

A RITUAL FOR LUGHNASADH

If you have the time and space, both mentally and physically, it can be lovely to mark the festival of Lughnasadh with a personal ritual. This ritual can be conducted indoors or outdoors, day or night. It creates space for the practitioner to celebrate the harvest, and to be thankful for their skills.

Take some time to think of three or more skills that you have; things you are good at, and enjoy, but you're not necessarily an expert in. Be honest with yourself, but don't be modest: this is a time to celebrate! They might be gardening, cooking, music, or painting.

Choose an object to represent each of your skills eg. a leaf, or a tool of some sort.



Find a spot that feels comfortable and set an altar, on a small table or on a piece of fabric on the ground. You will need a central candle, and four candles for each compass point, incense, wine or juice (I used homemade blueberry smoothie) and a bowl for it (I used a traditional Quaich), a board of harvest foods like bread, berries, cheese and chutney, and a bell. Prepare yourself mentally for your ritual; meditate, don some ceremonial dress, or take some time in nature.



To open your ritual, say "I come to this place to recognise the ancient festival of Lughnasadh, to witness the changing seasons, the turning of the wheel, and the waning of the year. To be present in this time of plenty and to be thankful for my skills." Lay your objects on the altar, candles first, and then pour your wine or juice into the ceremonial bowl.



Lay out your harvest foods on a board and place this on your altar.



Now ring your bell three times. Light your candles, at each four compass points first, followed by the central candle, and then light your incense.



Holding your incense, draw a circle around your altar, starting at the East compass point, pausing to say, "I breathe the air of the East."
At South pause and say "I light the fire of the South."
At West pause and say "I swim in the water of the West"
At North pause and say "I am held by the earth of the North."



Now lift each ritual object that you chose to represent your various skills, in turn, and consider it. Take time to remember why you chose this skill, and why you are thankful for having it in your life. Remember all the time you put into learning this skill, and remember all the times you used it, alone and with others. Visualise yourself using your skill, and let its energy fill you up. Offer yourself and the universe thanks and celebration for bringing this skill into your life. Once you have done this with each skill, take some time to ground yourself.



Now take a drink from your bowl, giving thanks to the harvest. Eat some of the harvest foods you have gathered, and mindfully give thanks for the energy they give you.

Close the ritual by retracing the circle you created with your incense, and when you arrive back at the East point, ring the bell again three times.



Your ritual is complete, blow out your candles and put away your things. Perhaps take your harvest foods and eat the rest while letting yourself come out of the ritual headspace.

May your Lughnasadh be joyful and your harvests be full!

Words by Katrin Blackwater & Dima Nowarah
Stills from 'Lughnasadh' film by Katrin Blackwater

Adapted from a ritual on www.patheos.com