

Opening (Statement of Intent)

Preparing to Ourselves for Sacred Time

Washing our hands recalls the sacredness of the body and prepares us to create and enter sacred space. Rinse the week away. Rinse your fears away. Rinse the negative energy away.

Entering the Space

Priestess begins:

Barchu Dear One(s), Shekhina, Holy Name I call on the light of my soul as “your name.”

Like generations before us, we will light two candles to signify the change from regular time and space to sacred time and space. The candles symbolize many things. The light of a candle symbolizes the spark of the divine that resides in all of us. The candles represent the Shekinah, Divine Presence, and the Ein Sof – the eternal source. The candles above all represent a link with all who have come before and all who will come after. Once you all have entered and created the temple, we will say the blessings together.

Light candles (right then left)

When you are ready announce yourself, and be welcomed. Once in the space, light your candles and join the circle and welcome the rest who follow.

When ready to enter person will look to those in circle space and sing/say:

Barchu Dear One(s), Shekhina, Holy Name I call on the light of my soul as “your name.”

Those in the space will respond (sing/say)

Barchu dear one, Person's Name, you have called on the light of your soul -- welcome home.

Creating Sacred Space

Now as the blessing is said we cover our eyes with our hands and turn towards the candles. Then three times we draw the energy of the candles to us before we open our eyes. Three times we breathe in and draw the energy to us and exhale reaching out again, creating a circle of sacred space, a sacred temple of souls.

Traditional Hebrew Blessing with feminine language.

Let us bless the Source of Life

As we bless the Source of Life so may we be blessed. – Group Response

As we bless the Source of Life so are we blessed.¹

Together we say, “The Divine abounds everywhere and dwells in everything. The Many are One.”²

¹ Marcia Falk; The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival; Beacon Press; 1999

² Ibid

Blessing of Elements

As tonight is a festive occasion and is about bringing our awareness to things of spirit and creating a temporal temple for the Shekhinah, and we will acknowledge and honor the elements with song and poems.

Participants should recite poems or songs for each element after the invocation to the element

Water:

We bring our awareness to the water of life -- the mysterious unknown, the primordial beginnings of life, the blood that runs through our veins, the rain that feeds our crops, the water that quenches our thirst.

Suggested Poem: April Rain Song by Langston Hughes

Air:

We bring our awareness to the air, the breath of life -- the name YHVH, the sound of breath, the sound of an infant's first cry, the sound of ecstasy, the sound of love, the sound of creation.

Suggested Poem: Who has Seen the Wind by Christina Rossetti

Fire

We bring our awareness to the fire, the spark of the Divine within us -- guiding light, fires of creativity, heat of passion, hearth-fire of the home.

Suggested Poem: Jewels by Christina Rossetti

Earth:

We bring our awareness to the earth, from which we begin and end. We walk firmly forward with the earth under our feet.

Suggested Poem: Enter this Deserted House by Shel Silverstein

Honoring the Divine Source - Shema

Now we will say the Shema, the central prayer of Judaism together. We will do this in Hebrew and I invite you to use whichever you are most comfortable and whichever Divine name you are most comfortable. If you prefer Shekhina, Adonai, Elohim, Havayah, HaMakom, El Shaddai – any of these name or the many others, use the one that comes most naturally to you. As tonight is celebration of a Hebrew tradition, I do ask that you choose a Hebrew name. We will say each word of the shema and hold each word for a full breath – to fully experience the word. Hold each word for as long as you are able. If you do not know the Hebrew, I invite you to join in using “Shalom,” which means “Peace,” for each word.

Shema Yisrael
Elohim Eloheinu
Elohim Echad

Restoring Shekinah

Now let us restore Shekinah to her place in Israel and the world, and let us infuse all places with her presence by bringing our awareness to the sparks of the Divine that are in us and all things. Let us bring our awareness to the ever present Presence and the Web which connects all things past, present and future.

Tonight we will do this with song and dance. As we dance, we restore the Shekinah by connecting the Divine energy within each of us to each other and all things. Let that spark grow to the center of the circle and mix with the energy of all the other people in this circle. As you dance, remember with joy those who have passed before us. Invite the memory of loved ones who have passed on, to join you in joy. Take the spark of them that resides in your memories and add it to your own, connecting past present and future. Let the energy blend and grow, and create the living Presence, Shekinah.

Feel the joy of movement,
The joy of song,
The joy of dance,
The joy of love,
The joy of peace,
The joy of Sabbath.

Sing until you can no longer say the words. Dance until you can no longer keep on your feet.
The Spirit is flowing, flowing and growing. The Spirit is flowing through you and me
Adonai guide me, be faithfully beside me
Adonai guide me, and bless me

The Spirit is flowing, flowing and growing. The Spirit is flowing through you and me
Shekhina reside in me your wisdom lives inside of me.
Shekhina reside in me, oh Holy of Holies

Interweaving Circle Dance

Blessing Divine in Each Other

All join hands – said jointly or by leader/participant

Each of us has a name given by the source of life and given by our parents
Each of us has a name given by our stature and our smile and given by what we wear
Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given by our walls
Each of us has a name given by the stars and given by our neighbors
Each of us has a name given by our sins and given by our longing
Each of us has a name given by our enemies and given by our love
Each of us has a name given by our celebrations and given by our work
Each of us has a name given by the seasons and given by our blindness
Each of us has a name given by the sea and given by our death³

Let us greet the Shekinah, the Presence of the Divine, in each other.
(Becoming “Secret Handshake” - place right hand on heart, and left hand on heart of partner)
XXX I honor and cherish the Divine in you. XXX I honor and cherish the Divine in you. (Goes around circle)

Kiddush

Our celebration soon comes to a close. We now enjoy and share sweet wine and bread.

³ Marcia Falk; The Book of Blessings: New Jewish Prayers for Daily Life, the Sabbath, and the New Moon Festival; Beacon Press; 1999

Blessing over Wine
(Hebrew prayers first)

Let us bless the Source of Life
That ripens fruit on vine
As we hallow the seventh day –
The Sabbath day –
In remembrance of creation

Blessed be. *All drink.*

Blessing of Bread
(Hebrew prayers first)

Let us bless the Source of Life
That brings for bread from the earth.

Blessed be. *All Eat.*

Closing

The Sabbath remains with us until sundown tomorrow, so we will not release this temporal temple or anything we have brought into it. Over this time she will grow and mature from Maiden Bride, to Mother, to Crone, and back again to the dark, unknowable void. We carry this sacred space with us through time. Four 24 hours, no matter where we are, we live in sacred time – and so all places and things are sacred.

I have for each of you a gift, to help you release the Shekinah so the cycle may begin again. At sundown tomorrow, open these and smell the sweet spices, bisamin. Let it refresh and remind you as you release the Sabbath. Use these little packets of bisamin on your own if you must, but please consider joining Jennifer Hunter for the Havdalah ritual tomorrow so we can all release the Sabbath together.

Let us join hands and breath together once more.

May the blessings of peace and kindness,
Graciousness, goodness, and compassion
Flow among us
All the communities of Israel,
All peoples of the world.

We say together, “As we bless the Source of Life, so are we blessed.”

May this Sabbath bring you peace and restoration.

Blessed Be.

Tools:

- Altar table
- Two central candles
- Matches/Lighter
- Trays of tea lights
- Challah, board, cover, knife / salt
- Wine chalice / cups / wine / juice
- Bisamin packets