

Headwaters Rite @ Lime Rock Preserve 2008

Opening Prayer and Grove Attunement

The Folk gather in the parking area outside the Preserve. **AT** sounds a chime 3 times to signal the start of the ritual, then puts chime away for ending the rite.

AT: *For what purpose have the Folk gathered here this day?*

All: *We are here to honor the Goddess of the Land and Waters.*

AT: *Do the members of the tribe wish to claim this land as our own?*

All: *We do!*

AT: *Do the members of the tribe seek the acceptance and blessing of the land?*

All: *We do!*

AT: *Do the members of the tribe intend to honor the mother of the waters as the mother of our grove?*

All: *We do!*

AT: *Then join your hands together and repeat after me...* (hands joined)

At the edge of the world, our tribe stands together, (repeat)

Preparing to journey, to the mother of all. (repeat)

As the heroes of old, set off for new lands, (repeat)

So as one grove, do we quest for the source.

(repeat)

Joined by our allies, and guided by love, (repeat)

We seek out the waters, feeding our tides. (repeat)

Claiming the river, and the land as our own, (repeat)

If it pleases the Queen, to count us as kin. (repeat)

Dearly we'll pray, and offer our troves, (repeat)

Seeking her name and her blessing as mother of our tribe. (repeat)

(the Folk stop holding hands)

AT: *Now with the Folk united in one grove and one purpose, let us treat with the Outsiders, open the gates, and ask our allies to join us as we seek the sovereignty of the land.*

Outdwellers / Purification of Folk

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

EM: *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,
Any and all forces of chaos who would disrupt our rite,
Take this and trouble not our work.*

EM then says to the Folk:

*Likewise we look within ourselves for those parts that are hostile, petty, or small-minded,
Which would distract us from the harmony we create today with our allies and this land.
Take a moment... Feel those parts of you, acknowledge them,
and then release them for this rite... (pause)
Folk of the Grove, do you release all ill will?*

All: *We release all ill will!*

EM: *So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

Opening the Gates Between the Worlds

SS: *Heimdall, Manannan, Ianus, all of you who guard the ways between... You who stand at the borders, behind all bridges, doors, and thresholds, you for whom light is dark, and dark is light, guide us now in our working. Great guardians of all the worlds and realms, lend your aid to our cause now, accept our offering, and open the gates between your realms and ours.*

SS makes an offering of oil and says: *Gatekeepers, accept our offering!*

All: *Gatekeepers, accept our offering!*

All sing **Gatekeeper Open the Portals** (3x):

*Gatekeepers open the portals,
Between the gods and mortals,
Power freely flows,
As our magic grows.*

SS: *Now, Gatekeepers, join your magic with ours... **Let the Land be open to us...***

Let the Sea be open to us... Let the Shining Sky be open to us...

*We move through the sacred center... **Let the gates be opened!***

All: *Let the gates be opened!*

Bardic Inspiration

KB invokes the Powers of Inspiration:

KB: *O Powers of Inspiration that attend us,
Brigid, Oghma, Bragi, Saga, the Muses,
Voices of the fire of purpose and the well of wisdom,
Come into our hearts' shrine.
O powers of inspiration in this holy place,
O powers of inspiration at this holy time,
O powers of inspiration at the center of all,
Fill the three cauldrons within us,
Guide our rite in the way of truth,
And let our works please the spirits today.*

KB makes an offering of oil and says: *Powers of inspiration, accept our offering.*

All: *Powers of inspiration, accept our offering!*

All sing **Let the Way Be Open** (3x):

*Sing through my voice,
Play through my hands,
Let the way be open!*

Honoring and Inviting the Three Kindreds

Ancestors

FS: *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.*

FS 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

DQ: *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.*

DQ 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

EM: *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.*

EM 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 and Re-Centering

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

Procession

AT: *Now with the allies of our tribe among us, let us begin our journey to find the goddess of the land and waters and seek her name and blessing.*

AT begins to lead procession to headwaters ritual location.

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.*

(only 3x)

The Folk process to the headwaters ritual location...

The Folk arrive at the headwaters site and set up the Fire, Well, Tree, omen tools, etc.

Re-Attunement (Two Powers Meditation)

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

AT leads the folk in **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.*

Establishing the Sacred Grove: Fire, Well, and Tree

AT: *Now with the Folk united as one grove to claim this land and seek its blessing, let us bless the sacred elements of our world, the Fire, the Well, and the Tree.*

Fire

RS: *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 (**RS**) adds incense to the fire/censer.

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

Sacred fire, burn within us.

All: *Sacred fire, burn with us.*

RS censes the site and the folk.

Well

EM: *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 (**EM**) pours waters from the Well to blessing horn, offers silver to Well.

EM: *In the depths flow the waters of wisdom.*

Sacred waters flow within us.

All: *Sacred waters, flow within us.*

EM asperges the site and the Folk with a branch and Well water.

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.*

Land/Sea/Sky and Completion of Consecration of Space

EM: *The fire, the well, the sacred tree...*

All: *Flame and flow and grow in me!*

EM: *In land, sea and sky...*

All: *Below and on high!*

EM: *Thus is the sacred grove claimed and hallowed.*

By the cleansing of water and fire, let all ill turn away from me and mine.

EM: *So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

Group Meditation / Journey

AT leads the Folk on a group meditation/journey (including mental sacrificing of objects), ending with: “And now, as we open our eyes, let us call the goddess of this land, the lady of the lakes and rivers, the mother of sovereignty - let us call her, offer to her, and await her majesty.”

Individual Praise Offerings

AT: *Have the Folk brought praise?*

All: *They have!*

AT: *Then let our tribe make offerings to the Mother of the Land and Waters, asking for her love, her acceptance, and her blessing as we pledge to honor and protect her. So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

Each member of the Folk, starting with **AT** and thence clockwise, offers three items of sacrifice.

Key Offering

Honoring the Mother of the Land and Rivers

AT: *The Folk of the Tribe call out to the Mother of the Land.
Hear us, Lady of the Waters, Queen of the Rivers deep and wide.*

*We have journeyed long to touch your body with our hands...
We have journeyed long to hear your voice in our minds...
And we have journeyed long to know your name in our hearts.*

*We make offering to you, goddess of this place and granter of sovereignty.
We offer stone jewelry, the bones of the land worked by our arts.*

(stone jewelry offered)

We offer hard cider, the fruits of the land touched by our crafts.

(hard cider offered)

And we offer whole grain bread, the harvest of the land baked by our fires.

(whole grain bread offered)

Hear us, Mother of the Waters, hear your children as we seek you out.

Grant us the audience we seek - come into our minds' eyes...

Grant us the knowledge we seek - speak to our inner ears...

And grant us the blessing we seek - your kinship in our hearts...

Accept our tribe as your own, Oh Mother of All,

and we will honor and serve you to the end of our days.

AT: *Great Mother of the Land and Waters, accept our offerings!*

All: *Great Mother of the Land and Waters, accept our offerings!*

Individual Meditations

AT: *Now let the Folk disperse to seek the Great Mother in our minds eyes,
in our ears, and in our hearts!*

The Folk disperse to meditate for 15-20 minutes, then to journal details of the meditation,
keeping their experiences/impressions private to themselves for the time being.

Final Prayer of Sacrifice

AT: *Folk of the Grove, 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 Mother of the Land and Waters lovingly awaiting our final prayer of sacrifice...
Great Mother, accept these final offerings with all our love and thanks...*

*(juice poured) Great Mother, accept our sacrifice. **All:** Great Mother, accept our sacrifice.*

*(juice poured) Great Mother, accept our sacrifice! **All:** Great Mother, accept our sacrifice!*

*(juice poured) Great Mother, accept our sacrifice!! **All:** Great Mother, accept our sacrifice!!*

AT: *Great Mother, 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 blessed waters.*

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 Great Mother duly praised let us seek an omen for the blessings of return.*

Omen for the Blessings

While **DQ** takes the omen, **All** sing:

All: *A sacred grove, and all is hallowed,
Gifts, given and received,
The seer's eye turns into shadow,
The will of the gods revealed.*

DQ reveals the omen, finishing with: *These are the blessings of the Great Mother. So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

Calling for and Receiving the Blessings

DQ: *Folk of the Grove, we call for the blessing of the Great Mother.
Together we cry... Great Mother, give us the waters!*

All: *Great Mother, give us the waters!*

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

All: *Great Mother, give us the waters!*

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

Together we pray... Great Mother, give us the waters!

All: *Great Mother, 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 Great Mother, 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 power. Grant us the blessing we seek. Let the wisdom, love and power of the Mother of the Land and Waters flow in this cup of Blessing. Behold, the Waters of Life!

All: *Behold, the Waters of Life!*

DQ pours the waters into the Well and says:

Do the Folk of the tribe accept the waters of the Great Mother into our own?

All: *We do!*

DQ: *Then our tribe is truly blessed. So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

Thanking the Kindreds and Spirits

SS: *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.*

SS: *Great Mother, we thank you!*

All: *Great Mother, we thank you!*

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

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

SS: *Nature Spirits, we thank you!*

All: *Nature Spirits, we thank you!*

SS: *Ancestors, we thank you!*

All: *Ancestors, we thank you!*

SS: *Gatekeepers, we thank you!*

All: *Gatekeepers, we thank you!*

SS: *Powers of Inspiration, we thank you!*

All: *Powers of Inspiration, we thank you!*

Re-grounding Meditation

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

Closing the Gates

SS: *Now by the keepers 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)

*The sacred center is unmade... **Let the gates be closed!***

All: *Let the gates be closed!*

Affirmation of Continuity, Ending the Rite

AT: *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. So be it!*

All: *So be it!*

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

Recession

All sing **Walk With Wisdom** 3 times 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.

Words and music by Sable

(grove waters recombined)