

Gleichentag 2005

A musical signal is given for beginning the ritual, and the folk process to the ritual area singing:

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*

AT: *Wir sind hier um die Goetter zu Ehren.*

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

DQ: *What we have sown continues to bear fruit for us in the time of the second harvest, when the days grow shorter and become even with the night. The Mother of All is fruitful and the Kindreds await. Let us remember our Ancestors, let us celebrate with the Nature Spirits around us, and let us honor the Shining Ones, so that we may enjoy their blessings throughout the harvest season.*

Honoring the Earth Mother

KB honors the Earth Mother, source of all life:

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 Nerthus, all joy and prosperity comes from you, and it is you who sustains us.

Earth Mother, we honor you now to thank you for the bounty you bestow upon us.

All sing **Blossom Lifter** (1x):

*Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter
Bloom with the wheat,
Bloom with the rye
Bloom with barley
And bloom with all grains
Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter
Bless what we eat,
Bless what we drink,
Bless what we harrow,
And bless what we sow
Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter
With all these things, let us rejoice
We give to you, and you give to us*

KB makes an offering of corn meal on the ground and says: *Earth Mother, accept our offering.*

All: *Earth Mother, accept our offering!*

Grounding and Uniting in the Grove Meditation

(AT leads grove meditation.)

AT leads the folk in the **Unity Chant** (1x):

All: *We are one, in our grove,
upon the earth, within the sea, beneath the sky.
We are joined, to send our call,
to the honored dead, to the spirit folk, to the blessed gods.
We praise thee, in one voice, in our sacred grove.
We are one.*

Establishing the Sacred Grove: Fire, Well, and 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 within us.*

KB censes the site and the folk.

Well

BC: *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 (**BC**) pours waters from the Well to blessing cup, offers silver to Well.

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

All: *Sacred waters, flow within us.*

BC asperges the site and the folk with a branch and 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:

AT: *The fire, the well, the sacred tree,*

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

AT: *In land, sea and sky,*

All: *Below and on high!*

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

All: *So Sei Es! (“zo zay ess”)*

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

All: *So Sei Es!*

Opening the Gates Between the Worlds

Calling to Heimdall, guardian of the rainbow bridge, Bifrost:

DQ: *See Yggdrasill, the cosmic tree, the axis of the universe that connects the nine realms. Now we call upon Heimdall, the gatekeeper, so we can connect to the realms and the shining ones. Watch the fire and Yggdrasill and see Bifrost, the rainbow bridge, manifest to us.*

AT: *Heimdall, shining one, guardian of beautiful Bifrost, son of nine waves and sounder of the ill fated horn, you who can hear the grass grow and even hear the wool growing on the sheep, we ask you father of all men to open the gates. You who teach us the runes and our Wyrð let us walk in your light so that we may journey and learn in safety. Leuchten uns hervor, Heimdall.*

All: *Let the gates be opened!*

AT makes an offering of oil to Heimdall.

All: *We invoke you Heimdall, opener of every gate
We invoke you Heimdall, opener of every gate
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)*

AT makes an offering of oil to Heimdall and says: *Heimdall, accept our offering.*

All: *Heimdall, accept our offering!*

Outdwellers Appeasement

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

DQ: *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,
Take this and trouble not our work.*

Bardic Inspiration

AT invokes **Saga**, goddess of poetic inspiration:

AT: *Saga... all hear the ancient one come
Saga... help us see the harvest
Saga... guide us to the table
Saga... sing us tales of wonder
Remind us that we are able
To drain the cup yet drink again
Golden seer of eternal light
Fire us with your beloved presence
Your song is our own... Saga*

AT makes an offering of oil to Saga and says: *Saga, accept our offering.*

All: *Saga, accept our offering!*

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 gods made whole.*

Gods

BC: *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.
Honor us as we honor you.*

BC 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.*

Meditation of Merging the Energies and Re-Centering

(AT leads meditation of merging and re-centering.)

Ritual Purpose, and Honoring the Spirits of the Occasion

DQ: *It is the time of Gleichentag, even day, when the waning light of summer is matched by the waxing darkness of winter. The faint echoes of summer breeze are still around, but the windy chill of winter begins to blow as well. We have gained harvest and weal from the summertime, and now we will make offerings to the Shining Ones that they may ward us and we may weather the winter well.*

AT calls to Frey, beautiful patron of bountiful harvests, and lord of the elves:

AT: <i>Frey, Fro Ing, protector of the gods,</i>	(fray ; froh ing)
<i>Ingwaz-seed, the chaos of potential,</i>	(ing-wahz)
<i>Slain Shining One, still you survive strong.</i>	
<i>Gerdhr-husband and giver of gold,</i>	(gerd)
<i>Gullinbursti battle-boar, Beli-bester Blót</i>	(goo'-lin-burst-ee ; beh-li ; blote)
<i>You who sacrificed sword and stallion,</i>	
<i>We pray that you protect us and our kin,</i>	
<i>That you ward us through the winter,</i>	
<i>And that you bring us back to bright bounty again.</i>	

AT offers oil to the fire and says: *Frey, accept our offering!*

All: *Frey, accept our offering!*

KB calls to Freya, beautiful goddess of love and fertility, and lady of the faeries:

KB: <i>Freya, the Frowe, bright beautiful one,</i>	(fray'-uh ; froh)
<i>Bringer of bounty and bearer of Brísingamen,</i>	(briz-ing'-uh-men)
<i>Hight Harvest-Hörn, you are a most mighty mistress.</i>	
<i>Glorious gold-giver, amber Vanir-weaver,</i>	
<i>Sensuous Seidhr-shower, Wyrð-witching woman,</i>	(sayth, weerd)
<i>You who brought the Aesir and Vanir together, and together again.</i>	
<i>We pray that you bear frith to our Folk,</i>	
<i>That you show us love through the winter,</i>	
<i>And that you bring us back to bright bounty again.</i>	

KB offers oil to the fire and says: *Freya, accept our offering!*

All: *Freya, accept our offering!*

Offerings to the Kindreds and Spirits

KB: *We have called the Kindreds here today and it is right to give them praise: A round for the ancestors, a round for the nature spirits, and a round for the gods. Have the Folk brought praise?*

All: *They have.*

KB: *So Sei Es!*

AT conducts three rounds of praise offerings: Ancestors, Nature Spirits, and Gods.

KB: *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.*

An Omen for the Blessings is Taken and Shared

While **AT** takes the omen with the runes, **DQ** distributes individual blessing cups and the folk quietly sing Come Druids All (as often as necessary):

All: *Come druids all, ovates and seers
And let your minds be still.
Earth, sea, and sky will lend no fears,
As the gods reveal their will.
Let every heart sing praise to them,
And all our works be skilled.
Claiming their blessings to the very end,
As the gods reveal their will.*

After the cups are distributed, **AT** reveals the omen to the folk.

Receiving the Blessings of the Gods and Spirits

DQ: *Children of earth, we call for the blessing of the Ancient Ones.
Together we cry...*

All: *Shining Ones, give us the waters!*

DQ: *We join our hearts, that each of us be blessed. Together we call...*

All: *Shining Ones, give us the waters!*

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

All: *Shining Ones, 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 Three Kindreds flow in this cup of Blessing. Seih den Lebenswassern da! (zay den lay-bens-vassern dah)

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*

Magical Workings

Dedicant Oath

AT: *Now with the blessings of the gods flowing in us, let us turn to the Work at hand. Is there one present who would make an Oath as a Dedicant of Ár nDraíocht Féin?*

DQ: *There is.*

AT: *Then what oath would you swear before the Gods and Folk?*

DQ makes his Dedicant Oath.

AT: *So Sei Es!*

All: *So Sei Es!* (zo zay es)

Grove Founding

The founding grove members gather together in the center of the ritual space.

AT: *We stand together in the presence of the Kindreds, brought by bonds of community, friendship, and devotion to the Gods. Today we weave our lives and our Wyrd together to form a new Folk: a Grove of Ár nDraíocht Féin. Shining Ones! Hear our words as we swear these oaths today:*

Grove members touch their right hands together.

I swear to honor and support members of the Grove as my true friends and family.
(other grove members repeat)

I swear to uphold the laws and customs of the Grove as my own.
(other grove members repeat)

I swear to protect and aid the members of the Grove in their times of need.
(other grove members repeat)

This we swear to each other and the Kindreds, by all we hold sacred!
(other grove members repeat)

The grove members release hands, **AT** gets the main pouring vessel, and grove members then pour their ocean waters together into the main pouring vessel.

AT: *Together, we offer these waters and in return we ask for the blessings of the Kindreds upon the Grove, ourselves, and our loved ones.*

AT: *Of the Ancestors we ask: Health, Strength, and Wisdom*

Dx: *Health, that sickness not impede us and that the Folk should always know the fullness of life's vitality*
(waters poured, then passed)

Dx: *Strength, that we have the power to accomplish our goals, and the endurance to carry us through difficult times*
(waters poured, then passed)

Dx: *Wisdom, that we hear the voices of the Honored Dead, and need not learn all our lessons the hard way*
(waters poured, then passed)

AT: *Of the Nature Spirits we ask: Balance, Harmony, and Abundance*

Dx: *Balance, that the tribe should always know what it needs and does not need, what is too much, and too little*
(waters poured, then passed)

Dx: *Harmony, that all of nature be at peace with us, as we in turn respect the Earth and her creatures*
(waters poured, then passed)

Dx: *Abundance, that the riches of the Deep flow out to us, and the tribe never be found wanting for what it needs*
(waters poured, then passed)

AT: *Of the Gods we ask: Magic, Luck, and Protection*

***Dx:** Magic, that our Workings be powerful in all the worlds,
and our hearts' desires always be fulfilled
(waters poured, then passed)*

***Dx:** Luck, that the oddities of chance fall in our favor,
and the forces of world continually conspire to aid us
(waters poured, then passed)*

***Dx:** Protection, that in time of need or danger,
the tribe should always be safe in the blessing of the gods
(waters poured, then passed back to **AT**)*

***AT:** And of all the Kindreds we ask that as we keep the Waters of our Grove, that they be
hallowed and provide the blessings of the Gods and Spirits to any who partake of them.
(final pouring of water)*

Grove members place their right hands together again and say, in union:

*By Fire, By Well, By Tree,
By Land, By Sky, By Sea,
By Gods, By Dead, By Sidhe,*

*Today we form a Folk, a Tribe, and a Family.
In the presence of the Gods and Spirits,
We now form Ocean's Tide Grove, ADF!*

All: *So be it!*

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.*

AT: *Frey, Wir danken Sie.* (veer dahn-ken zee)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

KB: *Freya, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

BC: *Goette, Goettern, Wir danken Sie.* (gote'-uh, gote'-urn)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

KB: *Naturgeisten, Wir danken Sie.* (nat-ur'-geyst-en)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

DQ: *Vorfahr, Ahne, Wir danken Sie.* (vohr'-far, ah'-na)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Heimdall, Wir danken Sie.* (hime'-dahl)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

KB: *Nerthus, Wir danken Sie.* (nurth'-us)

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

Closing the Gates and Ending the Rite

BC: *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 all be as it was before.
Lassen die Toren zumachen. (lahs' -en dee tohr' -en zoo-mack' -en)

All: *Let the gates be closed!*

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.*

All: *So Sei Es!* (zo zay es)

The musical signal is given to signal the end of the rite.

Materials List

Branch from local area for asperging, dressing the tree, etc. – Anyone
“Tree” (pole-like object) – unnecessary, using tree in ritual area

Water bottles for the Well, for drinking, and putting out fire – All
Individual blessing cups (will also have paper cups) – put near blessing cup before ritual!
Individual praise offerings – All
Water from the ocean – Brought by each new Grove member

Fire wood and matches or other lighting implement – Dan (and/or Bonnie)
Bird or other seed for nature spirits – Dan (and/or Kristin)
Incense, charcoal & censer (if nec.) – Dan
Outdweller appeasement (some form of soda) – Dan
Bread for ancestors – Dan

Vessel to hold Waters of the Grove – Anthony
“Well” – Anthony
Blessing cup – Anthony
Musical signal maker – Anthony (chimes)
Runes for omen – Anthony
Corn meal for Earth Mother – Anthony
Silver-like object for well – Anthony (shiny quarters)
Oil for offerings (lots) – Anthony
Bowl to hold oil for offerings – Anthony
Ladles (2) – Anthony (one for the Well, one for offering oil)
Paper towels to wipe oil bowl down – Anthony
Spade for digging offering hole – Anthony
Small cups for individual blessing cups – Anthony
Bottle opener – Anthony
Apple for Heimdall - Anthony
Highlighter (for people re: their ritual parts) – Anthony
Pamphlets for guests – Anthony

Pre-Ritual Setup

Dig or uncover the offering shaft, if necessary.

Gather wood/kindling for the Fire, if necessary.

The Tree should be set up, the Well filled with water, and the Fire lit.

If using charcoal incense, the charcoal should be put in the censer and lit, incense made ready.

Blessing cup, ladle, branch, and “silver” object should all be near Well. Individual blessing cups should also be near the center, but don’t need to be near the Well (they’ll be redistributed in rite).

Offerings should be gathered centrally, folks should note location of their offerings:

- Earth Mother, Gatekeeper, Bardic Inspiration, Outdwellers
- Kindred offerings – ancestors, nature spirits, gods
- Key offerings – deity(ies) of the occasion
- Individual praise offerings

Pre-ritual briefing for new folks:

- Outline the rite, esp. individual praise offerings, “circles”, etc.
- Teach/review songs and chants
- Review foreign language bits’ pronunciation
- Review order of processional
- Answer any questions