

Service of Celtic Worship

January 5, 2020



*We are a Celtic spiritual community grounded in sacred love,
which is at the heart of the Christian message.*

**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 **Meditation.***

Words of Welcome *The Reverend Susan Pinkerton*

Opening Prayer

Being a Person by William Stafford

Read by Jeff Verney

Be a person here. Stand by the river, invoke
the owls. Invoke winter, then spring.
Let any season that wants to come here to make its own
call. After that sound goes away, wait.

A slow bubble rises through the earth
and begins to include sky, stars, all space,
even the outracing, expanding thought.
Come back and hear the little sound again.

Suddenly this dream you are having matches
everyone's dream, and the result is the world.
If a different call came there wouldn't be any
world, or you, or the river, or the owls calling.

How you stand here is important. How you
listen for the next things to happen. How you breathe.

Song

Please stand.

Where the Soul of Man Never Dies

To Canaan's land, I'm on my way,
Where the soul never dies.
My darkest night will turn to day,
Where the soul never dies.

Chorus

Dear friends there'll be no sad farewells.
There'll be no tear dimmed eyes.
Where all is peace and joy and love.
And the soul never dies.

The rose is blooming there for me,
Where the soul never dies.
And I will spend eternity,
Where the soul never dies.
The love light beams across the foam,
Where the soul never dies.
It shines and lights the way to home,
Where the soul never dies.

My life will end in deathless sleep
Where the soul never dies
And everlasting joys I'll reap
Where the soul never dies

I'm on my way to that fair land
Where the soul never dies
Where there will be no parting hand
Where the soul never dies

Please be seated.

Reflection Molly Louden

from *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* by
Cynthia Bourgeault

“In the center of one’s nothingness one meets the infinitely real,” says Thomas Merton, adding, “This act of total surrender is not merely a fantastic intellectual and mystical gamble; it is something much more serious. It is an act of love for this unseen person, who, in the very gift of love by which we surrender ourselves to his reality also makes his presence known to us...Call that ‘unseen person’ Christ, God, or one’s own deepest self.” (p. 15)

The divine indwelling is the cornerstone of contemplative prayer. Thomas Keating refers to it as “our personal big bang,” for it reveals the Source of our own being—the explosion of divine love into form which first gave rise to our personal life. It also reveals the direction in which our hearts must travel for a constantly renewed intimacy with this Source. (p. 14)

Chant *There is a Balm in Gilead*
Please stand.

Negro Spiritual

There is a balm in Gilead, to make the wounded whole,
there is a balm in Gilead, to heal the sin sick soul.

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 Mary Cole

Please join in reading the responses. Feel free to pray your own petitions and desires silently or aloud after each response.

God of all Being,

We thank you for all the blessings of our lives, especially this community that we share. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

Help us to love each other in Your name.

We pray for all those in need of love and community, the lonely, the displaced, the discouraged, and all those facing illness and fear. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

May we serve them in Your name.

We pray for our nation, and all nations on this Earth, our common home. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

May our hearts and minds be open to reconciliation for the shared good of all peoples everywhere.

We pray for your Creation, all creatures great and small, this precious Earth, and all its resources on which we depend. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

Give us compassion and resolve to care for this living planet and everything upon it.

We pray for all those who have died, especially those we name now. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

We thank you for their lives. Bless their journeys into Light.

We thank You for holding us in the power of Your Love. *[Pause for silent or spoken prayers.]*

**Help us be your eyes and hands to serve the world in Your name,
Amen.**

Closing Prayer

Read by Jeff Verney

Falling Awake by Jon Kabat-Zinn

Have you ever had the experience of stopping so completely,
of being in your body so completely,
of being in your life so completely,
that what you knew and what you didn't know,
that what had been and what was yet to come,
and the way things are right now
no longer held even the slightest hint of anxiety or discord?
It would be a moment of complete presence, beyond striving, beyond mere
acceptance,
beyond the desire to escape or fix anything or plunge ahead,
a moment of pure being, no longer in time,
a moment of pure seeing, pure feeling,
a moment in time in which life simply is,
and that "isness" grabs you by all your senses,
all your memories, by your very genes,
by your loves, and
welcomes you home.

Threshold Blessing

Led by Molly Loudon

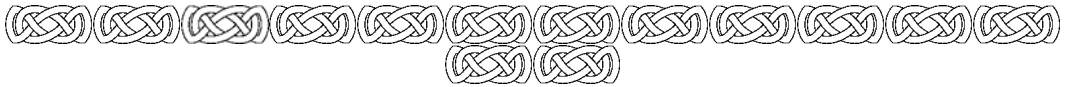
J.P.Newell & K.Baard, heartbeatjourney.org

We first hold our hands over the candle and then up to our eyes as a signal of our desire to see light in each other and all of creation. We then hold our hands over the candle to our heart as a signal of our desire to know light deep within ourselves.

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 "Meditation" in the Reception Room.



Greeter: David Hadden

Healing ministers: Jane Cloutier and Molly Loudon

Reception Hosts: Jane Cloutier and Rita Neal

*Set-up Crew: Holly Fenn, John and Ann Walsh, Carey Downes, Florence
Nicholas, Charmaine Harkins, and Eleanor Blake*

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

Celtic Worship Guild

Jane Cloutier

Mary Davies Cole

John Hardy

Sarah Kieffer

The Reverend Dr. Molly O'Neill Loudon

Tom Neal

The Reverend Susan Pinkerton

Norb Spencer

Jeff Verney

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CTCelticWorship.

See our web page and video at www.sjparish.net/celtic-worship.

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 6, 2019 - Rebirth
Sunday, November 3, 2019 - Welcome the Stranger
Sunday, December 1, 2019 - *Cancelled due to inclement weather*
Sunday, January 5, 2020 - Meditation
Sunday, February 2, 2020 - Love
Sunday, March 1, 2020 - Betrayal
Sunday, April 5, 2020 - Forgiveness
Sunday, May 3, 2020 - Nature
Sunday, June 7, 2020 - Joy

