



Jukebox Sunday 2018

Singing is an act of creation, of bringing into the world something that wasn't there before.

Singing is a natural expression of our spirit—at the same time it can be soothing, energizing, crying, laughing, angelic or down in the dirt blues...it's all good!

Singing is energy going out into the world to create even more sympathetic energy. It can change the world.

I'll bet it was someone listening to music that first created the concept of heaven!

Desmond Tutu once said "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality."

Protest songs reject neutrality. They choose a side in opposition to all that dehumanises us. Through the power of song they call for resistance.

Corinne Henrickson was the successful bidder at the Service Auction for this year's Jukebox Sunday. When she told me she wanted us to focus on protest songs that played a part in New Zealand's history, I thought it was very appropriate for this congregation. Its members had often found themselves as part of the resistance, be it for environmental protection or being nuclear free or against the Vietnam war, racism, and apartheid.

Corinne selected the songs we will sing. I had hoped to engage the Topp Twins or Joan Baez to accompany us, but alas, they were otherwise engaged. As an alternative, we will sing along with the Jukebox. The lyrics are in your Order of Service and I hope you will feel free enough, brave enough, to sing along as if you were in your car alone listening to the radio.

Damn the dam - by John Hanlon

Damn the Dam was born as a 2 minute radio commercial for New Zealand Fibreglass. John Hanlon had a day job as an advertising copywriter and art director at the time. The commercial was part of a campaign designed to lobby the government of the day to make insulation compulsory in new homes.

While this was an environmentally responsible thing to do, clearly New Zealand Fibreglass, as the manufacturer of Pink Batts, would benefit from this legislation. They did. Nonetheless, said John, it took a brave and visionary client to approve a 2 min radio commercial with only 10 secs of soft sell commercial message in the body of it.

As a result of advertising airtime bought by the client, the song/commercial became very popular and John was pressured into releasing it as a single. He agreed to do so as long as the profits were donated to environmental bodies.

Eventually the song was adopted by the opponents of the Lake Manapouri dam.

Lake Manapouri is often described as the loveliest of all Fiordland's lakes with its array of 33 small islands, backdrop of the Cathedral Mountain range, and native bush-clad edges with a variety of sandy beaches and coves.

The Public Works Department wanted to dam the outlet of the lake so it could raise the water-level of the lake by 30 metres to join it with Lake Te Anau. This would have produced much more power. It would have also destroyed all the coves and islands and thousands of hectares of pristine World Heritage rainforest.

A strong nationwide protest lasting over a decade prevented the raising of the lake from taking place. That campaign, the Save Manapouri campaign, is regarded as a major milestone in the history of New Zealand's environmental protection.

[Nga Iwi E sung by the Topp Twins](#)

Nga Iwi E translated means The song for the people of the Pacific. Hirini Melbourne took a kapa haka group to the Festival of the South Pacific in New Caledonia. He wrote the first two verses and asked the other countries attending to add on their own verse.

It was adopted by Greenpeace who sung it on board the Rainbow Warrior while protesting French nuclear testing at Muroroa in French Polynesia.

The Topp Twins, radical feminist lesbians and singing duo often sang at protests including the Bastion Point land protest in 1978, Nuclear Free New Zealand protests, Anti-Springbok tour marches, and homosexual law reform demonstrations in the 1980s. Nga Iwi E was a part of their repertoire.

[We shall overcome sung by Joan Baez](#)

"**We Shall Overcome**" is a [gospel song](#) which became a [protest song](#) and a key [anthem](#) of the Civil Rights Movement. The song is

most commonly attributed as being lyrically descended from "I'll Overcome Some Day", a hymn by [Charles Albert Tindley](#) that was first published in 1900.

The modern version of the song was first said to have been sung by tobacco workers led by Lucille Simmons during a 1945 strike in [Charleston, South Carolina](#).

The song became associated with the Civil Rights Movement from 1959. It quickly became the movement's unofficial anthem. Pete Seeger and other famous folksingers in the early 1960s, such as [Joan Baez](#), sang the song at rallies, folk festivals, and concerts and helped make it widely known. Since its rise to prominence, the song has been used in a variety of protests worldwide. In New Zealand it was a feature at Bastion Point and at Springbok Tour protests as well.

[For What its Worth by Buffalo Springfield](#)

Contrary to popular belief, "For What It's Worth" wasn't written as a reflection on any of the historic Vietnam War protests or Civil Rights marches of the era. Stephan Stills actually wrote the song—in only fifteen minutes, he claims—about the "Sunset Strip Riots" that were a reaction to the closing of a popular LA nightspot and to the curfews imposed on the area to deter young people from loitering outside of clubs and bars. The LA Police Department had tried to enforce the curfew laws by shutting down a handful of hangouts frequented by teens and people in their early twenties, so a local radio station called for a rally to protest. About a thousand young people showed up and milled about until fighting broke out. Two of the young people who showed up were Jack Nicholson and Peter Fonda.

While the event was certainly politically, socially, and emotionally charged, it surprises a lot of people to learn that this was the inspiration for the Buffalo Springfield classic. "For What It's Worth" was almost immediately embraced as an anthem for much larger social and political protests.

[Biko sung by Joan Baez](#)

"**Biko**" is an [anti-apartheid protest song](#) by English [rock](#) musician [Peter Gabriel](#). It was released in 1980.

The song is a musical [eulogy](#), inspired by the death of the black [South African anti-apartheid](#) activist [Steve Biko](#) in police custody on 12 September 1977. News of his death spread quickly, and became a symbol of the abuses perpetrated under the apartheid government. Biko's position as an individual who had never been convicted of a crime led to the death being reported in the international press; he thus became one of the first anti-apartheid activists widely known internationally.

Gabriel wrote the song after hearing of Biko's death on the news. The lyrics, which included phrases in [Xhosa](#), describe Biko's death and the violence under the [apartheid](#) government. It was banned in South Africa, where the government saw it as a threat to security. "Biko" had a huge political impact, and along with other contemporary music critical of apartheid, is credited with making resistance to apartheid part of western popular culture. It has been called "arguably the most significant non-South African anti-apartheid protest song" Its popularity certainly fanned the flames of New Zealand's anti-apartheid protests during the Springbok Tour.

[Beds Are Burning by Midnight Oil.](#)

This is a political song about giving native Australian lands back to aboriginal people.

Midnight Oil performed this in front of a world audience of billions, (including Prime Minister John Howard) at the closing ceremony of the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The whole band were dressed in black, with the words "sorry" printed conspicuously on their clothes. This was a reference to the Prime Minister's refusal to apologize, on behalf of Australia, to the Aboriginal Australians for the way they have been treated over the last 200 years.

[French Letter by Herbs](#)

The New Zealand reggae group Herbs released the song 'French letter' in 1982 in protest against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. It became a popular hit and a protest anthem. When France briefly resumed testing in 1995, the band re-released the track.

[Parihaka sung by Herbs](#)

The non-violent action preached and practiced by Māori prophets Te Whiti and Tohu at Parihaka in Taranaki forms one of the most compelling episodes of New Zealand's 19th century history, as they resisted Pākehā confiscation of their land and home. Tim Finn was inspired to write this paean to the pair after reading Dick Scott's influential book *Ask That Mountain* given to him by his sister, who challenged him to write a song about it.

[Imagine by John Lennon](#)

Imagine conveyed **Lennon's** wish for world peace and harmony in simple terms, both musically and lyrically. It was **inspired** by Cloud Piece, an instructional poem dated Spring 1963 that appeared in Yoko Ono's book Grapefruit.