



# *The Westminster Pulpit*

Sermons Preached at Westminster Presbyterian Church  
3900 West End Avenue Nashville, Tennessee 37205-1899

## ***“They’re Playing Our Song”*** **Sermon on Psalm 100**

Donovan A. Drake

June 14, 2026

Third Sunday after Pentecost

“They’re playing our song! Our song. We have our name on it. Don’t mess with it! That song was the song that was played when we met for the first time.” It was the song of our romance. When I hear that song, I’m 25-years old again, “Come on darlin’, let’s dance! They’re playing our song!”

Or “Hey! They’re playing OUR song. Who do they think they are?”

I remember a man in my first congregation who liked the Fleetwood Mac song, “Don’t Stop thinking About Tomorrow” until it became associated with the Clinton campaign.

We get tied to songs!

Westminster has a few songs that are our songs. “On Eagle’s Wings” - I didn’t know that song until I came here. “Here I am Lord” - with graduating Seniors in the balcony. Hardly a dry eye in the house. That’s one of our songs.

We just sang the tune OLD HUNDRETH. That’s the tune. I grew up with that tune. It was the Doxology every Sunday. When I say the Doxology, what I mean is THEE Doxology.

And some of you know this! Because we get around to singing THEE Doxology at Westminster. And what I hear is, “Hey, we finally sang the Doxology! We used to only sing it that way in this church... ALL THE TIME. And then someone changed it, did you do that? We don’t need to change things. Listen! PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSING FLOW!

IT IS The way the Almighty GOD INTENDED IT!

I think this is a good time to go over the definition of the word Doxology: the study of praise! But I know, I know, I know, we get passionate about our song! It used to be our song! It got us through the good times. It got us through the hard times.

I remember landing in Philadelphia and taking a train to Princeton. I arrived in Trenton, NJ, to switch from the Penn line to the NJ Transit line, and suddenly, in the station, police were everywhere! Sirens and lights. Out of the corner of my eye, a yellow cab. With my heart racing, I jumped in and said, "Princeton, please!" The driver didn't speak a lick of English, but when my heart settled down enough so that I could hear the radio, I realized that it was tuned to a Christian Station.

It's really not my music, but that night in that place, it was nice to know that I wasn't alone. There was in the car the driver and I, and Jesus... for where two or more are gathered in my name.... I am there among them. They're playing our song.

It holds us together.

I think of Paul's words in Ephesians. He says to us, "sing songs and spiritual songs to one another." We should practice that!

It's hard to have an argument after you sing, "*Great is Thy Faithfulness*." Difficult to have a dispute after singing "*How Great Thou Art*." Got a bone to pick with the preacher? "Well, before you let me have it, can we sing, "*The Old Rugged Cross*" together?

"I will cling to that old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown." Now what seems to be the problem?

Jesus calls us the "light of the world." It would be good to look like our song!

The song we sang to the tune of Old Hundredth, "*All People That on Earth Do Dwell*" is Psalm 100.

Psalm 100 is an in-your-face psalm. Filled with imperatives...

Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

Come into his presence with singing.

Know that the Lord is God.

Wow! Refreshing! YOU make! YOU serve! You Come! You Know! DO IT! To be in control! Rare these days. I saw a family in Costco and the mother said, "Don't do that! Don't touch it! We're not buying that! So, don't touch it. What did I say? Don't! Ok, fine!" And I thought, "That woman has no control over her husband!" A "no" cannot be a "maybe," or "sometimes." What is that? How do you function in that? No is no. Yes is yes.

It is such a rare bird these days... the IMPERATIVE! "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, Worship the Lord with gladness; come into God's presence with singing." Do it!

It seems to me that if we were writing Psalm 100 today, we would have to write, "I would like to invite you to offer an expression of thanksgiving to God." I know when I say "God," I don't mean ... "GOD!" Authoritarian God. I mean more of a vibe, a good and happy vibe we could just be aware of and share together. Knowing that not all of us are joyful at this moment of time,

but perhaps joining in this communal experience, we might serve the vibe with gladness. And when I say serve, I don't mean to diminish your self-esteem. I'm suggesting that you should be empowered to offer your own experience back to the vibe, freely! Do you think that would be all right?

And that would be the end of verse one! And we'd have to put it to the tune CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG!

I feel like today we can all agree to disagree, but we can't agree to agree.

Listen to Psalm 100.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord,  
all the earth.  
Serve the Lord with  
gladness;  
come into his presence with  
singing.

Know that the Lord is God.  
It is he who made us, and we  
are his;  
we are his people, and the  
sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with  
thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise.  
Give thanks to him, bless his  
name.

For the Lord is good,  
his steadfast love endures  
forever,  
and his faithfulness to all  
generations.

Wow! All encompassing, the imperative. Do this! Wouldn't it be great to be the Church again? Be the light shining on the hill again? I feel like we've taken a backseat. Always reacting. Reacting. Reacting to the world around us. Lost our light! Lost our power! We can't tell anyone what to do!

We are scrambling to figure out why we're dying. "How can we make God more palatable to the masses? How can we attract young people?" That's been our mission my whole ministry long!

We come up with ideas! We need more comfortable seating, let's get rid of the pews! Let me tell you, as a father, I have discovered young people don't care about comfortable seating. When we go on a family vacation, my son and daughter scout the town and find the best coffee shops. We went to one up in British Columbia where you stand. What is this? We just stand here? "Dad, hush up!" That's the imperative! So, I drank my \$7 cup of coffee... eating my 'AKEE berry and bird seed breakfast.' "Dad, it's pronounced ASAAEE." "Whatever, my kingdom for a chair."

The next day, we're at a different place. Same prices. But it had seats, which were 90-degree concrete slabs, held up by chains to the wall. Kind of an Alcatraz motif. "How are you doing, Dad?" "Ten years to life."

It's not the pews!

What do you suppose it is then? It could be the music. It could be the preaching. It could be the dress code, it could be the time of the day. It could be the friendliness. It could be all of these things. It could be!

Or maybe we've lost our direction. We've been thinking that the culture has the direction. Has it occurred to us that the culture may be completely lost as well? They don't know where they're going either. Everything is changing so quickly.

You can get into a car downtown that doesn't have a driver. Have you done this? It's all done with light detection sensors turning the world of color and light into ones and zeros, ones and zeros, ones and zeros, zeros and ones, ones and zeros. Are you one, or are you nothing at all?

I have a friend who wrote a song and sent it to me via email. It was an amazing song. He wrote the lyrics, and the lead singer had an incredible voice. The band was full. The chorus had a choir. How long did that take? How much did that cost? I was impressed. He said, "All AI. I put in the lyrics and then AI made the song." Ones and zeros, zeros and ones. Are you one or are you nothing at all...?

In a disorienting time, maybe it's time to be unequivocal. Maybe it's time to point to some hope. There is a God, and we are not it. There is light, and we reflect it. There is a thing called steadfast love. It never gives up on loving any one of us. There this a thing called God, who created the world and everything that is in it. There is this God who is reconciling all things in it. There is this thing called love, there is this thing called joy, there is this thing called hope, there is this thing and we are to do it. They're playing our song!

The world is saying they are playing our song. They're playing our song!

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

Serve the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name.

For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.

It's our song.

Copyright©Donovan A. Drake 2026