

ADF Samhain 2010

***Consecration of Space and Participants:
Lighting the Sacred Fire, sanctifying the space done
on site.***

***Processional of the Folk, with adapted version of
Hoof and Horn.***

***Purification: As people walk into the circle, they are
asperged and censed.***

Honouring the Earth Mother: offering of grain is
given to the Earth Mother

Our first offering is given to the mother of us all,
Danu.

(Heartbeat rhythm of the drum)

From her comes the sheaf, from which we harvest
grain.

From her comes the animal, whose flesh feeds our
own.

From her comes the tree, which gives fruit and nuts to
sustain us.

From her comes the timber and rocks, which give us
shelter and warmth in the coming winter.

From her all these blessings come forth, and for these

blessings we give our most humble thanks!
(Offering of grain)

Offering to the Outdwellers:

“Outdwellers! Those who would work against us in
our rite! Bother us not, nor come any closer! We offer
you a sacrifice in exchange for peace. (*offering of beer
is given*)

Centering, Grounding and Merging:

***Meditation and grounding: People will hold
hands and breathe deeply.***

Unity chant/song: This is our song...

Stating ritual purpose and historical precedent:

We gather here on the Feast of Samhain, the End
and Beginning of the Sacred Year, the Time of
Turning, of twilight, when the Dark Time begins.
This is the Last Harvest. The fields lie empty,
sinking into Winter’s Sleep and our larders hold
what gain we have reaped from our labours.

We are here to worship the Lord of the House of
the Dead; We offer to Donn the Dark One, the
Antlered God who offers hospitality and peace to
those bound for the Ancestors’ Country.

In this Season of Change we also honour the Holy Dead, as the ancients did. On this, their feast day, we celebrate their lives, their contributions to the weft of time, and give thanks for the love and wisdom they continue to give us, beyond the veil.

In the times of the standing stones, the folk would often make pilgrimages from one sacred circle to another, to dramatize the passage of their ancestors into the Hall of Donn. We will begin our ritual here, in this circle of the living.

Recreating the Cosmos:

We are at the centre of all things
Response: (Home of our home)
The Land is firm below our feet
(Home of our home)
The eternal Sea surrounds us
(Home of our home)
The endless Sky stretches out above us
(Home of our home)
By land and sea and sky do we come
By land and sea and sky are we made
By land and sea and sky we are
At the centre of all things
(Home of our home)

Sacred Fire:

We light now the sacred fire. This is the fire of life, of light, of inspiration and transformation. It is the fire our ancestors depended on to survive, and the hearth fire we continue to gather around, to sing, and play and dance. It is the fire that ignites our creativity and courses through our veins when we are inspired. It warms us, kindles our passions, strengthens our will and, when faced with adversity, it transforms us.

Behold, the sacred fire!

Sacred Fire, flame within us!

Offering of oil is made to the fire.

People: Sacred fire, flame within us!

Sacred Waters:

Next we call to the Sacred Well, and the waters of life contained within. These are the primordial waters of creation, from which all life comes. It is the womb of the mother, a vessel of untapped potential and the unshaped powers that lie deep below us and within us. It is the water that nourishes us, and cleanses us, and flows through our veins with vitality and strength.

Behold, the sacred waters!

Sacred waters, flow within us!

Offering of silver is made to the well.

People: Sacred waters, flow within us!

World Tree:

Lastly, we come to the Sacred Tree and nestle our spirits in its roots and branches. This is the world tree, which stretches above and below, connecting the worlds together. It is the steed of the shaman, the source of wisdom, the watcher, the teacher of the lessons found in stillness and time. We take haven under its leaves and gain strength from its roots.

Behold, the Sacred Tree!

Sacred Tree, grow within us!

Water from the well is given to the Tree.

People: Sacred Tree, grow within us!

Calling the Kindred:

Nature Spirits

“Hallowed are the dwellers of the land
Spirits of green and bark, feather and fur
Makers and keepers of the natural order
Beauty we find in your presence
Wondrous beings of this hidden world
We honour you!” (*offering of seeds is given to the ground*)

Ancestors

“Hallowed are the ancestors
Beloved dead, elders and heroes
Watchers and whisperers of the secrets of life
Wisdom we find in your presence.
Guardian spirits of the other world
We honour you!” (*Offering of whiskey is given to the fire*)

Shining Ones

“Hallowed are the Shining Ones
Immortal Gods and Goddesses all
Creators and masters of the universal mysteries
Grace we find in your presence.
Matrons and Patrons of our hearts
We honour you!” (*Offering of oil is given to the fire*)

See all these beings now at our fire- the ancestors, our recently departed, the spirits of this land, and all our Shining Ones. See them ringing our Grove, mingling their energies with ours.

Now we will open the gates, the gates we will walk through to begin our journey to the Hall of Donn.

Opening the Gates:

Manannan chant:

“We stand at the border and watch the mist close in.
Waves rolling, rolling,
Where shore meets the ocean, where land meets sea
and sky,
We call to you, Manannan,
Manannan, Manannan,
We welcome you as you one day will welcome us.”

O Manannan, Lord of the Gates, Lord of Wisdom, we
walk in your holy ways; we walk the Sacred Road.
Share your magic with us; ward us so that we may
walk in safety. Manannan Mac Lir, accept our
sacrifice!

(Offering of oil is given.)

Gate Trance:

Now, we turn our minds to Magic... make yourself
comfortable, straighten your spine, and breathe deep...
Renew your center... Earth below and Sky above...
feel the currents of light and dark... flowing in your
flesh, and in our Grove... feel the presence of our
grove, surrounding us... see before you our simple
Hallows, the shining Fire, the dark within the

Cauldron... the currents of Fire and Water, lightness
and darkness swirling around the Tree... Now see,
with your vision's eye, by imagination and by will...
see rising from the Hallows a mist... Silver-grey, warm
and thick... rising to swirl around your form... rising
around your hips... rising around your chest... rising to
enclose your head... Filling our Grove with Magic's
Mist... the Mist of the Borderland... that separates the
common world from hidden truth... feel it thicken, feel
it swirl and shift and rise upwards... surrounding and
encompassing us, becoming the gates to the
otherworlds. The gate stands in the west, containing
both light and darkness, shifting with the mist that
swirls around it. You are standing before the gate, in
the archway of the gate. Breathe deep, and feel the
flow of Light and Shadow in your flesh... breathe deep
and feel the Mist around you... Let the Mist enclose
you, carrying your mind inward... turning your eye
toward the Gates themselves...

Now, we call to Manannan Mac Lir, Lord of Ways:
join your magic with ours. Let the fire open as a gate,
let the well open as a gate, let the tree be the
crossroads of all worlds. Open as a road to the spirits,
a path to the Hall of our Ancestors. Let the gate be
open!

We now enter the realm of Manannan, as we begin our

journey to the world of the spirits.

Procession to Ancestor Cairn in silence (ringing bell).

At the cairn:

Behold the cairn we have built in memory of our ancestors and beloved dead. Let us hallow it with water and fire, to make it a fitting vessel for the portal we intend to raise.

Cairn is censed and asperged.

Call to Donn

In the season of darkening, the Lord of the House of Death receives the Spirits in his Hall. He is Donn the Dark One, also called Cernunnos the Horned One. He is the First Ancestor, the Torc Bearer, and The Guardian of the Cauldron of Plenty. Hear us now, Receiver of the Dead, Granter of Rest, Patron of the Feast in the Land of the Dead. We your children pray you to come in, to let your gaze fall upon this Sacred Ground, to indwell our rite and our cairn and give us your blessing. For this sake, we make due offering to you.

We give you...
(offering made into shaft.)

Silver, that you grant to us the wealth of the Underworld, Source of All Potential.

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

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

Be welcome among us, Donn; Dark One, accept our sacrifice!

Building the portal: visualization

Close your eyes but hold the image of our cairn before your inner sight. See the humble collection of stones, the small opening at the base. Your eyes are drawn downward, into this opening, through the hole, into the Earth. You pass along tree root and watercourse, down through veins of quartz... into the Deeps... toward a flickering light... Now your vision becomes clearer... you see before you a portal made of three great stones... two upright and a great capstone, with darkness all around it... yet within it there is light... You gaze through the portal... your vision focusing into a cavernous room... vast and deep... perhaps a timbered hall, perhaps a dome of ancient stones... as you enter, moving surely through the door, the Hall seems empty of guests... in the middle lies a huge round hearth... a fire burns low in the pit, and the shadows dance on the walls...

As you watch the shadows you realize that there are spirits waiting silently in the darkness... drawing forward toward the fire...

Open your eyes, but keep the vision within your inner sight. This is our vision-shadow of the Feasting Hall of the Gods... the image into which we draw the presence of the kindred, the sidhe, the beloved dead... Now let us invite them to come to us: 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.

Receive now these offerings, made in your honour (plate is held up):

Apple, the Fruit of Life and Death.

Pork, the flesh of the Sacred Sow.

Hazelnuts, concentrated meat of wisdom.

We offer these...

To the ancient heroes of the Pagan World, those men and women who did the bidding of the Gods for the good of the folk.

To our own Beloved Dead, Grandmothers-and-Fathers, family and friends who have gone ahead, we honour you and grieve for you.

To the honoured Dead of the past year; those women and men of our folk who inspired and guided our whole world.

(Read list of names)

Also, we honour our beloved animal companions, who have chosen this past year to leave us for the Summerlands:

(Read list of names)

To all of you we give these fruits and meats that you may feast in joy in the Land of the Dead.

Offerings are placed in the cairn.

At this time, we call upon the folk to make your own offerings to your beloved dead. You may speak to

them out loud or in silence- they hear you most clearly on this day.

(Folk make their offerings)

I call on Donn to help strengthen our intent, make this portal stand forever as a gate to the otherworlds, a means to communicate and send offerings to our ancestors, and a place to receive their blessings. So be it! So we have given of our love and our wealth to the Lord of the Dead, and given honour to those who pass before us into His hall. Now let our voices arise on the fire, let our voices resound in the well, let our words pass the boundary to the otherworlds. O Donn, we give you our love, our respect, our devotion as we pray you...

All: Donn, accept our sacrifice!

Now we have made our offerings, it is right and proper for our own Blessing to be revealed...

For on this night that stands at the rim of dark and light, the veil between the worlds is thin. Know that on this night above all others, the Shining Ones and Ancestors hear the prayers of mortals and on this night the kenning of their will is most easily obtained.

A gift calls for a gift! Offerings and sacrifice we have made. Let us learn now the wyrd of the folk who have come to this hall seeking the blessings of the mighty.

Omen is taken.

Hear now the nature of the blessing the Gods see fit to bestow upon us.

Omen is read.

Hallowing of the Waters:

Now let us enchant the Blessing Cup, that our work may bear true fruit. This is the outpouring of Blessings from the Mighty Ones, from all the Powers, from the Cauldron of Wonders! Drink we now the draught of the Gods. Drink in Wisdom, Wealth and Strength, so that we may live our lives in truth, joy and honour.

So, O Mighty, Noble and Shining Ones, hear and answer us!

BEHOLD THE WATERS OF LIFE!

The cup is passed in the usual way.

FINAL BLESSING:

The Ale of Blessing flows in us, filling us with the magic of Donn. As the year turns, let us welcome the quiet of the Dark. Let the stillness of the land calm and satisfy our spirits, allowing us to receive the Harvest's Bounty. Let the gain of the passing year be ours, to fill our lives with contentment. Let us welcome the Dead who wish to return to the living world, even as we remember those who depart. May we rest content as we pass the threshold of new beginnings...

Procession in song back to the grove. Ringing of the bell.

CLOSING

We have been blessed by Donn and the ancestors. Offerings we have given and Blessings we have received from the Mighty, Noble and Shining Ones. But now it is time to return to our common world, to leave behind this portal...

So close your eyes once more, and see again the mist come up from the ground... let it rise around you...let it envelop you... the opening of the gates is obscured, as the Mist closes around you...

Remember our Grove... the Fire, the Well, the Tree...

your vision returns to the Center of the Worlds, the Sacred Grove where we began...

The Mist begins to dissolve... and we are in our Grove together... returned truly and well to the common world... with the Blessing of the Gods in us all.

We have called out to the Shining Ones and been answered

We have given our offerings and been blessed in return.

Great and wonderful is this world and the creators who made it!

With each call we make to the Shining Ones, and each offering we give

They heed our calls more, and our connections become stronger.

Even though the rite is ending, we leave this place wiser,

and carry the blessings with us always.

So now as we prepare to depart, let us give thanks to those who have aided us.

O Donn, Dark One, for the blessings we have received, and those not yet received, we thank you!

All: We thank you!

O Gods and Goddesses of elder days, who have gathered close to witness our rite!

All: We thank you!

O spirits of this land, who surround and protect us!

All: We thank you!

O ancestors, our spirit elders and guides!

All: We thank you!

To all those powers that have aided us, we say again...

All: We thank you!

O gatekeeper, warder of the ways, for your presence and power, your guiding and guarding we say...

All: We thank you!

O Earth Mother, nurturer of us all, we thank you!

All: We thank you!

Now do we return from the centre of the Three Realms, under the protection of the Gods.

By the keeper of 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!

This grove was founded in January 2007, at which time a commitment was made: to celebrate together every high day, and other occasions; to worship the land and the spirits that reside here, the ancestors and our Gods. Today, as on every feast day, we now restate our oath. We have done as our ancestors have done, and as our children will do, and the Kindred have answered. Let us go now as children of the Earth. Peace be on us and blessings too.

Hoof and Horn

We all come from the Mother
And to her we shall return
Like a drop of rain flowing to the ocean

We all come from the Horned One
And to him we shall return
Like a sheaf of wheat falling to the earth as seed

Hoof and Horn, hoof and horn, all that dies shall be reborn
Corn and grain, corn and grain, all that falls shall rise again