

# UU Casper Samhain Ceremonial

By Athne Machdane, Composed Fall 2018

**Hall Setup:** Round altar in center, radial chair layout plus skull cup in center. Print handouts and prepare index cards & pens for devotional activity. Sound system set for (2) microphones + connection for recorded music, outdoor fire bowl for burning cards. Smudge and cleanse as part of ceremonial.

**Cast & Crew:** Service leader, elementals (Air/Fire/Water/Earth), pianist (if using optional hymn).

**Call to Order:** Fade out music, service leader moves to lectern and rings hand bell, guests take seats in circle. Service leader offers welcome & calls for announcements. Elementals take seats near positions. Service leader and/or assistant pass out handouts, cards & pens for devotional activity.

**Cast circle:** Service leader casts circle once around outside of chairs

**Opening Words:** *We gather here today in celebration of Samhain – the veils between the realms are thin and spirit flows freely – let us welcome and honor our spirit guides and beloved community of the living and the departed as we traverse this sacred circle.* By Athne Machdane

**Processional:** Service leader cues processional music and traverses once around the circle in a clockwise direction between the chairs and the altar, they will start and finish at the lectern. Service leader then cues first guest to their left to do the same. Each guest then may participate in turn advancing to their left/clockwise or opt out and cue the next person. This may be a simple walk around the circle, an improvised dance or presentation of their costume/fashion statement. Music plays continuously, service leader plants a rehearsed guest at the first position to initiate the sequence. **[Play Music: *Saltarello* by Dead Can Dance]**

**Invite Elements:** East (Air), South (Fire), West (Water), North (Earth). Elementals stand, take positions facing altar and then recite personal invocations in turn while service leader prepares elemental materials/talismans at altar. Begin in East (Air), Finish in North (Earth), clockwise progression.

*Let us invite the Elements in accordance with the Celtic Tradition...*

*In the East is Air – Breath of Life...* **[Guest Invocation]**

*In the South is Fire – Passion of Life... [Guest Invocation]*

*In the West is Water – Blood of Life... [Guest Invocation]*

*In the North is Earth – Foundation of Life... [Guest Invocation]*

**\* Deity Invocation (Recite in Unison):** *And now let us invite the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone – Please rise in body or spirit and repeat after me... [Maiden Mother Crone By Athne Machdane, SEE HANDOUT]*

**\* Optional Hymn:** *And now let us sing together #327 Joy Thou Goddess*

**\* Covenant (Recite in Unison):** *We have gathered here from realms near & far, within & beyond – may we now raise the intent to practice through our covenant of leadership. Please repeat after me... [UUC leadership covenant SEE HANDOUT] Please be seated.*

**Devotional Activity:** *Now I invite you as willing and able to approach the altar and offer your prayers, invocations and blessings to thy Deities, spirit guides, departed loved ones and beloved community across the realms. Feel free to write statements on the cards provided, speak them aloud with the microphone or offer them through sublime silence. When done take a sage sprig from the altar and offer it to the Air Elemental in the pyre set up on the altar. Gently blow or fan the sage with the fan provided. Feel free to move around the pyre and pass your hands and arms through the cleansing smoke. Keep your cards to offer in the burning bowl outside following the ceremonial. Enjoy the beautiful voice of Loreena McKinnett as the smoke offering commences... [Play Music: All Souls Night by Loreena McKinnett]*

**\* Closing Words (Recite In Unison):** *As we open the Sacred Circle let us give thanks to Deity, our spirit guides, departed loved ones and beloved community for empowering this practice – let us go forth in the dance of life with compassion for all sentient beings. We dedicate our merit to them that they may be liberated from suffering. So mote it be. by Athne Machdane*

**Spiral Dance:** Service leader explains spiral dance then cues recorded music, if drummers are available provide drum beat. All those willing and able join hands and follow service leader and drummers at front of processional. Spiral dance will run indoors throughout the building for the duration of one song played on the sound system. At the conclusion the circle will move outside and form around the fire bowl set up in the parking lot containing the cards from the devotional activity and any previous altar of hope cards. These will be burnt in an offering which will conclude the formal event. **[Play Music: Unda by Faun]**

**\*\* Please rise as in body or spirit**