



Music Report

A regular column from St Faith's Director of Music, Robert Woods

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. Ephesians 5:19

When we walk into church before our Sunday Eucharist, what do we hear? Some of us may hear silence, some hear people talking and socialising together... If we are lucky enough, we may even hear the choir rehearsing or the organ playing a prelude before the service. Why is any of these important? I think that all of these point towards the purpose of our presence, to be with God and be with our neighbours. These are all signs of life in our church.

When we pause in silence before the beginning of our service to gather our thoughts and prayers, we are active. When we hear the ringing of the bell to indicate the beginning of the service, the organist plays, we stand and sing, the choir, servers and clergy move and process. We are engaging our senses in active worship, praise and prayer. We hear the word, feel the touch of the hymnbook, smell (and sometimes taste) incense and see faces both familiar and unfamiliar.

An unpopular quote: "*We're all in this together*". When each of us enters this wonderful building, we enter alone but by our presence we come together to give thanks and praise for all we have. Singing is not just for the choir, it becomes much more meaningful when we all can participate in singing hymns, psalms and spiritual songs. Reading the word of God is not just for the few, we are all called to inwardly digest the word. Tea and coffee is not just for those who are served, but also by those who serve. Through what may seem a simple thought, we have become more than just *I'm here to worship* to *We're all in this together*. We have become a living community.

Why would I point this out? I'm sure some of you will know the infamous piece by John Cage called *4'33"*. It was an unwritten composition in which the noise from those present was the music, no notes were played on any instruments. The next time we are in church, take time to appreciate the life and sound of the building. Singing, speaking, sound of tea cups, shuffling of feet, the occasional cough! When we can hear these we remember that we are a community - using just one of the senses we have been given.

Robert Woods

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