

Midsummer 2005

Processional

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: *The days are at their longest, and the light of the sun warms us well. The seeds we've sown are strong and blooming, and life springs from the bosom of the Earth Mother. The Mother of All is fruitful and the Shining Ones 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 for season of light ahead and receive their gifts come harvest time.*

Honoring the Earth Mother

KB honors the Earth Mother, source of all life:

<i>Nerthus,</i>	<i>Earth Mother,</i>	(nearth'-uhs)
<i>You stand solid</i>	<i>beneath our feet,</i>	
<i>Cold of rock,</i>	<i>hardness of ice</i>	
<i>Carry me on</i>	<i>to night's next night</i>	
<i>Support me well,</i>	<i>Njord's twin</i>	(neye'-ord)
<i>Vanir Mother</i>	<i>strong sea sister</i>	(vahn'-ear)
<i>Bring faith to fruit</i>	<i>Birch-bright one</i>	
<i>Honor to you,</i>	<i>your rhythms true</i>	
<i>Hail Nerthus!</i>		

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.*

KB makes an offering of corn meal 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

KB: *Sacred Fire, holy woods
Warm light to fill the hall
Nine realms are known
With our words this day
Let the Folk hear the call
Light fires within, warmth to the True
Fire's flame burns to form the garth
Woods kindle well, with the fire of the hearth.
Let us call the Kindred forth...*

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 the folk.

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

AT: *Holy Well waters deep
Three streams strong gathers the flow
One of wyrd shining ones know (weerd)
Another yet icy, serpent safe
Last of wisdom, many eyes to see
What is, what was what will be (oar'-lahg)
Watching sisters of orlog, three
Our Folk look on, watching well.
Let us call the Kindred forth...*

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 the folk.

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

DQ: *Mighty Tree middle of all
Nine realms full its branches make
Much knows Har, High One hung; (hahr)
Ygg's steed hight, ever green stays. (igg ; hite)
Serpent below eagle above
Squirrel between Nith-hewer gnaws
Ash-wood tall wet with white dews
Strong-standing true our Folk seek shelter
Let us call the Kindred forth...*

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

All: *Sacred tree, grow within us.*

The formation of the vertical axis 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 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)*

Offering to the Outdwellers

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

KB invokes **Bragi**, god of poetic inspiration:

KB: *Bragi! Odinson!
Best of the wordsmiths and first of the skalds,
You with the tongue of gold,
Whose words are like the finest mead,
We ask you best of bards,
To inspire us and make our words mix well.
Bragi, let your inspiration flow!*

All: *Bragi, let your inspiration flow!*

KB makes an offering of oil to Bragi.

Honoring and Inviting the Three Kindreds

DQ: *Ancestors old Heroes renowned
Blood of our veins, Strength in our souls,
Grandmothers, Disir, Wise watching women,
Weal-bringing warders, We offer you welcome.
Grandfathers, Alfar, light-alf, dark-alf, black-alf,
Weal-bringing warders, We offer you welcome.
Great heroes of eld, might-memory knows,
Your valor shines still, We offer you welcome.
O Ancestors of blood and heart, we call you forth.*

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*

KB:	<i>Land spirits</i>	<i>Keepers of place,</i>
	<i>Wise with weather,</i>	<i>Your knowledge runs deep.</i>
	<i>Luck and prosperity,</i>	<i>Your blessings fall,</i>
	<i>Honor to you,</i>	<i>We bring this day.</i>
	<i>Landvaettir great</i>	<i>Ancient as earth,</i>
	<i>Boulder-homed,</i>	<i>Water-homed,</i>
	<i>Land wights old,</i>	<i>Guardians true,</i>
	<i>Your strength strong still,</i>	<i>We offer you welcome.</i>
	<i>O Spirits of the natural world, we call you forth.</i>	

KB makes an offering of herbs to the 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.*

AT:	<i>Aesir, Vanir</i>	<i>Shining Ones all,</i>
	<i>On Itha Plain met</i>	<i>Many moons past,</i>
	<i>Of Ask and Embla,</i>	<i>Our ancestors first,</i>
	<i>Many things made,</i>	<i>Of the gods we all come.</i>
	<i>None of you gods,</i>	<i>is not mighty indeed,</i>
	<i>Of soul, sense, and being</i>	<i>you have given us well,</i>
	<i>Taught us of runes,</i>	<i>Of faith and troth,</i>
	<i>Of right-mindedness,</i>	<i>and honor true,</i>
	<i>O Shining Ones of magic and might, we call you forth.</i>	

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.*

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: *Midsummer is not only the festival of Sunna, associated so strongly with fire, but it is also the death of Balder. His death signals the beginning of the end, since it is the first step on the road to Ragnarok. It is then that the fire giants will tear out of Muspelheim to fight the gods. This is a necessary part of the cosmic unfolding, for it is through the fire of Muspelheim that Balder is reborn to establish the new world order. Midsummer is thus both the funeral of Balder and the foreshadowing of his rebirth. As we feel the fiery warmth around us, we know that this is a Turning Point in the “Wheel of the Year”, that all things change, and we give honor to the Kindreds who are with us through all the Turnings of the Wheel.*

KB will call to Sunna, Norse Sun goddess:

KB: *Sunna, bright one, mother sun,
Skoll-fleer, Mani-sister, Glen-wife,
Mundilfari- and Glaur-daughter,
You who ride through the sky in your great chariot,
Pulled by Arvak the early riser and all-swift Alsvið,
I give honor to you this day,
At the height of your glory,
On this day of days, I have gathered to praise you.
Sunna, join with us in this celebration of light!*

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

All: *Sunna, accept our offering!*

AT will call to Loki, Norse trickster god:

AT: *Loki, sly one, shape-changer, trickster, and sky-traveler,
Farbauti- and Laufey-son, Jötun-kin and Aesir-kin,
Odin-brother, Hella-father, Fenris-sire, Sleipnir-mother,
Sig-spouse, Balder-slayer, Gungnir-gatherer,
O fiery master of guile and deceit,
You who gave the gods their treasures,
And who will be free again to fight the gods at Ragnarok,
We honor you today in all your clever forms.
Loki, join with us in this celebration of light!*

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

All: *Loki, accept our offering!*

Offerings to the Kindreds and Spirits

KB: *Have the Folk brought praise?*

All: *They have.*

KB: *So Sei Es!*

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

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.*

An Omen for the Blessings is Taken and Shared

While **AT** takes the omen with the runes, the folk sing Speak to Me (as often as necessary):

All: *Speak to us,
Speak to us, Goddesses.
Speak to us,
Speak to us, all the Gods.*

Receiving the Blessings of the Gods and Spirits

DQ holds the blessing cup aloft and hallows the waters with the blessings of the gods by saying:

<i>Wyrð's well waters,</i>	<i>We waited to reveal,</i>	
<i>Three women weaving,</i>	<i>Scores cut and laws laid,</i>	
<i>Women writing orlog</i>	<i>for the sons of men.</i>	
<i>Well have we witness</i>	<i>to the glory of gods,</i>	
<i>Giving gift for gift,</i>	<i>great ones all.</i>	
<i>Our waters received,</i>	<i>wetness of galdr.</i>	(gawld)
<i>Words were spoken</i>	<i>and runes were read,</i>	
<i>Wyrð was revealed</i>	<i>And weal we await.</i>	
<i>With these waters let our blessings flow!</i>		

AT: *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*

Thanking the Kindreds and Spirits

KB: *Kindreds have come* *heeded our calling*
Honor was given *and honor received.*
Great are our dead, *and great are our heroes,*
Great are our landvaettir, *and great are our gods.* (land-vet-ear)
With each call we make *to our Kindreds true,*
They heed our calls more, *and our troth stronger be.*
Rite closing, words waning, *our troth stronger still,*
We carry it well *with us all ways*
Honor to the Kindreds *for ever more.*

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

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Sunna, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Goette, Goettern, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Naturgeisten, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Vorfahr, Ahne, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Heimdall, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

AT: *Nerthus, Wir danken Sie.*

All: *Wir danken Sie.*

Closing the Gates and Ending the Rite

AT: *Heimdall, shining one, warder ever keen
Well do we know, what duty must do,
We thank you indeed, for watching the ways,
Guiding our kin home now to ward holy halls.
Our words speak farewell, though remembering remains,
We trust your rightness great guardian bridgeward
That with need known again we may pass by your stay
Your wisdom to guide well all sires of Heimdall*

KB: *Now by the keeper of the gates and by our magic we end what we began.
Let the fire be flame,
Let the well be water,
Let all be as it was before.
Let the gates be closed!*

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. So Sei Es!*

All: *So Sei Es!*

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

Pre-Ritual Setup

The Tree should be set up, the Well filled with water, and the Fire lit; offerings gathered

Materials List

Branch from local area for asperging, dressing the tree, etc.

Water bottles for drinking, putting out fire – All
Individual cups for germo-phobes who want them ☺

Individual praise offerings – All

Bird or other seed for nature spirits – Kristin?

“Well” – Dan or Kristin? (note: In case you can’t find one, I’ll bring one but it’s a bit small)

Blessing cup – Dan or Kristin?

Spade for digging offering hole – Anthony

Fire wood and matches or other lighting implement – Dan

Musical signal maker – Anthony (chime)

Incense, charcoal & censer (if nec.) – Dan

Outdweller appeasement (Club soda? Root beer? Ginger ale?) – Dan

Bread for ancestors – Dan?

“Tree” (pole-like object) – may not be necessary (Anthony)

Ladles (2) – Anthony (one for water, one for offering oil)

Corn meal for Earth Mother – Anthony

Silver-like object for well – Anthony (shiny quarters)

Oil for offerings (lots), paper towel to wipe bowl down – Anthony
Bowl to hold oil for offerings – Anthony (this might be the backup well bowl!)

Runes for omen – Anthony