### A Brief History of All Hallows' Eve and Anglican Traditions

The term "Halloween", is shortened from "All-hallow-even", as it is the evening before All Hallows' Day. Halloween originated with the Celtic tribes who lived in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany. For the Celts this Festival marked the end of summer - the coming of winter. For Celts it is a time when the bridge that separates the world of the living and the world of the dead becomes firmer, allowing spirits and ghosts and ghouls to cross over. These spirits or departed souls are honored and asked to grant luck and prosperity.

The 21st century secular popularity of this holiday has caused the Festival of the Dead to be less about honoring the dead and more about the commercial sale of ghoulish masks and frightening frivolity. The dressing up was to resemble the souls of the dead which the pagans believed walk the land that night, along with the evil spirits, which people wore masks and lit bonfires to scare them away.

However, over the centuries our Christian beliefs have given way to focusing on honoring the dead through worship, prayer remembrances, and community, not only on All Soul's Day but also the evening before known as All Hallows' Eve.

In 1979 *(the Book of Occasional Services)* was created as a result of a General Convention Resolution. The All Hallows' Eve service can be found on page 108 of *(the Book of Occasional Services),* the service of the light, found on page 109, may be used prior to the All Hallows' Eve service.

Using such services is  an opportunity to introduce some history of how Anglican and Episcopal traditions have evolved over time and how such traditions can be used to bridge the Christian tradition and the commercialism of the secular world.

**ALL HALLOWS EVE SERVICE** (PDF)

**THE SERVICE OF THE LIGHT** (PDF)