



Dear friends of music near and far,

here is my little article to describe the impulse behind creating our event 'Songs of Heaven and Earth', celebrating 30 years of Sacred Singing inspired by Taizé, building a Sacred World Culture, Findhorn, 25-27May 2018.

I, Barbara, first came to the Findhorn Foundation in 1978, following my quest for God, enticed by the stories about the magic of Findhorn, looking to be part of a community who's members all together were building 'the better world that our hearts know is possible'. The same yearning brought me to visit the Taizé community in France, in 1987. Both communities changed my life. I remember my first experience in Taizé : sitting with 5000 other visitors on the floor of a dimly lit church, which was decorated simply with flags, candles and a few Russian icons.



I found myself suddenly in the middle of an amazing energy, cradled by beautiful harmonies, surrounded by glowing faces and thousands of joyful voices, who were singing to God, the Beloved, the Source of all. I was in tears, and the musician in me was in heaven. Immediately I thought: Wouldn't it be wonderful to have that kind of energy in our community in Findhorn?

On my return to Scotland I started with a few friends in Findhorn an early morning singing practice, introducing the songs of Taizé. We met in the newly built nature sanctuary, whose builder Ian Turnbull was also an avid singer. This began a tradition which, through the love and dedication of many beautiful souls, is still alive and well today within the community.



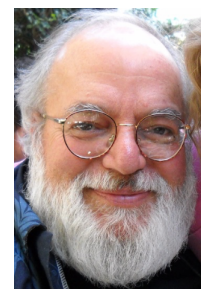
Now, 30 years later, I felt it would be nice to mark that date with a celebratory weekend, and bring together a larger body of local people and visitors for a 3 day Mini Festival, combining song workshops, concerts, rituals and celebrations in a garland of merry events. The idea of a 30 year celebration did not get picked up by the Findhorn Foundation workshop selection committee, but was welcomed none the less by the Taizé song leaders and received cheers of joy from the many attendants on the following Sunday Taizé service in July 2017.

Since then, a small core group has gathered to develop this event independently, in order to bring more song, prayer and joy into the world. It will be an event 'by the people - for the people' as there is no organisational backing and most of us are working as unpaid volunteers. We are relying on bookings and donations to give us the necessary budget. In any case, the beautiful Universal Hall is booked and we are assembling a list of activities and presenters.



The weekend will give an opportunity to sing and pray together as a collective, using the songs from Taizé as well as songs from other spiritual traditions, creating a prayerwheel like in the **'Findhorn Peace Prayer Mandala'**, praying for peace all over the world and so laying the foundations for a **Sacred World Culture through Music**. Skilled and inspired musicians will accompany us.

There will be ritual and celebration, like the opening of the **'Singing Chamber'** that has been built by many loving hands, without the use of any machines since 2006. There will be **Dances of Universal Peace** with **Dr. Tui Wilschinsky** from California, who is also offering a follow up workshop after the weekend on Monday and Tuesday 28/29th May to deepen the dances as a spiritual practice, with leadership training. (click her for the flyer PDF)



Since we don't have a big budget to work with, we will use a special 'love economy', where the abundance comes through the love & joy generated, and monetary abundance is welcomed as a byproduct. We are happy to welcome many young people, children and families as well. We are trying to keep the cost to a minimum in order to be able to open the doors to all kinds of budgets.

If you can spare the time, come for longer, there are beautiful naturewalks and places to visit. We may dream up more inspiring events before and after the weekend. For instance, you can participate in a Findhorn Experience Week, starting May 19th. <https://www.findhorn.org/programmes/experience-week/>

So let's see, what miracles of love and harmony we can create together over a Spring weekend in May 2018, because:

**There will be a great light, and that light is You.  
There will be a great healing, and that healing is You.**

**There will be a turning towards love,  
and that turning towards love comes from You.**

**(Christina von Dreien, a 16 year old Teenager, a multidimensional being with a highly evolved spirit, from Switzerland)**

For all bookings write to: [songsofheavenandearth@gmail.com](mailto:songsofheavenandearth@gmail.com)

If you have spontaneous comments or want to get involved, please write to [barbara@swetinamusic.com](mailto:barbara@swetinamusic.com)

With so much love and joy  
Barbara Swetina



The beach at Findhorn