



## Reflections from Pastor Brooke for May 29, 2020

*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

Good Day, Beloved Church!

Let's start with a few announcements. This Sunday is Pentecost, so please wear your red, orange, or yellow so that our screen looks like a Pentecost flame! Although my home altar will not be as beautiful as if Megan Moran did it, it will also be adorned with red, orange, and yellow. Some of you received a couple of coloring pages in the mail and some of you will receive it with this email blast. Please make sure you either color the uncolored one and bring it to worship on Sunday or bring the colored one with you. There will be a place in the service for you to hold it up so our screen is ablaze with a visual image of the Holy Spirit. I look forward to worshipping with you on this holy festival day.

This verse from the psalmist caught my attention and also made me a little sad. There was much I loved about my job as a music therapist, but one of the things I loved most, was that on most days, I got to sing. A couple of weeks ago, Jason played a prelude entitled *Jesus Paid It All*. He asked me if I thought the congregation would know it. I wasn't sure, but it immediately took me back to a small room in a second floor two-family home on the East side of Cleveland where a woman was the caregiver for her sister who had been a nurse. The patient had breast cancer and also dementia. She couldn't sing along with me, but her sister — the caregiver — would harmonize with me beautifully. She would frequently share some ideas about her faith and I often felt like I had received far more than I offered during those visits. *Jesus Paid It All* was one of those hymns we would sing.

I miss singing with others! There. I said it. Of course I love getting to sing along with Carol on Sunday mornings, but as I have heard over and over — it's not the same. As I was listening to a webinar this week about returning to the church building, one of the very first things they said was that we are all grieving. Some of us (myself included) are in the bargaining phase of grieving: "If we do this, can we return to the building? Couldn't some of us get together for worship? If we wear masks and sit 10 feet apart, could we sing just one verse of *How Can I Keep From Singing?* together?"

The answer to that last question is definitely “No,” so how *can* I keep from singing? I can't. I can't keep from singing any more than the birds that I am hearing as I write this, can keep from singing.

On that very first Pentecost, people spoke in their own languages. Singing is very much my first language, so I will not abandon it. I will sing! I will get in my car and sing, I will sit at my piano and sing, I will sing while muted to everyone else on Zoom — except my spouse — on Sunday mornings. It is decidedly not the same, but I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. How will you use your voice to sing to the Lord on this day and in the days to come?

*Blessings,*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Brooke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.