

# Nordic Samhain 2009: Norse Winter Nights

## Three Cranes Grove, ADF

### Processional:

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

### Outdwellers

[Nick]

### Censing and Aspersing

### Welcome

Welcome to Three Cranes Grove Winter Nights Celebration!

### Honoring the Earth Mother

We begin, always, by honoring the Earth Mother.

[April]

Hail to Thee, Nerthus,  
Earth Mother of Men  
Be Thou blessed and bless us as well,  
you who feed us generation after generation  
with the harvest of your bones and body.  
Nerthus, Earth Mother of Men, accept our sacrifice!  
**Folk: Nerthus! Accept our sacrifice!**

### Inspiration

[Troy]

We call out to Bragi, the Skald of Valhalla!  
Majestic God of poetry and song,  
Great Herald of Odin's Hall,  
Grant us eloquence, clarity and confidence,  
Inspire our thoughts and guide our words  
In beauty, grace and truth.  
Bragi! Bless us with your inspiration and eloquence this night!  
Bragi, Accept our sacrifice!  
**Folk: Bragi! Accept our sacrifice!**

Norse Samhain, 2009

Recreation of the Cosmos:

We now establish our sacred center.

*The Portal Song*

*CHORUS*

*By Fire and by Water, between the Earth and Sky*

*We stand like the World-Tree rooted deep, crowned high.*

*Come we now to the Well, the eye and the mouth of Earth,*

*Come we now to the Well, and silver we bring,*

*Come we now to the Well, the waters of rebirth,*

*Come we now to the Well, together we sing:*

*CHORUS*

*We will kindle a Fire, Bless all, and with harm to none,*

*We will kindle a Fire, and offering pour,*

*We will kindle a Fire, A light 'neath the Moon & Sun,*

*We will kindle a fire, our spirits will soar.*

*CHORUS*

*Gather we at the Tree, the root & the crown of all,*

*Gather we at the Tree, Below & above,*

*Gather we at the Tree, Together we make our call,*

*Gather we at the Tree, In wisdom & love.*

*CHORUS (with gusto)*

Initiating the Rite

As our ancestors once did, so we do today, and so our children will do in the future.

Tonight, we gather to celebrate, A Nordic Feast of Samhain, Winter Nights. Tonight, we honor our Mighty Dead and the Lady who rules their dwelling places, Hela, Goddess of the Underworld.

Let us join together as one folk to make our offerings in joy and reverence.

Grove Attunement

First, take a moment to find the center of your mind, body and soul.

[Anna's Three Lights Unity Meditation]

Now, focus your thoughts down, down into the Earth. Listen. Hear the heartbeat of Mother Earth. Listen. Listen. Feel your heartbeat match the pulse of the Earth; listen as they beat in unison. Now envision a pale green mist arising from the Earth. Swirling and flowing, it encircles your limbs, your torso, and engulfs your head. Feel the mists as they become a part of you, blending within you and exiting through you.

Now the mists twirl about you and their circle grows, encompassing those around you, as well. You watch as the green billowing mists entwine them, piercing their cores and uniting all in a green cloud of energy, flowing through each of you before moving on to the next, sharing the energy from one with the next, creating an interconnectedness between you. Hear you still, the heartbeat, the bass notes underlying the symphony of life as each living thing is connected through this Earth energy. You watch as the mist grows brighter and brighter until it burns brightly, twirling and swirling faster and faster as it is fed.

Now, see a shimmering band of white light, growing into a silvery essence from the air begin to follow the path of the green mists that glow like emeralds kissed by the sun. See the silvery light entwining you swirling about you, piercing your core before moving on to the next person, connecting those placed the emerald-green mists have been with a silvery, shimmering glow. Hear again the heartbeat, beating as one with your own heart and the hearts of those around you.

With the swirling silvers and emeralds about you, you now see a deep, sapphire blue bubbling up, flowing as water, encompassing your legs, your torso, your arms, your head. Flowing through you and throughout you, pouring down the paths of the silvers and greens, watch the watery blue light that breaks as waves at each surface it encounters before piercing and filling those around you—as the tide coming in and filling every crevice, every pool, every opening. See the ebb and flow of the blue light as it merges with the greens and silvers to erupt into a unified, intensified golden light, pulsing with the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

See now this golden light encompassing all that it touches, flowing faster and faster, enshrouding everything, everyone in a mantle of golden glory. Thusly dress in this golden light of balanced unity, open now your mind's eye, and with the bells of the lights and the heartbeat of the Mother Earth echoing in your spirit, allow yourself to open your eyes, prepared to open now the gates to the Kindred.

The waters support and surround us  
The land extends about us  
The sky stretches out above us.  
At our center burns a living flame.  
May all the Kindred bless us.  
May our worship be true.

Norse Samhain, 2009

May our actions be just.  
May our love be pure.  
Blessings, and honor, and worship to the Holy Ones.

Gatekeepers Invocation

Let us call on the Gatekeepers, who will open the ways for us.

Mighty Norns, Urd Verdandi, Skuld  
Thurs maidens of what was, what is and what may be  
You are the weavers of Wyrð  
You are the carvers of Örlög  
You are the deliverers of destiny to god and man alike.  
You are the Jotun maids that the gods seek council from  
You are the guardians of the well of Urd  
You are the nourishers of Yggdrasil, the world tree.  
You who touch all nine realms  
Wise ones, we honor you and ask you to stand as guardians of the gates.  
Blend your magic with ours that none may cause harm to those gathered here  
Help us as we open the gates and tread the ancient paths  
Ladies of the Ash, accept our offering with hail and welcome!  
**Folk: Ladies of the Ash! Accept our Offering!**

Opening the gates

And now, let us open the gates that we may commune directly with the Kindred.

[Joe] To the realm of Asgard - land of the Aesir and the Asyniur  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Traci] To the realm of Vanaheim - land of the Vanir  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Maggie] To the realm of Alfheim - land of the Alvs and the Alfar  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Paul] To the realm of Midgard - land of man and landvettir  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Aeryn] To the realm of Muspelheim - land of fire and one force of creation  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[MJD] To the realm of Jotunheim - land of the Jotunar  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Kim] To the realm of Helheim - land of the dead and our Disir  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Tamie] To the realm of Niflheim - land of ice and the second force of creation  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

[Michael D] To the realm of Svartalfheim - land of dark elves and forgers of treasure  
Hear our call while this flame burns bright (light torch)  
**Open wide your gates and join the children of the old ways.**

Nine realms we have called  
Nine doors we knocked upon  
Nine flames we burn  
Let the gates be open!  
**Folk: Let the gates be open!**

#### Invocations, Three Kindred

Children of Earth, we stand now in the presence of the Kindred. They hear our thoughts and intentions as well as our words. Meet them with a pure heart and an open mind.

#### *Ancestors: Skarlett*

Beloved ancestors, mighty heroes and heroines of long past,  
honoured dead...this night is especially yours. Please come and be  
among us as we offer words of praise, love and thanks for all you have  
done for us. What you have started, we take on and our children will  
continue.

Ancestors, accept our offering!

**Folk: Ancestors, accept our offering.**

Norse Samhain, 2009

*Nature Spirits: Leesa*

The children of the earth call out to the spirits of the land

Spirits of stone and soil  
And of gem and metal, we call to you

Spirits of leaf and stem  
And of branch and root and blade, we call to you

Spirits of skin and blood  
And of fur and feather and scale, we call to you

Spirits of our guides and totems  
Unseen elements who share this realm with us, we call to you

Come to our fire, Spirits  
Meet us at the boundaries  
Guide us and ward us as we walk the elder ways

Nature Spirits, accept our sacrifice  
**Folk: Nature Spirits, accept our sacrifice!**

*Shining Ones: Seamus*

Children of the earth call out to the Shining Ones

To the Gods and Goddesses of this land,  
Those remembered and long forgotten,  
Those whose blood courses in the rivers and streams  
Those whose voices echo through the trees  
We sing your praises and ask you to join us today

To the Gods and Goddesses of our Grove  
and those gathered here  
Those who shine their blessings upon us  
Those who council our thoughts and dreams  
We sing your praises and ask you to join us today

To the Shining Ones all  
to all those Gods and Goddesses  
Who illuminate days and nights,

Norse Samhain, 2009

Who light the fires of our hearths and hearts,  
We sing your praises and ask you to join us today

Meet us at the boundaries, join us at the fire  
Guild us and ward us as we walk the elder ways  
Shining ones accept our sacrifice.

**Folk: Shining ones accept our sacrifice.**

Have the folk brought praise and offerings for the Kindred? **We have.**  
Then come forth now with your offerings.

### **Journey to Helheim (Missy)**

And now we prepare to turn our minds down, down into the Underworld, to the dwelling place of our loved ones and respected ones who have gone before us.

#### *Warding the Folk*

First, Children of Earth, we must ward ourselves and make ready, for the sounds of life resound loudly in the Halls of the Dead. We cloak ourselves in the same manner in which Groa cloaked her son, Svipdagr, to prepare him for the journey.

#### *(Irisa and Paul to assist)*

First, we create a barrier that will cast of anything harmful.

Second, we prevent ourselves from wandering, deprived of will, in the ways.

Third, we protect ourselves against the power of rivers which might overwhelm us and cause us to sink into the bowels of Hel.

Fourth, we turn the hearts of enemies who lie in wait for us away from their hostility.

Fifth, we loosen any fetter that be laid upon our limbs.

Sixth, we calm the raging sea, wilder than men know.

Seventh, we preserve ourselves from death from intense cold on the high fells.

Eighth, we protect ourselves from the malignant power of those who lurk within, if we are suddenly overcome with darkness.

Ninth, we grant ourselves eloquence and wisdom when we converse with the wise and terrible giant who stands before the realm with eagle's wings and all those who dwell below.

We declare ourselves protected, grounded and ready. So be it! (So be it!)

#### *Invocation to Sleipnir*

Thusly warded, we must also call on a guide, whose powers will allow mortals such as ourselves not only entrance to the realm of the Dead, though we may be easily allowed in, but also a way back, for Hel does not easily release those who enter so freely into it's mists.

Norse Samhain, 2009

Sleipnir, Mighty Stead of Odin, we call to you now! Fastest and strongest of horses who glides on eight stalwart legs, Runes carved into your very teeth, we call you now to come forth! Come, join us at our fire!

You have guided Odin through realms of spirit and matter, over land, sea and sky. We have brought gifts for you, which we give freely in honor and in reverence, and in return, we ask that you guide us also as you have Hermodr on our journey over the Gjoll bridge and into the heart of Helheim, there to greet those who have gone before us and to pay honor to the Ancestors and to the Goddess, Hela, in all her majesty! Sleipnir accept our sacrifice!

**Folk: Sleipnir! Accept our sacrifice!**

### *Journey to Helheim*

Sleipnir, with his great speed, shall carry us through the cold ring of fire at the entrance to the burial mound, over a nine days' journey through mists and eternal blackness to the Crystal Bridge thatched with glittering gold called Gjollar, which crosses the Gjoll River, full of weapons, flowing from the spring of Hvergelmir. The maiden, Modgudr, asks us our names and our purpose. We each give our names and state our purpose: to pay homage to the Lady who rules here and to greet our beloved dead during Winter Nights, the time of the Ancestors. She smiles to us, noting the presence of the Giant Horse, and bids us down and north, toward Helheim.

So, onward we travel, through caverns with jagged rocks and dripping waters, along Hels-way. Darkness surrounds us, and we are washed in the winds from the wings of the giant Hraesvelg who sits at the edge of the world in the form of a giant eagle. Downward, further and further, beneath the third root of *Yggdrasil*. In the distance can be heard growlings, most likely from Garm, the four-eyed hound with chest drenched in blood who guards the entrance to Hel. Do not fear him, for those who have given bread to the poor can easily appease him with Hel cake, if he dares venture from the Gnipa-cave and into the presence of Sleipnir.

Darkness begins to give way as we approach the iron gates, thrown back in anticipation of our arrival. One final deep breath as we pass through the Gates of Hel.

### *Invocation to Hela*

And lo, there she stands, Hela, Goddess of the Underworld and Ruler of all nine realms of the dead. The power is hers, at the wave of her hand to cause disease or to cure. Half of her body, a beautiful maiden, half of her, death and decaying flesh; Hela, the embodiment of the cycle of life and death stands balanced in her beauty and her horror.

Hela, daughter of Giants, Ruler over the Nine Realms of the Ancestors! The Children of the Earth have come to your hall to pay respect to you and to those over whom you hold dominion! We come bearing gifts to lie at your feet, you into whose hands we commend our spirits at our



Norse Samhain, 2009

life-journey's end. Hela! Accept our sacrifice!

**Folk: Hela! Accept our sacrifice!**

Mighty Goddess, we have opened the gates to the nine realms, at your permission, and call now for all the Ancestors of those in this company to join us in the hall! Children of the Earth, envision the hall once more in your mind's eye. Find those loved ones who have gone before you, greet them with all your heart, open and ready to commune awhile. See your Mother, your Father, your Grandparent, Aunt, Uncle, dear friend, whomever you hold in your heart who dwells now in these halls.

*Ancestors Visitation Song:*

*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.*

*Returning to the Grove*

And now, we bid farewell to our beloved Ancestors, giving farewell hugs and kisses, and noting the details of all that we have seen, heard and experienced to bring back with us as we return.

Sleipnir, you whose presence allows us to return, lead us back through the gates, onward and upward, back through the darkness through which we came. We arrive back at the Gjoll-bridge, where Modgudr nods to us and allows us to cross the bridge southward once more. Over nine days' journey, Sleipnir, speed us back to our Grove!

Children of Earth, become aware once more of the world around you and reorient yourself as we prepare to move forward with the rite. Stand, stretch, come round to full awareness. If you or someone near you needs assistance, please let it be known.

Final Sacrifice

Let our voices arise on the Fire

Let our voices resound in the Well

Let our words pass the boundary to the Otherworld as we focus our intentions.

Kindred! We have honored you with many gifts in the ways of those who have gone before us. We have given freely from our hearts and from our hands, and we ask you now that you accept our sacrifices in the spirit in which they have been given!

Mighty Kindred! Accept our sacrifice!

**Folk: Mighty Kindred! Accept our sacrifice!**

Norse Samhain, 2009

### Omen

First Question: Have our offerings been accepted - Anna pulls one rune

Will those who performed the kindred invocations step forward? (Leesa, Skarlett, Seamus step forward)

What words of comfort do the Nature spirits have for us? (Leesa interprets drawn rune)

What words of Wisdom do the Ancestors share with us? (Skarlett interprets drawn rune)

What words of guidance do the Shining Ones gift us with? (Seamus interprets drawn rune)

The Kindred have spoken and given us their gifts. Do the folk accept these blessings?

Folk: We do!

Then let us seek the waters.

### Return Flow

[Julie] [Water Valkyries: Molly and Carmen]

These are absolutely good omens (we hope), for such a night as this.

Samhain is the time when we connect with the crucial forces of nature and make ourselves ready for the long descent into winter. It is a time to reflect on that which we've brought into our lives, and that which we need for the future. It's the night of the dead, of remembrance for our ancestors and those still living. A night of kinship and honoring the Mighty Kindreds.

Reflect now upon the Omens (1st Omen), (2nd Omen) and (3rd Omen).

Think of how they will affect our grove, community, our relationship with the Kindreds. Having meditated upon these Omens, now take a moment to feel our connection with the O Mighty Kindreds.

Children of the earth, do the folk accept these omens?

**Folk: We do!**

Then see the omens as they now manifest in these waters; see the fire of blessings as it reflects in the water. Life (gestures to the water vase) water ... that which takes life and that which gives it. Water that which sustains us and purifies us. And these waters here, to be blessed and enhanced by the Kindreds. Now, let us ask the Mighty Kindred to bless the waters!

Shining down from above, seeping up from below.

Mighty Kindreds, we ask you to bless the waters!

**Folk: Mighty Kindreds give us the waters!**

Mighty Kindreds, we ask you to bless the waters!

**Folk: Mighty Kindreds give us the waters!**

Norse Samhain, 2009

Mighty Kindreds, we ask you to bless the waters!

**Folk: Mighty Kindreds give us the waters!**

(then hold waters up)

Behold the Waters of Life!

**Folk: Behold the Waters of Life!**

[*Song: Wayfaring Stranger Repaganized by: Ian Corrigan 2008*]

Working

*Blot to the Ancestors* [Anna]

Thanking the Beings

*Hela: Missy*

Hela! Dark Goddess! For your leadership and for the care of our dear beloved Ancestors after they leave our sides in this world, we are grateful. Hela! We thank you! Hail and Farewell!

*Sleipnir: Missy*

Sleipnir! For your guidance and protection, we thank you. Hail and Farewell!

*Shining Ones: Seamus*

Shining Ones, we thank you.

**Folk: Shining Ones, we thank you.**

*Nature Spirits: Leesa*

Nature Spirits, we thank you.

**Folk: Nature Spirits, we thank you.**

*Ancestors: Skarlett*

Thank you oh honoured dead for your presence,  
for all the blessings you have shared with us. Know among your folk you are held in  
reverence and love. Ancestors, we thank you.

**Folk: Ancestors we thank you.**

Closing the gates

To the realm of Svartalfheim

You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)

**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Niflheim

You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)

**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

Norse Samhain, 2009

To the realm of Helheim  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

The realm of Jotunheim  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Muspelheim  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Alfheim  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Vanaheim  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Asgard  
You joined our rite while this flame burned (douse flame)  
**Close now your gates with thanks from the children of the old ways**

To the realm of Midgard  
As we dwell within your borders we do not close this gate.  
Instead we put out this flame with hail and thanks to those of the old ways.  
**Folk: Hail and thanks to those of the old ways.** (douse flame)

Nine realms we honored  
Nine doors we shut  
Nine flames burned out  
Let the gates be closed!  
**Folk: Let the Gates be Closed!**

Gatekeepers, Thanks

Urd, Verdandi, Skuld  
Norns of Yggdrasil

Norse Samhain, 2009

Our gatekeepers and guarders of fate  
The children of the old ways honor you for your work done here.  
Go now in peace with our hail and thanks.

**Folk: Hail and Thanks.**

Thanking Inspiration

Bragi, Great Skald of Valhalla! God of Poetry and Song!  
We thank you for the inspiration and eloquence you have granted us!  
Bragi, we thank you!

**Folk: Bragi, we thank you.**

Thanking the Earth Mother

Nerthus, Earth Mother of Men, Be thou Blessed, and we thank thee for thy blessings. We bid thee farewell. Earth Mother, we thank you.

**Folk: Earth Mother, we thank you!**

All things left unused shall be returned to thee, Oh Earth Mother.

Closing the Rite

May all be as it was, only better for having been touched by the work we have done here tonight.  
Go in peace. This rite is ended.

Recessional:

*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.*