

A CELTIC SERVICE FOR TRANSFORMATION

Thursday at 6:30 PM, St. Paul's on the Green, Norwalk, Connecticut

Welcome to St. Paul's on the Green. We're glad you're here.

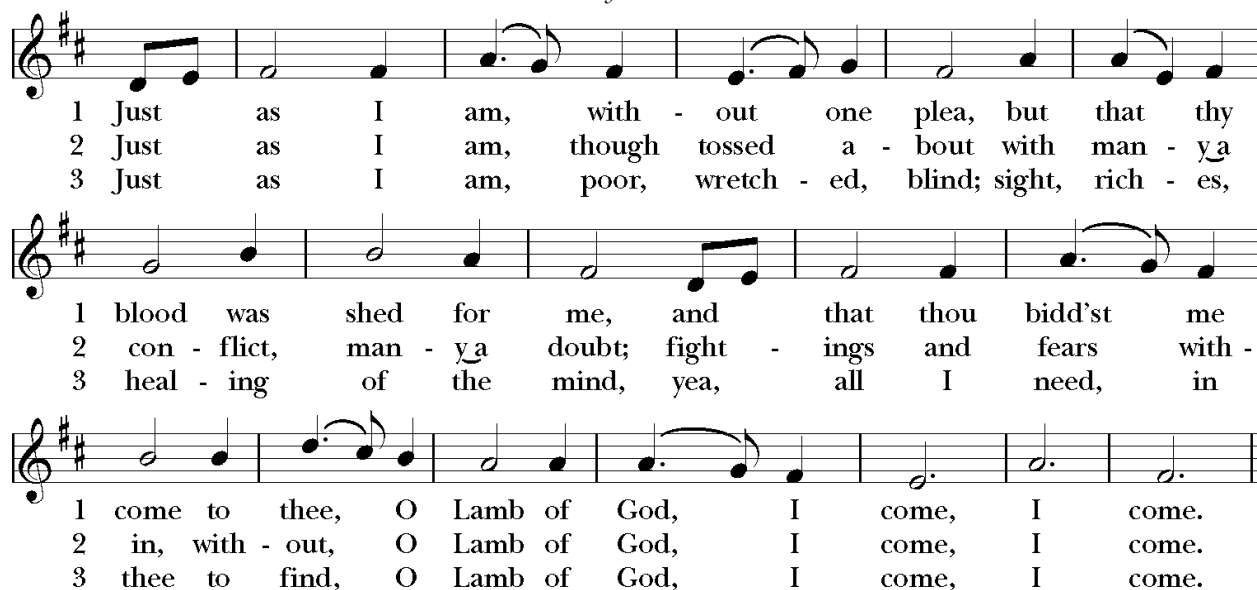
Please prepare for worship in silence and in prayer.

As you enter the church, you are invited to take a stone, and to place a lit taper in the candle stand.

As the ringing of the bell fades, the people stand.

HYMN

led by the cantor



1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy
2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - ya
3 Just as I am, poor, wretch - ed, blind; sight, rich - es,
1 blood was shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me
2 con - flict, man - ya doubt; fight - ings and fears with -
3 heal - ing of the mind, yea, all I need, in
1 come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
2 in, with - out, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
3 thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

words: Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)

music: *Woodworth*, William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868)

OPENING RESPONSES

Leader: Ever-present God, around us, within us,

People: **we come to praise and worship you.**

Leader: God of eternity, God of the here and now,

People: **we come seeking to serve you.**

Leader: God of the big picture, whose loving purpose embraces the whole world,

People: **we come to strengthen our commitment.**

Leader: God of the smallest detail, closer to us than breathing,

People: **we come to increase our discernment.**

Leader: God of things bright and beautiful, great and small, wise and wonderful,

People: **help us to sense your presence in and through all things.**

Leader: God whose grace is sufficient for all our needs,

People: **help us to be people of compassion, justice, and peace.**

OPENING PRAYER

Leader: We wait from the dawn until your light is within us; Lord, let your deep joy shine out from our eyes. Grant that your wisdom will inspire us with brightness. Let the splendor of your glory glow out through our actions. Come and burn within us until we radiate your light. Capture our cold hearts; set us ablaze with your love; change us, and we shall be changed. Lord, fill us with the light of life.

People: Amen.

The people sit.

THE READING

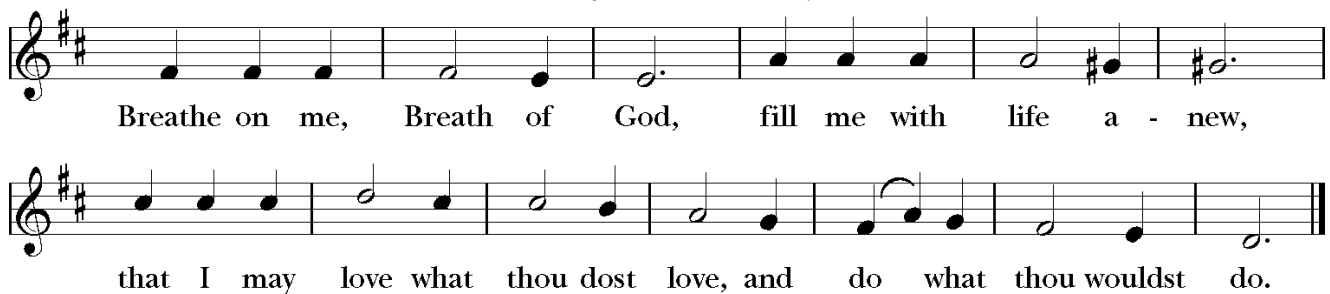
The reader announces and reads the first passage from today's lectionary.

Reader: Hear what the spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN

introduced by the cantor, then repeated



Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life a - new,
that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.

THE GOSPEL


The reader announces and reads the Gospel from today's lectionary.

Reader: Hear what the spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN

introduced by the cantor, then repeated



Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine,
till all this earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.

words: Edwin Hatch (1835-1889), alt.
music: *Nova Vita*, Lister R. Peace (1885-1969)

THE REFLECTION

Following the reflection, a bell rings, introducing a period of silence.

At the second ringing of the bell, the people stand.

THE PRAYERS

Leader: We pray now for the Church, the world, and all those in need, remembering that God can be present to us and can transform our lives if we but draw near.

God, light of the world, empower the Church throughout the world in its life and witness. Break down the barriers that divide, so that united in your truth and love, the Church may confess your name, share one baptism, sit at one table, and serve you with one accord.

Light of the world,

People: transform us with your glory.

Intercessor: Guide the rulers of the nations. Move them to set aside their fear, greed, and vain ambition, and to strive for justice and peace, so that all your children may be free.

Light of the world,

People: transform us with your glory.

Leader: Hear the cries of those who are hungry, homeless, and suffering, those near and those far. Give those of us who consume most of the earth's resources the will to reorder our lives, so that all may have their rightful share of food, care, shelter, and fullness of life.

Light of the world,

People: transform us with your glory.

Leader: Look with compassion on all who suffer illness and distress, especially those we now name.

Silence is kept.

Leader: Support them with your love and lead us to be healers for all we encounter, in the name of Christ.

Light of the world,

People: transform us with your glory.

Leader: With thanksgiving, we remember those who have died, saints who bore witness to your light, especially those we now name.

Silence is kept.

Leader: Allow us to persevere in faith, mercy, and love, and at the end of our lives to behold your glory.

Light of the world,

People: transform us with your glory.

Leader: I invite us to add our own prayers and thanksgivings.

The people may add their own petitions, either silently or aloud.

Leader: God, the light of the world, your servant Paul told us not to conform to this world, but to be transformed by the renewal of our minds, that we might discern all that is good, and acceptable, and perfect in your will. Renew us now in all our gifts, of faith, ministry, teaching, dedication, generosity, diligence, love, and joy. Transform us by your grace, that we may in turn transform the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who by his living and dying changed all.

People: Amen.

A PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Lord, we carry many burdens: the cruel words said; the humiliations inflicted; the regrets in our relationships; the failures in our lives; the damage to your creation; the violence of our world; our fear of the future; our fear of those who are different; the hope that has been lost.

Lord, we lay our burdens down at the foot of the cross. We cannot bear them. We cannot carry them further.

Lord, we carry your light within us: your compassion, your kindness, your gentleness, your wisdom, your courage, your strength, your joy, your eternal love, your still small voice.

Lord, we are here at the foot of the cross. Empty us of all that keeps us from you. Fill us, Lord, in a new way.

May your Spirit live within us, and may we be obedient to the path you light before us. Amen.

The people sit.


A MOMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

You are invited to bring forward a stone and place it in the basket near the candle stand. You may then take a lit a candle back to your seat, representing the light of God's Spirit with us.

At the direction of the leader, the people stand.

CHANT

introduced by the cantor, then sung three times



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, shine through the darkness. Christ,
be our light! Shine in your church, gathered to day.

words and music: Bernadette Farrell (b.1957)

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THE PRAYER AND PEACE

Leader: In gratitude for this moment, this place, those around us, Christ among us, we give ourselves to you, our God.

Take us out to live as changed people, because we have met the risen Christ, and cannot be the same.

People: Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage much through us: so may we live to your glory both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven. Amen.

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

As the people depart, they share a sign of peace with one another.