

Whispering Lake Proto-Grove



Lughnasadh

2003

Lughnasadh Ritual 6:30 PM

Hallowing and Claiming Sacred Space

An offering of apple butter to the Outdwellers is laid beyond the perimeter of the ritual space prior to hallowing and claiming.

**Spirits of this place; those of land, sea and sky;
Land of my ancestors and home to our children,
This place that so many have called their home.**

**Spirits of this land, guardians and those who watch,
Accept our offering and invitation!
That we may have use of this place for our rite.**

An offering of milk and honey is made at several points around the perimeter of our sacred space.

Purification

**Bringers of chaos, those who stand against Gods and Man,
Dwellers beyond the fires light
Those not in tune with kith and clan.**

**Each of us has our time and place
Let it be known that this shall be our time and our place
Take what is laid beyond the fires light and trouble not our
gathering**

Nine times the bell tolls, saying:

**As children of the Earth Mother and Sky Father,
We gather our kith, kin and clan before our hearth
That we may worship according to the ways of old.**

**As the world of the living and that of the spirit become one,
we welcome home our kin.**

That we may begin this celebration together in this hallowed place between Earth and Sky.

The water is blessed, saying:

**By the cleansing purity of water, we claim this place!
We purify this place in the name of the Kindred that we may worship with it's purity.**

The aspersion bowl is filled from the Well and the Nemeton aspersed.

The fire is blessed, saying:

**By the forging strength of fire, we claim this place!
We strengthen this place in the name of the Kindred that we may worship with it's strength.**

The Censer is kindled from the Fire and the Nemeton censured.

**In the purity of the waters
And with the forging strength of the fire,
This grove is made whole and holy.**

The Bile is blessed, saying:

May these words be heard:

**In the forest, glen and glade
By fur, fin and feather
From this world to the next.**

May these words be heard:

**In the sacred wells, upon the waves and across the seas
By family, friend and foe**

From this world to the next.

May our words echo:

**In the hollow hills in honor, respect and love for the Shining Ones
From this holy ground!**

Grove members, participating in the Hallowing and Claiming, now begin to circle the Nemeton, as the Bard begins the processional chant. Additional ritual participants that have been waiting outside the ritual area now join the circle. All participants are aspersed with water from the bowl and censured, as they circle the Nemeton..

Procession

In song

***We've come to the sacred grove,
with hearts and minds and flesh and bone.
Join us now in ways of old,
we have come home.***

Repeat until all participants have been censured and aspersed.

Opening Blessings

Earth Mother & Sky Father

**Oh, Great Earth Mother and Sky Father
Through your sacred union springs forth all life.
Your children gather between Earth and Sky in your honor.
Mother and Father of all that was, of all that is and all that will be,
We come before you in love and respect and ask that you uphold and bless our gathering**

An offering of bread and honey is made to the Earth Mother and Sky Father. The bread is broken in half and the honey is placed on the bread. The two halves are joined before making the offering. The offering is then placed in the offering bowl.

Great Earth Mother and Sky Father accept our sacrifice!

All: Earth Mother and Sky Father accept our sacrifice!

Bardic Inspiration

**Goddess of inspiration and poetry,
Great Mother of song and music,
May our words echo in the sacred well.
May our hearts and minds burn with the eternal flame.
May our songs resonate upon the wind.
May you grant us the gift of inspiration and insight.**

An offering of honey is placed in the offering bowl for Brigid.

Lady Brigid accept our sacrifice!

All: Brigid accept our sacrifice!

Grove Attunement

*Meditation adapted for group ritual from the:
Cosmological Meditation by Ceisiwr Serith.*

This meditation is based on the Indo-European concept of three worlds, the above, the middle, and the below. The middle is itself divided into four parts, according to the four directions.

We come together in final preparation for the rite to come, to join in like mindedness as one folk. Now is the time when all

of us must try to lay aside negative feelings and thoughts, as well as our struggles and worries of this world. This task may be difficult and if found impossible, may we lay these things with the Kindred for the time of our worship. As we now join hands and close our eyes, breathing deeply we become one people.

The Below

Let us image that we are facing East. Imagine water flowing up from below us, into our bodies. It fills you to your mid-section. When the pressure there becomes too great, a fire lights in your belly and erupts upward.

The Above

The fire sends a shoot of flaming liquid up your body and out your head and arms. It flows out and arcs down to where it joins with the water flowing up.

The Middle

With the flow of water and fire continuing, imagine going out three steps to the East. Imagine that there is an ox there. Lift your hands in salute:

The priests are in their proper place.

Lower your hands and imagine going to the South in a circle about your actual position. Imagine there is a ram there. Lift your hands in salute:

The warriors are in their proper place.

Lower your hands and imagine going to the West in a circle about your actual position. Imagine there is a mare there.

Lift your hands in salute:

Sovereignty is in her proper place.

Lower your hands and imagine going to the North in a circle about your actual position. Imagine there is a sow there. Lift your hands in salute:

The producers are in their proper place.

Lower your hands and imagine going clockwise in a circle about your actual position. Then imagine returning to your original location.

The End

Re-imagine the flow of fire and water, as well as all four animals. Hold the image for a while, and then let it fade.

Now let us attend to our work at hand, the worship of the Kindred and honoring the ways of old.

Purpose and Precedent

We gather as our ancestors once did and so may our children do in the future.

We gather our kith, kin and clan about us on this day of Lughnasadh.

We gather in celebration of the season and the turning wheel.

We gather to honor the growing green and welcome the warmth of the summer sun.

We gather to honor Lugh and Tailtu, the Great Craftsman & his beloved Foster-Mother.

We gather to ask Crom Dubh to stay his hand this day that we may reap a good harvest.

We gather to honor, worship and offer sacrifice to the Kindred.

Through the union of fire and water, the Ancients, our forebearers, worked magic to gather the first harvest and protect the growing fields upon which survival of the folk depended. So let us join together as one folk to make our offerings in joy and reverence...

Fire, Well & Tree

To the fire

**Kindled of the hearth fire
Scared flame upon the Earth
Joining together hearts and minds
Darkness banished before the roaring blaze**

**Transcending the realm of light and shadow
Purifier and cleanser of mind, body and spirit
Sacred fire open unto us the way to the Shining Ones.**
An offering of clarified butter is made into the fire.

To the well

**Threshold to the Other world
Window to the souls
Cauldron of inspiration
Sacred shrine of old**

**Ford of cleansing waters
Vessel of rebirth
Sacred well of Danu open unto us a path to the ancestors.**

An offering of silver is made into the well.

To the bile

**Mighty oak of the ancient grove
Roots burying deep within the Underworld
Wise teacher of traditions old
Branches reaching into the heavens.**

**Keeper of sacred knowledge
Pillar joining Earth and Sky; spanning the three worlds
Road to all realms; Sacred tree
Let all who walk this way walk in your wisdom.**

The bile is asperged with water from the well and censed with incense.

To Land, Sea & Sky

**The waters support and surround us.
The land extends about us.
The sky stretches above us.
And 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.**

Land, Sea & Sky Text by Ceisiwr Serith

In song

The Portal Song

***By Fire and by Water, between the Earth and Sky
We stand like the World-Tree rooted, deep, crowned high.***

***By Fire and by Water, between the Earth and Sky
We stand like the World-Tree rooted, deep, crowned high.***

*Come we now to the Well, the eye and the mouth of Earth,
Come we now to the Well, and silver we bring.
Come we now to the Well, the waters of rebirth
Come we now to the Well, and together we sing.*

CHORUS

*We will kindle a Fire, Bless all, and with harm to none,
We will kindle a Fire, and offering pour,
We will kindle a Fire, a light 'neath the Moon and Sun,
We will kindle a Fire, our spirits will soar.*

CHORUS

*Gather we at the Tree, the root & the crown of all
Gather we at the Tree, below & above,
Gather we at the Tree, together we make our call,
Gather we at the Tree, In wisdom and love.*

CHORUS

Opening the Gates

**Manannan, son of Lir; companion of Mankind
Warder of the Ways, Guardian of the thresholds
From out of the west you ride
Misty grey cloak swirling with each graceful stride
Weave now your mists, Grey rider of Aonbarr
Make open the way from this world to the next**

An offering of clarified butter is made upon the fire and an offering of porter is placed in the offering bowl.

Manannan merge your magick with mine.
Let the fire burning towards the heavens open as a gate...
that we may follow the way to the Shining Ones.
Let the well whose depths reach the Underworld open as a
gate... that we may follow the way to the ancestors.
Let the tree, pathway between Earth and Sky, be open to
us.

A Druid traces the triskel or sigil over the fire and well.

Manannan Mac Lir let the gates be opened!

All: Manannan Mac Lir let the gates be opened!

In song

*Gatekeeper open the portals,
Between the Gods and mortals,
Power freely flows, as our magic grow!*

Kindred Offerings

Ancestors

**Grandfathers & Grandmothers of old,
You who have paved our way within this world.
Those whose blood flows through our veins.
Ancient ones and most recent dead;
Friends, family and loved ones,
All those who have passed from this world.
Know you continue to live in our hearts and memories
As we await your rebirth and ask for your guidance.
Ancestors! we invite you to gather and rejoice at our
hearth.**

An offering of Irish whiskey is made into the offering bowl.

Ancestors accept our sacrifice!

All: Ancestors accept our sacrifice!

Spirits of this Land

**Spirits of the smallest stone, fertile land and highest
mountains; may you show us the path to balance and
stability.**

**Spirits of the gentle stream, endless sea and sacred wells;
may you grant us the gift of inspiration and insight.**

**Spirits of the growing green, magickal herb and ancient
trees; may you lend us your wisdom and knowledge.**

**Spirits of our animal ancestors, creatures of land, sea and
sky; may you guide us to your strength and intuition.**

**Mighty dragons, guardians of the treasures of land, sea and
sky; may your fire burn within us.**

**To all our companions, teachers and friends of old
we invite and welcome you to our hearth.**

An offering of barley is placed in the offering bowl.

Spirits of this Land accept our sacrifice!

All: Spirits of this land accept our sacrifice!

Deities

**Shining Ones, whose might and bounty know no bounds.
Gods of our people and our people's people,
Watchers over your children and their children's children,
Gods of Life, Gods of Death, Gods of Rebirth,
Gods of Land, Sea and Sky,
Gods that are well known and those who we have yet to
meet.
Gods of this place and of this season of change.
We bid you welcome to our hearth's fire.**

An offering of clarified butter is placed into the fire.

Shining Ones accept our sacrifice!

All: Shining Ones accept our sacrifice!

In song

***Gods and Dead and Mighty Sidhe
Powers of Earth and Sky and Sea
By Fire and Well, by Sacred Tree
Offerings We Make to Ye
Key Offerings***

Descriptive invocations of the patron powers for the rite are given. Offerings are made and a portion of each is held back for the final sacrifice.

Invocations to Patron Deities of the Occasion

Crom Dubh

**Ancient black bowed one
Ruler of the dark and shadows**

Withered old bull upon the barren land

**Dark, bent one beyond the borders of our fire's light
Carrier of mankind's burdens of the harvest
Stay your hand this day.**

**Through your sacrifice and death;
No longer are you an Outsider among our people.**

**We welcome you to our hearth's fire
Crom Dubh, accept our sacrifice!**

All: Crom Dubh, accept our sacrifice!

Tailtiu

**Tailtiu, Great Mother, we make our Grove on your plain. You
Queen of the Fir Bolg, You who cleared the Great Plain,
accept this ale in welcome. (Pour ale)**

**May we grow in joy under your watchful care, oh wise &
noble Foster-Mother. We offer bread, that the harvest of your
field may be plentiful (bread offered).**

**Beloved Mother, we honor your glorious foster-son as he
honored you of old. Tailtiu, wondrous Queen & Mother,
accept this offering of fruit .(offer fruit)**

All: Tailtiu, Accept this sacrifice!

Lugh

**Thou Lugh the Victorious, We make our Grove under your
shield, O Lugh of the White Horse & the Brilliant Blades. You
of the Perfect Form, the Child of Light & Shadow, Slayer of**

Balor, be in our midst. Accept this ale in welcome, thou Champion, King of Ale (pour ale).

May we make our circuit in the joy of Samildanach the Clever One, the Sure Hand, the Bard & the Smith. May we be at peace Under the hand of the Chieftain of the Danu, taking joy in the feast for the wake. We offer this bread, that the harvest may flourish by the hand of the ploughman. (bread offered)

By the Sacred Three of Glory, hear now your people's call- By the Spear & by the Raven come among your folk, O Lugh the Victorious, our light & our guide. Lugh the Victorious, accept this offering of fruit & be present in your strength (offer fruit)

All: Lugh, accept our sacrifice!

Light of the sky, come to our grove!

A spear, decked with greenery & blossoms, is brought out. It is carried once around the ring, then stretched over the fire. It is held there for a time, then brought out & laved nine times with water, saying:

May the strength of Lugh be over us, the beauty of Lugh delight us, may the skill of Lugh be upon us. Be welcome, Shining One, to honor Your Mother. Be welcome White-Silver One, & succor the Earth. Be welcome, Hand of Striking, & drive away the Hail. In the grove of the Old Ways, in the ring of your people, in the hearts of all who honor the earth.

Seasonal Enactment- The Victory of Lugh

Today, we honor the Goddess & God, not as the Divine Couple, but as Mother & Son. Lughnassadh means "Lugh's Festival" but the festival was not to honor Lugh himself.

Rather Lugh founded the festival as a wake in honor of Tailtiu, his foster-mother. As the festival progressed, the people began to honor both Mother & Son, until now little lore remains to us of Tailtiu. Time has passed, and Lugh has faded from our sight, so it is now proper that we honor him as well as his beloved Mother at the festival which still bears his name.

**Since Beltane we have worked,
we have cleared & we have planted,
taking our fields from the unmarked lands,
measuring our world out in their midst
and in the midst as well of those who dwell there,
those who dwell beyond the borders,
those who dwell in the surrounding lands.**

**At Beltane we made offering,
to assuage the Outdwellers
To appease them & please them
To win from them their grudging consent
For us to form our island world,
our homes, our culture, our people, our fields,
within the great surrounding sea.**

**Diviner: All this was done on the land that had lain untilled.
All this was done with the consent of that land's ruler.
All this was done under the gaze of Crom Dubh!**

Diviner removes the cloth & lifts the bull up.

All sing:

**Black bull, crooked one,
Ruler of the dark land,
Black bull, crooked one,
Ruler of the depths.**

She brings the bull clockwise around the circle. As she passes each person, they lift their arms in honor to her. When she has completed the round, she puts the bull again to the west of the fire & returns to her place. The others put their arm down as he puts the bull down. Druid 1 picks up barley & sprinkles it over the bull while Druid 2 says:

D2: The fertilizing rain that falls from above Honors the old bull marks him out, reestablishes his place as head of the heard.

**D1: If the High King is Crom Dubh,
Who is the King of our Tribe?
Who is the champion of our people?
Whose strong arm has enabled our crops to grow?**

The Champion holds up the spear & says: Lugh is our champion!

**Everyone chants:
Strong hand, bright one, spear tip,
Lugh is our champion;
Long hand, skilled one, young bull,
Lugh is our champion**

The Champion goes clockwise around the circle with the spear held high. As each person is passed, they lift their arms in honor to him. After the circuit is completed, the champion brings the spear to D1 & holds it in front of her. The others lower their arms. D1 says:

D1: Your golden spear tips in the radiant fields proclaim the work of your skillful hand. Through your skill & courage, you have brought us to harvest. Through the power that shines from your head you have defeated all who oppose you. By the might that is found in your unloosed spear you have earned the right of high kingship for yourself.

Champion cuts off the head of the bull with the spear. The drumbeat stops with a bang. He removes the head & places it on the east side of the fire. The drumbeat starts again. Champion then returns to his place & hands the spear to the D1, saying:

Champion: Chief above us, this spear is entrusted to your keeping.

D1 holds up the spear & says:

**D1: Strong in Lugh, we have proven our right to exist,
before the ones who dwell in the land about us.
By bringing our plantings to the point of harvest,
we have reached a point of equality with them.**

She lowers spear & says: Diviner of the tribe, collect the first fruits.

The Diviner goes about the Nemeton with the bowl & gathers the first fruits from the people.

**D1 says: Chieftains of the tribe,
we go together to the land outside
we go in strength, as equals to equals.
We go with gifts, to establish the bonds.**

The champion goes to her & is given the spear back. D1 picks up the board with the bull's body & goes to the gateway with the champion before her. At the gateway, the diviner joins in between the champion & the D1 with D2 coming in behind. The Diviner gives him the first fruits. The resultant order is: champion (with spear), diviner (with the cloth from the bull), D1 (with bull), & D2 (with first fruits). As they pass from the circle, the drumming stops. They go to the edge of the woods, to something representing a hole. The spear, fruits & bull are raised up.

The Diviner says:

**To those beyond the borders
Whether Gods or Goddesses
Whether Spirits or dead
To those who were before us
And dwell in the darkness of our world's shadow
We come to you with offering.**

**D1: Lugh has come to you, the new High King.
He has vanquished Crom Dubh,
whose leadership you acknowledged.
The Old Bull is dead;
Recognize as your new high king the Young Bull,
Who comes to you with shining head high**

**D2: We come to you with our well-earned harvest
Seeking in exchange a treaty peace.
Although not one people, may our tribes be at peace.**

Following the Seasonal Enactment, ritual participants are given an opportunity to make praise offerings in the form of poetry, song, dance, or works of their hands etc. Please avoid clapping after praise offerings.

Now we invite you to bring forth your personal offerings of praise to the Kindred.

Sacrifice and Omen

A final sacrifice is prepared and final prayer of sacrifice is made.

Kindred of land, sea and sky with our thanks, love and respect we bring to you the last of our offering. As this time of light is upon us, we give this offering in thanks for the season that has past, as we look forward to the season to

come.

Smallest stone and highest mountain, gentle stream and sacred well, growing green and ancient tree, animal ancestors, creatures of fir, fin and feather...

Grandmothers that bore us, Grandfathers that quicken us, ancient ones and most recent dead...

Shining Ones, whose might and bounty know no bounds.

The final sacrifice is made .

Kindred of Land, Sea and Sky, accept this our sacrifice.

All: Kindred accept our sacrifice!

We now close our eyes and open our hearts pouring out our love to the Kindred. We open our minds sending our love and energy into the Otherworld that all may know we worship in their honor.

Participants meditate on the kindred, sending their energies through the gates.

We offer hospitality and sacrifice to the Kindred on this day. We pray that our gifts, given with the highest honor and respect, receive your acceptance. We now open our hearts and minds to receive your blessings.

The Omen is taken. One Ogham stick is drawn for each of the three Kindred. The seer then interprets the omen, leading the company to contemplate the things they would ask of the powers, especially as suggested by the omen.

What use have you of nGeatal/the Reed gift of the Nature

Spirits?

What use have you of *Quert/the Apple* gift of the Ancestors?

What use have you of *Beith/the Birch* (reversed) gift of the Shining One?

The Blessing

Two cups will be filled and sat in the midst of the hallows. The following words will be spoken over the cups.

In elder days a gift given freely called for a gift given in return.

We will drink deep of the Cauldron of Rebirth. May the blessings of health, wealth and wisdom be ours.

Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

We gather with you between Earth and Sky. We are proud to call ourselves your people.

Once again, Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

We have brought our offerings. We have made sacrifice.

One last time, Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

The cups are lifted saluting the fire, well and tree.

Behold the Waters of Life!

Shining Ones hear and bless us. Miach and Airmed hallow these Waters of Life.

The cups are lifted before the participants.

Behold the Waters of Life!

All: Behold the Waters of Life!

Drinking horns and/ or cups are passed and all participants share the waters. As the cups are passed the following chant is sung by all participants.

Pour the Water

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.

Repeat until the cups have been passed to all participants.

Thanksgiving and Closing

We now prepare to thank the powers that have attended us during this rite. At this time the gates between the worlds remain open and we invite any to give personal offering or sacrifice to the powers.

Participants are given time to make final offerings.

Lugh, Great Craftsman, Champion of our people, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. We thank you for your gifts to us.

All: Lugh, we thank you!

Tailtiu, beloved Foster-Mother, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. We thank you for We thank you for your gifts to us..

All: Tailtiu, we thank you

Crom Dubh, dark and bowed one, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. We thank you for staying your hand this day.

All: Crom Dubh, we thank you!

Shining Ones, Gods of Life, Death and Rebirth, all those of Land, Sea and Sky may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. We thank you for the blessings we have received this day.

All: Shining Ones, we thank you!

Spirits that are this land, dwellers of land, sea and sky, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. Spirits of this land we thank your for knowledge and companionship.

All: Spirits of this Land, we thank you!

Grandmothers and Grandfathers, ancient ones and dearest friends, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. Ancestors we thank you for your guidance and wisdom.

All: Ancestors we thank you!

Manannan Son of Lir, Mist Weaver, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. Manannan Mac Lir we thank you for warding the ways

between the worlds this day.

All: Manannan we thank you!

Brighid, Goddess of Inspiration and Poetry, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. Brighid we thank you for your gift of inspiration!

All: Brighid we thank you!

Earth Mother and Sky Father, Mother and Father of all that was, all that is, and all that will be, may there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire. Earth Mother and Sky Father we thank you for attending to us this day.

All: Earth Mother and Sky Father we thank you!

Now that our work has finished; we now end what we began. The Gates are now ready to be closed.

Manannan, Son of Lir, Warder of the Ways, Opener, Closer and Guardian. We ask now that you close the gates that we have opened this night.

Let the way to the Shining Ones be once again be fire, the way to the Ancestors once again be water and the way between the worlds once again be wood.

By the might and wisdom of the Ancestors, Spirits that are this Land and Shining Ones; the way to the Kindred is once again warded.

We now return all that has gone unused to the Earth and the Sky, may they continue to support, surround and sustain us.

All offerings that remain are burnt in the fire or scattered upon the Earth.

All: We will keep the faith until the sky falls upon us and crushes us; until the earth opens and swallows us; until the seas arises and overwhelm us.

As participants leave the grove the following song will be sung until all participants have exited.

Carry It Home

Carry It Home to Your Children, Carry It Out in the Street.

Carry It on to the Ones you love, And to the Ones You Meet.

Carry It Light on Your Shoulder, Carry It Deep in Your Soul.

For We Have Been Blessed With Magic, And the Magic Will Make Us Whole.

***Whispering Lake Proto-Grove
Lughnassadh Ritual
2003***

composed by Raven and Carrion Mann

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