



The Five-Point Agenda

— The DreamRoads Collective, Starhawk, 1995
www.dreamroads.com/power/stara.html
www.starhawk.com

Sacred Values: Peace, Community, Family — For us, the sacred is embodied in the living systems of the earth and the human community. We see all things as interconnected and interrelated, and these values inform all our political stands. We support alliances across the barriers of difference, while recognizing that political decisions arise out of what we most value.

Diversity — We embrace diversity as integral to our country's strength and central to our common heritage. We understand the vital importance of biological diversity. We support education that includes many viewpoints and respect for differences. And equal access to resources and decision-making power for all.

Self-Determination — We stand for the right of all people to have a voice in decisions that affect them, the right of individuals to make free and informed choices regarding their bodies, sexuality, powers of reproduction, and manner of life.

Environment — We affirm that the interconnected life-systems of the earth have a right to be and an inherent value that goes beyond their usefulness for human ends.

Human Needs and Social Justice — Human beings have a right to those things that make possible a fulfilling life. Rather than protect the privilege of the few, government has the responsibility to assure that each person has access to the means and opportunities to pursue their own view of happiness.

Our only creed is the Reclaiming Principles of Unity. A Brief History of Reclaiming — Vibra Willow

The **Reclaiming Collective** was a group of women and men in the San Francisco Bay Area (1978-80) formed from classes in magic taught by Starhawk and Diane Baker. In 1997 the **Principles of Unity** were written and the collective dissolved. Reclaiming Witches are in US, Canada, UK, and Germany, largely due to the influence of Witch Camps in those places, as well as the influential writings of Starhawk.



Distinguishing features of the Reclaiming Tradition of Witchcraft

M. Macha NightMare,
and Vibra Willow © 2000

- no specific pantheon;
- group priest/esses and non-hierarchical covens;
- no formal membership or requirement of initiation, and when initiations are undertaken, customized ones;
- strong emphasis on political involvement and social and ecological responsibility/consciousness;
- no set liturgy (except certain large, public sabbat rituals) but rather training in principles of magic and structure of ritual, and to “speak as the spirit moves you” within that structure;
- cultivation of ecstatic states (customarily without the use of entheogens or psychotropics) and divine colloquy — more shamanic than ceremonial;
- cultivation of self-empowerment, self-discovery, creativity;
- extensive use of chanting and breathwork in magical rites;
- intense “energy-raising,” often using our trademark spiral dance (or even double helix/DNA molecule dance);
- magical use of Pentacle of Iron construct and its obverse, Pentacle of Pearl;
- concept of Three Souls or Selves: Younger Self (unconscious mind), Talking Self (verbal and conscious expression), Deep or God Self (Divine within);
- support the creation of new ritual forms by anyone.

Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess: The Immanent Life Force.

Reclaiming Mission Statement

We see our work as teaching and making magic — the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, minds, intuition, and energy. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, as individuals and as a community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and to birth a vision of a new culture.



Reclaiming Tradition



Reclaiming is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and politics.

Reclaiming Principles of Unity

The values of the Reclaiming tradition stem from our understanding that the Earth is alive and all of life is sacred and interconnected. We see the Goddess as immanent in the Earth's cycles of birth, growth, death, decay and regeneration. Our practice arises from a deep, spiritual commitment to the Earth, to healing and to the linking of magic with political action.

Each of us embodies the divine. Our ultimate spiritual authority is within, and we need no other person to interpret the sacred to us. We honor intellectual, spiritual and creative freedom.

We are an evolving, dynamic tradition and proudly call ourselves Witches. Honoring both Goddess and God, we work with female and male images of divinity, always remembering that their essence is a mystery which goes beyond form. Our community rituals are participatory and ecstatic, celebrating the cycles of the seasons and our lives, raising energy for personal, collective and Earth healing.

We know that everyone can do the life-changing, world-renewing work of magic, the art of changing consciousness at will. We strive to teach and practice personal and collective empowerment, to model shared power and open leadership roles to all. We make decisions by consensus, balancing individual autonomy with social responsibility.

Our tradition honors the Wild, and calls for service to the Earth and the community. We value peace and practice non-violence, in keeping with the Rede, “Harm none, and do what you will.” We work for all forms of justice: environmental, social, political, racial, gender and economic. Our feminism includes a radical analysis of power, seeing all systems of oppression as interrelated, rooted in structures of domination and control.

We welcome all genders, races, ages and sexual orientations and all differences of background and ability that increase our diversity. We strive to make our public rituals and events accessible and safe. We try to balance being justly compensated for our labor with making our work available to people of all economic levels.

All living beings are worthy of respect. All are supported by the sacred Elements of Air, Fire, Water and Earth. We work to create and sustain communities and cultures that embody our values, that can help to heal the wounds of the earth and her peoples, and that can sustain us and nurture future generations.

The “W” Word, or Why We Call Ourselves Witches

M. Macha NightMare
1998-2000

By calling ourselves Witches, we honor our oppressed foremothers who survived centuries of inequities. Reclaiming Witches place a high value on social justice. Reclaiming a word that was used to denigrate our foremothers identifies us more strongly with them. It reinforces our work on behalf of the disenfranchised and against all forms of injustice.

We in Reclaiming call ourselves Witches for the very reason that others do not. It's an in-your-face word. We, as feminists and people who honor our own divinity as well as our interdependence with the rest of Gaia, the Mother, reclaim the term Witch.

Some people call them-selves Wiccans because the term is less loaded than Witch. Or they may describe themselves as practitioners of the Old Religion or Nature Religion. Or as Pagans or neopagans. To me, this is retreating from our potential. I want respect for my spiritual practices from the rest of society, but I don't necessarily want respectability.

The word Witch evokes power. What better word to describe a movement of Goddess-worshipping, Nature spirituality, performers of “all acts of love and pleasure?”

Introduction to Witchcraft

Vibra Willow 1999-2000

Witchcraft is a religion. Historically, Wicca is one type of Witchcraft. It is an earth-based religion in some ways similar to Native American spirituality. The religion of Witchcraft or Wicca is recognized by most state governments, the federal government, and the United States Armed Forces. Courts have recognized the right of prisoners to practice this religion on an equal basis with other religions.

Witchcraft is part of what is called “Neo-Paganism,” ... exploring nature-based religious traditions which have historical roots in pre-Christian culture. Other modern Pagans include: Druids, Church of All Worlds, and Radical Faery.

Witches belong to dozens of different sects, which we call “Traditions:” Celtic, Faery, Gardnerian, and New Reformed Order of the Golden Dawn. The Covenant of the Goddess (COG) is an organization of many covens and circles. The Reclaiming Tradition is a feminist tradition started in California.

One of our most basic rules: “Harm no-one, and you may do as you wish.” One of our favorite sayings of the Goddess: “All acts of love and pleasure are My rituals.”

This document is not an official publication of any Reclaiming organization.

In Her Peace

In Her Peace,
in Her peace

In Her wisdom,
find release.

I am Goddess,
I am Goddess.

Spiraling into the Center

Spiraling into the center, the center of our soul (2x)
We are the weavers,
We are the woven ones,
We are the dreamers,
We are the dream.

Come Earth

Come earth,
Come air,
Come fire,
Come water.
(3x)

Bring us the power to heal!

Earth my Body

Earth my body,
Water my blood,
Air my breath
and Fire my spirit!

She Comes

She comes on a wave,
From the cauldron of ocean.

Swept to the shore,
Transformed once more.

Weave Your Circle

Lady, weave your circle tight,

Spin a web of glowing light,

Earth and air and fire and water,

Bind us to you.

Source unknown for chants. www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/chants04/
Free MP3 audio files & lyric files: www.culturemagic.org/MaterialSpirituality.html

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From: www.reclaiming.org
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M. Macha NightMare
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For color versions of this document, in poster format (16" x 21") and in letter format (8 1/2" x 11") as PDF files see: www.CultureMagic.org
Allen Butcher, Denver, 2003



Structure of a Ritual

Vibra Willow 1999-2000

• **Grounding and Purifying** — We use salt and water, or incense, cleanse ourselves spiritually and mentally, getting rid of any thoughts or feelings that might interfere with our participation in the ritual; we meditate together, remembering that we are all connected.

• **Casting a Circle** — We draw an imaginary circle around the ritual place, creating a sacred space. In each direction, we draw a pentacle, as an imaginary window letting in the spirits and powers we will invoke. When the Circle is cast, participants are said to be “between the worlds” and the ritual begins.

• **Calling the Directions** — Using words, song, chant, and/or movement, we call the powers of the four directions/elements.

• **Invoking the Diety** — We invoke different Goddess(s), and God(s), depending on the purpose of the ritual. We invoke one or more dieties to witness and assist magical work, and to empower those who are working the magic, generally a deity known for particular powers or qualities. It may be done with poetry, song or music of any kind, movement or dance. One person or all together may take the role of invoking.

• **Magical Working** — We might heal ourselves, or something in the world, raise energy and send it out, or seek guidance or power within ourselves. We might sing or dance, or make arts and crafts. We may be serious or laughing and joking. We work in harmony with the forces of nature. When the moon is waning we cast out the unwanted, when waxing we increase the good things in our lives. With the full moon we fulfill promises, bring projects to completion, and remember the infinit possibilities in the universe. Harmonizing with seasons.

• **Sharing Food and Drink** — We bless something to eat and drink by acknowledging them as gifts of the Goddess/God, and share them. Passing them around the circle, the giver may say to the recipient, “May you never hunger/thirst.”

• **Devoking and Opening the Circle** — To end we thank the deities invoked, and the spirits of the Directions, this time in a counter-clockwise direction, “Stay if you will, go if you must.” We imagine the circle cast being erased, dissolved. “The Circle is open, but unbroken; may the peace of the Goddess stay in our hearts; merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again!”

A Working Definition of Reclaiming — Starhawk
Reclaiming is a tradition of the Craft (we could say Wicca, Pagan, Witchcraft...). Because we value freedom of thought, we accept no dogmas nor implement any required beliefs. To us the Goddess is the wheel of birth, growth, death and regeneration. We always invoke Goddess into our circles and often, but not always, God as well. We recognize an eclectic pantheon of Goddesses and Gods, with whom we are co-creators of change and fate.



Ritual Planning Using the Elements

Dori's and Cynthia's notes of
Starhawk's Witchcamp Workshop

Center/Spirit — What is the transformation or change you want to happen in this ritual? Spider the ritual, see that the parts fit together, watch the movement of the energy and people, priest/ess the order of the ritual. **Air/Mind** — What story will this ritual tell? What idea or theme will it have? The story should be a simple concept expressed clearly in two or three sentences. Plan the opening and the closing, explain the ritual to the participants, teach chants, being the voice for the ritual. **Fire/Energy** — This is about the pattern of energy movement; how is it going to move or what is its structure in the ritual? When ideally will it rise and fall within the story of the ritual? Plan the raising of the cone, work with the energy, priestess the cone of power, tend the fire, drum. **Water/Emotions** — What are the emotions you want to invoke or will likely arise during this ritual? What does the flow (timing) look like? How will people move physically and emotionally? Plan the body of the ritual, tend people whose emotions are brought up, be aware of emotional shifts of the ritual as a whole. **Earth/Body** — How will you physically manifest this ritual? What are the logistics? What props do you need? Who is doing what? Many ideas and inspirations will come up, to be saved and weighed at the end as to how well they answer the questions raised by the other elements, from a ritual performance standpoint. In this way keep the ritual to its focus; all the elements working together as a whole.



Reclaiming Ritual: EIEIO

by Starhawk

Ecstatic: We aim to create a high intensity of energy that is passionate and pleasurable.

Improvisational: We value spontaneity within the overall structure of our rituals, encourage people to create liturgy in the moment rather than script it beforehand, to respond to the energy around us rather than predetermine how it should move.

Ensemble: In our larger group rituals, we work with many priest/esses taking different roles and performing different functions that, ideally, support each other like a jazz ensemble. We encourage a sharing of those roles over time, to avoid a hierarchy and to allow each person to experience many facets of ritual.

Inspired: As we each have access to the sacred, we are capable of creating elements of ritual. We honor the myths, songs and stories of the past, yet affirm that divine inspiration is constantly present.

Organic: We strive for a smooth flow of energy in a ritual that has a life of its own to be honored. Our rituals are linked to the rhythms of cyclical time and organic life. Our practice is alive and growing, constantly renewed and changed as the spirit moves us or the need arises, rather than a “tradition” to be learned and repeated in a formulaic manner. More E’s: experimental, eclectic, evolving.



Reclaiming Correspondences and Definitions



www.reclaiming.org and Suzanne Sterling

Elements — Four substances necessary to the creation of life:

Air-East/Eurus; Sylphs; athame; incense, feathers; woodwinds; To Know, mind, insight, intuition, psychic work, abstraction, analysis, martial arts; breath; heart chakra; smell; dawn; spring; Gemini/Mercury, Aquarius/Uranus; birds, insects; aspens; white & pale shades of yellow & pink; quartz, topaz, moon stone; frankincense, myrrh, lavender, sage; yarrow, clover, spearment

Fire-South/Notus; Salamanders; wand; candle, flame, heat; string instruments; To Will, passion, purify, change, relationships; aggression, innocence, playfulness, dance, drama, strength, exercise; anger, affection, sexual desire; nervous system; solar plexus chakra; sight; noon; summer; Aries/Mars, Leo/Sun; lions, mice; almond; red, gold; sparkles; sweetgrass; garlic, basil

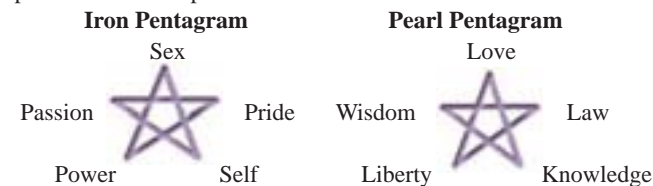
Water-West/Zephyrus; Undines; cup; seashells; bell, gong; To Dare, unconscious, dreams, healing, harvest, reflection, emotion; balance masculine/feminine; fluid qualities: depth, mutability, purity; blood; belly chakra; taste; twilight; autumn; Cancer/Moon, Neptune/Pisces; all water life; willow; blue, purple, silver; abalone, coral; thyme, sandalwood; ferns, catnip, lettuce, poppy

Earth-North/Ophion; Gnomes; pentacle; stones, dirt; percussion; To Keep Silence, create, nurture, structure, endurance, fertility, sustenance, sensuality, abundance, diversity; mountains, rocks, caves; bones; root chakra, touch; midnight; winter; Taurus/Venus, Capricorn/Saturn; all land animals esp. bear, cows; oak; green, russet; crystal; cedar; ivy, fruits, grains, birth/death, the Mother

Spirit — Center of the Circle is life; Aether/Soul; wheel of year; cauldron; major arcana; To Integrate, consciousness/body in all life forms (animals, plants, mountains, rivers); throat chakra; hearing; beyond time, Arachna (13th sign); mythological beasts; World Tree; clear, rainbow, black light; mastic; mistletoe

Pentacle — Five-pointed star, one at the top, enclosed in a circle. For psychic balance and to experience various connected energies. Each point is associated with different powers and qualities.

Pentagram — Qualities of solidity and structure lend the five-pointed star to the presentation of sets of values and ideals:



Wheel of the Year — Vibra Willow

Witches describe the cycles of the seasons as the Wheel of the Year. There are eight major holidays, called “sabbats,” based on solar events, marking the “Turning of the Wheel.” Some holidays are celebrated on the “eve,” the night before. The following calendar dates reflect the Northern Hemisphere perspective, observed in the Reclaiming Tradition.

• **October 31, Samhain** — (pronounced sow, to rhyme with cow, and win = sow-win) also known as Halloween. This is a major holiday; we honor our achievements in the past year, welcome babies born, celebrate the ancestors, mourn those who have died, and seek to contact the spirits of the dead. It is sometimes called the Witches' New Year.

• **December 21/22 Yule** — This is the Winter Solstice, the shortest day and longest night of the year, and the birthday of the sun. We watch the sun set, then stay up all night and keep the Yule log burning as we midwife the rebirth of the sun. We gather together at dawn to sing the sun up. Many of us have a Yule tree (with presents!) in our homes, representing the tree of life and regeneration.

• **February 2, Brigid (aka Imbolc, Candlemas, Oimele)** — This is a time we honor Brigid, or Bhride, the goddess of the forge, the flame and the well, and of work, healing, and poetry. We make pledges at the holy well, in front of the sacred flame. We celebrate the gentle signs of early spring, and of light returning after the darkness of winter.

• **March 22, Spring Equinox** — Also known as Oestar or Easter, named for the Goddess of Spring. The days and nights are of equal length, and it is time to start the garden, to sow the seeds. We try to do this in our lives as well as in the earth. We celebrate the renewal of life, the endless cycle of rebirth, symbolized by the egg.

• **May 1, Beltane** — This is also called May Day. Traditionally it is a time for lovers to celebrate (and get together!). We dance around a Maypole, weaving ribbons; and we leap over the Beltane fire, for fertility and creativity and love of all kinds, and for healing.

• **June 21, Summer Solstice** — Longest day and shortest night of the year. After this night, the days will begin to shorten, so we call this the death of the Sun-King. We watch the sun set, celebrating the beauty of midsummer.

• **August 2, Lammas** — This holiday is also known as Lughnasad (loo-noss'-sid). This is the early harvest, when we rejoice in the first fruits of the season. Also, we prepare for the coming winter, and think about what we will need to make it through the dark, cold season.

• **September 22, Fall Equinox** — This is the major harvest or thanksgiving festival, also known as Mabon. It is again a time when day and night are in balance, or of equal length. We have a feast, and also perhaps plant a winter garden. We remember to slow down, and to rest, to enjoy all our blessings, especially our families and friends.