

# OAK LEAVES

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# FESTIVAL OF THE MIDNIGHT FLAME

September  
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## OAK LEAVES

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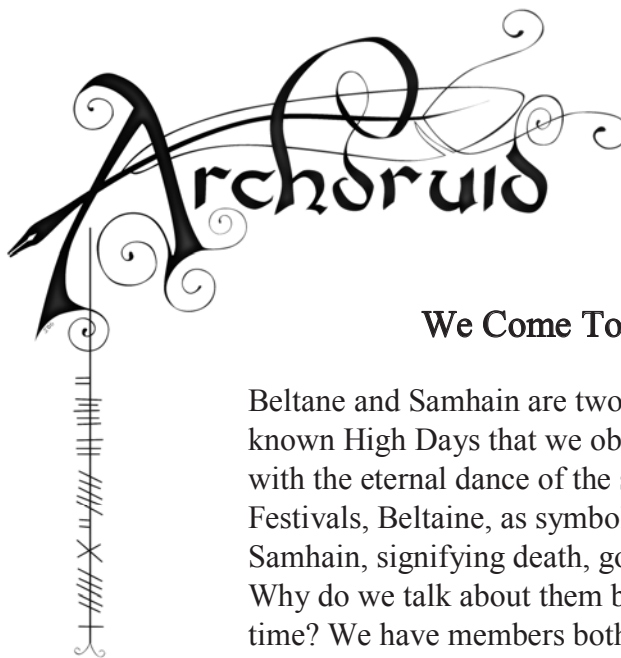
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## We Come Together

Beltane and Samhain are two of the most well-known High Days that we observe. In keeping with the eternal dance of the seasons and Fire Festivals, Beltaine, as symbolic of growth, and Samhain, signifying death, go hand and hand. Why do we talk about them both at the same time? We have members both north and south of the equator, so somewhere, somehow ADF is always dancing both sides of the seasonal inter-play. We do the work while the Earth and the Earth Mother do their work. We are all in this together.

As Beltaine arrives, I think that a good idea for the "Workings" portion of the Core Order rite is to read the names of those who have recently been born or those that have recently celebrated unions of any kinds. This is both coming into being and coming together. These are items of increase and are best celebrated and recognized when the season itself is increasing. One may either read the names of those new babies, new Druids, or new unions, or go around the circle





and let people read their own names or the names of their loved ones who fall into these categories. The leader of the rite could read the names for those not present or not represented.

As Samhain comes to our respective worlds, here too one may use the “Working” section of the Core Order rite to detail the names of those who have passed away, moved away, or experienced some sort of dissolution, if it is not too painful for the individual to have the event mentioned. These are endings and comings apart. These are items that end or fall away or diminish. While many of these things are not pleasant, they are part of the natural order of things, and one day we will find ourselves in one of these categories. One may read the names of those who have died, who have otherwise departed, and whose situations have changed with their friends, loved ones, partners, pets, whatever or whomever may have departed or separated. Again, the leaders of the rite could read the names for those who are not present.

While hemispheres and distances may separate our members, there are certain commonalities that we share regardless of location. The Earth Mother is one of these commonalities, as are the Kindreds. Our Ancestors are ubiquitous, I believe. They are as accessible in South America as they are in Asia. Our experience of the Shining Ones may be location-based, but I know that they can be called to regardless of where we are located. The Spirits of Nature are as vital and as varied as our experiences of the Earth Mother. Regardless of where or when, Our Druidry continues to be vital and alive. Let us revel in the knowledge that

we share these things with the other members of ADF. By the same token, there are Druids across the world and while they may not be ADF Druids, they are Druids nonetheless and they share our concern and love for the world around us. Perhaps we should be less concerned with labels and more mindful of our similarities while celebrating our differences. Let us welcome other pagans and Neopagans of a like mind to our workings and to our celebrations to help foster the hospitality that is the centerpiece of our virtues.

There is a new listing or blog that comes out twice every High Day season. It is called “News from the Archdruid”. I spoke to members from across the world, and they wanted more news about what was going on organizationally. “News from the Archdruid” is a way to get out not only what the Archdruid is doing, but what the Mother Grove is doing as well.

If I can help in any way, please feel free to reach out to me via email, Facebook, Twitter, or any way that works. I am interested in hearing what is on your mind.

Beltaine/Samhain Blessings,  
Rev. Jean (Drum) Pagano  
Archdruid, ADF

## Summer Issue of Oak Leaves

*By Oak Leaves Editor-in-Chief Rev. G. R. Grove*

Although it is still early spring here as I write this, by the time you read it summer will be beginning for most of us. New leaves will cover the trees, flowers will be in full bloom, and our gardens will begin to grow. For those not able to go outside and garden, however, we have two pertinent articles this time: Rev. D. Rowen Grove talks about indoor bowl gardens, and Rev. Chelly Couvette has suggestions for living your druidry

Rev. Robert Lewis – another subject on which opinions differ! Finally, Rev. Ian Corrigan gives us a ritual oriented toward affirming personal sovereignty.

I was hoping to include another Wandering Druid article this time, but in our next issue we can expect to hear about Dean Hallett's recent experiences in Greece. Incidentally, I encourage anyone



while physically disabled. For another indoor activity, our Chronicler Manny Tejada-Moreno has some thoughts about sacred food.

This time we have two thought-provoking articles from Wayne Keysor and Rufus Maychild, discussing respectively the subject of cultural appropriation in Paganism and the Gift Bargain implied in our ritual offerings. Some of us may disagree with their viewpoints on these subjects, but one of the beauties of ADF is our lack of fixed dogma, which allows us all to believe as we will. Our Core Order of Ritual requires certain actions in public high day rituals, but our private practice is our own. However, for those who want to follow the Core Order privately, Victoria S. offers a Solitary version, especially tailored for Beltane. We also have a discussion of the Outdwellers by

fortunate enough to visit sacred sites of whatever kind to submit a similar article. As our Archdruid said in his article, we have members around the world, and we are richer for sharing other experiences and viewpoints.

This column would not be complete without mentioning the poets, especially Nathan Large who has provided us with an original Norse story in verse. I would also like to thank first-time contributors Jenne Micale and Melanie S. Peterson, and to encourage others to send in their own verse. We cannot have too many poets!

Finally, I would like to congratulate our two newest Priests – Rev. Lauren Mart and Rev. Chelly Couvette. Lauren's ordination is scheduled for April 28th, and Chelly's for some time during Wellspring. Congratulations to both!

## The Delicious and the Ritual

By Manny Tejada-Moreno

In the film, *Like Water for Chocolate*, we are reminded not just of the magical powers of foods but also of its near daily necessity. Tita – the main character – connects with food intimately. Her energy pervades the food she cooks and her intent – purposefully or accidentally – possesses those who eat her preparations.

Tita’s experience with food begins early. She recognizes the kitchen as a liminal and limitless space where spirit becomes an ingredient. Tita sees in the kitchen an “endless expanse that began at the door between the kitchen and the rest of the house, whereas everything on the kitchen side of that door, on through the door leading to the patio and the kitchen and herb gardens was completely hers – it was Tita’s Realm”.

That passage reminds me of ritual. Tita builds and enters her ritual space every time she prepares food. She focuses on all of the elements that is ritual: research, preparation, structure, improvisation and execution. She uses food to expose messages and emotions. And she uses food to create change, to heal, and to celebrate.

Food in ritual is an opportunity to create new connections. Like incense and libations, food becomes part of us during the ritual experience. We take it in as we consume. And then, in one way or another, it may be with us forever. Perhaps only as a single molecule, but it is there – and more than just a memory.

I think that there are really two broad ways to include food in ritual. One such way is to offer food as a component of the ritual experience. Here food serves as an ingredient of the ritual. I think it is the more common way we include it in our work. Food serves as a component of the Core Order typically under Key Offerings. We might choose to incorporate food that under-

scores the Statement of Purpose or might further explore seasonal custom.

But food can also go beyond this role.

And to do that, I think we can learn from the Slow Food Movement that began in Italy in mid-1980s. The essence of the movement is to recognize our role in the local food ecosystem. It echoes back to the Arts and Crafts Movement of the last century that rose to resist the industrial takeover of artisanal folk competencies. The movement asks us to consider that a frantic pace of eating and ignorance about food production dishonors every spirit along the path of creation – farmer, seedling, cook, and plate. The Slow Food





Movement challenges us to become aware of tradition, preparation, place and moment. We must honor food, for it strengthens our spirits as well as our bodies. Our awareness changes the food – the act of eating becomes sustenance, not merely consumption.

In the Slow Food paradigm, the experience of eating should help us connect to the land. We should remember how something was grown, prepared, and plated for us. We should focus on the intimacy of connection from farmer to cook to us. When possible, we can add to the exceptionality of the experiences by searching for food from places where we can meet the farmer or even know the abattoir. The point of experience is to break away from indiscriminate feasting and celebrate feasting as our Ancestors would have done – rituals were special, holidays were special, and the food was special.

In this sense food can permeate throughout the ritual experience.

Let me sidetrack for moment and look at the Core Order. We have elements to ritual that should happen, we have elements that must happen, and we have elements that may happen. And yes, we also have some things that never happen. But we also don't have to be rushed in ritual. There is plenty of opportunity to hold, to explore and to honor the moment in each step of Core Order.

Removing an allotted amount of time in ritual is an opening for including food. Honoring the Earth Mother, for example, is an opportunity to go beyond the moment and the text and rather combine food with the reverence. Honey – and especially local honey – can be included in the moment of honor. We can go further and use honey gathered during the chestnut blossoms. We cannot only discover the power of the Earth Mother to provide sustenance but also explore the many ways She offers that nurturing. We do not



have to focus only on words of text that are spoken; we can use the moment to honor the concrete manifestations the Earth Mother offers to us. And we can take the time to commune with the flavors and richness of that sustenance to remind us of the vast complexity of Her gifts. Without imposing a time limit to ritual we can open the entirety of the experience in a slow and meditative exploration that combines the moment, the message, and food. Consuming food that is ritual makes us become the ritual as well.

Finally, food helps us delimit boundaries. The presence of certain foods sets seasons apart. Even finding prepared foods – like King Cake, or egg nog or Pandoro – tells not just what season and not just where we are but who we are. Even in many of our rituals, food follows worship – so again, food defines not just who, but what and when.

So, while incorporating food into ritual may not

always be obvious, in many ways it happens naturally. We allow food to define the moment.

We constantly are capable of bringing food into ritual – for some of us it tells us of ancestry and for others it tells us of path. Food offers a moment of sharing as well as education. However we might approach it, we can look for ways to make food less an ingredient of ritual and more of an experience of ritual. We hallow the food through selection and preparation. We deem it worthy of consumption for our loved ones after ritual. And if it is already that powerful and that important, it is also a doorway for offerings and for becoming.

As Julia Child famously quipped, “a party without cake is just a meeting”.

*Manny joined ADF in 2004, and has been serving as ADF Chronicler since 2015.*

## Dish Gardens for the Land Kin

*By Rev. D. Rowen Grove*

Across a gently undulating moor, clothed in vegetation of russet and vivid green, you come upon a deep dip in the earth, glistening with moisture, hinting at bog lands, or ancient sacred pools; above it rises a grey standing stone . . . and all in a bowl perhaps nine inches wide.

This evocative little landscape sits on my kitchen counter, taking in the morning sunshine – it’s the first and still favorite of my dish gardens, although at the moment, it is, alas, in recovery from some damage done by an inquisitive squirrel. Despite this, it seems to have acquired a small, indwelling spirit.

Dish or “fairy” gardens are fairly popular these days, and although some are thoughtfully constructed, all too many seem overly contrived, with cutesy little benches, teensy plastic houses, even sometimes little mass-produced “fairy” figurines, and for the most part are not very interesting to this Druid. But what of a dish

garden made as an indoor landscape, a place where one can invite the non-physical Land Kin to perch, even if only for a visit? Like a classic bonsai, a carefully constructed and tended small work of art, meant to evoke a whole wild landscape within a few square inches? To some degree, any potted plant could serve as a visiting spot for the Land Kindreds, or in a pinch even a plain bowl of garden soil, or a single stone. But just as one might furnish a guest room with the comfort and enjoyment of one’s human visitors in mind, these little landscapes can be designed as just that – miniature sections of the land, appealing to a visiting spirit. Such small wild places can be particularly useful for apartment dwellers or others whose outdoor space is severely curtailed; many dish gardens can exist happily on a sunny window-sill, and those containing no vegetation may be displayed almost anywhere. Even an arrangement without living plants can be a landscape: a dish of sand, stones, perhaps some tiny shells, or a bit of





driftwood, less structured than a formal Japanese rock garden, may still be evocative of a seashore or river bank, perhaps as seen in winter.

Should you wish to construct your own, the first thing to decide is the kind of landscape you would like. Is this to be something to honor your local Land Kin, or is it to be, like my little standing stone, something which evokes a far-away land to which you are spiritually connected? Do you want to build something very green and lush, or perhaps a dry-land scene? Do you want to evoke a meadow, a prairie, a mountain crag, a sea-shore, or a riverbank? Is it intended as an offering, a small shrine, or as a part of your own altar? (It may be more than one of these.) These are some things to consider before starting.

It is the shape of the land which defines a landscape; the rocks, plants, and other things come after that. So, in constructing this little garden, you will need to decide on the contour of the land before making any plantings; but before that, you must choose a container. How much room do you have for this, and what sort of pot or

dish is most appropriate? For most dish gardens, a container wider than it is high or deep works best. Some bonsai-style pots are quite good, but there are other possibilities as well. Thought should be given to the type of vegetation (if any) to be used; for plants which require a moister environment, a pot with a drainage-hole would be preferred. Those which need scant or no watering can subsist fairly happily in an un-drained bowl or tray. Note that any plant, even moss, requires a certain amount of light, and very few plants will tolerate sitting in an un-drained “swamp.” There are a number of instructions to be found at garden centers or online on “how to construct a dish / fairy garden”, and they will vary depending on the type of plants used and the effect desired. I have found in making several dish gardens of varying sizes that each one is a learning experience. All of them require some regular maintenance – but tending them can become a small meditative exercise.

My first effort in this direction was the mossy



moor described above, complete with standing stone. The dish I used is about nine inches across and three deep, a pale green glazed shallow bowl picked up at a student pottery sale. The little standing stone is a local river-rock that was in my garden, and the moss came from various spots: growing in a bag of potting soil, picked up on a north-facing wall by a parking lot, etc. There are several varieties in there; some kinds of moss seem to work better than others. The little dip in the ground suggests a deep pool, or perhaps a bog, and the white pebble is a reference to the white quartz pebbles found in some holy wells in Scotland. I've discovered that moss is trickier than one might think, especially in a dry climate; while it will often grow in some seemingly unlikely places, it will not necessarily cooperate and flourish where you want it.

Next I tried planting a little dwarf holly in a small oval bonsai pot, together with its own standing stone. This did not work very well at first; my initial lack of understanding of the plant's needs

caused it some trauma, but I learned what it wanted, and it is now adding new growth, and has a developing groundcover of volunteer dwarf oxalis as well. The growing and tending of a true bonsai is a whole topic on its own, and more complicated than it first appears. Note that simply buying a "bonsai" at a big-box sort of store is not usually a good idea, for the poor thing has already had a hard life, and seldom prospers. However, if you want an "indoor tree", your local garden center probably has a good supply of plants suitable for dish gardens.

A few of the other landscapes I have developed:

- One of my smallest is in a three-inch wide vintage terracotta plant saucer, which contains a little soil, two local stones, and a small succulent plant of the "hen and chickens" variety. The saucer has no drainage hole, but the little succulent is happy with a teaspoon or so of water every day or two, and enjoys strong sunlight. It has become a part of the Earth Mother garden in my kitchen window.



- A bit of seashore in an old carved wooden bowl: ocean sand with small pieces of shell, and a round bit of glass standing in for a tidal pool. This lives on my shrine to Manannán mac Lir, and is more of an offering. As it contains no plants, it does not require sunlight or watering.
- Another one is still in development, with some stones and a dwarf spruce, and in the future, I intend to try a “forest garden,” with some of the persistent elm or maple seedlings which come up in pots in the garden every spring.

Here are a few other things to bear in mind:

- Most healthy plants, unless they are of a dwarf variety, or are specifically trained to remain small, will continue to grow and in time may outgrow your container. In this case, you will need to decide whether to continually prune or to relocate them.
- When combining different kinds of plants, choose those with similar needs for light and moisture; also, consider the scale of the plant to the container. A broad leafed philodendron

or tall rye-grass, for example, will never look like part of a miniature landscape.

- If the plants you intend to use actually come from your own local environment, be careful not to uproot anything which is endangered, and be sure that you can provide an appropriate environment for the plants you collect. It doesn't honor the Land Kin to put something in a pot and have it die there.

Although I don't care for most of the miniature “garden furniture” that's available, you may decide that your landscape would benefit from a bench or arbor, or perhaps a small temple. Consider those for whom it is being developed, and ask them.

May you and the Land Kin both enjoy your creation.

*Rev. D. Rowen Grove joined ADF in the spring of 2010, and completed her Dedicant Path work two years later. She became an ADF Initiate in 2015 and was ordained an ADF Priest in 2016. She is currently Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado, and ADF Preceptor..*

## The Case for Cultural Appropriation in Contemporary Paganism

*By Wayne Keysor*

The issue of adopting the religious practices of other cultures for our own use within the developing tradition of contemporary Paganism has become problematized in recent years in a way that it has not been in previous generations. The adaptation and use of another culture's religious or spiritual traditions has been labeled pejoratively as cultural assimilation or cultural appropriation (I will use the terms interchangeably in this essay). Richard Rogers defines cultural assimilation broadly as, "the use of a culture's symbols, artifacts, genres, rituals, or technologies by members of another culture" (476). Such a broad definition immediately raises the question why cultural assimilation has come to be considered taboo in some circles; after all, humanity as a whole has benefited immensely from cultural assimilation throughout our long history. Important technologies such as writing, pottery, agriculture, iron smelting, and western medical science, to name just a few, have been created by specific cultures at specific times and subsequently have been appropriated, or assimilated, by other cultures to their lasting benefit. It would seem to take a particular smallness and meanness of spirit to wish to deny other human beings the benefits of such valuable cultural innovations.

However, cultural assimilation has come to be problematized because the transmission of culture rarely proceeds in situations of equity and fairness. There are often unequal power relationships between the cultures that are exchanging ideas, which usually results in unequal outcomes for the people involved. For this reason, Rogers further subdivides cultural assimilation into four types: exchange, dominance, exploitation, and transculturation. The first three represent the three possible permutations of cultural exchange in the context of differing power relationships: that is, the first category is the transmission of culture between groups of roughly equal power; the second, the transmission of culture from a

more powerful group to a less powerful group, often imposed by the more powerful group; and the third, the transmission of culture from a less powerful group to a more powerful group, usually without "reciprocity, permission, or compensation" (477). The fourth category, transculturation, Rogers defines as, "cultural elements created from and/or by multiple cultures, such that identification of a single originating culture is problematic; for example, multiple cultural appropriations structured in the dynamics of globalization and transnational capitalism creating hybrid forms" (477).

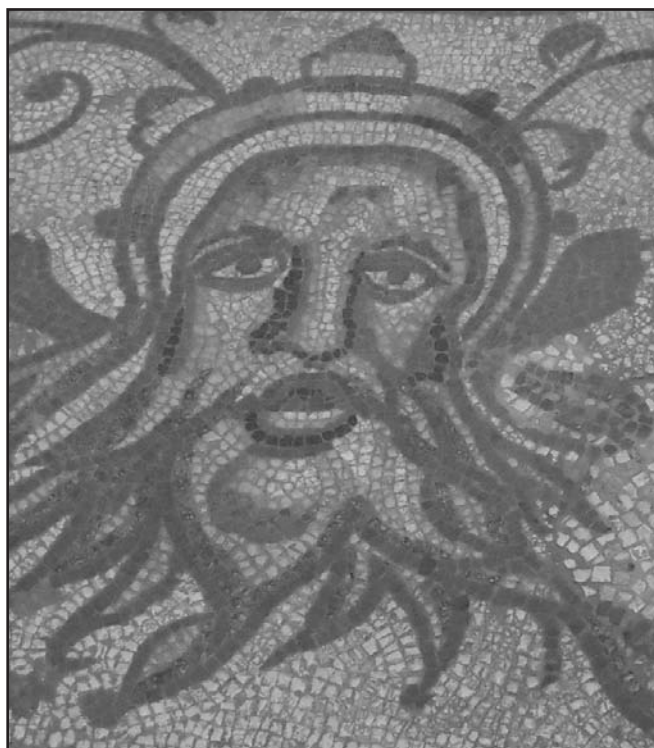
Under this four-part schema, it is really the third kind of cultural assimilation, exploitation, that has come to have a particularly bad name in contemporary Paganism. John Rowell, who is focusing on cultural appropriation within the arts, narrows the critique of exploitation by noting that it is not even problematic, from the perspective of cultural appropriation at least, for individuals from dominant cultures to present their impressions of a marginalized culture (138). Rather, "the real target in the voice appropriation contro-



versy is ... those works in which a dominant culture member takes as his or her focus the voice of a member of an oppressed culture and pretends to be that person. The term 'voice' may be extended to include 'expression' to cover appropriation in non-vocal music, painting, and dance" (Rowell 138).

Thus, in a contemporary Pagan context, using the spiritual techniques of a Siberian shaman, or a Native American medicine man, or Vodou Mamba, *and* representing oneself as a member of that group or attempting to speak with the spiritual authority of that group, especially if one is a member of a dominant European culture, has come to be seen as morally problematic. Furthermore, even employing religious practices from a marginalized culture without making the second claim, that one possesses the spiritual authority which comes from being part of the marginalized group, has come to be regarded with suspicion and sometimes even outright hostility.

Yet, this issue of cultural assimilation of religious practices from marginalized to dominant cultures in contemporary Paganism is perhaps not as simple as it might appear on the surface. I will make the argument that cultural appropriation is a natural process that is continuously ongoing and



that there are good reasons to argue that it benefits humanity as a whole. Furthermore, there is a clear distinction between employing the ideas and technologies of another culture and treating the members of that group unjustly. I will offer up five arguments for cultural assimilation with a focus on the spiritual element of culture, but which will have some applicability in other areas of culture as well.

The first argument is that unlike other kinds of cultural exchange, spiritual techniques often involve third parties, meaning that it is not just the marginalized and dominant groups who have a say, but also the spirits and gods with whom they are engaging in relationships. Religious techniques in contemporary Paganism, just as in many indigenous, earth-centered religions, involve engaging with spiritual powers who can hold back, as well as grant favors, who can curse, as well as bless. This means that these beings have the means to express their own pleasure, or displeasure, with those engaged in appropriation. And at some level if these powers are satisfied with the activities of a devotee, even if this devotee comes from outside of the culture in which the worship typically has occurred, on what grounds can those inside the culture really object? To not approach this issue in this way is to question the independence, agency, and even perhaps the reality of these powers. The fact that it might be highly debatable among people about how these spiritual powers are responding to the use of techniques assimilated from a marginalized culture does not change the fact that we must, at some level, accept that they do have a say.

The second argument is that the assimilation of cultural practices, especially spiritual ones, is not like borrowing a shovel from a neighbor. If two neighbors are arguing over the use of a particular shovel, it matters a lot, because without another shovel, only one of them will be able to dig her garden. Spiritual techniques, on the other hand can be used by multiple people in multiple ways, without impacting each other's experience. Two



good examples of this phenomenon are yoga and mindfulness meditation. Both are spiritual practices that originated in South Asia out of the complex of indigenous religions that eventually developed into modern Hinduism and Buddhism. Both practices have been widely adopted and adapted by the West. Yet the fact that westerners use these practices in ways that diverge from their traditional purposes does not mean in any way that Indians or Tibetans are kept from using them in their traditional context.

Indeed, it seems as practices multiply, there is actually more choice for these traditional practitioners, which could lead to further exploration and discovery. They may continue to use spiritual techniques as they have always done, or they might learn from westerners and use them in different but still potentially valuable ways. This argument is not valid, of course, if the dominant culture tries to suppress the traditional practice within the marginalized culture; however, I would argue that contemporary Paganism is not in that position. Quite the opposite, it is strongly supportive of people practicing indigenous, earth-centered religions in traditional ways.

This point leads into a third argument for cultural

assimilation. A culture is not a person with moral rights, nor is it a static, self-contained organism, as it often seems to be described. Rather, it is a set of practices used by people, people who are always in relation with each other. For this reason, a culture cannot be offended, nor can it be treated unjustly. Only persons or their spiritual allies can be offended; only persons or their spiritual allies can be treated unjustly. Thus, we should focus on how we treat others: do they have an equitable share of resources; are they safe; do they have their basic material, social, and spiritual needs met; do they have opportunities for achieving a fulfilling life? The question of whether it is appropriate for us, as contemporary Pagans, to eat or pray as another cultural group does is of little importance next to these more significant questions. Indeed, one should be wary if the considerations of cultural assimilation dominate one's focus, as opposed to the more fundamental matters of human well-being and natural justice. Indeed, cultural appropriation in situations of fairness is morally unproblematic, or perhaps even morally praiseworthy, though, of course, there are always social implications for both the giving and receiving society.

And it is precisely these social implications that draw into sharp relief my second claim in this section of the argument, that cultures are not self-contained, unchanging organisms. Rather, cultures change over time based on both internal developments and external influences. People find certain practices more or less useful as their environment alters. This is the natural process of culture change, and to attempt to freeze a culture into place is the equivalent of taxidermy; the only way that works is if the animal is already dead. The exchange of ideas and their adaptation by people is the life-blood of a vibrant culture. Ideas flow and move as people flow and move. Such interactions have never been limited strictly to internal movements within a culture, but have always included elements entering from the outside. Indeed, cultural assimilation is one of the primary tools that people have to adapt to changing circumstances. Good ideas by their nature spread. And the fact that these interactions do not often happen in situations of perfect or even

substantial fairness does not invalidate the usefulness of cultural assimilation as a tool for cultivating human well-being.

Our own culture is a case in point. The Western cultural tradition is usually reckoned as starting with the ancient Greeks, yet scholars have long recognized that the then-culturally more powerful ancient Near East was instrumental in shaping early Greek culture, particularly from the 8th to the 6th century BCE. And this shaping was not just a matter of transferring technologies or artistic forms, but also transferring and transforming fundamental elements of Greek culture like religious stories and cosmological conceptions. It is quite clear that some of the most important Greek myths came from the Near East, but were then transformed in the Greek context (Raaflaub, 18-21). And this is just one example of many that could be cited.

So if we accept that our own culture is a thing constructed over time out of both internal and external elements, and this most definitely includes our spiritual traditions, then it seems strangely arbitrary and frankly unrealistic to attempt to freeze our culture in place now and declare that, though we can trace how our culture was influenced by outside cultures over many thousands of years, those processes are no longer acceptable today and should cease. Rather, as was argued previously, the important thing is how we treat each other, not how we treat each other's ideas.

The fourth argument for cultural assimilation is that we should adopt a view of humanity as an extended family. In a loving family, each wants what is best for the other, and we share our strengths with each other ungrudgingly. This occurs in spite of the fact that members of a family are individuals with unique attributes, and not everything that works for one family member will work for another. This is how it should be between cultures. Though we might not necessarily agree with the theology behind it, the ancient Stoic view that each human contains a fragment or spark of the divine world soul within us is a myth that speaks powerfully and poetical-

ly to the essential unity of humanity. We all are born, we all die, and we all seek fulfillment in between. It should be that we want to share our ideas with each other for our mutual betterment. If there is a powerful spiritual technique out there, why should it be only limited to a select number of people or a select culture? The impulse to want to keep something from others which could help them seems small-minded, petty, and particularly selfish, especially since allowing people to use these techniques or to engage with particular gods or spirits does not impact the giver's ability to do the same. One could object that this is utopian thinking, and it certainly is to a degree, but if we do not begin to think this way, we will never progress toward a more just future. The tendency to see culture as a divider leads to conflict. The tendency to find commonality among people opens up compassion and the potential for understanding. This does not mean we all have to be the same, but it does mean that we should recognize that in some fundamental ways, we are one.

And finally, the last and fifth argument is that there is something strangely totalitarian about arguing that people cannot think certain thoughts or engage with certain ideas because they *belong* to other people. Our ability to engage our own thoughts free of outside interference within our own mental space is a fundamental human right. If we accept this premise, then it again seems weirdly arbitrary that we are allowed to engage internally with certain ideas, but if they manifest in the external world, through religious practice for example, then this activity somehow becomes illegitimate. The free flow of ideas is a strength of humanity, and the ability of a positive, helpful idea to transform a person's life for the better is amazing. We should not be in the business of turning away good ideas simply because they came from somewhere else or because we feel guilty about how members of our own culture have treated people from other cultures. If you feel this guilt, then stand up for justice for the people involved, but do not shy away from exploring the positive, healthy attributes of their

culture by integrating some of their practices into your life.

This is a complicated issue, and I do not expect to convince everyone, but I hope that I have at least opened up the possibility that cultural appropriation is a force for good and that it should be part of the naturally evolving, shared enterprise that is contemporary Paganism. I will conclude this essay by noting that the pursuit of a meaningful human life is universal, but the individual practices that humans have evolved to seek that meaning are not. This does not mean that such practices cannot have a wider applicability beyond the culture that spawned them. If such practices can do some good in the world, why would we not engage with them?

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## **Just Give: An Alternate Point of View**

*By Rufus Maychild*

I've been a member of ADF now for several years, though if I had my time again I would have joined at the beginning. Sadly, though one might expect otherwise in the land of Cymru, there are very few folk interested locally (one elderly and housebound as I understand, plus one young, fit, and of my extended family but with many other interests). I have enormous respect for ADF, but being a heretic always, find that there are some things I'm very uneasy about.

Foremost, perhaps, is the idea of "do ut des" – not a constitutional principle I think, but significant in ADF material. This Latin phrase is usually translated as "I give, so that you may give". The formula was apparently used in Roman civil law as well as in relation to offering to the Gods. I do not have the academic knowledge of Latin to be able to comment on any possible subtleties, nor to propose alternative Latin. Nonetheless, as ex-

pressed in English, I feel that the idea is wholly mistaken.

To get quickly to the point, the phrase (a) is the wrong way around and (b) has the wrong conjunction – which doesn't leave much of merit...

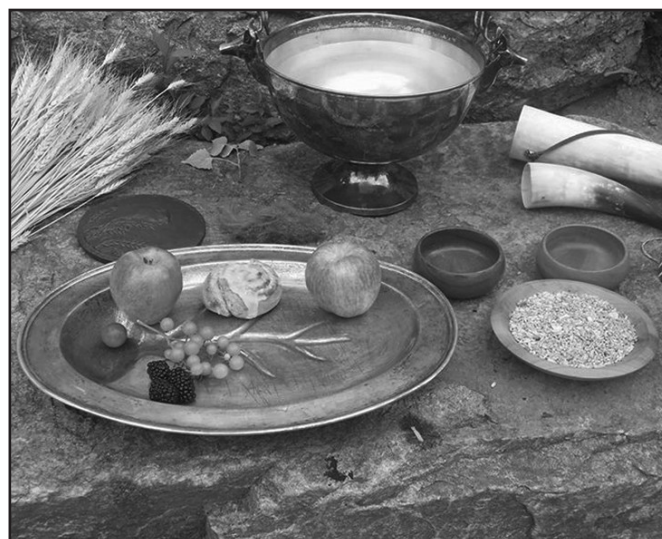
The sequence implied by the phrase is explicit enough: that Deities give after, and only after, we have given our offerings. But the Gods have already Given to us. Life, the Universe and Everything in fact. If, for example, we honor the traditions related in Voluspa, we tell how Odin, Vili and Ve Gave us Breath (spirit, inspiration), Wod (sense, reason) and Blood (energy, passion). As individual human beings we are born from the Gift of love, nurtured likewise. We would not be here were it not for the Gifts of our Mothers. Each day that we eat, drink, breathe, dance, love is the Gift of the Deities. And then rebirth.

So it seems to me that this sequencing of things is

something of an insult to the Deities, a hubris indeed, that suggests we are the drivers of the Cycle of Life. To me, this is at odds with what I understand as a primary principle of ADF, to honor the Earth Mother first and last. We can only give because the Deities have already Given to us.

The conjunction “so that” is mostly understood as emphasizing the sequence as above, with additional implication of causality. One may easily take the phrase as implying that we give only in order to get what we want – and with the intention of getting advantage in the exchange. At its worst, it suggests that the Deities are capricious despots requiring appeasement (much like the big J worshipped by the Abrahamists). Yet I doubt that any ADF members actually relate to the Deities in such a way.

I’m not in a position to say at what point “do ut des”, as described above, became dominant in Roman religion, or for Indo-Europeans in general. If it ever did, the phrase might derive from spiritually corrupt intellectuals for all I know, not reflecting real spiritual practice. In so far as there was a shift from a more primal sense of spiritual gifting alongside material gift economy, the formulation of “do ut des” was, for me, something on the lines of “original sin”! Although we have but little documentation, for many non-Indo-European “traditional” or “indigenous” spiritualities, it is entirely reasonable to think that spiritual gifting matched the material gifting of “potlatch”



and similar practices.

For me then, the simplest reworking of the phrase might be “I give as you give / gave”. Clearly this flips the implied sequence. I want to stress, though, that I mean the simple “as” in the sense of “in like manner” or “according to your example”, and definitely not with the meaning “to an equivalent extent”, since that would turn giving into exchange. It is in any case ludicrous to think that we might match the Deities’ gifts. In exchange, the focus is on what we get back, with preference for a “bargain”, something actually unequal (greater) in value. In gifting, by contrast, we focus on the recipient and their needs. It is up to us to trust in the knowledge that gifting is transitive, that gifts move on and around. Our own needs will be met. We don’t need to hoard our “warm fuzzies”. Be content – the Deities have promised and They will perform.

So what do the Deities need from us? Our simple material offerings help to open the way to their presence, but are of little relevance to their real nature. In the world today, I tend to feel that more than anything else the Deities need the Gifts of our own life energies – via work of course, not sacrifice – in defense of their creation against the devastations of capitalist patriarchy. That work is their deepest honoring.

*Rufus Maychild joined ADF in 2014 and lives in Wales.*

## Stolen Thread

*By Nathan Large*

Sing a secret saga,  
Unknown until today:  
Of Odin's boy I speak,  
Wind-swift and battle-brave,  
Sleipnir-Rider, Hermoðr,  
And how he robbed the Norns.

After hailing Hel's halls,  
After Baldr's pallor,  
After guesting in grief,  
Hale Hermoðr held horror:  
Not of death or defeat,  
But of being forgot.

Deeds and daring had Thor,  
Baldr, brightness, beauty;  
Even Laufey's son, as  
All-Father's fickle friend  
Warranted well would be  
Despite destructive deeds.

What of their swift sibling?  
Though fierce, fell, fine and fair,  
His stories seldom soared;  
No arrant adventure  
Was he allowed apart,  
Riding Rögnir's errands.

Thus, would he do, 'til death,  
Should duty drear demand.  
Hermoðr upheld honor,  
Obedient unto Doom,  
Bound by noble bearing,  
Which was his word, and Wyrð.

Duty-doomed rode Hermoðr,  
Reversed upon Helvegr,  
Bringing grave gifts to some,  
Bearing grave words to Frigg,  
Heading home with Hel's laugh,  
Slowed by thoughts serpentine.

Would he be hailed hero

For his daring descent?  
Would he be set aside  
In heedless haste, unthanked  
With all Asgard abroad,  
Begging brine for Baldr?

Instead, the swift son chose,  
While Sleipnir's speed he shared,  
To turn down and descend  
Toward World Tree's wide roots,  
To the lair at lands' end,  
Where sisters three weave Wyrð.

Never again might he  
Be freed to fare so far;  
Never again might he  
Wander away, unwatched,  
To find Fate's fell forgers,  
To ask them what he would.

At first, he solely sought  
To ask an accounting,  
But then, drawing inward  
The streams snaking slowly  
Round Yggdrasil's great base,  
Hermoðr improved his plans.  
Was he not swift, and stout,  
And wary, and war-skilled?



Spindle weights.

Did he not steer Sleipnir,  
Swallow-swift and steady?  
Why simply see his skein,  
When he could claim its coil?

In ill-advised ideas  
Came Hermoðr to the cave,  
Howling, his own herald,  
Hailing, walking inward,  
Playing petitioner  
To those who dwelt within.

“Sisters three, I attend  
From Asgard, to your door,  
Ahead of Frigg’s command,  
Bringing word, begging woe:  
Baldr’s held in Helheim’s halls;  
‘Til all lament his loss.”

Answered they as thousands,  
Three, and one: “This we know.”  
And into sight they stepped:  
Women of wide shadow,  
Intimidating tall,  
Giants of three ages.

Said stern Hermoðr, “I see...  
And I ask your answer:  
Will you weep for Baldr?”  
Answered old Urðr, “Assured,  
Are there any alive  
Who would not wail that wound?”

Still, she smiled, as she shed  
Tears from ancient eyes.  
A knowing nod she shared  
With Verdandi, weaving on  
Straight-faced, also sobbing.  
Even eyeless Skuld cried.

“Sisters, thanks,” said Hermoðr,  
“I will bear back your boon,  
But as I fared so far,  
A second gift I beg:  
To view my Wyrð and weave,  
A feat few have achieved.”

The eldest gave consent,  
Smiling still; the mid-most

Pondered pattern’s turning,  
Then agreed; the youngest  
Stayed her shears a second,  
Then spoke: “It shall be seen.”

Urðr teased the thin thread  
That spanned his single soul.  
Verdandi traced its track,  
Showing where it wound.  
Silent Skuld sat sullen,  
Unneeded to divide.

Lightning leapt, thus aligned,  
Quickest in all Nine Worlds,  
Faster even than Fates,  
Snatching up his spindle,  
Freeing it from the fear  
Of those life-bleeding blades.

She who ends all called out:  
“Stop, thief, or suffer worse,”  
But what is worse than her?  
From the cave, Hermoðr fled,  
Leaping eight-legged Sleipnir,  
Racing up and away.

Heart beating, breath heaving,  
Wracked with wonder, that he  
Should seek such and succeed  
Unlike any other;  
Hermoðr held his own Wyrð,  
To wind and weave as wished!

Would he boast his boldness,  
A deed none other dared,  
Never before and not after?  
Or should he stay silent,  
Concealing his conquest,  
Invincible, immortal?

His reward would wait:  
First, to free fair Baldr,  
Delivering Hel’s deal.  
Before himself, Hermoðr  
Held his interred kinsman,  
Hoping for his return.



Wikipedia: public domain image: Hermodr upon Sleipnir

To Asgard's doors he rode,  
Unannounced, unchallenged  
As if his homecoming

Were worth no welcome word...  
Were all so sorrow-sunk  
That none in kinship came?

Into Frigg's fane he fared,  
Revealing his return,  
Announcing his success.  
No heavy head yet turned,  
Sullen Aesir still snored,  
Deep in dreams, cups, and cares.

Fighting flaring fury,  
Their crier crossed the aisle,  
Mouthing his mother's name,  
Barking his brothers' name,  
Damning the doorman's name,  
That none should pay him heed.

Even gold-toothed Heimdallr,  
Furthest seer, sharp eared,  
Seemed senseless, still staring  
Even when nose to nose.  
Patience past, wroth Hermodr  
Raised hands and struck to rouse.

Like blood from ice rebounds,  
Without hit, without heed,  
His target untouched;  
Odin's son struck again,  
Harmless like the stones thrown  
At oath-warded Baldr.

Seeing nothing serving,  
The rider reined his rage,  
Imagining enchantments,  
Magic which might explain  
This strange state of Asgard,  
As Aesir drowsed senseless.

While thus in thought, there came  
Laments from mother Frigg,  
Addressed to those within:  
"Where is one warrior,  
To fare forth, fearless, and  
Bring Baldr from below?"

All stood in silent shame,  
Save Hermodr, who spoke out:  
"I! I am he, who dared

ride and return with word.  
Why does no one know me?  
Why am I forgotten?"

Speaking so, he felt a pull:  
A tug against his thigh  
Where hung the bag, that held  
His stolen strand of Wyrð,  
Unwound, unwove, unspun.  
By this sign, he grew wise.

Quick, courageous, clever,  
Hermoðr became greater,  
Learning what weavers know:  
No thread alone will bind,  
But must combine, drawing  
Warp with weft to entwine.

A single stolen thread  
Is safe, but worthless then.  
It must risk shortening  
With other threads tangling.  
Whole only in pattern,  
Making enmeshed meaning.

With thought as swift as acts,  
Rash Hermoðr turned 'round.  
Straddling Sviðurr's stallion,  
His messenger sped down,  
Ripping the road, racing,  
To find the Norns anew.

To their cold home he rode,  
Soft and silent entering,  
Punishment expected,  
Redressed earned for ill deeds:  
A future woven foul,  
If not at once snapped short.

Within, none stood forward,  
Not to indict or greet.  
In silence stood Hermoðr,  
Until, wiles and will fled,  
He called for consequence,  
Announcing his own guilt.

"Here I am, thief of thread,  
Faster than fate, yet foiled.  
A fly off the web, but

By its absence still bound.  
Sister spiders, descend.  
Your prey returns, undone."

Then did the three emerge,  
Old Urðr, Verdandi, and  
Faceless Skuld last always.  
His three sides surrounding,  
Ringing the self-damned rider,  
Holding out empty hands.

Knowing their meaning, he  
Held hard for a heartbeat,  
Then withdrew his life-thread,  
Placing it in the palm  
Of grim Verdandi, she  
Who most offended seemed.

"Spider, indeed," said she,  
Stringing his skein onto  
Existence's short spines.  
"What friendship did you find  
Outside, untouched, untied?  
What lonely, unbound pride?"

Stalwart Hermoðr stood strong,  
Facing truth, not flinching.  
"Without others joining,  
I could create nothing.  
They complete my pattern  
As I bend theirs in turn."

Turning to Urðr, instead,  
Accusing the crone, incensed:  
"You who grin, you design  
The boons we bear at birth,  
Traits that earn attention,  
Or lacking, limit life."

Cackling, she countered,  
"Find not your fault in me.  
Odin's boy, grateful be,  
That you I spun at all.  
You Aesir are long work,  
And not what I prefer.



Wikipedia: public domain image: The Norns

“I but spin, life to spawn,  
To birth it, but more blame  
The shearer or the sheep  
For fiber’s final form.  
Your temper tends from there;  
I wind what wool is found.”

Hermoðr nodded, humbled,  
Marking her meaning well.  
Having had answer, he  
Turned to the third, sharp Skuld,  
Summoning his last nerve,  
Demanding her defense.

“This final fault I find:  
You snip each span too short,  
Stealing stockpiled success,  
Denying dreams deserved.  
Birth and being are boons,  
But why abide your blade?”

Mouthless but still mocking,  
The maiden made reply:  
“More than wound or wasting,  
Forgetfulness you fear,  
But who must remember  
One who lives forever?”

“Value is unknown, ‘til done.  
An uncut blanket warms  
No bones; an infinite  
Garment is worn by none.  
Lives, like threads, need endings,  
To weigh their worth as wholes.”

Thus rebuffed, their thief bowed,  
And bid, “How do you judge?  
The raided hall was yours,  
Though what I claimed was mine.  
What is the price to pay?  
Jotnar, will you end me?”

The ancient one laughed loud;  
The weaver even smiled.  
But the youngest bristled,  
And silent, spoke for all:  
“Here, then, is your humbling,  
Torment and teaching, too:

“No unseen robber comes  
For us who hold Wyrd’s thread.  
We allowed what you dared,  
What occurred was ordained.  
What was, we wove, and yet,  
Unwinding, it wove us.

“Your stories are assigned,  
Even those not yet told.  
Your fame is foreknown, yet  
You must earn every word.  
You must fret as if free,  
Each decision doubted.

“Hie home, hasty Hermoðr,  
And deliver your doom.  
Bring back brother Baldr...  
If his Wyrd that will be.  
Boast of your bravery,  
Leaving silent this lapse.”

So saying, they unspooled  
The stolen skein again,  
Setting it all aspin,  
Resuming the story,  
Resetting the traveler,  
Returning thief to time.

## Aonghus of Dreams

By Jenne Micale

Do you hear him singing, with the birds  
around his head? Where does that thread end,  
the tapestry begin, the trailing fringe

of dream that brushes your face in sleep?  
Which feather belongs to a bird and which  
to the god? He spreads white wings in welcome

at the clear lake where he met his own  
beloved in the throes of dream. "Sleep now,"  
he hums, then spirits you away Étaín



## The Riddle

By Jenne Micale

Waiting for the road, the long ride,  
the transition from one place to  
another, each moment a greeting

and a farewell, a welcoming  
and a sorrow. This is more than  
one day — rather it is Aonghus

and the riddle that won him the *brugh*:  
for day and night, each and every,  
a single moment that spans all time



## Aranrhod's Lament for Dylan ap Ton

By Rev. G. R. Grove

White seagulls swoop and call along the shore  
and I sit watching on this rock alone,  
but from the sea my boy will come no more.

The long green waves as garments once he wore  
and gold as midday sun his bright hair shone.  
White seagulls swoop and call along the shore

and loud the empty waves in storm may roar  
in rage against this coast of ancient stone,  
but from the sea my boy will come no more.

For unexpected in the smithy's door,  
Gofannon's spear it clove him, flesh and bone.  
White seagulls swoop and call along the shore

where red as fire I saw his heart's blood pour.  
He vanished in the waves without a groan,  
but from the sea my boy will come no more.

What time has taken, she will not restore,  
and I am left behind, a bitter crone.  
White seagulls swoop and call along the shore  
but from the sea my boy will come no more.

## Ogham poem: Gort/The Garden

*By Jenne Micale*

Dearer than gold is the grass underfoot.  
What is an emerald to a mushroom?  
What are your questions to the song of a bird?  
What is death's darkness to the soil beneath,  
  
each inch bursting with more life than the moon?  
There sits no high god here, or everything  
is a god, neither high nor low. A beetle  
bristles with the same beauty as a stag,  
  
a toad with the speckled galaxies that wheel  
far above our heads, the inevitable  
starlings unfurling their scarf in the sky.  
The cow doesn't ask more. Neither should you.  
  
In the grass, the sating of multitudes.  
In the dirt, the counterpart of heaven.  
In the wildwood, the greenest of pastures.  
In pale morning, the abode of the swan.  
  
In dusk, ageless ivy, the autumn-red vine.  
In the furrow, treasures beyond compare.  
And of every worn tale, this you should know:  
poets name the walled garden paradise.



## Dream-Songs

*By Wayne Keysor*

*For Katherine, may there never be a winter so  
cold that you cannot remember flowers.*

When Summer dreams,  
she dreams in flowers,  
blue-green and bursting.

Blossoms born from summer sun,  
brought forth by the enchanter's art,  
sunlight frozen into fragile, spreading lace  
the color of new-fallen snow.

Or transmuted into roses so red  
as to pierce the heart,  
and wrench the soul  
from its sullen follies.

So many tiny, perfectly shaped, sacred fires  
set in temples of peerless green,  
invocations to the ever-mysterious genius  
of incomparable beauty.

For they are dream-songs, fragrant and fleeting,  
whose truth lies beyond the tangled paths of our  
own minds  
grown dark with the too-dense material  
of their own imaginings.

Dreams are not waking,  
but neither are they unreal,  
so sleep and dream in sweet repose  
and waken not til the cold dawn's call.



## Beltane: Pryderi

*By Rev. G. R. Grove*

Gold-haired boy-child, Beltane born,  
Wisdom's son, mother's Worry,  
horse-fond lad, Epona's foal,  
swift you grew, swift your running.  
Land-lord-fostered, well-loved child,  
hard your parting from that home;  
joy your coming brought to two –  
Annwn's Head and his Great Queen.  
Sorrow fled Rhiannon's face,  
her false penance now was done.  
Hail, Pryderi, Dyfed's Heir –  
Hail, Pryderi, hail!

Sharp-speared warrior, once you went  
with great Bran to Ireland fair.  
Fierce you fought there; from that fray  
seven only did survive.

Feasting followed; four-score years  
with sweet bird-song pleasant passed.  
Bran's head buried, home you brought  
Manawydan, wise and strong,  
soon to be your mother's mate,  
in green Dyfed long to live.  
Hail, Pryderi, Dyfed's Prince –  
Hail, Pryderi, hail!

Slow years passed; you ruled alone,  
generous, joyous, glad in hall.  
Then from Gwynedd strangers came  
cloaked in magic, offering  
three deceptions, Gwydion's work:  
gold that glittered but soon fled.  
You chose wrongly, broke your *geis* –  
vengeance followed, blood and ruin.  
Youth and magic beat you down,  
yet your courage never failed.  
Hail, Pryderi, Dyfed's Loss –  
Hail, Pryderi, hail!



## Ode to Brigid

*By Melanie S. Peterson*

White, black, and red  
Are Brigid's colors.  
Some scholars say  
They're primordial.  
All language has  
At a minimum  
These three shades.  
Tell me, Goddess  
Are you such a being  
Cast from the fires  
Of the first times?

From her birth she took to the sky.  
From her birth the great goddess took to the sky.  
My mistress, daughter of Dagda,  
took to the sky with the sun's rays as her halo.  
Great Brigid, daughter of Dagda,  
took to the sky with the sun's rays as her halo.

Ruadan's keener, steel striker  
Daughter of Dagda, whistler in the night  
I beg you, do not turn away from me because  
Of my reticence, Lady.  
But favor me now, if my prayers  
Reach you in your lofty places  
And please you in your hall on high,  
Release your sacred serpents.



## Outdwellers

By Rev. Robert Lewis

Within ADF, the concept of Outdwellers has often been a concept that has confused some people. After this past Wellspring I had someone discuss with me how they felt the way the Outdwellers were dealt with during the main ritual was offensive – that was, until it was explained to them which of the various concepts of Outdwellers was being used. People have taken vastly different approaches in how they are dealt with and I hope that what follows will prevent more misunderstandings in the future.

### What is an Outdweller?

This is a persistent question within ADF. The first way we can define them is by restricting to the fewest beings possible. This would be any being that could or would want to cause harm and/or disruption to your ritual work. In general, that would be any of the “evil” beings within a culture e.g. the Fomorians, Frost Giants, or Titans of the Celts, Norse, and Greeks respectively. Because these beings are known to work against the gods that we worship, they are considered disruptive forces that we almost universally do not want to have invited to our rituals. Within this category we can also include deities within the culture that we know don’t play well with the beings we are calling by name. As an example if we were doing a ritual to Loki then Heimdall would be considered an Outdweller.

Another definition that is commonly used can be equated with the Germanic idea of *ingardh* and *outgardh*. The general idea of this is those outside of the community’s boundaries (*outgardh*) are not invited, but anything within them (*ingardh*) are welcomed. The question that arises here is what are we calling our boundary? That is really up to those present in the ritual. A common definition is “beyond the light of this work’s fire”, or if you are indoors, beyond the walls of the room/building. By using this definition, we are usually allowing in whatever beings are in that place and

those that come with all participating in the ritual regardless of their culture. We usually add in a second part when defining Outdwellers along the lines of: “all you not aligned with the purpose of this rite”. This helps prevent the technically welcomed, but disruptive, beings from attending.

The third definition is the most restrictive in who is allowed in. This is where we say that any beings that are not part of the culture we are working with for that ritual are now considered Outdwellers. This prevents any cross-cultural issues, but it also can make attendees not feel that welcomed if their deities are not in the ritual’s culture. It was this definition that was being exemplified at the Wellspring ritual I mentioned at the start. The culture we were celebrating was all IE cultures. When the Native Americans were called out by name as Outdwellers, it was because they are not part of the IE cultures and hence asked to stay away from the ritual.



### How do we deal with Outdwellers?

There are many ways that the Outdwellers are dealt with throughout ADF. One way is to have a warrior deal with them. This comes out of discussions with Ceiswir Serith. The idea is that you don't want to form any kind of relationship with these beings, so you have a warrior go and forcefully tell them to stay away. The evolution of this became that all the non-warrior participants of the ritual turn away when the offering is made.

Along this same line of thought, another method I have seen is to again try to avoid making any relationship with them. The example I recall is that the person made the call to the Outdwellers, and then walked out of the circle, put the glass of beer down, faced the circle again, and kicked the beer over behind them. There was no requirement that the people in the ritual not look in that direction. The key though was the person making the offering did it in such a way that they were least likely to form any kind of relationship with them.

If we don't worry about forming a relationship, then we are able to be more polite to them. This evolved initially in my grove as a reaction to the warrior method. Here what is done is to make it an offering like all the others in the ritual. Be polite, ask them to stay away, and then make the offering as you would for any other being, just outside of the ritual area. In essence you are saying, "Here's some beer, you party over here with this beer and leave us in the ritual alone." This too has evolved to our current practice which is to make it more of a bribe. What we currently do is open the beer, show them and tell them that they will get it at the end of the ritual *if* they don't disturb us. This forces us to acknowledge them twice during the ritual and affirm that they behaved.

One final method that I have just recently learned about comes from Anna Sowell. It involves the person making the offerings to the Outdwellers to stay outside of ritual, be in the liminal space, and work with them to keep them out throughout the ritual. This does a few things. First, the person that stays outside the ritual becomes in essence a



sacrifice to the Outdwellers in that they are giving up the ritual to keep them at bay. They are also acting as a warrior because they are guarding the entrance to the ritual, however you define it. They are also forming some kind of \*ghosti- with them through being with them for the duration of the ritual. As I examine this method of dealing with Outdwellers, I can see a parallel of sorts to the peace formed between the Vanir and Æsir in the Norse lore with an exchange of some gods between the groups.

### When do we make the offering?

This too has many variations. The most common one I have seen is mostly related to the layout of the ritual space. Many groves have an Outdwellers area on the way into the ritual space. For practical reasons, the offerings are made on the way in. This works wonderfully well when you have a ritual space set up in such a fashion. If you don't, it can still work, but you have to remember to do it before you get to the ritual space.

Probably the next most commonplace is somewhere before the hallowing of the hallows and/or purification of the space/folk. When it is done here, the offering becomes in essence part of the purification. We ask the bad stuff to stay away,

then wash it all away from our bodies as we are purified. This also works well as it combines the energy and mindset of purification and coming into the rest of the ritual without these negative attributes, and keeping things out that would disrupt the ritual.

The latest that this can be done is just after opening the gates. The idea is that if we need to open the gates in order to have clear communications with all the other worlds, then logically we don't have such clear communications before that point. Therefore, if we call on the Outdwellers before we open the gates, they could theoretically not hear the call. If we do this after we open the gates, though, we should have clear communication and there should be no reason for them to disturb us, assuming the offering is accepted. This is done after we have called a few beings in, and that could be seen as an issue depending on the beings. The other tricky part of doing it here is that the person making the offering can be considered polluted after the purification is done resulting in the need that they be purified once again.

With the bribe method of making the offerings, you need to remember to make the offering some time after you receive the blessings. As many of us prefer that our rituals are symmetrical in how beings are called in and thanked out, you can put them in the appropriate slot there. My personal preference is to thank them right before the Earth Mother so we get through all the thanks before taking the chance they will come back in. As long as you don't forget to make the offering, even if it's a few minutes after the ritual when cleaning up, you should be fine.

If you are having someone sit outside the ritual as in the fourth method, you need to re-integrate the person into the group. They have just spent the entire ritual warding your space both physically and magically. They have set themselves aside for a larger purpose becoming part of the sacrifice. The group as a whole needs to welcome this person back, thank them for the job they have

done, and show them that they are once again one of us.

### **Forming relationships, or not?**

Ultimately, no matter what we do, once we call attention to ourselves and make any kind of offering, we are forming some kind of relationship with the Outdwellers. The question is to what extent, and how adversarial do we want the relationship to be. This is something that you and whatever group you work with need to discuss and determine. Most people and groups tend to fall on making as little of a relationship as possible, and often in an adversarial fashion. My grove and I on the other hand go the other direction.

What my grove does is relatively unique within ADF. For our spring equinox ritual, we have developed the tradition of doing a chaos, or Outdwellers ritual. We specifically call the Outdwellers into the ritual as our honored guests. As we are doing a Norse ritual, this involves us calling the Jotun (Frost Giants) as a group into the ritual as our beings of the occasion. We do this while reminding them that we expect \*ghostrelationships with them for this ritual. Much to my surprise the first few times we did this, they do respect the relationship. The other part of this ritual is the goal we have. We are inviting them in and forming a relationship with them. In return, we ask that they don't wreak havoc on our lives the rest of the year. Over the last 15 or so years this has worked well for us.

What kind of relationship you develop is ultimately up to you and any group you work with. A good default is to deal with the Outdwellers in such a way that the group as a whole creates as little relationship as possible. As you and/or your group gets more comfortable with the Outdwellers, you can slowly change to forming more of a relationship if you desire.

*Rev. Robert Lewis is a Senior Priest of ADF and has been a member since 1999. He is currently working on training members in Oracular Seidhr and trance work. He also is working on promoting inclusive heathenry and international relations.*

## A Solitary COoR Ritual for Regular Devotions

By Victoria S.

I have recently started doing COoR rituals for some of my daily devotions. I don't have a lot of time for these regular devotions, so the ritual needs to be quick and effective. My rituals tend to be pretty simple and streamlined – as is this one. This ritual is short and sweet, but flexible enough for you to do what you need.

In addition to your Hallows, you'll need a bell, singing bowl, or sound of some type for this ritual. There are apps on your phone if you don't have a physical bell. You'll also need offerings for the Kindreds and the Deity of the Occasion. Remember, water is always an acceptable offering.



For this ritual, I called Brigid in her aspect as Healer as the Deity of the Occasion, but please feel free to replace those lines with words appropriate to the Being of your Occasion.

If you would like to use this ritual for Beltane, or any specific High Day, consider the Deity of the Occasion that works for you for this High Day. What does the High Day mean to you? Is there a deity or being that makes sense for you to honor on that day? Remember, you don't need to worship a specific deity. For example, I will usually honor the Ancestors as the Deity of the Occasion on Samhain.

Before we get started, please keep in mind the following quirks about how I write my rituals.

Even in solitary rituals, I use the word “We” when referring to myself in rituals. If that makes you uncomfortable, I invite you to replace it with the first-person pronoun of your choice.

I work with a Gatekeeper as a guardian of the space, not as a being who opens the Gates. If you prefer, please change the wording to invite the Gatekeeper to open the gates instead of to guard the gates.

Speech is written in normal text, with actions and directions in *[brackets]*.

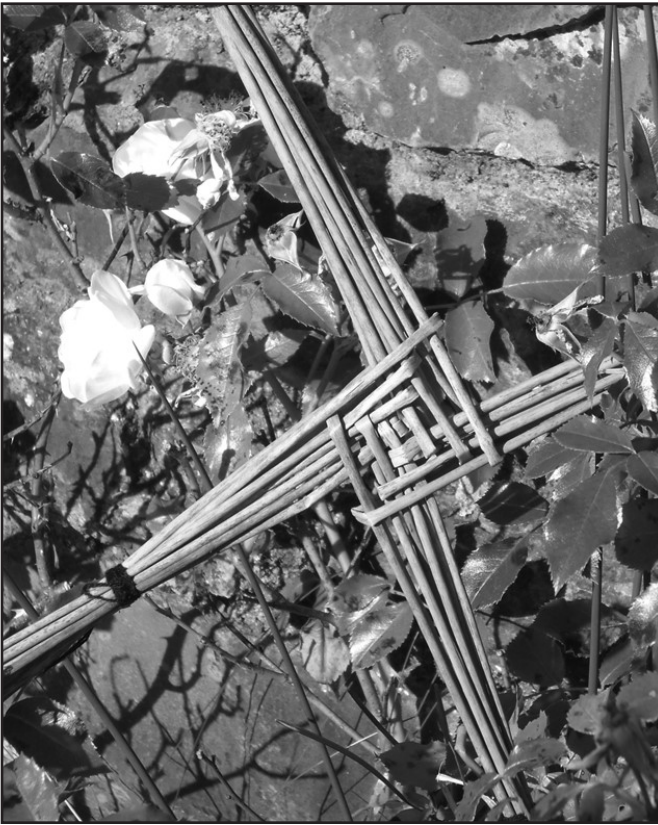
And now, here's the ritual. I hope that you find a use for it.

### SOLITARY RITUAL

*[Gather up your offerings and a chime, bell, rattle or drum]*

We come here today to honor the Old Ones.

*[Ring your bell, or make noise with your noise-*



May the Well be open as a Gate,  
*[Make a clockwise swirling motion near the Well.]*

May the Fire be open as a Gate,  
*[Make a clockwise swirling motion near the Fire.]*

May the Tree be open as a Gate,  
*[Make a clockwise swirling motion near the Tree.]*

May the Gates be open!

Ancestors,  
You who came before,  
You who birthed and shaped our bodies, hearts  
and minds,  
We call to you now.  
Ancestors, we welcome You.  
*[Make an offering to the Ancestors]*

*maker to clean the space. Let the sound flow through you, shaking off the cares and worries of the day. Breathe in the sound, connect with the sound, connect with the space, be HERE.]*

We call to the Earth Mother, who supports and sustains us as we stand here today in honor and praise.

*[Make an offering of grain or water for the Earth Mother]*

May the Fires of the Heavens flow to us,  
*[Light the flame or make an offering to the Fire.]*

May the Waters of the earth flow to us,  
*[Add silver to the Well.]*

May the Tree connect us,  
*[Anoint the tree with water from the Well.]*

May the Cosmos be whole!

Gatekeeper, we call to you  
To aid in our rite and guard the gates.

Nature Spirits,  
You who share this world with us,  
You who inspire us,  
We call to you now.  
Nature Spirits, we welcome You.  
*[Make an offering to the Nature Spirits]*

Shining Ones,  
You who share your Blessings with us,  
We call to you now.  
Shining Ones, we welcome You.  
*[Make an offering to the Shining Ones]*

Brigid, Bright One,  
Goddess of Healing,  
We call to you now.  
Brigid, we welcome You.  
*[Make an offering to Brigid]*

*[Take a moment and focus on what you are asking Brigid for. If you don't have anything in particular, you can ask for advice, blessings or just acceptance of your honor.]*

Brigid, please accept this offering,  
Given in piety, appreciation, and praise.  
Brigid, we honor You.



*[Make another offering to Brigid]*

Kindreds,  
we ask for your wisdom.  
*[Take the omen]*

Kindreds,  
Gifts we have given, and Blessings we ask in  
return.  
Brigit, Shining Ones, Nature Spirits, Ancestors,  
bless these waters so that we may  
accept your Blessings.

*[You may choose to intone the names of the  
omens that you pulled into the water before you  
drink.]*

*[Drink the Blessed water]*

*[If you are doing any Workings during this ritual,  
this is the spot to do them]*

Brigid, we thank you for joining us for this rite.  
Shining Ones, Nature Spirits, Ancestors, we  
thank you for joining us in this rite.

Gatekeeper, we thank you for your service in this

rite.

Let the Well become water.  
*[Make an anti-clockwise swirling motion near the  
Well.]*

Let the Fire become flame.  
*[Make an anti-clockwise swirling motion near the  
Fire.]*

Let the Tree be wood and leaves again.  
*[Make an anti-clockwise swirling motion near the  
Tree.]*

May the Gates be closed!

Our thanks to you Earth Mother, for supporting  
us through this rite and beyond.

This rite is closed.

*Victoria joined ADF in 2011 and continues to build a  
devotional practice with the Kindreds. She is currently  
studying to become a member of the ADF Clergy.*

## Living Your Druidry While Physically Disabled

*By Rev. Chelly Couvrette*

Over the years, I have had many people ask, “How can you live a nature-based religion while you are disabled?!” My response is typically, “It can be hard, but rewarding.” No matter if you are partially or fully housebound, whether you don’t go out because you rely on a scooter, wheelchair, cane, rollator or walker, crutches, etc. and it is extremely difficult, it can be done.

When we think of the Kindred, one of the hardest ones to figure out how to work with while being stuck inside is the Nature Spirits: those spirits of the outside areas, of the trees, of the squirrels, of the crows and the fish, of the wooded areas. The thing is, our cities and towns, while now manicured, still have many of these species! They still have the plants that grow through the sidewalks, they still have the raccoons that forage for trash, or squirrels that steal garden bulbs. This means that we can see all of those things through our windows and doors if we watch for them.

Personally, I rely on a mobility scooter for anything more than about 500m (550yards) or else I have severe pain in my legs. I have learned, looking outside the windows and doors of my home, what trees change first in the fall, what birds to look for to signal the coming of spring, which side the sun rises and sets on, to allow for more of a connection while stuck inside. I know some people who love to grow plants inside their homes, and others who keep all different kinds of pets. All of these are also valid ways of letting a little bit of that outdoors in.

I mentioned that I am lucky enough to be in a house versus an apartment building, but many of these can also be done from a height. Does the sun set or rise in one of your sets of windows? Is there a specific tree that goes red or orange or yellow first (no matter the distance)? When do the geese start flying past your windows in V formations? These are all things that still allow a

connection to the natural outdoor world when being stuck inside. Opening your windows (smog/allergy considerations included) can also allow for a bit of that brightness of outside to be brought in. The smells of spring or fall, the crispness of the smell of snow – all of these, in small bouts, can be smelled through windows and doors.

My personal Druidry focuses a lot on the Ancestors. As such, this one is really easy for me to think of ways to honor them from inside the home! Things like cooking recipes that were theirs, or doing other things that they loved, are both awesome ways. When you have the money, you can set out an extra place for them at the table at holidays, or set aside one area of your home where you have their pictures and mementos up to remember them regularly. Though it is not always easy to sit or stand at an altar, remembering them and allowing them a place in your home can let you honor them even when you cannot, for example, get to their grave (due to



Photo: Chelly Couvrette



mobility or distance travelled). I also tend to wear pieces of jewellery that remind me of the Ancestors, specifically a few of my bracelets. This allows me to have them with me even if I'm at an appointment or out with friends and I need that reminder that I have the strength of those who have gone before me with me.

As many times the Shining Ones are actually worked with at altars, this then becomes a matter of placement and shrines. If you cannot get out to locations which are appropriate, make one! Rev. Jan had the Daily Shrine project going on between February 1 and March 21 on Facebook. These little shrines can give you ideas on things you can place on a shrine. Honestly, if it gives you some sort of connection, it can go there! When looking at how this can affect your own path, look at its placement. Are you someone who spends a lot of time on the couch? Put it where you can see it from there. Are you bedridden? Put it where you can reach and see it at the bedside. As we saw with the Daily Shrine project, you can also do them to things like the sea and the Earth Mother, and this can let you bring little bits of the outdoors in.

If you are able to get out though, do so in places that are safe for you and your mobility levels. Contact local conservation authorities to find out which paths would be easiest and safest. Many are more than willing to work with you to ensure

you are safe and able to enjoy the areas as well. If you live in an area with ice, make sure you have an ice pick on your cane, or that you have traction on your shoes. Ask a local friend, even if they aren't pagan, to come with you and keep you company. If you get into trouble mobility-wise or with other health-related things, you have someone there and it can help reduce a lot of anxiety about going out. If you need to go slower than most, or put on ten braces and use a cane, so be it. We each need to remember we can only go at the speed our bodies are willing on these excursions so that we can continue to honor the Kindred another day.

The point I'm trying to make is that this can be done. Sometimes, it just takes a little bit of "outside of the box thinking" to make it as easy and safe as possible while respecting our bodies, our health, and the Earth.

*Chelly Couvrette has been an ADF member since 2006. She has completed the Initiates Path and is working on the Clergy Training Program. She has had mobility issues half of her life with various degenerative and chronic conditions. As a mentor for both the Dedicant Path and Initiate Path she tries to ensure that all students can find ways that suit their own journey to complete what they wish to.*

## Ian's Little Room – The Oath of Sovereignty

By Rev. Ian Corrigan

In February of 2018 the ADF Priesthood took part in Cherry Hill Seminary's short class, "Building Pagan Consent Culture". Using several resources that directly referenced Paganism and our small-group and festival dynamics, we discussed ideas and strategies for more fully normalizing consent in ADF's public and internal cultures. The course included a final project, intended to take ideas from the course out into our community. It may not be surprising that I chose to write a ritual module and meditation. Note that in the opening, numbered points refer to specific questions in the project.

### **The Oath of Sovereignty: A Meditation on Empowerment and Consent.**

1. Intended audience and their preparation: Practically, this is targeted to ADF members/attendees, but more broadly to any Pagan group that comes together for a workshop described as this. The scripted 'Oath' can be framed with any opening and closing that fits. It would be best to have an audience with skills in basic trance, able to prepare themselves in relaxation and focus. Less skilled groups will require additional time for trance induction, maybe a flashier framing ritual to draw concentration.
2. The group should ideally have been prepared with a workshop or presentation on consent, and understand that the exercise participates in a religious culture of individual liberty and responsibility.
3. Anticipated challenges:
  - The group must, of course, be given the text of the 'Oath' (that is, the scripted affirmations) in advance of the working. Presenters



must be prepared to deal with quibbles over the language, even being prepared to make minor edits for the mental comfort of participants. In this, it would fall to presenters to preserve the sense of the working, offering dissenting members of an audience the freedom to sit out.

- Beyond that, the challenge, as in any such work, is to gather and focus the group's attention. I have not spent keystrokes here scripting trance induction – there's plenty to be found.  
(This project can be presented only as a draft of this sort of poetic construct. I hope to test it several times over the coming summer, and content edits seem likely)
- 4. Goals: To generate the image and emotional experience of being seated or standing firmly in one's own authority and power; to likewise generate the experience of standing amidst a community of sovereigns.
  - The language intends to remind us to examine our own interior processes, and choose to act for the good, by will. It hopes to induce a sense of personal pride in making that choice, and in taking one's Sovereignty in hand.

### **The Program.**

#### **Pt 1: Briefing/Introduction – Sovereignty and Consent**

(For the Briefing I present a topic outline of the

kind I often use when I feel I can fill in the blanks. I'm confident my notes will be too long for a workshop including the working.)

***Sovereignty*** in myth and tradition – Kingship and the Sovereignty Goddesses.

- As modern people, we take for ourselves, for each, the royal right to rule our own somatic and psycho-spiritual space.
- We observe that we live in a world of such sovereign spaces, each with our own agenda. It seems right to grant this rulership to every competent adult person as a default. Exceptions and detailed definitions of those terms are not the point of this discussion.
- Sovereignty rests on the right of individuals to monitor and enforce our own boundaries – the limits we wish to place on opinion, action, and touch. In many ways, while sovereignty grants us all the right to say “Yes” as we please, it is perhaps most clearly defined by our right to say “No”.

***Consent*** is the diplomacy between us, the subtle or conscious social negotiation of command and compliance, freedom and obedience, yes and no.

- Applicability beyond socio-sexual negotiation; acceptance of opinion, lifestyle, choices are core to respect for the boundaries of another sovereign. Others have a right to say “No” to what we think is best for them!
- Social consent contracts include Regency; Conferred sovereignty in employment or other service, and arrangements within families and households.
- In no case is it possible to bargain away the ultimate right to refuse.

***Building a “consent culture”*** involves moving our expectations from socially-imposed contracts of implied and inferred consent, to an expectation of explicit affirmed consent.

- Social conditions and upbringing often produce psychological habits that weaken our sense of sovereignty and executive power.
- This meditation intends to remind us of our Sovereignty, place it with feeling in our



physical bodies, and contemplate what the ideas connected with it mean.

- Likewise this working intends to remind us of our mutual duty to our royal kin, and to strengthen a sense of our own boundaries and those of others.

**Pt 2: The sign: “Have No Fear”**

- OK, this is the risky (i.e. maybe silly) part... The Hindus use the famous ‘*namaste*’ or ‘*namaskar*’ gesture – bowing over ‘praying hands’ to one another – as a way to acknowledge the divine in one another.
- The same tradition has the *mudra* called ‘have no fear’, in which the right hand is held up simply, straight with palm forward. This is a universal symbol that “I am unarmed”, and could be exchanged without touch if desired.
- I propose interpreting that gesture for ourselves as meaning “I mean you no harm”. The subtext being “I participate in a conscious consent ethos and will respect your sovereignty”.
- When we have completed our inward meditation, let us greet our fellow sovereigns here by exchanging that gesture.
- It’s a flexible gesture... those who prefer to

be untouched may simply present it. Some may find proper spirit in a “slow-five” or in gripping hands. When we greet one another with such a sign it is a perfect time to ask about hugging, touch, etc.

- Maybe have the crew model this, get the initial giggling done.

### **Pt 3: The Working**

- This meditation/working can be embedded in a full liturgy if desired. Devising an invocation of the Sovereignty deities would be another project.
- My style would be to recruit two or three total mixed-gender voices and alternate texts through the work.
- Most of the script is in the first-person, and could be read in unison, or done call-and-response. The advantages of having each participant recite the affirmations should be considered.
- When all are in place and ready, the Presenter begins with simple preliminary relaxation language. This is where one begins judging the crew and how much entrancement will be needed.
- When ready, the Voices give:

#### ***A: The Recitation.***

- In order to strengthen the hearts of our people, and likewise to soften our hearts to one another in respect and affection, and without injury, we create this Mystery, which we call “Sovereignty”.
- By Sovereignty we mean to say that each mortal person, and every spirit and wight of the world, is intrinsically and by right the ruler of their own flesh and person, in the way we might imagine a monarch ruling a Land.
- This rulership, as any, grants privilege and responsibility. We rule our flesh, we choose the deeds of our hands and of our words. There is no law higher than our Sovereignty, and that is the greatest “private law”.
- Yet we dwell next to other Rulers, in our ever-dancing diplomacy. Though we are free,



we must agree, one with another. So, at the simplest, we begin by granting one another the Rights of the Ruler.

- Let us choose to act within our own boundaries, fully aware of the boundaries of other Rulers. Giving respect as we seek it; letting “yes” be “yes” and “no” be “no”, we grant every being the freedom we claim for ourselves, and hold our own boundaries as firmly as we respect others’.

#### ***B: The Oath***

In this typeset, bold words would be unison or call-and-response. Italic words (guidance) could be said by the Presenter

Presenter begins with as much basic entrancement as seems needed, then:

*So we begin, by preparing ourselves in the Way of the Wise.*

- **This Work I do, to remember and affirm my Sovereignty over my Self.**
- *Place your hands on your core, your loins, as we say:*
- **First I assemble my strength. My breath serves me, my posture serves me, I release tension, and all involuntary hindrances. Let my impulses be guided by my will.**



*Let it be so. Pause to observe your body, and make it ready, by your will. (pause...)  
Place your hands upon your heart, as we say:*

- **I calm my heart. I take in hand my fears and my delights, my passions and my disgusts. Let my emotions be guided by my will.**

*Let it be so. Pause to observe your feelings, your heart, and make ready, by your will. (pause...)  
Place your hands upon your forehead, as we say:*

- **I clear my mind. I may not still the clouds of thought, yet I will rest in my will as they flow by. Let even my reason be guided by my will.**

*Let it be so. Pause to observe your mind, your thoughts, and make ready, by your will. (pause...)  
And join your hands together, relaxed and calm, as we claim our thrones.*

- **For I sit in the seats of rulership, and affirm my Sovereignty over my Self.**

*You may envision this as suits you, seekers of wisdom. Will you see a crown, a throne, a scepter, a sword, a spindle, a plow? Let the symbols of your own sovereignty be chosen by will, or arise by vision, as we take them up.*

- **I take my seat in my Core. I will rule my impulses, and be not their servant, and know that I am the master of appetite and of passion.**

*And envision the symbol of your Sovereignty enshrined in your core...*

- **I take my seat in my Heart. I will be the ruler of my emotions, and not their servant, standing firm in storm and in sunshine.**

*And envision the symbol of your Sovereignty enshrined in your heart...*

- **I take my seat in the Crown of my Head. I will be the ruler of my thoughts, and not be ruled by them. Even what seems the most true, I will examine according to my will, and for the good of all.**

*And envision the symbol of your Sovereignty enshrined in your head...*

- **I sit in these seats of rulership, and affirm my Sovereignty over my Self.**

*So let all this be true, and true, and surely true. So give the sign meaning "have no fear", as you speak of the Ruler's Obligation.*

- **From the Seats of Vision I look upon the Worlds. The Sky above, the Surrounding Sea, and the Land, where I dwell.**
- **I remember the world of our kind, of mortal humans, every one a Ruler. Each one seated in their seat is a Sovereign, my cousin, all of us bearing our freedom and duty. Let me remember the duty of (kings), to greet my kin with grace, forbearance and hospitality.**
- **Let that which is mine serve me. So let my thoughts be gracious, granting to each a due welcome, forbearing to condemn the choices of another. I grant every fellow-Ruler the freedom I claim for myself – to think and believe as they will.**

- Let my heart be strong, graced with courage, able to face what my path brings. I renounce fear, and stand firm, in my heart. I greet the currents of other hearts equally with grace and welcome.
- Let my passions and desires be yoked, well-fed and strong, yet in service to my life, and the folk's good. My eye, and my hand, and my mouth all serve me; my boundaries are my own, and I see and keep those of other Rulers.
- Thus I say that I am seated and crowned, Ruler among Rulers. So let my "yes" be "yes" and my "no" be "no", and as it is for me let it be so for all. Be it so!

*Now rise, Sovereigns all, and greet one another in joy, by the Sign of Harmlessness.*

*When all have exchanged the gesture, return all to attention, and close as you opened.*

I hope that I have stayed back from deliberate triggering or open-ended button-pushing in these ideas, but watch carefully for the emotional responses of your audience as you bring folks back to center and prepare them to walk away.

*Ian Corrigan is an ADF Senior Priest and former Archdruid. He lives in Madison, Ohio.*

## The Poets

**Rev. G. R. "Gwernin" Grove:** *Aranrhod's Lament for Dylan ap Ton, Beltane: Pryderi.* G. R. joined ADF in 2009. She is an ADF Initiate, Chief of the Scholars Guild, and one of the Bardic Guild's four Master Bards. She was ordained in 2016, and is Past Senior Druid of Chokecherry Grove, ADF, in Denver, Colorado. She has published four collections of poetry and four historical novels (with a little magic) set in 1st and 6th century Britain and Ireland.

**Nathan Large:** *Stolen Thread.* Nathan is a writer and storyteller, working primarily in speculative fiction with frequent mythological themes. After twenty years of storytelling across varieties of role-playing – and two years of live public practice – his fascination with the power of folk tales and myths, ancient and modern, continues to grow. He recently released the first two novels in his Empyrean Dreams sci-fi series with Laine Megan Lundquist; two more should follow this year. Nathan also creates as acting Secretary of the Games and Play SIG and Secretary of Whispering Lakes Grove, Erie, PA.

**Melanie S. Peterson:** *Ode to Brigid.* Melanie is a member of the Inis Ull/Apple Isle Grove in New

York City. She is fairly new to paganism and druidry, but thinks she's really found her path here. She mostly enjoys writing prose, but is occasionally inspired to write poetry

**Jenne Micale:** *Aonghus of Dreams, The Riddle, Ogham poem: Gort/The Garden.* Jenne is a writer, singer, priestess and musician whose endeavors include the ethereal/wyrd folk project Kwannon and, in former times, the wyrd folk band Belladonna Bouquet. A former initiate of the Henge of Keltria, she won the 2009 DANAC Golden Oak Award for best Druidical essay, and has published articles and poetry in a variety of publications. She is currently Bard of the ADF Protogrove of the Three Gorges. Listen to her music at [www.kwannon.net](http://www.kwannon.net).

**Wayne Keysor:** *Dream-Songs.* Wayne Keysor joined ADF in 2008, has completed the Generalist Study Program, and holds the rank of ADF Journeyman Bard. He is currently a student in the Initiates Program. He also holds a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Philosophy and Religion, and is currently studying classical Latin and its literature at the University of Maryland College Park. He is the current Wellspring Bard.

## News and Announcements

### Program & Path Completions

**Erin Mullin**

DP Completion  
December 2017

**Sarah Berson**

DP Completion  
March 2018

**Diane Cacciato**

DP Completion  
March 2018

**Birgit Reinartz**

Bardic 3<sup>rd</sup> Circle  
February 2018

**Rev. Lauren Mart**

Clergy Circle 1  
April 4, 2018.

**Rev. Chelly Couvrette**

Clergy Circle 1  
April 4, 2018.

### Protogrove & Grove Approvals

**Manatee Oak Protogrove, ADF**

Safety Harbor, FL

Date of Charter: December 21, 2017

**Winter's Gift Protogrove, ADF**

Grand Rapids, MI

Date founded: December 22, 2017

**ProtoGrove of the Singing Oak Springs, ADF**

Madison, WI

Date Founded: February 5, 2017

**ProtoGrove of the Three Gorges, ADF**

Ithaca, NY

Date Founded: February 5, 2018

**Grundsau ProtoGrove, ADF**

McKeesport, PA

Date Founded: February 14, 2018

**Greylock Shadow ProtoGrove, ADF**

East Templeton, MA

Date Founded: March 2, 2018

**Garry Oak Protogrove, ADF**

Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada

Date Founded: April 1, 2018

~Congratulations to all~

### Upcoming Events

**Wellspring Gathering (ADF Festival)**

May 24-28, 2018

Madison, OH

**Three Rivers Festival (ADF Festival)**

June 7-10, 2018

Eganville, ON Canada

**Sirius Rising (Pan Pagan)**

July 16-22, 2018

Sherman, NY

**Eight Winds Festival (ADF Festival)**

July 19-22, 2018

Lagunitas, CA

For more festival information see

[www.adf.org/events](http://www.adf.org/events)





**CHOKECHERRY GROVE, ADF'S  
ANNUAL ROCKY MOUNTAIN RETREAT  
IS MOVING OUT OF DENVER --**

**JOIN US  
SEPTEMBER 21-23, 2018  
IN COLORADO'S BLACK FOREST!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
SEE OUR WEBSITE:  
[CHOKECHERRYADF.ORG](http://CHOKECHERRYADF.ORG)  
OR FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!**



# Sacred Fire, Holy Well

A Druid's Grimoire  
By Ian Corrigan

Find it now at:  
[ADF.org/store](http://ADF.org/store)

Join the Druids  
of the Northwest Region for  
**Eight Winds**

July 19 - 22, 2018  
at  
Samuel P. Taylor State Park  
Lagunitas, CA

Featured Presenters

Jason Mankey

JoHanna Hill

Sarah Bernard

Archdruid Rev. Jon Drum

Rev Sean Harbaugh

Registration Fees

Adult (16+) Weekend Registration & Camping - \$50

Adult Weekend Food Plan - \$60

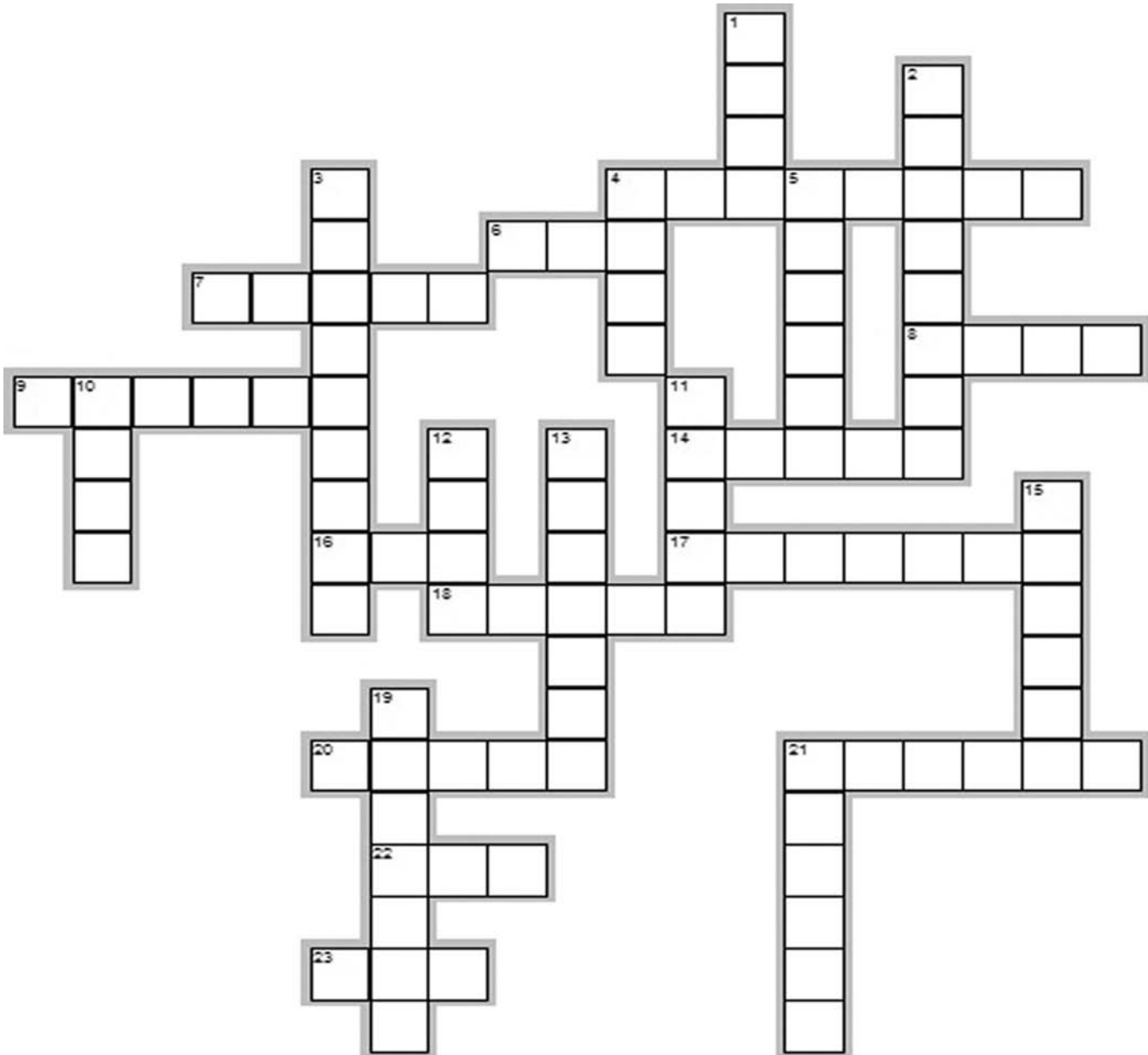
Child Weekend Food plan - \$30

Limited cabin beds are available - \$50 additional for the weekend

For more information and to register:  
<http://northwest.adf.org/eight-winds-2018/>

# Easy Myth

By Chris:)



## Across

4. (G) He guarded the gates to Hades
6. (N) Fenrir took his hand
7. (N) Consort of Odin
8. *Isatis tinctoria* AKA
9. (R) God of Agriculture
14. Slavic Lightning God
16. *Quercus* AKA
17. (R) Brother to Jupiter and Pluto
18. (I) Vedas' weather bringer
20. (C) Porridge eating god
21. (G) She had snakes for hair
22. (C) This drink of Goibniu gives immortality
23. (C) Manannan's father

## Down

1. Ursidae AKA
2. (C) Her cauldron gave knowledge
3. (C) She stepped over Maths wand
4. Corvidae AKA
5. (N) He was killed by a mistletoe arrow
10. (I) Vedic God of Fire
11. (Ga) Protector of horses
12. (N) God of Mischief
13. (G) Hephaestus created this box opener
15. (G) He invented the lyre
19. Gallic God of thunder
21. (N) Odin's Raven Muninn AKA



# ADF Directory



## The Mother Grove

Archdruid	Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano	adf-archdruid@adf.org
Vice-Archdruid	Rev. Sean Harbaugh	adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org
Treasurer	Margaret Forsell-VanHorn	adf-treasurer@adf.org
Secretary	Rev. Crystal Groves	adf-secretary@adf.org
Members Advocate	Desiree Cook	adf-members-advocate@adf.org
Chief of the Council of Regional Druids	Rev. Amber Doty	adf-cord-chief@adf.org
Chief of the Council of Senior Druids	Flip Rutledge	adf-cosd-chief@adf.org
Non-Officer Director	Rev. Lauren Mart	laurmm@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Jennifer Hatter	anusingjenn@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Leesa Kern	firewomanpg@gmail.com
Non-Officer Director	Julie Desrosiers	poledrasdaughter@gmail.com

## Additional Leadership Positions

Administrator	Jane Wayson	adf-administrator@adf.org
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Isaac Bonewits	[deceased]
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Ian Corrigan	tredara@ncweb.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. John 'Fox' Adelman	john.adelman@trw.com
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Robert 'Skip' Ellison	skip@dragonskeep.us
Archdruid Emeritus	Rev. Kirk Thomas	druidkirk@gmail.com
Chronicler	Manny Tejada-Moreno	adf-chronicler@adf.org
Information Manager	Arthur Shipkowski	adf-info-manager@adf.org
Listmaster and Moderator	Rev. G. R. Grove	adf-listmaster@adf.org
Preceptor	Rev. D. Rowen Grove	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Store Manager	(vacant)	adf-store@adf.org
Webmaster	Arthur Shipkowski	adf-webmaster@adf.org

## Committees

Clergy Council	Chair: Rev. Jean 'Drum' Pagano	adf-archdruid@adf.org
Council of Lore	Chair: Rev. D. Rowen Grove	adf-preceptor@adf.org
Grove Coordinating Committee	Chair: Rev. Caryn Laney-MacLuan	adf-gcc-chair@adf.org
Grove Organizing Committee	Chair: Rev. Nancy McAndrew	adf-goc-chair@adf.org
Prisoner Relations Committee	Chair: Rev. Kirk Thomas	adf-prison-ministry@adf.org

For information on **Regional Druids** please see the full listing at:

<http://www.adf.org/members/org/cord/>

For more information on **Groves, Guilds, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and Kins**, please see the full listing at:

<http://www.adf.org/groups/groups-list.html>

## Ár nDraiocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship

### Oak Leaves Subscriptions:

#### ADF and Oak Leaves Membership Rates:

Regular Membership: \$30/year  
Prisoner Membership: \$10/year

Subscription to Oak Leaves: Members: \$20/year  
Subscription to Oak Leaves: Non-Members: \$25/year

If you are already an ADF member but not an Oak Leaves subscriber, you can add a subscription either through our webpage (preferred) at <http://www.adf.org/joining/join.html>, or by contacting our Business Office at the following address:

**Subscription Service Dept.**  
ADF Office  
PO Box 669  
Amelia, OH 45102-0669  
[adf-office@adf.org](mailto:adf-office@adf.org)

If you would like to subscribe to Oak Leaves without joining ADF, please contact the Business Office at the address above.

### Submission Guidelines for Oak Leaves:

Oak Leaves welcomes submissions of articles, poetry, artwork, and anything else that might be of interest to our Druid readers. Submissions relating to the turning of the wheel of the year and the celebration of the High Days are particularly encouraged. Submissions from non-members will be accepted, but preference will be given to submissions from ADF members. Since excellent scholarship is one of ADF's goals, please document sources of ideas and materials that you used for your writings. Please follow the standards for references in the MLA Handbook or Style Manual. We will not accept submissions with footnotes, as they require considerable editing to convert to endnotes. We reserve the right to reject submissions which do not meet our standards. When planning lengthy submissions, please inquire first at [oak-leaves@adf.org](mailto:oak-leaves@adf.org).

Electronic submissions are preferred, sent as email attachments to the Oak Leaves submissions address: [oak-leaves@adf.org](mailto:oak-leaves@adf.org). Written submissions should be sent in one of the following formats: MS Word (.doc/.docx), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or Text Format (.txt). Please include a brief ADF-related bio for all articles and essays. For more information on submissions, please see our web page at <https://www.adf.org/publications/periodicals/oak-leaves/submissions.html> or contact us at [oak-leaves@adf.org](mailto:oak-leaves@adf.org).

#### Deadlines for submissions (two months before publication date):

Spring Issue : December 1st;  
Summer Issue : March 1st;  
Autumn Issue : June 1st;  
Winter Issue : September 1st

# The Wellspring Gathering

May 24 - 28 2018

At Tredara,  
In Madison, OH

## "Working With the Spirits"

- Chris Godwin on Indo-European Folk Magic
- Rev. Melissa Hill on Valkyries & Swan Maidens
- Ian Corrigan on Pagan Conjuring
- The Procession of the Shrines
  - Wellspring Bardic Chair Competition
- Mead Brewer's Competition
- Artisan's Gallery and Judging
- Warrior Guild Championships

## • & The A.D.F. Annual Member's Meeting!

Event cost inclusive of semi-developed camping and all program.  
Food and all services are available within minutes of the site.

**\$75 Advance Registration, \$85 at the door.**

<http://stonecreed.org/wellspring>

# Summerland Festival

20th  
Anniversary

August 16th - 20th

[www.6thnightgrove.org](http://www.6thnightgrove.org)

