

# Introduction

I am grateful for the opportunity to introduce this new collection. The one-word title, *Onward!* is a call anyone can respond to, at any age. To quote Scottish singer Sir Harry Lauder, we can all “keep right on to the end of the road.”

Most of the hymns were written between 2012 and 2015, some of which are hymn-style versions of biblical psalms or significant portions of a psalm, or in response to a verse of scripture. Some older texts have also been included, paired here for the first time with recently crafted tunes.

This collection also includes a previously unpublished song I co-wrote with my wife, Susan Heafield, a United Methodist pastor and musician. Praise Partners, our joint musical venture, has released two collections: *We Can Be Messengers* and *Tell the Good News!* both distributed by Hope Publishing Company and Stainer & Bell Ltd.

# Thanks and Recognitions

Many people have helped me on my journey. Erik Routley (1917–1982) gave me an invaluable, because critical yet encouraging, start as a hymn-poet. George Caird (1917–1984) inspired me with his penetrating intellect, command of the biblical languages, lecturing skill, and passion for the Bible and Christian doctrine. George Shorney (1931–2012) was the head of my USA publishing house, appropriately named HOPE. A warm and welcoming man, he was my publisher who became my friend. During the 10+ years I worked freelance, many musicians, pastors, and others—too many to mention here—helped me by giving hospitality, paying my way, singing my hymns, commissioning hymns, and sharing their skills.

My spouse, Susan M. Heafield and I are equal partners in marriage and ministry. Her leadership, love, and companionship are indispensable to me.

Peace and Hope to all who sing or speak these songs and hymns!

Brian A. Wren.