

# Why We Give: Lifting Our Voices to God

*by Walter Smith, St. John's Parishioner, with contributions from attendees of St. John's services*

*"The music is such a special part of services. When the choir sings softly, it's like they are sharing a secret about worship with me."*

Each Sunday at St. John's, the sung poetry of sacred texts invites us to enter a realm of mystery. Church music opens us to the divine and to aspects of ourselves that otherwise are hidden. Music can express the full range of our feelings, from exultant joy to anguished lament.

*"I'm new to St. John's and had to tell you how much I loved the music."*

On Sundays, we bring ourselves into a space set aside, dedicated and consecrated to encounters with the transcendent. Singing hymns lets us experience an essential truth: we are not created merely for ourselves, and there is one Spirit that animates us all.

*"The music is so beautiful! I can hear their voices like angels singing prayers to me, instead of me only saying and praying them."*

The Book of Common Prayer has a prayer for church musicians and artists that asks that they and we be granted glimpses of divine beauty. The psalmist said, "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of Him," and that is what sacred music at its best will do for us: offer us glimpses of beauty that point us toward awe.

Your pledge supports a music program that nourishes us all.