

Hearth Keepers' Way Autumnal Equinox Rite

This is a ritual honouring the Earth Mother, designed to be performed by one person, at any time of day, preferably facing East. Do not let these suggestions limit you from performing this rite; we do our best.

If performed within a week on either side of the Autumnal Equinox, this ritual includes all of the necessary actions for the Hearthkeepers Way, and the ADF Core Order of Ritual (i.e. does qualify as an ADF rite for Dedicant Path work). For 2022, the Autumnal Equinox is **Thursday, September 23, at 9:03 PM EDT.**

All work that is not my own is attributed to its author or source. The remaining work is original text, which may have previously appeared in *The Hearth Keepers' Way* [HKW]. If there are any errors in attribution or otherwise, please contact caer@starandstone.ca

Supplies:

- Representations of the Fire, Well, and Tree
- A separate small bowl of water for purification
- A separate small bowl to receive offerings, if working inside
- Offerings for the Earth Mother, Hearth Goddess, and the Kindreds
- A divination tool
- A drink for the Return Flow
- An additional candle for the Flame of the Season

Suggestions for additional simplicity:

- Purify yourself with the waters in the Well.
- Make a sweetened herbal tea to use for both offerings and return flow.

Initiating the Rite

[Take three deep breaths to prepare yourself for the rite. Light your hearth fire.]

Purification *[Touch water to forehead, lips, and heart with each line.]*

May I be pure that I might cross through the sacred.

May I cross through the sacred that I might attain the holy.

May I attain the holy that I might be blessed in all things.

[Ceisiwr Serith]

Opening Prayer

I am here to honour the Gods. At this holy time, I walk the path of my Ancestors.

Establishing the Group Mind [Hearth Keeper Essential]

I, [name, of Hearth name (if applicable)], am a tree in the Grove of Ár nDraíocht Féin. As my spine straightens, my roots entwine with the trees in this Grove and my branches provide shade on the beautiful Earth. The fire that burns within me is a star in the sky of ADF's spirit. [HKW]

The Hearth and our Allies [Hearth Keeper Essential]

Born in the Waters, kindled on the Land,
With a pillar of smoke that supports the Heavens,
This Fire burns at the Centre of All
To carry my voice to the Spirits. [HKW]

Kindled from the Great Flame, kept by prudent skill

Join with our common hearth, that these flames be one

[The Fire Charm]

Holy Goddess of the Hearth, your light burns brightly at the centre of my home.
We are each other's guests, and from you, hospitality flows.
May I keep my home well in your honour,
May you shine ever bright in my heart.
Accept this offering, Hearth Goddess, and be welcome at my hearth.
[make offering]

Earth Mother

Earth Mother, I call upon you to uphold and bless this rite.
Each day you sustain me, nurturing my bodies and souls with your bounty.
Each day, I remember what you do for me, and I seek to bless you in return,
With my words, with my actions, with my love.
Accept this offering, Earth Mother, and be welcome at this Hearth.
[make offering]

Statement of Purpose

On this holy day, the Autumnal Equinox, I come to this place to make offerings to the Gods. I honour the abundant Earth Mother with all of her gifts, as we enter the season of Autumn.

Recreating the Cosmos

Waters of the deep, rise up and fill me with your potential.
Fires of the Sky, shine down and illuminate me with your clarity.
Water and Fire, primal powers, merge within me to make magic.

I come to the centre of worlds,
Between the Land and Sky and Sea,
To offer to the powers through the Sacred Centre.

Fire, burn bright with my offerings.
Well, flow deep with my song.
Tree, reach to the realms with your branches,
Carry my voice along.

Opening the Gates

Flame in the centre of all,
be my gate to the lands of the Holy Ones, opening to their realms.
May my words enter you, and be there transformed:
breath into spirit, offerings to spirit.
May the gates be open!

[Ceisiwr Serith]

Goddess of the Hearth, brightly burning,
Be the still centre around which our rite turns.
Lift our offerings on the flames of your fire,
Amplify our voices with your own.

Inviting the Three Kindreds

We welcome the Holy Ones to our home:
Nature Spirits, allies of this abundant Land, our neighbours on the body of the Earth.
Ancestors, blood, kin, and spirit, the roots and branches of our past.
Gods and goddesses, the shining ones, wise and mighty in myriad ways.
Blessings and honour to you, Kindreds, be welcome at our hearth.

[make offering]

Key Offerings

The fire is lit, turning our offerings to food for the Gods.
Now I call to the Earth Mother, and welcome in the Autumn.

At each rite I call to the Earth Mother, first honoured,
Vast and local, ever-present and mysterious.
I celebrate the turning of the Wheel with the Bounty of the Land –
Our cycles are her cycles, the cycles of Earth and Sun,
Whereby we live in accordance with Nature.

The treasures of the world are contained within you, Earth Mother:
Fruit from potential,
Life-giving streams,
Healing from herbs,
And abundance of harvest.
Accept this offering, Earth Mother, from your child.

[make offering]

O Earth Mother, your beauty this day is in your fullness,
As the Harvest has truly come.

Let us be prudent in our gathering in,
Not to shy from work and preparation,
As after the harvest comes winter,
And we move from light to dark.

Standing in balance with you, upon you,
Among the gifts you give,
I remember to act with integrity
In each act I do.

O Earth Mother, today as all days,
I honour you.

[pause and abide in the presence of the Earth Mother]

Prayer of Sacrifice

All I have done here becomes one offering.
My keeping the Old Ways with words, deeds, and gifts.
May my voice be heard in the realms of the spirits as I say:
Accept my sacrifice, Holy Ones!

Omen

[A simple omen is taken. Reflect on what blessings or messages are for you in the omen.]

Return Flow

Mighty Kindreds, I have heard your voices.
You have spoken to me with blessing.
Pour out the waters with your gifts, I pray,
And Kindreds, grant me the waters.

Gifts of [the omen], come to me.
And Kindreds, hallow these waters.

In this vessel flow the Waters of Life,
Blessed by the Dawn and the Earth,
And by all the Kindreds.
I drink these sacred waters,
And join in the magic of the cosmos.
Behold, the Waters of Life.

[drink]

Workings: Flame of the Season [Hearth Keeper Essential]

I light the Flame of Thanksgiving, both on my shrine and in my heart.

[light the candle for the Flame of the Season]

Bolstered by the blessings of the Gods through the Waters of Life, and in this time of Autumn when the Earth is full, but the season of darkness approaches, I give thanks for all I have. As this Flame of the Season burns, I remember to act with integrity, for acting in truth is a form of thanksgiving, honouring and moving within the cycles of the Earth, Moon, and Sun.

As a Hearth Keeper, I have promised to live a pagan life. I learn and remember the ways of our Ancestors, and carry forward these ways today. I am thankful for their knowledge passed on to me, and thankful for the love and reciprocity I share with the Earth Mother and all the Kindred. I am thankful for all things.

*[you may add your own words as you see fit,
or simply reflect on what you are thankful for]*

Thanking the Beings

O beloved Earth Mother,
Kindreds all, Gods, Ancestors, and Land-Spirits,
I thank you for your presence, and for sharing your blessings as the seasons change.

Closing the Gates / Hearth Goddess

This holy fire has transformed our offerings,
As this rite has transformed us in love and wisdom.
The Gates are now closed, but the magic I have done stays with me.
Hearth Goddess, I thank you for your blessings.

Thanking the Earth Mother

Earth Mother, even as I go from here,
With each step we take, I remember you,
Our foundation of love and life.

Closing Prayer

As my Ancestors did, so I do now, continuing the old ways for new days.
I go now in peace and fellowship.