

Morning Prayer in the Celtic Tradition

First Sundays at 8:00 a.m.

The First Sunday of Advent

December 1, 2024



St. Paul's

Episcopal Church

Brunswick, Maine

27 Pleasant St.
P.O. Box 195
Brunswick, Maine 04011

Phone: 207-725-5342
Fax 207-729-1910
E-mail: stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org

**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 si-
lences, 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: Bill Edman

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.

(With all seated in silence, leader lights a candle.)

Opening Prayer and Thanksgiving

Leader: We watch this morning

All: For the light that the darkness has not overcome.

Leader: We watch for the fire that was in the beginning

All: And that burns still in the rising of the sun.

Leader: We watch for the glow of life

All: That now sleeps in the earth and glistens in the sea and sky.

Leader: We watch for your light O God

All: In the eyes of every living creature

And in the ever-living flame of our own soul.

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 our defenses,

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 From *Waiting on God*, Rowan Williams

When she first sensed the urgency of God's word inside her, the longing of God to be here, in this body, 'in my acts and words,' the first feeling was a mixture of fear and exhilaration. God had begun to exist in her belly, not through the work of any man, but out of a kind of meeting of her longing and God's. How can anyone carry God, bring God to birth in the world? How can you carry the cup without spilling it? What if the cup is no fragile container but a deep well that can never run dry? Then you know it isn't just your resource, your decision, but God's insistent generosity carrying you as you carry God.

Her body changed, her face changed. She was no longer on the edge of things, a mere extra in the spiritual drama. As she went around her body spoke to other women: others with unlikely pregnancies, early and late, recognized her, and what was in them leapt up in greeting. Conspiracies of hope.

Scripture Readings

Psalm 27: 7 - 14 (Responsively by half verse)

- 7 For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe
in his shelter; *
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling
and set me high upon a rock.
- 8 Even now he lifts up my head *
above my enemies round about me.
- 9 Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation
with sounds of great gladness; *
I will sing and make music to the LORD.
- 10 Hearken to my voice, O LORD, when I call; *
have mercy on me and answer me.

- 11 You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." *
Your face, LORD, will I seek.
- 12 Hide not your face from me, *
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
- 13 You have been my helper;
cast me not away; *
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
- 14 Though my father and my mother forsake me, *
the LORD will sustain me.

Isaiah 40: 27 - 31

(The leader can elect to read the NT Reading or ask a congregant to read.)

Leader: Let us listen for the word of the Lord.

All: Our ears are open.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
'My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God?'
Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

All: Amen.

(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 heart.

Let my heart bless all it holds.

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 for ever. AMEN.

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

Blessings

Leader: We have tasted the fruit of the earth, O God.

All: We have seen autumn trees hang heavily with God's
gifts.

Leader: We have known people pregnant with your spirit of
generosity.

All: Let these be guides to us today.

Leader: Let the vitality and wakefulness of God be ours

All: That we may be fully alive each day.

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.

All: Amen.

You are encouraged to remain in silence.

This service is adapted from the Community of Iona, the Northumbrian Community, St. Albans Cape Elizabeth, St. Brendan's Deer Isle, and other Celtic prayer resources.

