



# Do Re Mi Us — The benefits of communal

**New recruit to the National Office and choir lover, Andrea Fleming, investigates why it feels so good to sing.**

From the Ancient Greek choruses to the flash mobs of the early 2000s and everything in between, communal singing has always played an important role in society. Singing together breaks down barriers, builds confidence, offers an outlet and unifies a group. Not to mention the magic of creating a strong and beautiful chorus of many individual voices becoming one.

We see across all cultures, languages and faith communities that groups of people are unified when they sing together. It is a kind of hospitality which we can invite and welcome others into... whether they are in tune or not!

While serving in Papua, Val Holt, Director of Member Care, remembers the Dani people singing together as they worked on a big project. Val shares, "On one occasion, a group of 20 or so men were charged with the task of dismantling a significantly large building and removing the rubble from its built location to another. They sang as they worked. **The singing seemed to unify them in this task, kept the momentum going and strengthened them as a team and community.**"

Walt White, Global Consultant for Community Movements, was struck by a quote from Indian missionary Shadhu Sundar Singh. It read, "Many shadus (holy men) have become theologically Christian, but have taken a decision not to associate themselves with the Christian church, but rather to take a role like John the Baptist, to prepare India to become Christian in an Indian way." Walt recalled this quote following an afternoon with a group of believers in a small village in South India.

**Together they sang songs, songs that they had been taught by a wandering shadu and some they had made themselves. The songs expressed their unique relationship with God and they worshiped together, following Jesus within their own culture.**

Individually, there are benefits as well. A study undertaken by Swinburne University of Technology's Centre for Social Impact, reported that 98% of participants found singing to be a great way to de-stress and 81% said they experienced improved wellbeing. In God's perfect design for your life and others, He intended for you to sing. How are your vocal chords... do they need some exercise? Try them out, sing in the rain, sing in the shower, sing in the morning, sing before you sit down to study, sing before you go to bed. It's a spiritual exercise and it won't require anything more than your persistence to do it.





# singing

## More reasons to sing:

### Singing cements the words of Jesus in our heart

In Colossians 3:16, the Apostle Paul instructs us to, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Paul tells us that as we sing spiritual songs together, the words of Jesus dwell in our hearts. Think how much scripture you know by heart because you have sung it!

### Singing strengthens our faith

Acts 16 describes Paul singing with Silas in jail. Rather than rot away, they chose to sing away. Their song of praise strengthened them, refocused their minds from their earthly suffering to their heavenly God and reaffirmed their trust in Him. Their song was also a witness to those listening.

### Singing brings us closer to God

Ephesians 5:18-20 highlights the relationship between singing praises and being filled with the Spirit. It says, "be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..." Proclaiming truths about God through song brings us closer to Him and grows our relationship with Him.

## Even more reasons to sing:

- > **Psalm 84:4**  
Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever **singing** your praise!
- > **Psalm 100:2**  
Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with **singing**!
- > **Psalm 105:43**  
So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with **singing**.
- > **Song of Solomon 2:12**  
The flowers appear on the earth, the time of **singing** has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
- > **2 Samuel 22:50**  
For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, and **sing** praises to your name.

The Apostle John in Revelation 7:9-10, describes a great multitude of people from every tribe, people groups and languages singing before the Lamb, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" As we branch out for May Mission Month, maybe you can use singing to reach out to others in your community? Singing is a great way to connect with people. If your church doesn't have a group to sing with, start one up! Invite people outside your church community. Use it as a mission opportunity – there are so many songs that can sow seeds of faith for friends who haven't met Jesus yet. Think of all the 70's hippies singing Boney M's Rivers of Babylon!