

# Celtic Prayer Circle: Bealtaine, May 1, 2021



We celebrate the festival of Bealtaine (sometimes spelled Beltane), half-way between the Spring Equinox and Summer Solstice, the movement from the dark half to the light half of the year, from the inner to the active. The name is said to derive from Old Irish, meaning "bright fire." It is the season of the rising sun and warming air, the greening, unfurling and blossoming of flora.

The most important aspect of the celebration was the lighting of at least one, often two, and sometimes several huge bonfires. The flames, smoke and ashes were deemed sacred. Both people and cattle would walk around the bonfire or between two bonfires, sometimes even jumping over flames, to gain protection, health, and wealth.

Our Celtic Prayer Circle "gathered remotely" invites us to hold all people, all creatures and Earth in prayer. This prayer invites us to listen for what needs purification and protection so that new life may bloom in us and in our world.

## **Creating your prayer space**

The earth is lush and green as new grass and trees return to life after a winter of dormancy. Use lots of greens, as well as bright spring colors -- the yellow of the daffodils, forsythia; the purples of the lilac; the blue of a spring sky or a robin's egg. Decorate with any or all of

these colors in your cloth and candles, or colored ribbons. Include a vessel with water. Add some early spring flowers.

**Light your candle and bless yourself with the water.**

### **Opening Prayer**

Pulse of all life

Beat through all I am and all I do this day.

Beat through my feet that I may walk in awareness of earth.

Beat through my thighs that I might go the extra mile for a fellow-traveler.

Beat through my groin that I might cherish the darkness and joy that stirs there.

Beat through my hands that I might touch with awe all you have created.

Beat through my heart that I might better know the connectedness of every living thing.

Beat through my body that I might respect what I take for granted.

Pulse of all life, beat through your world and myself as part of it, as I set forth this day.

Taken from *The Celtic Wheel of the Year; Celtic and Christian Seasonal Prayers* by Tess Ward

### **Scripture Readings**

#### **Genesis 1**

On the fourth day God said, 'Let there be lights in the heavens.'

So the wind carried fire on its wings and scattered light through the skies.

There was a great light to rule the day and a gentler light to rule the night.

And there were glittering galaxies beyond number.

The sun, the moon and the stars moved in harmony.

They guided the seasons.

They marked the days and the years.

God said that it was good.

And there was evening and morning, creation's fourth day.

Taken from *Celtic Treasure* by J. Philip Newell

#### **Psalms 8**

Many-Named One

beyond imagining –

When I contemplate the night sky,

the cosmos which all unfolded from a speck,

galaxies, stars, this beautiful earth –

Who are we humans, that you attend to us?

mere mortals in our tiny corner, and you love us?

We are here come to knowing and feeling.

The whole world is in our hands:

plants and animals, oceans and ice caps, rain forests

atmosphere and ecosystem.



Touch our hearts, O God,  
make us worthy of this trust.  
Help us care for life on this beautiful earth.

Interpretation of the Psalm by Rev. Christine Robinson

### **Reflection**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljcgra-QHDY>

Sunrise at Bealtaine - John McSherry

Images are of the Beltany Stone Circle in Co. Donegal, Ireland.

### **Questions for Reflection**

What in you needs purification and protection so that new life may bloom in you and in our world?

The reading from Genesis speaks of the sun, the moon and the stars moving in harmony. Is something in you in need of renewal so you too can move in harmony with all of creation?

What does the fire burning through all of creation inspire in you?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=On2CgB\\_Ya9c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=On2CgB_Ya9c)

"Beltane Fire Dance" by Loreena McKennitt

### **Blessing**

May the breath of God be near me.

May the Spirit of God encircle me.

May the love of God breathe through me.

May God bring blessings on the wind of this new day.

May the deep peace of God enfold me.