

Sunday, 2 November 2025 – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost – All Saints' Sunday

“All Saints’ Day has a rather different focus in the Reformed tradition. While we may give thanks for the lives of particular luminaries of ages past, the emphasis is on the ongoing sanctification of the *whole* people of God. Rather than putting saints on pedestals as holy people set apart in glory, we give glory to God for the ordinary, holy lives of the believers in this and every age. This is an appropriate time to give thanks to members of the community of faith who have died in the past year. We also pray that we may be counted among the company of the faithful in God’s eternal realm.”

For more reading:

<https://pcusa.org/about-pcusa/agencies-entities/interim-unified-agency/ministry-areas/theology-worship/worship/christian-year/all-saints-day>

Prelude/Postlude

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897) was an organist and composer born in Alsace, France. Of the 160 pieces he composed during his short life, the *Suite Gothique*, op. 25 for organ is his most famous work. The third movement of the suite is played as this morning’s prelude and the fourth movement as the postlude.

Prelude/Processional Hymn

Organist and composer Wilbur Held (1914-2015) served on the faculty of The Ohio State University in Columbus, OH for thirty years.

The text of *For All the Saints* was written by the Anglican Bishop William Walsham How and published in 1864. Comprised of 11 verses, this text was originally sung to the hymn tune SARUM by Joseph Barnby. Since the publication of the *English Hymnal* in 1906, the text has been associated with the tune SINE NOMINE (meaning “without name”) by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Offertory Anthem

The melody of Goin’ Home is taken from the second movement of Antonín Dvořák’s (1841-1904) Symphony No. 9 (From the New World). The symphony was premiered in New York City on 16 December 1893. One of Dvořák’s students, William Arms Fisher (1861-1948), arranged the melody and added the words in 1922. Fisher wrote of the arrangement in the published sheet music:

“The Largo, with its haunting English horn solo, is the outpouring of Dvorak’s own home-longing, with something of the loneliness of far-off prairie horizons, the faint memory of the red-man’s bygone days, and a sense of the tragedy of the black-man as it sings in his “spirituals.” Deeper still it is a moving expression of that nostalgia of the soul all human beings feel. That the lyric opening theme of the Largo should spontaneously suggest the words “Goin’ home, goin’ home” is natural enough, and that the lines that follow the melody should take the form of a negro spiritual accords with the genesis of the symphony.”

For more reading:

<https://www.wrti.org/arts-desk/2020-11-16/the-story-behind-the-nostalgic-melody-by-dvorak-that-became-the-song-goin-home>