

Beltane Rite
Sassafras Grove, ADF, Pittsburgh PA
Valley Heights Grove, South Park
Saturday, May 5, 2007; 3:30 pm

Primary Liturgist: Emerald

Liturgy Team: Emerald, Diana, Earrach, Janet, Sarina

Sacrificers: Deana, Onyx, Lassair

Event Operations Director: Diana

Text, Chants, and Songs not otherwise credited are by Diane Lynn "Emerald" Vaughn.

BEGINNING THE RITE & ESTABLISHING THE GROUPMIND: FIRST TIER

*Clear-cut Beginning (Consecration of Time)

*The Nine Knells: **Earrach (horn) and Drummers on site**

*Opening Prayer: **Emerald**

Emerald

Paresmen timesonta tas theas kai tous theous. We are here to honor the Blessed Ones.

*The Consecration of Space and of Participants

*Procession: "Center of the World"

Chorus:

*The Waters flow around us
The Fires burn within us
Standing tall we gather at the center of the World
Upon the Earth our Mother
We worship here together
All as One we gather at the center of the World*

*Upon the Land, within the Sea, and soaring through the Sky
The Spirits of this World our home with whom we all ally
We come to offer friendship to the beings of this place
In harmony we dance with them within the sacred space*

Chorus

*The ancient ones of hearth and kin who lived in elder days
Their wisdom, lore and memory inspire all our ways
To Grandmothers and Grandfathers, all our love we bring
In fellowship we honor them together as we sing*

Chorus

*All the Gods and Goddesses of the Sky and Earth
Warriors, healers, smiths and bards; lords of death and birth
We offer to the Shining Ones devotion, love and praise*

In one voice we pray to them with open hearts ablaze

Chorus

*As it once was done of old, and as we do it now
And as it will continue in the future we avow
The separate paths we walk alone now in this place converge
To do the work we meet as one, our hearts and minds we merge*

Chorus

***Purification of the Participants: Blessers Chosen On Site**

Sea (wash hands),

Land (put hands on Earrach's labyrinth rock),

Sky (incense)

People will process into the ritual space carrying maypole and ribbons, flower garlands, and offerings. When they arrive, they will take their places around the circle and put down their things. Two sets of Blessers will come around to do the purifications, each followed by a person bearing a basket of barley. After each person is blessed, he or she takes a handful of barley from a basket.

***Warding of the Site / Acknowledgment of the Outsiders: Emerald & congregation**

Emerald

Hekas! Hekas! Esti bebeloi!

All

Begone profane ones!

Everyone throws their barley at the altar to consecrate the altar and to protect the fire from evil spirits.

***Bardic patron - Apollon and the Muses: Maria**

*Apollon, Bright One, lord of music and song
Hear our call!*

*Let you lyre lead the muses to our rite
That all may be inspired by their blessings*

Gentle Muses hear us

Come dancing to our circle

Kalliope stir our hearts

Kleio bring us the magic of our history

Ourania teach us the mysteries of the universe

Thaleia who makes us laugh

Melpomene who makes us weep

Polyhymnia who sings sweet praise to the gods

Erato who stirs our blood

Euterpe who touches our minds

Terpsikhore who leads in song and dance

*Bright Lord, Lovely Ladies, hear us
Inspire us, teach us how to dance in the circle of Life!*
(Maria Stoy)

Song: "Sing Through My Voice"

*Sing through my voice
Play through my hands
Wake the flame within me*
(Abbie Spinner, new words by Maria Stoy)

*Earth Mother (Gaia): **Earrach**

Earrach

*Divine earth, mother of men and of the blessed gods,
you nourish all, you give all, you bring all to fruition, and you destroy all.
When the season is fair you are heavy with fruit and growing blossoms;
and, o multiform maiden, you are the seat of the immortal cosmos,
and in the pains of labour you bring forth fruit of all kinds.
Eternal, reverend, deep-bosomed, and blessed,
you delight in the sweet breath of grass, o goddess bedecked with flowers.
yours is the joy of the rain, and round you the intricate realm of the stars
revolves in endless and awesome flow.
But, o blessed goddess, may you multiply the gladsome fruits
and, together with the beautiful seasons, grant us favour.
Earth Mother, we honour you!*
(Orphic Hymn #26 to Earth: Apostolos N. Athanassakis, trans.)

All touch or kiss the ground.

Song: "Earth Mother, We Honor Your Body"

*Earth Mother, we honor your body,
Earth Mother, we honor your bones,
Earth Mother, we sing to your spirit,
Earth Mother, we sing to your stones.*
(Author unknown)

*Acknowledging Hestia: **Sarina**

Earrach will have already kindled the Hestia fire on the fire altar atop a pillar.

Sarina

*Queen Hestia, daughter of mighty Kronos,
Mistress of ever burning and peerless fire, you dwell in the house's center.
May you hallow the initiates of this rite.
You are the home of the blessed gods, and men's mighty buttress,
Eternal, many-shaped, beloved, and grass-yellow.
Smile, O blessed one, and kindly accept this offering,*

Wafting upon us prosperity and gentle-handed health.
For worshipping at a common hearth, we become one tribe, one people, one Grove.
Hestia, accept our offering!
(Orphic Hymn #84 to Hestia: Apostolos N. Athanassakis, trans. (Common hearth phrasing by Ceisier Serith))

*Remembering Brighid (As Matron of Our Grove): **Janet**

Janet

*I light this candle in honor of Brighid
The Matron of Sassafras Grove
Through the years you have been midwife
To many changes and new beginnings within our grove.
You foster our hope through good times and hard,
Through challenge and victories
You are the source of all our work
The voice in our song
The strength of our arm
The hand that heals discord
The inspiration of all we create
Lady of the Hearth Fire
Lady of the Sacred Wells
Lady of our grove
Remember us as we remember you.*
(Maria Stoy)

*Centering, Grounding, Merging: **Onyx**

Song: “Rooted Deep”

*Rooted deep within the well
Branches reaching to the sun
Leaves are touching, roots entwined
We are a Grove, We are one.*
(Music trad., Words Diane Lynn “Emerald” Vaughn)

*Declaration of Intention & Historical Precedent: **Emerald**

Emerald

Beltane is the point on the wheel of the year where everything is in bloom. It is a step on the journey from the planting we did at Spring Equinox to the harvest we will enjoy in the fall. Looking the Wheel of the Year in terms of Earrach's model of the Season of Life, we are now at the point of courtship. As the flowers bloom, they must be fertilized for the plant to bear fruit. So too must we as human beings be fertilized in order to enjoy abundance in our own lives. These themes can be quite literal—a time for us to work toward love and physical fertility, to work for fertility and fecundity of gardens, field, and flock, or to celebrate the union that created our own lives. On a more esoteric level, we are fertilizing ourselves through our work so that the seeds we planted within ourselves at Spring Equinox come to fruition. We call to Aphrodite as the goddess of love and sex and procreation to bestow her blessings upon us as we do

this work. Beltane is also a time to celebrate the true height of Spring in our climate, and Aphrodite presides over our festivities as we bedeck ourselves with flowers and have a good time!

RECREATING THE COSMOS & PRELIMINARY POWER RAISING: SECOND TIER

*Creating the Vertical Axis

*Acknowledging the Axis Mundi and The Sacred Center: **Emerald**

Emerald

I place this stone as the Omphalos, the naval of the world, the sacred center of all the Cosmos. (Pour libation over stone). Like the sacred stone at Delphi, let this stone be the place where Zeus's eagles did meet to find the center of the world. Let this stone mark the grave of the Pythian serpent, slain by Delian Apollon. Through this sacred center, let the World Tree grow, reaching through the sky to embrace the Sacred Fires above, and plunging deep within the earth to touch the Sacred Waters below.

*Acknowledging Fire, Well, and Tree – Song “Fire, Bright Fire”

Song will be done as a call and response as Sacrificers make offerings and decant waters for grail. “Singers” denote **Sarina, Maria, Emerald, Dae, Earrach**, and any other Grove Members who want to take part.

All: *Fire, bright fire*

Singers: *Gate to the Shining Ones*

All: *Fire, bright Fire*

Singers: *Our passage to the Sky*

All: *Fire, bright Fire*

Singers: *Warmth of our Community*

All: *Spark of Life, We honor you now*

All: *Well, deep Well*

Singers: *Gate to the Underworld*

All: *Well, deep Well*

Singers: *Our passage to the Sea*

All: *Well, deep Well*

Singers: *Wisdom of the Ancestors*

All: *Waters of Life, We honor you now*

All: *Tree, great Tree*

Singers: *Gate that reaches everywhere*

All: *Tree, great Tree*

Singers: *With you we share the Land*

All: *Tree, great Tree*

Singers: *Our passage to the Otherworld*

All: *Source of Life, We honor you now*

(Words and music by Pandora)

*Creation Myth: **Lassair**

Emerald

Who are we? From whence do we come? What is the story of our people?

Lassair

Not hard..

*A great misty cloud had gathered together in the void
Swirling and spiraling; spiraling and swirling
Drawing ever-in upon itself.
At its center a radiance shone forth
And drove outward the surrounding cloud
Gathering the waters together here below.
And so it was that the stuff of creation drew apart
To form the Fire Above
And the Waters Below.
The Solar Fire warmed the Cauldron of Creation
And stroked upon its waters with thunderbolts
And begat upon it Life.
And the Life begat the Creatures
And the Creatures begat the Ancestors
And the Ancestors begat Us; the Living People.
Upright, like you, Great Tree
We bear upon us the mark of Creation
Then, now, and for all time.
Rooted in the ancestral waters of the World Below,
Spanning this Middle-World of form
And reaching ever-upward to embrace the Fire Above.*

*Sacred Tree, grow within us!
The Well, the Fire, the Sacred Tree
Flow and flame and grow in me !*

(Earrach of Pittsburgh)

*Calling the Gatekeeper – Khloris: **Diana**

Diana will do a preliminary invocation as the members of the congregation take up their garlands. As the point is for everyone to create the Gateway together, each person should be attached to one of the garlands. The size of each group will depend on number of people who attend and number of garlands we are able to get made.

*Opening the Ways: **Diana & Congregation (Grove Helpers: Deana, Emerald, Onyx, Lassair, Vicki, Earrach)**

The bower will be setup in the North East quadrant of the circle and covered with pastel colored tulle. Each group of garland bearers will come forward one at a time in an orderly fashion. **Earrach and Vicki** will herd. **Emerald and Deana** will asperge the garlands with water and cense with incense. The garland bearers will then turn their garlands over to Lassair and Onyx who will drape them on the bower. **Diana** will invoke a different aspect of Khloris as each garland is put on.

*Filling Out The Cosmic Picture: The Kindred Invocation Triad

The Kindreds will be called with a song by the **congregation. Sacrificers (Lassair, Onyx, Deana)** make offering at each Kindred shrine during the songs.

***Nature Spirits – Song “Spirits of Nature”**

*Spirits of Nature, we call you
Earth & Sky and Wind & Rain
Spirits of Nature, we call you
To remember us again*

Chorus:

*We-ee call to you
Those we touch and those we dream
We-ee call to you
To be heard and to be seen*

*Spirits of Nature we call you
River, lake and sacred spring
Spirits of Nature we call you
From our hearts to you we sing*

*Spirits of Nature we call you
Every time we look around
Spirits of Nature we call you
By this promise we are bound*

(Words and Music by Diana Paar)

Lassair

Nature Spirits, All Hail and Welcome! (All repeat)

***Ancestors—Song “Mothers and Fathers of Old”**

*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 (x3)*

(Words and music by Sable)

Onyx

Ancestors, All Hail and Welcome! (All repeat)

***Deities—Song “Hail all the Gods (with extra words)”**

*Hail all the Gods,
Hail all the Goddesses,
Hail all the Holy Ones,
We dwell together.*

*Powers of the Sky
Powers of the Underworld
Powers of the Sacred Earth
We dwell together*

*Hail all the Gods,
Hail all the Goddesses,
Hail all the Gods and Goddesses (x 3)*

(Words: First verse, Trad.; Second verse, Maria Stoy & Diane Lynn "Emerald" Vaughn; Bridge section, Gwynne Green. Music: Paul Maurice, Sean Miller, Gail Williams.)

Deana

Deities, All Hail and Welcome! (All repeat)

INVOCATION TO APHRODITE, PRAISE OFFERINGS AND OMEN THIRD (TOP) TIER

*Call to Aphrodite: **Earrach, Emerald, Janet, Sarnia, Daimon** and the Congregation

Emerald says a short introduction and begins the chant.

We will all then take up the chant,: *Aphrodite, Come to us, come to us.*

Aphrodite cult statue will be hidden outside the ritual space. **Two hot guys of Emerald's choosing** will bring her in on her palanquin through the floral bower and will parade her around the circle. They will then put her palanquin on the Aphrodite shrine.

*Five-Fold Invocation to Activate the Five Aspects

Say invocation, make offering.

1. Earrach/Beauty/Flowers
2. Daimon/Happiness/Honeycake
3. Janet/Love/Incense
4. Sarina/Seduction/Wine
5. Emerald/Sex/Oil

Earrach
(offering of flowers)

*Aphrodite Morpho, Aphrodite the Shapely
Gorgeous Goddess, pure vision of loveliness, perfect in form
You inspire us with the power of beauty
Hearts uplifted by a heavenly voice, a graceful dance, a stunning work of art
Our breath catches, stomachs flutter when we spy a mortal blessed by your charms
You enrich our lives with the glory of our changing Seasons,
Crystalline ice giving way to white-rushing streams,
Brilliant hues of flowers and leaves
And the many shades of green that dress the land
Aphrodite Morpho, Beautiful Aphrodite. . .*

Hail and Welcome!

Daimon

(offering of honeycake)

*Aphrodite Doritis, Aphrodite the Bountiful
Laughing Goddess, delighting in festivity
You fill our hearts with joy, souls brimming with mirth
Cares forgotten in feasting, dance, and song
With our relaxed inhibitions, you help us to share with one another,
Forming bonds of friendship that last a lifetime
Our spirits rejuvenated through relaxation and pleasure.
Aphrodite Doritis, Goddess of Happiness. . .
Hail and Welcome!*

Janet

(offering of incense)

*Aphrodite Ourania, Aphrodite of the Heavens
Golden Goddess, shining above
Illuming our hearts with the pure light of love
You intoxicate us with your strange elixir of
Hope, terror, and joy as we pine for
One word, one glance, one touch from the beloved.
When taken by your fever we can know no remedy
Except fulfillment of desire
Aphrodite Ourania, Goddess of Love. . .
Hail and Welcome!*

Sarina

(offering of wine)

*Aphrodite Symmachia, Aphrodite our Ally
Sly Goddess, assisting in the art of seduction
Shy, coy; stolen glances, hearts racing at the slightest touch
You help us find witty words, an enticing gift,
A secret meeting place, hidden under the cover of night.
The rush of anticipation, crumbling resistance, sweet surrender.
Aphrodite Symmachia, Our Ally in Seduction. . .
Hail and Welcome!*

Emerald

(offering of oil)

*Aphrodite Praxis, Aphrodite of Action
Lusty Goddess, enflaming our passions, urging us on
The drive, the need; hearts pounding, vision blurred,
Blood rising, rising, rising. . .
Wetness, sweetness, writhing, writhing, writing. . .
You bring us to union, finding sweet fulfillment
In a lover's embrace for a night or a lifetime
For procreation or pleasure*

*Aphrodite Praxis, Goddess of Sex. . .
Hail and Welcome!*

*Praise Offerings

Grove members will make offerings to Aphrodite as the priest or priestess of the gods, men, and beings most associated with her.

As the Priest/Priestess of _____, I (we) make offering of _____. EXCEPT for Hermes & May King & Queen (see below)

May King & May Queen: *As the Priest & Priestess of the May, we make you offering of Bells.*

Horai (Seasons): **Emerald, Sarina, Dae** (necklace, rose oil, flower garland)

Ares: **Maria** (wooden blade)

Dionysos: **Daimon** (grapes)

Adonis and all mortal lovers: **Onyx** (rose petals)

Kharities (Graces): **Emerald, Sarina, Dae** (dance)

Eros & Himeros: **Earrach & Janet** (arrow & aphrodisiac)

Priapos: **Dave** (Daimonea)

Harmonia: **Vicki** (rose incense)

Hermes: May Pole (Herm) – **Diana**

Diana

As the Priestess of Hermes, we erect this herm in your honor.

*Prayer of Sacrifice: **Emerald & All**

Emerald

Aphrodite, Accept our offerings! (All repeat)

*Omen – Fire-scraying: **Deana**

RECEIVING AND USING THE RETURNED BLESSINGS/POWER: FOURTH TIER

*Induction of Receptivity/Calling Down the Blessings: **Emerald**

Emerald will ask for Aphrodite to bless the waters of the grail, ending with:

Emerald

Give to us the waters of blessing! Give to us the waters of life! (All repeat)

*Affirmation of the Blessings

Emerald

Is it your will to receive the blessings of the great goddess Aphrodite?

All
It is!

*Receiving the Blessings: **May King & May Queen**

May King and Queen will sprinkle maypole ribbons, and circle dance ribbons, and people with the waters while all sing.

Song: "Rise"

Chorus:

*Rise, rise, the heat of passion
Rise, rise, the heat of love
Rise, rise, the power within us
Joy and beauty, flesh and blood*

*Here we celebrate in the springtime
Everybody's caught in the May
Festive dress and ribbons and flowers
Singing, dancing, feasting, and play*

Chorus (x2)

*Aphrodite's calling to you and
Aphrodite's calling to me
Heed Her voice and join in the splendor
Of everything this May Day can be*

Chorus (x2)

*To Her power our hearts are open
Feel it blazing hot as the Sun
Deep inside we burn with desire
Through Her blessings our will be done*

*Using/Activating the Blessings: **Led by Diana**

Musicians, Maypole Dancers, and Circle Dancers will be predetermined. At this point, everyone will take their respective places. And then we dance, play, sing, and make merry. As the ribbons are woven onto the maypole, the blessings of Aphrodite are activated by the power of Hermes. The power streams down and radiates out, and those holding the ring help to contain and reflect this energy, and through their dance, they raise energy of their own, pushing it back toward the pole. As each maypole dancer finishes his/her part in the maypole dance, they become part of the circle dance, until we are all dancing in a circle around the pole and the musicians. The power

streams down the pole from the maypole dancers and back up the pole from the circle dancers, and it fills the circle completely as a cone of power, infused with the blessings of Aphrodite, activated by the power of Hermes, and raised to a fever pitch by our work and our will. We each take of this energy what we need, focusing it as we dance the final circle. And when we are done, we send the remainder of this energy back into the Earth for her fertility and healing, continuing the work we began at Oestre, reflecting where we now are at Beltane.

Chants:

Chorus from "Rise"

"Aphrodite, Give to us, give to us" (mirroring the calling chant)

"Aphrodite" by Pomegranate:

*Strong like the ocean
Gentle like rain
River wash my tears away
Aphrodite*

*Aphrodite
Sea spawn, sea spray
Love us we pray
Aphrodite*

*Work yet undone?

UNWINDING AND ENDING THE CEREMONY: TIER FIVE

*Thanksgivings to Entities Invited (in reverse order of arrival:)

*Aphrodite: **Emerald, Sarina, Janet, Daimon, Earrach**

Emerald

Aphrodite Praxis, Goddess of Sex

Sarina

Aphrodite Symmachia, Our Ally in Seduction

Janet

Aphrodite Ourania, Goddess of Love

Daimon

Aphrodite Doritis, Goddess of Happiness

Earrach

Aphrodite Morpho, Beautiful Aphrodite.

All Five Priests/Priestesses

We thank you for your many blessings this day.

Aphrodite, Hail and Farewell! (All repeat)

Emerald covers statue with purple tulle, to symbolize that we have taken our leave from her, but she is still with us.

*Kindreds: End with *Hail and Farewell!* (All repeat)

*Deities: **Deana**

*Ancestors: **Onyx**

*Nature Spirits: **Lassair**

*Thanking the Gatekeeper and Closing the Threshold: **Diana**

Acknowledge that while we don't really close the gateway to the May, we now remove ourselves from the presence of Khloris.

*Affirmation of Past/Future Continuity and Success: **Earrach**

Earrach

*As it has been done in the past...
As we have done it now...
and as it likewise will be done in the future...
we have again forged a link in the sacred chain of Tradition...
LONG LIVE THE TRADITION !*

(Earrach of Pittsburgh)

All

LONG LIVE THE TRADITION!

*Draining Off the Excess Power - The Restoration of the Ordinary”

Sarina: *Now let the Well be but Water*

Maria: *Let the Fire be but flame*

Emerald: *But the Sacred Tree grows always within us! Esto!*

All

Esto!

* Unmerging, Regrounding and Recentering: **Onyx**

*Thanking the Earth Mother: **Earrach**

*Farewell to the Bardic Patrons (Apollon & the Muses): **Maria**

*Clear-cut Ending: De-consecration of Time and Space

*Final Benediction: **Emerald**

*Announcement of End: **Emerald**

*Musical Signal: The Nine Knells: **Earrach with horn, drummers on site**

*Recessional song: "Walk with Wisdom" (UP TEMPO!)

*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.*

(Words and music by Sable)