



## FIRST UNITED CHURCH

Swift Current, SK  
Sunday, May 30, 2021

### Music for the Soul

Leading Worship: First United Church Choir

#### **A Theological Statement on “Music in The United Church of Canada”**

The promise of the holy spirit is through song and music and in accordance with that understanding, the United Church of Canada was prompted in 2008 to commission a theological statement on music in the United Church of Canada. This morning we would like to share that statement with you. It begins with a quote “When long before time” from VU #248, is followed by a preamble and four short statements.

*“When long before time and the worlds were begun,  
when there was no earth and no sky and no sun, and all  
was deep silence and night reigned supreme, and even  
our Maker had only a dream...the silence was broken  
when God sang the Song, and light pierced the darkness  
and rhythm began, and with its first birthcries creation  
was born, and creaturely voices sang praise to the morn.”*

-Peter W.A. Davison, “When Long before Time” (VU248)

#### **Preamble**

We are a singing people. Music is not simply inserted into liturgy but liturgy is inherently musical. Music permeates all God's creation and enfolds and embraces all God's people. Our musical life is rooted in and evolves from God's relationship with us, and our relationship and response to God. That relationship, especially through biblical and theological witness, and the experience of being the church, shapes who we are and who we are becoming as persons baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and nourished at his table. How we sing together as a people of God shapes and reflects how we live as human beings and how we live with creation and with one another.

#### **We long for a deeper relationship with God**

Why do we sing? Where does music live in us? Music empowers us to listen for God's voice. It enables us to offer praise to God who has created and is creating. Music reminds us that we are loved by God and made for God. The fullest expression of this in the church is congregational song.

#### **We long for deeper connections with one another.**

When we sing together, barriers and categories are transcended. Differences go away. Song enables us to bridge gaps. It unites us as the body of Christ. It helps us learn to listen deeply. When we sing each other's heart song, we take on a new sense of compassion and understanding.

**We acknowledge the brokenness, pain, and fear we carry.**

Song enables us to confess our brokenness. In it, we call each other to account. We have been silent about music in the church. We confess that at times relationships with music-makers have not been what they could be. Songs have been broken. There has been discord and dissonance. Congregations have been part of this. We have not acknowledged this in our governance especially in terms of shepherding care.

**We believe that our spirituality and our prophetic voice spring from one source and are lived in one Body.**

We are grounded in God's Spirit as we sing to, for and with the world. Through song, voices are found and nurtured. Song shows us how the world is and how it can be. Stewardship of the church's song therefore requires faithful discipleship of us all.

(by Dan Hansen, Nancy Hardy, Kenneth Inkster, Blair Odney and Janet Wilson, as part of their participation in "Are We Off-Key?" in March 2008) Taken from a book called "Singing Faith Alive