



First Parish of Sudbury

*Ignite your spirit
Nurture your values
Join our community*

A Welcoming Unitarian Universalist Congregation



Dancing into the Season

REVELRY SUNDAY

**SUNDAY,
DEC. 8, 2024
10 AM**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Kathleen

CENTERING TONE

PRELUDE

Medley of Carols

Tom Pixton

OPENING WORDS

INVOKING THE POWERS

CAROL #73

Chant for the Seasons (Winter verse)

Words: Mark L. Belletini

Music: Czech folk song, arr. Grace Lewis McLaren

Autumn cold has turned the starwheel, winter is upon us.

Grey the windy storms, cold upon our cheeks the wet rain glistens, glistens.

Autumn cold has turned the starwheel, winter is upon us.

Leaping is the fire, golden in the glass the cider glows like amber.

Autumn cold has turned the starwheel, winter is upon us.

DANCE

Abbots Bromley Horn Dance

Dapper Rapper

READING

MORRIS DANCE

Cuckoo's Nest

HopBrook Dancers

MUSIC INTERLUDE

Winter Solstice

First Parish Choir

Words & Music: Ruth Elaine Schram

In the midwinter, when the air is chill,
on the horizon, the sun stands still.
After December's full moon so bright,
Soon it will be the year's longest night.
Stars will align and they will leave their mark:
showing the point of the sun's new arc;
From this day forward, its path will ascend,
hours of daylight grow longer again.

This is the winter solstice;
follow the path of the sun.
Now the new path has begun.
Follow the path of the sun.

DANCE

Worcestershire Monkey

HopBrook Dancers

READING

OFFERING

The Holly and the Ivy
Traditional British carol

Gail Hardenbergh

MUMMERS PLAY AND SWORD DANCE

HopBrook Dancers

CAROL #235

Deck the Hall
Traditional Old Welsh Carol

Deck the hall with boughs of holly, fa la la la la, la la la la.
'Tis the season to be jolly, fa la la la la, la la la la.
Don we now our gay apparel, fa la la la la la, la la la.
Troll the ancient Yuletide carol, fa la la la la, la la la la.

See the blazing Yule before us, fa la la la la, la la la la.
Strike the harp and join the chorus, fa la la la la, la la la la.
Follow me in merry measure, fa la la la la la, la la la.
While I tell of Yuletide treasure, fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes, fa la la la la, la la la la.
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses, fa la la la la, la la la la.
Sing we joyous all together, fa la la la la la, la la la.
Heedless of the wind and weather, fa la la la la, la la la la.

READING

Shortest Day
by Susan Cooper

RAPPER SWORD DANCE

Dapper Rapper

DISMISSING THE POWERS

ALL SING

Lord of the Dance
(and dance around sanctuary)

Terry Lockhart

Chorus:

Dance then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.

CLOSING WORDS

MUSIC FOR GOING FORTH

Rev Debra

Thank you to the dancers and players for this morning's Revelry service!

Musicians: Tom Kruskal concertina, Tom Pixton accordion

HopBrook:

Anders Breck
Ben Jones
Bianca Hellman
Casey Curry
Ezra Whiting
Felix Simmonds
Jacob Whiting
Julian Duchon
Julian Lubertazzi
Mattie Salvo
Silas O'Brien
Soleil McLaughlin
Whitby Ellsworth

Dapper Rapper:

Auden Malone
Beatrice Nolan
Ida Ellsworth
Nora Flannery
Ethan Macintyre

Please join us for coffee and conversation down the stairs in the Parish Hall!

Why in this tradition-filled meeting house, in a congregation originally gathered by Puritans (who almost certainly did not dance) are we dancing and reveling and reenacting ancient rituals originally designed to bring back the sun and ensure the rebirth of the natural world? We do it because it honors earth-centered traditions, which, as contemporary Unitarian Universalists, we cite as one of many sources of making meanings for ourselves. This service is holy because it revives ancient, sacred traditions. Listen carefully and you will see how these ancient stories have elements that we find in so many other religious stories about darkness and light, death and rebirth, stories with messages that point to an interconnected that includes all beings, including the spirits of beings who died long ago.

It is the time of year when darkness triumphs. The longest night. The shortest day. We stay awake in the night, dancing, singing, reveling to bring back the light, to call the sun from the womb of night. For so many ancient peoples, their relationship to nature was sacred. As they began to chronicle certain natural cycles, they also introduced certain rituals. They lit fires to lure back the sun. They dressed like animals hoping to secure these animals' favor and bring good luck. They enacted skits where the hero magically comes back to life, just as the sun magically returns with light. They made noise and stomped and jumped to wake up the sun.

We revel here at First Parish because we have some talented adults and youth who are willing to share their passion for these sacred and folk traditions. The teamwork between our youth and adults and the sharing of the fruits of their work, builds and sustains our community. This service of revelry is holy because of the human bonds it creates.

To worship means to honor that which is of greatest worth. Recreating and reinterpreting ancient rituals in our community today binds us to the past and to one another now. We are weaving a living tradition that continuously ties us to the earth and to one another. This is holy. This is worship.

There is something beautiful and strange in this music.

To hear it is to believe that Morris dancing was a sacred rite.