

Sing A New Church Into Being

It was no surprise that the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meeting recently in Indianapolis was in unanimous agreement about re-envisioning our church structure – somewhat overdue. What came as a surprise was the standing ovation, cheers and applause in response. This was not your hometown football game, but a national gathering of formal legislative body of clerical and lay leaders not prone to such spontaneous outbursts. The very act itself might have been the first sign of something new *aborning* - confirmed even further as one, then two, then a swelling crowd moved by the spirit began singing joyfully a fairly new (to many) hymn to an old familiar tune.

Perhaps in anticipation of this joyful response – the words to the hymn were quickly flashed on the screen so that all could see and comprehend the words rather than just hum along to the foot tapping melody. Because the words are so rich and powerful, yet unfamiliar to many, I would like to share them for your meditation and reflection. We sing it often at our church, and I take every opportunity when I meet with Christian formation leaders to introduce it to them.

Sing a New Church Into Being

Summoned by the God who made us
Rich in our diversity,
Gathered in the name of Jesus,
Richer still in unity:

Refrain:

Let us bring the gifts that differ
And, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being,
One of faith and love and praise

Radiant risen from the water;
Robed in holiness and light,
Male and female in God's image
Male and female God's delight: *Refrain*

Trust the goodness of creation;
Trust the Spirit strong within.
Dare to dream the vision promised
Sprung from seed of what has been: *Refrain*

Bring the hopes of every nation;
Bring the art of every race.
Weave a song of peace and justice:
Let it sound through time and space: *Refrain*

Draw together at one table
All the human family;
Shape a circle ever wider
And a people ever free. *Refrain:*

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB

Sung to the tune of "Nettleton": *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

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