The Center
for Christian Spirituality

All Things Hold Together:
Held with the Saints

8:45 a.m. + November 1, 2026 + All Saints' Day

In the ancient Celtic imagination, this was considered to be a "thin time" when the veil between heaven and earth grew more transparent and the wisdom of our ancestors was closer to us. We are reassured that we are not alone, that we share the world with a great "cloud of witnesses" and "communion of saints" just across the veil. This season is a threshold space and in thresholds we are closer to the other world which is always here.
Christine Valters Paintner

A Hymn for All Saints ***"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"***

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, holy, holy, Merciful and Mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Holy, holy, holy, all the saints adore Thee.
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.
Cherubim and seraphim, falling down before Thee.
Which wert, and art, and evermore shall be

Crossing the Threshold

Praying with St. Francis ***"Most High and Glorious God" (The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi)***

Most high and glorious God,
Lighten the darkness of heart and mind.
Let Wisdom lead me to you,
That I may live for love of your love.
Most high and glorious God,
Grant me true faith, certain hope, and pure love.
That I may follow you,
And carry out your holy command.

My God and my all.
My God and my all.
My God and my all.

Contemplating a Psalm — contemplative adaptation of ***Psalm 97:9-12***

O Beloved, You are the Most High,
above all that is, yet within it –
you are the beating Heart of all things.

Let all who love You turn from what harms,
from whatever wounds the heart or divides the world.
You, the Light of the saints,
keep watch over the lives of your holy ones – your merciful ones –
those on earth and beyond the veil.

Free us, your saints below, from the grip of fear
and the shadows that would hold us fast.
Your Light dawns for the just,
and joy for the upright in heart.

Rejoice in the Beloved, O people of the Light,
you who perpetually dwell in Eternal Light and you who walk below.
Give thanks together to the One whose Name is Love.

On Earth as It Is in Heaven — ***"As Above, So Below"***

As above, so below, on the earth as in the heavens,
Till your Kingdom comes in love, as below, so above.
As in Christ, so in me. Born beloved of the Father,
Called to selfless sacrifice. So, in me as in Christ.

Far beyond the struggles of each moment,
There is hope for those who believe.
Hope that lifts our spirits up to heaven,
Hope that helps our hearts to perceive.

Contemplating Scripture — ***Colossians 1:1-12***

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother: to the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Light.

Meditation

Losing Ourselves in God *"Held"*

I want to lose myself in You –
Lost in the beauty of all that You are.
Here in the chapel of my heart,
I will worship You.

I want to lose myself in You –
Lost in the beauty of all that You are.
Here in the chapel of my heart,
I will worship You,
As I am held by You.

Held in compassion, held in forgiveness,
Held in Your faithfulness and grace.
Held as accepted, held as beloved,
Held as enough in Your embrace.

Resting in God

We have sung of being held. Now we simply let it be true. During these minutes of silence, simply rest in God's abiding and loving presence, here in this chapel and in the chapel of your own heart. You don't have to hold anything together right now. You are in the Love of God, held with everyone in this room and held with all the saints, those beside us and those beyond our sight. Christ is your Divine Center, and the center of that whole company. There is nothing you need to do. Just be, and relax. Center your attention in your heart, or breathe deeply down into your belly. If it helps, use a sacred word such as Love, Abba, Jesus, or Spirit. You may also pray with your breath.

Breathe in: Held
Breathe out: in Love

Praying for Transformation *"As Above, So Below"*

As above, so below, on the earth as in the heavens,
Till your Kingdom comes in love, as below, so above.
As in Christ, so in me. Born beloved of the Father,
Called to selfless sacrifice. So, in me as in Christ.

Communion

O God, by whose Word commanded, "Let light shine out of darkness,"
You have caused us to be Your children of Light.

We thank You for all those who have reflected Your love to us
and have shown us the Image of God.

Hear our thanksgiving for those who have entered their eternal home
to live with You but whose lives of faith live on in our hearts:

(silence as you whisper the name(s) of loved ones)

With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us,
we gather around Your throne of grace and remember Your great sacrifice of love,
offered through Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith and the faith of all your saints.

Today we celebrate this holy meal in Your presence and in the company of the great cloud of witnesses who are reflections of Your Light. By Your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until we feast with all the saints at Your heavenly banquet. Amen.

Communion Anthem *"Khumbaya"*

Receiving a Good Word

Our Staff

Haley Brown *– Associate Director of The Anchor House*
Courtney Garrison *– Ministry Assistant*
Christian Ibanez *– AV Production*
Peter Johns *– Associate Director of Contemplative Worship*
Zachary Montasser – *Violinist*
Everett Dagher *– AV Production*
Rev. Rachel Sciretti *– Associate Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Michael Sciretti, Jr. *– Pastor of The Center*

Today's Music

"Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God Almighty!" – R. Heber & John B. Dykes, ***"Most High and Glorious God"*** – Peter Johns, ***"As Above, So Below"*** – Peter Johns, ***"Held"*** – Peter Johns, **"*Khumbaya*"** – Traditional

Where Sound Meets Silence: A Weekly Gathering for Sacred Listening

Thursday, November 5 | 10:30 a.m. | The Anchor House

Each week, Peter and Zach guide a gentle rhythm of silence, Scripture, and improvised music for violin and piano. Within this quiet, gentle space, we reflect on the passage appointed for Sunday's worship, trusting the Spirit to speak anew through word and sound alike.

Creative Space

Saturday, November 7 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Creative Space is a nurturing, encouraging gathering of people who come together to create art and spend time in personal reflection. You will get an opportunity to explore spirituality through creative expression, as well as to be creative in a setting that is intentionally designed to enhance the spiritual. Materials are provided and everyone is welcome. No reservation is required.

Nissan Brothers at Second Sunday Lunch

Sunday, November 8

In the past, when we have taken pilgrims to the Holy Land, we've always visited the Nissan Brothers family store and olive wood carving factory in Bethlehem. The Nissan family is the largest Christian family in Israel and their store helps support over 250 Christian families in the area in and around Bethlehem as artisans and workers in the olive wood factory. As a way of supporting the Christian community in Bethlehem, we invited them to be with us to share items from their store. John Nissan will be with us on Sunday, November 8, between 9:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. in the Williams Lobby near the gym to share his community's story and offer products from Bethlehem for you to purchase to support the Christian families there. Visit their website at www.nissanbros.com.

The Work of Our Hands: November's Guided Silent Retreat in the Way of Ora et Labora

Saturday, November 14 | The Anchor House | 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Step into the ancient monastic rhythm of ora et labora, pray and work. After a short introduction and centering prayer, we'll spend the day in silence doing simple tasks around The Anchor House, small things done with love, and then close in a circle of prayer and sharing. Dress for light indoor and outdoor work.

Creation Care – Growing the Ground We Pray On

We are preparing for a groundbreaking. The Anchor House labyrinth has been where our community walks its way into silence, into prayer, into the presence of God. In partnership with Go Native Landscaping, we're transforming our backyard into two new sacred spaces: a Labyrinth Woodland Garden and a Butterfly Garden. They'll surround our contemplative practice with the quiet, living witness of native Texas plants, trees and pollinators. This is more than landscaping; it's an invitation to let the land itself become a companion in prayer and a habitat for the smallest of God's creatures, who remind us that flourishing is always communal. We invite you to help bring this vision to life with a designated gift toward these gardens.