

RIVER OF TIME – A SONG SUITE FOR CENTENARY 2028!

2028 marks both the centenary of our General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, and the centenary of the opening of our church.

Some time ago, I approached our headquarters to say that I plan to compose, in collaboration, a suite of songs/choral pieces. Liz Slade, Chief Officer has welcomed the idea, saying it seems likely that 2028-9 will see a range of celebrations for the GA centenary. I have sent an inquiry to the Innovation Fund for guidance or for financial support.

GETTING CREATIVE

My plan is to collaborate with potential writers - much as we have achieved in recent years in *Uni-Sing!* while also following the example of David Kent whose Chalice Meditations were the result of his invitation to a few of our Ministers. This invitation is for all of us as wordsmiths, and I have begun at home by inviting our own members. Therefore, the Suite of music I hope to complete in the next 18 months is for Cambridge Unitarians and for the wider Unitarian movement.

River of Time would comprise simple choral pieces along with familiar hymns for audience participation. Pieces of writing sent to me, but which feel difficult to set to music, could become readings. The event may be used as a service in itself or may become the focus of a day event for a congregation or district. The Suite may become as long as the proverbial piece of string, so scratch choirs can learn their own choice of pieces, as they will vary in difficulty.

PROMPTS FOR WRITING

Naturally, the following hints are metaphors for the fluidity of our Unitarian history, and for changes we experience as human beings in a changing world.

A river has a source, and an end point in the sea. It can become narrow, fast and deep, or it may become broad and slow, swallowing up other streams and sources. It can be sluggish, can seem almost to dry up, then is refreshed. It can be peaceful, glinting with light - a source of wonder; or it might fall as a cataract, prompting awe. Water can run clear or become turbid after the turmoil of rain. A stream may run underground, become lost, forgotten. Heading relentlessly downstream, eventually, water meets the sea.

And so, my invitation goes something like this: Each of us is a writer in that we ponder, reflect, react, speak of our dreams and of our sorrows - whether or not we write them down. So, each of us is potentially a writer of colourful thoughts. Over the coming weeks, please consider what you might write as a basis for singing, here - or at our Annual Meetings. I look forward to hearing from you, on ringofvoices@gmail.com

Marianna