

HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 4/8/2024

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

ONE AT ONE – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, April 9 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for our country, that we not focus so much on differences but rather on those things that bring unity. Pray for those who lead that they might put the needs of people ahead of party and political gain. Ask that GOD continue to guide us so that we might bless others as we have been blessed.*

In 1973, Paul Simon wrote “American Tune.” It was a time of great political and social unrest in our country. The Vietnam War was still being fought, the Watergate scandal was breaking, civil rights continued to be a divisive issue, and many were disillusioned with the government and the direction in which the country was heading. “American Tune” spoke to the universal struggle of people trying to find their way in a complex, ever-changing world.

Today, I still find “American Tune” resonating for me as we struggle with issues of immigration, war and conflict in different parts of the world, unrest and violence in our country, and those continuing questions about government and the direction of our country. I think Simon’s words can speak to us in this time as well as they did fifty years ago. Unfortunately, I cannot share the beautiful music Simon wrote to accompany the lyrics, but you can find it on the internet, I’m sure. The music was influenced by the hymn, “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded,” by Johann Sebastian Bach. Paul Simon is gifted at subtly finding ways to infuse troubling situations with hope and promise. Here are those words:

Many's the time I've been mistaken
And many times confused
Yes, and I've often felt forsaken
And certainly misused
Oh, but I'm alright, I'm alright
I'm just weary to my bones
Still, you don't expect to be bright and bon vivant
So far away from home, so far away from home

I don't know a soul who's not been battered
I don't have a friend who feels at ease
I don't know a dream that's not been shattered
Or driven to its knees
Oh, but it's alright, it's alright
For we lived so well so long
Still, when I think of the road we're traveling on
I wonder what's gone wrong
I can't help it, I wonder what's gone wrong

And I dreamed I was dying
I dreamed that my soul rose unexpectedly
And looking back down at me
Smiled reassuringly
And I dreamed I was flying
And high up above my eyes could clearly see
The Statue of Liberty
Sailing away to sea

And I dreamed I was flying
And we come on the ship they call The Mayflower
We come on the ship that sailed the moon
We come in the age's most uncertain hours
And sing an American tune

Oh, and it's alright, it's alright, it's alright
You can't be forever blessed
Still, tomorrow's gonna be another working day
And I'm trying to get some rest
That's all I'm trying to get some rest

In CHRIST's love,
Pastor Jeffrey