

Beltane 2018

Revision 0

Protogrove of the Whispering Spirits

28 April 2018

1. Offerings

This section describes the offerings made to the various hallows, the Kindred and the attendees of the rite.

- Outdwellers: Ale
- Purification: Water, with rose water added
- Danu: Pinhead Oats
- Fire: Incense
- Well: Rose Water & Silver
- Tree: Water from the Well and Incense lit from the fire
- Gatekeeper: Saffron and Cinnamon
- Gods: Whisky
- Nature Spirits: Bread
- Ancestors: Bread
- Epona: Roses, sugar cubes for individual offerings
- Final Sacrifice: Red Wine
- Waters of Life: Red Wine

2. Initiating the Rite

{Horn blower}: After all have circled the area blow horn 3 times

{Speaker}: Speaks after horn call

Once again we have gathered together as one people, to honor our Kindred and celebrate the changing of the seasons.

Around us the spirits of nature move, amongst us our ancestors gather and before us our gods stand tall.

At this time, in this place, we set aside all that we brought with us. We focus our thoughts and our actions on this moment while we commune with the Kindred.

{Bard}: Leads we approach the sacred grove until the purification is completed

3. Purification

{Speaker}:

As you go into the ritual area, please stop at the basin where our assistant will pour water over your hands.

May the water flowing over your hands carry away all impurities.

{Purifier}: Pours water over the hands of participants before they enter the ritual area

4. Meditation

{Bard}: Tree Meditation Song

5. Outdwellers

{Speaker}: Moves just outside the perimeter

Outdwellers!

You who come from the wild places,
You who are the raw untamed forces of nature,
You whose goals do not align with ours, Take this and trouble not our work.

{Speaker}: Leave offering outside of the ritual space

6. Honoring the Earth Mother

{Speaker}: Distribute grain to participants

Great Danu Mother of all our life is nourished from your bounty. You give the food that nourishes us, the wealth that enriches us, even the very ground we walk on O bright goddess.

All joy and prosperity comes from you, and it is you who sustains us. We honor you now. We thank you for the bounty you bestow upon all of us.

Great Danu accept these offerings.

{All}: Place grain in the fire

7. Statement of Purpose

{Speaker}:

We are here this afternoon to celebrate the Celtic fire festival of Beltane. Our world is thawing from the spring freeze, and life is returning to the land. The snow has nearly melted, and we are chomping at the bit to be back outside again.

Today we honor Epona, the Gaulish goddess of equines, sovereignty and fertility. It is time to remember that we are the sovereigns of give ourselves free reign, to take control of our future, and to bring our ideas to fruition.

After a challenging winter, and a wild spring, we once again need to remember that it is we who are in charge of our lives.

8. Recreating the Cosmos

{Speaker}: Moves to the fire

To the flame, with this incense let you be sanctified and transcend the limits of this world. You are now The Sacred Fire; our connection to the heavens and the gods.

{Speaker}: The offering is placed in the fire. Moves to the well

Cauldron of water, With this silver, let you be sanctified and transcend the limits of this world. You are now The Sacred Well; our connection to the underworld and our ancestors.

{Speaker}: Silver is placed in the well. Moves to the tree

Mighty tree, with this fire from The Sacred Fire, and water from The Sacred Well, you become The World Tree; that which connects and binds the three worlds together.

Like the tree is rooted in the land, so too do we stand firmly upon it.
Like the tree is encircled by the seas, so too are we encircled by them.
Like the tree dwells beneath the sky, so too do we live beneath it.

Once again we remember our place in the three realms, and await the coming forth of the kindred

9. Opening the Gates

{Speaker}:

Cernunnos, watcher at the borders of the untamed lands, patron of travelers, we seek your aid.

We have need for our words and offerings to span worlds, to reach the shining ones, ancestors and spirits of nature.

To you we look, oh horned god, and torque holder

To you we make our offering of spices, of saffron and cinnamon, to open the way.

{Sacrificer}: places offering in the fire

{All}:

Cernunnos, accept our offering!

{Speaker}:

Cernunnos, let the Sacred Fire be a gate!

Let the Sacred Well be a gate!

Let the World Tree be a gate!

Let the gates be opened!

{All}:

Let the gates be opened!

10. Inviting the Kindred

10.1. Inviting the Ancestors

{Speaker}:

Welcome Ancestors. We make space at our fire for our mighty ancestors, for our honored ancestors, and for our beloved ancestors.

You who are of our blood and bone, you who are of our spirit and heart, you who have walked this world and left it before us.

Ancestors, accept our offering.

{Speaker}: Places offering next to the Well

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

10.2. Inviting the Nature Spirits

{Speaker}:

Welcome Nature Spirits. We make space at our fire for The Good people, for the spirits of this land, of its plants and trees, its birds and beasts and its waters.

You who have dwelled in this land before man, who protect it, who nurture it.

Nature Spirits, accept our offering.

{Speaker}: Places the offering next to the World Tree

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

10.3. Inviting the Shining Ones

{Speaker}:

Welcome Shining Ones! We make space at our fire for the Shining Ones, the gods of our people, and the gods of this land.

You who nurture our spirits, you who challenge us to grow, you who we return to when we pass from this world.

Shining Ones, accept our offering.

{Speaker}: Pours offering into the fire

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

11. Key Offerings

{Speaker}:

Epona Rigatona (REE-at-on-a), Great queen Epona, hear us as we call out to you!

Epona, goddess of sovereignty, fertility, and of equines, join us at our fire!

Hooves pounding, heart beating, with the exhalation of the equine running within you, we welcome you!

The horse is an ancient symbol associated with kingship and the sovereignty of the king. In battle, the cavalry of the Gauls were amongst the best in Europe, and those troops helped ensure the sovereignty of their people.

Epona, champion of sovereignty, we remember you!

{All}: Response

We honor you.

{Speaker}:

In you're images, you are show with cornucopia, and amongst foals. Agriculture was assisted by equines, and in some places still is. The fertility of the land and of the horses benefited the people.

Epona, herald of fertility, we remember you!

{All}: Response

We honor you.

{Speaker}:

You have been honored in stables through out Europe. No other Gaulish goddess has had such wide acceptance. You are the keeper of equines, their secrets, and their care.

Epona of the equines, we remember you!

{All}: Response

We honor you.

{Speaker}:

Epona, accept our offering!

{Sacrificer}: Places offering in the fire

{All}:

Epona, accept our offering!

{Speaker}:

Now is an opportunity for us all to make offerings to Epona, and any other of the Kindred that you feel called to. There are sugar cubes for offerings to Epona.

{Reference}: <http://www.epona.net/later.html>

12. Prayer of Sacrifice

{Speaker}:

Epona, we have welcomed you amongst us, made offerings and spoke your praises.

We come to you, and ask that you aid us in recognizing the sovereignty we have over our own lives and the abundance that is hidden within us.

Hooves pounding, heart pumping, may we find that the exuberance of the equine runs within us!

Epona, accept this final offering!

{Sacrificer}: Places offering into the fire

{All}:

Epona, accept our offering!

13. The Omen

{Speaker}: To the oracle

Oracle, what blessings does Epona offer us for this season?

{Oracle}: Draws and interprets The Omen

14. Calling for the Blessings

{Speaker}:

Epona, and all kindred who have joined us here today, we have made you welcome at our fire, we have honored you, and we have gifted you with offerings. From the oracle, we have heard your blessings, and we seal our relationship with the Waters of Life.

15. Hallowing the Blessings

{Speaker}: Fills the horn, holds it over the fire then speaks.

Let the blessings flow into these waters through the sacred fire.

{Speaker}: Holds the horn over the well

Let the blessings flow into these waters through the sacred well.

{Speaker}: Holds the horn over the tree

Let the blessings flow into these waters through the world tree.

The blessings of Epona run throughout these waters! Offerings we have given, and an offerings we have been given in return. Behold the Waters of Life!

16. Affirming the Blessings

{Speaker, then remaining worshipers}: Raises the horn, speaks then drinks (or pours a small amount on the ground/in the fire) and passes the horn to the next worshiper.

I accept the blessings of the Kindred.

{Speaker}: Speaks then pauses for a moment.

Let us reflect a moment on the blessings of the Kindred.

17. Workings

No planned workings

18. Thanking the Kindred

18.1. Thanking the DotO

{Speaker}:

Epona, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may we see the strength and beauty of the equines in the world around us.

18.2. Thanking the Shining Ones

{Speaker}:

Shining Ones, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may our relationship with you continue to deepen.

18.3. Thanking the Nature Spirits

{Speaker}:

Nature Spirits, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may you look kindly on us in our future meetings.

18.4. Thanking the Ancestors

{Speaker}:

Ancestors, both new and old, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may our actions in this world bring honor to you.

19. Closing the Gates

{Speaker}:

Cernunnos, as our rite draws to a close, we again turn to you; assist us in closing the gates.

{Speaker}: Moves to the tree

Let this gate return to a tree.

{Speaker}: Moves to the well

Let this gate return to a bowl of water.

{Speaker}: Moves to the fire

Let this gate return to just a flame.

Let the gates be closed!

{All}:

Let the gates be closed!

20. Thanking the Earth Mother

{Speaker}:

We thank the Great Danu for all she has given and done for us. We now return all that we did not use back to the earth. May Danu continue to provide for all of us. We thank you.

21. Closing the Rite

{Bard}: Sings the Tree Meditation Song Closing

{Bard}: Sings Now the rite is at an end

{Speaker}:

Our time of communion with the Kindred draws to a close, and cares of mundane world began to assert themselves over us once again.

Let us take the blessings of the Kindred, back into the world, and remember our connection to the divine.

We have come together as we have done before and shall do again. Until next we meet, may peace and prosperity be upon you.

{Horn blower}: Blow horn 3 times

22. Songs

22.1. We Approach the Sacred Grove

We approach the sacred grove, With hearts and minds and flesh and bone, Join us now in ways of old, We have come home.

By Sean Miller to the tune of "an Old English plainsong"

22.2. Now the Rite is at an End

And now the rite is at an end, again we're parting ways May truth and honor be your friend and lucky be your days I'll hold you dearly in my heart, I'll hold you in my mind And though our branches grow apart, our roots shall be entwined.

By Paul Kershaw and Marae Price