



DAY 24

Making Noise

Psalm 98:5. Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

I have been involved in music for my entire life. We sang in the car when we went on vacations (no radio) and my sisters and I were always singing about something. I also sang in the church choir when I got older. I started in the bell choir at First Christian Church of Stow when I was in high school and I have been ringing bells with the same group ever since. When we had our children they also sang in the children's choir and they played in the bell choir all through high school. Music is a joy to me and is a big part of my life. I love it because it involves so many different emotions.

But what do we do when we don't feel like making a "joyful noise"? What if we want to make a sad noise or an angry noise or a hopeless noise? What if we can't even think about a joyful noise. Not only that, what if our noises are not perfect? What if we can't sing or play bells or we just can't bring ourselves to make any noise at all?

Fred and I watch the news most nights and it really feels hard right now to make any kind of "joyful noise". My heart aches for peace but right now peace feels so far away. How do we find the energy to make any noise, when the only thing you want to do is scream or cry. The news can do that to you!

What a blessing it has been for me to lead our bell choir (Center Ringers) for the past two years! These wonderful people are so eager to learn and get better! One of our pieces brings out many emotions. It starts out angry with loud clashing bells that don't seem to make any sense. But then it flows into a beautiful melody that you all may recognize. At the end we go back to the angry bells and they are loud and fierce until the very last note of the song. The song ends with a beautiful chord coming from the depths of anger. When you hear it, your body says "Ahh, **there** it is"! There is the hope we are waiting for! There is the peace. There is the Joyful noise!. We can all breathe again.

I believe that God does ask us to make a "Joyful Noise". But, I also believe that God hears our sad noises and our angry noises. I believe that God is in those noises, until we can again make our noises joyful. We aren't perfect when we sing, play bells or any other instrument. But God is not looking for perfection, God is looking for our faithfulness.

May we all make a joyful noise to God even if it's not perfect or beautiful, because just like our bell piece, God makes all things beautiful in the end.

God of Joyful Noises, we thank you for voices and instruments of your peace. May we continue to use whatever we have to glorify your name. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

– Cheryl Delaney