

**Bible Study Series “Singing the Unsung”  
Session One - “Why We Sing”**

“Singing is praying twice” - music gives sense to words

**song:** The Lord will listen to the broken-hearted

**song:** Alleluia (from Detroit)

Song can engage us in worship in ways nothing else can

**song:** Prepare the way of the Lord

One of the purposes of song is to allow prayer and liturgy to have depth that doesn't happen without it

Hymn books, bulletins, and projectors... “if a song is worth singing, the words should be worth remembering”

Songs are the public property of the church

Three ways in which the church has sung the Psalms through the ages:

- Gregorian chant
- Anglican chant
- Reformed Church verse

Psalms have a substantial range of dynamic and emotion

Second Vatican Council - the liberation of people, including the singing and responsorial

Church musicians tended to write nice melodies; whereas other cultures bring in other rhythms (syncopations) that come from the songs being written as people danced and responded

**song:** The Lord is my light  
(Style is antiphone and verse)

## SINGING THE UNSUNG

*Questions for discussion:*

1. Give an example from your life experience illustrating the claim that “singing is praying twice.”
2. “Music embellishes words with much more profound meaning” and resonance. Explain.
3. What kinds of music does your worshipping community rely on? Why?
4. What are some of Bell's pet peeves regarding the poorly thought-out projection of words in worship? Suggest a list of considerations on a “best practice” list for churches that use projection.
5. What are some of the benefits of the “responsorial Psalm”?
6. Describe how the European approach to singing in worship may differ from the typical African or South American approach?
7. So, *why* do we sing?
8. Describe a situation in your worshipping community where you could imagine incorporating one of this session's responses or Psalms.

[www.livingthequestions.com](http://www.livingthequestions.com)