to some of our modern afflictions.

The political division of this era has spread far beyond the bounds of cable news and social media. Indeed, it's permeated our relationship and bled into the church, too. Is there any hope for healing these ruptures? You're probably not surprised that we think the answer is a resounding "YES!" (we wouldn't have created [The After Party course](#) if we didn't think so) and we think worship is a key element of moving the church towards hope, humility, and unity. This is why we have partnered with The Porter's Gate to create songs related to the themes of [The After Party course](#) for the forthcoming album [The Kingdom of Jesus](#).

You might be wondering "How can worship help us confront the challenges of political polarization?" Here's the thing: Worship is really God's way of moving us towards greater humility and more lasting hope and, as Jesus outlined in the Sermon on the Mount, hope & humility are to define how Christians engage in politics, as in all things.

One of the best examples of humility in worship is found in the [book of Psalms](#). Written as a collection of worship songs for the people of God, the Psalms express the full range of human emotion and experience—lament, joy, anger, doubt, and thanksgiving. Underlying all of these emotions is an awareness of our need to humbly rely on God. Worship is one way we can express the full spectrum of these emotions, much like we see unfold in the Psalms, while drawing closer to God at the same time. As Andy Crouch said in a recent [Good Faith podcast](#), music is another way to fulfill the greatest commandment of all: To love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength. Singing the Psalms and worshiping together is a way for us to share in the full emotions of the Psalms, grow closer with fellow believers, and commune with God.

We sing songs also to grow our hope. Through worship, we often rehearse [the theological truths of the faith](#) about who God is and who we are. Singer-songwriter Sandra McCracken shared on a [Good Faith podcast episode](#) that in times of waiting and exile, the Psalms and corporate worship can bridge current struggles with the future hope of the “wedding Feast of the Lamb.” Worship serves as a powerful way to grow our understanding of the faith and remind us that at the core of our theology is an abundance of hope in the coming Kingdom of God.

In addition to growing hope and humility, it is significant that worship on Sundays is not done alone. It unites congregations — young and old, rich and poor, Republican and Democrat. As Michael LeFebvre, author of *Singing the Songs of Jesus: Revisiting the Psalms*, [wrote for the Center of Pastor Theologians](#):

“This social benefit of song is experienced in many realms of life, not only in worship. Citizens are invited to set aside political differences when they sing the national anthem together. A family can rise above their tensions (at least for the moment) when the strains of ‘Happy Birthday’ unify them in a shared celebration. Singing together fosters harmony, both vocally and communally, around those core yearnings we share and sing about. Christian hymnody brings that experienced harmony into the communion of the saints.”

Singing together allows us to participate fully in the body of Christ, exhibiting our humble reliance on God and our hope in the coming Kingdom of God. It is the “[glue](#)” to the historic church and for our present-day Christian communities, too.

With this in mind, let’s gather together on Sundays and raise our voices in unity, praising and giving thanks that we worship the same God who graciously meets us in our humility and lovingly gives us hope.

Want to go deeper on how we are formed by worship?

- [“How Music Makers Help Us Make Sense of God’s World \(with Sandra McCracken\),” Good Faith Podcast](#)
- [“How to Listen to Music \(with Andy Crouch\),” Good Faith Podcast](#)
- [“A Conversation with Sarah Reeves,” The Walk: Devotionals & Conversations with the Artists of the Church](#)
- [“Darren Mulligan Devotional: A Call to Care for Worship Leaders,” The Walk: Devotionals & Conversations with the Artists of the Church](#)

Some of our favorite writers on the topic

- [“Singing the Songs of Jesus: Revisiting the Psalms by Michael Lefebvre](#)
- [Sing a New Song: Recovering Psalm Singing for the Twenty-First Century by Joel R. Beeke and Anthony T. Selvaggio](#)
- [The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms by Timothy Keller and Kathy Keller](#)

Want to expand your worship playlist? The team at [Redeeming Babel](#), home of *The After Party*, has compiled a list of a few of our favorite contemporary Christian artists in a variety of genres as further example of how we can find unity in our shared faith even when (or especially when!) we have a wide range of interests and preferences in the church. We've curated some of our favorites into a [playlist](#) designed to help you go deeper – and maybe sing along!

- The Welcome Wagon – Gospel / Indie Pop Band
- Kings Kaleidoscope – Indie Rock / Hip Hop
- The Collection – Alternative / Indie
- Josh Garrels – Folk
- The Hillbilly Thomists – Bluegrass
- John Mark Pantana – Indie Pop
- Antoine Bradford – Gospel / Soul
- The Sing Team – Folk / Soul Band
- Verses – Electronic Trio
- Ecclesia – Pop / Electronica
- Natalie Layne – R&B / Soul
- Tekoa – Folk Rock
- Derek Minor – Rap
- Terrian – Pop
- Over the Rhine – Folk
- Lauren Daigle – Pop
- Andrew Peterson – Folk Rock
- Maverick City Music – Contemporary

[LISTEN TO A PLAYLIST OF THESE ARTIST'S TOP SONGS HERE](#)

A Final Thought

Redeeming Babel is a home for thoughtful Christians who are trying to make sense of the world. We'd love you to join in the conversation around our (virtual) campfire by listening to [The Good Faith podcast](#), signing up for one of our [courses](#), reading our [book on anxiety](#) and our latest [book on politics](#), or by following us on [social media](#). We hope you'll stick with us – and may what we've shared here be a rich blessing to you as you journey on!