

Thornhaven ADF

Yule 2014

Thornhaven Yule Blot and Sumbel 2016

Pre-ritual run-down: 3 main highlights of the ritual- feast, sumbel, and return of the sun. People will be taking turns guarding the hall/sitting vigil over the course of the night.

Pre-brief with those who have never attended an ADF ritual, especially the children who will be part of the welcoming of the stranger.

Statement of Intent

“Tonight, the darkness wins. In the battle between day and night, the day has been conquered, and we, the people of this land, must now endure the long nights of Winter’s reign. Frost giants surround us, and with them, come the threats of danger and death. What keeps us alive during this time is the shelter and warmth of the Hall, and the company of our Kin. We must keep the fires burning, and keep each others’ company over these long, wintry nights, to guard our people against the cruel weapons of the Giants- the wind, the snow, the hail. So tonight we will perform a vigil, not only to await the dawning of the day, and the return of the sun, but also to preserve the lives and comfort of those in the Hall throughout the unending night.”

“Yule is a time of celebration, of gathering together around the fire, of accepting the blessings of kinship and community- food, drink, laughter, warmth. It stands in harsh contrast to the inhuman world outside, where the Giants roam, where there is no room for error, no mercy

and no fairness. So we help each, support each other, and give each other solace. That is what kinship is. On this longest night, with the cold and the darkness hovering just outside our door, we here gathered form a kindred, to protect each other, support each other, comfort each other.”

“Tonight, we will recognize both the darkness and the light: First, we will give tithing to the Frost Giants out there in the wilderness, to recognize their role in the balancing of the world, and secure protection for our kin during this most dangerous of seasons. We will then also honour, through celebration, the blessings of Yule amongst our kindred, the warmth and the comfort that comes from the company we share. Get ready to eat and drink, be merry, entertain and be entertained, sing and laugh!”

“Tonight, we will give our Gods what we can, and take from them the blessings they see fit to bestow upon us.”

“Let us go out now, and give our due to the wild dark, to those who dwell in the barren snow, the unforgiving ice.”

Procession to Frost Giant Altar

**“We call out into the darkness,
Into the bitter cold and harsh winds,
We the people of Thornhaven Kindred
Call out the enemies of the Gods.
You who know not the warmth of the Hall**

**Who are strangers to company, and the blessings of
Humankind.**

**We, who are not your enemies, but see you for what you are
And recognize your value and place in our world
You give us snow to help regenerate the earth
You give us wind to cleanse the air
You give us ice, from which our own ancestors sprang
You give us darkness so that we may know rest.**

**Wild Ones, Frost Giants,
We offer you a tithe
To secure the protection of the folk here gathered.
Keep safe our people, our loved ones, our animals, our
property,
Do not jeopardize our safety or health.
With this offering we buy ourselves peace
Though tempests and blizzards may howl.
Let our voices carry on the North Wind,
Let our offering be brought to your Mountains.**

Group moves back toward the Mead hall. Someone goes in and gets fire from the hearth, brings it out, lights the torches, and 4 torch bearers go out to the four corners of the building (on the

outside). Rest of the group gathers by the door. Door should be closed.

**“Hear me all you wights unhallowed,
Etins, trolls and all the Out-garth,
Ravers, enemies of Asgard and tree of life,
Here we have given you proper honour.
Take our gift, freely given,
And trouble not our holy night,
For our land is well-warded by thorn and fire,
And our mead hall is a haven of comfort and warmth.
Let not the light of these torches touch you
Stay in your darkness, come no closer!”**

Group goes now into the mead hall.

**“We will now bring the blessings of the Season into our
Hall.”**

Offering to Earth Mother

**“For the peace of mid-winter
For the bounty of the feast-table
For the shelter of the Hall**

And the comfort of Kin

We say Hail to you, Earth Mother!

The foundation of our lives and all our happiness is built upon you, and so we give you this, the first offering in thanks.”

(Offering of grains is poured into the offering bowl)

Offering to Sky Father

Son of Jorth, Red-bearded one

Bringer of lightning, seeding the sky

We gather under your shield

Skyfather, mighty one

Protector of Midgard

Grant us the hallowing of Mjolnir

Might Donar, honour us as we honour you.

Offering of beer is made to the offering bowl

Sacred Centre

World-Tree:

In the centre of all, there is the one tree

Yggdrasil, mighty pillar

Stretching above and below

And through the nine worlds

Steed of Odin, home of secrets

Time worn but ever standing.

Shelter we find 'neath your branches

Strength we draw from your roots

Sacred tree, grow within us

Response: Sacred tree, grow within us

(Tree is libated with water from the Sacred Well)

All: Sacred Tree, Grow within us.

Druid addresses the congregants:

“Let us ornament the world tree with the beauty of Midgard, and bring the blessings of this world to our Hall.”

Sacred Well:

In the centre of all, beneath the tree

There are three wells of power

One of magic, mighty wyrd

The other, deep and full of darkness,

**The third, belonging to the Norns,
of wisdom and fate, for those who seek it.**

The powers flow deeply below our feet.

Sacred waters, flow within us

Response: Sacred waters, flow within us

(Water is taken from the well, and the people are sprinkled with it using an evergreen bough.)

Fire:

In the centre of all, beneath the tree

We light the sacred fire

Bright is the praise that we will give

In kindling the flames of sacrifice

With holy fire we raise our offerings up

Upward to the realms of gods

And pure will our worship be.

Sacred fire, burn within us

Response: Sacred fire, burn within us

(Oil is poured into fire, then a candle is lit from the flames. Each person holds a candle, which is lit from the first (or by others around them), until all the people hold candles that are lit.)

Once all the candles are lit:

“With Holy Flame, with Sacred Waters, this Grove is claimed and hallowed.

With the World Tree stretched above us and below us, this Grove is claimed and Hallowed.

With the Spirits of the People shining bright and strong, this Grove is claimed and Hallowed.

So be it!”

Gatekeeper

(Druid stands in the doorway with the door open and faces congregants)

See Yggdrasil, 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 Yggdrasil and see Bifrost, the rainbow bridge, manifest to us.

**Heimdall, shining one, guardian of beautiful Bifrost, where
Asgard and Midgard meet: We ask you, father of all men,
to open the gates. Let the blessings and praise flow freely
between our worlds, and let us know our Gods, and they us.**

**Let our voices be made heard throughout the nine worlds,
riding the roots and branches of Yggdrasil: worlds of
darkness, worlds of light, worlds of fire and of ice, worlds
of beauty and worlds most bleak- through all the worlds do
we proclaim: Let the Gates be open!**

Heimdall, gatekeeper, we honour you!

(Incense is lit to fill the Hall with scent)

Calling the Kindreds

(Druids move to the Feasting table)

**“We make our offering to the Kindreds of the Worlds
To those who dwell below and those who dwell above
To the tribes of Spirits
In the nine realms
Hear your true worshippers as we make due sacrifice.”**

Nature Spirits

**“Spirits of the Land, keepers of place
Weather-wise, your knowledge runs deep
Landvaettir great, Ancient as Earth
Land wights old, Guardians of garth
Spirits of leaf, and thorn and stone
Creatures of feather and fur and skin
We call you forth, to bless this feast.”**

(The bowl is filled with bread, milk and honey and is put
outside at the door)

**“This offering we make to our Land Wight
Spirit of peace, and power of Thorn
Protect us and keep us this night as all nights
Ward this Land
Ward this Hall
Ward the people and animals herein.”**

Ancestors

**“Ancestors old, keepers of wisdom
Life-wise, your knowledge is hidden
Grandmothers and fathers, beloved dead
Alfar, Disir, Heroes, and guardians,
Warding Spirits untouched by memory
Ancestors of blood, of heart and of land
We call you forth, to bless our feast.”**

(mead is poured into a horn)

**“This is the cup of remembrance,
An offering to our Ancestors.
Let it be known we do not forget you,
We celebrate the life that you have given us
And learn from your wisdom.”**

**“During the course of the night, please feel free to offer
some of your drink to this cup, as a sacrifice to your own
ancestors.”**

Gods

**“Aesir, Vanir, Shining Ones all
From you do all things come,
The beauty of Midgard, the bounty of all.
Of sense and being you have given us well,
Taught us of runes, of faith and troth,
Of right-mindfulness, and honour true,
O Shining Ones of magic and might, we call you forth
To bless this feast and the people here gathered!”**

(Feast food is taken and put in a bowl)

**“Join us at our feast table, warm yourselves at our hearth,
Let us honour you with hospitality, fit for the Gods.
Hail to the Aesir!
Hail to the Vanir!
Hail to the Gods!”**

**“The kindred have been given their due, as is proper. Now,
let us begin our festivities!**

(people will be told that they can individually visit the Frost Giants altar during the night, but must tell a “buddy” before heading out)

Official Feasting (at approximately 8:00)

Eating, story telling and singing.

Stranger's Visit

There is a knock on the door. A stranger in a cloak stands in the doorway.

**"Come, Stranger! You are welcome this night
We are blessed by your presence and the chance you give us
For blessed is the host and the giver of comfort.
We will give you a place by the fire to warm yourself
And linens to cleanse yourself
Food and drink to satisfy your need."**

(The stranger is given a chair by the fire, a bowl of warm water to wash his face and hands, and a plate of food, and a cup of drink.)

(Once he has taken a bite and a drink, he pulls down his cloak and addresses the congregants. One of his eyes is covered.)

**"I am Vegtam the wanderer
One of many names
The seeker of knowledge
The seer of truth
Much have I sacrificed for what I know-
I have plucked out my own eye**

**To see the past and the future
I have lived as king and peasant
God and Father of All
And died more than once to gain what I have.
I hung from the world tree
nine whole days and nights,
stabbed with a spear, offered to Odin,
myself to my own self given,
high on that Tree of which none have heard from what
roots it rises to heaven.**

**None refreshed me ever with food or drink,
I peered right down in the deep;
crying aloud I lifted the Runes
then back I fell from thence.
I carry them now with me
And offer to you on this night
For the comfort and welcome you have given me
The blessing of foresight, if you dare to know it."**

Omen

People will come and draw a rune (or runes), and the Stranger will interpret it for them.

(Once the rune reading is complete, Stranger will make his way to the door and address the congregants once more)

Host to Visitor: “Hail, thou who hast spoken! Hail, thou that knowest!

Visitor to the Folk: Hail, ye that have hearkened! Use, thou who hast learned!”

Stranger will leave, to ground, and return as himself after a short time.

Sumbel (at approximately 11:00 pm)

A druid begins the Sumbel with a brief introduction of the first three rounds of traditional Norse Sumbel, with an open forum afterwards. Sumbel will go for as long as desired by the congregation.

Sunrise (at approximately 8:30 am)

Just before dawn, the congregation will make its way down to the Ve where they can witness the sunrise, and make their salutations.

**“Hail to thee Day, hail, ye Day's sons;
hail Night and daughter of Night,
with blithe eyes look upon us,
and grant to those standing here victory!
Hail Aesir, hail Asynjur!
Hail Earth that givest to all!**

**Goodly spells and speech bespeak we from you,
and healing hands in this life!”**

“Hail To Sunna, She of the day!

Sunna, Sunna, Sunna!

May you grow in strength each year.

Never tiring, never faltering,

mindful of the wolves at your heels.”

Offering of mead is poured into the offering vessel (with a painted sun on it), while all say “hails” three times toward the east.

Said by All:

Hail Sunna!

Hail Sunna!

Hail Sunna!

“Now by the blessing of all the Vanir, by the might of all the Aesir, may the rising light of the Sun be in our hearts as it is in the world. May our strength grow with it, from good

to good and gain to gain, throughout the turning year. All hail the reborn Sun!

Hail!”

Omen

“In the first light of the new day, let the mystery of wyrd be revealed to us”

Priestess takes the omen and reads it out loud, interpreting.

“The omen is good. Hail to the Gods!”

Thanks

“We have withstood the darkness, and outlived the night, safe in the presence of each other and our Gods. It is time now to end what we began at sunset yesterday!

We give thanks and hail to the Gods for surviving this long winter’s night.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to the Gods for the bounty of our lives.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to the All-Father, for his teachings.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to the Ancestors, Alfar and Disir.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to Land wights for their protection.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to Heimdall, the gatekeeper.

Hail!

We give thanks to the Sky Father, for the shelter of his shield.

Hail!

We give thanks and hail to the Earth Mother, our foundation and strength.

Hail!”

Closing the Gates and Ending the Rite

“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!”

**“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 Sun.

Peace be on us, and Blessings too.”

“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 Sun. Peace be on us and blessings too.

This rite is ended. So be it!