



May 1, 2016

Beltane Reflections

There were dire predictions for showers and thunderstorms on Beltane. It rained all morning as we were setting up, but in the afternoon blue sky magically appeared, and over 50 celebrants poured in as if through the opening in the sky. Your eagerness and enthusiasm powered the whole celebration! It felt like we were all, in turn, surrounded by loving spirits! What an amazing day!

Thanks to Libby for once again welcoming us to her sanctified OneSpirit land. Roger beautified the ceremonial fields, the Maypole, and the fire circle with his usual creative artistry. Nancy made lovely flower garlands and was a great help throughout. Thanks to our talented musicians Hayat, Hamid, and Merlyn and to the singers who joined with us in opening the Directions and calling with gratitude to the Elements and Ancestors, and to the Spirits of the Land. Thanks to the vigorous chanters who spurred on the lively Maypole dancers:



Gratitude to Ann for sitting at the welcome table and to Vanessa and Elizabeth who were our potluck angels once again. And finally, a big thanks to our son, Tristan, for hanging out taking most of these great photos. (He calls the above pic "Shamom.")

We began with pilgrimage to the Sacred Spring. We dipped clooties into her healing waters, hung them as prayers on the trees, sprinkled rose petals in gratitude, spent quiet time visioning at this portal between the worlds, and sang K. Hannan's Water in the Well in honor of the recent loss of Lilith, a chorus member. *There's water in the well, there's water in the well, there's water in the well, all is love.... Seen and unseen, known or forgotten, ever risin' in the well, all is love.*



Here is a pilgrim carrying the horn that she filled with water from the spring that we poured as libations to the land:



A sweet synchronicity happened when we found out that May 1 was Lea and Donovan's anniversary, and their wedding had featured a Maypole! They graciously agreed to engage in the "serious play" of being crowned the May King and Queen under the sacred World Tree. The King/Green Man vowed to care for the May Queen/Goddess of the Land in return for her nurturing the health and well being of the whole community of life.



Then the community danced the Maypole, decorating the Tree with our colorful prayer ribbons, weaving a beautiful pattern of intertwined energies, fervently helping to bring the light of the sun down to fertilize the earth. We then read the pattern as an oracle to glean the solemn (and humorous) meanings of what we had woven together.





We were fortunate to have *Stellaria*, Lea and Cynthia, perform for us. They had us moving and singing with two wonderful songs: *I draw up from the earth the spirit of life, through the soles of my feet and the palms of my hands. I draw down from the sky the spirit of love, flowing into my heart, flowing out through my song....* And the very powerful *Earth is Holy: Why have we forgotten? Forest is a holy place, stand within its circle, feel its power, know its grace.... Why have we forgotten? Earth is holy, earth is whole, woven all of beauty, she is mother to us all....*



We began the Fire Ceremony by dancing the favorite Beltane Brand dance: *The wheel of the year is turning, and the Beltane fires are burning, so give your hand, and take your brand, to kindle your own hearth's yearning.* Here the dancers become turning wheels:



Our May Queen and King lit the twin fires with the bundles of nine sacred woods, honoring our precious forest trees. *Fire, fire, fire, kindle my spirit, fire. In your flame, naught remains, but fire, fire, fire.* Then we processed under the joined hands of our friends, between the fires, first for purification and releasing, then again for igniting our passions and illuminating our hearts. Lighting our Beltane firebrands, we shared some of our deep hopes and intentions, witnessed and supported by all.



Here we are dancing to, with, and for our fellow beings: *May I walk in beauty, may I walk in peace.... All my relations, all my relations. All life is sacred, the mountains and*

the seas. All life is sacred, the animals and the trees.... All my relations ...



And we merrily parted with: May the circle be open, yet unbroken, may the love... joy ... peace of the Goddess be ever in our hearts!

What delighted me most of all this year was being surrounded by such a lively mix of ages from 6 to 75, little kids, teens, young adults, and on up to us elders, all sharing the ceremonies and dances together:



May our creative passions burn brightly in service to the One Circle of Being.

With Love to all of you,
Hakima Betty Lou
blchaika@earthlink.net

Mark your calendar !

The next *Spirit and Nature* Cross-quarter Celebrations sponsored by the Ziraat Circle of the Rose Heart Sufi Community are:

Lughnasa (Lunasa)

Wednesday, July 27, 7-9pm, at the Pittsboro Senior Center.

Samhain

Saturday, October 29, location TBD.

Imbolc

Saturday, January 28, at Church of Reconciliation in Chapel Hill.