

Lughnasadh 2005

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: *Tá muid anseo leis na Déithe a adhradh.* (Tah mweed un-show lesh nah Day-hi uh ow-ruh)

All: *We are here to honor the gods.*

DQ: *The days are beginning to shorten, and our shadows are beginning to run longer. The seeds we've sown are beginning to bear fruit as 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 in the coming seasons of harvest.*

Honoring the Earth Mother

KB honors the Earth Mother, source of all life:

O Earth Mother, our lives are nursed from your bounty.

You are the food that nourishes us, the wealth that enriches us, even the very ground we walk on.

O great mother, all joy and prosperity comes from you, and it is you who sustains us.

Earth Mother, we honor you now to thank you for the bounty you bestow upon us.

All sing **Blossom Lifter** (1x):

Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter

Bloom with the wheat,

Bloom with the rye

Bloom with barley

And bloom with all grains

Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter

Bless what we eat,

Bless what we drink,

Bless what we harrow,

And bless what we sow

Earth Mother, Blossom Lifter

With all these things, let us rejoice

We give to you, and you give to us

KB makes an offering of corn meal on the ground 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

Fire

KB: *O sacred fire that consumes and transforms,
True and holy light of the Shining Ones,
Be blessed with our offering! O sacrificed and sacrificer,
Let holy flame warm our spirits and our lives.*

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.

Well

BC: *O sacred waters that flow and swirl beneath all being,
Well of ancient wisdom, keeper of deep riches,
Be blessed with our offering! O great source of all,
Let us know the elder depths within ourselves.*

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

BC: *In the depths flow the waters of wisdom.
Sacred waters flow within us.*

All: *Sacred waters, flow within us.*

BC asperges the site and the folk with a branch and water from the Well.

Tree

DQ: *O sacred pillar, boundary of all worlds,
Stand at the center of the sky,
Stand at the center of the sea,
Stand at the center of the land on which we dwell.
Let us be deepened in your depths,
Raised to your heights,
And strengthened in your strength.*

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

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

All: *Sacred tree, grow within us.*

The consecration of the space 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: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* (“bee shay ow-lee”)

AT: *By the cleansing of water and fire, let all ill turn away from me and mine.*

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!*

Opening the Gates Between the Worlds

AT calls to Manannan, god of the sea and the misty ways leading to the Otherworld:

AT: *Oh Manannan, powerful son of the sea, holder of the magics of the crane bag, we ask you to hear our call. Oh Lord of the Otherworld, bearer of the silvered apple branch, join with us this day so that you may guide us safely in our workings. Mist-shrouded rider of the maned waves, accept our offering and open the gates between our realm and yours.*

AT makes an offering of apple to Manannan and says: *Manannan, accept our offering!*

All: *Manannan, accept our offering!*

All: *Gatekeeper open the portals,
Between the gods and mortals,
Power freely flows,
As our magic grows (3x)*

AT: *Let the fire open as a gate, let the well open as a gate, and let the tree connect all the worlds as Manannan walks with us in all ways. Osclaítear na geataí!* (os-kluh-TEER na GA-thay)

All: *Let the gates be opened!*

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 **Brighid**, goddess of bards, healers, and smiths:

KB: *Bright Brighid, Daughter of the Daghdha, Flame of Inspiration,
Maker of metal, Maker of good health, Maker of song,
With you as our mother we need fear no sickness,
With you as our mother we need fear no dull swords,
With you as our mother we need fear no empty words.
Our tribe is triple-blessed, O shining light of the hearth,
and we your children ask you to alight in our hearts,
Alight in our heads, and alight in our voices,
That we may give praise to the gods with good skill.*

All sing (3x):

Birghita, Birghita, goddess of the flame (BUR-gee-ta)
Birghita, Birghita, call her by name
Awaken the flame within our beings
Awaken the sacred song within our beings

KB makes an offering of oil in the Fire to Brighid and says: *Brighid, accept our offering.*

All: *Brighid, accept our offering!*

Honoring and Inviting the Three Kindreds

Ancestors

DQ: *Hear us, Old Ones, our ancestors and kin,
You whose blood flows in our veins.
From you we spring and with you we will grow in health.
Ancestors, remember us as we remember you.*

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*

Nature Spirits

KB: *Hear us, Spirits of the Land,
You of stone and stream, of beast and herb and tree.
From you we learn to live in harmony with our world, and ourselves.
Nature spirits, aid us as we aid you.*

KB makes an offering of bird seed to 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.*

Gods

BC: *Hear us, Shining Ones of eld, you who uphold the worlds.
You who guide us and protect us, O patrons and matrons,
In you we grow in wisdom, strength, and purity.
Honor us as we honor you.*

BC 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: *We are here to welcome in the first harvest, to give thanks to the Earth and the Kindreds that we have survived and prospered to see the fruits of our efforts over the past year. It is also a time to begin contemplating the coming autumn and the preparations that must be made for winter. We will remember what the Kindreds have blessed us with for our efforts, and pray that they will guide us and aid us through the winter ahead, that we may begin another planting in the year to come.*

Honoring Lugh Samildanach

AT: *Lugh, the Victorious,
We make our Grove under your shield,
O Lugh of the White Horse
And the Brilliant Blades.
You of the Perfect Form,
Child of Light and Shadow,
Slayer of Balor, purger of the unnatural, be in our midst.
Accept this ale in welcome
Lugh, Champion, King of All
(ale poured)
We make our working in the joy of the Samildanach ("sow-eel-dahna")
The Clever One, the Sure Hand
The Bard and the Smith.
May we be at peace
Under the hand of the Chieftain of Danu,
Taking joy in the protection
Of the master of all crafts at once
We offer this bread,
That the harvest may flourish
by the hand of the ploughman.
(bread offered)
By the Sacred Three of Glory, and By the Spear and by the Raven
Hear now our call
Come, we pray, among your folk
O Lugh the Victorious
Our Light and our Guide
O Lugh the Victorious
Our Champion and Protector
O Lugh the Victorious
Our Savior and Healer
Accept this offering of fruit
And be present in your strength.
(fruit offered)*

AT: *Lugh, accept our offering!*

All: *Lugh, accept our offering!*

Honoring Fliodhas

KB: *Fliodhas, the Changer,
We make our Grove under the branches of your wood,
O Fliodhas of the Hornless One
And the Wild Cattle.*

(fleesh)

*You of the Softest Hair,
Lover of Fearghus mac Roich,
Mother of Kings, Protector of Creatures, be in our midst.
Accept this milk in welcome
Fliodhas, Huntress, Milk-Queen*

(fuhr-guhs mac roy)

(milk offered)

*We make our working in the joy of the Foltchaoín
The Quick One, the Green-Skinned
The Consort and the Satisfier.*

(FAULT-heen)

*May we be at peace
Under the hand of the Woman of the Woods,
Taking joy in the protection
Of the guardian of all beasts tame and wild
We offer these flowers,
That great nature may flourish
by the turning of the seasons.*

(flowers offered)

*By the Nourishment of Three Hundred,
and By the Cattle,
and By the Deer,
Hear now our call*

Come, we pray, among your folk

O Fliodhas the Wild

Our Huntress and Protector

O Fliodhas the Wild

Our Cattle-Maiden and Beast-Guardian,

O Fliodhas the Wild

Our Lady and Provider

Accept this offering of grain

And be present in your strength.

(grain offered)

KB: *Fliodhas, accept our offering!*

All: *Fliodhas, accept our offering!*

Offerings to the Kindreds and Spirits

KB: *Have the Folk brought praise?*

All: *They have.*

KB: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!*

(“bee shay ow-lee”)

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

AT: *As further praise for the Shining Ones, especially for Lugh and his mother Tailtiu, let us offer joy and mirth by playing Lughnasadh games!*

[Lughnasadh games played]

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, **DQ** distributes individual blessing cups and 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.*

When the omen is taken and the cups are distributed, the Diviner reveals the omen to the folk.

Receiving the Blessings of the Gods and Spirits

DQ: *Children of earth, we call for the blessing of the Ancient Ones.
Together we cry...*

All: *Shining Ones, give us the waters!*

DQ: *We join our hearts, that each of us be blessed. Together we call...*

All: *Shining Ones, give us the waters!*

DQ: *And as we are blessed, let all the worlds be blessed.
Together we pray...*

All: *Shining Ones, give us the waters!*

DQ pours water from the Well into the blessing cup and says:
We draw water from the well of wisdom, pouring the ale of inspiration.

DQ holds the blessing cup aloft and says:

O Mighty, Noble and Shining Ones, we have given to you, and now we ask you to bless us in turn, as a gift calls for a gift. Hallow these waters, O holy powers. Grant us the blessing we seek. Let the wisdom, love and power of the Gods, Dead and Sidhe flow in this cup of Blessing. Seo iad uisci na beatha! (“shee ahd ishka nah bah-hah”)

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: *We have called upon the Kindreds and they have answered us! With joy in our hearts let us carry the magic from our sacred grove into our lives and work. Each time we offer to the powers they become stronger and more aware of our needs and worship. So as we prepare to depart let us give thanks to those who have aided us.*

KB: *Fliodhas, Go raibh maith agait!* ("gora mah-agit", singular)
All: *Go raibh maith agait!*

AT: *Lugh, Go raibh maith agait!*
All: *Go raibh maith agait!*

BC: *Gods and Goddesses, Go raibh maith agaibh* ("gora mah-ageev", plural)
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

KB: *Nature Spirits, Go raibh maith agaibh!*
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

DQ: *Ancestors, Go raibh maith agaibh!*
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

AT: *Manannan mac Lir, Go raibh maith agait!*
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

KB: *Brigid, Go raibh maith agait!*
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

KB: *Aine, go raibh maith agait.* ("AN-ya")
All: *Go raibh maith agaibh!*

Closing the Gates and Ending the Rite

BC: *Now by the keeper of the gates and by our magic we end what we began.*
Let the Fire be flame, (gesture to Fire)
Let the Well be water, (gesture to Well)
Let all be as it was before.
Dúntar na geataí! (DUN-tar na GAH-thay)

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.*
Bíodh sé amhlaidh!

All: *Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* (“bee shay ow-lee”)

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

Materials List

Branch from local area for asperging, dressing the tree, etc. – Anyone
“Tree” (pole-like object) – unnecessary, using tree in ritual area

Water bottles for the Well, for drinking, and putting out fire – All
Individual blessing cups (will also have paper cups) – put near blessing cup before ritual!
Individual praise offerings – All

Fire wood and matches or other lighting implement – Dan (and/or Bonnie)
Bird or other seed for nature spirits – Dan (and/or Kristin)
Incense, charcoal & censer (if nec.) – Dan
Outdweller appeasement (some form of soda) – Dan
Bread for ancestors – Dan

Apples – Bonnie
Bocce – Bonnie

“Well” – Anthony
Blessing cup – Anthony
Musical signal maker – Anthony (chimes)
Runes for omen – Anthony
Corn meal for Earth Mother – Anthony
Silver-like object for well – Anthony (shiny quarters)
Oil for offerings (lots) – Anthony
Bowl to hold oil for offerings – Anthony
Ladles (2) – Anthony (one for the Well, one for offering oil)
Paper towels to wipe oil bowl down – Anthony
Spade for digging offering hole – Anthony
Small cups for individual blessing cups – Anthony
Bottle opener – Anthony
Apple for Manannan - Anthony
Ale, bread, and fruit for Lugh – Anthony
Highlighter (for people re: their ritual parts) – Anthony
Pamphlets for guests – Anthony

Milk, flowers, and grain for Fliodhas – Kristin
Horseshoes – Kristin

Pre-Ritual Setup

Dig or uncover the offering shaft, if necessary.

Gather wood/kindling for the Fire, if necessary.

The Tree should be set up, the Well filled with water, and the Fire lit.

If using charcoal incense, the charcoal should be put in the censer and lit, incense made ready.

Blessing cup, ladle, branch, and “silver” object should all be near Well. Individual blessing cups should also be near the center, but don’t need to be near the Well (they’ll be redistributed in rite).

Offerings should be gathered centrally, folks should note location of their offerings:

- Earth Mother, Gatekeeper, Bardic Inspiration, Outdwellers
- Kindred offerings – ancestors, nature spirits, gods
- Key offerings – deity(ies) of the occasion
- Individual praise offerings

Pre-ritual briefing for new folks:

- Outline the rite, esp. individual praise offerings, “circles”, etc.
- Teach/review songs and chants
- Review foreign language bits’ pronunciation
- Review order of processional
- Answer any questions