



Order of Worship 🌸 All Saints' Day 🌸 November 1, 2020

Church of the Isles 🌸 Trinity UCC

To view the entire service online, click on:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLr2IwlWThmmQQv76l3ite6lNGpvuDocD6>

Prelude “When the Saints Go Marching In” (Black Spiritual, trad.)

Shirley Hand <https://youtu.be/VCKTrDPeRlc>

O when the saints go marching in, O when the saints go marching in,
O Lord, I want to be in that number when the saints go marching in.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayers

Shelly Wilson <https://youtu.be/pxz-LGzF2PU>

Welcome to all, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. We hope to be in person for worship November 8, possibly indoors at COTI, definitely outdoors at Trinity. Regularly scheduled times: 9 and 11 AM. Masks, distancing required. Online worship will continue.

Call to Worship

By Yehuda HaLevi (1075 – 1141)

‘Tis a fearful thing to love what death can touch. A fearful thing to love, to hope, to dream, to be – to be, And oh, to lose. A thing for fools, this, And a holy thing, a holy thing to love. For your life has lived in me, your laugh once lifted me, your word was gift to me. To remember this brings painful joy. ‘Tis a human thing, love, a holy thing, to love what death has touched.



Opening Hymn “I’ll Fly Away” (A. Brumley)

Winston Culler <https://youtu.be/k6QBiktzcOo>

Some glad morning when this life is o'er I'll fly away To that home on God's celestial shore
I'll fly away I'll fly away, oh glory, I'll fly away When I die, Hallelujah, by and by I'll fly away.

Just a few more weary days and then I'll fly away To that land where joy will never end I'll fly away
Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away.
To a land where joy shall never end, I'll fly away.

Time for Children “All Saints’ Day & Dia de los Muertos”

Tina Allen <https://youtu.be/tVOGNQbn7vo>

Scripture Reading Hebrew 12:1-2; 12-15

Holly Sorensen

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Therefore, lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God.

Offering

Financial support for our churches is essential, now more than ever. Thank you for your faithful giving that keeps our ministries going! Please mail in your offerings to your church:

Church of the Isles

Att. Barb Templin

200 24th Ave.

Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785

Or give online: www.churchoftheisles.org

Trinity UCC

Att. Marty Seyler

3155 Featherwood Court

Clearwater, FL 33759

www.trinityuccstpete.org



Scripture Reading 2 Kings 2:1-13

Alicia Isaac

² Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ² Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel. ³ The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?” And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent.”

⁴ Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho.

⁶ Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on.

⁹ When they had crossed the Jordan, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you.” Elisha said, “Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.” ¹⁰ He responded, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not.” ¹¹ As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹² Elisha kept watching and crying out, “Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. ¹³ He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.

Sermon “For the Saints”

Shelly Wilson https://youtu.be/_3nTZyHSr-Q

Today is All Saints Day when we remember the blessed dead. Perhaps for you, especially this year, you remember a saint of yours, recently gone and still, deeply, dearly, here. It is also a day when we reflect upon the ways in which WE are the blessed living, —and the veil between us is thin and the time we share on Earth is holy because it is shared together with all the creation and with each other. How we bless one another with our presence is up to us, and there are myriads of ways we may do so! Hear this story aired by CNN a few years back. It is the story of Eiko and those whose lives she touches.

Amidst the sea of jerseys and bike shorts at New Jersey's City to Shore – a 150-mile bike ride to benefit multiple sclerosis research -- one unlikely rider stands out.



A tiny 84-year-old woman wears a neat, green turtleneck dress and an embroidered jacket. On her feet is a pair of high-heeled pumps. Her salt-and-pepper hair peeks out from the helmet that indicates she is, in fact, a participant in the bike ride. Her old-fashioned one-speed bicycle is purple, with a large wire basket on the front that carries her belongings and her number for the ride.

Lan Yin Tsai doesn't give the impression that she could go five miles on that bike, let alone 150. But that's what she's done -- for the past 26 years. Eiko, as she's known to friends and family, is an institution at the annual City to Shore event. And over the years, she has become a symbol of hope and determination for City to Shore participants and MS patients.

It all started when Eiko began to work in a hospital many years ago. A native of Taiwan, she was trained in Japan in the art of shiatsu massage. So while working at the hospital, she began regularly giving massages to cancer patients, until one day, about 26 years ago, she massaged a patient with MS. It was then and there that she first heard about the bike ride and decided to participate.

"In Taiwan, riding a bike is very common," explains Eiko's grandson, Alan Sim, who also has participated in City to Shore "So she grabbed her little one-speed bike and was doing the ride."

And why the nice dress and high heels? Eiko says that's just her normal biking outfit.

"I went to church, so I always dressed up and would ride my bicycle," she says. "So that's why I do it that way -- I do it that way naturally. That's the way I ride my bike."

One year her family honored her commitment by creating a team in the bike ride called "Team Eiko." Sim says 17 riders, all family and friends "from all over the place," joined the team to participate in the ride. The City to Shore ride raised more than \$5 million for MS research and care, and Team Eiko was responsible for more than \$6,000 of that. Sim says his grandmother's determination is inspirational for both the other riders and the MS patients themselves.



"When the last rider comes in, [the MS society] usually has like a police car or fire truck with sirens going off. And usually my grandmother is the last person," says Sim with a laugh. "So the people who know about her, they just sit around waiting for multiple hours after most people have finished. And she'll just ride in, and people are cheering, taking pictures, asking for autographs. It's like being with a celebrity."

"I think because of her personality and her demeanor, it really gives people hope. It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, as long as you're persistent, you are helping others and making a difference," he says. "She's a pretty remarkable woman. And I'm just hoping the genes pass down." "I have the most pressure out of anyone on the tour," Sim adds jokingly. "I know I can't quit, because my grandmother's back there behind me somewhere!"

We have been blessed, haven't we—by a line of people through the years of our lives who have been back there behind us somewhere, or now, in the transition, around, through, and ahead of us, showing us how it is done.

Eiko and her grandson Alan, and the Scriptural story of Elijah and Elisha tell us the simple archetypal stories of the living blessed presence—those who still live physically beside us and show us the way, and those who have achieved the transition and have gone ahead of us, one in God somehow, "the communion of saints."

I love this story Alicia read for us from 2 Kings...Elijah has been mentor and friend, teacher, role model, wise and good, for Elisha. "I'm headed out now, my dear one, farther than you can go with me. You stay here." Elisha is in denial—"No way, You can't go. I'm not ready. I can't do this life without you..." How many, many people here and around the world have felt that jolt of pain this year.

Elijah lingers...Elisha is trying everything to keep him alive, his friends are saying, "you know God's taking him soon." Thanks. Yeah, I know. Be quiet. I don't want to know this." Elisha says to Elijah, "No, don't say you are going. If you are going, I will go with you." Perhaps you have felt that kind of grief.



Finally, they reach the Jordan River. In African American spirituals and in some Hebrew traditions, too, the Jordan is the symbol for death. Jordan's waters are chilly and cold...Elijah says, "Before I leave, what of my soul can I give you?" It's a beautiful question to ponder. What essences of themselves have the departed left with you? Some parts are tangible, a necklace, a journal, a song, some photos remain to remind us. Other parts are woven into our selves, the way we see life, the truths we are growing to understand. Elisha thinks and then says, "Give me a double portion of your spirit." Make me **you** times two...which is like Eiko's grandson realizing he has to keep on riding his bike ahead and faster, because the people with MS cannot, and so he rides for them, and because he holds a double portion of his grandma Eiko's determined spirit.

Today—All Saints Day—is like a keepsake, too. We look at it, experience it, to remind us all. As Tina reminded us in the children's story today, all through the world's cultures there are days of the dead in which it is acknowledged that the parts of their spirits they have given to us as gift always remain—in the words of St. John Chrysostom, they are now wherever we are.

Give me a double portion of your spirit. . . .And then Elijah goes. It is a peaceful, blessed death full of dignity and power, symbolized by a chariot of fire! But dignified and peaceful or untimely and tragic, expected or not, it hurts to lose them. In this time of COVID we are reminded in poignant ways to hold all in our lives very lightly, because it is only for a short time that we belong to one another. Elisha hurts, even though he has been filled with this inspirational spirit of his friend, in verse 12, we read the poignant sentence, "Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father...father...the chariots of Israel and its horseman!" and when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them into pieces." When he could no longer see him...if you have been in the room when someone dies, you know that there is a moment in which, though the body remains where it was before, things change and you can no longer see the person you love, for he/she has gone. I picture Elisha crying, huddled on the ground, ripping his clothes in agony.



Time passes, and as Elisha heals a little, he picks himself up and goes back to his life. Like him, we do that as well with those we have loved and have lost—and after a time we look back, on those who have gone, no matter how complex our relationships, and we often find our own journeys formed and reformed—invited to follow our path in new ways.

The New Testament and many, many other spiritual traditions proclaim that somehow, someday, somewhere, we still go on, present within and for each other, and wrapped up in the Beloved One who holds us all. The author of the Hebrews passage Holly read today pictures it like a cosmic sporting event—the image of a grand stadium filled with “a great cloud of witnesses”—that these blessed dead are not gone from us, but are right with us all the time, their brokenness healed, cheering us on! And in that instant when we remember them, they are in Godself, whole and perfect, forever, and they are all with us here, too.

Today, we are like Alan with his grandmother Eiko. We are like Elisha, with his mentor Elijah. We are the blessed witnesses to the saints in our lives—and we also get to pass on the blessings to those who ride, run, walk, live beside and behind and before us. As you meditate with thanksgiving on the mysteries of loss, learning, and love and joy in our shared journey, I want to share again one of my favorite meditations. It always reminds me to hold on lightly and to be full of thanksgiving, every minute, every day. By Patti Tana, this poem is called “Post Humus.”

Scatter my ashes in my garden so I can be near my loves.

Say a few honest words, sing a gentle song, join hands in a circle of flesh.

Please tell some stories about me—making you laugh. I love to make you laugh.

When I’ve had time to settle, and green gathers into buds,

Remember I love blossoms bursting in spring.

As the season ripens, remember my persistent passion.

And if you come in my garden on an August afternoon, pluck a bright, red globe,

Let the juice run down your chin, and the seeds stick to your cheek.



When I'm dead I want folks to smile and say,

"That Patti, she sure is some tomato!"

Remember today...make plans to be a blessed presence
yourself...look around you at the saints...and give thanks!! Amen.

Litany of Remembrance/We Remember Them—Communion of Saints 2020

<https://youtu.be/GjiZ2OBz2Mo>

Joan Ferguson	Mark Devore
June Smith	John Romig
Billie Dirks	Eleanor Rouse
Don Hand	Sharon Rouse Schrader
Harryette Williams	Lee Bates
Jacquie Lewis' mom, Kitty	Lionel Scott

When All That's Left Is Love by Rabbi Allen S. Maller

When I die If you need to weep
Cry for someone Walking the street beside you.
You can love me most by letting Hands touch hands, and
Souls touch souls. You can love me most by Sharing your Simchas (goodness) and
Multiplying your Mitzvot (acts of kindness).
You can love me most by Letting me live in your eyes And not on your mind.
And when you say Kaddish for me Remember what our Torah teaches,
Love doesn't die People do.
So when all that's left of me is love Give me away.

Music "Pie Jesu"

Andrew Lloyd Webber https://youtu.be/xn_gimD6COs

Andre Rieu, Dutch violinist and conductor joins with his orchestra and choir and the brilliant Brazilian soprano Carla Maffioletti and the Nigerian/German singer Akim Camara (Germany) to perform Lloyd Webber's amazing piece, *Pie Jesu*. Camara, a musical prodigy who could play violin from the age of two was 6 years old when they performed this piece in 2006. He has gone on to form his own orchestral groups and continues to perform around the world. Lloyd Webber wrote "Pie Jesu" after several deaths around him. It prays God's blessings upon the departed.



Pie Jesu, pie Jesu, pie Jesu, pie Jesu Qui tollis peccata mundi
Dona eis requiem Dona eis requiem
Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei Qui tollis peccata mundi
Dona eis requiem Dona eis requiem
Sempiternam Sempiternam
Requiem sempiternam
Merciful Jesus, merciful Jesus, merciful Jesus, merciful Jesus
Father, who takes away the sins of the world
Grant them rest, grant them rest
Lamb of God, Lamb of God, Lamb of God, Lamb of God
Father, who takes away the sins of the world Grant them rest, grant them rest
everlasting everlasting Rest

Postlude “For All the Saints”

Shirley Hand <https://youtu.be/xpCMGYZOZ2o>

For all the saints, who from their labors rest, Who Thee by faith before the world
confessed, Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest—Alleluia, Alleluia!

Prayer concerns

- ❖ Claire H., broken back
- ❖ Larry K., Covid
- ❖ Susan A., Diane Gu.’s cousin, in critical condition after a cycling accident
- ❖ Diane Gu., recovering from cancer surgery
- ❖ Jan K., recovering at home from Covid
- ❖ Gina S., recovering from an infection after knee replacement surgery
- ❖ Martin, Eleanor R.-B.’s brother-in-law, living with multiple types of cancer, grief in the death of his wife, Sharon; their daughter, Kristine
- ❖ Marla B.’s sister Ruth, health concerns
- ❖ Jamila, Jan & Mark’s friend, recurrence of cancer
- ❖ Church members having scans, tests, awaiting surgeries
- ❖ All those grieving losses of loved ones from COVID, other illnesses, accidents, racism, and violence
- ❖ Our nation and the world



Joys and Celebrations

Our two churches work with many impressive community partners, assisting them in a variety of ways with their important missions. SO Proud of our two churches whose missions and ministries continue to serve our communities!

Here are two celebrations!

FROM TRINITY Congratulations to the founder of the Red Tent Initiative which helps incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women in St. Petersburg, Barbara Rhode. Barbara was selected as one of ten women across the United States to be a L'Oreal of Paris' Woman of Worth. The next level is to choose one woman from among the ten to receive a \$25,000 award for her project. This will be done by nationwide vote. You (anyone can vote!) can help by voting for Barbara every day from now- November 27. Thanks!! Link to vote:

<https://www.lorealparisusa.com/women-of-worth.aspx#page>

FROM CHURCH OF THE ISLES Congratulations to Sophia Renee who was awarded the Angel Award for her volunteer work and advocacy for those served by Pinellas Hope, a program administered by Catholic Charities to assist with dignity and compassion those experiencing homelessness, offering resources with dignity and compassion. Pinellas Hope provides shelter, meals, clothing, adult education, medical respite, assistance with transitional housing, and more. Sophia was selected from among 200 honorees in multiple counties to receive this special recognition.