

*Coursing River* was written in honor of James Gertmenian and Sam King on the occasion of their retirement from eighteen years of ministry at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis. It was a privilege to set Jim's own words, first in a congregational hymn and then in this anthem, based on the hymn.

First performance  
January 25, 2015  
Plymouth Congregational Church Choir/Philip Brunelle  
Minneapolis, MN

duration: c. 3:00

## THERE IS A COURSING RIVER

There is a coursing river  
Beneath the common sod  
Whose depth we cannot fathom,  
Whose source is none but God;  
And pilgrims on their journeys  
Are often unaware  
That freshets rising from below  
Are welling everywhere.

Their course cannot be bounded  
By book or creed or sign,  
By certainty or logic,  
By reason or by rhyme.  
We cannot claim the knowledge  
Of where a spring will flow,  
Or when God's grace will surface  
From reservoirs below.

But if some thirsty trav'ler  
Should faint upon the way,  
Let others come assuring  
To comfort and to pray  
That though distressed and doubting  
The injured one will know  
How water rises to the need  
And emptied cups o'erflow.

So pilgrims, be encouraged!  
Though all around you lies  
A rocky and a barren land  
Where everything seems dry.  
There is a coursing river  
Beneath the common sod  
Whose depth we cannot fathom,  
Whose source is none but God.