

# **Spring Equinox 2018**

# **Maslenitsa**

Revision 1

**Protogrove of the Whispering Spirits**

24 March 2018

## 1. Offerings

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

- ◇ Outdwellers: Water
- ◇ Mati Syra Zemlya: grain
- ◇ Fire: Incense
- ◇ Well: silver
- ◇ Tree: Incense and water from the well
- ◇ The Zoryi: Ginger ale (morning), evening (grain), midnight (flowers)
- ◇ Gods: Olive oil
- ◇ Nature Spirits: Bread
- ◇ Ancestors: Bread & salt
- ◇ Morana: Honey, bread and salt
- ◇ Dažbog: Ginger Ale
- ◇ Final Sacrifice: Sparkling Juice
- ◇ Waters of Life: Sparkling Juice

## 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.

*{All}: Sing "We Approach the Sacred Grove" x 3 repetitions*

## 3. Meditation

*{Speaker}: Sing "The Tree Meditation" by Karl Steinmayer*

## 4. Outwellers

*{Speaker}: Moves to the edge of the ritual space*

O fierce whirlwind, O hostile powers, O wicked Bannik!

You who reside in the bitter darkness, we give this gift to you. Go from here with the stormy winds and trouble not our holy work. During this sacred time, we now set aside all that separates us from the bliss and blessings of the Holy Ones.

*{Speaker}: Leaves gift outside ritual space*

## 5. Purification

*{Speaker}: Anoint each participant with water and speak*

With this water, let you be purified

## 6. Honoring the Earth Mother

*{Speaker}: Distribute grain to participants*

Come to life, come to life, O our Mother, Mati Syra Zemlya!  
Out of the winter comes the spring, out of barrenness comes abundance.

Deep within the forests of spring, we come to you,  
Our bare feet lightly tread on your moist body, we come to you,  
The leaves and pine needles are your blanket, we come to you,  
On our knees, head to the ground, we come to you,  
The rich smell of the earth, we have found you,  
The plants and trees are your clothes, we have found you,  
The pure fresh air we breath, we have found you,  
We are home again, with the moist mother earth.

Awaken from your slumber and come dressed in radiance, O our Mother the Earth, bless and uphold our rite!

To you we offer this gift with reverent hearts.

*{All}: Place grain in the offering bowl*

## 7. Statement of Purpose

*{Speaker}:*

We are here today to aid winter's transition into spring. In Slavic countries this is known as Maslenitsa, a time for the folk and the kindred to come together in the spirit of merriment and gaiety as winter's harsh rule comes to an end.

We give honor to Morana, the Slavic Goddess of Winter, as she begins her transition to the healing depths of the underworld. There she will rest until it is her time to rule the Earth once more. Through Morana the Earth finds balance in the seasons; the tranquility and repose of the darkness in equilibrium with the warmth and intensity of the light.

We also give honor, strength and power to Dažbog, the Sun God, who is also known as the Giving God. As he assumes his reign life is kindled anew; soon the Earth will be lush in life and color. And as Dažbog renews himself daily, so he renews the Earth - bringing potency and vitality to all living things.

On this day we come to keep the ways of our ancestors, to honor the gods and seek their blessings. We come as one people to make our offerings with love and reverence.

## 8. Recreating the Cosmos

*{Speaker}: Moves to the fire*

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

*{Speaker}: Incense is lit from the fire. Moves to the well*

Water, With this silver, let you be purified 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*

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.

*{Speaker}: Water from the well is lightly sprinkled on the tree, and the stick if incense is swirled around it.*

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}: Addressing the Gatekeeper*

I call to the Zoryi, the daughters of Dažbog, the sisters that watch the gate from which the sun leaves at dawn and enters at dusk.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Utrennaya, the morning star. We ask you who guards palace gate at dawn; you who opens it to allow the sun to traverse the sky, accept this sacrifice and make this fire a gate.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Vechernyaya, the evening star. We ask you who guards the palace gate at dusk; you who closes it once the sun has left the sky, accept this sacrifice and make this tree a gate.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Polunochnaya, midnight star. We ask you who watches over the world in the dark of the night, accept this sacrifice and make this well a gate.

### *{Sacrificer}: Places the offering into the offering bowl*

Let the gates be opened!

### *{All}:*

Let the gates be opened!

## 10. Inviting the Kindred

### 10.1. Inviting the Gods

#### *{Speaker}:*

Dobro požalovat Bogi i Bogini.  
Welcome Gods and Goddesses.

We make space at our fire for the Gods and Goddesses of our people, and the gods of this land.

Bogi i Bogini, accept this offering of oil.

*{Sacrificer}: Pours offering into the offering bowl*

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

*{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}:*

Dobro požalovat Lesovík.

Welcome woodland spirits.

We make space at our fire for the spirits of this land, of its plants and trees, its birds and beasts and its waters.

Lesovík, accept this offering of bread, and lead us not astray as we walk through the world.

*{Sacrificer}: Places offering next to the Tree*

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

*{Speaker}: Call*

We remember you.

*{All}: Response*

We honor you.

*Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times*

## 10.3. Inviting the Ancestors

*{Speaker}:*

Dobro požalovat predki.

Welcome Ancestors.

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

Predki, accept this offering of bread and salt.

*{Sacrificer}: Places offering next to the Well*

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.

*{Speaker}: Call*

We remember you.

*{All}: Response*

We honor you.

*Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times*

## 11. Key Offerings

### 11.1. Morana

*{Sacrificer}: The corn dolly is laid on a bed of pine boughs. When indicated in the chant, each offering is placed next to the corn dolly.*

*{Speaker}:*

Morana, Morana, Morana, the green boughs shall bear you up,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, the white shroud shall clothe you for your journey,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, O Ancient Grey Lady,  
 May deep rest restore you, transform, sustain you as you journey forth,  
 The underworld waits rejoicing, to receive their queen,  
 The Earth Mother's singing, the winter is fading, as you journey forth,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, three gifts we give to you,  
 Honey to sweeten you, bread to strengthen you, salt to preserve you,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, accept our offerings,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, accept our offerings,  
 Morana, Morana, Morana, accept our offerings

*{All}:*

Morana accept our offerings,

*{Sacrificer}: While the speaker talks, the sacrificer carries the straw dolly on its pine bed around the grove*

*{Speaker}:*

Morana, Queen of Winter, now it is time for your journey home; the way is open, your throne in the underworld awaits. Take from us the honey, bread and salt, and put on the white shroud; the waters below will restore you. The world is waking from its rest, and now you must depart.

May she who has renewed the earth herself be renewed!

We bid farewell to Morana as she journeys to the underworld. Winter is over and spring has begun!

*{Sacrificer}: Once the “farewell” chanting begins, the Morana effigy is carried out and placed in the coals.*

*{All}: chanting and moves outside to the fire. Continue chanting until the Morana effigy is consumed in flames*

Farewell, farewell...

*{All}: Returning inside*

## 11.2. Dažbog

*{Speaker}:*

The shining King, Dažbog, has come to assume his throne!  
 Come forth girded in strength,  
 Come forth in your gleaming robes,  
 Come forth in your brilliant chariot,  
 O Dažbog, Conquering Sun, your renown is carried to the heavens,  
 Pierce the clouds and free the winter-bound Earth. Hear us, Gift-Lord, Bestower of Plenty.

We give you honor and welcome!

Dažbog, accept our offering!

*{Sacrificer}: Pours offering into the offering bowl*

*{All}:*

Dažbog, accept our offering!

## 12. Prayer of Sacrifice

*{Speaker}:*

Kindred, we welcome you amongst us. Through each ritual, each prayer, we grow closer to you . Accept this final offering, let it rise up, and with it, our words to your ears.

*{Sacrificer}: Pours offering into the offering bowl*

Kindred, accept our offering.



## 13. The Omen

*{Speaker}:*

Seer, have our offerings been accepted?

*{Speaker}: After seer responds*

Seer, what blessings does Dažbog offer us this season?

## 14. Calling for the Blessings

*{Speaker}:*

O kindred, we have made you welcome at our fire, we have honored you, and we have gifted you with sacrifices. From the oracle, we have heard your blessings, and we seal our relationship with a feast.

## 15. Hallowing the Blessings

*{Speaker}: Blessing the blini*

In Slavic countries Maslenitsa is celebrated with blini, a symbol of the returning sun.

Dažbog, we ask a blessing on the blini that have been made in your honor. Grant strength, good health, happiness, peace and abundance for us and the whole world. So be it!

*{Speaker}: Blessing the waters*

Kindred, let your blessings flow into the waters,  
Through the world tree, let the blessings flow into the waters,  
Through the sacred fire, let the blessings flow into the waters,  
Through the sacred well, let the blessings flow into the waters.

Behold the shared feast between us and the kindred!

*{Sacrificer}: Takes some of the waters and a blini and sets them aside for Dažbog*

## 16. Affirming the Blessings

*{Sacrificer}: Passes out the waters and blini to the participants*

*{Speaker}:*

We have received the Waters of Life and the Blessing of the kindred. And with this blessing, may you be sound and unhurt, weathering all ills with health and good cheer.

Let us eat and reflect on the blessings of the Kindred.

## 17. Workings

None

## 18. Thanking the Kindred

### 18.1. Thanking the DotO

*{Speaker}:*

For a time wintery storms may hide the Sun, but the spring has come - the sunlight bursts out again in all its glory, and the Sun God once more goes forth conquering and to conquer. Take these blessings into your lives and work. But first let us give thanks to those who have aided us this day.

Morana, Dažbog, we thank you for being with us today.

### 18.2. Thanking the Ancestors

*{Speaker}:*

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

### 18.3. Thanking the Nature Spirits

*{Speaker}:*

Woodland spirits, we thank you for sharing our fire, may you continue to nurture the land as it is reborn.

### 18.4. Thanking the Gods

*{Speaker}:*

Gods of our people, gods of this place, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may our relationship with you continue to deepen.

## 19. Closing the Gates

*{Speaker}:*

As our rite draws to a close, we again turn to the Zoryi to 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 cauldron.

*{Speaker}: Moves to the fire*

Let this gate return to the fire.

Let the gates be closed!

*{All}:*

Let the gates be closed!

## 20. Thanking the Earth Mother

*{Speaker}:*

We thank Mati Syra Zemlya, our moist mother earth, for always being here with us today and the days to come. When the time comes for melting snow may she keep our plows ready and our fields fertile. May she watch over us, for some of our journeys my find us alone in a forest with only her moist warm earth beneath us and her soft sweet voice all around us. We shall always honor and thank her for all she does even when not asked.

## 21. Closing the Rite

*{All}: Sing "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.

*{Speaker}: 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*