

Notes on Selected Portions of Today’s Music

The Recessional Hymn:

One cannot study church history without becoming aware of the continuous harassment and persecution suffered by the Christian Church from its inception to the present time. As Protestants we are especially mindful of one of the important climaxes in this struggle, that historic date, October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther nailed to the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg his ninety-five theses for consideration by the medieval church, condemning many of its practices and teachings. But prior to that date as well as since that time, it has been necessary for other committed men of God to defend the Church from those who would defile and destroy it with heretical doctrines and practices.

Such was the occasion for the writing of this hymn. It was written by a Church of England pastor, Samuel J. Stone, in 1866. It was during this period that there existed much turmoil within the Anglican Church over a book written three years earlier by one of the influential Anglican Bishops, John William Colenso, in which this liberal bishop attacked the historic accuracy of the Pentateuch. The book, *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, Critically Examined*, was vehemently opposed by another Anglican leader, Bishop Gray. Soon the theological dispute between these two leaders became a widespread controversy throughout the entire Anglican Church.

Samuel Stone was deeply stirred by this matter and in 1866 wrote a collection of hymns, *Lyre Fedelium (Lyra [songs] of the Faithful)*, containing twelve creedal hymns based on the Apostles’ Creed to combat the attacks of modern scholarship and liberalism which he felt would soon divide and destroy the church. This particular hymn was based on the Ninth Article of the Creed, which reads, “The Holy Catholic (Universal) Church; the Communion of Saints: He is the Head of this Body.” It was Stone’s conviction that the unity of the Church must rest solely with a recognition of the Lordship of Christ as its head and not on the views and interpretation of men.

The hymn soon became highly popular throughout Great Britain. It was also translated into a number of different languages, including Latin. Two years later all of the Anglican bishops assembled in London for a great theological conclave known as the Lambeth Conference. Stone’s hymn was chosen as the processional and thematic hymn for that historic meeting. He became widely known and respected as a prolific writer of hymns with several of his hymnal publications running into many editions. Stone wrote a total of seven books of verse and served on the committee which prepared the 1909 edition of the well-known Anglican hymnal, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Today, however, this hymn is his only hymn which is still in general use.

Samuel John Stone was born in Whitmore, Staffordshire, England, in 1839. Following his graduation from Oxford, he spent most of his remaining ministry in just two parishes in London, where he was affectionately known as the poor man’s pastor. Here his time was spent in ministering to the poor and underprivileged populace of the East End of London, where it was said, “he created a beautiful place of worship for the humble folk, and made it a center of light in the dark places.” Stone was known as a man of spotless character; he was chivalrous toward the weak and needy, yet he was a violent fighter for the conservative faith that was being so sternly attacked in his day. He refused to compromise on iota before Higher Criticism and the evolutionary philosophies that were becoming increasingly popular. A personal faith in the inspired Scriptures was enough for him. All of his writings have been described as “strongly outspoken utterances of a manly faith, where dogma, prayer and praise are interwoven with much skill.”

Stone’s text originally contained seven stanzas. However, most hymnals today use just his first, second and fifth verses; our last stanza is actually a compilation of the first four lines of both his sixth and seventh verses.

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Giving QR

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The Rev. Fr. Steven J. Kelly, SSC, *Rector*
The Rev. Canon Michael J. Bedford, SSC, *Assisting Priest Emeritus*
Dr. Huw R. Lewis, FRCO, *Director of Music, Organist, and Master of the Choir*
Ms. Chanmi Kim, MM, *Edwards Organ Scholar*



St. John’s Church

Sunday, September 27, 2026

Ten O’clock in the Morning

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Order for Holy Communion with Confirmation

- *A warm welcome to all parishioners, guests, and visitors. Worship at St. John’s is according to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal, 1940. Be sure to ask a neighbor for help if you have any questions about where we are during the service.*
- *The ☩ symbol indicates a point in the liturgy where making the sign of the cross is appropriate.*
- ***Please turn all cell phones, pagers, and wireless communication devices off or to “vibrate.”***
- *Children are most welcome at St. John’s worship services. For those who desire it, during the school year, Sunday School begins at 9:15 AM in the undercroft, where nursery care is also available year-round.*
- *Information on worship practices, Communion procedure, announcements, prayer requests, the teaching series, a brief history of St. John’s, and various aspects of parish life are available in the Parish Chronicle, which is inserted in this bulletin.*

Hymnal

Prayer Book

The Prelude: *Prayer (Op.40 No.4)* - René L. Becker

300 The Processional Hymn: *Before the Lord Jehovah’s throne* – TUNE: Winchester New

The Introit: *Justus es Dómine*, Psalm 119:137, 124, 1 – Plainchant

RIGHTEOUS art thou, O LORD, and true is thy judgment: deal with thy servant according unto thy merciful kindness. Ps. Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way: and walk in the way of the LORD. Glory be... Righteous art thou... (etc.)

The Collect for Purity (the People all kneeling) p. 67

The Summary of the Law p. 69

710 The Kyrie eleison, ninefold: Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena – Healey Willan p. 70

The Collect of the Day p. 213

The Epistle: Ephesians iv. 1. p. 213

