

# Lughnasadh

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 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 alternating lines in *italic print*.

## Invocation

D: O Lord, overlook these three errors 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 hast no need of prayers and sacrifices,

P: *Yet we offer Thee these prayers and sacrifices.*

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

P: *O Mother, cleanse our minds and hearts and prepare us for meditation.*

## Procession

Here occurs the Procession, often with the Grove singing this hymn from *Customs 2:1-3*:

O Earth-Mother! We praise thee  
that seed springeth,  
that flower openeth,  
that 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.

Upon arrival near the altar, the Preceptor and the Server 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 then closed by the two staves.

## Praise

Here may be inserted a reading or singing of Latter Chronicles 10: 6 - 22 as a hymn of praise: everyone speaks the lines in *italics*.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: In all that we do, do we praise Thee: in our getting up and our lying down, in our sleeping and in our waking, in our eating and in our drinking, in our working and in our times of leisure; for we are alive only through Thee, and in our every act do we praise Thee.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: In all that we see, do we praise Thee: in the sky and in the sea, the hills and the plains, in the clouds and the stars, the moon and the sun, in the birds and the flowers, the butterflies and the myriad-colored fishes.

We praise thee with our admiration of the sunset and of the mountains, of the trees and of the streams; for Thou hast made all things, and for all that we see do we praise Thee.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: In all that we hear and smell and feel and taste do we praise Thee: in the song of birds and the roar of the sea, in the perfumes of flowers and the freshness of a summer rain;

In the softness of a kitten and the coolness of a lake, in the sweetness of honey and the savor of fruits; for all that we hear and smell and feel and taste is of Thee, and for all sensible do we praise Thee.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: For all that we love do we praise Thee: for the love of our parents and the love of others; for the act and emotion of love is an act and emotion of praise, and in loving do we praise Thee.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: In our meditations and services do we praise and think upon Thy works and power.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

D: In all the whole world do we praise Thee: from the east to the west do we praise Thee, and from the nadir to the zenith do we praise Thee.

We praise Thee in the day and in the night, in all seasons of the year, and in the myriad of years.

We praise Thee knowing, and unknowing, believing and of little faith; for Thou hast made all and art all, and we can praise and admire nothing without praising and admiring Thee.

E: *O Earth-Mother! we praise Thee!*

## Sacrifice

The Druid/ess 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 sacrifice, dedicated to the fertility and renewal of life, and to the cleansing of our minds and hearts, has been accepted!

## Chant

D: The 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: 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: 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 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!

## Ordination?

If a member of the Grove is to be ordained to the Second Order (in which case the Druid/ess will have consecrated a second 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 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 or three 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 sacrifice has 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:

D: Peace!                      Peace!                      Peace!