

Formation Project

Hamish Dobbie - Mōteatea

The project that I decided to do for our formation class was to write a mōteatea. Simply put a mōteatea is a form of traditional waiata in Māoridom. They were often composed by our tūpuna to express a variety of different emotions, tell stories, and transmit whakapapa. Some examples include waiata tangi, which were songs to express ones sadness, waiata aroha, used to express ones love for people or place, or oriori, which were often used to pass on whakapapa to tamariki.

I decided to compose a mōteatea for a few reasons. The first comes down to the small knowledge base of waiata Māori in the Church. From my experience the Church generally only seems to have a handful of waiata that they know which they can used for various aspects of tikanga Māori. This mōteatea is my contribution to beginning to build a larger kete of songs that the Church can draw from for such moments.

Secondly, even with the waiata Māori we do know within the Church, almost none of them are mōteatea. They are usually more contemporary forms of waiata. These, of course, have their place, but I would like to see a much larger stylistic variety of waiata Māori that draw on more traditional composition methods.

Finally, when a song is used as a tautoko it should be relevant to the context in which it is sung. If we keep singing the same songs without thinking about whether or not it is relevant for the context, then it does nothing, in my view, to enhance the mana of the person, kaupapa or mihi that is being supported.

With this in mind, I have written this mōteatea, with the purpose of being used as a waiata tautoko for all manner of Christian kaupapa. Furthermore this mōteatea is relatively short, with the hope that it can be learnt with relative ease. The words for this mōteatea are attached below, with a rough english translation. There is also an audio recording to go along with the words, so the people can pick up the tune and phrasing of the words.

Ko koe te poutokomanawa
E mau ake ana i a mātou
I tō aroha, i tō rangimārie
Māu e tīaho i te pōuri,
Te hīnatore e arahi ai
Mātou i te haere whakamua
Ko koe hoki te puna o te oranga
E kore mātou e matewai anō
Ki te haere mai ki te kōpua
Ko te timatanga, ko te whakamutunga
Ko koe tō mātou Ariki e.

*You are the post, holding us up
By your love and peace
You will shine in the darkness,
The first light that guides us forward
You are also the spring of life.
We will not thirst again,
If we come to this deep well.
The beginning, the end,
You are our God.*