

Morning Prayer in the Celtic Tradition

First Sundays at 8:00 a.m.

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

July 5, 2026



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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**Welcome to Celtic Morning Prayer
at St. Paul's
First Sundays at 8:00 a.m.**

*This is a service of silence and prayer,
loosely based on the order for morning prayer in the Northumbrian
Community and including prayers from the Iona Community. It is led by
Lay and Clergy Worship Leaders and is intended to include long silences,
which begin and end with the ringing of a bell.*

*(At the beginning of worship,
you are invited to place an
offering in the Alms Basin.)*

Leader: Greg Millert

St. Paul's Territory Acknowledgement

(In accordance with Diocese resolution and approved by Vestry in winter/spring '23)

We acknowledge that we stand on territory that was taken from the Abenaki people of the Wabanaki Confederacy, the people of the Dawnland. May we always remember that the Earth does not belong to us, that we belong to the Earth, and that we are all companions in life. May we learn from our past sins and be instruments of justice and peace for all people in today's world. We ask for inspiration that we might be compelled to take action and support our native neighbors as they continue to seek their sovereignty here in Maine.

Opening Prayer and Thanksgiving

Leader: I arise today

All: Through the strength of heaven; light of the sun,

Leader: Splendor of fire, speed of lightning,

All: Swiftmess of the wind, depth of the sea,

Leader: Stability of the earth, firmness of the rock.

All: I arise today

Leader: Through God's strength to pilot me; God's might to uphold me,

All: God's wisdom to guide me,

Leader: God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me,

All: God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me.

Prayer of Approach and Contrition

Leader: God of wild, windy and prodigal love,

All: We confess our bondage to fear,

Our smallness of heart,

Our lack of imagination,

Our guardedness in giving,

Our complicity in systems of racial and economic injustice,

Our misuse of the gifts of creation,

Our resistance to the Way of Jesus.

We ask your mercy and the power of your Holy Spirit,

To burn through us,

To break open our hearts,

To ignite our imaginations and

To raise us from the dead

That we might be signs of your healing and liberating love in the world.

(5 minutes of silence begins and ends with the bell)

First Reading

The First Day of Holly Month.

(Irish, early 16th Century from A Celtic Book of Days)

“Of all the trees that in the wood, the holly tree bears the crown.”

So says the carol, and holly is generally associated with Mid-winter and Christmas – when its prickles recall Christ’s crown of thorns, and its berries his sacrificial blood. But holly was sacred to the Romans, the Germanic peoples and the Celts long before the coming of Christianity, and its special month was celebrated, not at the time of its berries, but at that of its much less conspicuous flowers. More significantly, it is also the month just after Midsummer, when the sun is beginning to decline, for the god or king of the evergreen holly (often identified with ‘Bran the blessed’ of Celtic mythology) was a guardian of the waning year and the winter, as the oak god ruled the season of growth which culminated at Midsummer.

“Holly, burn it green; holly burn it dry: of all trees whatsoever the critically best is holly.”

Scripture Readings

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 (responsively by whole verse)

8) The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills.

9) My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.

Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.

10) My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;

11) for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

12) The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

13) The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give
forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

Philippians 4: 4 – 9

(5 minutes of silence begins and ends with the bell)

Declaration of Faith

All: We believe in God whose love is the source of all life
and the desire of our lives,
whose love was given a human face in Jesus of Nazareth,
whose love was crucified by the evil that waits to enslave us all
and whose love, defeating even death,
is our glorious promise of freedom.

Therefore, though we are sometimes fearful and full of doubt,
in God we trust; and in the name of Jesus Christ,
we commit ourselves, in the service of others,
to seek justice and to live in peace, to care for the earth,
and to share the commonwealth of God's goodness,
to live in the freedom of forgiveness and the power of the spirit of love,
and in the company of the faithful so to be the church,
for the glory of God. Amen.

(5 minutes of silence begins and ends with the bell)

Prayers

Leader: Peace between nations

All: Peace between neighbors

Leader: Peace between lovers and partners

All: In love of the God of life.

Leader: Peace between parent and child,

All: Peace between sister and brother

Leader: The peace of Christ above all peace,

All: Bless O Christ my face

Let my face bless everything.

Bless O Christ my eyes

Let my eyes bless all they see.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: And now, as Jesus taught us, we say,

ALL: Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name,

Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in Heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil,

For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.

AMEN

(5 minutes of silence begins and ends with the bell)

Blessings

All: This day and this night,
May I know, O God
The deep peace of the running wave,
The deep peace of the flowing air
The deep peace of the quiet earth
The deep peace of the shining stars
The deep peace of the Son of Peace.

Leader:

May the God of Hope fill us with every joy in believing.
May the peace of Christ abound in our hearts.
May we be enriched by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Ministries

8:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

Celebrant	Celtic Morning Prayer Leader: Greg Millert	The Rev. Katie Holicky
Preacher		The Rev. Matthew Scott
Eucharistic Ministers		Meghan Williams and Carol Thomas
Lectors		Intergenerational Reader 1 st Lesson Nancy Whitehouse Ps. Carol Thomas Pr.
Music		Amy Webb-Prosser
Greeter		Moriah Freeman
Ushers		Jerome Brown and Michael McCabe
Acolyte		Meghan Williams
Torchbearer		
Alter Guild	Karen Rienert and Bonny Labonte	
Fellowship Host	Ellen Hall	

The Diocese of Maine, The Rt. Rev. Thomas James Brown, Bishop

St. Paul's Staff and Vestry
The Rev. Dr. Matthew R. Scott, Rector
The Rev. Katie Holicky, Associate Rector

Melissa Carbajal
Lead Administrator

Patsy Oehl
Senior Warden

Andrea Lauerman
Sacred Ground Coordinator

Sunshine Spaulding
Administrative Assistant

Nancy King
Junior Warden

Amy Webb-Prosser
Organist/Accompanist

Vestry
Term ending 2027 — Michael Anne Banks, Jonathan Bolton
Term ending 2028 — Roger Barras, Michael Turner, John Bilodeau
Term ending 2029 — Dieuwke Zolas, Leslie Walter, and Elizabeth Davis