

Blurb for 7-8-18

News and Notes:

This week, special music will be provided by Jeanne Lehning on the dulcimer. Organ music will be "Variations on 'Simple Gifts'" by Texas-based Roman Catholic composer Noel Goemanne. We will sing "All hail the power of Jesus' Name," "Here I am," and "Go forth for God."

Bulletin:

The text and tune of today's hymn, "When Jesus the healer passed through Galilee," were written by Peter D. Smith. He was born in 1938 in Surrey, England. After a stint in the aircraft industry he became an ordained Methodist minister. Although a classically trained pianist, folk music and the guitar became the hallmark of his ministry. He edited several collections of Christian folk-style songs. This song was composed during a course he was teaching in 1975 on contemporary worship with the Iona Community.

The hymnal companion of the Methodist hymnal states that "classical hymnody often engages through the depth of metaphors and symbolic use of language." On the other hand, folk music engages us with its directness and simplicity. To be successful it needs to be "easily learned and captured immediately."

This hymn gives us a compendium of narratives of Jesus' miraculous healings from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The final verse reminds us that there is still need for Christ's healing power today: "There's still so much sickness and suffering today....We gather together for healing and pray: Heal us, Lord Jesus!"

Today's organ music is a set of variations on the Shaker tune "Simple Gifts" by Noel Goemanne. He was born in Belgium in 1926. Always outspoken about the importance of music, he was arrested in WWII for publicly playing the music of Jewish composer Felix Mendelssohn during the Nazi occupation. In 1952 he moved to the United States and where he held several posts at Roman Catholic churches, mostly in Texas. He took his last position at Christ the King in Dallas in 1972 until his death at 83 in 2010. In the 60s, adapting to the new requirements for music in the Catholic Church, he wrote the first Vatican II approved musical setting of the Mass in English. He taught workshops at colleges around the US, started the sacred music program at St. Joseph College in Indiana, and composed. He received awards from both church foundations as well as ASCAP. His arrangement of the Pachelbel "Canon" was used in the soundtrack for the film *Ordinary People*.