Leaving of the Ego

Upon entering this space, we all equals. Please leave your ego behind and outside of this space as you join us as equals.

Opening Meditation

As we gather together, let us ground ourselves in the earth, and seek our centers.

Close your eyes and open your spirits.

Draw your focus inward. Breathe slowly and deeply. Turn aside all distractions.

Be aware of your body, of your breath, of your heart beating in your chest. With each breath, relax your body. Make yourself comfortable. Move and adjust your body as needed to feel balanced and at ease. Release the tension in your head, your neck. Relax your shoulders, your arms. Let your stomach soften and relax. Adjust your position until your spine feels comfortably aligned. Release the tension in your hips, relax your legs, your feet. Feel any aches and pains fade away. Be at ease.

Be aware of your spirit, your inner self. Observe your thoughts, your feelings. Let them wash over you, through you. Let them settle as you continue to breathe slowly and deeply. With each breath, set aside the many worries and cares that fill your mind. Focus on the calm and peace of this moment. Feel safe and protected.

Be aware of the earth beneath you. Feel yourself anchored firmly to the earth, to the planet that supports you, in body and spirit. Focus on your connection to the earth. Feel the tug of gravity, drawing you close, binding you to the earth. Be aware of the substance of the planet – the soil and water and air that comprise our world. Be aware of these elements within yourself: the earth that makes up your flesh, the water that flows in your blood, the breath that fills your lungs. Feel the magic of that connection – the power that links you to the larger whole.

Be aware of the spirits around you. Feel your connection to the other beings that support you, in body and spirit.

Be aware of the web of life that surrounds you: the beings that inhabit this world with you. Feel your connection to the plants and animals and others that you depend on for life – for food, for shelter, for the very air you breathe. They are a part of you. You are a part of them. Feel the magic of that connection – the power that intertwines your life with the greater web of all life.

Be aware of your ancestors, of their role in shaping who you are. Feel their presence in your life – their history and teachings living on in your memory, their legacy moving forward through your words and deeds. They are a part of you. You are a part of them.

Feel the magic of that connection – the power that connects you to the past, to your own history and the history of all humanity.

Be aware of the deities, of their role in the shaping of the world and civilization. Feel their presence in your life – their guidance and support and power. They call to you and invite you to learn from them. They gain power from your love, and in turn, they grant you the power to shape the world through your words and deeds. They are a part of you, and you are a part of them. Feel the magic of that connection – the power to create something new and wonderful.

Be aware of the others gathered here in spirit if not in flesh. Feel their presence in this sacred space. They are here in common purpose with you, to celebrate and strengthen their connection to the earth, to the spirits of land, to the ancestors, the deities, and to one another.

As we gather in common purpose, let us do so with full awareness of the connections we share and the power it grants us.

As you breathe, deeply and slowly, focus once again on this place, this moment, where we come

together in fellowship and worship, and when you are ready, open your eyes.

Honoring the Earth Mother

As we gather here, we honor the Earth we stand upon. We call to the Earth Mother who surrounds and supports us. We call to the Earth Mother who feeds and nourishes us. We call to the Earth Mother who shelters us and gives us a home to live in. Without you, we would not be here. Without you we would not survive. Without you, we would not be. We honor you. We love you. We respect you. We all work to make you healthy. We now give to you these offerings in a token of our appreciation. Earth Mother, accept our offerings!

Statement of Purpose

We are here to celebrate Samhain. It is time to honor the dead, be they friends, family, pets, or people we looked up to as heroes and mentors. Today we celebrate the end of the harvest season, and the start of the dark and cold, especially with the time change tonight. The world around us is slowly dying and going dormant. The leaves are falling, the days are getting shorter, the animals are making their winter homes and rushing to store as much food as they can. Winter is around the corner with reports of snow and ice in the mountains. So today we honor our ancestors, our animal friends, and all those who have passed from this world. We will also call on deities that are associated with this season, the Dagada and Morrighan and tell the story of the second battle of Mag Tuired.

Recreate the Sacred Center

officiant makes offerings during the appropriate sections of the text.

As we gather here, in the center are our hallows, our sacred center, each with its role in the cosmos.

We start with focusing on the well, our connection to the underworlds This is our way to the Ancestors and all who are found in those realms. To the well, we offer silver. With this offering, we connect our well to all the wells in the world, making our well `the` well.

We now focus on the fire, our connection the the upper-worlds. This is our way to the Deities and all who are found in those realms. To the fire, we offer incense. With this offering, we connect our fire to all the fires in the world, making our fire `the` fire.

Finally, we focus on the tree, our pathway between all the worlds. This is our road to travel to the realms of the Deities and the Ancestors, and all beings found outside our realm. We join this tree with the well through the waters of the well. We join this tree with the fire through the smoke of the incense. As we join this tree to the well and fire, our tree becomes `the` tree and our path.

Outsiders

Outsiders! You who stand against our purposes for this rite. You who only wish to cause mischief and harm. You who are beyond the light of our work. We ask you today to not disturb us as we do our work. We recognize you and your role in our lives. If you do not disturb us, we will make you this offering of beer when our rites are over.

Purification

Officiants will sprinkle the congregation with water and smudge with incense while the following is spoken

As we gather here in this place, let us once again focus on our ritual purity. Wash yourselves with the waters from the well, washing away all your cares and all your worries. Smudge yourself with the incense from the fire, to join us all in ritual. As we do this washing and smudging, see our circle become cleaner and purer until we are all here as one.

Call to the Deities

Officiant makes offerings of grains or alcohol when indicated.

Deities! To all the gods and goddesses who we work with on a daily basis and who guide us in our lives. Matron and Patrons, those we work with directly. Those of this place, we we honor as we stand in your lands. Those that are unknown to us, yet watch over us all. We call to you and we offer to you. Come, join us at our fire! Deities, accept our offerings!

Call to the Land Spirits

Officiant makes offerings of grains when indicated.

Land Spirits! To all the spirits of the lands around us. To all the animals we see each and every day, domesticated or wild. To all the plants that grow around us, cultivated or not. To all the unseen spirits who live amongst us. We call to you and we offer to you. Come, join us at our fire! Land Spirits, accept our offerings!

Call to the Ancestors

Officiant makes offerings of grains or alcohol when indicated.

Ancestors! We call on all those who have come before us. We call to our relatives, those that have passed throughout the years. We call to our chosen family, the mentors and heroes who walked the path before us. We call to you and we offer to you. Come, join us at our fire! Ancestors, accept our offerings!

Call to the Honored Beings

Officiant makes offerings of grains when indicated.

Morrighan

Morrighan! You lady of the dark. You who are known to us as the battle goddess. You help determine who wins and who loses. We see you and your ravens as you approach us. We call you not in battle but in friendship. We call you to honor you and worship you. It is said that it was this holiday that you merged with the Dagda, and helped determine the outcome of the second battle of Mag Tuired.

Morrighan! Come, Join us at our fire! Be with us as we celebrate this day of the dead. Morrighan! Accept our offerings!

Daghda

Daghda! Good God! Great God! You who carry the club that takes life on one end and gives life on the other. You are the one with the cauldron of plenty! We call on you to join us this day to honor you and worship you as this is the day it is said you merged with the Morrighan and determined the outcome of the second battle of Mag Tuired.

Daghda! Great God!, Come, join us at our fire! Be with us as we celebrate this day! Daghda! Accept our offerings!

Telling of the second battle of Mag Tuired

84. The Dagda had a house in Glen Edin in the north, and he had arranged to meet a woman in Glen Edin a year from that day, near the All Hallows of the battle. The Unshin of Connacht roars to the south of it.

He saw the woman at the Unshin in Corann, washing, with one of her feet at Allod Echae (that is, Aghanagh) south of the water and the other at Lisconny north of the water. There were nine loosened tresses on her head. The Dagda spoke with her, and they united. "The Bed of the Couple" was the name of that place from that time on. (The woman mentioned here is the Morrigan.)

85. Then she told the Dagda that the Fomoire would land at Mag Ceidne, and that he should summon the aes dana of Ireland to meet her at the Ford of the Unshin, and she would go into Scetne to destroy Indech mac De Domnann, the king of the Fomoire, and would take from him the blood of his heart and the kidneys of his valor. Later she gave two handfuls of that blood to the hosts that were waiting at the Ford of the Unshin. Its name became "The Ford of Destruction" because of that destruction of the king.

86. So the aes dana did that, and they chanted spells against the Fomorian hosts.

87. This was a week before All Hallows, and they all dispersed until all the men of Ireland came together the day before All Hallows. Their number was six times thirty hundred, that is, each third consisted of twice thirty hundred.

(http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/cmt/cmteng.htm)

Shared Meal

Behold this loaf of bread. With this loaf, we share a meal with The Dagda, The Morrighan, and the spirits. As we tear this loaf in half, one half goes to them and the other will be shared between us.

Food is eaten with a portion left for the deities and spirits

Blessing of the Waters

We have made our offerings to all of the spirits. We have honored The Daghda and The Morrighan and called to them to celebrate the holiday and turn the wheel towards winter. We call to all we have honored today to bless these waters. Fill them with the powers of their blessings in return for our offerings. Spirits, give us the waters! Behold the blessed waters!

Waters are drunk

Thanking the Beings

Thanking the Honored Beings

Daghda

Daghda! We have made offerings to you and you have returned the favor. For all you have done for us, Daghda, we thank you.

Morrighan

Morrighan! We have made offerings to you and you have returned the favor. For all you have done for us, Morrighan, we thank you.

Thanking the Ancestors

Ancestors! We have made offerings to you and you have returned the favor. For all you have done for us, Ancestors, we thank you.

Thanking the Land Spirits

Land Spirits! We have made offerings to you and you have returned the favor. For all you have done for us, Land Spirits, we thank you.

Thanking the Deities

Deities! We have made offerings to you and you have returned the favor. For all you have done for us, Deities, we thank you.

Acknowledging the Outsiders

Outsiders! We asked you at the start of the rite that you leave us to work in peace. You have done so. We will honor our end of the bargain and pour you the beer we offered you earlier.

Thanking the Earth Mother

Earth Mother! We have given to you, and we have honored you. You are the reason we are able to survive in this world. For all that you have done for us both today and throughout our days, Earth Mother, we thank you.

Closing Meditation:

As we conclude our ritual, let us once again seek our centers and ground ourselves.

With spirits open, close your eyes. Breathe slowly and deeply. Draw your focus inward. Feel the threads that connect you to the others gathered here today – threads of common purpose and devotion, of fellowship and mutual caring.

Feel the threads that connect you to the deities – threads of power and faith, of wisdom and trust.

Feel the threads that connect you to the ancestors – threads of lineage and history, of lore and memory.

Feel the threads that connect you to the spirits of the land – threads of life and sustenance, of beauty and wonder.

Feel the threads that connect you to the earth – threads of life and sustenance, lineage and history, power and faith, love and existence itself.

As you feel these connections, know them to be ever present. But for now, relax your focus of these

bindings. Let your awareness of them soften, but never fade as you go about your daily lives.

As you breathe, deeply and slowly, focus once again on this place, this moment, as we prepare to go forth into the world, and when you are ready, open your eyes.

And so the rite is finished, go now in wisdom and peace.