

Ancient Sea Island Continuum



The Cherokee Solstice

June 22, 2014

RITUAL SPACE PREPARATION

Fire pit, wood, altar with lavender, peppermint, sage, marigolds & artificial sunflowers, ears of corn (7 for the clans, 1 for those who have passed), seasonal crops & fruits, Roman, Greek, Christian, Celtic, Wiccan & Native American imagery, green pebbles, and small wood pieces with corresponding elements painted on them for each direction.

SMUDGING

Air smudges with sage. Earth hands two green pebbles to celebrants.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcomer *UUFB welcome, visitors, announcements, and then rings the singing bowl to center attention...*

Today, Ancient Sea Island Continuum, the Pagan spiritual affinity group of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort, presents a Cherokee Solstice. As you share our Earth-centered worship, the Continuum asks you to keep two thoughts in your minds. First, consider a spirit, a direction, or a declaration as a pattern of energy. You may perceive this energy as psychological, cultural, spiritual, or magickal. Second, Native American culture is alive, and the songs, words, and dance you participate in today represent unique and specific meanings to each tribe, and in today's ceremony, the Cherokee heritage of some of our members. By doing so, you respect the past, present, and future of America's Native Peoples.

We begin with our customary Fellowship traditions, but in a different order. First, we will state our Mission, collect your offerings and enjoy a *Story for All Ages*. Then we will prepare a sacred space within which we may worship and celebrate using the deepest convictions of our souls, hearts, and minds. Joys and Sorrows will be collectively commemorated within this sacred space. Now, let us begin *A Cherokee Solstice*. Please turn to your ASIC booklets and join me in reciting aloud our mission statement.

MISSION STATEMENT

Welcomer invites fellow worshipper to light UU candle on altar.

All

Our mission is to create a joyful sanctuary for spiritual and intellectual growth, embracing all souls in a nurturing community from which we go forth as activists for social justice and as stewards of the natural world.

OFFERING

Welcomer

Our Fellowship encourages all of us to grow more generous in spirit and in action. Let the fire of the longest days of the year inspire your generosity of spirit. If you are visiting us for the first time, please let the basket pass by. To the members of our Fellowship, I invite you to exercise generosity of spirit. With your offering that helps build this self-supporting church, we gratefully receive your gifts.

Guide and Air pass the basket around the circle, as music plays....

MUSIC

Drumming

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Cherokee Creation Story

Storyteller

When the world began it was all water. The animals lived on the top or in the sky. Eventually it became too crowded. So the water-beetle, set off to discover land. Finding none, he dove down deep into the water, returning with soft mud. Each time he dived he brought back the mud until an island was formed. This island became suspended by cords attached at each cardinal point – North, South, East and West. The Great Buzzard was sent down to find a dry place for all

to live, but the island was still too soft. He became tired while searching and when his wings struck the soft island deep valleys were created. As his wings rose, mountains were formed. Once the island dried all the animals came down to live. The darkness was great, so they placed the Sun in a continuous track which crossed the island from East to West. Each day the animals raised the Sun a little farther from the island, until on the 7th day it was the perfect height and temperature. The animals and plants were told to keep watch for seven nights, but many fell asleep. Only the owl, panther, bat and a few other animals stayed awake. These animals were given the power to see in the dark and prey on those that slept at night. The cedar, pine, spruce, holly and laurel also stayed awake. These plants were given the power of eternal greenness and source for great medicine. The other plants were condemned to shed their leaves each year, turning brown and withered.

The last creatures to come to the island were humans. A brother and sister came first. One day the brother struck the sister with a fish and said "Multiply"! Seven days later a child was born. Every seven days thereafter another child was born. When the island became too full, the sister was stopped and women were made to bare only one child per year. This is the Cherokee's story of how the animals, plants, humans and the island we call Earth, came into being.

Afterwards, singing...

All

We will sing all together as the world turns 'round.

We will sing all together as the day grows long.

We will sing all together growing wise and strong.

In the name of all of our children.
(Children's Song by Sally Rogers)

PRELUDE MUSIC

Cherokee Morning Song

<http://youtu.be/YhcgX1VHsqk>

Welcomer exits. All sing as Priestess, Priest, Shaman, Elements (North, South, East, and West) and Guide process in via a spiral circle three times around. Priestess, Priest, and Shaman finish at the altar, Guide at circle center and Elements in their directions.

We n' de ya ho,
We n' de ya ho,
We n' de ya,
We n' de ya
Ho ho ho ho,
He ya ho,
He ya ho,
Ya ya ya.

*I am of the Great Spirit, It is so,
I am of the Great Spirit, It is so,
I am of the Great Spirit,
I am of the Great Spirit,
It is so, it is so, it is so, it is so,
Great Spirit, it is so,
Great Spirit, it is so,
Great Spirit, Great Spirit, Great Spirit.*

Guide

Our ceremony today has many meanings. The traditions presented are small representations of different cultures and beliefs around the world. Earth centered religions celebrate the Summer Solstice, the point on the Wheel of the Year, opposite of Yule, where there is a great battle between light and dark. The Sun God departs to bring life and warmth to the Southern Hemisphere, as we celebrate the first harvest. In ancient Rome, the month of June was

named after the Goddess Juno who was the Patroness of Marriage. Still today, most weddings are held during this midsummer time. In Greece they celebrate Apollo the God of Sun, music, medicine and healing. The Celtic tradition called "Give it to the pebble" is celebrated by cultures across the world. It is believed that when you whisper your request to the pebble, while circling the Litha fire three times, the stone will possess your request. The stone is then tossed into the fire which releases your prayer to the Gods. Native Americans also celebrate the midsummer with the Green Corn Festival. In Cherokee traditions the first harvest is celebrated during late June or early July. The festival continues for four days and included dances, fasting, games of stickball, cleansing, prayer and feasting. Today's ceremony is an infusion of these traditions, all of which represent a new beginning, a change in the year and a time for celebration. Ancient Sea Island Continuum incorporates all Earth-centered beliefs and is constructed by members who bring together a vast cultural array of philosophies and customs. Two of our members immersed their rich Earth centered Cherokee heritage and love of world cultures into another member's deep-rooted Native and Pagan beliefs. The sudden recent passing of one of them is a tragic loss to our community, and has broken the hearts of all who loved him. But this ceremony not only represents his beliefs, but it is a true representation of him. He was a registered Cherokee and half Celtic, a self-identified Pagan, a teacher of Roman and Greek history, a member of the Unitarian Universalists family and an inspiration to the community. So today we continue his work, and

celebrate the traditions of native cultures around the world.

Guide moves to one of the quarters.

QUARTER CALLS

Priestess I call to the quarters, the elements of our world, to bring their blessings upon our gathering. For here, as in the beginning, we come together to create a world in which all can live harmoniously.

Priest I call to the seven clans, the founders of our tribe, to give their blessings upon our gathering. I ask the Panther for purification, the Wind for breath, the Bird for intelligence, the Paint for direction, the Deer for peace, the Bear for Earth and the Wolf for entrance to the Spirit world.

Shaman Let us invoke the elements.

South Spirits of the South, I invite you to bring the warmth of fire into our fields and hearts. Bless this sacred rite.

All Hail and Welcome!

West Spirits of the West, I invite you to bring the cleansing and energy of water to our crops and souls. Bless this sacred rite.

All Hail and Welcome!

North Spirits of the North, I invite you to bring the nourishment and foundation of earth to our roots and community. Bless this sacred rite.

All Hail and Welcome!

East Spirits of the East, I invite you to bring the clarity and comfort of air to carry our seeds and open our minds. Bless this sacred rite.

All Hail and Welcome!

*Priest/
Priestess/
Shaman* God and Goddess, we invite you to bring the passion of life and the fellowship of faith to all living things. Bless this sacred rite.

All Great Spirits we thank you!

Priestess The Summer Solstice is upon us! We celebrate the Oak King, Lord of Light. His warmth and radiance fills the fields with food, the meadows with flowers and the Earth with life. The Shaman frolics through the land, enveloping his pregnant Goddess in a beautiful world of colors, scents and sounds.

We gather together to celebrate the marriage of the Sun and Moon, and rejoice in their gifts. The waxing year, season of fertility and life, unites with the waning year, season of harvest and wisdom. As we greet the dark half of the year, we must bid farewell to the young Lord until the wheel turns and we meet again at Yule. May his blessings of light and youth continue on in our hearts.

Shaman Great Spirit (*U-ne-qua*), whose voice I hear in the wind, Whose breath gives life to all the world. Hear me; I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold
the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made and
my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may understand the things you
have taught my people.
Help me to remain calm and strong in the face of all
that comes towards me.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf
and rock.
Help me seek pure thoughts and act with the intention
of helping others.
Help me find compassion without empathy
overwhelming me.
I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but
to fight my greatest enemy MYSELF.
Make me always ready to come to you with clean
hands and straight eyes.
So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may
come to you without shame.

Priestess holds Water as Priest recites the Serenity Prayer in Cherokee

SERENITY PRAYER

<http://www.culturev.com/chokeke/front/serenity.html>

Priest

u-ne-la-na-hi s-gv-si nv-wa-do-hi-ya-di o-s-da a-yi-li-di
ni-ga-di gv-gi-ne-tli-yv-s-di ni-ge-s-sv-na ge-sv-i
*God, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I
cannot change,*
a-le u-tla-ni-gi- da a-quu-da-na- da-di-s-di a-gi-ne-tli-yv-
s-di na gv-gi-ne-tli-yv-s-di ge-sv-i

The courage to change the things I can,

a-le a-ga-do-hv-ne- s-di a-quu-nv-da yu-li-s-do-si d-u-
da-le-hna- v-i

and the wisdom to know the difference.

O-s-dv na-s-gi-na-i go-hi i-ga

Just for today!

Priestess places Water on altar. Priest & Priestess stand back to back.

Priestess I speak to the sky, the earth, the flame, the water from
which I was born.

Priest I speak to my ancestors, the seven clans, the almighty
creator.

Priestess I follow the path of the Goddess. The Sun and Moon
are my guide.

Priest I follow the path of God, forgiveness and redemption
are my guide.

Priestess I believe in the circle of life and reincarnation.

Priest I believe in the spirit of Heaven and resurrection.

Priest & Priestess turn towards each other...

Priest/Priestess I live as one with the Earth, let my prayers be heard.

Priestess Maiden, Mother and Crone

Priest Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Priest/Priestess Unite our hearts and bless this rite

All So mote it be

Elements pass two seeds to the members in their quarter.

Priestess Please take two seeds. Then close your eyes and listen to the sounds of nature. Breathe in her summer fragrances and appreciate her gifts.

MUSIC

Drumming

Priest/Priestess/Shaman join hands until everyone has received their seeds in silent prayer/meditation. Shaman & Priest take the clay balls to each of the elements. Priest follows Shaman and gives the elements a blessing, sprinkling them with the blessed water.

<http://www.culturev.com/chokeee/front/traditional.html>

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ga lv lo hi gi ni do da

Sky, our grandfather

ᏁᏚᏂ ᏚᏂᏚᏂ

nv da gi ni li si

Sun, our grandmother

ᏂᏍᏰ ᏚᏂᏚᏂ

E lo hi gi ne tsi

Earth, our mother

ᏄᏍᏰᏄᏍᏰ

o tsa li he li ga

We are thankful/happy

Priestess dances the circle, with Music playing the drum, until Priest and Shaman return to the altar, then joins them.

Priest There are markings on both sides of your tokens. The picture represents the Cherokee symbol for the direction in which you are standing.

Element call their direction one at a time, same order as invocation. South, West, North, East ...

Shaman Apollo

Priestess The second side represents one letter for each of the five in Ethan's name.

Elements call their letter one at a time, same order as invocation. E, T, H, A ...

Shaman "N"

Priest Together we have molded this island called Earth, which is held together by the bonds of the elements. *Holds up the clay ball of the God and Goddess.*

Priestess Hold the seeds tight in your hands. Tell them your joys and sorrows. When your element comes by, press one into the clay. The other is to take with you. It is a reminder that the seed of Ethan's spirit lives within us, to nurture and love for all time. Please join us in singing the Cherokee National Anthem... Amazing Grace.

Elements proceed to each member with clay element.

MUSIC

Amazing Grace

All

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

T'was Grace that taught my heart to fear.
And Grace, my fears relieved.
How precious did that Grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
And Grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.

All sing while tokens are pressed into clay. Continue singing until Priestess walks to Litha fire & signals for all to stop. Priest/Priestess/Shaman place the spirit clay on top of the water beetle. All take seeds and do the same. Then press one of each element symbol, and one of each letter into spirit clay to form all five symbols and the name of our deceased.

After all members of a quarter have placed their seeds, Elements bring the clay to the altar, hand it to Shaman. Shaman places each ball of

clay next to the spirit clay in its directional position, forming a circle around it. Priestess walks to the Litha fire ...

Priestess Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there – I do not sleep.
I am the thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints in snow,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
As you awake with the morning's hush
I am the swift up-flinging rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight.
Do not stand at my grave and cry
I am not there – I did not die.

-Mary Frye-

*Priest/
Priestess/
Shaman* God and Goddess, we thank you for blessing this
fellowship and vow to love the Earth and all that dwell
upon it. Go if you must, stay if you will, you are always
welcome.

All Hail and farewell!

South Spirits of the South, we thank you for blessing our
fields and hearts during this sacred rite. Go if you must,
stay if you will, you are always welcome.

All Hail and farewell!

West Spirits of the West, we thank you for blessing our
gathering with the cleansing of our souls and the
energy for our crops. Go if you must, stay if you will,
you are always welcome.

All

Hail and farewell!

North

Spirits of the North, we thank you for blessing our community and providing the foundation to grow upon. Go if you must, stay if you will, you are always welcome.

All

Hail and farewell!

East

Spirits of the East, we thank you for blessing our ceremony and opening our minds. Go if you must, stay if you will, you are always welcome.

All

Hail and farewell!

Guide

The ritual will conclude with the Priestess, Priest, Shaman, and Elements leading a Cherokee procession called the Stomp Dance. When you arrived, each of you was given a small green stone for the Celtic tradition of "*give it to the pebble*". When your turn comes, whisper a prayer to the stone as you dance and tap three times around the Litha fire. On your third turn around the fire, cast the stone into the flames. This will release your prayer to the Gods, then follow the procession into the building for the potluck feast. If you're unable to join the dance, toss your pebble into the fire whenever convenient before joining the feast.

EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE

Guide

We will now close the circle we cast and begin our Stomp Dance. Now, please join me in reciting aloud *Extinguishing the Chalice*.

Guide extinguishes the chalice flame...

All The chalice flame is extinguished until once again ignited by the strength of our gathering in community with a mission for justice and our hearts full of love.

Priestess May the Love of the Goddess ...

Priest And the Peace of the God ...

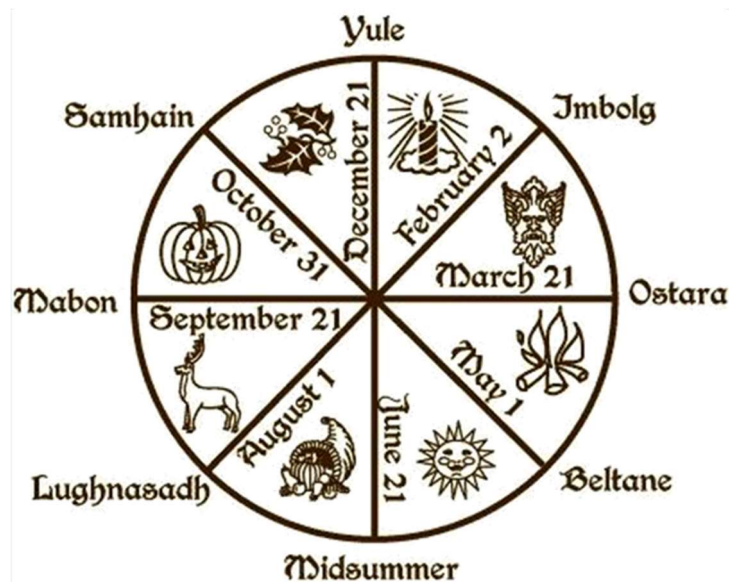
Both Go with you in your hearts.

All The circle is open,
But never broken.
Merry meet, merry part,
And merry meet again!

MUSIC

Drumming

Priestess, Priest, Shaman, Guide and Elements begin the Stomp Dance spiral, pulling the Fellowship along. All cast their stones, then weave through the lines and out into the feast.



UUFB COVENANT

How we agree to be together

In full acceptance of our mission statement and in the desire to further its realization, we the members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort, South Carolina, do covenant to be in community with each other in the following ways:

We will apply our Unitarian Universalist Principles to congregational life and governance.

We will respect & support those we have chosen to lead and serve us.

We will practice respectful speech and listening among ourselves, including discussion of those not present, and will assume good intentions of one another.

We will take responsibility for our words and actions, while treating ideas and opinions different from our own with respect.

We will bring problems or concerns directly to those who hold responsibility, speaking with kindness and respect.

While we respect individual needs, the health, safety, and well-being of our religious community transcends individual agendas.

When faced with conflict within our congregation, we will seek to work together to address the conflict and remain in relationship.

When covenant is broken, we will seek to reconcile our relationships in direct and respectful ways.

Thus we will endeavor to maintain and continue our covenant as a healthy religious community, joyfully prepared to carry our mission to the wider world.

ASIC - UUFB COVENANT

As we covenant in new relationship, we hold up to each other our values, our expectations, and our commitment to the well-being of our beloved Unitarian Universalist Community.

We, the Circle, promise to recognize and respect the spiritual authority of the Minister. We will include the Minister in the planning of ceremonies the Circle offers. We will support the Minister's requests to share our traditions of Earth-centered worship with the congregation.

I, the Minister, pledge to respect the Circle and the spiritual path of each of its members, counseling and supporting members of the Circle as appropriate. When accepting an invitation to the planning and leading of ritual, I will model openness to the Earth-centered spiritual practice of honoring Nature/Mother Earth.

We, the Circle, promise the Board to provide education on the history, practices and benefits of living the Earth-centered spiritual path. We will include an educational component when an Earth-centered ceremony is offered. In relationship with the congregation, we will work toward Earth-centered justice. We promise to uphold the best practices of Unitarian Universalism in our activities.

We, the Board, will value the Circle's place as the first spiritual affinity group founded within our congregation, and will support its development with respect and appreciation. We promise to be open to the language of Earth-centered spirituality as may be learned and understood through our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources. We will respect the personal spiritual affinity for rituals celebrating the cycles of Nature.

We, the Circle and the Board, covenant with each other to trust that communications are offered in the best interest of the congregation. We will communicate about what is working and offer discussion on what is not. Above all, we promise each other to listen with open minds and hearts.

May it be so.



Ancient Sea Island Continuum

*The Earth-centered spiritual affinity group
of the
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort
178 Sams Point Road, Beaufort, SC 29907*

www.AncientSIC.org