

Three Branch River Grove, ADF

Midwinter/Full Moon Peace Ritual 2016

February 10, 2017

Linda Sager Kazalski

SUPPLIES (IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL ALTAR SUPPLIES AND TOOLS)

Salt	Holly
Sugar/Honey	Mistletoe
Fresh baked bread	Pork
Butter	Apple
Oil	Hazelnuts
Wine/ale/mead	4 taper candles
Herbs	Green pillar candle
Incense	Black pillar candle
Cauldron	2 platters
Spring Water	

Roles:

SEER - WES

D2=DRUID2 - WES

D1=DRUID1 - LINDA

GATEKEEPER - WES

OFFERINGS/SUPPLIES

ESTABLISHING THE BOUNDARIES:

Cornmeal
Saltwater
Incense/Sage Wand

OUTDWELLERS

Tobacco
Corn, Squash, or Beans
Water from the well
Cider/Ale

HONORING THE EARTH MOTHER

Cornmeal or other flour

GATEKEEPER - Oil

KINDREDS OFFERINGS:

-Ancestors - Bread and
Butter/nuts/ale
-Nature Spirits - Bird seed/Herbs
-Gods/Goddesses - Hard
Cider/Ale/Whiskey

ALTAR SETUP

This ritual should be done at night, if possible. It is best done where you can experience near-total darkness. If background noise is a problem, play instrumental music just loud enough to cover it.

Set an altar in the center of your space with the taper candles. Set them in a row on the Yule log. The four candles can be whatever colors seem right. If you don't have colored candles, use white.

Light the four taper candles prior to ritual.

(Don't ask.)

You'll also need matches or a lighter, a bell, incense, a small bowl of salt water, bread, wine or other drink, and an offering bowl. You'll be sitting quietly for part of the ritual – if you can't sit comfortably on the floor or ground, place a chair facing the altar.

Place the black pillar candle, on the right side of the altar. Place the green candle where it will be behind you out of sight,

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INITIATING THE RITE

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.¹

ESTABLISHING THE BOUNDARIES/PURIFICATION

LAND: (cornmeal sprinkled around the outside of the sacred space)

D1: Let the Land be the foundation of this Grove.

SEA: (saltwater sprinkled around the outside of the sacred space)

D1: Let the Sea be the boundary of this Grove.

SKY: (incense is thrown into the fire)

D1: Let the Sky be the roof of this Grove.

¹ Words by Sean Miller, music "an Old English plainsong" traditional

OUTDWELLERS: A bowl of water from the Well together with an offering of tobacco and corn/beans/squash are offered at their altar.

D2: Gods and spirits of this land,
Whose ways are not ours,
Offerings now for you and yours,
In memory of your band.
We come in peace, to pray and sing,
Asking you withhold your sting.²

D2: We come from East and West,
North and South, to be together here.

Let us take three breaths...

Together with the Earth beneath us.
Together with the Sky above us.
Together with the Sea about us.

(Ring the bell)

ALL: UNITY CHANT

We are one with the Mother
We are one with the Earth
We are one with each other
By our lives, by our birth³

HONORING THE EARTH MOTHER - All kneel and touch the earth
(Offering of cornmeal or other grain or granola)

D1: We honor the Earth Mother, without whom nothing exists.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

D1 - On this, the shortest day, the longest night of the year, we celebrate the Winter Solstice and welcome back the sun.

From the darkness is born the light,

From the void, life emerges...

The darkest night of the year is at the threshold,

Open now the door, and honor the Darkness.

(Light the black candle. Step back and give silent honor to the Holly King, the ruler of the dark of the year.)

² Linda Sager Kazalski, 2016

³ Rev. Jeffrey Wyndham (Ian Corrigan)

RECREATING THE COSMOS

ALL: The waters support and surround us.
The land extends about us.
The sky stretches above us.
And at the center burns a living flame.
Let us pray with a good fire.
May all the Kindred bless us.
May our worship be true.
May our actions be just.
May our love be pure.
Blessings and honor and worship to the holy ones.⁴

OPENING THE GATE(S)

D1: We stand at the shore and watch the mists close in
Waves rolling over and over, where shore meets ocean
Where sea and sky do meet the land, we call to you, Manannan.⁵
A drum beat begins and rattles are used to fill the sound. All begin to chant, over and over:

ALL - Open the Gates. Open the Gates. Open the Gates...

When the chants, drums and rattles are well established,

Gatekeeper (over the chanting): Manannan! Gatekeeper! Open the ways for us. We walk your holy ways; we walk the Sacred Road. Share your power with us; ward us as we walk in safety. Manannan, accept our sacrifice!

D2 makes an offering of oil to the fire. The chanting, drums and rattles continue. They increase in speed and volume. Gatekeeper holds a staff or spear, pointing the top of it at the top of the World Tree. Gatekeeper begins to spin. When Gatekeeper's staff or spear first passes the Fire, Gatekeeper says:

Let the Fire open as a Gate!

⁴ Land, Sea & Sky Text by Ceisiwr Serith via www.adf.org

⁵ Hearth Fire Grove Samhain via www.adf.org

Gatekeeper continues spinning at least one full revolution.

As Gatekeeper's staff or spear passes over the Well, Gatekeeper says:

Let the Well open as a Gate!

Gatekeeper continues spinning at least one full revolution. As

Gatekeeper's staff or spear passes by the Tree, Gatekeeper says:

Let the Tree connect the Worlds!

There is a loud drum roll ending in a strong stroke. Everything stops.

Gatekeeper stops spinning, holds both hands and staff or spear out and grounds it firmly.

Gatekeeper: Let the Gates be open!

ALL: shout: Let the Gates be open!⁶

INVOCATIONS

D1 – Ancestors of blood and spirit, whose children we are, I invite you to join in this celebration of the Solstice. Accept this offering given in hospitality and in love. Blessed Ancestors – Hail and welcome!

Raise the bread and butter in offering and give the offerings to the fire

D2 – Spirits of the Land, Sea and Sky, spirits of this place, here long before man, I invite you to join this celebration of the Solstice. Accept this offering given in hospitality and in love. Land spirits – Hail and welcome!

Raise the honey and herbs in offering and give the offerings to the fire

D1 – Shining ones, First Children of the Mother, I invite you to join this celebration of the Solstice. Accept this offering given in hospitality and in love. Shining Ones – Hail and welcome!

Raise the wine/ale/mead in offering and give the offering to the fire

**D2 - He who is known as Maonis, the Divine Child,
He who is known as Belinus, The Great Lord of Divine Fire,
He who is known as Aengus Òg, Son of the Young.
Known are you by many names by many peoples,
Yet always the same in your countenance.**

⁶ <https://www.adf.org/rituals/celtic/midsummer/ssgmidsummer.html>

**'O Shining, Radiant, Lovely One,
We behold your rebirth this day
In awe and reverence.
We make offering to you of gold,
The shining tear of the sun.**

Eldest man present makes the offering of gold to the Cauldron.

**We make offering to you of the sacred Holly,
The ever green and ever growing.**

Eldest man present makes the offering of holly to the World Tree.

**We make offering to you of oil and incense,
So your flame may grow in strength and brilliance.**

Eldest man present makes the offering of oil to the Sacred Fire.

**Beloved, newborn son of the Great Mother,
Accept our worship and our praise,
And grant us your blessings.**

**D1: She who is known as the Madron, the Great Mother,
She who is known as Cerridwen, the Keeper of the Cauldron,
She who is known as the Cailleach, the Veiled Crone of Stark Winter.
Known are you by many names by many peoples,
Yet always the same in your countenance.
'O Shadowy, Hidden, Haggard one,
We behold your great mystery this day,
In awe and reverence.
We make offering to you of hazelnuts,
The kernel of Knowledge from your sacred tree.**

Eldest woman present makes the offering of hazelnuts to the Cauldron.

We make offering to you of pork, the flesh of your sacred sow.

Eldest woman present makes the offering of pork to the World Tree.

**We make offering to you of Apples,
The fruit of the tree of the Blessed Isle of Death and Rebirth.**

Eldest woman present makes the offering of apple to the Sacred Fire

**Great, Mysterious, Veiled One,
Accept our worship and our praise,
And grant us your blessings.⁷**

ALL: PRAYER OF SACRIFICE

Let our voices arise on the Fire
Let our voices resound in the Deep
May the spirits accept what we offer,
As we honor the old ways we keep.⁸

SEER: TAKING THE OMENS

D1: A sacred grove and all is hallowed,
Gifts, given and received,
The Seer's eye turns shadowed,
The will of the Gods revealed.

The seer interprets the omens, leading the company to contemplate the things they would ask of the powers, especially as suggested by omen.

Have our offerings been accepted?
What do the Powers offer us in return?
What further needs do the Powers have of us?⁹

I continue to refer to Rev. Skip Ellison's excellent book, "Ogham, The Sacred Language of the Druids," and my own methodology as described in a previous article. I have also been doing some exploratory writing based in part on my reading, and personal gnosis. At some point in the future I will get my thoughts organized and post them. On to the augury for Yule!

In response to the question, "Do the Gods accept our offering?" the answer was North (yes), with the few "Gort" or Ivy as amplification. This was an interesting modifier, Gort brings thoughts of tenacity and binding, I interpret this to mean that the several changes we have made, in our organization for the ritual, in the wording, and the simplification of the ritual are pleasing to the Gods and Goddesses.

In response to the question, "What do the Powers offer us in return?" I drew Fearn, the Alder. This sign represents Guidance, confidence, a shield, and sage advice. This doesn't take a lot of thought, the gods offer their guidance and protection, and their confidence that we will continue to both serve them and ask their assistance.

⁷ <https://www.adf.org/rituals/celtic/yule/wsolstice.html>

⁸ Words: Anthony R. Thompson, music: Ian Corrigan via www.adf.org

⁹ Adapted from Anthony R. Thompson via www.adf.org

In response to the question, "What further needs do the Powers have of us?" I drew Munin (Ellison uses the spelling Muin), the Vine. Unity, work completion, and festivity are all associated with Munin. The gods and goddesses want us to come together and do the work that needs to be done, and then when that work is done to celebrate our accomplishments.

This is a very positive reading, appropriate for one of the most positive influences in my life. A Joyous Yule to everyone, and thank you all for letting me be a part of this family, I am so excited to continue this journey and see where it takes us.¹⁰

CALLING FOR THE BLESSINGS

D1: As in the ways of old
A gift is given freely
As in the ways of old
A gift is given in return.

(The pitchers are lifted saluting the fire, well and tree.)

HALLOWING THE BLESSING

D2: Bright the flow of giving turns, we come before you.
Please remember us now and grant us the Waters.

All: Grant us the Waters.

D2: The flame of wisdom lights this cup stirring our lives.
We ask again: please grant us the Waters.

All: Grant us the Waters.

D2: Thrice we call, as in days of old,
As we've opened our hearts, so grant us the waters!

All: Grant us the Waters.

D1: AFFIRMATION OF THE BLESSING

Accepting the Gifts surrounding us,
Absorb and swirl blessings so sweet
We gladly partake of these waters before us.
These are the waters of life!¹¹

¹⁰ Wesley Jolly, December 18, 2016

¹¹ Chant for the Blessing Cup by ZL Bennett

ALL: Pour the waters, raise the cup.
Drink your share of wisdom deep.
Strength and joy now fill us up.
As the elder ways we keep.¹²

(Pass the cup or horn around for all to share.)

MIDWINTER OBSERVATION

D1 - Since the beginning of time, humans have gathered in this season to celebrate the turning of the year and the rebirth of the Sun. We observe the Winter Solstice: the longest and darkest of nights. At Midwinter, with the Wild Hunt at its peak, a spark of light is born which brings us the promise of Spring: of light and heat, growth and fruitfulness. The breath of nature is suspended: all living things await the transformation of the Dark King into the King of Light.

D2 - Midwinter is a time to look forward to what will come and what we will achieve. On this longest night, a spark of hope flares: the sacred fire, the light of all the world. We will watch for the coming of dawn, when the Great Mother gives birth to the Sun, beginning the yearly cycle again, bringing the promise of Spring and the life of Summer.

(Extinguishes the Black candle)

D1-(First Candle) I remember the Sun at Summer Solstice, at the height of your power, when days are at their longest. High on the northern horizon and your rays are at the strongest. You bring the summer's warmth and make the crops grow tall and full. Having reached your heights, you begin your journey southward and the days begin to grow shorter.

(Extinguish the candle.)

Remember the warm weather, fresh vegetables and berries and the long days of summer.

D2-(Second Candle) I remember the Sun at Lughnasadh: First Harvest, when the days are still long. You rise on the northeastern horizon, and your strong rays ripen the grain in the fields. August heat is oppressive: if you did not relinquish your hold the Earth would burn dry. So continue your journey southward and the days grow shorter.

¹² Rev. Jeffrey Wyndham (Ian Corrigan) via www.adf.org

(Extinguish the candle.)

Remember the hot days when the joy in Summer turned into hopes for Fall, and the smell of new-mown hay.

D1-(Third Candle) I remember the Sun at the Autumn Equinox, when day and night are equal. Rising from due east, your rays ripen the fruits on the trees. The heat has subsided now and leaves begin to turn. You continue your journey declining, rising lower on the horizon with each passing day.

(Extinguish the candle.)

Remember the cooler days of Fall, the fresh apples and nuts.

D2-(Fourth Candle) I remember the Sun at Samhain: the Final Harvest. Rising low on the southeastern horizon, night has overtaken the day. The crops are in, the stock has gone to sale and the air grows cold. Your rays grow weaker. Soon the end shall come, as it comes for all.

(D1 Make sure you have the lighter in hand and extinguish the candle.)

Remember feasts of the final harvest as days are colder and nights longer. Remember the coldest days are to come.

D1 - The solar year has run its course and completed its cycle. So have some of our habits or traits completed their cycles and outlived their usefulness. This is a time to shed that which is no longer beneficial. Take a few moments now to consider things you would leave behind as you go into the coming year. *(pause)*

As the old year fades, so will these old ways will fade into memory.

ALL: May it be so!

D2 - What do you want to do differently in the future? Think carefully, then say to yourself what you will do. Remember the land spirits, your ancestors, and the Gods are your witnesses - do not promise what you will not do. *(Pause)*

As the sun grows, so shall these intentions.

ALL: May it be so!

D1 - My body is earth. Taste the breath of death.

(D2 offer salt to all)

D1 - In the beginning we came from the darkness of the womb. Within us, we carry that fertile darkness. There we hold the seeds of hopes and dreams of the future. We shield these tender roots until they are strong enough to come forth in the light. Nurture them for they will grow with you and bloom in the coming year. As the sun strengthens, so will new ways. Taste the sweetness of life.

(D2 offer sugar to all)

Your future is yours to write!

D1- When the time feels right, light the Green pillar candle.

D1 - This is the Sun at the Winter Solstice. You rise on the southern horizon, low and faint, bringing with you the promise of Spring and rebirth. You will grow strong and bright. The days will lengthen once again. As the Sun is reborn, so too are my hopes and dreams. Feel the Sun filling you with warmth and light.

ALL: LITANY FOR PEACE

**We honor the fallen,
Those who chose to fight,
And those who had no choice,
Those whose fate it was to die in conflict.
We honor and remember them.**

(pause to honor and remember those who have died in conflict.)

We stand in the web of life, each of us connected to each other.

Our thoughts and deeds ripple outwards across that web.

(pause to reach out & feel our connections to each other & the web of life)

**Today we stand for peace,
today we act for peace.**

Let each of us be a channel for peace.

Peace in our hearts.

Peace in our lives.

Peace in the world.¹³

¹³ Obod Litany for Peace

ALL: PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO SERVE

**Those who serve, we honor you
You who stand on the wall to protect us from harm
You who bind and tend us when we are ill or injured
You who make up the line between order and chaos
You who brave the very fury of the elements
To save and protect us
We honor you!
Gods and Goddesses, we ask your blessings for these
Warriors and guardians
Ancient and powerful dead,
We ask that you watch over and keep them safe
Spirits of nature, creatures of air, fire, earth and water,
Support and sustain them
Outwellers, grant them respite,
Place no obstacles in their path
We pray that the Fire might warm you,
The Waters refresh you, and
The Tree shield and protect you, today and forever.¹⁴**

D1: Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the infinite peace to you.¹⁵

D2: THANKING THE BEINGS

**We have called upon the Kindred and they have answered!
With joy in our hearts we carry their magic into our lives and work.
Each time we offer to the powers they become stronger.
As we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who given aid.
Brighid ... (ALL) We thank you
Manannan Mac Lir . . . (ALL) We thank you**

¹⁴ Wesley Jolly, 2016

¹⁵ Gaelic inscription

Shining Ones . . . (ALL) We thank you
Nature Spirits of Land, Sea and Sky . . . (ALL) We thank you
Ancestors and Mighty Dead . . . (ALL) We thank you
Maonis, Belinus, Aengus Òg. . . (ALL) We thank you
Madron, Cerridwen, Cailleach ... (ALL) We thank you

D1: CLOSING THE GATE(S)

Now by the Keeper of the Gates, we end what we began.

Let the Fire be flame, (*gesture to Fire*)

Let the Well be water, (*gesture to Well*)

Let the Tree be a tree, (*gesture to Tree*)

Let all be as it was before.

Let the Gates be closed!

All: Let the Gates be closed!

*D2: THANKING THE EARTH MOTHER (*pour out ritual remains onto the earth*)*

Earth Mother, we thank you for your fertility and return this, as we will return to you one day.

ALL: CLOSING THE RITE

And now our rite is at an end,

Again we part our ways

May truth and honor be your friend

And lucky be your days

I'll hold you in my heart,

I'll hold you in my mind,

And though our branches grow apart,

Our roots are intertwined.