

Celtic Christmas

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We gather together to recite the Christmas Story from a Celtic Perspective.

The Lantern at the Door is a Celtic tradition of placing a Light, visible to all wanderers, in a doorway or a window on Christmas Eve so that any person might know they are welcome. In a Church, it symbolizes Christ welcoming us.

The Sanctuary space is referred to as the 'womb' where we are cradled, nurtured, cared for and strengthened before being given birth back into the world where we are called to serve. If you have questions, feel free to ask after the Worship.

MUSICAL PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME and EXPLANATION

THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS *(the banter in heaven)*

Tonight's the night, the darkest night
When shines no moon to give us light,
When all are held in fear's embrace
And tremble for the human race.

**Celestial stars above us bright,
Now whisper from their lofty height.
"Be calm, you shepherds, have no fright,"**

**"Be calm, you shepherds, have no fright,"
A voice from darkness speaks at night,
And somewhere far beyond our sight,
A Father holds his baby tight.**

A Father holds his baby tight,
"To earth, be gone, O Child of light,
With flocks of angels, take your flight,
Forsake your Throne, your Power, your Right
And in a manger dwell this night."

**Dear Mary's Son, you know our plight,
So in our darkness, be our light,
Lend strength and power to do the right,
And be the North Star in our night.**

We thank You, Spirit, God of Might,
**Who to the clans on Sinai's height,
Gave Law and Wisdom and insight,
In which the Prophets took delight.**

We thank You, Father, God of Might,
Your door You never did shut tight,
A draft of warmth, a crack of light,
All spoke of life beyond our sight.

And now, O Christ, Great God of Light,
Whom evil sees and then takes flight,
We stand before You, our delight,
And join the angels in this night.

“All Glory to the God of Might,
Who now appears to human sight,
To guide us from our greatest fright
And bring us home to heaven tonight.”

Seumas Eóin macSheumais

MUSICAL CALL TO PRAYER (*Irish Tune: The Wests Awake*)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
 come ransom captive Israel
 Who mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appears.
 O Come, O Come, Great God of Might!
 Who to the clans on Sinai's height,
 In ancient times didst give the Law,
 In clouds of majesty and awe!

O Come, Great Shepherd, to your flock
 And with you love, all doors unlock,
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
 And death's dark shadows put to flight.
 O come, Desire of Nations, bind
 All peoples in one heart and mind
 Come, bid our sad divisions cease,
 And show yourself, our Prince of Peace.

RECITATION OF ISAIAH 9:2

The people who walk in darkness
have seen a great light.
 On those living in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them the light will dawn.

HYMN – *(Irish Tune – The Minstrel Boy)* Sung by the Musical Leaders then repeated by the Congregation.

O Saviour Christ, You have come for me
 And by grace your light has shone upon me.
 Send forth your angels to this House of Prayer
 That our earthly praises may be heard there.
 Great High King and the Lord of All
 Yet born of Mary, mild,
 Come to our side and join the song
 Of your faithful people here assembled.

Seumas Eóin macSheumais

LIGHTING OF THE TRINITARIAN LIGHTS

I will light a light,

**In the Name of the Conceiver, the Source, the Belovèd,
 Who molded the world and shapes me into being.**

I will light a light,

**In the Name of the Redeemer, the Christ, the Lover,
 Who saved the world and reaches out to me.**

I will light a light,

**In the Name of the Inspirer, the Spirit, the Love,
 Who encompassed the world and breathes new life into me.**

God is Three yet God is One, behold the mystery of the Trinity!

**Three lights we perceive yet the source still is One,
 Three flames we see burn yet the flame came from One,
 Three wicks we must tend yet the cord all is One,
 Three Persons in God yet our God is but One.**

**From one Light, the lights all their origins share,
 From one Flame, the flames all have sprung in the air,
 From one Wick, the wicks all stand up to declare
 That God, Three-In-One, is the Essence of prayer.**

**From one candelabra, three candles we see,
 Each raising their glory to God, One-In-Three,
 The holder is one though the candles are three
 The Trinity God is but One Energy.**

HYMN ~ TO THE TRINITY *(Scottish Tune: Bunessan – Morning Has Broken)*

God the Conceiver, God the Redeemer, God the Inspirer, Great Three-In-One!
 Beyond our knowing, always revealing, Never forsaking, loving each one.

God uncreated, yet still creating Without beginning, without an end,
 All of creation echoes your Presence Both seen and unseen, on You depend.

So, to the God of Earth and of Heaven, God of the star fields, God of the sea,
 All of our praises shall now be given, Through out the ages, eternally.

Seumas Eóin macSheumais

THE GOOD SHEPHERD'S PRAYER

- O Christ, the Good Shepherd, come gather your people.
The lost and the lonely, the broken and breaking
The tired and tortured, the anguished and aching
The done-in and doubting, the waiting and wishing,
- O Christ, the Good Shepherd, come gather your people.
The puzzled and pondering, the proud and pretentious
The sure and superior, the never inferior,
The bright and the bustling, the stirrers and shakers,
- O Christ, the Good Shepherd, come gather your people.
From corner and lamplight, from mansion and campsite
From fears and obsession, from tears and depression,
From untold excesses, from treasured successes,
- O Christ, the Good Shepherd, come gather your people.
We saw You a stranger, coming into our midst,
We put food on your plate, we put drink in your cup,
Played music in your ear, gave warmth to your being,
You laughed & You blest us, in your heart You held us,
The lark sang above You, Now we know her sweet song,
“Among us lives Jesus as a stranger disguised”.

HYMN ~ CHRIST IN THE STRANGER'S GUISE (Leaving of Liverpool)

From heav'n to here and from here to heaven
 Is a distance less than tissue-thin,
 And it's trod by him who, in the stranger's guise,
 Is made known when he is welcomed in.

*So, come Lord Christ in the stranger's guise,
 Known both through scriptures and through broken bread.
 Your kingdom come and on the earth your will be done
 By the people you've loved and you've led.*

The folk who journey on the road with Christ
 Are the ones who've left their selves behind.
 Their song is taught them by the deaf and dumb;
 Their horizon is shown by the blind.

*So, come Lord Christ in the stranger's guise,
 Known both through scriptures and through broken bread.
 Your kingdom come and on the earth your will be done
 By the people you've loved and you've led.*

The love that's shared along the royal road
 Is a love not found when standing still.
 It lives and grows wherever faith is known
 As a movement grounded in God's will.

***So, come Lord Christ in the stranger's guise,
 Known both through scriptures and through broken bread.
 Your kingdom come and on the earth your will be done
 By the people you've loved and you've led.***

From heaven to here and from here to heaven
 Is a distance less than tissue-thin,
 And it's trod by those who meet the risen Christ
 As a stranger to be welcomed in.

***So, come Lord Christ in the stranger's guise,
 Known both through scriptures and through broken bread.
 Your kingdom come and on the earth your will be done
 By the people you've loved and you've led.***

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INVITING BELIEVERS FROM THROUGHOUT TIME

The response after each prayer is

“Come and surround us, come and surround us.”

Leader

Congregation

O Father who wrought us, ... **Come and surround us, Come and surround us.**
 O Son who sought us, ... **Come and surround us, Come and surround us.**
 O Spirit who taught us, ... **Come and surround us, Come and surround us.**

Mary of God, the mothering one,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.
Joseph of God, the fathering one,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.
Shepherds of God, the tending ones,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.
Angels of God, the singing ones,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.
Simeon of God, the waiting one,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.
Anna of God the faithful one,	Come and surround us, come and surround us.

*Continuing onward, we invite the saints of the Biblical Story,
 the saints of Universal History, and those unsung Saints who are dear to us
 through all of whom the Light of Christ has shone and still shines
 – men and women whom we want to be with us and who desire to be with us
 We invite them by saying their name and that they are of God,
 And then name the quality or special gift that endeared them to us.*

_____ of God, the _____ one,

The Congregation invites your friends to join us by saying,

Come and surround us, come and surround us.

We end with:

God the Conceiver, God the Redeemer, God the Inspirer,
Come and surround us, come and surround us.

**Come and surround us, Great God of all time.
Surround us with friends, surround us with saints,
Enfold us in clouds of Witnesses great,
In prayer let us join with those beyond time,
Who stand by us now surrounded in light
To offer this prayer which is their delight.**

The LORD'S PRAYER

This is our Universal Christian Prayer.

As we recite it, all who have ever recited it, come to join us in worship.

*It is the Celtic Belief that Jesus Himself has joined us
and is incarnate in someone in our midst.*

As we turn to welcome each other, be mindful that you may be welcoming Christ.

WELCOMING OF STRANGERS AND CHRIST

*People are asked to turn to their neighbours and say
"Peace be with you"*

RE-GATHERING PRAYER

Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ on Cross and Christ in manger,
Christ sustaining all who gather, Christ uniting friend and stranger.

**Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ to check me,
Christ to win me, Christ to hold me, Christ to lead me,
Christ to guide me, Christ to teach me, Christ to save me,
Christ to raise me, Christ to comfort and restore me.**

HYMN ~ O COME LITTLE CHILDREN *(Irish - Twenty One Years)*

O come, little children, O come, one and all,
Come look in the manger in Bethlehem's stall,
For there, little children, on this holy night,
Our God sends from heaven, his Son, our delight.

Adore like the shepherds! Your glad voices raise
With those of the angels who sing in His Praise,
Your chorus will echo from earth to the sky,
"All Glory to God in the Heavens most high!"

Away in a manger no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus, laid down his sweet head,
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing the baby awakes
 But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes,
 I love You, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
 And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask You to stay
 Close by me forever and love me I pray,
 Bless all the dear children in your tender care
 And fit us for heaven to live with you there.

Author unknown.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader

Congregation

I am bending low the knee **in the eye of those who see;**
 Conceiver who created me**with eye of love behold now me.**
 Redeemer who defended me..... **with eye divine enfold now me.**
 O Spirit who so altered me..... **with eye refining hold now me.**
 In friendliness & love, the Three...**behold me when I bend the knee.**

O Trinity of love and power,	Forgive me in this sacred hour.
Forgive the sins I can recall,	Forgive the sins forgotten all;
Pardon what I have committed,	And the good I have omitted;
Forgive the times I have been weak,	When you required me to speak.
Forgive the judgments harsh I made	When others from the way once strayed.
Forgive the lies that I have told	To save myself, my place to hold.
Forgive the truths I still avoid,	The Spirit's power still unemployed.
Forgive the times I failed to boast	Of You my God and all the host
Forgive the past and present too	And all that I confess to You.
O Trinity of love and power,	Forgive me in this sacred hour.

PRIVATE CONFESSION

HYMN – LORD, WHERE HAVE WE LEFT YOU?

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Lord Christ, You never leave us.
Your Kingdom is among us.
 Lord Jesus give your pardon,
To all who turn from evil
 And to each who turns to You,
 Where regret is strong and true,
Let freedom dwell within us,
And from all bondage free us.
Reshape us for your glory.
That we might tell your story.

In Christ our Lord I tell you, assure you, and persuade you
 All sins are past - forgiven, we live in God's Redemption
 As children of salvation from every clan and nation.

**Amen! Tis true, God loves us,
 In Christ God does forgive us.
 Again and again, 't is true –
 Again and again, Amen.**

ACT OF COMMITMENT

As Columba laid down his cherished books
 And left behind the monastery he loved
 He turned his gaze across the Sea to You.

**So we lay down this night our cherished past
 We leave behind our treasures in this world
 and look across the changing seas to You.**

As Aiden and Cuthbert set out to preach
 They traveled down roads yet unknown to them
 Talking about faith and listening to You.

**So we set out down new and unknown paths
 Into a future from which You call us
 Talking about faith and trusting in You.**

As Hilda relinquished her cherished plans,
 And surrendered her life to your Spirit,
 She guided her nuns to new life in Christ

**So we now relinquish our plans to God
 And taking hold of the hand of our Lord
 Breathe in the breath of the Spirit of Life.**

HYMN ~ ALL HAIL THE POWER *(Irish Tune: Homes of Donegal)*

All hail the power in Jesus' name, let angels prostrate fall!
 Bring forth the Royal Diadem and crown Him "Lord of All"
 Let every clan, let every tongue, responding to his call,
 Join in this everlasting song and crown Him "Lord of All"!

O Spirit, breathe among us here; inspire the work we do.
 May hands and voices, eye and ear, attest to life made new.
 In worship and in daily strife – may we perceive your call
 And join an everlasting throng that crowns Him "Lord of All"

May poor grow rich and weak grow strong, may foolish ones grow wise,
 May all who mourn the loss of friends, know You hear all their cries,
 O for your world where time and tears, by love, which conquers all,
 Enable all to join with us and crown Him, "Lord of All"!

Words: vs. 1: Edward Perronet 1780 et al; vs. 2- 3 arranged by Ivan Gregan 2000 et al

READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

FIRST TESTAMENT LESSON: HOSEA 11 *(in Scot's Gaelic- a summary)*

God said, "All the people of Israel are like a single child. When Israel was a child, I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son. Yet the more I called him, the further he ran from me. He sacrificed to foreign gods; he burnt incense to idols. Yet it was I who taught him how to walk. It was I who stretched out my arms and caught him when he stumbled. It was I who healed him but he did not acknowledge me. I drew him to me with cords of kindness, I surrounded him with bonds of love, I lifted the yoke from around his neck and bent down to feed him. Israel was determined to turn away from me even as he continued to call me 'The Most High'. But how can I give him up? How can I hand him over to the misfortune of his own doing? How can I treat him like Admah or Zeboiim, cities of the plain that were destroyed with Sodom? I can't. My feelings for Israel are much too strong. I will not lose my temper. I will not carry out my fierce anger. I will not hand him over. For I am God and not human. I am the Holy One in your midst and not one who sinks to spiteful reaction. I will not come to my child in wrath. I, THE LORD, will roar like a lion and my child will return. With trembling he shall come home, like birds returning from Egypt or Assyria. I will bring him back to his senses. I will bring him back home. I, THE LORD, have vowed redemption.

PRAYER BEFORE THE GOSPEL RECITATION

God of the heavens, of air and of space,
 God beyond time and God beyond place,
 God of the richness of eternal grace

Send now your blessing, send now your blessing.

God of the mountain peak piercing the sky
 God of Commandment on Mount Sinai
 God of new insight from Mount Tabor high,

Send now your blessing, send now your blessing.

God of the moon and the stars and the night,
 God of the sunrise, the bringer of light,
 God of the highway beyond human sight

Send now your blessing, send now your blessing.

God in the Gospel we gather to hear,
 God in the Voice that will make your Love clear,
 God in the faith that will banish all fear,

Send now your blessing, send now your blessing.

Traditional Gaelic Translated Ivan Gregan 2004

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 2: 1 – 20 *(Recited in unison)*

1. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.
2. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria,
3. And all went to be taxed, everyone to his own city.
4. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the House and lineage of David:
5. To be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.
6. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
7. And she brought forth her first born son,

and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
9. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
12. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.
15. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.
16. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.
17. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told to them concerning this child.
18. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
- 19: But Mary kept all these things in her heart.
20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

OFFERTORY HYMN ~ THE AYE CAROL *(Irish: Red is the Rose)*

Who is the baby an hour or two old,
 Looked for by shepherds strayed from their fold,
 Lost in the world though more precious than gold?
 This is God with us in Jesus.

Who is the woman with child at her breast,
 Giving her milk to earth's heav'nly guest,
 Telling her mind to be calm and at rest?
 Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Who is the man who looks on at the door,
 Welcoming strangers, some rich, most poor,
 Scanning the world as if somehow unsure?
 Joseph, the father of Jesus.

Who are the people come in from the street,
Some to bring presents, some just to meet,
Joining their song to what angels repeat?
These are the new friends of Jesus.

Will you come with me, ev'n though I feel shy,
Come to His Cradle, come to His Cry,
Give Him your nod, or your "yes" or your "aye",
Give what you can give to Jesus?

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BLESSING AT THE MANGER

Usually, during the singing of this hymn, if people have a baby present, they are encouraged to come and place the baby in the Manger for a traditional blessing. If children or grandchildren were not present but people wish them to be blessed, they come forward and figuratively place them in the manger by mentioning their name or placing a piece of paper with their name upon it in the manger.

AN TALADH CHRÌOSDA – (the Christ Child Lullaby Translated into English by Ivan Gregan)

Mo ghaol, mo ghràdh, 'is m'eudail Thu
M'ionntas ùr is m'èibhneas Thu
Mo mhacàn àlainn, ceutach Thu
Chan fhiù mi fhèin a' bhith ad dhàil.

Hallelujah!

You are the object of my love,

My lovely, little baby boy,
You're cradled in these arms of love.

Hallelujah!

Ged as Rìgh na Glòrach Thu
Dhiùlt iad an tigh-òsda dhut,
Ach chualas ainglean sòlasach
Toirt glòir do'n Tì as àird.

Hallelujah!

Although of Glory you're the King
For rest that night no bed was found,
Yet Angel voices shook the ground
Fear not! Behold your heavenly King!

Hallelujah!

Bheir mi mòladh, bheir mi aoradh,
Bheir mi cliù dhuit, bheir mi gaol dhuit,
Tha thu agam air mo ghairdean,
'S mi tha sona thar chloinn daoine.

Hallelujah!

With Love, I praise You, little boy,
 With love, we are adoring you
 Within my arms I'll cradle you,
 You are the Source of human joy. **Hallelujah!**

The traditional prayer in translation reads:

*O little one, may you grow up to be like the One who first laid in this manger:
 surrounded by the song of the angels, guided by light beyond our ken,
 held in arms that will love you and a spring of inspiration for all who receive you.
 O little one, into Christ's hands we commend you, amen.*

HYMN ~ COME AND SING (Welsh traditional tune: *Ar Hyd y Nos*)

Sleep my child, may peace attend thee, - this Holy night.
 Guardian Angels God will send thee, - this Holy night.
 As the darkness comes descending, May your light all shadows rending,
 Be for us a joy unending, this Holy night.

IN THE FIELDS

In the fields, where long ago,
 Ruth's young feet went to and fro,
 Dropping tears among the leaves,
 binding up the scattered sheaves.

**In the fields that heard the song,
 of David's singing, sweet and strong,
 Still the shepherds hear Your Voice
 and tonight with us rejoice.**

In the fields of Bethlehem,
 lies the rare and precious gem,
**Tucked within the manger's hay,
 where some wish that he would stay.**

In the fields, where angels sing,
 fearful shepherds, trembling,

**Wonder what the heavens know,
 wonder if it's safe to go.**

In the fields of strife tonight,
 sounds a voice from heaven's light.
**"Peace on Earth! It is God's Will,
 Let the guns and swords fall still."**

In the fields around us now,
 Sheep and cattle humbly bow.
**We, with them, will bend the knee,
 To the ONE who sets us free.**

Words: Seumas Eóin macSheumais

HYMN ~ INSPIRED BY LOVE AND ANGER (*Irish tune – Salley Gardens*)

Inspired by love and anger, disturbed by endless pain,
 Informed of God's own bias, we ask him once again:
 "How long must some folk suffer? How long can few folk mind?
 How long dare vain self interest turn pray'r and pity blind?"

From those forever victims of heartless human greed,
 Their cruel plight composes a litany of need:
 "Where are the fruits of justice? Where are the signs of peace?
 When is the day when prisoners and dreams find their release?"

From those forever shackled to what their wealth can buy,
 The fear of lost advantage provokes a bitter cry,
 "Don't query our position! Don't criticize our wealth!
 Don't mention those exploited by politics and stealth!"

To God, who through the prophets proclaimed a different Age,
 We offer earth's indifference, its agony and rage:
 "When will the wrong be righted? When will your Kingdom come?
 When will the world be generous to all instead of some?"

God asks, "Who will go for Me? Who will extend My reach?
 And who, when few will listen, will prophesy and preach?
 And who, when few bid welcome, will offer all they know?
 And who, when few dare follow, will walk the road I show?"

Amused in some one's kitchen, asleep in some one's boat,
 Attuned to what the ancients exposed, proclaimed, and wrote,
 A Saviour without safety, a tradesman without tools
 Has come to tip the balance with fishermen and fools.

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SEEKING OF GOD'S BLESSING UPON THE WORLD

The response after each prayer is

"May God's Peace be upon you."

Think of those people, those places and those situations around the world
 where God's Peace is needed. Either aloud or in silence offer them to God.

THE LIFE AFTER TODAY

Glad music filled the Christmas sky,
As Mary sang her lullaby.
 This gentle girl has much to bear,
Those fingers twining in her hair,
 Will grasp the hideous and profane,
This present joy foreshadows pain.

The manger's wood becomes a cross,
Our present gain becomes a loss,
 The swaddling bands so snug tonight,
Become the shroud that holds him tight.
 The angels singing o'er his head,
Announce the news, "He is not dead!"
 A borrowed stable, an upper room,
Foreshadow but an empty tomb.
 O baby dear, on Mary's breast,
Your infant cry foretells the rest.
 From Bethlehem to Calvary
A distance that will set us free.

Translation: Ivan Gregan

PREPARATION FOR LEAVING

HYMN - THE WORD OF LIFE *(tune – Wild Mountain Thyme)*

In a byre near Bethlehem, passed by many a wandering stranger,
 The most precious Word of Life was heard gurgling in a manger.
 For the good of us all.

***And He's here when we call Him bringing health, love and laughter
 To life now and ever after, for the good of us all.***

By the Galilean Lake where the people flocked for teaching,
 The most precious Word of Life fed their mouths as well as preaching.
 For the good of us all.

***And He's here when we call Him bringing health, love and laughter
 To life now and ever after, for the good of us all.***

Quiet was Gethsemane, camouflaging priest and soldier;
 The most precious Word of Life took the world's weight on his shoulder,
 For the good of us all.

***And He's here when we call Him bringing health, love and laughter
 To life now and ever after, for the good of us all.***

On the hill of Calvary, place to end all hope of living,
 The most precious Word of Life breathed his last and died, forgiving,
 For the good of us all.

***And He's here when we call Him bringing health, love and laughter
 To life now and ever after, for the good of us all.***

In a garden, just at dawn, near the grave of human violence,
 The most precious Word of Life cleared his throat and ended silence,
 For the good of us all.

***And He's here when we call Him bringing health, love and laughter
 To life now and ever after, for the good of us all.***

RUNIC PRAYER

God our Creator; God of surprises,
Shaping the sea, the stars, and the planets,
gather us into your circle of love.

God our Redeemer, Icon of caring,
Gurgling, crying, a Bethlehem babe,
gather us into your circle of love.

God our Inspirer, the Breather of Life
Flickering, dancing, like light in the dark,
gather us into your circle of love.

Great God, Three-in-One, Great God, One-in-Three,
Gather us into your circle of love.

Hold us like Mary now holding her child,
Sweeping us gently up into your arms,

Hold us like Joseph now holding his bride,
Breaking traditions to stand by his love,

Hold us like shepherds now saving their lambs
Protect us in death, from danger and dread,

Hold us, your children, secure in your care.
Hold us, your children, secure in your care.

BENEDICTION *(in Gaelic, French and English)*

PARTING RUNE

Grant us Glory, **Saviour Dear,**
 God's affection, **love and fear,**
 Saints and angels do not cease**Day and night to give us peace,**
 Day and night to give us peace**Saints and Angels do not cease.**

You made my hand for holding,
 You made my eye for seeing,
You made my soul for glory,
You wrote in me your Story.

Guide me homeward, Saviour true,
 until at last I'm home with You.
From all darkness to the Light,
steer my feet and bless my sight.

Amen, Amen, again Amen!

SAYING GOOD NIGHT TO THE TRINITY

Extinguishing the Three Candles lit at the beginning of Worship.
 We give thanks to each Person of the Trinity and bid them,
 "Soraidh leibh, beannach leibh, 'is oidhche mhath leibh"
 "Fare thee well, blessings upon you, and good night to you"

LEAVING THE PLACE OF PRAYER

In my womb an angel's made thee,
to my breast an angel's brought thee,
In my arms an angel's placed thee,
sweet, bonnie baby, divine.

Chorus:

*Hush! Hush! Time to be sleeping,
Hush, Hush, dreams come a-creeping,
Dreams of peace and of freedom,
So smile in your sleep, bonnie baby.*

God has poured on me a measure
of His Grace and of His Pleasure,
Child of God you are my treasure,
sweet, bonnie baby, divine. **Chorus**

Cold was the stable where I met you,
sheep and cattle milling about you,
Straw and rags first did enfold you,
sweet, bonnie baby, divine. **Chorus**

Sarah was ninety, barren, forsaken,
Hannah was old, her faith was unshaken,
I am afraid, I'm only a maiden,
sweet, bonnie baby, divine. **Chorus**

Now we're refugees on the run
from Bethlehem, 'cause Herod's begun,
To kill all the children, leaving not one
sweet, bonnie baby, divine. **Chorus**

(Words: Ivan Gregan 2001)

We leave the Chapel in quiet reflection with Christ at our side.

Thank you to all who have participated in this evening's Worship both in person and through the Web.

To our Musicians and Singers: Adam Johnson, musician for Port Wallis, Abby Hanson, Ella Hanson, Hal Ritchie, Roger Boychuk, Ellen Gibling, Rebecca McCauley, and Ryan Henwood - a hearty thank-you.

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To Abby Hanson and Ella Hanson for helping with the Gaelic singing, tapadh leibh.

To the Rev. Catherine Stuart, visiting assistant Minister with the Rev. Ivan Gregan.

And to all who worked behind the scenes to make this a wonderful offering of Praise.