

Imbolc 2014

Dear Ones,
Happy Imbolc! Happy Brigid's Feast Day!
Happy Groundhog Day! Happy Bear Day!

A big thanks to the many people who helped make our Imbolc Celebration so beautiful and meaningful. Roger, Christine, and Melissa helped with preparing the space. Nancy added wonderful contributions to the ceremony. Farrunnissa co-led the Dances with me. Hamid, Hayat, and Sophiana were our musicians. Many people helped with the cleanup, especially Steve! Special thanks to Hamid's group who made their debut playing Irish tunes for the potluck:



Our day began with a pilgrimage to bless the re-awakening land from its slumber:



The weather was good for Calling the Directions and dancing Thunder Beings around a fire. As pilgrims to the shrine of Brigid we purified ourselves at the Elements Altars. Here is the Water Altar:



Then we made Brigid's crosses for protection and healing and birdseed mandalas as offerings (on the beautiful wooden bases Roger made for us):



Here is Brigid's Altar:



and the rotating sunwheel we lit to call back the sun:



The slide show illustrated the powerful appeal of Brigid as a unifying figure who brings together Pagans and Christians, Catholics and Protestants, men and women, rich and poor, sacred and secular, spirit and nature, animals and humans.

Here is one of my favorite images from the slide show:



Another theme of the evening was about the archetypal theme of hibernation and re-emergence as metaphor for the life-death-rebirth initiatory process as symbolized by Snake, Groundhog, and Bear. We saw this Black Bear at Pocosin Lakes Wildlife Refuge:



Finally, I appreciate all the celebrants' heartfelt sharing of seasonal poems, songs, and stories.



With love, Hakima Betty Lou