

Earthshine Rituals

Druidry is about making, or re-making, that connection humans need with our planet. It is a connection with the spirit of all things. When we make this connection, we learn (remember) how we should be living. Our life will change as we re-evaluate all that we have come to take for granted.

We can do it anywhere: in our home, in our office; in our schools - for spirit is everywhere around us if we chose to acknowledge it. It is this acknowledgement that often changes how we see things.

We soon learn that we are not alone, that we have our own guides and helpers.

Ritual is just a part of this re-connection. We can, of course, do this alone but it helps to meet with like minded people who are also seeking reconnection.

Preparation is almost as important as the ritual itself, the more we prepare ourselves the more we have to give. And it follows that the more we give, the more we receive as a group when we come together.

You will find that in celebrating the rituals, the seasons begin to flow through you and you begin to feel when they change. Quite often this will be before or after the set date, it is something that nature knows instinctively and something which we soon pick up in ourselves.

Before the Ritual

Preparing yourself a few days before ritual will make it deeper and more meaningful. There is no great secret here, it is about an attitude of mind. Think on it, on what it means to you in your life. I would recommend doing this for three days before hand. It is a way of letting the spirit world know you are coming to share with them. 'Things' will happen, you may find something, remember something, have the urge to share something.

Early in each ritual we will give our gifts to Spirits of Place. This may be nuts for the squirrels; seeds for the birds; dried blood for the trees and soil, so come prepared. All offerings must be bio-degradable as we will be leaving these behind. However, we should avoid dried fruits as these have been found to cause problems with dogs should they eat them.

There will be an opportunity to share your experiences with the group. Sometimes we feel the need to make an offering: this might be a promise written on paper and given to the fire, or a flower which has healing powers given for a friend. In some very strong circumstances, a sacrifice may be given as a way of letting go of something you want to leave behind.

Sharing does not need to be specific, some things can be too personal to share totally, but be prepared to say something as you make your offering/sacrifice. Whatever we say must not go beyond the sacred space in which we make our ritual. This space is a place of trust and we must never divulge what we hear in private. This kind of sharing adds to the ritual's power and strengthens our prayers and gives healing to the giver.

The main part of the ritual will, obviously, depend upon the season, but there will be a time to join in with the general spirit of the rite. If there are things to bring we will let you know in good time.

After we share the bread and mead, we will open the proceedings for an Eisteddfod. This is a time to share readings, poems, songs, stories. Maybe something you have written yourself or something you found that seems apposite for the season and the ritual.

Meeting for Ritual

The rituals will always be outside, whatever the weather: >)

We will meet at the appointed place, usually a car park, where we can put on our gear. English weather being as it is, Wellington boots and water proofs are always useful to have handy.

We will then walk together to the ritual site. This is best done in silence. Silence allows the spirit world to talk to us more easily. Quite often, it is difficult to find silence and this is a great opportunity. Let the stillness, or not, of the woods will seep into us.

When we arrive at the ritual site, give it respect. We are about to enter sacred space. The area we chose will have given permission previously for ritual, but that does not mean we can assume this will always be the case. Sometimes, the spirits may not wish us to be present and ask us to leave. For this reason, the priests will lead the group into the space.

Once the circle has been cast the sacred space has been created. Do not leave the area without asking permission of the Priest who, in turn, will ask permission of the Spirits. This may sound harsh, but the space we have created is no longer strictly in this world, to wander in and out is not polite.

The Form of Ritual

Follow the Priest(s) into the circle. They will walk clockwise and take their place. If you have offered to call a quarter, walk round to a space in that quarter.

Priest: Greeting to Spirits of Place and Permissions

Volunteer: The Call for Peace

Priest: Consecration of the Circle

Volunteer: The Four Directions: Air Fire Water Earth

All: The Three Worlds (Land, Sea, and Sky around us)

Priest: Honour our Ancestors of Place, Blood and Tradition

All: Offerings to Spirits of Place

All: Remembering Others

Priest: The Declaration (Purpose of the Rite restated for focus)

The Rite

Bread and Mead

Eisteddfod: A Celebration of the Season in words music and song

All: Druid's promise:

We swear by peace and love to stand
Heart to heart and hand in hand
Mark, O Spirits, and hear us now
Confirming this, our sacred vow (rep twice more)

Awen

Closing (in reverse order):

Ancestors
Three Worlds
Four Directions (Earth, Water, Fire, Air)

The Circle is Opened

Thanks and farewells to Spirits of Place

With the Rite over it is time to gather our things and leave the site. There should be no sign that a ritual has taken place there only the offerings remain.

To learn more about the form of ritual, I would suggest reading Emma Restall Orr's book "Ritual, A Guide to Life, Love and Inspiration". Much of what we do will be based on her suggested format.

The Druid's Prayer

Grant, O Spirit thy Protection
And in Protection, Strength,
And in Strength, Understanding
And in Understanding, Knowledge
And in Knowledge, Truth
And in Truth, Love
And in Love, the Love of all Existence
And in that love, the love of Spirit and All Creation