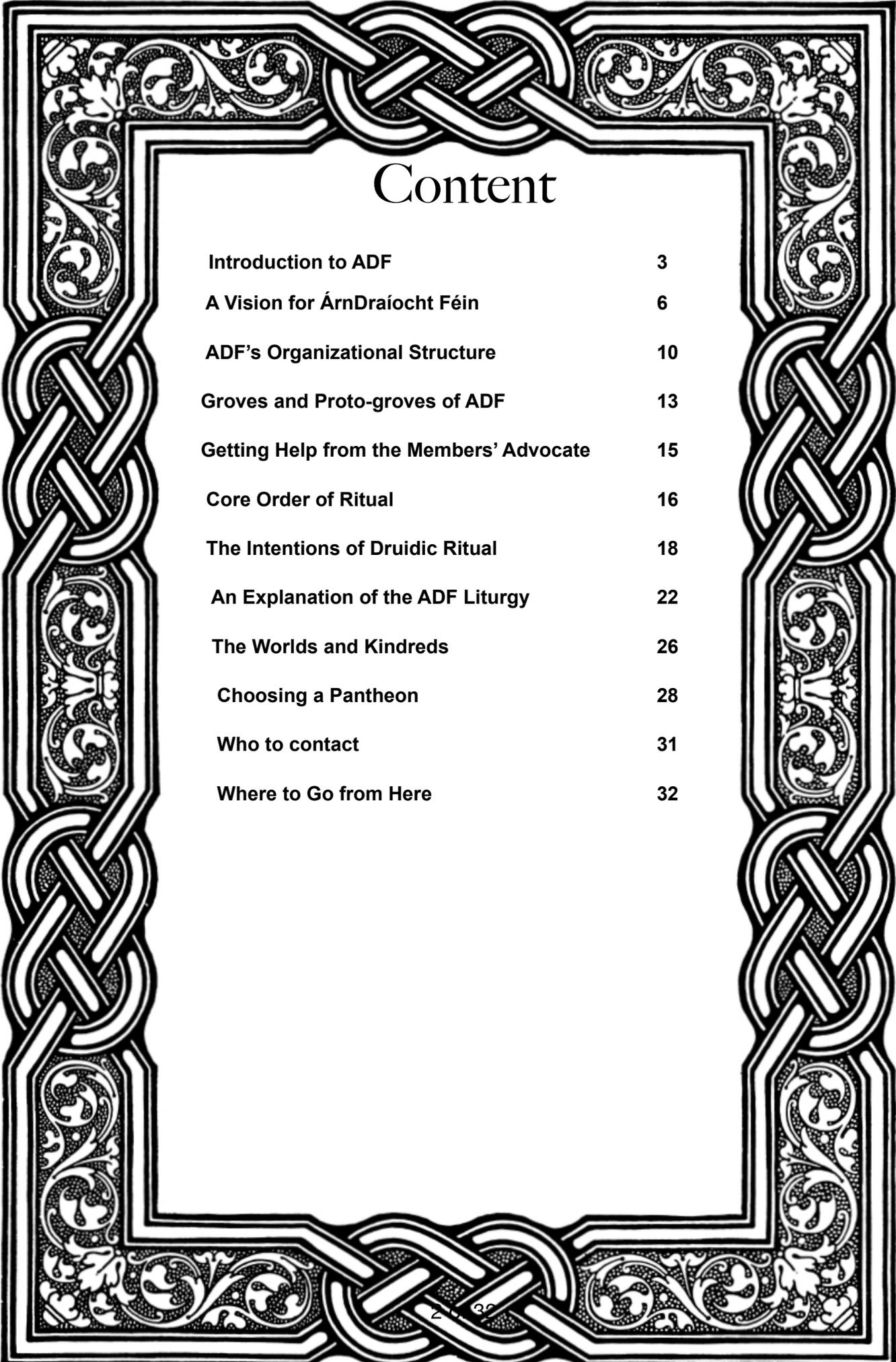


# The ADF Membership Guide



by *The Mother Grove, ADF*

*Sixth Edition, 2022*



# Content

<b>Introduction to ADF</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A Vision for ÁrnDraíocht Féin</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ADF's Organizational Structure</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Groves and Proto-groves of ADF</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Getting Help from the Members' Advocate</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Core Order of Ritual</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>The Intentions of Druidic Ritual</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>An Explanation of the ADF Liturgy</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>The Worlds and Kindreds</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Choosing a Pantheon</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Who to contact</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Where to Go from Here</b>	<b>32</b>

by rev. Amber Doty

# Introduction to ADF

## Welcome

Welcome to Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc (ADF)! Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your spiritual journey. We hope this guide assists you in learning about ADF and what we have to offer, while also providing you with the tools and resources necessary to be successful. The information in this guide has come directly from other ADF members, so we hope you find it helpful.

Let's jump right in with a few Frequently Asked Questions:

### What is ADF?

Ár nDraíocht Féin is an independent Neopagan Druid church, originally founded in 1983. We are registered in the United States as a tax-exempt Nonprofit Corporation (501c3). ADF began as a network of independent scholars interested in the research of ancient Indo-European religious practices and has grown to have members on six continents and in countries all across the globe. We strive to provide a framework for public pagan worship and scholarship. Our vision is that the Deities and Spirits are served in the modern world through:

- Public worship with a skilled priesthood
- Accessible religious training for all
- A spiritual relationship with the Earth
- Sustainable Pagan institutions
- A flourishing family and community Pagan culture

ADF members are working to revive the best aspects of the Paleopagan beliefs and practices from the ancient Indo-European people adapted to modern scientific, ecological, and cultural contexts.

### What does Ár nDraíocht Féin mean, and how is it pronounced?

Ár nDraíocht Féin is modern Irish for "Our Own Druidry". It is pronounced arn REEokht fane, however, most of our members simply use the acronym ADF.

### What is Indo-European?

Indo-European is a term that defines a large family of languages spoken throughout Europe and Asia as far north as India. This grouping includes: Albanian, Anatolian, Armenian, Baltic, Celtic, Germanic, Hellenic, Indo-Iranian, Italic, Slavic and Tocharian languages, and their descendants. Indo-European is a purely language based categorization and is not a cultural or racial concept.

### Why do you use the term "Druid"?

The simplest answer is that we look to the ancient Druids for inspiration for our own spiritual path and build upon their work and ideals. The ancient Druids fulfilled many roles within their communities. They were the spiritual leaders of their people, the wise-ones, the law-makers, and a living library of art and science. They were the seers, mediators, and healers. We strive to uphold those ideals ourselves through spirituality, scholarship, and community.

### What do ADF members believe?

ADF as an organization does not have any set dogma, orthodoxy, or required shared beliefs. Instead, our focus is upon shared practices (orthopraxy) and values. Our practice is based around the idea of reciprocity: we give our gifts to the Deities and Spirits and in return we receive blessings from them. Public ADF rituals do have a specific format requirement, known as the Core Order of Ritual, which is further described later in this guide. However, there are no requirements for your personal practice outside of those public rites.

**We value:**

- Commonality of ritual practice
- Honoring the Earth Mother
- Scholarship and research
- Reciprocity with the Deities and Spirits
- Respect for others through living our virtues
- Service to the community, land, and the Kindreds.

While we do not have a standard set of beliefs that are shared between our members, we do have specific expectations for behavior from our members. Ár nDraiocht Fein is committed to upholding all members in a warm and welcoming environment. We are dedicated to providing a safe space for all of our members no matter their race, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, or experiences. ADF seeks to build a community that encourages, understands, appreciates, and accepts diversity. We work proactively to cultivate an environment where differences are embraced and the diversity of human expression is valued. ADF believes that our community is stronger when all members have a voice and are encouraged to contribute. Additional expectations for member behavior can be found in our Code of Conduct

<https://www.adf.org/adf-code-conduct.html>

and Moderation Policy

<https://www.adf.org/forums/moderation.html>

**What can I do as an ADF member?**

As a member of ADF, you gain access to a network of hundreds of other members who share your interest in modern Druidry. You have the option to join our mailing lists, subgroups, and members-only social media groups.

Prior to joining ADF, you had access to the Hearthkeeper's Way program, which allows people to align at least part of their practice with Our Druidry by devoting themselves to welcoming the Deities and Spirits to their hearthfire and integrating neopaganism into your daily life.

Now, as a member, you also gain access to the Dedicant Program (DP). The DP is an introductory course that can be completed in as little as a year, which encourages you to explore your spiritual path from the perspective as an ADF Druid, whether you are brand new to Paganism or have been Pagan for decades. Once you've completed the Dedicant Program, you are welcome to apply to any of the other Study Programs that ADF has to offer.

If you are near a local grove or protogrove, you can also join them in their rituals and community service projects. If there are none near you, after six months of membership you are eligible to start your own Protogrove.

ADF members are also given the opportunity to vote for regional and organizational leadership in the Annual Election, including members of the Mother Grove and Regional Druids. Each member is given one vote upon joining, and then gains one additional vote for each year of consecutive membership, up to ten total votes.

Our website has a wealth of information, and we know that can be overwhelming, so below are a few popular items to help you get started.

You can find rituals and articles about liturgy here: <https://www.adf.org/rituals/index.html>

You can gain access to our lists, forums, and social media information here:

<https://www.adf.org/forums/index.html>

If English is not your primary language, we have mailing lists for members to communicate in German (adf-deutsch), Spanish (adf-espanol), French (adf-francais), and Portuguese (adf-portugues). We are always willing to add more language lists on demand if we have members who are interested in them.

You can subscribe to all of our mailing lists, including our language specific lists, by clicking [Subscribe to Lists](#) on this page:

<https://www.adf.org/members/forums/lists/index.html>

You can check out our Study Programs, which begin with the Dedicant Path here:

<https://www.adf.org/members/new/training.html>

You can see any upcoming events and festivals here:

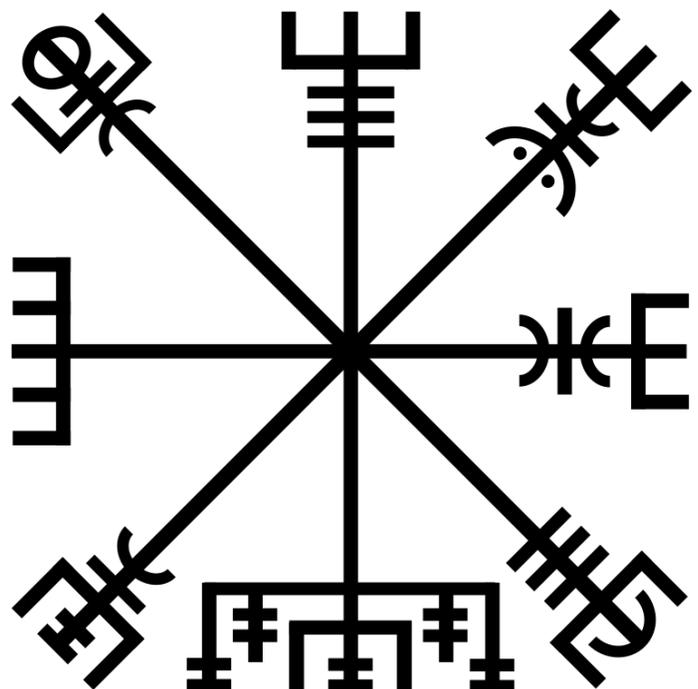
<https://www.adf.org/events/index.html>

You can also find all of this information and more on the Getting Started in ADF webpage:

<https://www.adf.org/members/new/index.html>

We understand that this is a lot of information, and it can all seem daunting. Hopefully, the information provided here will be helpful to you as a member, but we also know that a guide cannot replace communication with real people. There are many people in ADF Leadership who are willing to help. Please feel free to reach out to other members, your Regional Druid, or the Members Advocate for guidance and advice.

Thank you again for joining ADF. Blessings to you on your journey!



by rev. Jean DRUM Pagano

# A Vision for Ár nDraíocht Féin

ADF's Vision is described best in five lines:

*Public Temple Worship with a skilled  
priesthood*

*Accessible religious training for all*

*A spiritual relationship with the Earth*

*Sustainable pagan institutions*

*A flourishing family and community Pagan  
culture*

I would like to share this vision with you and what ADF is doing to make the vision a reality.

## **Public Temple Worship with a skilled priesthood**

In the early Vision of ADF, articulated almost forty years ago, it was believed that one day we would have a temple in major cities in North America and eventually around the world. This vision was a little more challenging to realize, mainly because brick-and-mortar buildings take a lot to maintain, not only in capital costs, but in human participation. It became clear early on that Druids preferred to congregate around a fire in a forested or park-like setting than within a building with four walls. Perhaps a bumper sticker I have states in best: *"Nature is my church"*.

Nevertheless, we currently have many Groves and Protogroves (congregations) that hold public temple worship on ADF High Days, namely the equinoxes and solstices, and the cross-quarter days in between. These rites are by nature open to the public and all are welcome. Congregations that perform High Day rites do them according to the ADF Core Order of Ritual, which is a set of steps that are the same regardless of where the rite occurs. Several years ago, while visiting a Protogrove in Brazil, I had the pleasure of attending a

High Day rite, which was offered in Portuguese. While I do not understand much Portuguese, I was able to easily follow along because the Core Order of Ritual was followed.

The Core Order of Ritual, much like the Standard Liturgical Order which preceded it, was the product of the ADF Clergy Council. While not every congregation has an ADF Priest, it was the Clergy that developed and refined the Core Order and shared it with the membership. While a priest might not always be available, one can be found either via the ADF website, the e-lists and forums, and through social media.

The arrival of COVID-19 on the global scene changed a lot of how-we-practiced, since the ability to meet in person was not only severely curtailed, but also discouraged. This led to the advent of Zoom and Zoom-like rituals in which members from all over the world could attend rituals offered my congregations not only in their own city, but throughout the globe. Technology and need made ritual attendance a virtual reality. This virtual platform helped keep our congregations safe, which creating opportunities for individuals that normally could not attend rites in person into a reality.

We have also seen the creation of our first Virtual Grove, which brings people together through electronic media from not only different cities, but different time zones and continents. Our vision of Public Temple Worship grew from one in major cities into one wherever Internet-connectivity can be achieved. Druidry and the practices thereunder have become a global reality.

## **Accessible religious training for all**

One of the primary reasons to join ADF is to become a member of like-minded religious community. Since ADF is an orthopraxic religion, it is best if everyone is aware of *how* and *what* we practice. Our Dedicant Program has long been the entryway into our many study programs. The Dedicant Program is a year-long study program that covers 11 important topics that make up Our Own Druidry, namely:

The Virtues  
The High Days, described  
Book Reports  
Home Shrine  
Understanding the Two Powers  
Mental Discipline  
The High Days, attended  
The Three Kindred  
Building a Hearth-based Spiritual Practice  
Nature Awareness  
The Dedicant Oath

Historically, about 10 -15% of our members complete the Dedicant Program. While we feel that this program has always been the proper introduction to ADF, a new program entitled “The Hearthkeeper’s Way” was developed, based on an idea from Rev. Ian Corrigan, our second Archdruid.

The Hearthkeeper’s Way walks an individual through the process of setting up a Home Hearth, or a place of local practice. This could be a practice for one person, for a couple, for a family, or for any group of people who have a common practice and are not organized into a Grove, a Protogrove, a Study Group, or a Prison Worship Group. This methodology exposes ADF’s orthopraxy by discussing the various components of our practice, including the beings that we honor, the realms and hallows that we recognize, and the Kindreds and Spirits that populate our world and our worship. Examples of rituals, prayers, High Days, and Moons, as well as various other rites are presented in an easy to read and easy to practice manner.

What makes the Hearthkeeper’s Way accessible to all is that it is available to everyone, not just ADF members, but to non-members alike. An individual can look to the Hearthkeeper’s Way as an introduction to what it is to be an ADF Druid. It is all there, easily accessible in about 100 pages and all for free.

For those individuals that wish to continue their studies beyond the Dedicant Path, the Clergy Training is available to those who wish to become priests. The Generalist Study Program and the Initiate Program are available for those who wish to continue learning about ADF and get a more in-depth

look at our practices. Guild, Kin, and Order study programs help to further one’s knowledge in specified programs of study.

ADF has developed on-demand modules, most notably a Consent Culture Course that is available to all our members. This course was developed in-house, and it is an exceptional program that highlights two important concepts in our work: hospitality and consent. I committed myself to providing on-demand courses, and I expect there to be more just like this one.

Finally, ADF has purchased a subscription to Overdrive, an electronic lending library, made possible by a generous bequest from a former member. Overdrive allows our members to check out books electronically that will help them complete not only the Dedicant Program but help with other study programs as well. The cost to our members? Merely the cost of membership.

### **A spiritual relationship with the Earth**

The Earth Mother is first mentioned in RDNA literature in 1963. The Earth Mother in various forms, is found in the lore of many hearth cultures. For RDNA, it was to recognize the Earth Mother’s presence in the past while also highlighting the importance of environmentalism in the modern age.

The Earth Mother is recognized first in ADF Liturgy because she represents beginnings, endings, and beginning again. We come from the Earth Mother, we live by the many treasures that the Earth Mother gives us – her bounty allows us to live, to thrive, and to survive. She is our foundation – we stand upon her shoulders as we journey through our lives in this middle world. When our time in lifetime comes to an end, we return to her once again, awaiting rebirth.

We give thanks to the Earth Mother, first and foremost, for all that we already have. She gives to all her children. Here, in the middle realm, the Earth Mother is not only the centre of our physical world, but she is also a fundamental component of our spiritual life.

Life, without the Earth Mother and her bounty, would be neither possible nor sustainable.

*\*Ghosti*, or the concept of reciprocity, is one of the fundamental considerations in our reverence for the Earth Mother. *\*Ghosti* is a reconstructed Proto-Indo-European word that means being a good guest and a good host. It is the essence of reciprocity.

The Earth, as the Earth Mother, provides an incredible bounty, not only in the food in which we are given, but in the beauty that we witness every day. This beauty often causes a sense of wonder and awe, and it is these feelings that arouse such a strong religious feeling in us all. For all these things that we are given, it is customary and reasonable for us to feel profound thanks and gratitude for these many gifts.

One of the three Kindred that we honour in each of our rites are the Spirits of Nature. These are the very spirits that inhabit this middle realm with us. They are the creatures of fur, feather, flesh, and scale that live in this world, along with all the plants that surround us. It includes the places that we find as magical, such as natural settings whose beauty is much more than just a pretty place, but a location of beauty, wonder, and awe.

We are not set apart from nature – we are a part of it. The Earth Mother and the Sprits of Nature surround us with all that we need including the opportunity to express our thanks through the practice of hospitality as a good guest and a good steward.

### **Sustainable pagan institutions**

ADF has been around for more than three decades. We have seen six Archdruids in this time, and the path of succession and election has worked successfully through nine Archdruid elections. Our Board of Directors, called the Mother Grove, has positions which are included in our annual election process such as Archdruid, Vice Archdruid, Secretary, Non-Officer Director, Chief of the Council of Regional Druids, and Chief of the Council of Senior Druids. ADF has had people step down from elected positions, had individuals

involved in recall elections, and had Board positions replaced through a democratic process supported by the ADF By Laws.

Some of our Groves and Protogroves have been around for decades and have gone through several leadership changes in that time. The ability for such subgroups and institutions to weather leadership changes is an important measurement of sustainability.

Our Guilds and our Orders, which are the home of many of our Study Programs, continue to provide opportunities for learning, once the Dedicant Path has been completed. While some guilds are more active than others, the opportunity for learning remains. There is a wealth of Bardic content that has been produced over the years by the Bardic Guild, and this information resides on the ADF website. There are years' worth of yearbooks from the Liturgist Guild which captures a wide cross-section of liturgy from Groves, Protogroves, Prison Worship Groups, and solitary members.

Our weekly solitary rites are now in their third year. Ritual opportunities are offered on an annual basis and the attendance at these rites continues to grow and attract members from around the world. These solitary rites provided the nexus for our first virtual grove, which is the first of many to come.

With new rules recently instituted by the Mother Grove and administered by the Council of Lore, subgroup viability is measured on a quarterly based upon reporting by the heads of these groups. Elections are tracked and held annual, assuring a smooth transition in leadership among these many groups.

Finally, the Clergy Council is now in its third decade and is represented by priests from varied backgrounds and locations. We currently have four retired priests and have developed a methodology to allow priests to retire and even return to active service if they feel called to do so.

From the broader organization to the smaller groups contained therein, ADF continues to provide sustainable institutions to its members throughout the world.

## **A flourishing family and community Pagan culture**

In the early days of ADF, many if not most of us came to Druidry from other religious paths, most often the path of our parents. As people joined ADF, many brought their children to ADF rites in their Groves, Protogroves, and in their own homes. As time went by, those children had children and we now have instances of three generations of ADF members in a Grove, Protogrove, or Hearth.

For some children, the way of Druidry is the path they grew up with. There is no carryover from other faiths or belief systems, but they are instead brought up in the virtues and in the practice of hospitality. This is not to say that others who came from different backgrounds are in anyway deficient, but we celebrate the traditions of Druidry that bind us together.

ADF has recently created an on-demand Consent Culture course to help protect our individuals and their families. This Consent Culture course is available to all members of the organization and is available online. A flourishing family is a safe family. Our leadership, from Mother Grove members, to Clergy, to Regional Druids, through to Senior Druids and Grove Organizers, are background checked to ensure the safety of the groups in which families may participate.

ADF recently created the Hearthkeeper's Way, a method in which individuals or small family-based or community-based groups may practice together, without the reporting requirements of a Grove or Protogrove. The Hearthkeeper's Way is a free program, not only for our membership, but to anyone who wishes to follow it. It includes practices, prayers, liturgies, from High Days to Moons in a complete practice to acquaint and orient anyone who wishes to follow in our ways. It is an excellent way for individuals and small groups to try out the ADF-style of Druidry before joining.

The ADF YouTube channel allows individuals to see a wide variety of videos that illustrate the practices of ADF Druids. When I first joined ADF, there was no way for a solitary member to truly understand what an ADF rite

looked like. Now, through the magic of the internet and YouTube, it is available to anyone with internet connectivity.

Our weekly chats and online rituals provide a safe place for individuals to come and share their questions, their ideas, and their time, with other ADF Druids. Our electronic meeting places are moderated, thereby making even virtual places safe for individuals and families alike.

These are our visions and the ways in which we are bringing the vision to life. We strive to find new ways to extend this vision to larger groups of people so that they may share in our Druid fellowship.



by rev. Amber Doty

# ADF's Organizational Structure

ADF has a diverse, slightly complicated structure, so we wanted to give some brief information about each type of council and subgroup. Additional information can be found on the ADF website here:

<https://www.adf.org/about/org/structure.html>

## Councils

### Mother Grove

ADF is led by a group of elected and appointed officers called the Mother Grove. This group acts as the Board of Directors and maintains the general management of business affairs, policies, and procedures. This group is made up of the following officers: Archdruid, Vice Archdruid, Secretary, Treasurer, Member's Advocate, Chief of the CoSD, Chief of the CoRD, Administrator, and four Non-Officer Directors.

### Council of Regional Druids (CoRD)

The CoRD is a council of the 11 elected Regional Druids and their Deputies. This group is responsible for interacting with the membership in their region and acting as a liaison between members and leadership as needed.

### Council of Senior Druids (CoSD)

The CoSD is a council of all past and present Senior Druids and current Grove Organizers which are the leaders of ADF Groves and Protogroves. This group is responsible for the formation and oversight of Groves and Protogroves. There are two subcommittees of this council:

- Grove Organizing Committee (GOC)
  - This committee ensures groves and protogroves are meeting the minimum standards of reporting, membership, etc.
- Grove Coordinating Committee (GCC)
  - This committee reviews and approves protogrove and grove applications.

### Council of Lore (CoL)

The CoL is a council of all current Subgroup Chiefs and Preceptors of approved study programs. They approve and oversee all ADF study programs, and govern the ADF Subgroups. This council is overseen by the ADF Preceptor.

## Subgroups

In addition to our leadership councils, ADF has a number of different subgroups within the organization, focused upon different activities, interests, and practices.

### Guilds

Guilds are subgroups that are based upon building and developing a specific set of skills and applying these skills in a spiritual practice. They also provide opportunities to learn and train in a specific area.

### Kins

Kins are subgroups that focus on exploring a specific hearth culture within the Indo-European tree. Kins develop culturally specific spiritual traditions within ADF and can help develop liturgy for that culture.

### Special Interest Groups (SIG)

Special Interest Groups are subgroups that are focused on a specific hobby, language, or lifestyle.

## Orders

Orders are a subgroup that provide rituals and training to ADF members in a specific Indo-European Mythic or symbolic complex. They maintain training programs focused on their respective subjects.

## ADF Local

While much of the activity in ADF happens online, there are also local options for members to participate within ADF. Those options are described below.

### Protogroves

Protogroves are the first type of local congregations. They require one ADF member and are expected to host eight (8) public events per year.

### Groves

Groves are the second type of local congregations. They meet regularly to celebrate high days and provide places of community and learning. They require three ADF members and host eight (8) public high days/year.

### Solitaries

Solitary members make up the largest portion of the ADF population. While group rites are an important part of ADF, individual hearths and homes have a vital role in Our Druidry.

## ADF Study Programs

ADF is an organization that emphasizes scholarship and takes an academic approach to our practice. Currently the organization offers numerous study programs on various topics. Below are the different options for study programs within ADF.

### Hearth Keeper's Way

The Hearth Keeper's Way is a method of worship for the folk of Our Druidry. To become a Hearth Keeper is to devote yourself to the basic work of druidry - to welcome the gods and spirits to your hearthfire, to keep the holy days simply, and to integrate paganism into your daily life. Being a Hearth Keeper is about keeping the flames of piety active for your

Hearth. Unlike our other study programs, you do not have to complete the Dedicant Program prior to joining the Hearth Keeper's Way. This program is also available to people outside of ADF to participate in.

### Dedicant Program

The Dedicant Program is the introductory study program available to ADF members. This program takes approximately one year to complete, and is intended to acquaint members with the ways of Our Druidry, including the 9 virtues, High Day information and attendance, book reviews, home shrines, meditation, nature awareness, the three Kindreds, and hearth practice. This program must currently be completed before you can submit any of the other ADF study programs. While we do not have translations of the Dedicant Program completed at this time, it can be submitted for review in English, German, or French.

### Organization Wide Study Programs

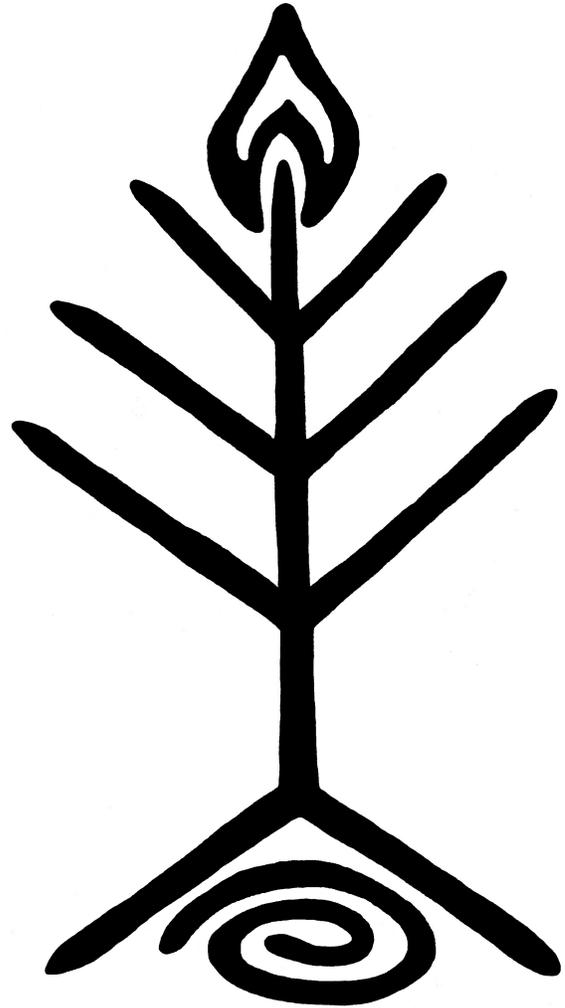
There are three study programs that are offered to all members after completion of the Dedicant Program: the Generalist Study Program, Initiates Program, and Clergy Training Programs.

- **Generalist Study Program:** Provides understanding of the history of Druidry and ADF, comparative mythology, and cultural focus. It is an academic program with some spiritual and religious work.
- **Initiates Program:** Expanded training that involves more spiritual and action based practice, including courses in divination, liturgy, magic, and trance. This program focuses on individual work and prepares participants for Initiation.
- **Clergy Training Program:** Training program to help establish educated, experienced, and well-rounded clergy. This study program contains a preliminary set of courses, followed by three full circles of work for ordination, consecration, and elevation.

## Subgroup Study Programs

There are several subgroups of ADF that offer study programs to their members, including Guilds, Orders, and Kins.

- **Guilds:** The following guilds all offer study programs for their members to allow them to develop the skills and interests that the guild focus is centered around.
  - Artisans
  - Bardic
  - Brewers
  - Liturgists
  - Magicians
  - Naturalists
  - Scholars
  - Seers
  - Warriors
  
- **Orders:** The following orders also offer study programs for their members to focus study on their mythic or symbolic complex.
  - Demeter and Eleusinian Order
  - Order of Manannan
  - Order of Raven and Falcon
  
- **Kins:** The following kins offer study programs focused upon their specific hearth culture and the practices and customs associated with them.
  - Kin of Fire and Ice (Norse)



By Brian Larter

# Groves and Proto-groves of ADF

ADF is made up of a diverse group that reaches across the globe, it brings people together to form conversant groups that share in our belief system.

Proto-groves and Groves are one of the most important aspects of ADF; they represent our form of worship as well as our public image. These are groups of individuals who meet regularly and celebrate rituals, enhance learning opportunities and participate in other community activities together at least 8 times a year.

At the heart of ADF, groves/proto-groves provide support for worship and learning as well as community connections to facilitate growth.

The number of active groves and proto-groves within ADF varies from year to year, an updated list can be found here:

<https://www.adf.org/groups/groves/index.html>

## What is a Proto-grove vs Grove:

### Proto-grove:

Proto-groves are the start of a Grove and have the help and support of the Council of Senior Druids, they also may have access to a mentor by request. A Grove Organizer, the leader of a Proto-grove would have input into the policies presented at the Council of Senior Druids. They can also raise questions or concerns and provide solutions to the Council of Senior Druids. A Proto-grove often is formed when three individuals come to gather with the goal of forming a Grove within ADF. This is a process that requires patience and dedication as it may take several years.

A Proto-grove should be thought of as a probationary congregation of ADF. A Proto-grove may be formed by one or two voting members in a given location who are attempting to build a Grove. Proto-grove status is given to most who request it, provided one member has belonged to ADF for at least six months and there is a publishable (secular or religious) name and a box number (either post office or mailing service) to use as their official mailing address. Currently, a group may remain a Proto-grove for up to three years before being required to apply for status as a Provisionally Chartered Grove. As a probationary group, Proto-groves have fewer required activities than Groves, but also slightly less autonomy to designate officers or approve and amend bylaws.

### Grove:

Groves differ in that they have been established for at least six months and completed the above mentioned tasks. They have a good amount of autonomy, and they provide support for their members and the community at large. A Senior Druid of a Grove will be elected by the grove's membership and be tasked to participate within the Senior Druid Council of ADF. The Senior Druid is tasked with communicating between their Grove and the ADF leadership for purposes including the sharing of international news, relaying concerns, voting needs and as a means of representing their Grove's ideals.

An ADF Grove may be formed by any group of three or more current voting members of ADF who (1) live in the same geographic area, (2) gather at least once a month for activities that promote the practice of Neopagan Druidism within the context of ADF, (3) hold no fewer than eight public rituals a year, and (4) are chartered by ADF Grove Organizing Committee on behalf of the Mother Grove as a local congregation.

## Further considerations

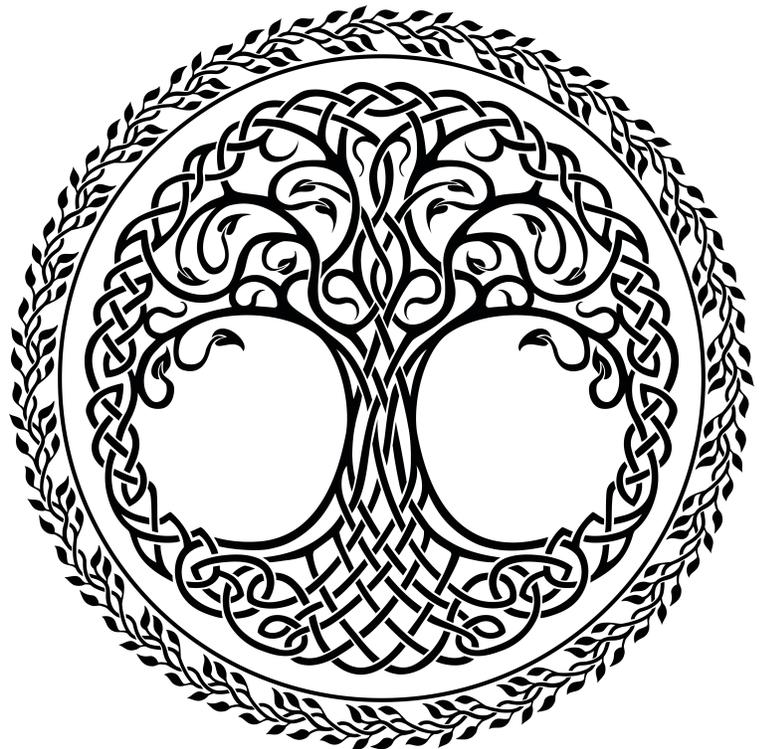
Both Groves and Proto-groves serve as the front line of ADF's image in the Pagan community, and it is from contact with Groves and Proto-groves that most people decide they're interested in joining ADF.

ADF is both an international fellowship and a church recognized by the United States government. Like all national church organizations, ADF has local congregations to serve its members. As stated in the [Subgroup Charter Manual](#), these local congregations of ADF are known as "Groves," and function legally as "subgroups" of the central organization. For their protection, and that of ADF as a whole, certain minimal rules (outlined in the ADF Subgroup Charter Manual and the [bylaws of the Council of Senior Druids](#)) need to be followed.

Two types of charters may be issued to Groves. Provisional Charters are issued to those Groves whose organizers have given satisfactory answers on the Senior Druids' Questionnaire and for which three current ADF members are prepared to serve as officers and have properly filled out and notarized the Provisional Charter Request. Full Charters may be issued to Groves that (1) have been in existence at least two years after receiving their Provisional Charter, (2) have at least 9 current voting members of ADF in the congregation, and (3) have at least one member holding [valid clergy credentials](#) from ADF.

All local groves of ADF are entitled to the maximum amount of autonomy consistent with the survival, identity, and well-being of ADF as a whole. (ADF By-Laws 13:2:1)

ADF was conceived as a "Third Wave" (see Alvin Toffler's [book of that title](#)) or "postmodern/post-industrial" religion. This means, among many other things, that the intention is to allow each Grove to make their own mistakes and innovations, with the expectation that the fellowship as a whole will learn and grow as a result.



By Mike Kaan

# Getting Help from the Member's Advocate

ADF is an international organization with nearly 1200 members and over 60 local groves and protogroves. To handle all of the members' needs we have had to set up standard procedures—methods for serving the majority that can sometimes seem insensitive to individuals' unique circumstances. The office of the Members' Advocate was invented to help you when you are having difficulty with our "bureaucracy," as well as to represent the membership at large to the rest of the Mother Grove.

The governance of ADF is pretty informal most of the time. Most decisions are made by consensus among the Officers or Directors involved in a given situation, and the opinions of the members are always given significant weight. But we can't solve a problem if we don't know that it exists, whether it's emotional or organizational.

If you're having serious difficulties with an Officer of ADF, a local grove organizer, or just the ADF "system" of doing things, the person to contact is the Members' Advocate. To get the fastest and most effective help, here's what you need to do when you contact him/her:

Tell your story clearly. Particularly include: When did the situation you are concerned about begin (at least this episode)? Who else is involved in the problem? What did they do to you? What did you do to them?

Tell what you have done about it: Who else have you asked for help? What did they tell you? Did they suggest anything for you to do? Did you do it? What was the result?

Giving the Members' Advocate all of this information will make it as easy as possible for her/him to actually help you. Be assured that we will listen to accusations of serious misconduct by ADF representatives or other members, but we will not take anyone's "side" until we actually have some evidence in hand and/or a report by a genuinely neutral third party. We will take steps to protect people from possible harm in situations where dangerous or illegal behavior has been alleged, but we won't necessarily believe an accusation simply because it has been made, no matter how controversial or politically (in) correct the topic of the accusation. Someday we may have our own Brehon Court using Neopagan Common Law to help us judge controversial situations, but for now we muddle through as best we can.

However, don't feel that you can only contact the Members' Advocate when a concern is this grave. Her/his job is to represent everyone to the Mother Grove, even on matters that might seem trivial. So feel free to share your opinions about ADF policies and procedures with her/him. If you had a bright idea at a grove meeting that was (you feel) unfairly quashed, pass it along to the Members' Advocate. If you think that ADF needs to be doing some thing specific that it isn't doing, tell the Members' Advocate. If you think the new ADF T-shirts should be printed in pink ink on chartreuse cloth, if you think we need more materials for solitary Druids, or if you want to know what the Mother Grove intends to do about the annual mistletoe harvest—tell the Members' Advocate!

You may contact the Members' Advocate at [ADF-Members-Advocate@ADF.ORG](mailto:ADF-Members-Advocate@ADF.ORG) or through the main ADF Office whose address is given elsewhere in this Guide.

# ADF Core Order of Ritual

As we mentioned previously in this guide, ADF is an organization that is focused on orthopraxy (shared practice) as opposed to orthodoxy (shared belief). One of the shared practices that ties us together are our rituals, which follow our Core Order of Ritual (COoR). The COoR was implemented for three primary reasons. 1) It establishes what makes a ritual an ADF ritual. 2) It sets the sequence that our steps should be performed. 3) It defines what an ADF ritual is not. The expectation is that a Druid from one area could attend a ritual in another place and still be able to follow along and participate in the ritual because of the unique, consistent ritual structure.

The information below describes the COoR is intended to be used for all public ADF rituals. Each of the headings listed in **bold** are required actions. Certain steps below may also contain suggestions for how to perform that specific step and those will be identified as “may include.” These are simply suggestions for how that step may be fulfilled. Additionally, some modifications to the COoR are expected, including the re-ordering of some steps. Any items that must be done in a specific order will be noted in the steps themselves.

1. **Initiating the Rite:**
  - May Include:
    - Musical Signal
    - Opening Prayer
    - Processional
    - Establishing the Group Mind
2. **Purification** – This must take place prior to Opening the Gates
3. **Honoring the Earth Mother**
4. **Statement of Purpose**

5. **(Re)Creating the Cosmos**
  - *Must include:*
    - A triadic cosmos
    - Acknowledgement of Three Worlds and/or Realms
    - Fire
6. **Opening the Gates**
  - *Must include:*
    - Gatekeeper
7. **Inviting the Three Kindreds**
8. **Key Offering**
  - May Include:
    - Invitation of Beings of Occasion
    - Seasonal Customs
    - Praise Offerings
9. **Prayer of Sacrifice**
10. **Omen**
11. **Calling for the Blessings**
12. **Hallowing the Blessings**
13. **Affirming the Blessings**
14. **Workings (Optional)**
15. **Thanking the Beings**
16. **Closing the Gates**
17. **Thanking the Earth Mother**
18. **Closing the Rite**

There are also several optional steps that may be added to this ritual structure, which can be found below:

- Acknowledging the Outdwellers
- Honoring the Hearth Deity
- Appeals for Inspiration
- Piacular Offerings

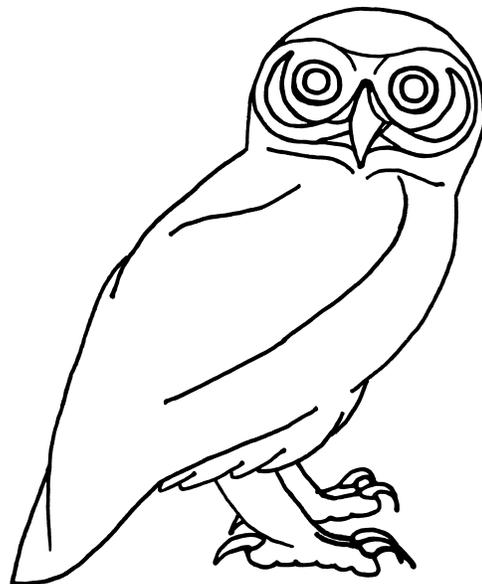
While we do see some variability within our ritual structure, there are a few very specific items that are NOT allowed or included in any ADF rituals, the list of which can be found below:

- Use of the Four Elements, or Elemental Cross Symbolism
- Casting Circles
- Calling Watchtowers or Elemental Guardians
- Dualistic themes of the Lord and Lady
- Acknowledgement of one divine being with power over all
- Blood Sacrifices
- Non-Indo-European mythic and deity motifs

Most of these items are excluded primarily connected to our Indo-European focus. The first 5 items on the list describe ritual parts that were established in modern Paganism and not from Indo-European practices. The sixth item forbids blood sacrifices, including animal sacrifices that were part of ancient rituals. We do not have any interest in reviving this practice and therefore forbid any blood sacrifices, including offering a few drops of your own blood.

Please remember that there are no requirements for your personal practice outside of public ADF rites specifically, so you're welcome to use as much, or as little of this ritual structure as you'd like. For more information and examples of each step of the Core Order of Ritual, you can view our Core Order of Ritual Tutorial here:

<https://www.adf.org/members/training/dedicant-path/articles/coortutorial/index.html>



by rev. Ian Corrigan

# The Intentions of Druidic Ritual

We begin our exposition of the ways of Druidry with the intentions of our rites. By this we mean both the limited and specific goals of any one rite, as well as the overarching meaning that is present in the Order of Ritual itself. Every rite performed in this Order partakes of three meta-processes of spiritual intent.

## **Spiritual Intentions of Druid Rites**

### **To Rectify and Empower the Souls of the Worshippers**

The most consistent and personal result of sincere participation in ritual is the creation or strengthening of the patterns of our spiritual cosmos in the souls of individual worshippers. We need not enter into a discussion of whether this pattern exists innately in all people or whether we must create it there through our work. In either case the pattern will be strengthened and deepened by repeated meditation and ritual enactment.

The lore of Indo-European Paganism clearly assumes that the Inner Worlds, Otherworlds or Spirit Lands are the original models that predated our manifest world and from which it draws its reality. When we make our simple physical images of cosmic order, our Sacred Grove, we draw these Inner realities closer to the manifest world. When we in turn meditate on these symbols, recreating them in vision in ourselves, they become a kind of map that allows a clearer, more ordered understanding of the contents of our minds and hearts.

As in most of the Pagan revival, Druidry is not focused exclusively on the Light or the Heavens, nor do we value the Inner or Spiritual world more highly than the manifest world or the contents of our souls. We understand the Inner to be integral with the physical, and the physical to be as holy as the Inner. We use ritual to manifest the Powers of

the Inner in our common world. By using our art, craft, and skill we create physical and spiritual events that reflect and manifest Inner realities.

Once these Inner realities are manifested in this way, they can have effect on much larger groups and whole communities, in the process being graven in the souls of many more worshippers. Thus is the Pattern of the Worlds translated from the Inner through Art to the physical, and into the souls of the folk. When a Pagan successfully integrates these patterns, they act as a kind of realignment for the mind and heart. Even if we assume that these patterns are inborn in us all, it is clear that the stresses of everyday life in our secular culture can leave us uncentered and distressed. Thoughtful, integral participation in ritual is one of the key answers to this modern alienation.

### **To Serve the Gods, Goddesses, and Spirits**

In contrast with much of Paganism, our Druidry tends to adopt a theology that views the million Powers described in tales and lore as independent, living entities. We reject, in general, theories that view the Powers as projections of our own minds, or as thought forms created by human worship or as archetypes in the collective unconscious. Instead, we prefer the traditional uniting of the nature of the Gods and Goddesses, Spirits, and of humanity. We can describe this uniting as having three parts. First, humankind are Powers in and of themselves. We have innate abilities to shape thoughts, words and things just as do the Powers, and are capable of magic even without their aid.

The greatest of us can be the equal of nearly any being, and all of us are able to exercise a degree of spiritual acuity according to our talent and skill. Second, we know that while there are many Spirits that may be weaker than us, there are many that are vastly more powerful. Many of these Mighty Ones are connected with the very maintenance of the life and health of ourselves and our land. So, third, in order to live well we need the blessing of these great Powers. This is obtained through worship, sacrifice, and Attunement. By thus bringing ourselves into contact with these beings we allow them to be reflected to some

degree in our own souls, bringing their blessing into our lives. All traditional Paganism says that it is proper to give gifts of our own skill, art, and substance to the Powers. The ancients offered carefully crafted objects of precious metal and wood as well as fruits of labor, food, and drink to those they worshipped, and it is proper for us to do the same today. We must assume that the Spirits want and need these gifts just as we need their blessings. So, by our rites of worship, we feed the Powers and acknowledge our mutual interdependence with them.

This worshipful approach can help us to avoid the inflation of the personal ego that has been the besetting error of the Western magical Tradition. We do not teach that we are “God” or identical with God or the Universe. Rather we acknowledge that each of us is one element in the great dance of being. If we are skilled and talented we may come to a very great spiritual power, perhaps even becoming a God or Goddess. Yet even the greatest of the Powers worships and sacrifices to the other Gods or Goddesses and Spirits. The web of mutual obligation never ends, nor would we wish it to, for it is the thing that sustains all existence.

### **To Bless the Folk and the Land**

Our Druidry is neither meant to be humble, one-sided giving to the Powers nor vague, feel-good spirituality. Pagan religion hopes always to provide real benefit to the community it serves. In traditional lore this is often expressed as three great goods—health, wealth, and wisdom. Again, Paganism does not reject the things of this material world in favor of spiritual things. Every human life needs a balance of physical well-being, sufficient goods, and mental and spiritual growth. We expect our religious rites to be practical aids toward these goals.

The Order of Ritual contains several intrinsic benefits for all who join in wholeheartedly. First, as mentioned, is the establishment or strengthening of the Cosmic Patterns in the soul making us more firmly grounded and more effectively centered. Second is the deepening of our contact with the Gods and Goddesses and Spirits. As Pagans we should

be working to establish personal relationships with the Deities, members of the Faery Tribes and of course with our own Ancestors and the Elder Wise Ones. Whenever we participate in the offerings to the Three Kindreds we have the opportunity to call to our own allies among the Powers, thus strengthening our personal magic. The third source of blessing is, of course, the Blessing itself (the “return flow”). The worshipper should formulate carefully what she desires to receive from any rite, and everyone should expect real results, real life-changes from the blessing and drinking of the Blessing Cup.

As modern Pagans we have a special duty to heal and defend the land itself. Our Holy Earth has been deadened by centuries of loveless abuse, and it should be part of every Druid rite to appeal to, waken and honor the land that upholds our work. Our Order of Ritual gives us several opportunities. The first is at the Earth Mother Offering, when the local Goddess of the land, and/or the Earth Mother of the chosen pantheon is honored. The second is at the Nature Spirits Offering, when the tribes of Spirits who enliven the area are worshipped, and the third could be at the Blessing itself, when a portion of the Blessing may be poured on the Earth so that the land may share the results of the work.

## **Practical Considerations**

Having discussed the theoretical bases of our work we may now examine some more practical connotations in choosing your intent and goal for a Druidic rite. We can consider these under two headings: Choosing a Pantheon and the Occasion of the Rite.

### **Pantheon and Patrons**

The primary outer purpose of most Druid ritual is to worship the Powers, the Deities and Spirits. In much of the Pagan revival Powers from a variety of cultures and systems are often worshipped together.

While this happens in Druidry as well we encourage the choice of a single cultural pantheon for each individual rite. This gives focus to the rite, ensures that the Powers are in harmony and encourages the gaining of lore

about ancient Pagan cultures. So, the first step in designing a Druidic rite is to decide in which cultural complex the rite will be done.

Of course, any system that chooses to call itself “Druidry” will have a strong interest in the ways of the Pagan Celts. We are no exception, and so we often focus on Celtic rites for the seasons and other intentions. However, Ár nDraíocht Féin is open to all Indo-European cultures, and we have work occurring in the Germanic, Hellenic, Slavic, and Baltic communities.

Of course, the strongest element in this choice will be your own interest and dedication to a particular pantheon. If you are working alone, you should simply use your own first choice of pantheon, but groups will need to reach a consensus. Rather than mingling the systems of several group members, we recommend doing separate rites, experimenting with various cultures until the group’s preferences become clear. Some of ADF’s Groves keep to a single culture throughout the year while some vary from holiday to holiday and some even perform multiple rites, one for each of several cultures for each Holy day. Choosing a single cultural paradigm allows a group to deepen and strengthen its magical connection with those Powers, while experimentation broadens experience and entails research, so the choices are yours.

Once you have determined the pantheon for your rite you must also choose the particular Powers to whom the central offerings and callings will be made. This will be based on the occasion and the magical intent of the rite as discussed below, and on the inclination of its group or individual sponsors. Almost always these Patron Powers are a pair of Deities, a Goddess and a God, though rites can also be offered to the Ancestors or the Spirits of the Land.

Those working alone or in a small group that shares a focus may find a desire to worship only one or two Deities from a single pantheon, that is personal Patron Deities. This is fine, but it is important to include the broader company of Powers from the pantheon from which these Patrons are drawn. Our Order of Ritual requires offerings

to several categories of Deity in every case, reducing the problem of focusing on personal Deities alone, but you should be sure to thoroughly research the whole cultural pattern from which the Powers are drawn.

## **The Occasion of the Rite**

### **Seasonal Rites**

Ár nDraíocht Féin has formally adopted the modern Neopagan calendar of eight seasonal holy days. These are, of course, the four astronomical days, the Solstices and Equinoxes combined with the Fire festivals of the Celts, Samhain, Imbolg, Beltainne and Lughnassadh. We have not established a specific set of symbols or mysteries for these occasions. The form and content of each is up to you, though we will provide scripts from which you may draw inspiration. Again, your own research and meditation will be the best guide to the proper symbols for each feast.

ADF is not attempting to revive any of the ancient Pagan religions of the cultures we study. We base our work on authentic ancient lore and effective modern magical and religious technique, realizing that we are creating a new religion for ourselves as moderns. Thus, we use the standard dates and core symbols of the modern Pagan calendar, fitting various ethnic traditions into this pattern. While a Grove may choose to perform rites based on a specific ethnic tradition on dates different from the core calendar, the eight core holidays must be offered to the community.

### **Rites of Passage**

As in any religion, Pagans hallow the important occasions of our lives with ritual. Births, Child Blessings, Comings of Age, Religious Vocations, Weddings and Funerals can all be proper occasions for our rites. Scripts for several of these occasions are regularly published in ADF’s journal, Oak Leaves, and on the website.

## Personal Magical Work

The ADF Order of Ritual has been evolved mainly for public worship with medium to large groups. Using the Order for small workings is quite possible but may require some variation.

One approach to personal rites in a community context is similar to traditions in several world religions including Vedic and Yoruba ways. When a member of the community has a particular need or has had a particular stroke of good fortune, they may ask their local priest/ess to perform a Rite of Offering to the Powers who will or have aided them. This sometimes becomes a community celebration or prayer and sometimes is quite private. It seems to me that this is a practice that we could profitably adopt.

So then, let's conclude by recapping the central concerns for the intent of any rite:

## Nature of the Work

Is it seasonal worship, a rite of passage or an individual goal? If the rite combines one or more of these functions, which is the primary and which the secondary intention?

## Pantheon and Patrons

If you are devoted to a particular cultural pantheon then that choice is simple. Otherwise, you will choose which complex to draw on. You will then choose which Deities are most proper to your intention. For seasonal work this may derive from customs and traditions connected to the holy day; for other intents you will need to do research to determine which Powers most closely fit your need. When these concepts are clear in your mind you are ready to proceed to the actual construction of your Druidic rite.



by rev. Ian Corrigan

# An Explanation of the ADF Liturgy

Any Druidic ritual has as a primary intention the re-weaving of the links between humankind, the natural world, and the Gods and Spirits who support both. For thousands of years human culture lived in more or less intimate communion with the unseen worlds. Over the centuries of European culture these ties have been weakened, until our modern materialism is endangering the very air and water that sustains our life. We work to reconnect with the powers of Land, Sea and Sky, honoring the spirit that is in them as well as their physical realities.

As with any religious path we also seek blessings for ourselves, our families and communities. We open our hearts to the flow of divine blessing that comes from our Gods and Goddesses. We seek also to awaken that same divine spark in our own souls, so that we can bless the world in return.

Ár nDraíocht Féin is a small part of the Neopagan movement, one of the fastest-growing currents in modern religion. From our beginnings we have been committed to serving the whole Pagan community.

Druidic worship is open and inclusive. We welcome Pagans of every tradition and path, as well as those who want to learn more about Druidry or pagan ways in general. We ask only that you respect our ways; you can expect the same from us.

## Some Conventions Of Druidic Ritual

Our rites are open and inclusive. We do not close our circles, and all are free to come and go as they please during the rite. We ask only that everyone be respectfully quiet and attentive when within earshot of the ritual. If you have a Praise Offering that you wish to perform, please see the Grove Bard before the rite. We ask that no one applaud the Praise Offerings, but rather that everyone give the energy of appreciation to the Patrons.

## Principles Of Druidic Worship

The outer form of our worship, like all ceremony, is made up of spoken prayers, invocations and statements combined with traditional actions. While we have reclaimed some of these from pre-Christian Europe we do not grant them the status of revelation or scripture. All ritual speech is made by humans to help turn our minds more effectively toward the Divine. Druidry teaches that beautiful speech, poetry or music pleases and influences the Powers, and so we fill our rites with these things to the best of our ability.

A central action of our rites is the giving of gifts to the Powers. This is commonly called sacrifice (Latin: to make sacred). We teach that the Gods and Spirits are strengthened by our offerings, and show their gratitude by blessing the givers. In Pagan ways humans are not mere dependents of even the greatest Deities. Rather they depend on our love and offerings as we depend on their blessing and aid.

While it is true that the ancients offered animal and even occasional human lives to the Powers, our modern Paganism rejects any offering that takes life or causes injury. We offer our Gods and Goddesses flowers, food, drink, incense and scented oil, precious metals and gems, poetry and song, but never blood.

The soul-skills that bind Pagan worship together are the techniques of meditation and trance. By concentrating our minds on the symbols and words of the rite, by relaxing our bodies and letting go of our internal dialogue and by strongly visualizing the rite's energy flows and Deities we induce a state of mind that allows contact with Inner worlds.



In every Druidic rite there will be a series of spoken instructions intended to help induce this trance. Following these suggestions with an open mind will deepen your experience. Remember that all such guidance is just that; you are in control of your state of mind at all times. Yet it is through consenting to trance that you can know our Magic best.

These three principles—ritual, sacrifice and trance—combine to produce the magic of Druidic worship.

## **The Outline Of Druidic Rites**

### **Part 1 : Establishing The Grove**

In ancient days Pagans gathered in places hallowed by tradition. Sometimes these were temple buildings. More often they were groves and glens in the deep forest, or high places. In our times we must usually recreate the holy atmosphere of the Sacred Groves by ritual and meditation.

**The Procession:** In some cases the presiding priest or priestess will come out of the Grove and lead a procession of all the worshippers into the holy place. Usually this is accompanied by song. At other times the worshippers are sent to meditate alone, and then are called to the Grove by horn, drum or song. When approaching the Grove one tradition is to circle the Center of the Grove three times in the sun-wise direction.

**Honoring the Mother:** The priest or priestess usually gives a simple statement of beginning, followed by a prayer and offering to the Earth Mother who upholds our lives and rites. One common custom is to bend and kiss, or place a hand on, the earth to honor Her.

**Opening Meditation:** The priest or priestess or a Grove member will lead a basic grounding and centering. This attunement helps us to connect our individual souls with the Two Powers. The Earth Current or Underworld Power carries the dark, mixed elements from which all forms arise. The Sky Current, or Starry Power is the ordering pattern that crystallizes forms out of the Underworld

potential. Together these powers manifest the Middle World in which we live.

**Statement of Purpose:** Following the Grove meditation the priest or priestess gives a statement of the intention and purpose of the rite and its precedent in the Ways of the ancients.

**Affirming the World Order:** Druidic ritual is anchored in the Sacred Center of the Grove. The Center is conceived as a meeting-place of the common world with the Otherworlds of the Spirits. We use one or more of the universal symbols of the Center—the Fire, the Well and the World Tree. Fire connects us with the Sky, the Well with the Underworld and the Tree is the Boundary Between All Worlds, rooted deep and crowned high.

In this phase of the ritual the Order of the Worlds is acknowledged, first the vertical axis of the Under- Mid- and Starry Worlds. The rite may then honor the three worlds of Land, Sea and Sky, or the Four Directions.

By affirming these symbols in our rite we acknowledge them in ourselves, making our own souls a temple in which the Deities may dwell.

**Opening the Gates:** Meditation on the World Order is a valuable spiritual tool all by itself. The next part of the rite transforms the simple symbols of the Center into true Magical gates. First the priest or priestess invokes the Deity that has charge of the Ways Between, in the pantheon of the rite. We offer to the Gatekeeper and ask their help in the work.

The symbols of the Sacred Center are then conjured to function as the Gates Between. Through these gates we send our love, worship and offerings to the powers and they, in turn, send blessing to us. As long as the Gates are open our thoughts and impulses can be heard clearly by the Gods and Spirits.

## **Part 2 : Offering To The Powers**

**Preliminary Offerings:** There are two preliminary offerings usually made at this point.

**Bardic Inspiration:** First the Bard of the rite invokes the power of poetic inspiration to indwell both the priest or priestess and worshippers. This may be either an offering to a specific Deity or a general attunement to sources of inspiration in the Self.

**Outdwellers:** Next we may offer to the spirits commonly called the Outdwellers. These are the Powers that can be inimical to mortals or oppose our own Deities. We acknowledge their presence, asking them to leave our rites in peace. We also acknowledge the parts of ourselves that might, likewise, interfere with proper worship.

**Three Kindred Offerings:** In each of our rites we invoke and offer to the Spirits in three categories. We call these the Kindreds to reflect their family relationship with one another and with us. The Nature Spirits are those who ensoul soil and stone, water and wind, bird and beast. The Ancestors, both those of actual blood or those of our heart and affection and heroes and mighty dead. The Shining Ones or Deities are the eldest Children of the Mother, the Brightest, Wisest and Strongest. For each of these we speak an invocation and make a proper offering.

When these Triad Offerings are made the worshippers should meditate on and call to those Spirits that are closest to them. Our own Ancestors, Deities, and allies among the Nature Spirits are called to join us in honoring the Patron Powers of the rite.

**Patron Offerings:** Each of our rites is commonly dedicated to two or more of the Deities. These are usually chosen either for their connection with the seasonal holiday being celebrated, for their ability in the area of the work being done or their special relationship with the mortal focus of the rite.

The Patrons of the rite are first invoked with expressive prose or poetry, sometimes accompanied by a visualized image of the

Deities. A proper offering is made as the celebrant invokes.

**Praise Offerings:** After the formal offerings there is usually a time when members of the company can make personal offerings. Usually these are offerings of art (songs, poetry etc.), though they may simply be thanks to the Powers for blessings received.

**Final Sacrifice:** After the Praise Offerings the celebrant gives a final Prayer of Sacrifice and makes a large offering to the Fire. This is the moment when every worshipper sends their love and respect, her energy, through the Gates to the Patrons and Powers.

**Omen:** After the Sacrifice the celebrant seeks an omen, doing a simple divination to determine what sort of blessing the Powers offer in return for our gifts.

## **Part 3 : The Blessing**

**Opening to Blessing:** The celebrant leads a meditation combining the presence of the Powers with the content of the Omen. We also meditate on our own needs, those of our loved ones, and our community.

At this time there is usually a litany in which the assembled company pray to be given the Blessing, in the form of the Waters of Life. In this moment your personal desire should be strongly imagined, held in the mind and heart, with harm to none and for the good of all.

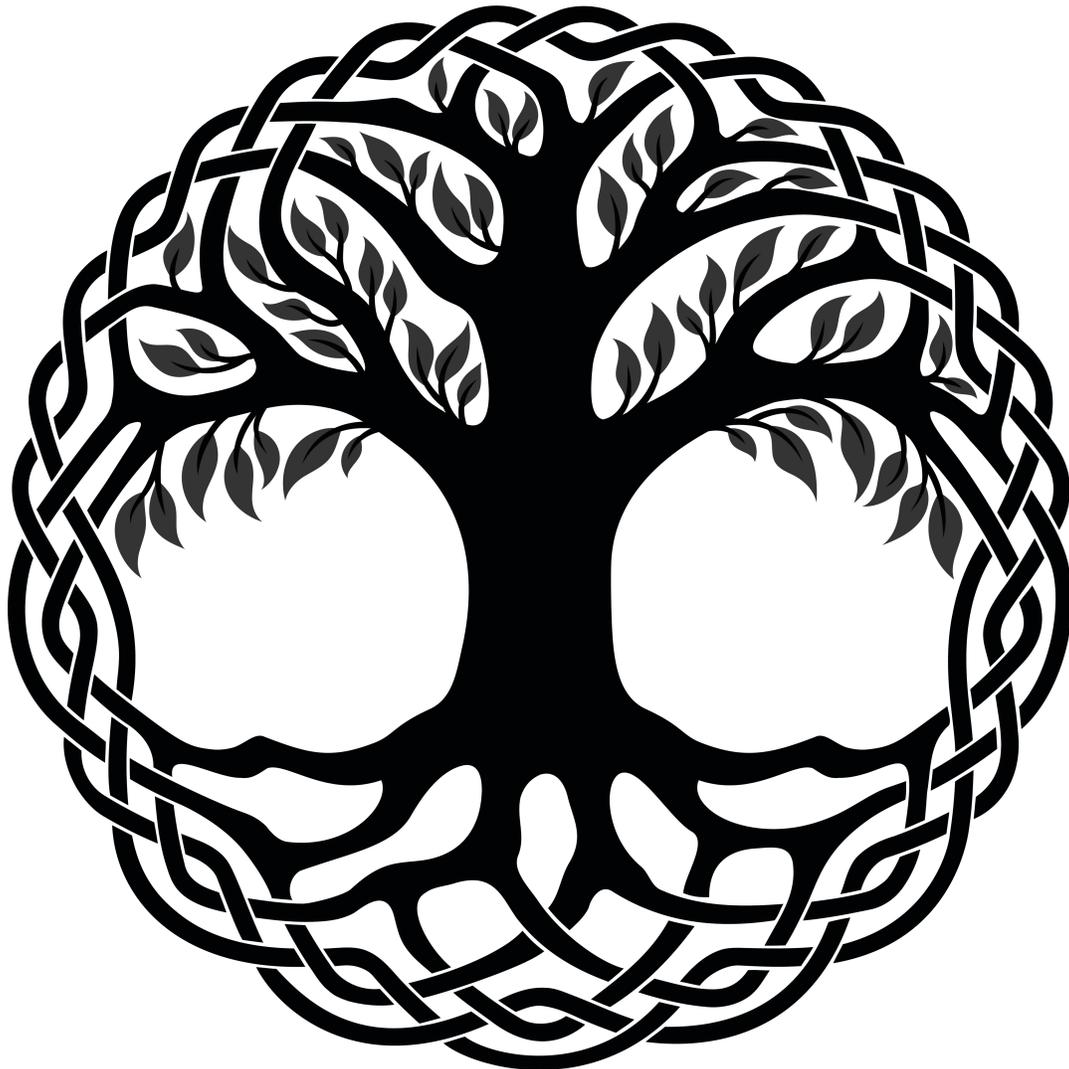
**The Waters of Life:** The Blessing of the Powers is commonly given as a cup or horn of drink. There is always clear water or fruit juice and sometimes ale, wine or even whiskey (Gaelic: uisge na beatha, "weeshky nah bee-ah", water of life). The celebrant invokes the Blessing as water drawn from the Well of Potentials and held in the light of the Fire of Transformation. We contemplate again our needs, and the Omen as we drink the Blessing. We often sing an anthem or listen quietly during this most reverent moment.

Works: If there is any social or magical task to be accomplished it is done at this time. Healings, announcements of weddings, child blessings, workings for community good may occasionally be part of the rites.

#### **Part 4 : Thanks, And Closing:**

After all is done we give proper thanks to all the Powers. The celebrant leads us in thanking the Patrons and the Kindreds. We thank the Gatekeeper and conjure the Gates to close. We renew our grounding, our connection with Earth and Sky, and center the energies of the rite in our souls. We allow any excess energy to flow away into the ground as we offer any remains of the rite to the Earth Mother.

The rite concludes with a blessing and we often sing a closing chant as we leave the Grove.



by rev. Ian Corrigan

# The Worlds and Kindreds

There are Nine Ways of the Druidic Cosmos. The Fire, the Well and the Tree define the Sacred Center, the vertical axis of Underworld, Middle World and the Heavens. Around this axis turn the Three Realms of Land, Sea and Sky and the Otherworlds of each. Within these Realms the Three Kindreds follow their Fates.

## The Three Realms

The universal pattern of the four 'elements' is understood by Celtia differently from the broader magical movement. The classical system of the four arranged as a cross is replaced by the three realms of Land, Sea and Sky, with the Sacred Fire in the center. These are not abstract principles, but interacting homes of all the world's teeming life, whether human, beast, plant, stone or spirit.

### The Land

The home of our human kindreds and of our closest allies. The land is our common world where most of us live out our lives. When we look for our part in the great weaving of things it is the patterns of the land that are our first teachers. Fresh water that wells up in the earth can also be part of the realm of the land.

### The Sea

The wild waste that lies outside our common land. The sea is the home of a vast and teeming life, different from our own. It is also the place of the Otherworld Isles, the home of the Sidhe heroes and the Land of the young. Thus, the sea is connected with the Otherworld as a place of concealed potential.

## The Sky

The source of Light and Shadow, the place of the Shining Ones. The Sky overarches the Land and Sea, as the sight of the Gods and Goddesses watches over all. The turning and waxing and waning of the Three Lights of Sun and Moon and Stars, and the wheeling of the stars around the Pole display the Order of the Deities and Their blessing to us.

Among these Realms, all common life is sustained between the Chaos of Potential and the World Order. The ancient Celts made their oaths by saying: "May the Sky not fall, may the Sea not burst its bounds, may the Land not open beneath me, so long as I keep my oath." In the midst of these Realms is found the Sacred Grove, the place of flowing Together. There the Sacred Fire burns, by the Well of Wisdom, beneath the World Tree.

## The Otherworlds

Within and behind our common realms, as near as the far side of a tree, as far as the misty deeps, lie the Otherworlds. The Otherworld lands are the home of the Spirits, the Tribes of the Noble Ones and the Shining Gods and Goddesses themselves. The Otherworld is reached by strange pathways. It may appear as trackless, misty pathways through forested glades, or as vast waters with Isles of Wonder in them, or as many wild places. It is always a place of challenges, of connection and of learning for the Seeker of the Way.

Within the misted borders of the Otherworlds are many places of wonder. The Land of Youth, where the Gods and Heroes feast; the Land of the Dead, where the blessed Ancestors have their rest and comfort; the Land Under the Hill, where the Noble Ones have their court. All of these can be reached with the skills of Magic.

The Otherworld is both cause and reflection of our common realms. Thus the Wise seek to know its ways, to better understand the flow of events in the world and to exert the subtle influences on life that are so much of Magic Art.

## **The Kindreds**

All beings are the Children of the Mother, descended through the lines of countless Mothers and Fathers. As well as the many mortal kindreds, there are the countless tribes of Otherworld beings. The Druid will deal with, and make offering to, many kinds of Spirits.

## **The Shining Ones**

The eldest, mightiest and wisest of the beings in the Great Weaving. The First Mother and First Father, the Triple Kingship and the Goddesses of Sovereignty, Inspiration and Bounty; the powers of Love, Artisanry and Healing; the Child of light and Shadow; all are reflected in the many cultural pantheons of the Celtic peoples.

## **The Mighty Ones**

The Ancestors, those of our folk who are presently resting in the Land of the Dead. They watch over their descendants and lend their power to aid us. It is proper for every Druidic worshipper to honor her immediate ancestors, her Grandmothers and Grandfathers, as well as the Heroes, those great women and men who are honored by her folk.

## **The Noble Ones**

Also known as The Nature Spirits, are the Spirits of non-human evolutions, both mortal and never-born. They are of a multitude of kinds. from small spirits of stone and herb and beast to the very Queen Under the Hill and Her Consort. Each has their own power and should be approached with respect, whether a simple herb-spirit or a mighty mountain.

Thus are the Three Kindreds. It is well to remember that these are not hard and fast categories. The greatest spirits may be reckoned Gods and Goddesses, even though they come from other kins, while one folk's Deity can be the Ancestor of another, etc. So let the Wise do honor to all the Spirits.



by rev. Ian Corrigan

# Choosing a Pantheon

From the beginning of ADF's work we have sought to base our Neopagan work on the actual ways of Indo-European Pagan cultures. We know that the religions we are making are, and must be, modern. We are modern people in a modern world, and we will inevitably bring with us ideas shaped by our experience. However, like many Pagans, we seek to move beyond many of the common paradigms of our times. We see things in the modern world that we consider less than desirable, and we hope to relieve those ills, at least in our own lives, by looking to the ways and values of the Old Religions. The Old Ways are our inspiration, and their sages, magicians and priests are our spiritual mentors.

In accord with that philosophy, one of the core instructions of ADF's work is to study the cultures of Pagan Europe with the intention of comprehending them as fully as possible. We work to learn the facts about Paganism, but also to understand the minds and hearts of the people who lived it. To do this we must comprehend not just the religious symbols and forms of the ancients, but their lives and work. We must know their art and artisanry, the structure of their families, tribes and nations. We must know what they ate, what they wore and, to the best of our ability, who they were. If we do not seek a grasp of the essence of a people's way of life, then we will fail to understand what their spiritual ways have to teach us. We risk doing no better than pounding the triangular peg of religious symbolism into the square hole of our modern preconceptions.

In addition to study of archeology and ancient customs, insight into the modern cultures that descend from the Pagan past can contribute to our understanding of it. Getting involved in the folk cultures and more modern history of the Irish, Welsh, Danes, or

Greeks offers insights into the spirit of a people that cannot be gained from academic sources alone. So we encourage students to listen to the folk music of these cultures, learn their traditional dance, and especially to learn at least some of the native tongue of the Gods they wish to address.

On the most basic level, we strongly recommend that each ADF ceremony be focused on a single pantheon. That allows the rite to be unified in esthetics and cultural detail, and it ensures that the Powers called will be in harmony with one another. Even in early stages, when you are examining various traditions, it is best to keep each rite focused on a specific culture. Experiencing the gestalt of each culture in turn gives a clearer understanding of each.

In our Druidry we have learned to view the Deities as real persons—independent, freely acting individuals of great wisdom and mighty magic. We try to avoid viewing the Spirits as 'archetypes' in the 'collective unconscious.' We do not, in general, find that Deities with similar function are 'aspects' of one another, or of a greater whole. So we would consider Thor, Taranis and Zeus, despite the association of each with thunder, to be separate, individual Deities.

It seems only right to address the Powers in the cultural idiom to which they are accustomed. When we invite the Gods and Goddesses to our rites, we feel it is proper to treat them with honor. We feel it is best to use Greek customs for Greek Deities, Welsh for Welsh Gods and Goddesses. We see it as less proper to construct ritual out of bits and pieces of many cultures and try to 'plug in' whatever Powers one wishes to 'use.'

On a more personal level, we recommend that each student choose one Indo-European culture to work as their 'home' culture. If we wish, we might refer to this as one's Hearth Culture, or Hearth Ways.

Ancient Paganism was certainly fairly open and inclusive. It seems likely that neighboring cultures influenced one another's ways, including their religions. But

the people of those cultures would have begun life with a child's immersion in the ways of their local religion, at their family's hearth. If, when adult, they chose to include spirits or works from other cultures in their personal religion, they would do so with the particular worldview of a Celtic tribesman, or a woman of the Hellenic cities.

This is very different from a person whose native land is in the modern, industrial West who tries to absorb Pagan ways directly, without regard for the cultures in which they grew. Far from bringing the wisdom of the ancients into modern life, that approach may only superimpose the form of Paganism on the attitudes, beliefs and lifestyles of our materialist, Christian-influenced culture.

So you might think of yourself as a new human, freshly brought into the world of ancient Athens, Ireland, or Scandinavia. Or you might think of yourself as a voyager thrown up on the shores of a Pagan culture. As a newcomer among the people it is your duty to learn their ways and, in time, to be accepted as one of them. It is by this kind of cultural immersion that a child or a castaway might experience Pagan perspectives.

Please understand that we are not recommending an exclusivist or fundamentalist approach to this choice. The ancients seem to have had little of such attitudes. There is little evidence to show that they wished to preserve 'purely' Celtic or 'exclusively' Germanic ways. Every European Pagan culture was (and is) the result of thousands of years of intermingling and mutual influence, and the cultures of the Pagan Iron Age all drew freely on one another's cultural and religious ideas.

So while you should work to understand your 'hearth' culture fully, you need not feel required to limit your personal work only to those forms. If you have a relationship with a deity from another culture, you should certainly continue it. If you have spiritual practices from various cultures that work for you, use them. Perhaps you will find yourself adapting your older patterns to fit your hearth culture, as you move more fully into its

model. In the end you should be able to find a balance between formal work in your ethnic tradition and a more personal eclecticism.

Respect for the cultures from which we seek to learn asks us to go beyond simple borrowing, or 'cut-and-paste' approaches. Wisdom suggests that to comprehend the Gods and Goddesses, the spirit and magic of the Old Religions we must comprehend the cultures in which they existed. Practice has shown that involvement primarily in a single culture leads to solid, practical results. So we earnestly suggest that you take up a Hearth Culture for your work in Our Druidry.



by rev. Amber Doty

# Who to Contact

ADF members are assigned to regions depending on where they live. These regions were established by the Council of Regional Druids. The members of each Region elect the Regional Druid they think would be best to foster growth and communication in the region. The territories included in each Region are listed below:

**Asia-Pacific:** Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Philippines, and South Korea in addition to all southern hemisphere countries, including the continents of Africa and South America.

**Canada East:** New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec

**Canada West:** Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon

**Central:** Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas

**Europe:** The United Kingdom and Europe including the Republic of Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, France, Monaco, Germany, Greece, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Gibraltar, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, as well as all former soviet bloc countries and states, Western Russia, (West of the Ural Mountains) and middle eastern Countries (from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan - for APOs).

**Heartland:** Indiana, Kentucky, New York west of I-81, Ohio, Pennsylvania west of I-81, Tennessee, West Virginia

**Northeast:** Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York east of I-81, Pennsylvania east of I-81, Rhode Island, Vermont,

**Northwest:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Northern California (all of California north of the Southern border of Monterey, Fresno, and Mono Counties--generally CA zip codes above 93600)

**Southeast:** Alabama, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia.

**Southwest:** Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, Utah, Southern California (all of California south of the Southern border of Monterey, Fresno, and Mono Counties--generally CA zip codes 90000 - 93599)

**Upper Midwest:** Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin

**Non-Assigned:** International members living outside of specified regions become part of the nearest region to their home location and receive all the privileges of membership in that region. Areas without an assigned regional druid are left white on the map below.

## Important Links and Email Addresses

### **Policies and Organizational Documents:**

Moderation Policy:

<https://www.adf.org/forums/moderation.html>

Code of Conduct:

<https://www.adf.org/adf-code-conduct.html>

Constitution:

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/docs/constitution.html>

Bylaws:

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/docs/bylaws.html>

Policy Manual:

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/docs/policy/index.html>

## Standard Operating Procedures:

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/docs/sop.html>

## Social Media Information:

ADF Website: <https://www.adf.org/>

Youtube Channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/ADFDruidry1>

Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/adfdruidry/>

Instagram:  
<https://www.instagram.com/adfdruidry/>

Facebook Page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/adfdruidry/>

Member-Only Facebook Group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/468253430215759/>

Solitary Facebook Group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/242955149564240/>

ADF Discord Server:  
<https://discord.gg/3fd3Tkd>

## Mother Grove Email Addresses:

Arch Druid:  
[adf-archdruid@adf.org](mailto:adf-archdruid@adf.org)

Vice Arch Druid:  
[adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org](mailto:adf-vice-archdruid@adf.org)

Secretary: [adf-secretary@adf.org](mailto:adf-secretary@adf.org)

CoRD Chief: [adf-cord-chief@adf.org](mailto:adf-cord-chief@adf.org)

CoSD Chief: [adf-cosd-chief@adf.org](mailto:adf-cosd-chief@adf.org)

NOD 1: [nod1@adf.org](mailto:nod1@adf.org)

NOD 2: [nod2@adf.org](mailto:nod2@adf.org)

NOD 3: [nod3@adf.org](mailto:nod3@adf.org)

NOD 4: [nod4@adf.org](mailto:nod4@adf.org)

Member's Advocate:  
[adf-members-advocate@adf.org](mailto:adf-members-advocate@adf.org)

Administrator:  
[adf-administrator@adf.org](mailto:adf-administrator@adf.org)

Treasurer:  
[adf-treasurer@adf.org](mailto:adf-treasurer@adf.org)

## RD Email Addresses

Messages sent to the following email addresses will automatically be routed to the appropriate RD's email address on file in the ADF database.

Chief of the Council of Regional Druids: [adf-cord-chief@adf.org](mailto:adf-cord-chief@adf.org)

Asia Pacific RD: [adf-asia-pacific-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-asia-pacific-rd@adf.org)

Canada East RD: [adf-canada-east-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-canada-east-rd@adf.org)

Canada West RD: [adf-canada-west-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-canada-west-rd@adf.org)

Europe RD: [adf-europe-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-europe-rd@adf.org)

Central RD: [adf-central-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-central-rd@adf.org)

Heartland RD: [adf-heartland-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-heartland-rd@adf.org)

Northeast RD: [adf-northeast-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-northeast-rd@adf.org)

Northwest RD: [adf-northwest-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-northwest-rd@adf.org)

Southeast RD: [adf-southeast-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-southeast-rd@adf.org)

Southwest RD: [adf-southwest-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-southwest-rd@adf.org)

Upper Midwest RD: [adf-upper-midwest-rd@adf.org](mailto:adf-upper-midwest-rd@adf.org)

by James "Pigeon" Fielder

# Where to Go From Here

For further information on getting involved with ADF, we recommend the "Getting started in ADF" section of the ADF website at <https://www.adf.org/members/new/index.html>. From there you can link to the "Mailing Lists and Forums page at

<https://www.adf.org/forums/index.html>,

select "E-Mail Lists / Webforums" to subscribe to the email lists for your specific areas of interest. At a minimum you should subscribe to ADF-Announce, it has low traffic, is moderated, and is how ADF sends out important announcements. You might also consider ADF-Discuss, this is the general discussion forum which does not require every message to be approved by the List Moderator.

You can also find ADF on social media! If you have any questions, you can reach the social media team at [social-media@adf.org](mailto:social-media@adf.org)

- Discord: <https://discord.gg/3fd3Tkd>
- Facebook (Members Only):  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/468253430215759/>
- Instagram:  
<https://www.instagram.com/adfdruidry/>
- Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/adfdruidry>
- YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/adfutube/>

We also recommend getting connected with ADF locally. You can search for nearby groves by contacting the ADF Office or visiting <https://www.adf.org/groups/groves/index.html>. If you are interested in starting a grove, see <https://www.adf.org/members/groves/starting/index.html>, and if you just want to contact other ADF members in your area, you can search at

<https://www.adf.org/members/org/findmem.html>,

email us at [ADFOffice@adf.org](mailto:ADFOffice@adf.org) or inquire in writing at:

**Ár nDraíocht Féin**  
**1147 Brook Forest Ave #355**  
**Shorewood, IL 60404**

Please let us know if we can be of any assistance to you and accept our hospitality as we welcome you to Our Druidry! Welcome to our Fellowship, and may you be blessed by the Gods and Spirits always.

The ADF Mother Grove