# http://ts3.mm.bing.net/th?id=I.4845256481244826&pid=1.7&w=116&h=151&c=7&rs=1A Beltane Rite

Beltane is a cross-quarter Sabbat that takes place inbetween the spring equinox and summer solstice. Like Ostara, Beltane is a fertility holiday (relating to animals this time, as opposed to plants). Beltane celebrates the full power of spring and the ascending power of the sun. Liturgically, Beltane celebrates the sexual union between the God and Goddess (unlike some religions, Wiccan deities are fully reflective of all aspects of nature). Beltane is a “major” Sabbat. Thematically, it occupies the opposite position from Samhain on the Wheel of the Year. While Samhain commemorates the death, Beltane celebrates life. Both are important aspects in the never-ending cycle of the ecology and of the universe.

## Preparing the Sacred Space

For an outdoor ritual, there should be four lit torches at each of the cardinal directions. Blooming flowers of the element-appropriate color shall be fastened to the torch shafts. The Celebrant shall purify the ritual space with sage smoke. For an indoor ritual, the four lit torches can be substituted with pillar candles of the appropriate color.

Additionally, for outdoor rituals, the Celebrants should set up a Maypole for the traditional Beltane Maypole dance. This dance celebrates the union of the masculine and feminine forces and the life-creating power that union generates.

## Special Materials Needed

* For an outdoor ritual: Maypole with colorful ribbons.
* For an indoor ritual: Deck of animal oracle cards.

## Casting the Circle

The Celebrant shall walk the periphery of the ritual space three times, clockwise starting from the east. On the first pass, the Celebrant shall sprinkle salt water along the edge of the sacred space. On the second pass, the Celebrant shall trace the periphery with a rod of incense. With the final pass, the Celebrant shall use an Athame. Once the circle is walked three times, the Celebrants issue a Gathering call:

### First Iteration

1. **Priestess:**
2. "Come shapers, come craftsmen, come molders of clay
3. Come artists, come singers, come teachers of the way
4. Come warriors, come hearth-keepers, come healers
5. Come wise ones, come mystics, come fortune-dealers."
6. **Covenors:**
7. "We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"

### Second Iteration

1. **Priest:**
2. "We are shapers of dreams, crafters of song
3. We are teachers of lore, righters of wrong
4. We are seekers of truth, affirmers of life
5. We are guardians of peace, soothers of strife."
6. **Covenors:**
7. "We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"

### Third Iteration

1. **Priestess:**
2. We remember the fire, the well, and the tree
3. We remember the call that all must be free
4. We remember the Lady, and the Lord of the Sun,
5. We remember the charge to love all and harm none
7. **Covenors**:
8. "We come to the Circle, we answer the call!"
9. **Priest and Priestess:** "The Circle is cast!"
10. **Coven**: "So mote it be!"

## Calling the Quarters

Calls to elemental spirits and deities begin in the east and proceed in a clockwise fashion.The appropriate candle is lit after each call.

### Air / East

Guardian of the East, Spirit of Air

In love and thanks we invite you here.

The sky is bright, the clouds are bold

Warmth and life now take hold

Blossoms alight on clement breeze

New leaves grow from awakened trees

Guardian of the East, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Air, blessed be

Hail and welcome!

### Fire / South

Guardian of the South, Spirit of Fire

In love and thanks we invite you here

The warmth of spring now holds sway

Trees and flowers bloom more each day

With winter banished for another turn

Let the Beltane fires burn!

Guardian of the South, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of fire, blessed be

Hail and welcome!

### Water/West

Guardian of the West, Spirit of Water

In love and thanks we invite you here

Spring rains come to bless the land

The time of planting is now at hand

With morning dew and mists so pale

You give life to the greening vale

Guardian of the West we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Water, blessed be

Hail and welcome!

### Earth/North

Guardian of the North, Spirit of Earth

In love and thanks we invite you here

The trees awake with leaf and flower

They draw from the ground's returning power

Creatures of scales and fur and feather

Make new life when joined together

Guardian of the North we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Earth, blessed be

Hail and welcome!

### God

God of the Sun, Lord of the Fields

In love and thanks we invite you here

Your spark of life is felt in planted seeds

In trees and crops, flowers and weeds

With the Mother Goddess, you create life anew

Within the blossoms that glisten with dew

God of the Sun, we give thanks to thee

Lord of the Fields, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

### Goddess

Mother Goddess, giver of life

In love and thanks we invite you here

Fur and feather, hoof and horn

By your power all life is born

With the God, your consort and friend

Life is granted, a cycle without end

Mother Goddess, we give thanks to thee

Giver of Life, blessed be

Hail and Welcome!

## Meditation

*This meditation will focus on connecting with one’s animal guide, animal spirit, or companion spirit.*

Make yourself comfortable. Have your feet in contact with the ground and make your spine straight. Close your eyes and take three cleansing breaths. Breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… and breathe out….

We are leaving this place, this building, this structure, and our awareness is travelling to another realm. You open your eyes and find yourself standing in an ancient and dense forest. The redwood trees are hundreds of feet tall and dozens of feet wide. The rich, green canopy high above obscures most of the sky, leaving the forest floor shrouded in a cool, quiet, verdant gloom. Hidden in the vaulting, leafy branches, birds and insects chirp and buzz. You cannot see them, but you hear them clearly and you feel their presence. A faint breeze gently blows across the ferns and underbrush of the forest. It is a gentle caress upon your skin.

There is a narrow, rarely-tread path that winds through the woodland. You suspect that few people have been here, nor has it been recently. This suits you, as there sacredness to your solitude. You feel part of this place. You sense the life energy of the vines and ferns, bushes and trees, insects and birds. It is intertwined and fully realized. You are part of something so much greater than yourself, and yet your presence also adds to the distinctiveness of the symphony of life and spirit.

In this place, you also sense myriad animal forms, just beyond the range of your vision. Perhaps there are deer here, or perhaps a wolf? Maybe there is a bear or a coyote? Or is it a raven? Perhaps you sense a butterfly?

You stand there for several quiet moments and you make no sudden moves. Your breathing is easy and regular. Perhaps an animal sees you and comes out of hiding to investigate. What comes to you? What does it look like? Does it bear a spiritual message for you or perhaps it is just curious to meet you. What do you see?

[Silence for a time]

Your visitor retreats back into the forest and is hidden from view once more. But you will remember the encounter and you will be able to call upon the image of your animal spirit to help you in magical practices and in times of trial.

We are leaving this place now. We are leaving the ancient redwood forest with the high canopy and shadowy gloom. We are returning to this building and to our bodies. Breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… breathe out… breathe in… and breathe out….

When you are ready, open your eyes.

## Magical Working

**Indoor service:** Celebrant will perform a divination using an Animal Oracle deck (or similar divination tool)

**Outdoor service:** May pole dance with festive drumming

## Cakes and Ale

*If there are two Celebrants (Priest and Priestess), the Priest shall distribute the bread/cakes and the Priestess shall distribute the cup of wine/ale/juice.*

**Priest or Priestess:** “The celebration of bread and wine is not unique to Wicca. Many religions in many cultures have venerated the bounty of grain and vine. Bread and wine sustain the body and bring us together as a community. In the Wiccan tradition, these gifts also bring us in communion with the God and Goddess. And so we bring you these gifts so that we may be united with one another in spirit.”

**Priestess**: “With the cup, we are one.”

**Covenor**: “Blessed be”

**Priest**: “We are one people, we share one bread.”

**Covenor:** “Blessed be.”

## Releasing the Quarters

The elemental spirits and deities are released in the opposite order in which they were invited. The appropriate candle is extinguished after each dismissal.

### Goddess

Mother Goddess, Giver of life

We give you thanks for coming here

The seeds are planted, with hope and love

Fertile ground fed from rain above

Egg and womb your spirit fills

Granting life as is your will

Mother Goddess we give thanks to thee

Giver of Life, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### God

God of the Sun, Lord of the Fields

We give you thanks for coming here

Cattle and lamb, fish and bird

Their life increases at your word

Horn and hoof, fur and feather

Life begins when brought together

God of the Sun, we give thanks to thee

Lord of the Fields, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### Earth/North

Guardian of the North, Spirit of Earth

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the mountains, return to the plains

Meadows bloom in warm spring rains

Planted seeds poke through rich, dark soil

Sown with love and care and toil

Guardian of the North, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Earth, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### Water/West

Guardian of the West, Spirit of Water

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the rivers, return to the springs

The rain descends, and life begins

Burbling brook and rushing river

The flow of life they now deliver

Guardian of the West, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Water, blessed be

Hail and Farewell!

### Fire/South

Guardian of the South, Spirit of Fire

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the bonfire, return to the flame

The spark of life we shall acclaim

We burn the sage and incense this night

In thanks for the Beltane fires so bright

Guardian of the South, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Fire, blessed be

Hail and farewell!

### Air/East

Guardian of the East, Spirit of Air

We give you thanks for coming here

Return to the clouds of grey and white

And to the sky so blue and bright

We thank you for the gentle breeze

That whispers past awakened trees

Guardian of the East, we give thanks to thee

Spirit of Air, blessed be

Hail and Farewell!

## Releasing the Circle

*The Celebrant walks the perimeter of the circle in a widdershins direction, using a wand or Athame to release the sacred space.*

**Priest**: “May all spirits attracted to our light return to your realms in peace, harming none.”

**Priestess**: “The circle, though open, remains unbroken.”

**Celebrants and Covenors:** “Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again!”