

Samhain 2007 • UConn PODS

Procession

A chime is sounded 3 times to signal the beginning of the ritual, and the folk process to the ritual area singing **We Approach the Sacred Grove** until the folk are all gathered:

All: *We approach the sacred grove
With hearts and minds and flesh and bone.
Join us now in ways of old,
We have come home.*

Opening Prayer

AT: *Tá muid anseo leis na Déithe a adhradh.* (“Taw meej an-show leshna day-uh ah-rah”)
We are here to honor the gods!

All: *We are here to honor the gods!*

Honoring the Earth Mother

KB honors Áine Chliar, the Earth Mother: (“awn’-yeh cleer”)

*O Earth Mother, our lives are nursed from your bounty.
You are the food that nourishes us, the wealth that enriches us, even the very ground we walk on.
O great mother Áine, all joy and prosperity comes from you, and it is you who sustain us.
Earth Mother, we honor you now to thank you for the bounty you bestow upon us.*

KB offers corn meal on the ground and says: *Áine Chliar, accept our offering.*

All: *Áine Chliar, accept our offering!*

All sing Blessed Is She (3x):

*Blessed is She who brings the life to the land,
Blessed is She.
Flow out from your sources, sacred river,
Blessed is She.*

Grounding and Uniting in the Grove Meditation

(AT leads the grove meditation, ending with “we are one”.)

AT leads the folk in the **Unity in the Three Realms (3x)**:

All: *Beside you I stand, hand in hand, on this holy Land,
With one breath we cry, you and I, to the sacred Sky,
And together we, one day will be, across the endless Sea.*

Statement of Purpose

KB: *The days shine shorter, and night comes fast upon us now. In this time of darkness we are here to welcome in the last harvest, to enjoy the final fruits of our labor before the coming harshness of Winter.*

In elder days the Folk knew that spirits were about this night, and they made offerings hoping the sprites would be gentle. They knew that on this night the Dead are with us and must be given their due, lest they reward our forgetfulness with mischief of their own.

So on this night let us remember our Ancestors and all our Honored Dead, let us celebrate with the Nature Spirits around us, and let us honor the Shining Ones, so we may enjoy the Kindreds’ blessings through the darkness of Winter.

Establishing the Sacred Grove: Well, Fire, and Tree

AT: *Now with the Folk united in one grove and one purpose, let us bless the sacred elements of our world, the Fire, the Well, and the Tree.*

Fire

KB: *O sacred fire that consumes and transforms,
True and holy light of the Shining Ones,
Be blessed with our offering! O sacrificed and sacrificer,
Let holy flame warm our spirits and our lives.*

The Fire Maiden (**KB**) adds wood to the fire and makes an offering of incense.

KB: *I kindle the sacred fire in wisdom, love, and power.*

Sacred fire, burn within us.

All: *Sacred fire, burn with us.*

KB censes the site and (only if the crowd is small) the folk.

Well

AT: *O sacred waters that flow and swirl beneath all being,
Well of ancient wisdom, keeper of deep riches,
Be blessed with our offering! O great source of all,
Let us know the elder depths within ourselves.*

The Keeper of the Well (**AT**) pours waters from the Well to blessing cup, offers silver to Well.

AT: *In the depths flow the waters of wisdom.
Sacred waters flow within us.*

All: *Sacred waters, flow within us.*

AT asperges the site and (**only if the crowd is small**) the folk w/ branch & water from the Well.

Tree

DQ: *O sacred pillar, boundary of all worlds,
Stand at the center of the sky,
Stand at the center of the sea,
Stand at the center of the land on which we dwell.
Let us be deepened in your depths,
Raised to your heights,
And strengthened in your strength.*

The Tender of the Tree (**DQ**) dresses & censes the world tree.

DQ: *From the depths to the heights spans the world tree.
Sacred tree, grow within us.*

All: *Sacred tree, grow within us.*

The consecration of the space is completed with:

DQ: *Fire and well and sacred tree, flame and flow and grow in me!*

All: *Fire and well and sacred tree, flame and flow and grow in me!*

DQ: *Let the land stay firm beneath us!*

All: *Let the land stay firm beneath us!*

DQ: *Let the sea be calm around us!*

All: *Let the sea be calm around us!*

DQ: *Let the sky hold fast above us!*

All: *Let the sky hold fast above us!*

DQ: *Land and sea and starry sky, all surround and sanctify!*

All: *Land and sea and starry sky, all surround and sanctify!*

DQ: *By the might of the waters, and the light of the fire, this grove is made whole and holy.*

All: *By the might of the waters, and the light of the fire, this grove is made whole and holy.*

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All: *By the might of the waters, and the light of the fire, this grove is made whole and holy!!*

DQ: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* (“bee shay ow-lee”)

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!*

Opening the Gates Between the Worlds

DQ calls to Manannan, god of the sea and the misty ways leading to the Otherworld:

DQ: *Oh Manannan, powerful son of the sea, holder of the magics of the crane bag, we ask you to hear our call. Oh Lord of the Otherworld, bearer of the silvered apple branch, join with us this day so that you may guide us safely in our workings. Mist-shrouded rider of the maned waves, accept our offering and open the gates between our realm and yours.*

DQ makes an offering of apple to Manannan and says: *Manannan mac Lir, accept our offering!*

All: *Manannan mac Lir, accept our offering!*

All: *We invoke Manannan, opener of every gate*

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You will reach us, you will teach us, and reveal our fate.

You will reach us, you will teach us, and reveal our fate. (3x)

DQ: *Now, Manannan mac Lir, join your magic with ours... **Let the Fire open as a gate...***

Let the Well open as a gate... Let the Tree connect all the Worlds...

Osclaítear na geataí... Let the gates be opened! (“ahs-kluh-teer’ na ga’-thee”)

All: *Let the gates be opened!*

Outdwellers Appeasement

Outside of the ritual space, **AT** gives soda to the **Outdwellers**, saying:

AT: *You who come from the outer dark,
You who stood against the gods and man,
You who are cold of heart and cruel of mind,
Fir Bolg, Fomorians, all forces of chaos who would disrupt our rite, (“fur bohlg”)
Take this and trouble not our work.*

Bardic Inspiration

KB invokes Brighid, goddess of creative expression:

KB: *Bright Brighid, Daughter of the Daghdha, Flame of Inspiration,
Maker of metal, Maker of good health, Maker of song,
With you as our mother we need fear no sickness,
With you as our mother we need fear no dull swords,
With you as our mother we need fear no empty words.
Our tribe is triple-blessed, O shining light of the hearth,
and we your children ask you to alight in our hearts,
Alight in our heads, and alight in our voices,
That we may give praise to the gods with good skill.*

KB makes an offering of oil to Brighid and says: *Brighid, accept our offering.*

All: *Brighid, accept our offering!*

All sing (3x):

*Birghita, Birghita, goddess of the flame (“bur’-gee-ta”)
Birghita, Birghita, call her by name
Awaken the flame within our beings
Awaken the sacred song within our beings.*

Honoring and Inviting the Three Kindreds

Ancestors

DQ: *Hear us, Old Ones, our ancestors and kin,
You whose blood flows in our veins.
From you we spring and with you we will grow in health.
Ancestors, remember us as we remember you.*

DQ makes an offering of bread to the ancestors and says: *Ancestors, accept our offering!*

All: *Ancestors, accept our offering!*

All sing **Mothers and Fathers of Old (3x):**

*From far beyond this mortal plane, mothers and fathers of old,
We pray that you return again, mothers and fathers of old,*

*To share with us the mysteries and secrets long untold,
Of the ancient ways we seek to reclaim, mothers and fathers of old.*

Nature Spirits

KB: *Hear us, Spirits of the Land,
You of stone and stream, of beast and herb and tree.
From you we learn to live in harmony with our world, and ourselves.
Nature spirits, aid us as we aid you.*

KB makes an offering of bird seed to nature spirits and says: *Nature spirits, accept our offering!*

All: *Nature spirits, accept our offering!*

All sing **Fur and Feather** (3x):

*Fur and feather and scale and skin,
Different without but the same within.
Many of body but one of soul,
Through all creatures are the **worlds** made whole.*

Gods

AT: *Hear us, Shining Ones of eld, you who uphold the worlds.
You who guide us and protect us, O patrons and matrons,
In you we grow in wisdom, strength, and purity.
Gods and goddesses, honor us as we honor you.*

AT makes an offering of oil to the gods and says: *Gods and goddesses, accept our offering!*

All: *Gods and goddesses, accept our offering!*

All sing **Hail All the Gods** (3x):

*Hail all the gods,
Hail all the goddesses.
Hail all the holy ones,
We dwell together.*

*Powers of the sky,
Powers of the sacred earth,
Powers of the underworld,
We dwell together.*

*Hail all the Gods!
Hail all the Goddesses!
Hail all the Gods...and Goddesses.*

Hail all the gods,

*Hail all the goddesses.
Hail all the holy ones,
We dwell together.*

Meditation of Merging the Energies and Re-Centering

(AT leads a meditation of merging and re-centering, ending with “the host is gathered”.)

Honoring the Spirits of the Occasion

DQ: *In this time, when the Otherworld is close and the ways between are freely traveled, we honor those who have come before, the Dead and the Powers who guide them, and we ask for their guidance and blessings in return. As the tree grows tall and strong from the foundation of the great Earth, so too do we grow wise by listening to the words of our Ancestors. All we are arises from all they have been. On this night of Samhain, let us hear the whispers of the Wise, let us walk the Old Ways well, and let the Spirits ward us tonight and through the rest of Winter.*

Honoring the Ancestors

AT: *On the feast of Samhain the veils between the worlds are thin. We call to our Beloved Dead, the blessed Ancestors, to join our feast and receive due offering.*

Come to the Gates, honored ones; hear our call, we your children who remember.

We offer you our worship, our reverence and our love.

You who fill the empty womb, you who cause the seed to spring, you who fill the breast with milk, receive now these offerings, made in your honor:

Apples, the Fruit of Life and Death.

Pork, the flesh of the Sacred Sow.

Hazel nuts, concentrated meat of wisdom.

We offer these...

To the Heroes of the Ancient World, those men and women who did the bidding of the Gods for the good of the folk...

(AT and then each celebrant, clockwise, reads the names of ancient heroes)

Myth-kin, we honor you and grieve for you.

(apple offering made)

Myth-kin, accept our offerings.

To the Honored Dead of our hearts, those women and men who inspired us and guided our lives...

(AT and each celebrant, clockwise, reads the names of honored dead)

Heart-kin, we honor you and grieve for you.

(pork offering made)

Heart-kin, accept our offerings.

To our own Beloved Dead, Grandmothers and Grandfathers, those of our blood who have gone ahead...

(AT and each celebrant, clockwise, reads the names of blood ancestors)

Blood-kin, we honor you and grieve for you.

(hazel nuts offering made)

Blood-kin, accept our offerings.

To all of you we give these fruits, nuts, and meats that you may feast in joy in the Land of the Dead. Ancestors, accept our offerings!

All: *Ancestors, accept our offerings!*

Honoring Donn

KB: *In the season of darkening, the Lord of the House of Death receives the Spirits in his Hall.*

He is Donn, the Dark One, the First Ancestor, the Torc Bearer, Guardian of the Cauldron of Plenty.

He is the Dark Rider, the Collector of Souls, Father of Diarmuid and All Men, Master of the Wild Hunt, the Great Welcomer and the Great Sender.

Hear us now, Horned One, Dark one, Receiver of the Dead, Granter of Rest, Patron of the Feast of Ages.

We your children pray you to come in, to let your gaze fall upon this Sacred Ground, to indwell our rite and give us your blessing. We make due offering to you. We give you... Silver, that you grant us the wealth of the Underworld, Source of All Potential.

(silver offering made into shaft or offering bowl.)

Oil, that the Richness of the Land be renewed as our own lives are renewed.

(oil offering made to the Fire)

Horn, that those who know you may bless us in the Season of Hunting.

(horn offering placed at the foot of the Tree)

KB: *Be welcome among us, Dark One; Donn, accept our offerings!*

All: *Donn, accept our offerings!*

Honoring the Morrigan

DQ: *As the Earth falls into sleep the Dark Queen chooses those who will go to the Cauldron of Rebirth.*

She is the Morrigan, the Terrible One, the Queen of Phantoms, Chooser of the Slain and Speaker of Doom.

She is the Battle Raven, the Red Woman, the Great Temptress, Mistress of the Cauldron and Challenger of Heroes.

Hear us now, Red One, Great Queen, Lady of the Reaping, Cauldron-Witch of Sorcery and Prophecy.

We your children pray that you be with us, that you look kindly upon our holy rite, that you come into our Grove and give us your blessing.

We make due offering to you. We give you...

*Precious stone, that the Bones of the Earth may be clothed again in life.
(precious stone offering made into shaft or offering bowl.)*

*Whiskey, that the Waters of Life May flow in us and Spirit indwell flesh.
(whiskey offering made to the Fire)*

*Feathers, that your raven Eye watch over us in the Season of Sleep.
(feather offering placed at the foot of the Tree)*

DQ: *Be welcome among us, Red Lady.
Morrigan, accept our offerings!*

All: *Morrigan, accept our offerings!*

Main Praise Offering

AT: *Children of Earth, we have called the gods, the spirits of the land around us, and our own ancestors and honored dead, and they have come.*

We have called the Morrigan, Donn, and the Ancestors and given them honor, and they have received our praise. Let us join our voices together now in one final offering...

Raise your voice high, make a sound, an om if you will, or a humming, or any other noise that you feel in your heart expresses your love for the Kindreds.

Reach deep within your heart and let out a sound of love and praise, and send that energy out to the Kindreds. Children of Earth, lift up your voices now...

AT raises arms and starts the humming/singing/om-ing, **Celebrants** and **All** join in.

All continue to om, hum, etc. until it naturally stops *or* until **AT** lowers arms to signal end.

Final Prayer of Sacrifice

AT: *Children of earth, relax now... and reach deep within your hearts and touch that tender place of worship... hear the music of love and devotion there that we play together tonight... and see before us the Kindreds lovingly awaiting our final prayer of sacrifice... Holy ones, accept these final offerings with all our love and thanks...*

(oil poured) *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

All: *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

(oil poured) *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

All: *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

(oil poured) *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

All: *Holy Ones, accept our sacrifice!*

AT: *Shining Ones, Noble Ones, and Mighty Ones, we have given you praise and honor! A gift calls for a gift, and we pray to you as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, open our hearts, and give to us of your blessings.*

All sing (3x):

Let our voices arise on the Fire,

Let our voices resound in the Deep.

May the spirits accept what we offer,

As we honor the old ways we keep.

AT: *Now with the Kindreds duly praised let us seek an omen for the blessings of return.*

Omen for the Blessings

While **AT** takes the omen, **DQ** distributes individual blessing cups and **All** sing:

All: *Speak to us,
Speak to us, goddesses,
Speak to us,
Speak to us, all the gods.*

AT reveals the omen, finishing with: *These are the blessings of the gods. Bíodh sé amhlaidh!*

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* (“bee shay ow’-lee”)

Induction, Receiving the Blessings

DQ: *Children of earth, we call for the blessing of the Ancient Ones.
Together we cry... Kindreds, give us the waters!*

All: *Kindreds, give us the waters!*

DQ: *We join our hearts, that each of us be blessed. Together we call... Kindreds, give us the waters!*

All: *Kindreds, give us the waters!*

DQ: *And as we are blessed, let all the worlds be blessed.*

Together we pray... Kindreds, give us the waters!

All: *Kindreds, give us the waters!*

DQ pours water from the Well into the blessing cup and says:

We draw water from the well of wisdom, pouring the ale of inspiration.

DQ holds the blessing cup aloft and says:

O Mighty, Noble and Shining Ones, we have given to you, and now we ask you to bless us in turn, as a gift calls for a gift. Hallow these waters, O holy powers. Grant us the blessing we seek. Let the wisdom, love and power of the Gods, Dead and Spirits flow in this cup of Blessing. Seo iad uisci na beatha! (“shee ahd ish’-ka nah bah’-hah”)

All: *Behold, the Waters of Life!*

The waters are passed and drunk, and as this happens the folk sing (as often as necessary):

Pour the waters, raise the cup,

*Drink your share of wisdom deep.
Strength and love now fill us up,
As the elder ways we keep,
As the elder ways we keep.*

(dark version)

Thanking the Kindreds and Spirits

KB: *We have called upon the Kindreds and they have answered us! With joy in our hearts let us carry the magic from our sacred grove into our lives and work. Each time we offer to the powers they become stronger and more aware of our needs and worship. So as we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who have aided us.*

KB: *Donn, we thank you!*

All: *Donn, we thank you!*

KB: *Morrigan, we thank you!*

All: *Morrigan, we thank you!*

KB: *Myth-kin, Heart-kin, and Blood-kin, we thank you!*

All: *Myth-kin, Heart-kin, and Blood-kin, we thank you!*

KB: *Gods and Goddesses, we thank you!*

All: *Gods and Goddesses, we thank you!*

KB: *Nature Spirits, we thank you!*

All: *Nature Spirits, we thank you!*

KB: *Ancestors, we thank you!*

All: *Ancestors, we thank you!*

KB: *Manannan mac Lir, we thank you!*

All: *Manannan mac Lir, we thank you!*

KB: *Brighid, we thank you!*

All: *Brighid, we thank you!*

KB: *Áine Chliar, we thank you!*

All: *Áine Chliar, we thank you!*

Re-grounding

(AT leads a short re-grounding meditation, ending with “now, let us finish the work we started”.)

Closing the Gates

DQ: *Now by the keeper of the gates and by our magic we end what we began...*

Let the Fire be flame...

(gesture to Fire)

Let the Well be water...

(gesture to Well)

Let the Tree stand alone...

(gesture to Tree)

*Dúntar na geataí... **Let the gates be closed!***

(“doon’-tar na gah’-thee”)

All: *Let the gates be closed!*

Affirmation of Continuity, Ending the Rite

KB: *We have done as our ancestors did and as our children will do and the gods have answered! Let us go out into the world secure in the knowledge that our offerings have pleased the gods and that we go forth under their protection. The ritual is at a close.*

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!*

(“bee shay ow’-lee”)

KB uses the chime 3 times to signal the end the rite.

Recession

All sing **Walk With Wisdom** while recessing away from the ritual area:

Walk with wisdom from this hallowed place.

Walk not in sorrow, our roots shall ere embrace.

May strength be your brother, and honor be your friend,

And luck be your lover until we meet again.