

Sunday, 21 September 2025 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Sundays after Pentecost (like the Sundays after Epiphany) are sometimes called Ordinary Time - not because they are routine or mundane, but because their primary rhythm has to do with following the Sundays “in order.” Indeed, each Sunday is a celebration of Christ’s resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week, and it is this holy mystery that animates, renews, and transforms our life of faith. – *The Book of Common Worship*, 2018

Prelude

William Bolcom (b. 1938) composed 12 *Gospel Preludes* between 1979-1984, divided into four books of three each. No. 11, *Sweet Hour of Prayer* is the second prelude in book four. Bolcom was professor of composition at the University of Michigan from 1973-2008. His compositions and performances have earned him the Pulitzer Prize, the National Medal of Arts, and two Grammy Awards.

Processional Hymn

GtG 340 – *This Is My Song*

This hymn was the number seven vote getter in our favorite hymns survey. The well known tune FINLANDIA appears three times in our *Glory to God* hymnal: #340 – *This Is My Song*, #819 – *Be Still, My Soul*, and #808 – *When Memory Fades*.

Carl P. Daw, Jr. writes about this tune in [*Glory to God: A Companion*](#)

“Sibelius’s tone poem Finlandia was initially composed as music for a patriotic tableau and had its premiere in 1899, when the Finnish people were growing restive under the repressive measures of the Russian regime. It became intensely popular at once as an expression of both love of nature and devotion to homeland, and that popularity grew after it was revised as an orchestral tone poem in the following year. Although it may not be the most distinguished of Sibelius’s compositions, it has become the most widely recognized of his works.”

The first two verses of the text were written as a “song of peace” by Lloyd Stone (1912-1993) and the third was added by Georgia Harkness (1891-1974) in *The Methodist Hymnal*, 1966. This added verse moves from the theme of international harmony to a consideration of the universal sovereignty of God, tying it to a phrase from the Lord’s Prayer.

Sermon Hymn

From hymnwriter Carolyn Winfrey Gillette:

“*God, Our Nation Feels the Lost* was written in remembrance of the beloved children of God who died in the school shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. Many of us, as individuals, do not accept violence, keep silence, or clamor for guns. Yet, as a nation, we do these things, and as a nation, we need to repent; we need to turn around and live a different way. All of us are called to do more than sing and pray; please work for gun safety laws in your community and state.”

Offertory Anthem

The dedication of *Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace* reads:

“Commissioned by the Cancel Choir of Oakmont Presbyterian Church, to honour the Rev. Dr. Stephen Wilson's 35 years of faithful service to our OPC family, to the greater community and the wider world, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, on the occasion of his retirement as Senior Pastor, August 2023. May his example of humble service and loving leadership inspire us all!”

From composer Philip WJ Stopford (b. 1977):

“The music, as always, is built around the text which has a wonderful sense of hope and love; there is always something better. Hatred bettered by love, injury bettered by pardon, doubt bettered by faith and so on. You may notice in the music that these dualities are painted with minor and major chords and through changes of key; a particularly poignant passage of music. Ultimately, in dying, we are born to eternal life. There is a place for us all in God’s eternal kingdom.”

This anthem was donated in 2024 to the ELPC Choir library in memory of Richard C. Depperman, loving husband of member Carla D. Depperman. Richard greatly appreciated the music of our choir.

Postlude

Ryan Croyle (b. 1990) composed *Fanfare & Processional* for his wedding to Kathleen Mahin at ELPC on September 16, 2017.