

Spring Equinox: 2000 (A full moon is on this day.)

At Cheryl's house in Cohasset

Wear green for growth of plants

BRING:

LeeAnn: flowers, Green round tablecloth, barretts and kazoos to put on the manzanita forest path. Printed paper for our book. New potatoes and bacon

Cheryl: green boughs, , bright colors to decorate eggs. Make a big poster of the egg symbols. An egg meal

Marci: soil and decorated pots with names written on them, Honey cakes or coffee cake

Earth Prayers page 211

"At the heart of earth prayer is a sense of belonging. Belonging is the basic truth of our existence. We belong here. Life belongs here. Likewise, at the heart of gratefulness, in its deepest sense, we also find an expression of belonging. When we say "Thank you" we really are saying "We belong together." That is why we sometimes find it so difficult to say "Thank you"--because we don't want to acknowledge our interdependence. We don't want to be obliged. But in a healthy society that is exactly what we seek: mutual obligations. Everyone is obliged to everyone and everything else; we all belong together, we are *of* each other. In this awareness we are freed from self preoccupation--and only then, emptied of self, can we be filled with thanks. Within this human impulse of gratitude flow the vast cycles of universal reciprocity--for everything that is taken, something has to be given in return. If you merely take in a breath and stop there you will die. Likewise if you merely breathe out. Life is not giving or taking, but give and take. This is the dynamic expression of universal belonging expressed in our thanksgiving."

"All beings on earth: the trees, the animals, the wind and rivers give away to one another so all is in balance."

Arrive, park along the road, put our food in the kitchen, go outside and decorate eggs, LeeAnn says the food blessing, Earth Prayers page 354, eat, then drum.

Sing: The earth, the air, the fire, the water, return, return, return, return.
While drumming, we leave our drums and rattles behind as we are invited to..

Begin our circle around the directions by inviting each person down the steps towards the field through the manzanita as we continue to sing. LeeAnn and Marci tell people to pick a barrette from the branches if they wish.

East: ~~all~~ We gather in a circle in the field.
Cheryl: " We welcome the renewal of our inspirations from the winds of the East."

Cheryl passes around 3 other cedar branches and we bless each other in a clockwise direction as Cheryl reads one line and we respond:

**"We join with the earth and with each other
To bring new life to the land
To restore the waters
To refresh the air."**

Cheryl: "This is the dawn of the Spring Equinox. The life forces of Earth have turned toward renewal; new life awakens us to a recreated world. This time is sacred to dawn, youth, the morning star and the East. Eostre (estrus) is a dawn goddess of fertility and rebirth. The festival of Astarte March 17 means "womb". At this time the Goddess as the earth is pregnant. As the goddess of the morning and evening star, Astarte is also Venus, goddess of love, passion and creativity. In the story of Demeter and Persephone, this is the time of Persephone's reappearance on earth."

"The first days of Spring make us all feel young again. Let optimism touch our hearts as the tender spring sunshine touches the earth."

Sing: Wings (I keep wanting to spread my arms..)
As we walk toward the

South: ~~for~~ We gather in a circle around the apple tree.
Marci: "We welcome the renewing warmth and energy from the South. We give away our thanks to the trees which give away fruit and nuts."

Marci: lights incense and passes them to 3 other persons as we bless each other in a clockwise direction. Marci says each line and we respond:

**" We join with the Earth and with each other
To renew the forests
To care for the plants
To protect the creatures."**

Join hands and one says their name when they wish to be called into the circle.

Sing: Name. name. name. name. let me tell you how I feel. Knowing you will give us pleasure, I'll love you so.

The person in the center takes the hand of someone and pulls them into the circle as they return to the circle.

When we are finished we walk toward the

West: *water* We gather in a circle around the home site
LeeAnn: "We welcome new life within our hearts, replenished by the Western waters. We give away our thanks to the rivers and lakes which give away their water."

LeeAnn gives out 3 more spritzers of glitter face spray to bless each other in a clockwise direction as she says each line and we respond.

**"We join with the earth and with each other
To celebrate the seas
To rejoice in the sunlight
To sing songs to the stars"**

Sing: We all come from the Goddess and to her we shall return like a drop of rain flowing to the ocean.

As we walk toward the

North: *earth* we gather in a circle on the pool deck.
Marci says: "We respond as part of the renewal of life on earth as we salute the North. We give away our thanks to the earth which gives us our home."
"Pick up a pot and deliver it to the person whose name is written on it."
Marci says then we respond.

**"We join with the Earth and with each other
To recreate the human community
To promote Justice and peace
To remember our children."**

Then we plant seeds in the pots.
Marci reads this visualization as the seeds are planted
from Earth Prayers page 288

**To be of the Earth is to know
the restlessness of being a seed
the darkness of being planted
the struggle toward the light
the pain of growth into the light
the joy of bursting and bearing fruit
the love of being food for someone
the scattering of your seeds
the decay of the seasons
the mystery of death
and the miracle of birth.**

Sing: Earth My Body, Water my blood, Air my breath and Fire my spirit.
As we walk back toward the house

Spirit Center: join a circle in the yard next to the pond deck.
Cheryl: "We welcome an awakened spirit echoed in the unfolding life around us.
Let us feel the vitality of renewal sweep through us."

LeeAnn passes out the paper for our book.
"On it is the poem we read at each direction,
at the end, we will all read in unison.
There is space to write your reflections on the other side."

Beth reads and we respond to each line:
**"We join with the Earth and with each other.
We join together as many and diverse expressions
of one loving mystery:
for the healing of the earth and the renewal of all life."**

Eggs are perfect symbols of creation. They produce life.
The shell represents the earth, the membrane air, the yolk fire, and the white water.

Marci: In this game, close your eyes and pick one egg out of the basket. Hide your eggs, go back and pick out a kazoo and whistle to play. When we have finished hiding eggs, we'll hunt for eggs, gather back into the circle and discuss the symbols revealed to us.

"Why did you choose this egg. What does it mean to you?"

Sing: I am as life created me, in the love in the light in the glory.

Closing:

Join hands and

Sing: May the circle be open, but unbroken.