

Service of Celtic Worship  
March 3, 2019



A joint ministry of  
St. James's Episcopal Church  
and  
St. John's Episcopal Church

679 Farmington Avenue  
West Hartford, Connecticut

# Celtic Worship

*Welcome!*

*We are delighted that you have joined us today – we cherish your attendance.*

*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 you observe this silence immediately upon entering and turn off all electronic devices.*

*There are several stations of interest around the church that you may visit at any time before, during or after the service. You may wish to light a candle at the candle station, browse the Celtic station icons and information, or write a prayer request for yourself or others at the prayer station. Know that your written prayers will be prayed in the coming days by members of the Celtic Worship Guild.*

*During the period of extended silence later in our worship, healing ministers will be available to offer you the prayer or blessing you ask for.*

*Children are welcome at our worship.*

*At 4:50 p.m., a singing bowl tone will break our preparatory silence and today's service will commence.*



*The theme for our worship this month is **Silence**.*

**Words of Welcome**      The Reverend Susan Pinkerton

**Opening Prayer**

Paul Goodman

*Read by Mary Cole*

“Not speaking and speaking are both human ways of being in the world, and there are kinds and grades of each. There is the dumb silence of slumber or apathy; the sober silence that goes with a solemn animal face; the fertile silence of awareness, pasturing the soul, whence emerge new thoughts; the alive silence of alert perception, ready to say, “This... this...”; the musical silence that accompanies absorbed activity; the silence of listening to another speak, catching the drift and helping him be clear; the noisy silence of resentment and self-recrimination, loud and subvocal speech but sullen to say it; baffled silence; the silence of peaceful accord with other persons or communion with the cosmos.”

**Song**

*Simple Gifts*

*Led by Norb Spencer*

Traditional/Shaker (Elder Joseph Brackett, 1848)

*Please stand.*

**Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free  
'tis the gift to come down where you ought to be  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right  
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.**

**When true simplicity is gained  
To bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed  
To turn, turn will be our delight  
'Till by turning, turning we come round right.**

*Please be seated.*

**Reflection**

Norb Spencer

*In Silence* by Thomas Merton

Be still.  
Listen to the stones of the wall.  
Be silent, they try  
to speak your  
name.  
Listen  
to the living walls.  
Who are you?  
Who  
are you? Whose  
silence are you?

Who (be quiet)  
are you (as these stones  
are quiet). Do not  
think of what you are

still less of  
what you may one day be.

Rather  
be what you are (but who?)  
be the unthinkable one  
you do not know.

O be still, while  
you are still alive,  
and all things live around you  
speaking (I do not hear)  
to your own being,  
speaking by the unknown  
that is in you and in themselves.

“I will try, like them  
to be my own silence:  
and this is difficult. The whole  
world is secretly on fire. The stones  
burn, even the stones they burn me.  
How can a man be still or  
listen to all things burning?  
How can he dare to sit with them  
when all their silence is on fire?”

## **Chanting**

*Led by Norb Spencer*

*Please stand.*

### **Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hum**

*Om is the primal vibration out of which all things come and into which all things will be re-absorbed, the highest expression of consciousness.*

*Ah is the primal state of the spirit, the female aspect, the mother fully expressed in divine wisdom, without thought.*

*Hum is the root vibration, the descent from universality (Om) into the human heart.*

*Vajra is the energy that the enlightened mind holds. Like a thunderbolt or diamond, it can cut through anything.*

*Guru is the wise teacher.*

*Padma is the lotus, representing the pureness of the enlightened mind. This is due to the lotus's ability to grow purely in muddy waters, just like the enlightened mind is surrounded by delusions, greed, and hatred found in the sentient world.*

*Siddhi is the term used to represent an accomplishment.*

## **Silence**

*We enter now into an extended period of silence, which you are invited to use in whatever way you are called today. You are welcome to sit or move about the church in silent prayer, meditation, or reflection.*

*Feel free to visit all of the stations. Write a prayer request, light a candle, contemplate upon the Celtic saints, or pray with a healing minister near the baptismal font.*

## **Intercessory Prayers**

*Led by Sarah Kieffer*

Traditional Tibetan Sanskrit mantra

*Please stand and join in reading the text that is printed in bold. 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.*

Holy One, you are the source of all that is within us, among us, and beyond us. Give us your sacred silence in the early morning, in the late of night, and even in the din of day. Let us be emptied and filled in the silence. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

Open up our eyes to your gift of the earth's beauty and harmony. Make us ever mindful of the earth's fragility. Teach us to faithfully steward this gift and to share the earth's bounty with all your creatures. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

Imbue us with gratitude for what we have. Make us aware of those among us, near and far, who are without. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

Heal all who are sick or hurt. Comfort all who suffer. Shelter all who are in danger. Give speed to justice for all who wait for it. Grow our compassion and make us your agents in these mighty works. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

Help us hold fast to the love we have for those who have died. Perpetuate this love in our hearts and give it the power to sustain us. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

Touch us with your presence in our lives. Connect us in the joy of oneness with you. Make each of one of us a thread on your loom. **Hear our words. Hear our silence.**

## **Closing Prayer**

*Read by Mary Cole*

*Keeping Quiet by Pablo Neruda*

*Please be seated.*

Now we will count to twelve  
and we will all keep still.  
For once on the face of the earth,  
let's not speak in any language;  
let's stop for one second,  
and not move our arms so much.  
It would be an exotic moment  
without rush, without engines;  
we would all be together  
in a sudden strangeness.  
Fisherman in the cold sea  
would not harm whales  
and the man gathering salt  
would look at his hurt hands.  
Those who prepare green wars,  
wars with gas, wars with fire,  
victories with no survivors,  
would put on clean clothes  
and walk about with their brothers  
in the shade, doing nothing.  
What I want should not be confused  
with total inactivity.  
Life is what it is about;  
I want no truck with death.  
If we were not so single-minded  
about keeping our lives moving,

and for once could do nothing,  
perhaps a huge silence  
might interrupt this sadness  
of never understanding ourselves  
and of threatening ourselves with death.  
Perhaps the earth can teach us  
as when everything seems dead  
and later proves to be alive.  
Now I'll count up to twelve  
and you keep quiet and I will go.

## **Celtic Blessing**

Deep Peace of the running wave to you  
Deep Peace of the flowing air to you  
Deep Peace of the quiet earth to you  
Deep Peace of the shining stars to you  
Deep Peace to you.

*A singing bell tone will signal the end of the service.*

*You are invited to join us for a reception in Hubbard Hall after the service.*

*You are also welcome to come participate in a discussion group on today's theme of "silence" in the Reception Room.*

*Greeter: David Hadden  
Reception Hosts: Rita Neal and Cheri Evans  
Set-up Crew: John and Ann Walsh, Holly Fenn, Carey Downes, Eleanor Baker, Florence Nicholas*

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



## **Celtic Christianity Book Study**

**Sunday, March 17, 4:30pm**

**at St. John's Church**

David Hadden and Molly Loudon

### ***Rebirthing God* by John Philip Newell**

John Philip Newell is the leading voice of Celtic Theology in the world today. Please join us to talk about "Why?" we are offering Celtic Worship and "What?" is the foundation of Celtic Christianity. We will discuss chapters 7 and 8 at the March meeting. All are welcome!

## Schedule of Celtic Worship at St. John's Episcopal Church

Thank you for spending time with us.  
Please join us at 4:30 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month, October through June.

Sunday, October 7, 2018 - Belonging  
Sunday, November 4, 2018 - Gathering  
Sunday, December 2, 2018 - Darkness  
Sunday, January 6, 2019 - Spirit  
Sunday, February 3, 2019 - Trust  
Sunday, March 3, 2019 - Silence  
Sunday, April 7, 2019 - Creation  
Sunday, May 5, 2019 - Healing  
Sunday, June 2, 2019 - Celebration

### Celtic Worship Guild

Mary Davies Cole  
John Hardy  
Sarah Kieffer  
Scott Lamlein  
The Reverend Dr. Molly O'Neill Louden  
Tom Neal  
The Reverend Susan Pinkerton  
Norb Spencer



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See our web page and video at [www.sjparish.net/celtic-worship](http://www.sjparish.net/celtic-worship).