

Service of Celtic Worship

December 3, 2017





Celtic Worship

at St. John's Church

December 3, 2017

Welcome! We are delighted that you have joined us today - we cherish your attendance.

In order to prepare for worship, our time this afternoon commences with a period of silence which you may enjoy in any way that is meaningful to you: prayer, meditation or simple reflection. We ask that this silence be observed immediately upon entering, and that you turn off all electronic devices.

The value of silence and being present to what is immediate is all too often lost in our busy world. We hope that today's service of presence, contemplation, and periods of quiet provides nourishment and recharging for you. To that end, perhaps you may wish to turn those electronic devices all the way off if you are able!

There are several stations of interest around the church for your perusal or quiet contemplation. We invite you to visit these spots at any time before, during or after the service. You may wish to leave a prayer request for yourself or others at the prayer station, browse the Celtic station icons and information, or light a candle for someone or some purpose. Your written prayers deposited at the prayer station will be prayed in the coming days by members of the Celtic Worship Guild.

In today's service, we celebrate gratitude. You may alternatively - or additionally - wish to light a candle in thanksgiving, or to add a written expression of gratitude to the prayer station deposit box. The Celtic Guild will be sure to add their prayers of thanksgiving to yours!

Healing ministers will be available - to pray with you, to hear your expressions of gratitude, or to offer you a blessing - both as you enter today, as well as during the period of extended silence during our worship.

Children are welcome at our worship. To help pass time, please find Celtic themed coloring sheets near the entrances - for children of all ages!

At 4:50 pm, a singing bowl tone will break our preparatory silence. Please remain seated while today's musicians lead us in learning the participatory music and chants.

Following the musicians' introduction, we will briefly resume our silent contemplation until the start of today's service.



December 3, 2017

The theme for our worship this month is "Gratitude."

Words of Welcome: *The Reverend Susan Pinkerton*

Please stand at the tone of the singing bowl.

Opening Prayer: **"Kanian'Kehaka (Mohawk) Prayer of Thanksgiving"**

Read by John Hardy

To be a human is an honor, and we offer thanksgiving for all the gifts of life.

Mother Earth, we thank you for giving us everything we need.

Thank you deep blue waters around Mother Earth, for you are the force that takes thirst away from all living things.

We give thanks to green, green grasses that feel so good against our bare feet, for the cool beauty you bring to Mother Earth's floor.

Thank you, good foods from Mother Earth, our life sustainers, for making us happy when we are hungry.

Fruits and berries, we thank you for your color and sweetness.

We are thankful to good medicine herbs, for healing us when we are sick.

Thank you, all the animals of the world, for keeping our precious forests clean.

All the trees of the world, we are thankful for the shade and warmth you give us. Thank you all the birds in the world, for signing your beautiful songs for all to enjoy.

We give thanks to you gentle Four Winds, for bringing clean air for us to breathe from the four directions.

Thank you, Grandfather Thunder Beings, for bringing rains to help all living things grow.

Elder Brother Sun, we send thanks for shining your light and warming Mother Earth.

Thank you Grandmother Moon, for growing full every month to light the darkness for children and sparkling waters.

We give you thanks, twinkling stars, for making the night sky so beautiful and sprinkling morning dew drops on the plants.

Spirit Protectors of our past and present we thank you for showing us ways to live in peace and harmony with one another.

And most of all, thank you Great Spirit, for giving us all these wonderful gifts, so we will be happy and healthy every day and every night.

Translation by Chief Jake Swamp, Source: Website of the American Indian Health Council, <http://aihc1998.tripod.com/>

Song: "For the Fruit of All Creation (Ar hyd y nos)"

Words: Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

Music: Welsh Folk Tune

Led by Norb Spencer

For the fruit of all creation,
thanks be to God.
For his gifts to every nation,
thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe-keeping,
thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor,
God's will be done.
In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will be done.

In our world-wide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will be done.

For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

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Please be seated.

Reading for Reflection: "i thank You God for most this amazing"

e.e. cummings 1894-1962

Read by Tom Neal

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

Source: <https://thepoetryplace.wordpress.com>

Reflection: "Gratitude"

Tom Neal

Expressions of Gratitude

The reflection will be followed by a period of quiet contemplation.

During this time of contemplation, you are invited to come forward and silently express your personal gratitude.

Our prayer stones container is on a table beside the Celtic Cross. Please select a stone, say a prayer of gratitude, and place the stone on the altar as your sacred offering to God and as a visible sign of your gratitude.

These offerings of gratitude will rest on the altar table during the remainder of today's service.

Following your offering, please once again be seated.

Chanting: "Amen"

Led by Norb Spencer; with Tom Neal, ukelele; and Paul Duva, drum

Silence

Our shared chant fades and we enter an extended period of silent prayer, meditation or reflection.

Please feel free to move about the church during this time. You may wish to visit the stations. Our theme today is "Gratitude." Perhaps you would like to light a candle in gratitude for something or someone in your life? Alternatively – or additionally – deposit a prayer request or written expression of gratitude to the prayer station deposit box.

In addition to the stations, healing ministers are available to pray with you or offer a blessing. They may be found near the baptismal font at the right side of the church. Today's Healing Ministers are Sarah Kieffer & Molly Loudon.

After several minutes, instrumental music will begin. Pianist Scott Lamlein will play "Sinfonia in D minor" by J.S. Bach.

Intercessory Prayers: *Led by Sarah Kieffer*

Please stand when requested.

You are invited to raise your own prayers, either silently or aloud for all to hear, in the periods of silence during the Intercessory Prayers.

Come, Divine Spirit, fill us with humility and vulnerability. Align our intentions with your purpose for us. Let us pray:

Creator of the Universe, we thank you. Keep our eyes open to the gift of your earth's natural beauty and harmony. Make us faithful stewards of this fragile gift. Imbue us with urgency to share your earth's bounty with all your creatures.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Light for the Nations, we pray for wisdom for all the world's leaders to find positive solutions in the midst of complex problems. Move our leaders to represent duly our peoples, and move our peoples to follow duly your will.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Abundant Giver, we pray for the poor, the persecuted, and the displaced. For those of us who live without sufficient nutrition, housing, sanitation, and heat. For those of us who suffer in war-torn and chaotic places. For those of us whose lives have been upended in natural disasters. Help us rebuild the basic comforts, safety, and order for those of us who are living without.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Restoring Presence, we pray for those of us who are living with pain. Touch us who need healing in body, mind, spirit, and soul. Let us feel your warm embrace.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Alpha and Omega, in these dark days as we await your coming, we pray for another advent in our lives, a new path. Deepen our prayer, that we may find new ways to make room for the holy Trinity in our lives.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Source of all that is within us, among us, and beyond us, we are called by you to be a holy people. Unite us in love, show us how to live together in our diversity. Make each of us one thread on your loom. Let us all know the joy of oneness with you.

ALL: Living God, hear our prayer.

Please be seated.

Closing Reading: "Gratitude"

Henry Jackson van Dyke Jr., 1852 - 1933

Read by John Hardy

"Do you give thanks for this? -- or that?"

No, God be thanked

I am not grateful

In that cold, calculating way, with blessing ranked

As one, two, three, and four, -- that would be hateful.

I only know that every day brings good above"
My poor deserving;
I only feel that, in the road of Life, true Love
Is leading me along and never swerving.

Whatever gifts and mercies in my lot may fall,
I would not measure
As worth a certain price in praise, or great or small;
But take and use them all with simple pleasure.

For when we gladly eat our daily bread, we bless
The Hand that feeds us;
And when we tread the road of Life in cheerfulness,
Our very heart-beats praise the Love that leads us.

Source: www.PoemHunter.com

Closing Silence

We enter a final brief period of silence; a time for personal prayer, meditation or reflection upon today's service.

After a time, a final tone of the singing bowl will mark the conclusion of our worship time together. After the tone, we invite you to remain seated in silence for however long you wish.

When you do stand to exit, please do so silently; our worship continuing in all that we do.

The stations continue to be available for you to visit after our service.



***Please join us for refreshments and fellowship in the parish hall,
located through the doorway to the right at the front of the church.***

**Today's greeters:
Sarah Kieffer, Bruce Louden & Molly Louden**

**Special thanks to Rita Neal
for providing and preparing today's refreshments.**



Thank you for coming to our Celtic Worship.

Are you interested in joining the Celtic Guild?

We invite new members to participate in planning and promoting the Service, to contribute to the music and liturgy, to help with set-up and clean-up, or to support the refreshment and fellowship time.

If you'd like more information, please speak with one of the Guild members or look for the sign-up sheet during the fellowship time.

Restrooms are located in the corridor just beyond the parish hall, located through the doorway to the right at the front of the church.

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Schedule of Celtic Worship at St. John's Church

Please join us at 4:30 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month,
October through June.

October 1, 2017	Celtic Spirituality
November 5, 2017:	Celtic Saints
December 3, 2017:	Gratitude
January 7, 2018:	Pilgrimage
February 4, 2018:	Divine Feminine
March 4, 2018:	Simplicity
April 1, 2018:	Rebirth (Easter Day)
May 6, 2018:	Earth
June 3, 2018:	Light

Celtic Worship Guild

Mary Davies Cole

John E. Hardy

Sarah Kieffer

Scott Lamlein

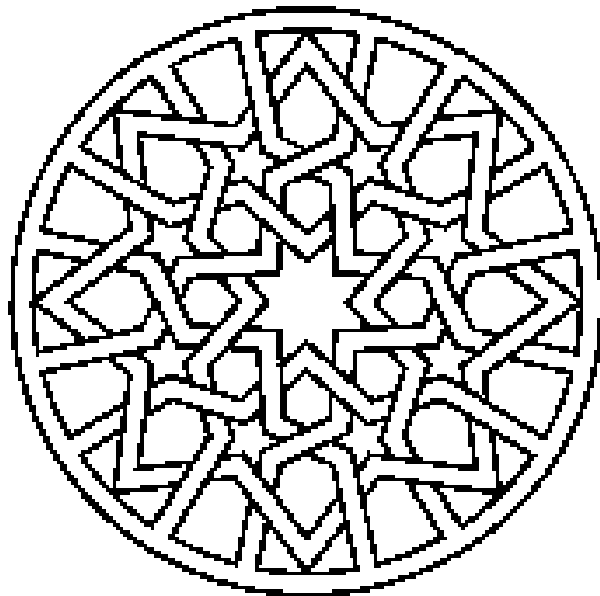
The Reverend Dr. Molly O'Neill Louden

Rita Neal

Tom Neal

The Reverend Susan Pinkerton

Norb Spencer



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