

THE SOLITARY DRUID FELLOWSHIP AUGUST CROSS QUARTER LITURGY 2013

BLESSINGS OF THE HIGH DAY BE WITH YOU!

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Bright blessings to you.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The SDF liturgy for the August Cross Quarter Day follows ADF's *Core Order of Ritual* format. Each of the components are designed to move the individual from a state of ordinary consciousness to a place of deep reverence, and to help the individual return back to ordinary consciousness at the end.

Read through the entire liturgy before performing it. The language is meant to be read aloud, so feel free to practice. You will see a number of [bracketed] instructions. Becoming familiar with them in advance of your solitary observance will help to make your ritual go smoothly. These instructions are merely guides, and you may choose to follow them or not. It is completely up to you.

You will need the following tools for this ritual:

A representation of the fire (e.g. a candle), the well (e.g. a chalice of water), and the tree (e.g. a living plant or a piece of wood). These three components are central to ADF cosmology, representing the Heavens, the Underworld, and the Mid-Earth, respectively.

The rite is initiated with words that help solitaries of the Fellowship establish an awareness of our interconnectedness and our shared practice of observance.

"I am one and we are many.
Fellowship, in solitude."

We may not be performing our rituals synchronously, which is to say that we are doing them on different days at different times, but there is still tremendous value in knowing that we are not alone in our practice.

The act of making offerings plays an important role in ADF rituals. Offerings, in the teaching of Our Druidry, affirm a symbiotic relationship with the Gods. We give, that they might give. And likewise, when our offerings are received, we in turn receive the blessings of the Gods.

Within the body of ADF, as well as within the Fellowship, there are those who identify as

atheists, or who do not feel comfortable with making offerings to deities. If you find yourself sharing that perspective, consider the act of making an offering to be an exercise in gratitude. Experience gratitude by offering something of yourself to the world, to the immediate environment in which you are performing your ritual. You might pour out alcohol onto the earth, or set out food at the base of a nearby tree. Whatever your method, simply practice the act of giving to the unseen, to the undefined, to that which is unknown and uncertain.

When you reach sections IV and XV of the liturgy, you will see a reference to the First Harvest and Imbolc devotionals, both of which are available at SolitaryDruid.org. (<http://www.solitarydruid.org/our-shared-liturgy/>). The words of the devotional can be used independent of this rite, but they also serve as supplemental language to the Statement of Purpose and the Final Affirmation.

Section XII, *Seeking the Omen*, allows each participant to ask whatever questions of the Kindred they wish, or to take the divination in the form that is most relevant for them. In addition, an omen will be taken for the entire Fellowship and shared on the SDF blog after the High Day has passed. Participants will be given an opportunity to offer one another their own interpretations of the Fellowship's group omen.

An attempt has been made to keep the liturgy neutral of Hemisphere-specific language. Please consider writing in your own descriptions of the season as it is experienced where you live.

The asterisk (*) indicates a pause. Use this moment of pause to breathe deep and experience the fullness of the ritual. This is your rite. Engage with it deeply.

This liturgy is yours to customize. Please make it your own.

And most importantly...

PRAY WITH A GOOD FIRE.

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Bright blessings to you.

I. Initiating the Rite

[Light candle, prepare water and tree, then speak the following words:]

I am one and we are many.
Fellowship, in solitude.
Here I bring my offerings
To celebrate the Kindred Three.

In my mind and in my body,
I hold space in solitude
For all of those who walk alone.
May they be with me in this rite.

Here before the sacred fire,
Sacred well, and sacred tree,
May we all be purified.
And may the fire burn within.

II. Purification

[You may perform the purification ritual of your choice (anointing your head and body with water or oil, burning sage or incense, etc.) while speaking aloud the following words:]

May all that hinders me be released,
May all that binds me be released,
May the Outdwellers of my heart
Be released,
That I may be made pure.

[After speaking aloud these words, take several moments to experience the feeling of purification. Breathe deep.]

III. Honoring the Earth Mother

I place my hand upon the ground,
And open my heart to the earth.

[Touch the ground, if possible.]

The sacred earth provides,
Making all life possible.
I call upon the Earth Mother -

Holy Mother, hear me.
Bless this rite of your child.

IV. Statement of Purpose

[For the language of the Statement of Purpose, please refer to SDF's First Harvest or Imbolc devotionals, both of which are available at solitarydruid.org. Once you have read aloud the Statement, continue on with the liturgy.]

Insert into the blank place the deity or deities you choose to honor on this High Day, as well as the Gatekeeper you intend to work with during the Opening of the Gates.]

I celebrate this High Day with the
solitaries of the Fellowship.

[Take this moment to make note of the season of your land, to recognize the state of nature, and to honor it.]

I pray with a good fire.

This ritual recognizes the great and
noble Gods, _____
(& _____), and I call on the
gatekeeper, _____.

V. Grounding & Centering

[You may use whatever method of G&C that is relevant to you. ADF members will be familiar with the Two Powers meditation, but this is not the only acceptable method. Below is a brief meditation. Spend enough time with each line to allow the words to sink deep into your consciousness.]

I stand with the strength of an Oak.
I move with the grace of the Willow.
I reach deep into earth,
High towards the sun,
And within my being,
I am still.

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VI. Recreating the Cosmos

Here at the center of all things,
Before the Fire, Well, & Sacred Tree,
I stand at the juncture of all worlds.

[Gather your prepared offerings, placing each into your offering bowl or at the base of the hallows after you speak the corresponding words.]

I bless the fire, and make it sacred.
Fire of heavenly light, burn within me.

*

I bless the well, and make it sacred.
Waters of deep wisdom, flow within me.

*

I bless this tree, and make it sacred.
Tree of great unity, grow within me.

*

[At this point, you may complete the cosmology by honoring any hearth culture cosmological trilogy that is personally relevant to you (ex: Land, Sea & Sky; Underworld, Midrealm, Heavens; Wise Ones, Warriors, Farmers; etc.)]

VII Opening The Gates

And now I call upon my Gatekeeper.

[Substitute "Gatekeeper" with name, title, and appropriate praise language.]

[Gatekeeper], I call on you and ask
that you be with me in this place and
lend your magic to mine. I make to
you this offering.

[Place offering in offering bowl/receptacle. Substitute the words within the brackets with appropriate language for the contents of your altar.]

Take this [candle], and transform it.
Let it become the Sacred Fire, gateway
to the heavens; gateway for the
Shining Ones.

[Gatekeeper], make this fire a gate!

*

Take this [water], and transform it.
Let it become the Sacred Well,
gateway to the underworld; gateway
for the Ancestors.

[Gatekeeper], make this water a gate!

*

Take this [wood], and transform it.
Let it become the Sacred Tree,
connecting heavens and underworld,
standing as a gateway in the midearth;
a gateway for the Spirits of the Land.

[Gatekeeper], make this wood a gate!

*

Through your power and magic, great
[Gatekeeper]...

Let the gates be open!

*

[Take a moment to visualize the opening of the gates. This space is sacred, and your Sacred Center is now nearer to the world of the Gods and Spirits. When you are ready, continue on by speaking the following words:]

Mighty Kindred, come close, that you
might hear my praise and receive my
sacrifice.

VIII General Offerings

[Take up your offerings, and turn your attention to each of the Hallows in turn. You may identify your offering by name where it appears in brackets (i.e. this offering of bread)]

I stand before the Sacred Fire,
At the Center of All Things,
And lift up [this offering].

This is my sacrifice of
Praise and thanksgiving,
Respect and honor,
Love, worship, and devotion.

Please accept this offering
In the spirit in which it is given.

Shining Ones, accept my sacrifice!

*

I stand before the Sacred Well,
at the Center of All Things,
and lift up [this offering].

This is my sacrifice of
Praise and thanksgiving,
Respect and honor,
Love, worship, and devotion.

Please accept this offering
In the spirit in which it is given.

Ancestors, accept my sacrifice!

*

I stand before the Sacred Tree,
at the Center of All Things,
and lift up [this offering].

This is my sacrifice of
Praise and thanksgiving,
Respect and honor,
Love, worship, and devotion.

Please accept this offering
In the spirit in which it is given.

Nature Spirits, accept my sacrifice!

IX Honoring Beings of Occasion

[This portion of the ritual is optional. Should you choose to include it, you may use the same form of offering and praise listed in the General Offerings section or add your own, and you may add any relevant ritual act that is customary to your cultural tradition.]

See Ceisiwr Serith's Pagan prayer books for specific prayers, or write your own. The writing of prayers, itself, can be a devotional act.]

X Personal Praise Offerings

[This portion of the ritual is optional, but recommended. In ADF tradition, we are encouraged to bring a personal offering of song, poetry or art to honor the Kindred. Use this moment to express praise from the heart.]

Look to the SDF Beltane or Samhain devotionals for suggestions of how to make your praise offering unique and personally relevant.]

XI The Prayer of Sacrifice

Mighty Kindred,
You have heard my praise
And seen the evidence of my devotion.
With this final offering
I lift up my heart, my being,
As a sign of my commitment to you.

Mighty Kindred, accept my sacrifice!

[Take a moment to sit or stand in the presence of the Kindred. Let your heart be open, and your countenance be filled with a generous spirit. You have made offerings, and affirmed your relationship to the cosmos. Let your entire being be filled with a sense of connectedness.]

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XII Seeking The Omen

[Perform a divination that is best suited to you.]

You might choose to ask questions of the Kindred in order to get a sense of how they received your offerings. You might also approach your divination in a more open fashion, allowing the messages to come freely.

Make note of the omen, recording it for later reflection.

A group omen will be drawn for the entire Fellowship and shared on the SDF blog.]

XIII Calling for the Blessing

[Said while holding hands over drinking cup filled with beverage of your choice (i.e. ale, cider, whiskey, water, or a beverage appropriate to your cultural tradition.)]

**Mighty Kindred,
I am open to your blessing.
I receive the gifts you offer.
May your generosity fill my cup.**

[Lift up the cup.]

**Into my being, I accept the blessings
of The Kindred.**

[Drink deep.]

**The blessings are received,
Into my body and spirit.
I have reaffirmed my relationship
With the world, and with the Kindred.**

XIV Workings

[This portion of the ritual is optional. If there are particular magical workings prepared for this working, do them now.]

XV Final Affirmation

[For the language of the Final Affirmation, please refer to SDF's First Harvest or Imbolc devotional, both of which are available at solitarydruid.org.]

Once you have read aloud the Affirmation, continue on with the liturgy.]

Now, I give thanks.

XVI Thanking The Beings

[In reverse order, thank the Kindred. Substitute their names and titles as they appear in the brackets and repeat the thanks for each of the Kindred.]

To the [Beings of Occasion/Spirits of Place/Ancestors/Gods], I give thanks.

**I thank you for your joining me on this
High Day, for receiving my offerings,
and for your great generosity.**

**I am blessed to be in relationship
With you.**

[If you are moved to do so, speak your gratitude for the ways in which you experience the Kindred in your lives.]

Let the spirit of gratitude fill your heart, and inform the words you speak.]

XVII Closing The Gates

**Great [Gatekeeper], I give thanks to
you for aiding me in this rite.**

**I ask now that you undo what you
have done. Lend your power to mine,
and let us close the gates.**

Take this Sacred Tree, and let it
become the [wood] once again.

*

Take this Sacred Well, and let it
become the [water] once again.

*

Take this Sacred Fire, and let it
become the [candle] once again.

*

Through your power and magic, great
[Gatekeeper]...

Let the gates be closed!

*[Take a moment to visualize the closing of the
gates. Your space has returned once again to the
common, ordinary place it was before.*

Breath in deep, and exhale.]

XVIII Thanking the Earth Mother

I place my hand upon the ground,
Earth Mother.

You have supported me in this rite as
you do in all things. From you I come
and to you I shall return. You are my
mother, and I am your child.

Your children give thanks
For the blessings and bounty of
This great earth.

May we keep you
In our minds and hearts,
And may we honor you in every
action.

XIX Closing The Rite

I am one and we are many.
Fellowship, in solitude.
I have made my offerings
To celebrate the Kindred Three.

In my mind and in my body,
I hold space in solitude
For all of those who walk alone.
May they be blessed in all they do.

I go forth into the world,
Strengthened by this Druid rite.
May we pray with a good fire,
And make the Old Ways new again.

It is done!