PART THREE

LITURGY OF THE DRUIDS

The various collected rites, activities, ordinations, blessings, and services of the various branches of the Reform, with a few additional selections from other modern Druid movements related to the RDNA.

Figure 1 Fisher, Nelson, Hotz & Frangquist on the Hill of Three Oaks, c.1964

The Drynemetum Press

2003 Introduction

Welcome to the expansive liturgical section.

Perhaps, I have agonized and labored most over this section of ARDA. According to the older traditions of the Reform, most groves require third ordination to perform the services, seemingly putting most of sections 1-7 of Part 3 out of the usage of most readers; which seemingly is against the rather egalitarian nature of Druidism. I would hope that the reader be encouraged to undertake the responsibilities of ordination more quickly, rather than be disenchanted; overcoming likely distance problems.

As a result of this imposed rule, it is quite likely that the Druid priest will be most strictly judged by their enactment of the liturgies. Your words and very gestures in a ritual context may have a far greater impact and weight than you realize on the Druids, especially the new comers, so be careful to distinguish personal and group beliefs, lest dogma flower from mere artistically selected statements. Nor should you become jaded with the formats, lest you forget the confusing tumult of misconceptions that you had wehn you first attended. A priest should also be a poet, a contemplative, a counselor, and a mortal human being. Thus, you should meet with such courageous newcomers beforehand to not seem so unreachable. Always keep that appropriate balance of reverence and humor.

Ritual is simply actions you like to do, over and over again. Your liturgies are only limited by your knowledge, imagination and experience. For those of us not gifted in public performance, it can be a series of difficult hard-fought lessons as you put together the pieces and styles that you can call your own, hopefully with the advice & example of a mentor, but often a result of trial & error and much reflection. It would be well for an aspiring liturgist to attend the services of as many different religions as is possible, to see in practice how different techniques are employed and how different elements are absent or held in common; especially since there are few comparative books on liturgy. You need not belong only to your Grove's community. A few acting lessons, a public speaking course, and simple practice in a mirror or before a trusted friend will vastly improve your performance ability. Explore, contemplate, try, decide and repeat. Then with honed skills and a fresh appreciation for the diversity, you may see how other parts of ARDA 2 may enrich your own liturgical design.

Each section of ARDA can richly inter-relate with each other, and means less when viewed only by itself. Pt 2 illuminates some of the debates on how to understand liturgy and ordination. Pt 4 gives tips on forming stable groves, and when to use seasonal liturgies. Pt 8 gives a sense of historical progression and how different factions of the RDNA have schismed over the importance of different elements in the liturgy. And Part 6 provides one vast resource, one among many, from which to draw songs, seasonal essays, meditations, stories, jokes, and a host of resources for researching ancient Celtic resources.

Without doubt, the liturgical additions to ARDA 2 are an enormous increase, and it has now become a daunting task to sift through and choose the best representatives of the various traditions within the Reform. You might even get lost if you don't pay attention to the way it has been divided. It may soon become difficult to keep the liturgical collection from becoming overwhelming, as happened with them Green Book and Magazine, which necessitated a separate printed volume.

For example, all the 1978-1980 liturgies by Isaac are of a different caliber than the previously published NRDNA liturgies of DC(E). Some elements are rather dogmatic in nature, nothing the average Neo-Pagan wouldn't agree with, but perhaps less amenable to many in the Reform. Yet, I decided to add them to ARDA 2 since this is primarily a historical collection, and they show the tangent that Isaac was walking that would lead to ADF beyond. Naturally one service from Keltria and OMS were added for good measure to show other examples of modern Druid groups related somehow to the RDNA.

One other section, which I'm ambivalent about, is the Solitary Services, which Eric recommended me to include. It may also swell out of control later with local customs, magical and spiritual exercises. Yet, as long as they seem practical for the general Druid and not too dogmatic, I'll have to include them. Druidism usually tends to err on the side of inclusion. But, I'm sure you'll find a few things in here of use to add to your core collection, that will influence the design of your own personalized system.

I suppose there is no way to curb the ceremonialist episcopagan from overly focusing on this section of ARDA 2, but I would like to remind them that there is much more than liturgy in Druidism. The non-liturgical materials were therefore added to give a greater emphasis that a group need not only meet with a person yakking at them in the same old format. Festivals can also be lively mixes of crafts, activities and free-form interactions beyond the spoken service. Don't neglect the seasonal essays of Green Book 7 in Part 6 and Part 4's calendar, as they'll give you greater depth of understanding to those holidays.

Finally, one last interesting trend is the element of randomness. In early traditions of Carleton and Berkeley, although the winds are divined, in nearly every case, the sacrifice was accepted in the summer and rejected in the winter. Since the 1980s, many groves have begun to actually acknowledge that the sacrifice is a less assumed item. How you deal with a "failure" is a good sign that we don't "control" nature and it's a good test of a leader's mettle, requiring some quick thinking, in which case it is good to have a "back up" plan. Proper rest, eating, contemplation, familiarization and rehearsal will do wonders fr you.

There is so much that you can worry about, you might forget to have a good time. After all, "you have no need of these prayers and sacrifices." Regardless, I have great confidence in your ability to adapt and overcome difficulties. I wish the best of fortune to you.

Mike Scharding
September 13, 2004

Liturgy Formatting Note:

Naturally, the liturgies have been laid out in a format that is most useful to people who are reading them, so original formatting, fonts, spacing, etc. have been slightly adjusted to make them fit the pages easily on a windy day for an Archdruid juggling several cups, bottles, regalia and a sheaf of notes.

It's not pretty, but hopefully it will be easier to find your place. Naturally, it would be better to memorize the piece. Alternatively have someone hold the service papers while you read, and keep a finger on the spot where you finish for quick resumption. Plastic coating a printed high-service liturgy is a good idea to make in advance.

1996 Introduction

When I began to put together this collection of old liturgies, designed by various Reformed Druids at Carleton, I had many misgivings about publishing them. I was not disturbed because they are secret or anything like that, since there are very few secrets (if any) in Reformed Druidism, but because they can be so easily misunderstood by someone not familiar with Reformed Druidism at Carleton College. If any terms confuse you, refer to Part Four of ARDA where I'm sure many of your questions will be answered. If there is any one section of the Anthology that I was considering dropping, it was this section, but that's just my personal tendency to downplay ritual.

The Liturgy has an unusual place and role in Reformed Druidism, unlike that found in most other religions. Reformed Druidism began as a protest against enforced attendance and fixed liturgies as found at the mandatory Carleton College Chapel service of the early 60s. It would be a very sad day when a fixed or forced liturgy were to become established in Reformed Druidism itself! There are several points about Reformed Druid liturgy that should be remembered: irregular attendance is acceptable (perhaps even desirable), it isn't fixed in its final form and the existence of liturgy may even be antithetical to Reformed Druidism itself

Irregular Attendance:

While many earlier members may have enjoyed going to every Saturday services and to every one of the eight great festivals; this was not the case with everyone. For many, the need to gather in a group for "formal" worship is an urge that only comes once in long time. One can have a great many religious moments outside of a group, perhaps even purer moments. Many a person would come to a Druid ritual and just suntan, ignoring the ritual in effect, being there just to be with the people. Attendance has no reflection on how "Druidic" you are. Others took it quite seriously.

Nor is liturgical attendance the only way to be with other Druids. Over the years, both at Carleton and abroad at our missionary groves, there have been many other group activities that have developed that don't use a standard liturgy (or even need a liturgy). Such activities include: sweat lodges, candle-making parties, Bardic sing-a-longs, group-feasts, nature-walks, group meditation sessions, pseudo-theological debates, magic-working groups, book reading clubs, herbology and many other activities (depending on local talents that exist within the group). However, some groups just did the services 4 times a year and nothing else.

The Liturgy isn't fixed in its final form

Even from the beginning, the liturgies have been constantly changing. Although the Council of Dalon Ap Landu had voted that they:

"adopt the Order of Worship of the Carleton Grove (as formulated by David H. Fisher) as the basic order of worship of the Reformed Druids of West America."

This restriction has been stretched and experimented with. Every priest is expected to change, adopt and mutate the liturgy to fit the existing mood, their religious sensibilities, and the specific purposes of the moment. Ad libbing and spontaneity, within reasonable bounds, is encouraged. As a result there are dozens and dozens of alternatives to every single ritual example that will be presented to you in this book.

Many a person has added Wiccan elements or Cabalistic elements or Judeo-Christian elements, etc. The purpose of the liturgy is to bring people together, and if the majority of the people in the grove belong to one particular tradition you can add elements from that tradition (if you want to). However, the original version has been judged over the years to be relatively ecumenical enough and dogma-free to be acceptable to most people, so we recommend it when dealing with a "mixed" crowd.

The Liturgy isn't Sacrosanct

There is no claim of divine origin for these liturgies, although a few writers may have felt a bit inspired when they wrote them. Sanctity is in the eye of the beholder, isn't it? For many, the liturgy is merely a philosophical exposition by the Priest who is using deities in the Jungian sense of the archetype. For others, the liturgy is the direct invocation and worship of whatever deities are being invoked. For some it is merely being quiet together at someplace while someone reads something out loud. For some, powerful magickal energies are conjured forth by the magickal words and the power is delegated to various tasks. For others, it's a quaint little service that's fun to attend. Let us respect the right of the beholder and individual congregant to have their own interpretation of the liturgy.

The liturgy may even be antithetical

Perhaps it was the Protestant streak in the early founders which made Reformed Druidism into the religion of the individual. The goal of Reformed Druidism, for many, is a never-ending search for religious truth; a truth which can be meaningful only to the particular individual who grasps it. Words and gestures cannot communicate the subtleties that define our thoughts (little can, unless you have telepathy). Let us beware from ever taking the liturgy as the most effective way of expressing our religious thoughts!

Who can say whether the individual with the title "Priest" has any better understanding of her/his religion than the young first-order Druid sitting near them? For all we know, the role/title of "Priest" within Reformed Druidism may be merely an "ego-stroke" of comfort for those who feel the need to make sure that someone in the group holds a service every now and then. I hope not, although I have been a priest, for three years as of writing this, I don't feel any more divine than the next guy.

Michael Scharding
Day 31 of Geimredh, Year XXXIII of the Reform
December 1st, 1995 c.e.

Figure 2 Lower Arboretum Trails, 1960s.

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New Order of Suzuki
New Order of Bambi

A King's Wedding
A Marriage Ceremony
An Old Fashioned Wedding
A Wedding Contract
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David's Final Meditation
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Section One:
The Simple Package of Generic Liturgies

This section can be printed out for a Druid on the run, who needs to hold a service, and it should cover all their needs for weekly services. I recommend having a plasticized copy of this section for all-weather use. Based on DC(E) concept, which was derived from a simplified humnal pamplet made by David Frangquist in 1964.

Order of Common Worship Simple Summer Version

From May 1st up to, but on Nov. 1st
By Mike Scharding, 1993

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

Optional Procession

Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Place sacrifice on Altar*
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East...and of the West.

The Reply

Priest: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

The Communion & Optional Ordinations & Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 3 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964.

Order of Common Worship
Simple Winter Version

From on November 1st to, but not on May 1st.
By Mike Scharding, 1993

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

Optional Procession

Drawing the Sigil & The Incantation

The Sacrifice

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life. *Put Sacrifice on Altar*
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

Priest: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PRIEST: Of what, then, do we partake?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

The Communion & The Libation

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation followed by The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you.
Peace! Peace! Peace!

Ordination of
Second Order Druids

By David Fisher, 1963

*To be inserted after the **consecration** and before the **meditation** in the Order or Worship. It can of course be the sole purpose of the Order of Worship, or an incidental part. It is generally only done in the Summer Half of the Year as it requires Alcohol or Something Perky. Usually the PRIEST of the service asks if anyone wishes to enter the Second Order after having consecrated the Waters..*

*Another alternative is to bring the aspirant forward during the Order of Worship's **invocation** and after asking the **Questions, shown below**, have the aspirant respond to the normal **Catechism of the Waters**. After the **Consecration of the** Waters, proceed to the **Sealing to the Second Order.***

*(**NOTE** Have everybody sip the Waters before the initiate, but leave plenty for her/him to drink. It is often a good idea to consecrate a second chalice to ensure that enough Waters will be ready for the Aspirant's ordeal.)*

Invocation

O Earth-Mother, bountiful and ever flowing forth, we Thy children, invoke Thy blessing upon this aspirant to serve thee.

Questions

PR: Do you, in full consciousness, promise to serve faithfully the Earth-Mother, ministering to Her followers, and following you duties as a Druid of the Second Order to the best of your ability? Do you?
Aspirant: I do. *(or close enough)*
PR: Do you understand from whence comes the source of all life, and the nature of the source of all life? Do you?
Aspirant: I do.
PR: Do you understand the partaking of the Waters-of-Life, and the sacrifice of life that we offer-up to our Mother? Do you?
Aspirant: I do.
PR: Are you ready, then, to be sealed up to the service of the Earth-Mother? Are you?
Aspirant: I am.

Sealing to the Second Order

(PRIEST dips fingers in consecrated waters and makes a Sigil on forehead of the candidate every time the word "seal" is spoken in the following:)

In the name of the Earth-Mother;

I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the spirit of the South.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the North.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the West.
I **seal** you to Her service in the house of the Spirit of the East.
Finally, I **seal** you to the service of the mighty, the blessed, all powerful and fertile All-Mother Earth, thus consecrating your life to Her cause.

The Ordeal

(Hand the candidate all the remaining Waters-of-Life)

PR: Take and drink, all of it!

(Return to the Order of Worship, usually at the Meditation, which may be just watching the staggering initiate!)

Ordination of First Order Druids

By David Fisher, c. 1963

Unlike the other Orders of Reformed Druidism, there is not a fixed liturgy of ordination. There is a general custom which can be elaborated upon as the Priest sees fit.

Usually the Priest will ask for aspirants to the First Order as the waters are about to be passed around. The Priest will go to the aspirant and ask if the aspirant believes in the two Basic Tenets of Reformed Druidism:

1. The object of the search for religious truth, which is universal and a never-ending search, may be found through the Earth-Mother, which is Nature; but this is one way, yea, one way among many.
2. And great is the importance, which is of a spiritual important, of Nature, which is the Earth-Mother; for it is one of the objects of Creation, and with it do people live, yea, even as they do struggle through life are they come face-to-face with it.

If the aspirant replies affirmatively, the Priest takes the chalice and dips their fingers in the Waters and draws the Druid Sigil on the forehead of the aspirant. Then the aspirant drinks some of the Waters. The Priest then declares them to be a First Order Druid.

If there are several aspirants, say a dozen, instead of going through each separately, they may be ordained as a group with separate head-anointings.

Another custom has developed at Carleton of anyone of the first or second orders being able to ordain another person into their own orders, in the absence of an existing Priest.

The 13-Fold Mystery

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the willows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in my head the fire,
Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
If not I

Invocation

I invoke the land of Erinn,
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
Showery be the river of waterfalls,
Of waterfalls be the lake of deep pools,
Deep-pooled be the hill-top well,
A well of tribes be the assembly,
An assembly of rulers be Temair,
Temair be a hill of tribes,
The tribes of the sons of Mil,
Of Mil of the ships, the barks,
Let the lofty bark be Erinn,
Lofty Erinn, darkly sung,
An incantation of great cunning,
The great cunning of the wives of Bres,
The wives of Bres, of Buaigne,
The great lady of Erinn,
Eremon hath conquered her,
Ir, Eber have conquered for her,
I invoke the land of Erinn.

Incantation #3

Fain we ask Erin, Faring o'er oceans',
Motions to Mountains, Fountains and bowers,
Showers, rills rushing, Gushing waves welling,
Swelling streams calling, Falling foam-thunder,
Under lakes filling, Willing abiding,
Riding rounds, holding, Olden fairs meetly
Fleet to lift loyal, Royal king's towers,
Bowers for crowning, Frowning foes over
Rover Mil's warlike, Starlike sons therein,
Erin shall longer, Stronger, show honour,
On our Milesians, Wishing, in trouble,
Noble isle's wooing, Suing, we stay here
Pray here to sail in, Wailing maids royal,
Loyal chief-priests, Priests, blend pray'r in
So we seek Erinn

Hymn to the Earth-Mother

O Earth-Mother!
We praise thee,
Who seed springeth,
Who flower openeth,
Who grass waveth.
We praise thee for winds that whisper
Through the graceful elm,
Through the shapely maple,
Through the lively pine,
Through the shining birch,
Through the mighty oak.
We praise thee for all things.
O Earth-Mother!
Who givest life.

Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America
Detailed Summer Version
By Isaac Bonewits, 1976
For use from on May 1st up to, but not including Nov 1st

Preparatory Details

This is the basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others are adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to filled with the Waters-of-Life.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(If the sacrifice is accepted, and it almost always is accepted, then continue. If bad omen, the service ends at this point.)

Pr: Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-life while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Life. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, Hallow these waters by thy seven-fold powers and by the three ways of day and one of night,. Cleanse our hearts and join us together as we take and drink of they secret essence!

Optional Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually 2 or 3 minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 4 Press, Weinberger (hidden), Nelson, Frangquist, Shelton & Webber, 2003
Little Bird Grove (Stone Circle) 40th Reunion

Order of Common Worship

New Reformed Druids of North America
Detailed Winter Version
By Isaac Bonewits, 1976
For use from on November 1st up to,
but not including May 1st

Preparatory Details

This is a basic Order of Common Worship from which all the others can be adapted, and is to be used during the Summer Half of the year (i.e., from Beltane to Samhain). The chalice is to filled with plain water.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

Pr: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

Pr: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Catechism of The Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may or may not replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

PR: Of what, then, do we partake?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 5 Nelson, Fisher & Frangquist on Hill of 3 Oaks, 1964 with original record-stand altar.

Section Two:
Old Carleton
Seasonal Versions

Authorship and dates are quite a bit uncertain in this section.

Samhain Version #1

(By Fisher?, 1964?)

The Invocation

Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.
Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Be'al, sign Ap handrahch.

Procession and Drawing of the Circle

Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Archdruid, upon the high altar.

Chants or Hymns

Here may be sung a hymn.

Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning

(Perhaps the following chant was used)

Samhain Chant

by David Fisher 1964?
Druid Chronicles (Customs Chap. Seven)

Priest:. Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature, in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise.
Chorus: Go thou not from us!
Priest: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us.
Chorus: Go thou not from us!
Priest: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?
Chorus: Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high!
Priest: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
Chorus: Return to us his warmth!
Priest: Lo, we are as wraiths; our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walk the land.
Chorus: Preserve us, O spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of power!
Priest: Ushtar, Astarte, guide our paths. If thou will leave us, save us through the time of silence, keep bright within our hearts 'til spring.
Chorus: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways!

The Sacrifice

Here shall be offered up a bough of pin, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.
Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The First Answer

Priest: The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of SAMHAIN is upon us.

The Second Answer

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PRIEST: Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.
PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.
PRIEST TO CONGREGATION: Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

The Sermon

Here may be given the sermon.

The Dismissal

Take up these torches, and go forth. Rest sure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;

Rest, Rest, Rest.

Figure 6 Stone Circle, Hill of 3 Oaks, 1997

Samhain Version #2

(Shelton? Early 1970s Version?)

The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Changing of Vestments

Procession and Drawing of the Circle

Here shall be lit a fire, from a torch carried by the Arch Druid, upon the High altar .

Chants or Hymns

Here may be sung a hymn.

Here shall be given a ritual chant of mourning.

The Sacrifice

Here shall be offered up a bough of pine, a branch of oak, and a crest of grass.

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy presence yet.

Priest: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Priest: The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. The time of Samhain is upon us.

The Answer

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?

PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THERE IS NO LIFE WITHIN THEM, NEITHER DO THEY SING. THEY ARE THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PRIEST: Give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, O Be'al return to these Waters, we pray thee. Hallow them, descend into them that we may have life.

PRIEST TO CONGREGATION: Take, and drink, in token of our acceptance of Samhain for I tell you that it is truly upon us.

The Meditation

Here may be offered petitions to the Earth-Mother.

The Benediction

Priest: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that after Samhain comes Beltane, and that the Earth-Mother will return to us. Peace to your spirits;
Rest, Rest, Rest.

COLD, COLD!

(Ancient Irish, suitable for Samhain)
From Druid Chronicles (Evolved) 1975

Cold, cold!
Cold tonight is the broad plain of Lurg,
Higher the snow than the mountain range,
The deer cannot get at their food.
Cold till Doom!
The storm has spread over all:
A river is each furrow upon the slope,
Each ford a full pool.
A great sea is each loch, which is full,
A full loch is each pool,
Horses do not get over Ross-ford,
No more do two feet get there.
The fishes of Inis Fail are a-roaming,
There is no marge nor well of waves,
In the lands there is no land,
Not a bell is heard, no crane talks.
The hounds of Cuan-wood find not
Rest nor sleep in the dwelling of hounds,
The little wren cannot find
Shelter in her nest on Lon-slope.
On the little company of the birds has broken forth
Keen wind and cold ice,
The blackbird cannot get a lee to her liking,
Shelter at the side of Cuan-woods.
Cozy our pot on the hook,
Crazy the hut on Lon-slope:
The snow has smoothed the wood here,
Toilsome to climb by kine-horned staves.
Glenn Rigi's ancient bird
From the bitter wind gets grief,
Great her misery and her pain,
The ice will get into her mouth.
From flock and from down to rise
Take it to heart! Were folly for thee:
Ice in heaps on every ford,
That is why I keep saying "cold!"

Taken from Ancient Irish Tales
(The Hiding of the Hill of Howth)

Service at the Winter Solstice

By Norman Nelson, 1964-65?

Opening Blessing

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;

Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer you these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

O Belenos, hear us as we praise thee in thy returning.

O Earth-Mother, wake and hear our prayers; cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession

(Circle is omitted) Here may be lighted a fire if one is desired.

The Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Wake now, and hear, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life that is to come. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts granting us peace and renewed life.

(Here shall be offered up a branch of evergreen, a branch of mistletoe, if available, and a branch bare, yet bearing buds.)

Hast thou heard our prayers and wakened? Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, dedicated to the renewal of life? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.

Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the return and renewal of life and fertility has been accepted.

The Answer

Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

THE WATERS OF LIFE.

From whence do these Waters flow?

FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

And how do we honor this gift that causes life in men?

BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.

Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

IT IS THE TIME OF WINTER, AND THE WATERS OF LIFE FLOW NOT FORTH. THE MOTHER GIVES US ONLY THE WATERS OF SLEEP.

(THEN SHALL THE A-D SAY) It is indeed the time of winter, when the Earth-Mother is wrapped in sleep, and the blanketed in snow and cold; yet it is also at this time that the sun, whom we have called Belenos, turns again to the north, bringing the promise of returning life to all things. For though the Earth be wrapped in sleep, within her rest the seeds and buds of renewed life, to come forth in all their glory with the return of the life-giving Belenos.

All people have celebrated the return of the sun, from time immemorial, and in many ways, but to the Druids does this have a special meaning, for in the Waters of Sleep is the promise of the Waters of Life. Then give me the Waters.

The Consecration

O Dalon-Ap-Landu, hallow these Waters of Sleep and life to come by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. O Belenos, pour into these waters thy life-giving powers and the promise of renewed life. O Earth, our Mother, cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy waters.

To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee. Hear us pray that with the return of the Waters of Sleep to the Earth, may come the return of mighty and life-giving Belenos; hear us, O Earth-Mother. O Earth, our Mother, O Belenos, even now and daily do we praise thee.

Reading and Meditation

(Here shall be read Customs 4:3-4)

(Here may follow a silent meditation and prayer.)

(Here may be appended any other prayers or thanksgivings at the discretion of the Archdruid.)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer: that life shall return to the face of the Earth, even as does mighty Belenos return, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

Note: This service is designed for use as close as possible to the Solstice. It may be performed by an Archdruid alone, or as an act or worship of the Drynemeton. Suggested vestments are plain black with white, or vice versa.

A Call to Mother Nature

Author Unknown, Date Uncertain, perhaps 1964

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of the sky and sea and of all Gods and powers; through thy power all nature falls silent and then sink in sleep. And again though bringest back the light and chasest away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea, and winds and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou wilt, and causest the seas to roar; thou chasest away the sun and arousest the storm. Again, when thou wilt thou sendest forth the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return. Thou indeed art duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due faith.

A Chant for Midwinter

By Fisher or Nelson? , 1963?

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants call upon thee

* GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER

Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of Belenos, great God of the golden sun.

* MAKE THY FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF THE BRIGHT LIFE-GIVING LIGHT.

Lo, Belenos, for more than six full moons hast thou drawn away from us since our rejoicing at the festival of Midsummer, and for these moons have our days dwindled shorter.

* YEA, AND COLDER TOO, AS THOU HAS LEFT OUR SKIES FOR THE SOUTH.

Yet though we know we shall suffer yet more cold before Beltaine, do we rejoice today to see thee stop thy flight and begin to return to us.

*AND WE SHALL REJOICE THROUGH THE SNOWS TO SEE THE SOURCE OF WARMTH AND LIFE DAILY RETURN NEARER.

We know, Mother, that as there is Samhain there must be Beltaine, and as there is Beltaine there must be Samhain.

* WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE MIDWINTER, AND AS THERE IS MIDWINTER THERE MUST BE AGAIN MIDSUMMER.

As the sun began to sink, it must now begin to climb.

* AS IT NOW BEGINS TO CLIMB, IT MUST SINK AGAIN.

All that passes away must come again. We praise thee, our Mother.

* ALL THAT COMES MUST PASS AWAY. PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

A Meditation for Midwinter

By Frangquist, 1964?

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning;
And the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
Be not quick to anger, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.
Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?"
For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.
In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider;
God has made the one as well as the other.
(Ecclesiastes 7:8-10, 14)

Figure 7 Monument Hill 1993

Oimelc Service of Worship, Version #1

By Fisher?, 1964 or 65?

Invocation

Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here.
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms.
Thou needest no prayers or sacrifices, but we offer you these prayers and sacrifices.
Lord, forgive three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Chant

(Here shall be chanted by the Archdruid an appropriate chant of praise.)

Sacrifice in Silence

We have raised our voices to thee in praise, O our Mother. Hear now, we beseech thee, as we offer thee praise in our hearts.

(Here shall the Archdruid place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

Words of Assurance

This Earth is a mother that never dies.
Of this the evergreen is a constant sign.
Of this at OIMELC we are given to know by the lactation of the ewe.
Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world. Join together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Archdruid pour the milk of a ewe (or a cow) into a chalice, saying:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this sign of thy eternal life.

The Readings

(Here shall be read suitable words of truth.)

(Here may be given a sermon.)

The Benediction

Go Forth now into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers have been heard, our sacrifice answered, and that you go in the peace of the Mother.

Peace, Peace, Peace.

Figure 8 The Amphitheatre 1993

Festival of Oimelc Meditation

Fisher or Frangquist? 1965?

Celebrated—from sundown Jan. 31 to sundown Feb. 1
Occasion—Beginning of the Second Quarter of the Druid year, also called the period of Earrach.

Very little is known about the Festival of Oimelc. This is because less of it has survived to modern time s than any of the principle festivals of the Druid year. Oimelc was almost totally eclipsed, on purpose, by the feast of St. Bridget in the Catholic church. There is some question as to the identity of Bridget. She is supposed to have lived at about the same time as St. Patrick, and like him, it is uncertain whether or not she actually existed. Furthermore, Bridget has been identified as one of the Celtic Goddesses – that of fertility- and it is possible that she was simple adopted as a saint out of the Celtic mythology. This may indicated that there were traces of the fertility rites in the celebration of Oimelc; however, considering the season, it is not very likely that they reached any proportion. Rather, it would seem that the festival was something of a repetition of mid-winter. As in mid-winter, the evergreen is made the center of attention as the symbol of continued life in the midst of the seemingly dead world. The fire, so important to all Druidic festivals most probably took the form of the Yule log as in the case of mid-winter. At any rate, the emphasis is placed on the fact that winter is now half-over and that life is not dead (as is seen in the evergreen) but is going to return to the earth in the spring.

A Service for Oimelc, Version #2

By Gary Zempel, 1966 or 67?

The Invocation

Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices;
Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.

Chant

(Here may the arch-Druid chant an appropriate chant or praise)

Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O Our Mother? Hast thou accepted our gifts, O Be'al? I call upon the spirits of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, of the West.

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in her full glory and thrice has she fully hid her glory from us. We know that as Belenos last hid his light from us, Geimredh came to its end. We have lived, through Geimredh, in the hope of the return of the Earth-Mother, yet she still answers us not, and all about us she appears dead.

The Answers or Words of Assurance

Priest: Has she given a sign of this?

Preceptor: Of this constant life is the evergreen a sign.

Priest: Does the Mother give us any sign, special to Oimelc, to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?

Preceptor: Of this at Oimelc we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.

Priest: It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will return to the world."

Preceptor: We drink together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice or goblet saying:)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of this thy sign of eternal life.

(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)

The Meditation

(Here may be read a suitable written meditation)

(Here may be given a sermon)

(Here may be provided time for personal meditation)

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our prayers and sacrifice have been heard and answered, that the Earth-Mother will return to us in less time than she has been gone from us, and that you go ever in the peace of the Mother.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

Set down by me on this eve of Oimelc, for the service celebrating Oimelc, in the third year of the Worship of the Mother

-Gary Zempel

Figure 9 Dick Smiley, Gary Zempel, c 1965

Yet Another Service for Oimelc, Version #3

By Shelton? Early 70s?

The Invocation

O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee but here;
Thou art without form, but we honor these forms
Thou art that which we take to give in dedication, yet we so take and give.
O Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Chant, then Sacrifice

Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried aloft to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this sacrifice of Life. Accept it, we pray thee, and acknowledge for us thy presence here.

(Here shall the priest place a branch of evergreen upon the altar.)

The four winds are silent, neither does the Mother answer. Thus has it been before; yet thrice since Samhain has the moon gone before us in his full glory and thrice has he fully hid his glory from us. We know that as the sun hid her last light from us this day, the time of Geimredh has come to its end, and as the serpent swallows his tail, so moves the world on. But around us all seems barren and cold.

The Response

Chorus: The Earth is a mother that sleeps but never dies.
Priest: Has she given of this a sign?
Preceptor: Of this the evergreen a constant sign.
Priest: Does the Mother give us any sign on this day of Oimelc to remind us that though the winds answer not, she shall yet return and awake?
Preceptor: Of this at Oimelc we are given to know by the lactating of the ewe.
Priest: It is written, "Take now, and drink of this milk, in assurance that life will reawaken in the world."
Preceptor: We drink together in this act of faith.

(Here shall the Priest pour the milk of a ewe (or of a cow) into a chalice)

O Dalon Ap Landu, we praise thy name and beseech thy return to the world of men. Come and dwell within us as we take and drink of thy sign of eternal life.

(Here shall the server pass the milk among the assembled grove)

The Reading

The Benediction

Go forth into the world of men, with faith that the Spirit of the World remains alive, and dwelleth within the hearts, aye, and moves the hearts of *all* men, and that that Spirit hears our plea. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

(Beltane)

SUMMER HALF OF THE YEAR

The Earliest Known Version,
(Perhaps by Fisher, Beltane 1963.)

I. OPENING BLESSING:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship you here;
Thou art without form, but we worship you in these forms;
Thou needest no praise, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive *[these]* three sins that are due to our human limitations.
Mighty and blessed, fertile and powerful, to thee Earth-Mother, we sing your praise, asking that what we offer up to thee will be accepted, and thy blessing of life granted to us.

II. PROCESSION AND DRAWING OF THE CIRCLE (& LIGHTING OF FIRE)

III. HYMNS OR CHANTS OF PRAISE

IV. THE SACRIFICE

Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O our Mother, as we offer up to thee this our sacrifice of life. Accept this we pray, and grant us life.
Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call on the Spirit of the North to give answer, of the South, of the East, and of the West.
Praise be, our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life has been accepted.

V. THE ANSWER

1. Of what does the Earth-mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
From whence do these Waters flow?
FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
And how do we honour this gift that causes life to men?
BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
SHE HAS
Then give me the Waters.
2. O DALON AP LANDU, HALLOW THESE WATERS BY THE SEVENFOLD POWERS, AND BY THE THREE WAYS OF DAY AND THE ONE OF NIGHT. GIVE US TO KNOW THY POWER AS WE TAKE AND DRINK OF THY SECRET ESSENCES.
3. To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

VI. THE SERMON

VII. THE BENEDICTION

Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that you go forth with her blessing. PEACE, PEACE, PEACE.

Mayday, Season Surpassing!

(Ancient Irish Poem, suitable for Beltane)
By Larson, Early 70s.

Mayday, season surpassing! Splendid is color then. Blackbirds sing a full lay, if there be a slender shaft of day.

The dust-colored cuckoo calls aloud; Welcome, splendid summer! The bitterness of bad weather is past, the boughs of the woods are a thicket.

Summer cuts the river down, the shift herd of horses seeks the pool, the long hair of the heather is outspread, the soft white bog-down grows.

Panic startles the heart of the deer, the smooth sea runs apace, season when ocean sinks asleep, blossom covers the world.

Bees with puny strength carry a goodly burden, the harvest of blossoms; up the mountain-side kine take with them mud, the ant makes a rich meal.

The harp of the forest sounds music, the sail gathers, perfect peace. Color has settled on every height, haze on the lake of full waters.

The corncrake, a strenuous bard, discourses; the lofty virgin waterfall sings a welcome to the warm pool; the talk of the rushes is come.

Light swallows dart aloft, loud melody reaches round the hill, the soft rich mast buds, the stuttering quagmire rehearses.

The peat-bog is as the raven's coat, the loud cuckoo bids welcome, the speckled fish leaps, strong is the bound of the swift warrior.

Man flourishes, the maiden buds in her fair strong pride; perfect each forest from top to ground, perfect each great stately plain.

Delightful is the season's splendor, rough winter has gone, white is every fruitful wood, a joyous peace in summer.

A flock of birds settles in the midst of meadows; the green field rustles, wherein is a brawling white stream.

A wild longing is on you to race horses, the ranked host is ranged around; a bright shaft has been shot into the land, so that the water flag is gold beneath it.

A timorous tiny persistent little fellow sings at the top of his voice, the lark sings clear tidings; surpassing Mayday of delicate colours.

Taken from *Ancient Irish Tales*,
(The Boyhood Deeds of Finn)

Figure 10 Beltane Maypole, 2001.

A Service for Beltane

By Shelton, c. 1970-1976

It is traditional to gather on Mai-Fete island first, light the torches there and then process to wherever (usually Monument Hill) in torchlight procession.. It is said that the Ancient Druids extinguished all fires throughout the land before Beltaine sundown, and then rekindled them all after sundown from a fire kindled by the Archdruid. The main fire, of course, is built and doused w/kerosene hours in advance, waiting to be kindled from the Archdruid's torch.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;

Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;

Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;

O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

The Incantation

Use the Mystery, Imagine the AD flanked by torches, reading this chant (That always makes my hair stand on end) and glancing significantly at a torch when he come to the line "Who created in the mind the fire".

The Lighting of the Fire

O Thou, that art this day awake, we greet thee!

Incantation and first Sacrifice

Place the evergreen bough reverently on the fire at the end of this speech. (Oh yes, each sacrifice should be entrusted to some worthy Druid or another, and you should ask for the appropriate one at the appropriate time. It is well worth the time to talk through the mechanics of the service with your cohorts the day before.

From Samhain, now half-year past, we have kept watch of the sun that divideth time as we ourselves. And we have seen the earth barren and deemed that life had fled. Yet thou abidest through all. In token of this we have taken the evergreen as sign, and the evergreen do we consecrate to ourselves that we may consecrate it to thee.

Changing of Vestments

I.e. the ribbons (from white to red). This marks the changing of the season.

Incantation and Second Sacrifice

Again, cast it [the wildflower] on the fire.

We behold the wild flower, the supreme sign of thy life and power. O Thou that returnest to the ways of the waking world, kindle within us thy joy, thy spirit, thy life!

Come ye winds and ye spirits of the wood, from earth and from sky, from greening tree and running stream; speak to us of the coming of spring, of rain on the hill and sun on the field, of the promise of ripening summer, of the quickening of life and quickening of spirit that springeth from the heart of all things and raiseth all unto life!

The Answers

Priest: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PRIEST: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PRECEPTOR: SHE HAS!
PRIEST: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration of the Waters-of-Life

O Dalon Ap Landu, who givest all life but yet who art sprung from the life of us all, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know of the force and power that resideth in the heart of each of us as we bind ourselves in communion with thee and with each other.

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

The Reading

Feel free to read several, and/or have other of the grove read their favorites. This is where the meat of the Modern Reformed Druid service resides, a sharing of thoughts.

The Opening of the Arb

A prerogative of the Archdruid. Any boor venturing to spend the night in the Arb before the Archdruid declares it officially open deserves the snow storm that may come his way. Traditional reading for Arb Opening is Yeat's Faery song (in the Green Book).

The Incantation and the Last Sacrifice

For the life of me I can't remember what the sacrifice was. As I recall, I wanted an oak, but oaks probably won't be in leaf. Grass is appropriate but not very dramatic. (Grass is about as eternal as anything) So think of something else.

Benediction

Write your own!

Figure 11 Paul Schmidt, Nikki Lambert, Mike Scharding, Hannah Landman & Richard Shelton at Monument Hill, 4/14/1993 for 30th Reunion.

Beltane Tips

By Shelton, 1976

21 April 1976
Shelton to Morrision

Dear Don,

We were delighted to get your letter, and to learn that you'll be around this summer and next year. It's beginning to look as though the Midsummer service will break a record for number of 3rd Orders present; there will probably be people from the cities (though not Isaac), and there's even a side chance that we'll have a majority of the Council.

You should receive shortly a document from Diana appointing you Arch-Druid of Carleton (pro-tempore). When you receive it, you will become 13th Arch-Druid of Carleton and Chairman of the Council of Dalon Ap Landu. The "pro-tempore" signifies only that you are appointed, rather than elected, and you don't have to mention the "pro-tempore". You can drop it altogether as soon as you can rustle up a Grove to elect you Arch-Druid. But you will have all powers of a regularly elected Arch-Druid, including the right to consecrate priests to the third order. I want you to have this office by Beltaine so that you can meet Isaac on equal footing. If necessary, you should make it clear to him that <u>you</u> are the presiding Arch-Druid, and that <u>you</u> are running the show.

Now any Arch-Druid needs some paraphernalia, and to help tide you over until you can get the real thing, we enclose the following:

1. The Order of Worship – containing basic services for the Summer Half and Winter Half, 2nd Order Consecration, and a few other things. This is most of what you need in the way of liturgy. Always remember: except for third order consecration, all priests are encouraged to write their own liturgy, and (except for third order consecration) there is no fixed liturgy. Oh yes I have written in pencil the text as it appears in the Carleton Liturgy (the Black Books) as it differs somewhat from the printed version. The black book version is the one we used (when we were following the book at all). Second order consecration was the one service of these that we regularly did follow the book on.
2. A service for Beltaine. This is meant only as a suggestion; if you like it, use it, but don't feel bound to it. I guarantee it will take Isaac by surprise, since whatever he is calling the "Standard Beltaine Service" he must have written himself – the Black Book contains none (or didn't at my time, anyway). This service I wrote myself at Carleton, Glenn might have stuck it in the Black Book, but Isaac can hardly have found a copy anywhere. Also enclosed are some "stage directions," which might be useful. If you use this service and if Isaac asks for a copy, refer him to me, its mine, and I don't want it showing up in his Magnum Opus.
3. A copy of our printed version of the Green Books. Read the introductory material carefully, and peruse the contents with pleasure; for here is the essence of Druidism. Without the Green Books, no Grove is complete. But: for the time being , keep this to yourself. Our problem is that we do not yet have all the copyright releases necessary, and I have been using that as an excuse not to send a copy to Isaac until after it's too late to include in his thing. So let him have no inkling that you have a copy. Of course, you will get the real Green Book with the paraphernalia; in the meantime find a bind

for this – and keep the temporary copyright page right after the tile page, as its our only protection against pirated copies.

4. A handy-dandy Druid Calendar – works even in leap year! – plus directions for use.
5. Copies of the Outline of the Foundation of Fundamentals and of Letter to my Brothers. They are part of the Carleton Apocrypha. Isaac has O.F.F. , but not letter- it would be best if he did not know of the existence of the latter.
6. Our very last copy of the Chronicles – we haven't been able to reach Kelton, so I don't know yet whether he has been able to recover the rest.
7. The Carleton Constitution. (as amended) Notice the striking resemblance to the Book of Law.

That should be enough to get you started. Let me know if you require anything else. I don't know how well-versed you are in the art of performing a service, so please forgive me if you already know all the following. But just in case you don't, I offer these tips:

A. It is traditional for Carleton priests to inscribe (with their fingers) the Druid symbol on the North (Blank) face of the Monument just before services. This is a token, looking forward to the day when we can have it inscribed (with a chisel) together with the legend "The First Reformed Druid Service was held on this spot on May 1st, 1963."

B. The presiding priest (usually, though not necessarily the A-D) gives the invocation somewhat apart from the congregation, and then processes (with his assistant, e.g. the Preceptor) to join the congregation. Upon reaching it, the two draw a symbol with their staves, into which the presiding priest steps, and from which he gives the rest of the service.

(Druid Symbol Illustration)

C. An incantation is nice, though not necessary. It is hard to find (or write) good ones. The ones in Customs are nice, but they are given much too often.

D. "The Sacrifice" Oh yes, the Sacrifice. Did anybody remember to bring a Sacrifice? -Uh, just a minute folks, I have to find a Sacrifice. Be right back." MORAL: Don't forget to bring a Sacrifice. This is the responsibility of the presiding priest. (This is particularly important for 3rd Order consecrations – the candidate will be pretty groggy, and very impressionable, so it is important that the A-D have gotten a good night's sleep and have everything all ready for the consecration so that everything goes smoothly. This instant is the most serious Druidism gets – it means a lot to the candidate, and it is important that it be done well.)

E. The responses in the Answer are given by the assistant, who should be of 2nd order (or more). If no 2nd order are available, they can be given by the congregation in union. But it doesn't really matter.

F. Waters of life: the traditional ratio of Scotch to Water is determined by the marks on the cruet (part of the paraphernalia): one fills with Scotch to the first mark, then with water (traditionally from a drinking fountain from 1st Goodhue, but only because A-D's traditionally forget about the water until the last minute) up to the 2nd mark. I measured out once what this came to in milliliters, but have forgotten exactly. It came to about 1 part Scotch to 2 parts water, for a total of about _ cup. Remember, for 2nd Order consecration, you need another cruetful in reserve for each 2nd order to be consecrated – for it is required that the aspirant consume the lion's share of the standard cruetful of waters.

G. Waters of Life (for Beltane): the ration is reversed: fill with water first, then Scotch. (This is one reason 2nd order consecration is traditionally **not** performed on Beltaine!)

H. Waters of Sleep: Straight water ("neither do they sing…")

I. Mechanics of 2nd order of worship (p.3) it says the 2nd order consecration is performed before the remainder of the waters is returned to the Earth-Mother. However, you need that chalice for the consecration, and the aspirant isn't supposed to leave any to be returned. So instead you proceed as follows: (suppose you have an aspirant)

J. Hallow the Waters of Life and serve the congregation, returning the remainder to the Earth-Mother, exactly as in a regular service.

K. Go to the aspirant. Ask him to kneel. Hallow the next batch of waters. Proceed with the consecration.

L. Go back to your homeplate (the Symbol) and continue the service (with the reading). Now you begin to see why you need an assistant or two: to hold bottles (of water and of scotch), cruets, chalice and liturgy, and torches at night!

M. Sermons. Nobody gives sermons anymore. A reading, or three or four, followed by a period of silent meditation is usual. I believe Renny was somewhat more imaginative – but you would know more about that than I.

O. Oh yes, the official liturgical scotch of RDNA is Black & White (Although we considered changing it when they changed the clip tops to screw tops – wrote them a letter to about it, too (didn't get any response)).

That's all I can think of. Hope it helps. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

News Department: The Ann Arbor Grove has been revived (see enclosed missive, which is for the Archives). So I may be addressed as "Richard, Arch-Druid of Ann Arbor" though I'll think you stuffy if you do! (Except formally of course.)

Although it is not required, if you fell energetic it might be a good idea to send out an accession letter. But you might hold off until after Midsummers, in case anything important is decided (Hah!) Whatever you think best.

Peace
Richard!

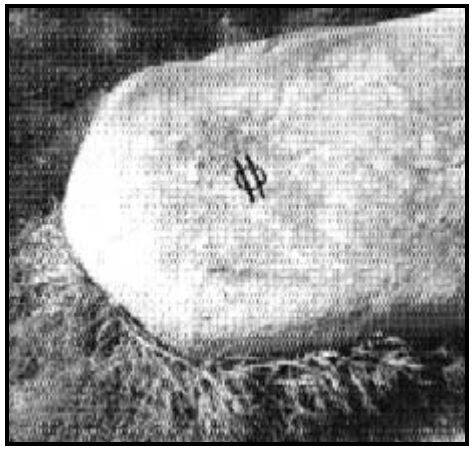


Figure 12 Altar stone, Hill of 3 Oaks c.1976

A Service for Mid-Summer

Small Fragment
By Fisher?, 1964?

Invocation:

O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, yet we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, yet we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these, our prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

(Here shall the sign be drawn upon the ground, the presiding priest stepping into it.)

A Chant For Midsummer

By Fisher, c. 1963

Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, thou of uncounted names and faces, hear us now as we thy humble servants do call upon thee.
(The BOLDFACE lines to be read by the congregation in unison:)
GLORIOUS ARE ALL THY WORKS, O OUR MOTHER!
Hear us, Mother, as we do call upon thee in the form of Belenos, great God of the golden sun.
MAKE THE FACE TO SMILE UPON US, THOU GOD OF THE BRIGHTLY SHINING LIGHT
Lo, Belenos, we have rejoiced these six full moons since the festival of midwinter, as we watched thee day by day lengthening thy reign of light.
O GLORIOUS ARE THE DEEDS OF BELENOS, AS THE WINTER SNOWS DO MELT AND WE REJOICE IN THE MOTHER'S RETURN TO LIFE AT BEALTAINE.
Yet do we know that with the coming of Midsummer the days will begin to shorten, all the mother's activities will begin slowing for the winter period, and the eve of Samhain shall come upon us.
WE SHALL MOURN AS THE SUN SINKS DAILY LOWER. BUT STILL YET BE GLAD FOR WHAT THE MOTHER DOES STILL GIVE US TO LIVE WITH.
We know, Mother, that as there is Bealtaine there must be Samhain, and as there is Samhain there must be Bealtaine.
WE KNOW, BELENOS, THAT AS THERE IS MIDWINTER THERE MUST BE MIDSUMMER, AND AS THERE IS MIDSUMMER THERE MUST BE AGAIN MIDWINTER.
As the sun began to climb, it must now begin to sink.
AS IT NOW BEGINS TO SINK, IT MUST CLIMB AGAIN.
All that comes must pass away. We praise thee, our Mother.
ALL THAT PASSES AWAY MUST COME YET AGAIN. PRAISE BE TO THEE, BELENOS.

Incantation to Midsummer

By Frangquist, 1964
Given at Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan

O glorious sun,
Won the fight,
Light over dark,
Stark nigh recedes,
proceed to thy fullest,
Best day today,
May thy radiance
Dance over all,
Fall to give
Living strength from on highs
Thy power goes through all, Belenos

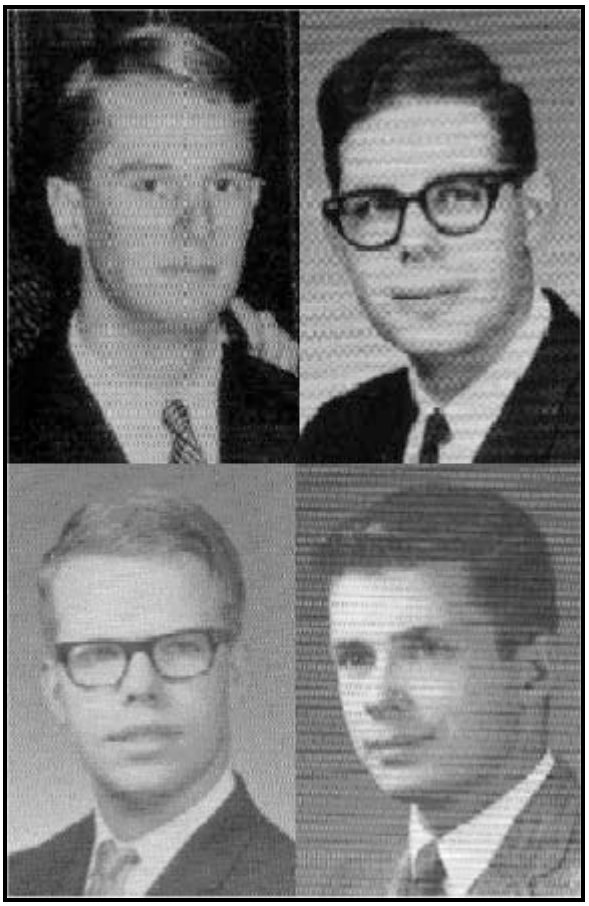


Figure 13 Four Founders of the RDNA
David Fisher, Howard Cherniack (Top)
Norman Nelson & David Frangquist, c. 1963

A Service for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

The Invocation

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations:

Thou art everywhere, yet only here do we seek thee;

Thou art without form, yet in these forms do we honor thee;

Thou hast no need of prayers and dedication, yet of thine own self do we gather that which we dedicate to thee;

Lord, overlook these three errors that are due to our human limitations.

Here shall the priest and preceptor together draw the sign upon the ground, and the priest shall step into it.

The Praise

Priest: Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled on her children.

Chorus: Three times since Beltane has the moon gone before us in her full glory, and three times has she fully hidden her glory from us.

Priest: In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought forth life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the fruit of this life.

Chorus: Yet as the moon now waxes near to full only to wane again, so at Samhain will the Earth-Mother withdraw from us a while.

Priest: Even so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh the life which has grown through Samhradh comes to fruition, that we her grateful children may gather it to endure and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.

BOTH: Let us gather and praise the bounty of the Mother!

The Dedication

Priest: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this dedication of life. Accept it, we pray thee, in token of the dedication of our hearts, and grant us awareness of thy presence with us.

(Here shall the priest place a stalk of wheat (or of field grass) upon the altar)

Priest: Hast thou accepted our dedication, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

Priest: Praise be, our dedication has been accepted. The Mother smiles on her children and brings forth of her bounty.

The Response

PRIEST: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PRECEPTOR: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: From whence do these Waters flow?

PRECEPTOR: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PRIEST: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PRECEPTOR: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PRIEST: Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?

PRECEPTOR: OF THIS AT LUGNASADH WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR.

PRIEST: What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?

PRECEPTOR: IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.

Priest: Give me this token.

The Consecration

PRIEST: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of Groves, sprung from the Mother of all life, who is herself sprung from the life of us all: hallow this thy fruit by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Impart thy power to thy fruit that we who partake of it may know our unity with all life. Cleanse our minds and heart and prepare us for meditation.

(Here shall the cider be passed to all present. Then shall the priest pour the remainder on the altar, saying:)

To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, even as we must return to thee.

The Reading and the Meditation

The Benediction

Priest: Go forth into the world of men, secure in the knowledge that our dedication has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and that her presence is with us always if we do but open ourselves to her. May the peace of the Mother find each of you.

A Reading for Lughnasadh

By Shelton?, Early 70s?

(From the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)

Thou, O God my Lord,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou Lord of hill and valley.
Now, after three suns, and three days,
Shall I begin to gather my maize
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.
A little of Thy food and drink gave I to Thee.
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,
But I have plenty and good
Of my own food and drink;
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.
I begin therefore the harvest,
But I am not this day ready for the harvest
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.
I can only complete it slowly.
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and Valleys?
I will again speak to Thee:
Wherefore not, my God?

From A.C. Bouget. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967. p. 31.

Service for Lughnasadh

By Katya Luomala, 1978

Invocation:

O Lord, forgive us these three sins that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no needs of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
O Lord, forgive these three sins that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleans our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Incantation:

(Appropriate and optional – Lugh Manifest)

I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the billows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valour,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of knowledge,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head, the fire;

Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
If not I---

Sacrifice:

P: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of Life.

P: For the sun has come to warms us.
G: SEE HOW WE ARE WARM.
P: The newborn plants, the worthy tasks, the thoughts of Lugh have we nurtured
G: SEE HOW THEY HAVE COME TO FRUITION (HAVE MET WITH LUCK)
P: We have praised the Mother with the work of our hands
G: WE HAVE REACHED BE'AL WITH THE WORK OF OUR HANDS.
P: The abundance we have found will sustain us
G: SEE HOW WE HAVE PLENTY.
P: The flowers of the earth, the fruit of the earth we can offer you freely (hold up sacrifice, portion of the feast)
G: THY BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN WHO WILL SEE US THROUGH COLD AND DARKNESS
P: We know you are drawing away from us, but first partake of the comforts you have brought us
G: WE REJOICE TODAY!
P: Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Sacrifice offered)

P: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West.

P: Praise be; our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted.

Consecration:

(Includes any beverage for the feast)

P: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.
P: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE (N)EVER-CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
P: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
G: SHE HAS, AND HER BOUNTY IS AT ITS HEIGHT.
P: The give me the Waters.

P: Oh inspiration of Be'al, oh manifestation through Lugh, oh sacrifice of Ea, come and meet in our festival cups today. And hallow these waters by the three ways of day and one of night; bring to them the purity of thy seven-fold powers, oh Dalan-ap-Landu.

Partaking of the Waters

P: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

Reading(s)

Earth, divine Goddess, Mother Nature, who generatest all things and bringest forth anew the sun which thou hast given to the nations; Guardian of sky and sea and of all Gods and powers; through thy power all nature fall silent and then sinks in sleep. And again thou bringest back the light and chasest away night, and yet again thou coverest us most securely with thy shades. Thou dost contain chaos infinite, yea and winds and showers and storms. Thou sendest them out when thou wilt, and causest the seas to roar; thou chasest away the sun and arousest the storm. Again, when thou wil thou sendest forth the joyous day and givest the nourishment of life with the eternal surety. And when the soul departs to thee we return. Thou indeed are duly called great Mother of the Gods; thou conquerest by thy divine name. Thou art the source of the strength of nations and of Gods, without thee nothing can be brought to perfection or be born; thou art great, queen of the Gods. Goddess! I adore thee as divine; I call upon thy name; be pleased to grant that which I ask thee, so shall I give thanks to thee, Goddess, with due faith.
-Ms. Harley 1585, FF. 12 v. –13r.

Meditation

(from the Kekchi Indians of Guatemala)
Thou, O God my Lord,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou Lord of hill and valley.
Now, after three suns, after three days,
Shall I begin to gather my maize
Before Thy mouth, before Thy face.
A little of Thy food and drink give I to Thee.
It is almost nothing, that which I give to Thee,
But I have plenty and good
Of my own food and drink;
Thou hast revealed it to my soul and to my life:
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father.
I begin therefore the harvest,
But I am not this day ready for the harvest
Without Thy word, and without Thy countenance.
Who knows how many suns, how many days I reap?
It is no quick matter to harvest from among the weeds.
I can only complete it slowly.
Who knows till when I can speak to Thee,
Thou my Mother, Thou my Father,
Thou celestial one, Lord of hills and valleys?
I will again speak to Thee:
Wherefore not, my God?

-A.C. Bouquet. Sacred Books of the World. Baltimore, Penguin Books (A283), 1967, P.31.

Benediction:

P: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, and also our rejoicing. And go forth to feast with your brethren, even unto excess; be merry, for soon all shall sleep.

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Katya Luomala
Lughnasadh 1978

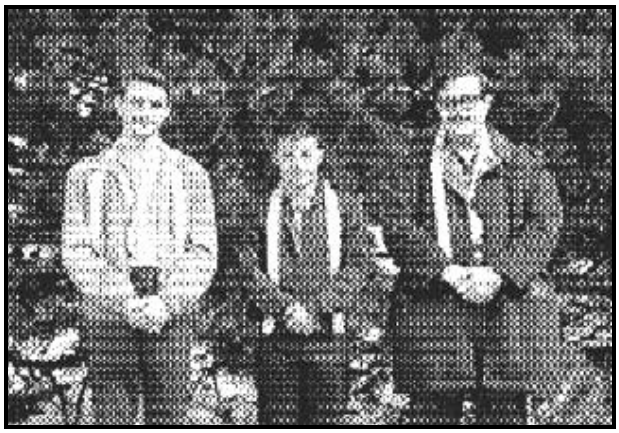


Figure 14 Fisher, Frangquist & Larson at Monument Hill, c. 1964

Section Three: Early Berkeley Seasonal Versions

These were in common use in the NRDNA groves and were the bulk of services in Druid Chronicles (Evolved), published in 1976.

Samhain

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use from on/near Nov. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary spring water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR:. Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.

Chorus: Go thou not from us.

PR: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.

Chorus: Go thou not from us.

PR: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?

Chorus: Depart not from our midst, sleep not, O most high.

PR: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

Chorus: Return to us his warmth.

The Second Sacrifice

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. All will turn to face the directions that are called.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Second Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

(The priests now remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ribbons. The following is the Mourning and Declaration of Faith)

The Declaration

PR: Lo, we are as wraith, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

Chorus: Preserve us, o spirit of Day. Keep us in thy mind, O spirit of Power.

PR: O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till spring.

Chorus: So let it be, O our Mother, for we are faithful, and would keep thy ways.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given

PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM!

PR: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what then, do we partake?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.

PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service.

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

PR: Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:

Figure 15 Robert Larson c. 1964.

Winter Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Winter Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs and mistletoe.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, but we worship thee here;
Thou art without form, but we worship thee in these forms;
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor & Server or any two others use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: Belenos halts his outward flight,
Chorus: And turns to us today.
PR: The shortest day, the longest night.
Chorus: He turns to us today.
PR: So let us rejoice in his sight,
Chorus: He turns to us today.
PR: O Belenos, to Thee we pray,
Chorus: Smile on us today.
PR: O look on us who keep Thy ways.
Chorus: Smile on us always!
PR: O Belenos, Who givest light,
O Belenos, Who givest life,
We rejoice at Thy turning,
A sign of life to us returning,
To Thee all praise, O Lord of Light
Thou Who takest away the night,
Thou Who givest life to land,
And warmth and joy unto Man.
Chorus: O Belenos, we praise Thee!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.
PR: Of what, then, do we partake?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-SLEEP.
PR: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 16 Sue & Larry Press with Stacey Weinberger at Live Oak, Beltane1984

Oimelc

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near Feb. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimelc. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and Server or any two chosen by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid steps into this Sigil, which is closed by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: For three months, O our Mother, has Thou been gone from us.
Chorus: Wilt thou not return?
PR: Our hearts are heavy, our days our dark.
Chorus: Wilt thou not return?
PR: All seems dead, hast thou departed?
Chorus: Never to return?
PR: O, our Mother, we ask a sign.
Chorus: A sign of thy return.
PR: A sign of Life in the midst of Death.
Chorus: A sign of thy return.
PR: Sleep in peace, but send a sign!
Chorus: A sign of they return!
PR: A sign of Life!
Chorus: The Life of thy return!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS NOT! BUT THE EWE GIVE MILK.
PR: Of what, then, do we partake?
PREC: THE MILK OF THE EWE!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the milk of ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually

*clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 17 Beltane picnic 1997 at the site of where the New Circle would be built. Adavid Coil, Sam Adams, Matt Gogla facing and Andrea Davis is standing.

Spring Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding branches.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is not accepted, except in emergency situations.)

PR: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Chant

PR: And the God of the Sun did arise from His tomb in the South; and once more did He fare forth to His children in the Northern lands. (Pause) O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names, but one Face, we, Thy children, welcome Thee back to our lands.

Chorus: O Lord of Light, we welcome Thee.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, long have we awaited Thy return, that the coldness of the Night might be taken from our lands.

Chorus: O God of Sun, We welcome Thee.

*****

PR: The nights were long, the trees had shed,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The days were short, and life had fled.

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: The winds were cold, the land seemed dead,

Chorus: The night had conquered day.

PR: But the Sun returns from the Southern lands.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: Plants spring up on every hand,

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: "Let Life return!" is the Sun's command.

Chorus: Balanced now are we.

PR: The Sun grows stronger every day.

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: The world grows lush and Life holds sway,

Chorus: The day will conquer night.

PR: So let us praise Him in all ways.

Chorus: The day will conquer the night.

****

PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we praise Thee at Thy return to our midst. Welcome art Thou among us.

Chorus: Bless with thy presence, O Lord of Light.

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, bless us with Thy warmth and light, that we may rejoice in Thy sight.

Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of the Sun.

The Catechism of Waters-of-Sleep

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Sleep while the priest ask the Catechism of the Waters-of-Sleep. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS NOT! THE WATERS ARE HERE, BUT THE SPIRIT HAS GONE OUT OF THEM.

PR: Of what, then, does Belenos give that we may rejoice on this day of His return.

PREC: THE WARMTH OF THE SUN AND THE WATERS WHERE he SLEEPS.

PR: OF WHAT, THEN, DO WE PARTAKE?

PREC: The Waters of the Sun.

PR: Then give me the Waters of the Sun.

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy promise of Life as we take and drink of Thy warmth and light.

Ordinations

No ordinations are normally done in the Winter Half of the Year.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Sleep," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length - though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:Peace! Peace! Peace!

Beltane

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near May 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Beltane. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation..

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)

PR: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: The Mother wakes from her long sleep and smiles on us today!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Life!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: She brings us Light!
Chorus: SHE IS AWAKE!
PR: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
PR: We light our fires to show the way.

(The fires of Be'al, the bonfire, are now lit by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.)

Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
PR: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
Chorus: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

(This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace:)

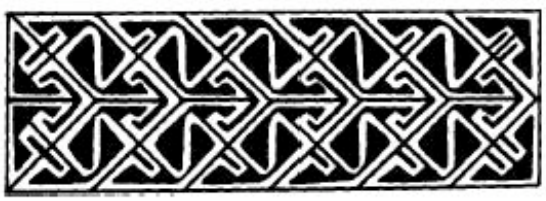
PR: O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O our Mother
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!
PR: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al
Chorus: WE WELCOME THEE!!
PR: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.
Chorus: WELCOME ARE YE, AMONG US, O MOST HIGH. SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Praise be!! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

(All priests remove the white ribbons and don the red ribbons.)

PR: Now give me the Waters!



The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air:The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying: Peace! Peace! Peace!

Summer Solstice

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Summer Solstice. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of green branches and mistletoe. The fire should be especially large.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

PR: A Bhelenos, a Dihia na Greine soilsigh orainn inniu. Glac leis an iobairt seo, A Bhelenos, mas e do thoil e, agus tabhair dhuinn cuid do theasa ' do shoilse. Loin le bheatha sinn-ne, a Thiarna Soilse, agus dein solas an bhealaigh dhuinn agus sinn ag moladh d'ainm.

{ O Belenos, O God of the Sun, shine on us today. Accept this sacrifice, O Belenos, we pray thee, and give us of your warmth and light. Fill us with life, O Lord of Light an light our way as we praise your name.}

Chorus: Hail Belenos, To Thee all praise! Hail Belenos, smile on us always!

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)

Priest: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: Welcome Belenos, this day of days.
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: Welcome Belenos, to Thy golden rays,
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: Welcome Belenos, to Thee all praise,
Chorus: Welcome art thou.
PR: All praise to Belenos, this day at full height
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O Lord of Light.
PR: All praise to Belenos, Who conquers night,
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O Giver of Life.
PR: All praise to Belenos, Who warms our life,
Chorus: Praise to Thee, O God of the sun.
PR: All hail Belenos, who smiles on us today.
Chorus: Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!
PR: All hail Belenos, who keep His ways,
Chorus: Hail Belenos! To Thee all praise!
PR: All hail Belenos, light our paths always,
Chorus: Hail Belenos, God of Sun!
Hail Belenos, Giver of Life!
Hail Belenos, Lord of Light!

The Catechism of Waters-of-Life

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: From whence do these Waters flow?
PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?
PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.
PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?
PREC: SHE HAS!
PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the tree ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Optional Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end of the Service with:

The Benediction

Pr: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

(THE END)

Notes:

Lughnasadh

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975
For use on/near Aug. 1st.

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as for the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that members of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship you in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess step into this Sigil, which is then close by the two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in very unusual situations.)

PR: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR:. Thy trees do grow and give us shade,
Chorus: O Dalon Ap Landu, we thank thee.
PR: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
Chorus: O Grannos, we thank thee.
PR: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
Chorus: O Braciaca, we thank thee.
PR: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
Chorus: O Sirona, we thank thee.
PR: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
Chorus: O Taranis, we thank thee.
PR: Thy seas are deep and full of fish,
Chorus: O Llyr, we thank thee.
PR: Thy earth is fertile and full of Life,
Chorus: O Danu, we thank thee.
****
PR: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
Chorus: In the midst of light is dark.
PR: Dark though the night, the stars are bright.
Chorus: In the midst of dark is light.
PR: Thy light shines on us today.
Chorus: O Belenos, we thank thee.
PR: The plants give fruits which then do die.
Chorus: In the midst of life is death.
PR: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
Chorus: In the midst of death is life.
PR: Thy life is here in us today.
Chorus: O Earth-Mother, we thank thee.

PR: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.

Chorus: We thank you, O most high. Keep us in your minds, we pray you, as we keep in your ways.

The Catechism

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS! RIPE ARE THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN, AND BRIGHT IS THE HONEY OF THE HIVES. OUR CUPS OVERFLOW WITH CIDER AND MEAN, AND ALL THE GOOD THINGS OF THIS SEASON!

PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Dalon Ap Landu, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

*The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does **not** drink more than once.*

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

*In either method, the last person in the circle should **not** finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:*

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:)

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

(THE END)

Figure 18 Nelson, Frangquist & Fisher on the Hill of Three Oaks, c. 1964

Fall Equinox

New Reformed Druids of North America
By Bonewits & Larson, c. 1975

Preparatory Details

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruid/ess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening Invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the people (depending on Local grove custom) to join in speaking the bold words of the Invocation.

The Invocation

O Lord, forgive these three errors that are due to our human limitations:
Thou art everywhere, **but we worship thee here;**
Thou art without form, **but we worship thee in these forms;**
Thou hast no need of prayers and sacrifices, **yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices;**
O Lord, forgive us these three errors that are due to our human limitations.
O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditations.

The Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server or any two others designated by the Grove use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom of the circle incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is closed by two staves.

The Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

The Sacrifice

The Druid/ess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

PR: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.

(Here the Priest places the plant offering upon the 'altar' or the ground if there is no altar. As each of the directions are questioned, the members may turn to face that direction.)

PR: Hast thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the spirit of the North to give answer... of the South...of the East....and of the West.

The Reply

(The sacrifice is accepted, except in unusual situations.)

Priest.: Praise be! Our sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

The Chant

PR: The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home.
O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but One Face, we, Thy children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.
Chorus: O Lord of Light, return to us soon.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.
Chorus: O God of the Sun, return to us soon.
PR: The nights were short, the trees in leaf,
Chorus: The Day had conquered night.
PR: The days were long and full of Life,
Chorus: The day had conquered night.
PR: The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,
Chorus: The day had conquered night.
PR: But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: Though the world is warm and full of Life,
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,
Chorus: Balanced now are we.
PR: The Sun grows weaker every day.
Chorus: The night will conquer day.
PR: The leaves will wither and Death draw nigh,
Chorus: The night will conquer day.
PR: We pray Thy return with all our might.
Chorus: Or the night will conquer day.
*****
PR: O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.
Chorus: Thou blessed us with Thy presence, O Lord of Light.
PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.
Chorus: Bless us and light our way, O God of Sun.
******
PR: But winter will pass and spring will come,
Chorus: And the day will conquer night.
PR: The Sun will return and warm our land,
Chorus: And the day will conquer night.
PR: Death will pass and Life return,
Chorus: And the day will conquer night!
****
PR: O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence depart from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.
Chorus: All hail Belenos, God of Light!
PR: All praise Belenos, who keep his ways.
Chorus: O Belenos, we praise Thee!

The Catechism

(The preceptor holds the Waters-of-Life while the priest ask the Catechism. The local custom may replace the Preceptor's response with a chorus of the members.)

PR: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

PREC: THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: From whence do these Waters flow?

PREC: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.

PR: And how do we honor this gift that causes life in us?

PREC: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

PREC: SHE HAS!

PR: Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?

PREC: HE DOES! THOUGH HE DEPARTS FOR THE SOUTHERN LANDS, STILL IS HIS SPARK WITHIN THESE WATERS-OF-LIFE.

PR: Then give me the Waters!

The Consecration

(The Priest/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Priest/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:)

PR: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

Ordinations

First Order consecrations can be done at this time, but it's not necessary to enter into the first order for a person to drink Waters. If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Priest/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

The Communion

The Priest/ess drink from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Priest/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does not drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Priest/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person to that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should not finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Priest/ess with blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip returning the remainder on the altar or fire, saying:

PR: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.

The Meditation

(Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture that the Priest/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Priest/ess and a period of silence and private mediation (usually two or three minutes in length, though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Priest/ess signals the end:

The Benediction

PR: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifice has found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that she has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with her blessing.

Drawing the Sigil in the Air

The Priest blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:

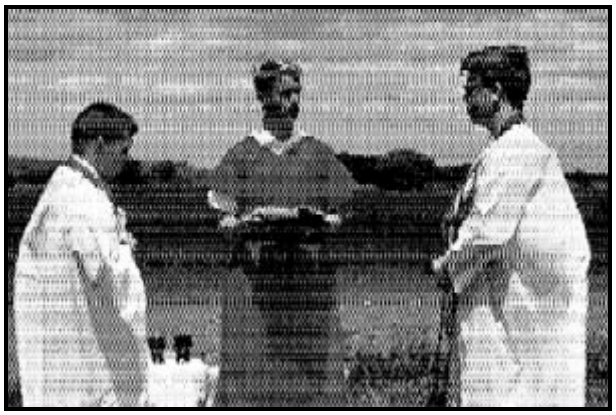


Figure 19 Frangquist, Fisher & Nelson at Hill of Three Oaks c. 1964.

Figure 20 The Vigiler

Section Four:
Later Berkeley
Seasonal Variations

After Larson retired as Archdruid, there were a number of permutations of Archdruids in charge until the Grove's break-up in 1982. Isaac became more interested in devising new liturgy, increasing the service's magical intensity, and investigating new Indo-European liturgical designs.

Order of General Common Worship (Summer Version)

Samhradh & Foghamhar (Fall) 17 y.r. (Bkly)
Mother Grove NRDNA
Circa late 1979 c.e.
(This is a very unusual one, see historiography)

Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (Ads) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song (All):

"O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance,
G: And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of though itself, reverberates infinitely,
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Procession Song (ALL):

"Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere,
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form,
G: But we worship them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
ADS: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: Yes!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God!
AD: Who is Our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is Our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.
AD: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and in soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and ask:

AD: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals, and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:

ADS: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female,
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

The chalice is passed around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Great the power we have raised
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest...?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure the area is physically clean before leaving.

Figure 21 Live Oak Grove in Procession at Lughnasadh 1983.

Order of General Common Worship (Winter Version)

Mother Grove of the NRDNA 18 y.r. (Brkly)
Circa early 1980 c.e.
This is an unusual version. "Class C"
See the Historiography at end of part 3.

Druids line up for the Procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Preceptor (P) and the Server (S), and the other members of the Grove (G).

Invocation "O Earth Mother" (Customs 2:1-3)

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of Life.
G: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
ADS: In the mighty helix we dance,
G: And in harmony with all of Life, we sing:
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness, teach us Your joy, let us share Your sorrow, extend our limitations.
ADS: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of though itself, reverberates infinitely,
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Procession Song (ALL): "Now do we with Songs and Rejoicing"

(All process to Altar. Prec. & Server draw Sigil, AD & ADS enter, Prec seals it).

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere,
G: But we worship Them here.
AD: The Gods are without form,
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices.
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit; evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand these experiences as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our own hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our live, and make our individual dedications to the spirits Whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surrounds us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: Yes!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God!
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!
ADS: Who is Our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and of light, spark of the sun, and flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is Our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength; to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society; to heal and protect, the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and in our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, in heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, and our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring their sacrifices to the altar stone.

AD: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The Ad holds up the sacrificial branch and speaks:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles, our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the ADS turns to the Four Quarters and ask:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer... and of the South... of the East... and of the West... and of the Holy Center..

(The Sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon but you have not answered, we have offered to you, but you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing, All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has NOT! The waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

Figure 22 Emmon and the Neo-Pagans at the Berkeley Inter-Faith Annual Thanksgiving Pageant, Samhain 1987. Emmon second from left.

Consecration:

The Ad takes the chalice of Waters, and invokes the Power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energies:

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the Waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which Is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female,
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

The Sharing

The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, The Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.

AD: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND OUR BROTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are one family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all ye Goddesses and Gods around us and within us;
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For all the bounty You have given through the Time of Life:.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All now pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

AD: And all the rest...?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send all remaining energies into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals.

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Let us go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire to after making sure the area is clean.

Figure 23 Bob Blunt after ordination Ocotber 18, 1983.

1978 Samhain

By Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Samhain. The chalice will be filled with ordinary water (the Waters-of-Sleep). The sacrifice should be of bare branches. All Third Order Druids and Druidesses, including the Grove's Archdruid/ess, should be wearing their red ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their white ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible place.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation:

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession:

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise:

Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

Sacrifice:

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

The Sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

Chant:

D: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted Nature in and above all, to Thee we sing our chants of praise.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all Groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not Thy pleasing face from us.
E: GO THOU NOT FROM US.
D: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is Thy order, where Thy strength?
E: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST, SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH.
D: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws His chariot; His face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.
E: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH

Second Sacrifice:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Second Reply:

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are silent; the Earth-Mother sleeps.

The Archdruid/ess, and all other members of the Third Order present, remove their red ribbons and replace them with their white ones. Then follows the mourning and Declaration of Faith.

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

E: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY, KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER.

D: O Earth-Mother, guide our paths. If Thou wilt leave us, save us through the time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts 'till Spring.

E: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

D: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.

D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?

P: She has not! The waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.

D: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep is begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters-of-Sleep.

D: Then give me the Waters-of-Sleep.

Consecration:

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these waters, and hallow them. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Communion:

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Sleep" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

End of a Special Order of Worship for Samhain

Figure 24 Tree libation offering, Live Oak Spring Equinox 1985.

1979 Samhain

Order of Common Worship, Samhain
(dated 17 Y.R. but probably 1979)
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"
(Berkeley) Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A

AD: Archdruid ADS: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server G:Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: THIS IS THE APPOINTED PALCE, NOW IS THE APPOINTED TIME.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: WE COME TO WORSHIP THE GODS.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: WE SEEK TO KNOW WHAT WE CAN, WITH OUR MORTAL LIMITATIONS.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM HERE.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: BUT WE WORSHIP THEM IN THESE FORMS.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: SO WE OFFER THEM OUR PRAYERS AND SACRIFICES:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: EACH OF US IN OUR OWN PRAYERS,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: EVERY GOD AND GODDESS IS A STAR!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: WHERE IS THE AIR WE BREATHE? THE WATERS THAT SURROUND US? THE GROUND UPON WHICH WE STAND?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: EVERY GODDESS IS WITHIN US.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: EVERY GOD IS WITHIN US.
ADS: Thou art God!
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: SHE IS THE EARTHMOTHER, SPIRIT OF ALL THAT LIVES UPON THE EARTH, AND SWIMS BENEATH THE WATERS, AND FLIES THROUGHOUT THE AIR.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: HE IS BE'AL, THE SHINING ONE, SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND LIGHT, SPARK OF THE SUN, AND THE FLAME WITHIN THE HEART OF EVERY BEING.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: HE IS DALON AP LANDU, LORD OF THIS AND EVERY GROVE, PATRON OF DRUIDS, AND COMFORTER OF THE PEOPLE.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: TO GROW AS HUMAN BEINGS, IN JOY AND LOVE AND WISDOM AND STRENGTH, TO PROMOTE IN OUR ACTIONS, A HUMAN AND INTERDEPENDENT SOCITY, TO HEAL AND PROTECT THE BIOSPHERE OF THIS PLANET; AND TO FURTHER THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION, IN OURSELVES AND OUR GROUPS, AND THROUGHOUT ALL TIME AND SPACE.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: THUS WE BRING OUR SACRIFICES, TO THE LORD AND LADY.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.)

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:)

ADS: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(The branch is laid upon the altar stone. The AD then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:)

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted!)

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

Chant:

AD: Ea, Lord, Ea, Mother, Thou with uncounted names and faces, Thou of the many faceted nature in and above all, to thee we sing our chants of praise!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and all groves, mover by night and by day, descend not beneath the earth, turn not thy pleasing face from us!

G: GO THOU NOT FROM US!

AD: The leaves wither, the trees and fields are barren, on what can we depend? Where is thy order, where thy strength?

G: DEPART NOT FROM OUR MIDST! SLEEP NOT, O MOST HIGH!

AD: The Sun, the bright fire of day, withdraws his chariot; his face is veiled with clouds, and the breath of the North Wind walks the land.

G: RETURN TO US HIS WARMTH!

Second Sacrifice:

AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(The second branch is laid upon the altar stone. The ADS then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted!)

AD: The four winds are silent: the Earth Mother sleeps.

(The ArchDruids, and all other members of the Third Order present remove their red ribbons of office, and replace them with their white ones.)

(AD presides from here on out)

Mourning and Declaration of Faith:

D: Lo, we are as wraiths, our fire is turned to ashes and darkness walks the land.

G: PRESERVE US, O SPIRIT OF DAY! KEEP US IN THY MIND, O SPIRIT OF POWER!

D: O Earth Mother, guide our paths! If thou wilt leave us, save us through the Time of Silence, keep bright within our hearts till Spring!

G: SO LET IT BE, O OUR MOTHER, FOR WE ARE FAITHFUL, AND WOULD KEEP THY WAYS.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, and you have not answered. We have offered of ourselves, but you have not accepted, for the Old Year sleeps in the silence and dark, awaiting new birth, and your eyes and ears are turned from us. Yet, as we have listened to you through the Time of Life, there has grown within us your Spirit of Truth, and this we will cherish and keep of you, to guide us through the Time of Sleep. To this we turn in silence, to seek the answers to our needs, to accomplish what we wish in the weeks ahead, knowing that the answers are within us.

(At this point, all state silently their needs, and listen for reply)

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

G: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUDIANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GROVE, SO THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES, AND IN ECH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth-Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters of Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift, that causes life?

P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.

AD: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of her bounty?

P: She has not! The Waters are here, but the spirit has gone out of them.

AD: So be it. Now is the Time of Life ended. Now shall we need our faith to keep us strong, for the Time of Sleep has begun in truth and in deed. Of what, then, do we partake?

P: The Waters of Sleep.

AD: Then give me the Waters.

Consecration:

(The ADS then takes the Waters, and consecrates them:)

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know your power, and the promise of life that is to return.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A SIGN OF THE POWER, AND THE BOUNTY OF THE GODS;
ADS: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS
ADS: Of male and female,
G: MORTAL AND DIVINE.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

(The Server passes the chalice to all present, and then returns it to the AD, who pours it on the altarstone, saying:)

AD: To Thee we return this portion of your bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
G: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We are One Family" song.)

Prayer/Meditation:

(On of the AD's leads the meditation)

Thanking the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADs: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For all the bounty you have given throughout the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That you have not left us utterly alone, but have left the Hunter and the Hag to guide us and protect us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have gone now to sleep, to bring forth again the whole world, in flower and in fruit:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

AD: And all the rest…?

ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you:

PEACE! PEACE! PEACE!

(The sigil around the altar stone is now broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure that the area is physically clean.)

Figure 25 Order of Puck, with Scharding, Bonewits, Tony Taylor & Sam Adams at Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1993 for Isaac's second visit to Carleton.

1979 Oimelc

By Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Oimelc. The chalice will be filled with milk (goat's, sheep's or cow's). The sacrifice should be of evergreen boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation:

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LTE US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession:

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn "Now Do We." Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Praise:

Here an Incantation , Poem or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire grove.

Song: "Oimelc Hymn"

Song: "She Will Bring"

Sacrifice:

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

The sacrifice is not accepted!

D: The four winds are yet silent. The Earth-Mother still sleeps.

Chant:

D: For three months, O our Mother, hast Thou been gone from us.
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?
D: Our hearts are heavy, our days are dark.
E: WILT THOU NOT RETURN?
D: All seems dead, hast Thou departed?
E: NEVER TO RETURN?
D: O our Mother, we ask a sign.
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.
D: A sign of Life in the midst of Death.
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN.
D: Sleep in peace, but send a sign!
E: A SIGN OF THY RETURN!
D: A sign of Life!
E: THE LIFE OF THY RETURN!

Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.
D: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The milk of the ewe!
D: Then give me the milk.

Song: "I Circle Around"

Consecration:

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Give us to know Thy power and the promise of life that is to return.

Communion:

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the milk of the ewe," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation:

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction:

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

1979 Pentalpha Oimelc

By Bonewits & others?

We held the Pentalpha Oimelc ceremony at The Dance Works in Berkeley, a redwood dance studio with a hot tub in the backyard. We started a half hour after our door closing to give people time to socialize, dance (we had put together a tape of our favorite music to dance to) and hot tub. Everyone had put their personal cups on the altar and just before the ritual started, Selene poured a mixture of extra-rich milk, amaretto, and vodka into the large bowl and chalice that sat in the center of the cups. Next to the bowl & chalice was a small cauldron filled with rubbing alcohol ready to light (we discovered that this works better if the alcohol is poured in just before lighting). A full spectrum of large candles was set up around the room.

All begin to form serpent lines of varying lengths and snake around the room to the music ("Spring Manifestations, - by SANTANA), eventually joining together in a circle just as the music ends.

Anodea and Selene lead Robert Larsen's -0imelc Hymn" (to band 1, side 1 of "Durch die WustelDesert," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIUS). Hymn is done in plainchant style (leaders chant each line, all repeat):

The days are short the heavens dark, the Mother sleeps.
The trees are bare the north wind stalks, the Mother sleeps.
The nights are long and full of fright, the Mother sleeps.
But the ewe gives birth the ewe gives milk, the Mother stirs.
The Mother smiles with dreams of life, She will return.
And on that day will we rejoice, when She returns.
Long the day bright the sky, when She returns.
Green the trees soft the breeze, when She returns.
Short the night our fires alight ,when She returns!

Jinz lights alcohol in cauldron, all begin to dance, play drums & rattles, make noises, raise energy ("oya (Primitive Fire)," on "Drums of Passion, " by OLATUNJI).

Dance gets wilder & wilder (to last band, side 2, "Durch die Wuste," by HANS JOACHIM ROEDELIUS), Selene begins to spin, gathering the energy in the room to a peak.

Selene lifts chalice and charges milk (to band 1, side 1 of "Renaissance of the Celtic Harp," by ALAN Stivell):

O Mother

Blend your milk with ours.

Give us nourishment
To strengthen our spirits
As well as our bones.
As we drink
From your breast
Pour your light in

Through our hearts,
To dance in our cells,
To glow with our eyes.
Through us
Your light spirals & spreads
Out our fingers
To all we touch

And on...
To heal the Earth
And to heal the people of the Earth
So that we may live & die

In harmony with your rhythm.

Charged milk is poured into the large bowl & mixed with the milk already in it. All are invited to drink of the Mother's milk. All come up and find their cups and the milk is ladled in to them one by one, with the harp music still in the background.

Isaac invites everyone to toast to the Gods & Goddesses, and "zany people toast to aspects of the deities, to the children, to the love in us all, etc. Isaac ends toasting with a final dedication:

Blessed be the most high one, who was and is and is to come, always, now, forever more, throughout all eternal space and time, we rise.

All chant:

Like a bee my mind is buzzing round the blue lotus feet of my divine mother, divine mother...

At this point we all brought the feast food into the backyard & feasting, hot tubbing & dancing continued on into the night...

Oimelc Poem

By Ailean MacGregor, 1979

Music filling the magical air whirling motion of dancing spirals of energy flowing from within the centre point of flame

Bleary eyed children of Brighid inebriated on the fruits of Dionysus celebrate Her mysteries around the cauldron fire

The Mother's milk is raised in salute to Her myriad aspects as sister and brother revel in the warmth of Her smile

Five times the magick point did merge into the star which illuminated the night while mushroom eating lovers huddled together and dreamt of the coming of the Spring

1980 Oimelc

Order of Common Worship, Oimelc, 18 y.r.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid ADs: Archdruidess P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. teach us your joy. let us feel your sorrow. extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
G: Let this ritual begin!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

(All sing Oimelc song)

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, but the ewe gives milk.
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The milk of the ewe.
AD: Then give me the milk.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O, Mother, we thank thee for this sign of thy continual presence and life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;

ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

Figure 26 Three shots of Isaac.

1978 Spring Equinox Fragment

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Spring Equinox. The chalice will be filled with the Waters-of-Sleep. The sacrifice should be of budding boughs.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand). The presiding Druid/ess may choose to speak the opening invocation to Be'al alone, or may ask the Preceptor and/or the People (depending on local Grove custom) to join in speaking the alternating line in italic print.

Invocation:

D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations: Thou art everywhere.
P: but we worship Thee here:
D: Thou art without form,
P: but we worship Thee in these forms:
D: Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and Being,
P: yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.
D: O Lord, forgive these three mistakes that are due to our human limitations:
P: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.

Procession:

Praise:

Here individuals may offer praise, gifts, or prayers to the Gods.

Sacrifice:

Reply:

Chant:

AD: O give praise to the Dark Gods who love: Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying, Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.
G: Praise Be'al who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.
AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.
G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.
AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.
G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.
AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed:
G: Light had turned to Dark.
AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold:
G: Darkness ruled over all.
AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed:
G: Darkness yearns to Light.
AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Belenos returns from the South:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on earth and tree:
G: Dark will turn to Light.
AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long:
G: Light will rule over all.
AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands:
G: And Light yearns again to Dark.
AD: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us!
ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!
AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sight!
ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

Catechism of the Waters:

Consecration:

Communion:

Meditation:

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth-Mother shower Her blessings upon you:

(The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:)

Peace! Peace! Peace!

Figure 27 Making bread from scratch at the Live Oak Grove Lughnasadh 1985.

1980 Spring Equinox

By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess
P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

[Begin insert]

A Chant for the Spring Equinox

Spring Equinox Invocation
A Druid Missal-Any Feb 1981
By Bonewits
But similar to another free floating leaflet.

AD:O give praise to the Dark Gods who love:
Praise to the Hunter, stalking and slaying,
Praise to the Hag, weeping and raging.
G: Praise Be'al. who is all Gods, praise the Earth Mother's many faces.
AD: Praise for food-store and tight roof, good wool and good health.
G: Praise for hearth and tale and friend.
AD: Praise for grey skies and healing rain, cutting wind and bedding snow.
G: Praise for the mystery of the Land of Shadow.
AD: The Earth went bare, the sunlight dimmed,
G: Light had turned to Dark.
AD: The nights were long, the winds were cold,
G: Darkness ruled over all.
AD: But within the cave, the bear cub waxed;
G: Darkness yearns to Light.
AD: Bough is barren, bud returns:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Belenos returns from the South:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: The Mother stirs and wakes again:
G: Balanced now are we.
AD: Snowdrifts of blossom on garth and tree,
G: Dark will turn to Eight.
AD: The world will be lush, the days will be long,
G: Eight will rule over all.
AD: Til the sweet fruits of the boughs are warm in our hands. And Light yearns again to Dark.
AD: O Belenos, O Lord of light, we praise thee at thy return to our midst. Welcome art thou amongst us.
ALL: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAY, O MIGHTY SUN GOD!
AD: O Earth Mother, beauteous and strong, rise up and let us rejoice in thy sights
ALL: PRAISE TO THE LADY WHO GIVEST LIFE!

Followed by "A Beltane Chant" from Druid Chronicles (Evolved)

[End of Insert]

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;
ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We Are One Family")

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

1980 Earrach

Order of Common Worship, Earrach Season, 18 y.r.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"
Almost the same as 1980 Spring Equinox

AD: Arch Druid ADS: Archdruidess
P: Preceptor S: Server G: Grove

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

(All process to altar. P&S draw sigil, AD & ADS: enter, P seals it.)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifices:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or male?
G: YES!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the shining one, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL: WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the lord and lady.
ADS: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

(Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar)

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

(Members offer songs, poetry, music, etc.)

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)

AD: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O our Mother, as we offer up this (these) sacrifice(s) of Life. Accept it (them) we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.

(ADS turns to the four quarters and asks:)

ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

(The sacrifice is not accepted.)

ADS: The Four Winds are silent; the Earth Mother yet sleeps.

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you, but you have not answered, we have offered to you, buy you have not accepted. Yet though you speak not, you whisper to us with your Spirit of Growth, and to this we turn in silence, to seek the changes we desire, to see our goals coming into being in the days and weeks ahead, knowing the answers are within us.

(Silence)

ADS: And we declare that, as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION, SO THAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. SEND YOUR QUIET SPIRIT TO THIS GORVE, THAT WE MAY FIND THE WELLSPRINGS WITHIN OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER, TO OBTAIN OUR NEEDS, AND TO BE FOR YOU YOUR EYES AND HANDS THROUGHOUT THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Chant of the Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AD: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has not, the Waters are here, but the Spirit is yet faint within them!
AD: Of what, then, do we partake?
P: The Waters of Awakening.
AD: Then give me the Waters.

(The AD takes the chalice, and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energy.)

AD: O Dalon Ap Landu, descend once again into these Waters and hallow them. Give us to know thy power, and the promise of Life that is to return.

(AD shares the waters with the ADS, who then asks:)

ADS: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods;
ADS: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine:
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The ADS then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove. During this time, the Bards may wish to perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who returns it to the ADS, who gives it to the AD. P&S do not drink twice.)

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

AD: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR

SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We Are One Family")

Meditation:

(Lead by the AD)

Thank the Gods:

AD: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: For all the bounty you have given through the Time of Life:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: That you stir now in sleep, and send forth flowers and green shoots to announce your coming:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: That you have sent the Maiden and the Fool to give us joy after winter's silence, and to guide us to you again:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
ADS: For that we need each other, Mortal and Divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now, and throughout the ages:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!
AD: Now, as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

AD: Great the power we have raised;
G: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
ADS: What shall we do before we leave?
G: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

(All pause and absorb as much of the divine energy as possible)

AD: And all the rest?
G: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

(All now send remaining energy outward to bless the earth and sky, plants and animals)

ADS: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

AD: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our prayers will be answered, that the bounty of life will return to the face of the Earth, and then will the Earth Mother shower her blessings upon you: Peace! Peace! Peace!

(The sigil around the AD 's is broken by the P, and all retire, after making sure the area is clean.)

Figure 28 Maypole at Live Oak, Beltane 1985.

1977 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

"O Earth Mother" Song

Invocation:

D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitation: thou art everywhere,
E: But we worship thee here:
D: Thou art without form,
E: But we worship thee in these forms:
D: Though wouldst have us offer our Living and being.
E: Yet we offer thee these prayers and sacrifices.
D: O Gods, we recognize these three mistakes that are due to our mortal limitations.
ALL: O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts, and prepare us for meditation.

Procession:

Song: "Now Do We With Songs & Rejoicing"

Praise:

People offer gifts, songs, etc. to the Gods.

Sacrifice: (As usual)

Reply: (As usual)

Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us today!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us life!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us Light!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
D: We light our fires to show the way.

The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going) by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.

E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!

This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.

D: O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O our Mother…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.

E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH, SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

Catechism:

\D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: *The Waters-of-Life*.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: *From the bosom of the Earth-mother, the never-changing All-mother*.
D: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: *By partaking of the Waters-of-Life*.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: *She has*!
D: Praise be!! At last is our Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life is begun in truth and in deed.

The Archdruid/ess and all other members of the Third Order present remove their white ribbons and replace them with their red ones.

D: Now give me the Waters!

Consecration: (As usual)

Communion: (As usual)

D: Anyone wishing to be ordained as a First Order Druid should be sure to partake of the Waters as they go around. Since the chalices are small, and the crowd large, we ask everyone to take only a sip, so there will be Waters to return to the Mother.

Ordination:

The Arch Druid will call for all prospective First Orders to come to the lowest tier.

Song: "Circles" see Green Book Vol. 6, and choose 7th Vol. Of Poetry.
Gwen Zak Moore, probably in mid 1970's.
Tune: Windmills, by Alan Bell

Meditation:

The AD will read a brief meditation which will be followed by silence.

Benediction: (As usual)

END OF A SPECIAL ORDER
OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

MIKES NOTES: We can see in this liturgy, Isaac Breaking away from established traditions after the publishing of the Druid Chronicles (Evolved). The notable change in the Invocation "Thou wouldst have us offer our Living and being" in place of "Thou havest no needs of prayers and sacrifices" is understandable given that Brother Isaac is a liturgist and this would be negating his primary drive in the Reform, perhaps? From 1975, we see an increased interest in sexual imagery in the works of Isaac Bonewits, greater incorporation of duo-theist ideas and imagery of Wicca. Perhaps a result of his several marriages in the mid-70s?

1978 Beltane

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with whiskey and water (the Waters-of-Life). The sacrifice should be of flowering branches and other offerings. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office around their necks at the beginning of the service, but carry their red ribbons-of-office in an easily accessible location.

Opening:

The service starts with the Archdruid and Assistant Archdruid at the site where the ritual will take place. AD does whatever banishings are necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, preferably out of sight, where they begin procession to the ritual site, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

If both safe and legal, AD starts a fire on or near the altar. Branch sacrifice is tucked away in his/her robe or held in one hand.

Invocation:

(A piece of white paper was pasted over the normal text, presumably to skip this step and move onto the next section. Probably the swirling galaxy opener had been inserted impromptu since it would be a new innovation introduced by David Geller as follows:)

[AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
P: And we partake of it, we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
P: And in harmony with all of life we sing
AD: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving-
P: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely--let this ritual begin!]

Offering & Praise:

AD: I see you have come from far and near
AA: Hail & welcome – enter in!
AD: But first, tell me- Why have you come to this place at this time?
BARD:
May I make my fond excuses for the late-ness of the hour;
But we accept your invitation and would bring you Beltane's flower.
For the May Day is the great day, sung along the old straight track.
And those who ancient lines did ley will heed this song that calls them back

Chorus: Pass the word and pass the lady.
Pass the plate to all who hunger.
Pass the wit of ancient wisdom,
Pass the Cup of Crimson Wonder.

AA: How can we learn more about his:

Bard:
Ask the Green Man where he comes from, ask the cup that fills with red.
Ask the old grey standing stones who show the sun his way to bed.
Question all as to their ways, and learn the secrets that they hold.
Walk the lines of Nature's palm, crossed with silver and with God.

Chorus:

AD: What shall we do now?
Bard:
Join in black December's sadness, line in August's welcome corn.
Stir the cup that's ever filling with the blood of all that's born.
But the may Day is the great day, sung along the old straight track.
And those who ancient line did ley will heed this song that calls them back.

Chorus.

AD: What have you brought for our Mother & Father?
People bring offerings down to altar.
AA: Not all offerings are physical. Has anyone brought praise for the Gods?
People offer poems and songs.

Sacrifice:

AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:
AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us thy peace and life.
Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA turns to Four Quarters and asks:
AA: Have you accepted our sacrifices, Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…
If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise the Service is ended immediately.
AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and hearts, have been accepted!
ALL: General Cheering!

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
P: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
P: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!
AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.
AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in Your awakening.
P: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!
AA: O Be'al, who ariseth out of darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that livest, and the heart of every star, blessed be Thy face among us.
P: Welcome are Thou, O Lord of Light!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
P: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we invoke You!
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf.
ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DELARE THY WAYS!
AD: Couch with us, and let our hearts be thy bed of working.
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

Chant:

D: The Mother wakes from Her long sleep and smiles on us today!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us life!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: She brings us Light!
E: SHE IS AWAKE!
D: The Mother wakes and seeks Be'al.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS.
D: We light our fires to show the way.
The Fires of Be'al are now lit (if they are not already going) by the plunging of a torch into the kindling.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
D: To couch with the Mother and bring forth Life.
E: QUICKLY BE'AL RETURNS!
This next section should be chanted at an accelerating pace.
D: O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O our Mother…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!
D: O Earth-Mother, O Be'al…
E: WE WELCOME THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Mother, parents of all that lives, we welcome Ye back to our midst. Give us of Your Life, O Most High, that we may share Your joy.
E: WELCOME ARE YE AMONG US, O MOST HIGH, SMILE ON US, WHO HAVE KEPT YOUR WAYS, THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP.

The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AA: And how do we honor this gift that causes life?
P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?
P: SHE HAS!
AD: Praise be! At last is the Time of Sleep ended. Now our faith bears fruit, and the Time of Life begun in truth and in deed!
ALL: General cheering!
Ribbons are changed.

Consecration of the Waters:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE..

AA: OOOOOOOOOO, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?
P: THE SPARKS OF LIFE.
AD: From whence do these sparks flame?
P: FROM THE HEART OF BE'AL, THE EVER SHINING ONE.
AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?
P: BY CHERISHING THE SEEDS AND SHARING THEIR FRUITS.
AD: Has Be'al given forth of his flame?
P: HE HAS! THE SEEDS OF THE OATS HAVE LASTED THROUGH THE TIME OF SLEEP AND CAKES HAVE BEEN PREPARED WITH LOVE AND CARE.
AD: Then give me the oatcakes!

Consecration of Oatcakes:

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE…

AD: OOOOOOOOO, Lady, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our ancestors have done through centuries past. Join us together by thy power and let the flames of love raise within us, even unto the stars; so that the seeds may be planted throughout all eternity.

Communion:

AA: What are these waters and these oatcakes?
P: SIGNS OF THE POWER AND BOUNTY OF THE GODS,
AD: Who are themselves a fraction of the Force
P: ABOVE AND BEYOND ALL HUMAN CONCEPTS,
AD: Of male and female, mortal and divine.
P: IT SURROUNDS US,
AD: It penetrates us,
ALL: IT BINDS THE GALAXY TOGETHER!

AD drinks from the chalice and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the Waters-of-Life," and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

AD takes a piece of oatcake from the server and blesses the preceptor with the words, "the sparks of life," and again marks the Druid Sigil in the air.

Preceptor and Server drink and eat and return the blessing, then go around the circle of the Grove clockwise blessing each person, handing the chalice and cakes, blessing them and being blessed in return.

The last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice or the last few crumbs of cakes. This is returned to AD with a last exchange of blessings.

Meditation:

The AD will lead all in a guided fantasy, culminating in a chant.

Libation:

Cups are returned to altar. Crumbs are poured into the fire, remaining waters are poured out.

AD: To Thee we return this portion of thy bounty,
AA: Even as we must return unto thee.

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

END OF ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR BELTANE

All help to clean up ritual site, then move to picnic spot and feast, sing, dance, etc.

Figure 29 Bob Blunt enjoying the maypole streamers, Live Oak, Beltane 1984

1979 Beltane

By Isaac Bonewits & Others?
"Class B"

The following is a new Order of Worship for Beltane (17 y.r.), as celebrated by the Mother Grove in the Berkeley Rose Garden. The chalice will once again be filled with the Waters-of-Life (whiskey) and oatcakes will have been cooked ahead of time. The sacrifice will consist of flowering branches and cut flowers (NOT roses!), as well as poems and songs brought by the congregation. All Third Order Druids should be wearing their white ribbons-of-office and have their red ones in an easily accessible location. If safe and legal, a small fire will be burning on or near the altar. At lease one of the branch sacrifices will be on the altar at the beginning.

Cues: AD=Arch Druid/ess, AA=Assistant Archdruidess, PRE=Preceptor, SER=Server, CON=Congregation, ALL=All.

Opening:

The service starts with the AD and AA at the bottom of the Rose Garden, behind the altar. AD does whatever exorcisms are necessary while AA sings "O Earth Mother" chant. All other participants are some distance away, by the tunnel from Cordonices Park. When the AD's messenger arrives, they process to the Rose Garden, singing "Will Ye No Come Back Again" and/or "Now Do We with Songs and Rejoicing."

Upon arrival, the procession walks down the center aisle, with the Preceptor/-tress and Server leading the members of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu to fill the second curved walkway. The rest of the congregation fills up the third and higher walkways.

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us your joy. Let us feel your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Song: "Let It All Happen"
By Anodea Judith

Let the water fall, Let the water fall
Let the water fall on the earth
Let the trees grow tall, Let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the earth.

Let the greenery grow, let the greenery grow
Let the greenery grow on the Earth
Let the trees grow tall, let the water fall
Let the greenery grow on the Earth

Let the air blow clean….
Let the water run clear…
Let the seals swim free…

Affirmation:

AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us!
AA: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
AD: Thou art God.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.
AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

People bring in their sacrifices to the Third Order members in the second walkway, who pass them on to the AD & AA, who place them on the altar.

AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

People offer poems and songs.

Song: "Goddesses, Goddesses Song"
By Anodea Judith

CHORUS: Goddesses, Goddesses, Got to have Goddesses.
Got to have Goddesses roaming above.
Goddesses, Goddesses, got to have Goddesses
Got to have Goddesses ruling with love.

In the ancient days of old,
Goddesses ruled the heavens I'm told
That was known as the time of mirth
When there were many who worshipped the earth.

When you're in need and you call on the Goddess
Her strength will illumine your wisdom within
The Goddess, she answers with laughter and dances
As we on the Earth become Pagan again.

When you're in crisis, then just call on Isis
Her silvery horns will take troubles away.
We dance in the moonlight, the sunlight and starlight
And know that the world will better someday.

All of the Earth is just one big home
Where all the Gods and the Goddesses roam
Look to the forest you'll see what I mean
Love of the Goddess will keep the Earth clean.

Song: Isaac's "Our Father"

Song: Jean

Sacrifice:

AD holds up main sacrificial branch to the sky, saying:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

Branch and some of the other sacrifices are laid in the fire. AA turns to the four quarters and asks:

AA: Have you accepted our sacrifice(s), O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues; otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits, have been accepted!
ALL: ((General cheering))

An appropriate song may be sung here.

Where gentle tides, go rolling by
Along the salt sea strand
The colors blend and roll as one
Together in the sand
And often do the winds intwined, to send their distant call
The quiet joys of brotherhood
And love is lord of all

Where oat and wheat together rise
Along the common ground
The mare and stallion, light and dark
Have thunder in their sound
The rainbow sign, the blended flood
Still hold my heart in thrall
The quiet joys of brother hood
And love is lord of all

But men have come to plow the hide
The oat lies on the ground
I hear their fires in the field
The drive the stallion down
The roses bleed, both like and dark
The winds do seldom call
The running sands recall the time
When love was lord of all.

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
AA: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
G: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
AA: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!

AA sprinkles whiskey on the fire.

AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Uti-Hiata, we welcome You in Your awakening.
G: All praise to the Lady who gives us life!
AA: O Be'al, who arises out of darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that lives, and the heart of every star, blessed be Your face among us.
G: Welcome are you, O Lord of Light!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!
AA: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf.
ALL: COME UNTO US! COME ONTO US! COME INTO US!
AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be Your bed of working.
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE YOUR WAY IS LOVE.
AA: Lay with us and let our souls be Your bed of playing.
ALL: LET OUR LIVES DECLARE YOUR WAY IS JOY.

The Oatcakes:

AD: Of what does Be'al give, that we may know the continual growth and change of life?
SER: The sparks of life.
AD: From whence do these sparks flame?
SER: From the heart of Be'al, the ever shining All-Father.
AD: And how do we honor these sparks of life?
SER: By cherishing the seeds and sharing their fruits.
AD: Has Be'al given forth of His flame?
SER: He has! The seeds of the oats have lasted through the Time of Sleep.
AD: What has been done with them?
SER: The cakes have been prepared with love and care.
AD: Then give me the oatcakes!

The AD takes the plate of oatcakes and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the Goddess.

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE… ((Etc., until the AD speaks))

AD: OOOOOOOOO, Bridget, Queen of the Heavens, Keeper of the Holy Flames, Inspiration of Poets, bless these oatcakes which we offer up to You, as our predecessors have done through centuries past. Join us together by Your power and let the flames of love rise within us, even unto the stars, so that the seed may be planted throughout all space and time.
ALL: SO BE IT!

The Waters:

AA: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
PRE: The Waters-of-Life.
AA: From whence do these Waters flow?
PRE: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
AA: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?
PRE By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AA: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
PRE: She has!
AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!
ALL: ((General cheering))

All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and AA, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The AA takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.

ALL: THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE, THE TIME OF LIGHT, THE TIME OF LIFE… ((etc., until AA speaks))

AA: OOOOOOOOOO, Dalon ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by Your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of Your secret essences.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters and these oatcakes?
G: Signs of the power and bounty of the Gods,
AA: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts,
AD: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine.
AA: She surrounds us,
AD: He penetrates us,
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

AD takes an oatcake from the plate, eats it, blesses the AA with the words "The sparks of life," and the forming of the Druid Sigil. The AA returns the blessing and sign, eats, and passes the plate to the Preceptor/-tress with the blessing and sign. He/she then blesses, signs, eats, blesses and signs. The plate is passed to the Server, who takes it around to the Congregation. In each case the blessing and the sign are exchanged.

AA takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the AD with the words "The Waters-of-Life," using the sign again. The chalice is passed as before to the AD and the Preceptor/-tress, who passes it to each person present, following the Server.

The last person partaking should NOT finish the last oatcake nor the last drop of the waters. They are returned to the AD with a last blessing.

During the passing around of the oatcakes and waters, the Bards may sing an appropriate song.

Song: "Let the Spirit Come To You"
By Anodea Judith

Let the spirit come to you
through you renew you
Let the love shine on to you
Pursue you undo you
Let the light shine above you
Be of you that loves you
Let the peace settle in you
Within you, begin you.

Second Order Ordination?

An ordination of one or more members of the Grove to the Second Order of the Druids may take place here.

Libation:

The last crumbs of the oatcakes and the last drops of the waters are poured into the fire or onto the ground by the AD, saying:

AD: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty,
AA: Even as we must return unto Thee.
ALL: SO BE IT.

Meditation:

The AD will lead all in a meditation or guided fantasy, which may end with a mantra or other chant.

Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth
She is our Mother!
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth
He is our Father!
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea…

Chorus: We are one family.
We are one family
Kin to the whale and the dove.
We are one family.
We are one family.
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive
She is our sister!
The wolf who must kill to survive
He is our brother!
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy…

Sequoia and bristle cone pine
They are ancestors!
The cactus and mushroom divine
We are related!
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key…

Throughout all of time and of space
Life has been granted!
Every intelligent race
We have been planted!
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently…

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

END OF THE ORDER OF WORSHIP
FOR BELTANE 17 Y.R. (Berkeley)

All now clean up the area and may retire to the park or elsewhere for picnicking, playing games and otherwise carrying-on in the manner appropriate to the season.

Figure 30 Tying the maypole, Live Oak, 1983.

1980 Beltane

ORDER OF COMMON WORSHIP,
BELTANE, 18 Y.R. (Berkeley dating)
New Reformed Druids of North America, Mother & Hazel Nut Groves
Fourth Annual Beltane-in-the-Rose-Garden
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

AD: Arch Druid/ess, ADS: Archdruidess, P: Preceptor, S:Server, G: Grove & Guests.

Opening Song: "O Earth-Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
ADS: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
AD: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying.
G: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.
ADS: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely:
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional:

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

© 1973, 2001 c.e.
words by Isaac Bonewits, music Scots trad. ("Bonnie Charlie's Now Awa'")
Key of C

In exile live our Olden Gods,
Vanished o'er the foaming main,
To lands no mortal ever trods.
Will They e're come back again?

Will Ye no come back again?
Will Ye no come back again?
Better loved Ye cannot be.
Will Ye no come back again?

Hills They walked were all Their own,
Blest the land from sea to sea,
Till the folk with tortured moan,
Abandoned all the noble Shee.

Many a gallant Pagan fought,
Many a gallant Witch did burn.
Priest and priestess, all have sought,
To sing the prayers Ye cannot spurn!

Now with eagle and with dove,
Sing we hear our heartfelt plea:
Come with thunder, or with love,
But come! Good Gods, we so need Thee

(All process in pairs, AD & ADS followed by P&S, then member of the Order of Dalon Ap Landu, then other Grove members, guests, and public)

Centering:

AD: Why have you gathered here under the sky?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
ADS: What brings you here out among the flowers?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
AD: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
ADS: The Gods are everywhere:
G: But we worship them here.
AD: The Gods are without form:
G: But we worship them in these forms.
ADS: We do not know what to offer our Gods,
G: So we offer them these prayers and sacrifice:
AD: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us with our own prayers.
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary ob Be'al, in each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the Spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

AD: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a Star!
ADS: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breath? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
AD: Are the Gods female?
ADS: Or males?
G: Yes!
AD: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every God is within us!
ADS: Thou art God.
G: Every Goddess is within us!
AD: Thou art Goddess!
G: Every God is within us.
AD: Thou art God.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, Spirit of truth and of light, Spark of the Sun, and the Flame within the heart of every being.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, Spirit of all that lives upon the Earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: And who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every grove, Patron of Druids, and comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as Human Beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet, and to further the process of Evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all Time and Space.
ADS: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
ALL : WE DEDICATE OURSELVES, HERE AND NOW, IN BODY AND MIND, HEART AND SOUL, TO OUR HOLY MOTHER THE EARTH, OUR HOLY FATHER THE SUN, AND TO ALL THEIR HOLY CHILDREN.

Offering and Praise:

AD: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices to the Lord and Lady.
AA: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?
(People bring in their sacrifices to the altar.)
AD: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?
(People offer songs, poetry, music, etc.).

Sacrifice:

(AD holds up sacrificial branch and speaks)
AD: Our praise has mounted up to thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we ask, O Our Mother, as we offer up these sacrifices of Life. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us thy peace and life.
(AD turns to the four quarters and asks☺
ADS: Have you accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West…
AD: Praise be!!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and the cleansing of our hearts and eyes, have been accepted!
(General applause. 3rd Order Druids CHANGE RIBBONS)

Chant:

AD: So long the Earth has lain in sleep:
G: Seed in ground, cloud on sun.
ADS: So long the Mother slumbered deep;
G: Be'al in darkness hid.
AD: So long Your children waited here,
ALL: AND WE YOUR WAYS DID KEEP.
ADS: No going without coming is, no loss without returning:
ALL: AND WE HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SET THE BELTANE FIRES BURNING!
(ADS lights Beltane Fire)
AD: O Earth Mother, who art called by many names: Danu, Frigga, Terra, Shakti, Tara, Uti-Hiata, welcome art thou among us!
G: All praise to the Lady who givest life!!
(AD sprinkles whiskey on fire)
ADS: O Be'al, who ariseth out of Darkness, the Beauteous, the Beloved, the flame of life within everything that livest, and the heart of every star, praise be thy face among us.
G: Welcome art thou, O Lord of Light!!
AD: O Earth Mother, we invoke you! O Be'al we invoke you!
G: O Be'al, O Earth Mother, we call upon You!
ADS: We call by seed and root and bud, by stem and flower and leaf!
ALL: LET ALL THE EARTH DECLARE THY WAY!
AD: Couch with us and let our hearts be thy bed of working!
ALL: LET OUR WORKS DECLARE THY WAY IS LOVE.

Statement of Needs:

ADS: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.
(At this point, each person may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplished their goals. After all have finished:)
AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM. YOUR HEALING AND JOY. SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS, AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
ADS: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
ADS: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
ADS: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!
(The ADS: takes the chalice and invokes the power of the Gods into it, thus initiating the return flow of divine energies.)
ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these Waters by thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by thy power, as we take and drink of thy secret essences.

AD: What are these Waters?
G: A sign of the power and bounty of the Gods,
AD: Who are themselves a fraction of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts,
AD: Of Male and Female,
G: Mortal and Divine.
AD: She surrounds us,
ADS: He penetrates us,
G: They bind the universes together.

The Sharing:

(The AD then shares the Waters with the P, who shares them with the S, who shares them with the rest of the Grove and guests. During this time, the Bards will perform. The S returns the cup to the P, who gives it to the AD, who returns it to the ADS. P&S do not drink twice.)
ADS: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENTHENED BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

(All sing "We are one Family")

Song: "We Are One Family"

We are the children of the Earth
She is our Mother!
Offspring of the Sun God's bright mirth
He is our Father!
We have our siblings in the air, on the land, in the sea…

Chorus: We are one family.
We are one family
Kin to the whale and the dove.
We are one family.
We are one family.
Joined by the strength of our love, of our love,
Joined by the strength of our love.

The dolphin so free and alive
She is our sister!
The wolf who must kill to survive
He is our brother!
We are the cousins of the eagle who soars in ecstasy…

Sequoia and bristle cone pine
They are ancestors!
The cactus and mushroom divine
We are related!
The D.N.A. that runs through us all is the key…

Throughout all of time and of space
Life has been granted!
Every intelligent race
We have been planted!
And those who have sown the seed now await patiently…

Meditation:

(Lead by the ADS)

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

AD: That You have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the wild things and ourselves.

ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.

AD: Go now in peace, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance and that we go forth to live in harmony with the blessings of the Earth Mother. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Benediction:

AD: Earth Mother, Be'al, all you other Goddesses and Gods, we gathered here today to praise and honor you. We have spoken from our hearts and You have heard us. From this place we now depart in love and joy, knowing that all things are purified in Your spirits, and that You have once again manifested the power of Life in a world that seemed so dead. We have offered of ourselves and You have answered. We go with your blessings: Peace! Peace! Peace!

1980 Beltane (Variant #2)

Special Order of Worship, Santa Cruz gathering,
By Bonewits & others?
"Class B?"
Beltane, 18yr (May 4, 1980)

Opening:

Before the service begins, the Sigil is marked on the ground, the sacrifice is cut, and the Third Order Druids are wearing their white ribbons-of-office, with their red ribbons-of-office handy.

Procession:

(Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?")

Archdruid steps into the Sigil, which is then closed by Preceptor and Server with their staves. The rest of the group forms a circle around the Sigil.

Invocation:

AD: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.

Con: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.

AD: In the mighty helix we dance.

Con: And in harmony with all of life we sing.

AD: Gods known and unknown, potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving…

Con: Be in our awareness, teach us your joy, let us feel your sorrow, extend our limitations.

AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..

ALL: LET US BEGIN!

Offering and Praise:

(Song: "O Earth Mother")

Congregation may offer songs, poems, other things; AD holds up main sacrifice to the sky, saying:

AD: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices of life and human effort. Accept them, we ask, and may our hearts be cleansed and may we share our lives in peace and harmony.

Turns to the Four Quarters and says,

AD: I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West… of the Center…

(If the sacrifices are accepted, the ceremony continues; otherwise the ritual is ended immediately.)

AD: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the healing of our bodies, minds and spirits, have been accepted!

The Waters:

AD: Of what does the Earth Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?

P: The Waters-of-Life.

AD: From whence do these Waters flow?

P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.

AD: And how do we honor this gift that embodies Life?

P: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.

AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of her bounty?
P: She has!
AD: Praise be! Now at last is the Time of Sleep ended, and the Time of Life begun in truth and indeed! So give me the Waters!
ALL: (General Cheering)

All Third Order Druids present, including the AD and Preceptor, now remove their white ribbons-of-office and replace them with their red ones. The Preceptor takes the chalice of waters, and consecrates them with the combined spiritual energies of the people and the God.

P: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, hallow these waters by your sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by your power, as we take and drink of your secret essences.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Archdruid takes the chalice, drinks of the waters, and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life," and marking of the Druid Sigil in the air. The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Archdruid. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and give the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove clockwise, blessing each person, handing the person the chalice, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server drinks only once. (Alternatively, the chalice may be handed around the circle after blessings from the Archdruid.)

The last person partaking should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the AD with a last exchange of blessings.

Then the Archdruid takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying;

AD: To thee we return this portion of thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to thee.
ALL: SO BE IT!

Meditation:

Brief readings/words of meditation, then a short period of silence.

Benediction:

AD: We have gathered here to praise and offer sacrifice to the forces of nature and to reaffirm our spiritual links with the unseen deities with whom we share this life. Let us go forth to live in harmony with all blessings and Peace! Peace! Peace!

1977 (?) Lughnasadh Fragment

By Bonewits & others?
"Class A"

The Chant:

D: Let us praise the Earth-Mother! She has smiled upon her children.
G: THREE TIMES SINCE BELTANE HAS THE MOON GONE BEFORE US IN HER FULL GLORY, THREE TIMES HAS SHE FULLY HIDDEN HER GLORY FROM US.
D: In those three months the Earth-Mother has quickened the Earth and brought new life upon it; and in these three months to come she will bring forth the bounty of this life.
G: AND AS THE MOON NOW WAXES NEAR TO FULL ONLY TO WANE AGAIN, SO AT SAMHAIN WILL THE EARTH-MOTHER WITHDRAW FROM US A WHILE.
D: Then so we praise her, for now at Lughnasadh, the life which has grown during Samhradh comes to fruition, that, we her grateful children, may gather and praise her and remember her until she returns again at Beltane.
G: LET US GATHER AND PRAISE THE BOUNTY OF THE MOTHER!

(Here is the Sacrifice part)

The Catechism:

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may remember the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: THE WATERS OF LIFE.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: FROM THE BOSOM OF THE EARTH-MOTHER, THE NEVER CHANGING ALL-MOTHER.
D: And how do we honor this gift of life?
G: BY PARTAKING OF THE WATERS OF LIFE.
D: Does the Earth-Mother give any sign on this day of Lughnasadh to assure us that she will sustain life while she sleeps?
G: OF THIS AT LUGHNASADH, WE KNOW BY THE HARVEST-BOUNTY OF FOGHAMHAR. (Fowg-avar)
D: What token does the Earth-Mother give of this bounty to come?
G: IN TOKEN OF THIS BOUNTY SHE HAS MIXED THE WATERS OF LIFE WITH THE GRAIN OF THE EARTH AND THE FRUIT OF THE TREE.
D: Give me this token.

1978 Lughnasadh 16 Y.R.

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh. The chalice will be filled with mead or hard cider (instead of the usual whiskey) as the Waters-of-Life. Since this is a harvest festival, it is suggested that member s of the Grove bring a sacrifice of fruits or vegetables, from their own gardens if possible. These are laid on the altar and/or around the fire along with the regular sacrifice (which should be of green branches) either at the end of the Procession or at the point in the service at which the regular sacrifice is offered up.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise:

Here may be inserted a reading or singing of Latter Chronicles 10:6-22 as a hymn of praise, with the entire Grove joining in on the refrain of "O Earth-Mother, we praise Thee."

Sacrifice

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply:

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.

D: Praise be!! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

Chant:

D: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.
E: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
E: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
E: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
E: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
E: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy Seas are deep and full of fish,
E: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.
D: Thy earth is fertile and full of Life.
E: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

D: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.
D: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.
E: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.
D: Thy light shines on us today.
E: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.
D: The plants give fruits which then do die.
E: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.
D: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
E: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.
D: Thy life is here in us today.
E: O EARTH-MOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

D: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which Ye have given us during this year. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.
E: WE THANK YOU, O MOST HIGH, KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEP IN YOUR WAYS.

Catechism

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
D: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Mother, we thank Thee for this sing of Thy continual presence and Thy life. O Dalon Ap Landu, descend into this milk and hallow it by Thy three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and join us together by Thy power as we take and drink of Thy secret essences!

Ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

Communion

SONG: "Lughnasadh Dance"

Title: Lughnasadh Dance
Lyrics by: Gwydion Pendderwen
Recorded on: "Songs for the Old Religion," Gwydion Pendderwen, 1975; "Once Around the Wheel," Ian Corrigan, 1987 (Association for Consciousness Exploration, 1643 Lee Rd #9, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)
Subject: Sabbats - Lughnassadh
Lugh the light of summer bright clothed all in green
Tailtu his mother true, rise up and be seen

Chorus:
At your festival sound the horn, calling the people again,
Child of Barleycorn, newly summerborn, ripening like the grain.

Lugh grew tall from spring to fall, and sought to find a wife
But Balor came and made his claim and vowed to take his life

The two did fight from morn 'till night and Lugh did strike him one;
And Balor's eye flew in the sky and there became the sun

Lugh was wed and made his bed with Erinn in the north,
And there they lay through many a day and soon a child came forth

The child grew tall from spring to fall, Setanta was his name,
And then at length, by honor's strength, CuChulainn he became!

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O our Mother, even as we must return to Thee.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

The edible sacrifices should now be used as part of a Lughnasadh feast.

End of a Special Order of Worship for Lughnasadh.

Figure 31 Eric Hilleman & Isaac examining his donation of archival materials, April 23, 1994.

1979 Lughnasadh
The Druid Ritual

(14 y.r. is typed on it, but contents belie a later date)
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. teach us Your joy. let us feel Your sorrow. extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.
AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.
ADS: Who do we honor on this day?
G: We honor Lugh of the Long Arm, the Son of the Sun, Spear Thrower, Master of all Arts, Lord of all Crafts, Bringer of the Harvest.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Lughnasadh Chant:

ADS: Thy trees do grow and give us shade.
ALL: O DALON AP LANDU, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy waters stream forth and ease our pain,
ALL: O GRANNOS, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy waters pour forth and bring us joy,
ALL: O BRACIACA, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy rivers flow and give us drink,
ALL: O SIRONA, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy thunder cracks and heralds rain,
ALL: O TARANIS, WE THANK THEE.
AD: Thy seas are deep and full of fish,
ALL: O LLYR, WE THANK THEE.
ADS: Thy earth is fertile and full of life.
ALL: O DANU, WE THANK THEE.

ADS: Though the Sun is bright, the Shade is dark.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT IS DARK.
AD: Dark though the night, the stars burn bright.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DARK IS LIGHT.
ADS: Thy light shines on us today.
ALL: O BELENOS, WE THANK THEE.
AD: The plants give fruits which then do die.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF LIFE IS DEATH.
ADS: We eat the fruits and they give us life.
ALL: IN THE MIDST OF DEATH IS LIFE.
AD: Thy life is here in us today.
ALL: O EARTHMOTHER, WE THANK THEE!

ADS: O Be'al, O Lugh, O our Mother, O all ye Gods and Goddesses, we thank You for the bounty which you have given us during this year. We thank you for the external growth of the plants and animals, and for the internal growth of our spirits. Accept our praise, O Most High, and smile on us always, that we may praise You the more.

ALL: WE THANK YOU, HIGH ONES. KEEP US IN YOUR MINDS, WE PRAY YOU, AS WE KEEPYOUR WAYS.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc. Ending with "Lughnasadh Dance" song.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

1979 Order of Common Worship, Foghamhar (Fall season), 17 y.r.

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our

private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices. Accept them, we pray, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us Thy peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifices are accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon You and You have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and You have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill Thy ways. Hear now Thy children, and help us, as ever You have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:
G: We need Your strength and wisdom, Your healing and joy, so that we may accomplish our goals and fulfill our dedications. Bless this Grove, and bring us all that we may need, materially and spiritually, so that we may grow ever stronger, in beauty, wisdom, health and joy.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
G: The Waters-of-Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
G: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
G: By partaking of the Waters-of-Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
G: She has! Ripe are the golden apples of the Sun, and bright is the honey of the hives. Our cups overflow with cider and mead, and all the good things of this season!
ADS: Then give me the Waters!!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:
ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

Figure 32 Daniel Harger's over seeing Sue & Larry's wedding at Live Oak, Lughnasadh 1983.

1978 (?) Fall Equinox

By Bonewits & others?
"Class B"

The following is a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox. The chalice will be filled with Waters-of-Life. The sacrifice should be of branches with turning leaves.

The service starts with all participants standing some distance away from the area where the ritual is to take place. If both safe and legal, a fire should be started in or near the altar. The Druid/ess who is presiding (usually, though not always, the Grove's Archdruidess) should already have cut the sacrifice and have it tucked into his or her robe (or it may be held in one hand).

"D" =Druid/ess presiding.
"P" =People attending.
"E" =Everybody.

Song: "Processional Hymn"

Invocation

D: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
E: AND WE PARTAKE OF IT; WE AND ALL LIVING BEINGS.
D: In the mighty helix we dance.
E: AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL OF LIFE WE SING.
D: Gods known and unknown, life potential and actual, noisy and silent, seen and unseen, beginning and ending, uniting and dissolving.
E: BE IN OUR AWARENESS. TEACH US YOUR JOY. LET US FEEL YOUR SORROW. EXTEND OUR LIMITATIONS.
D: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely, let this ritual begin!

Procession

Here occurs the Procession, with the Grove singing the hymn from Customs 2:1-3. Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the server (or any two others designated by the Grove) use their staves to mark the Druid Sigil upon the ground in front of the altar (usually on the South side), leaving the bottom incomplete. The Druid/ess steps into this Sigil, which is then closed by the two staves.

Song: "Now Do We"

Praise

Here an Incantation, Poem, or Hymn of praise is recited or sung by the Druid/ess, the Bard(s) or the entire Grove.

Sacrifice

The Druidess holds up the sacrifice to the sky, while saying:

D: Our praise has mounted up to Thee on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up to Thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, we pray Thee, our Mother, as we offer up this sacrifice of life. Accept it, we pray Thee, and cleanse our hearts, granting us Thy peace and life.

The sacrifice is laid upon the altar or in the fire. The Druid/ess then turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

D: Hast Thou accepted our sacrifice, O our Mother? I call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… of the South… of the East… of the West…

Reply

If the sacrifice is accepted, the Service continues; otherwise, the Service is ended immediately.

D: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, have been accepted!

Chant:

D: The Sun-God did spend half the year with His children in the North and then did depart to his winter home. O Belenos, O Thou unchanging God of many names but one Face, we, Thy Children, mourn Thy passing from our lands.
E: O LORD OF LIGHT, RETURN TO US SOON.
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, short seems the time that we have rejoiced in the warmth of Thy presence.
E: O GOD OF THE SUN, RETURN TO US SOON.

D: The nights were short, the trees in leaf,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: The days were long and full of Life,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: The Sun was warm, the land gave fruit,
E: THE DAY HAD CONQUERED NIGHT.
D: But the Sun must return to the Southern lands,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: Though the world is warm and full of LIFE,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: Yet the cold approaches to stalk the land,
E: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
D: The Sun grows weaker every day.
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.
D: The leaves will wither and Death draws nigh.
E: THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.
D: We pray Thy return will all Your might.
E: OR THE NIGHT WILL CONQUER DAY.

D: O Belenos, O Sun, we mourn Thy passing from our midst. Welcome wert Thou among us.
E: THOU BLESSED US WITH THY PRESENCE, O LORD OF LIGHT.
D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, return to us soon that we may rejoice in Thy sight.
E: BLESS US AND LIGHT OUR WAYS, O GOD OF THE SUN.

D: But winter will pass and spring will come,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.
D: The Sun will return and warm our land,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT.

D: Death will pass and Life return,
E: AND THE DAY WILL CONQUER NIGHT!

D: O Belenos, O Sun-God, O Lord of Light, though Thy presence departs from us, yet art Thou with us, for Thy light does guide our feet and Thy warmth is in our hearts.
E: ALL HAIL BELENOS, GOD OF LIGHT!
D: All praise Belenos, who keep His ways.
E: O BELENOS, WE PRAISE THEE!

Catechism

D: Of what does the Earth-Mother give that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters-of-Life.
D: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth-Mother, the never-changing All-mother.
D: Has the Earth-Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
D: Does Belenos still give us a sign of His presence?
P: He does! Though He departs for the Southern lands, still is His spark of light within these Waters-of-Life.
D: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration

The Druid/ess takes the chalice from the Server, who fills it if it is not already full. The Druid/ess then consecrates its contents with the following:

D: O Belenos, O Lord of Light, descend yet once more into these waters and fill them with Thy presence. Give us to know, O Lord, of Thy impending return, as we take and drink one more time of Thy warmth and light.

Ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated an additional chalice, filled with the Waters-of-Life) the ceremony is inserted here, before the Communion.

Communion

The Druid/ess drinks from the chalice and blesses the Preceptor with the words "the Waters-of-Life" and the marking of the Druid Sigil in the air.

The Preceptor returns the blessing and receives the chalice from the Druid/ess. The Preceptor drinks, blesses the Server, is blessed in return, and gives the Server the chalice. The Server drinks, then goes around the circle of the Grove (usually clockwise) blessing each person, handing them the chalice, letting them drink, being blessed in return, and taking the chalice to the next person. The Server does NOT drink more than once.

In some Groves, the Druid/ess may merely turn to the left and exchange blessings with the person on that side, letting the chalice be handed around the circle by the members of the Grove.

In either method, the last person in the circle should NOT finish the contents of the chalice. This is returned to the Druid/ess with a last exchange of blessings. Then the Druid/ess takes the last sip, pouring the remainder upon the altar or fire, saying:

D: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Lord, even as Thou wilt return to us.

Meditation

Here follows an appropriate reading, from any Nature-oriented scripture the Druid/ess may choose, read by the Druid/ess or by someone appointed for that purpose. After this comes a few BRIEF words of meditation from the Druid/ess and a period of silence and private meditation (usually two to five minutes in length – though longer with some Groves) by all. Eventually, the Druid/ess signals the end of the service with:

Benediction

D: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth-Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayer, and that we go forth with Her blessing:

The Druid/ess blesses the Grove with three Sigils in the air, left to right, saying:

Peace! Peace! Peace!

End of a Special Order of Worship for the Fall Equinox.

Figure 33 Isaac Bonewits & Sam Admas at the Hill of 3 Oaks on April 23, 1994.

1979 Order of Common Worship, Autumn Equinox Service

Mother Grove, N.R.D.N.A.
By Bonewits & others?
"Class C"

Druids line up for the procession, standing several yards North of the altar stone. The Archdruid (AD) and the Archdruidess (ADS) are at the front, followed by the Chief Bard and the Server, and the other members of the Grove (G).

Opening Song: "O Earth Mother"

(Customs 2:1-3)

Invocation:

ADS: In the dust of the galaxy swirls the spark of life.
G: And we partake of it; we and all living beings.
AD: In the mighty helix we dance.
G: And in harmony with all of life we sing.
ADS: Gods known and unknown, remembered and forgotten, male and female, dark and light, creating, preserving, and destroying...
G: Be in our awareness. Teach us Your joy. Let us feel Your sorrow. Extend our limitations.
AD: Knowing that the smallest motion, the softest note, even the energy of thought itself, reverberates infinitely..
ALL: LET THIS RITUAL BEGIN!

Processional Song (ALL):

Song: "Will Ye No Come Back Again?"

All process to altar stone, CB & S mark sigil on ground, AD & ADS step inside and go around either side to back of altar stone, sigil is closed. Grove members split into an arc in front of the altar stone.

Centering:

ADS: Why have you gathered here under the oaks?
G: This is the appointed place, now is the appointed time.
AD: What brings you here out under the sky?
G: We come to worship the Gods.
ADS: What do you know of the Gods?
G: We seek to know what we can, with our mortal limitations.
AD: The Gods are everywhere;
G: But we worship Them here.
ADS: The Gods are without form;
G: But we worship Them in these forms.
AD: We do not know what to offer to our Gods,
G: So we offer Them our prayers and sacrifices:
ADS: Each of us in our own way,
G: Each of us in our own prayers,
ALL: EACH OF US WITH OUR OWN SACRIFICES.

AD: Now let each of us go to the sacred place, the temple of the Earth Mother, and the sanctuary of Be'al. In each of our bodies, in each of our hearts, in the back of our minds, in the quiet of the spirit, evaluating all that has happened in our private lives since last we stood together, that the Gods may help us to understand them as sources of wisdom and growth.

(Silence)

Individual Goals and Dedications:

AD: Now let each of us, within our hearts, declare silently our personal goals for the days ahead and for our lives, and make our individual dedications to the spirits whom we worship and honor.

(Silence)

Statement of Beliefs:

ADS: How many Gods are there?
G: Every God and Goddess is a star!
AD: Where are the Gods?
G: Where is the air we breathe? The waters that surround us? The ground upon which we stand?
ADS: Are the Gods male?
AD: Or female?
G: YES!
ADS: How do we find the Gods?
G: Every Goddess is within us.
AD: Thou art Goddess!.
G: Every God is within us.
ADS: Thou art God.
AD: Who is our Lady?
G: She is the Earth Mother, spirit of all that lives upon the earth, and swims beneath the waters, and flies throughout the air.
ADS: Who is our Lord?
G: He is Be'al, the Shining One, spirit of truth and light, spark of the sun, and the flame within the heart of every being.
ADS: And Who is the God of this place?
G: He is Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and every Grove, Patron of Druids, and Comforter of the People.

Group Goals and Dedications:

ADS: Now do we declare our goals:
G: To grow as human beings, in joy and love and wisdom and strength, to promote in our actions, a human and interdependent society, to heal and protect the biosphere of this planet; and to further the process of evolution, in ourselves and our groups, and throughout all time and space.
AD: Thus, in order to achieve these goals:
G: We dedicate ourselves, here and now, in body and mind, heart and soul, to our Holy Mother the Earth, our Holy Father the Sun, and to all Their Holy Children.

[NOTE: A large picture of the Stone Henge picture from an old antiquarian book seems to have been deliberately pasted over the 1976 section that had the Lughnasadh Chant, perhaps to shorten the liturgy?]

Offering and Praise:

ADS: We are together, yet we often feel separate.
G: Thus we bring our sacrifices, to the Lord and Lady.
AD: What have you brought for our Mother and Father?

Members of the Grove bring sacrifices to the altar stone.

ADS: Not all sacrifices are physical. Has anyone brought Praise for the Gods?

Members of the Grove offer poems, songs, music, etc.

Sacrifice:

The ADS holds up sacrificial branch and speaks:

ADS: Our praise has mounted up on the wings of eagles; our voices have been carried up on the shoulders of the winds. Hear us, we pray, as we offer up these sacrifices to life. Accept them, we ask, and cleanse our hearts and eyes, granting us peace and life.

The branch is laid upon the altar stone. Then the AD turns to the Four Quarters and asks:

AD: Have You accepted our sacrifices, O Our Mother? We call upon the Spirit of the North to give answer… and of the South… and of the East… and of the West… and of the Holy Center…

If the sacrifice is accepted, the rite continues:

ADS: Praise be! Our sacrifices, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the honoring of our Gods, have been accepted!!

Statement of Needs:

AD: O Mighty Ones, we have called upon you and you have heard us. We have offered of ourselves and you have accepted. Yet each of us has needs for guidance and for aid, without which we cannot fulfill your ways. Hear now thy children, and help us, as ever you have done.

At this point, each person present may state, silently or out loud, her or his needs they wish fulfilled by the Gods, in order to accomplish their goals. After all have finished:

AD: And we declare, that as this Grove:

ALL: WE NEED YOUR STRENGTH AND WISDOM, YOUR HEALING AND JOY, SO THAT WE MAY ACCOMPLISH OUR GOALS AND FULFILL OUR DEDICATIONS. BLESS THIS GROVE, AND BRING US ALL THAT WE MAY NEED, MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, SO THAT WE MAY GROW EVER STRONGER, IN BEAUTY, WISDOM, HEALTH AND JOY.

Chant:

ADS: O give praise to the Gods of Light!
AD: Praise to the Dancer, singing and swaying,
Praise to the Mother, fruitful and shining!
G: PRAISE BE'AL, WHO IS ALL GODS; PRAISE THE EARTH MOTHER'S MANY FACES!
ADS: Praise for cold drink and good work, short sleeves and good times!
G: PRAISE FOR FIELD AND PLAY AND LOVER!
AD: Praise for sunsets and bright days, green leaves and flowing waters!
G: PRAISE FOR SURITY OF SUMMER PROMISE!
ADS: The Mother woke, the Sun God rose-
G: DARK HAD TURNED TO LIGHT.
AD: The Earth was lush, the days were long-
G: THE LIGHT RULED OVER ALL.
ADS: But the fruit formed over the quiet seed-
G: THE LIGHT YEARNS TO THE DARK.
AD: Leaf is crimson, day comes cool-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
ADS: Belenos turns his face to the South-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
AD: The Mother tires and drifts toward sleep-
G: BALANCED NOW ARE WE.
ADS: Flowers of hoar frost on leaf and pane-
G: LIGHT WILL TURN TO DARK.
AD: Limb will be sheared, day will be short-
G: DARK WILL RULE OVER ALL.
ADS: Til the seed wax full in the dampened earth-
G: AND DARK YEARNS AGAIN FOR LIGHT.

ADS: O Cernunnos, O God of the Hunt, we praise thee at thy return to our midst, for we fear thee not.
G: BLESS US AND GUIDE US WELL, O MIGHTY WARRIOR.
AD: O Macha, O Kali, wise and strong, protect us through the Time of Sleep.
G: PRAISE TO THE LADY, TO WHOM WE RETURN.

The Waters:

ADS: Of what does the Earth Mother give, that we may know the continual flow and renewal of life?
P: The Waters of Life.
AD: From whence do these Waters flow?
P: From the bosom of the Earth Mother, the ever-changing All-Mother.
ADS: And how do we honor this gift that causes Life?
P: By partaking of the Waters of Life.
AD: Has the Earth Mother given forth of Her bounty?
P: She has!
ADS: Does Belenos still give us a sign of his presence?
P: He does! Though he departs for the Southern lands, still is his spark of light within these Waters of Life.
ADS: Then give me the Waters!

Consecration:

The ADS takes the chalice of waters, and invokes the power of the Gods into them, thus initiating a return flow of divine energy.

ADS: O, Dalon Ap Landu, Lord of this and Every Grove, hallow these waters by Thy sevenfold powers, and by the three ways of day and one of night. Cleanse our hearts and eyes, and join us together by Thy power, as we take and drink of Thy secret essences.

Sharing:

ADS: What are these waters?
G: A sign of the power, and the bounty of the Gods;
AD: Who are themselves but fractions of that which is
G: Beyond all human concepts
ADS: Of male and female;
G: Mortal and divine.
AD: She surrounds us.
ADS: He penetrates us.
ALL: THEY BIND THE UNIVERSES TOGETHER!

The chalice is passé around to all present, each person being blessed by the Server with the Druid Sigil and returning the blessing, before and after drinking, with the words "The Waters of Life." The remaining waters are returned to the ADS, who pours them out over the altar stone, saying:

ADS: To Thee we return this portion of Thy bounty, O Our Mother, even as we must return unto Thee.

Group Bonding:

ADS: Now do we declare ourselves:

ALL: ONE, WITH ALL THOSE HERE PRESENT, IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT, ACCEPTING THE BONDS NOW STRENGTHENED, BETWEEN US, AND OUR SISTERS AND BORTHERS, IN ALL THE MYRIAD WORLDS, BELOVED OF THE GODS.

All sing "We are One Family" song.

Prayer/Meditation/Spell:

Led impromptu by the ADS.

Thanking the Gods:

ADS: O Earth Mother, O Be'al, O all you Goddesses and Gods around us and within us:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That you have made and inhabit the Earth, the Sea, the Wild Things, and ourselves:
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: That we have offered to You of ourselves, and You have accepted.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: That You have heard our prayers, our griefs and our needs,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: For all that You have given, all You give around us, all You will give in the future.
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
AD: For that we need each other, mortal and divine, and so serve each other, with respect and love, now and throughout all the ages,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE.
ADS: Now as we prepare to leave this place in joy and peace,
ALL: WE THY CHILDREN THANK THEE!

Absorption and Grounding:

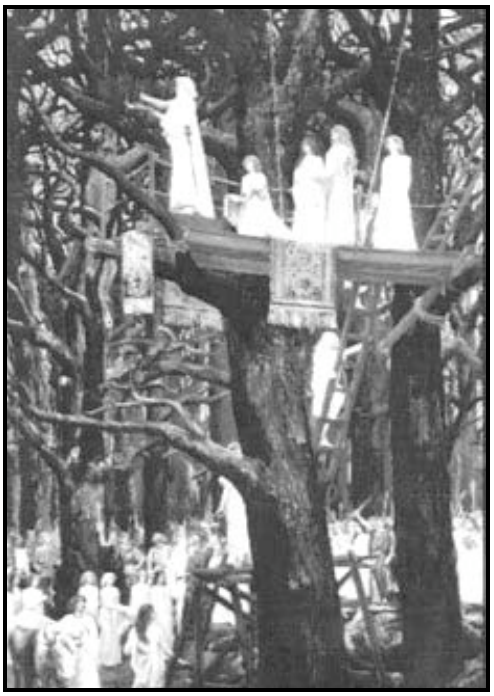
ADS: Great the power we have raised;
ALL: STRENGTH OF WOMAN AND OF MAN.
AD: What shall we do before we leave?
ALL: ABSORB AS MUCH AS EVER WE CAN!

All pause and absorb as much of the divine power present as they can manage.

ADS: And all the rest…?
ALL: WE SEND TO GROUND, TO SKY ABOVE AND TREES AROUND.

All now send remaining energy into the physical world around them, blessing and cherishing the earth and sky, plants and animals

AD: Is it done?
ALL: IT IS DONE!

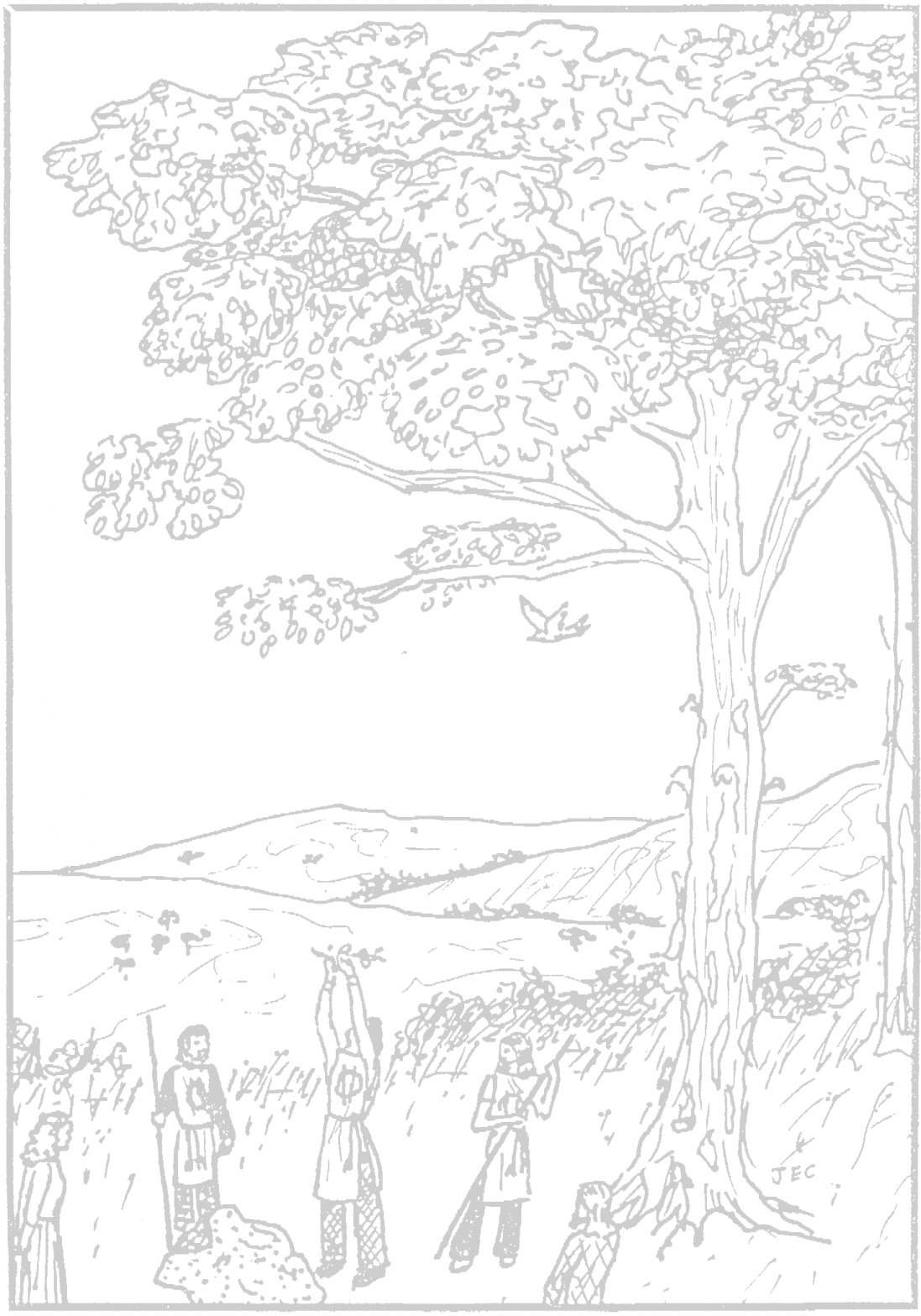


Benediction:

ADS: Go forth into the world, secure in the knowledge that our sacrifices have found acceptance in the Earth Mother's sight, that She has answered our prayers, and that we go forth with Her blessing: Peace! Peace! Peace!

The sigil around the altar stone is now broken, and all retire to picnic and celebrate, making sure that the area is physically clean before leaving.

Figure 34 Isaac Bonewits, c. 1998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