# Sky Blessing Ceremony at the Spring Equinox

# Full Script

*The purpose of this ceremony is to provide protection, healing, and blessing for the skies, helping to respond to the effects of extreme weather and an imbalance in air energies present. This ceremony uses a modified Sphere of Protection placed in an object representing air which is then offered to the air.  This is part of our four Order-Wide rituals for healing the earth.  Please see* [*this page*](http://aoda.org/earthrituals/) *for details about the ceremonies as a whole and how to participate.*

*This represents a full script for the ceremony; you may also find a simplified version on the website:* [*http://aoda.org/earthrituals/springequinoxskyblessing/*](http://aoda.org/earthrituals/springequinoxskyblessing/)

**Introduction**

As a community of druids, we recognize the ongoing human impacts globally, including the increasing severity of climate change and other human activities that release substances into the air.  Much of the recent change in climate is driven by the burning and release of fossil fuels into our atmosphere, and thus, is inherently tied to the sky and the air. Industrial activities result in the emission of a wide range of other pollutants into the air, directly at the industrial facility through permitted releases and indirectly through leaking pipes and industrial and transportation accidents.  These sky-based changes are creating more extreme weather events and imbalances in the air that cause adverse health effects for plants and animals, including humans.  While these changes are bigger than any one of us, what we can do is acknowledge what is happening and work to offer collective ceremony for blessing, healing, and balance.  These ritual actions are, of course, in addition to each AODA member committing to lifestyle changes to support, regenerate, and give back to the beautiful planet we live on.

Our Sky Blessing ceremony is structured in a similar fashion to our other three blessing ceremonies: we perform a modified version of the Sphere of Protection and then work to send the energy out into the world.

**Preparation for the Ceremony**

In preparing for the ceremony, you will need to do two things.  First, you will need to identify an air touchstone that can carry the energies for the ritual.  Second, you will need to identify a place outdoors, where you are in open air, to offer the air touchstone blessing.

**Identifying or Creating Your Air Touchstone**

For this ceremony, you will need to create or use something that can be directly placed, interacted with, released, or exposed to the air.  This object is called the “air touchstone”. As different members are in different life circumstances, these options are fairly wide-ranging.  Here are some options:

* **Objects to release into the air:** feathers, incense, bubbles, offering blend that can be released to the wind, seed pods from milkweed, etc.  Make sure that whatever you are releasing does not cause any damage to the air or ecosystem.
* **Permanent air-oriented objects to place:**  Wind Chimes, a handcrafted mobile (with feathers, sticks, shells, sea glass, etc.), a birdfeeder that you will maintain, flags and banners
* **Kites and other flying objects:** A kite could also be used for this ritual–flying the kite up into the air to release the blessing.
* **Music and sound:** flute, sounding a bell or chime, singing or chanting, drumming, humming, a bullroarer or other noise-making object.

Finally, we ask that you not choose anything (like mylar balloons) that would harm the earth.

In this ritual, you are placing the energies of the elements (raised by the Sphere of Protection) into an object that then can be used to channel those energies into the world. You can use one of the above or combine multiple approaches (burning a smoke stick with drumming and chanting, for example).  If you are making music, you would place the energies of the SOP into the instrument.  You can also use singing, chanting, humming, or another body-based approach to supplement the ritual.

Above, you will see that some objects are more permanent in the world (wind chimes) while some are less (incense, music). The difference here is that an object that is left in the world can offer a small blessing for the cycle of the seasons and you could continue to place blessings upon it, while an object that would be offered to the wind (via smoke, scattering, etc) would go out into the broader world.  Both have effects and would work for the purposes of this ritual.

Finally, you also have the option to craft an air touchstone for this ritual (mobile, chimes, bullroarer, etc).  If you select this option, we suggest opening up a sacred grove using AODA’s Solitary Grove ritual and making the object within a sacred grove if at all possible.  You can also craft your item on a day of power (full or new moon or day of other astrological significance). You can continue to use this crafted air touchstone in future years, or add a new one each year.

**Choosing a space outdoors for the second part of the ceremony**

In addition, you will need to choose a space to place/release your air touchstone to the world.  You can do your ritual in this space, or, depending on the circumstances and how public the space is, you can bring the object to the space (the same as the Telluric waterway blessing ceremony). Since the air is always flowing and air is all around us, any place that is open to the outdoors is fine (e.g. an apartment balcony, a backyard, a forest, the beach).  If you are feeling particularly ambitious, you might try to get up higher into the air in some way (e.g. hike up to the top of a mountain).

**The Ceremony, Part I: Blessing the Air touchstone**

In preparation for the Air Ceremony, place the air touchstone upon your altar and decorate your altar as you see fit. Have objects relating to the air adorning your altar: features, incense, bird-themed objects, clouds, music-themed objects, etc.  To place the blessing in an object, have some tool that is air-oriented: an incense stick, smoke-clearing stick, knife, wand, or feather.  You will use this tool to trace the symbols in front of the object during the Sphere of Protection.

Open up a Sacred Grove using [AODA’s Solitary Grove Ritual.](http://aoda.org/publications/articles-on-druidry/aodas-solitary-grove-opening-and-closing/)

**Solitary Grove Opening**

### Declaring Peace:

The first duty of Druids assembled in the Sacred Grove is to proclaim peace to the four quarters of the world, for without peace our work cannot proceed.

(Raise your hand in the east, facing outward toward the east and say):

I proclaim peace in the east.

(Pause, feeling peace radiating within and without.  Lower your hand and proceed to the south, where you repeat the same process, saying:)

I proclaim peace in the south.

(Proceed to the west, and do the same thing, saying:)

I proclaim peace in the west.

(Proceed to the north and do the same thing, saying:)

I proclaim peace in the north.

(Advance to the north side of the altar, facing south across it.  Say:)

The four quarters are at peace and the work of the grove may proceed.

### Purifying the Grove with the Elements

Let this grove and all within it be purified with air.

(Go to the eastern side of the altar, pick up the cauldron with the incense, and carry it to the eastern edge of the space.  Pause there, holding the cauldron out as though offering the incense, and then walk in a clockwise circle once around the outer edge of the space, tracing a circle around the grove with the cauldron.  When you’ve come back around to the east, return the cauldron to the altar.

(While you do this, visualize the following. When you hold the cauldron as though offering the incense, imagine a current of yellow light streaming in from the east and forming a sphere of yellow light around the cauldron.  As you carry the cauldron around the grove, imagine the cauldron tracing a line of yellow light in a circle around the outside of the grove. When you carry the cauldron back to the altar, see it trace a line of yellow light in from the edge to the altar, and see the sphere of yellow light remaining with the cauldron on the altar.

(If you are doing this in a natural setting, instead, observe in the four directions around you, starting in the east.  Look at how the air manifests in the surrounding landscape.  Feel it on your skin.  Feel the element of air coming into your sacred space, see it tracing a line of yellow light around your space and then, from the east, into the center of your space..)

(When you have finished, say:)

Let this Grove and all within it be purified with fire.

(Go to the southern side of the altar, pick up the cauldron with the flame, and carry it to the southern edge of the space.  Pause there, holding the cauldron out as though offering the flame, and then walk in a clockwise circle once around the outer edge of the space, tracing a circle around the grove with the cauldron.  When you’ve come back around to the south, return the cauldron to the altar.

(While you do this, visualize the following. When you hold the cauldron as though offering the fire, imagine a current of red light streaming in from the south and forming a sphere of red light around the cauldron.  As you carry the cauldron around the grove, imagine the cauldron tracing a line of red light in a circle around the outside of the grove. When you carry the cauldron back to the altar, see it trace a line of red light in from the edge to the altar, and see the sphere of red light remaining with the cauldron on the altar.

(If you are doing this in a natural setting, instead, observe the role of the element of fire in the four directions around you, starting in the south.  Look at how the element of fire manifests in the surrounding landscape.  Feel the warmth on your skin, feel the heat of the sun.  Feel the element of fire coming into your sacred space, see it tracing a line of red light around your space and then, from the south, see it tracing a line of red light into the center of your space.)

(When you have finished, say:)

Let this Grove and all within it be purified with water.

(Go to the western side of the altar, pick up the cauldron with the water, and carry it to the western edge of the space. Pause there, holding the cauldron out as though offering the water, and then walk in a clockwise circle once around the outer edge of the space, tracing a circle around the grove with the cauldron. When you’ve come back around to the west, return the cauldron to the altar.

(While you do this, visualize the following. When you hold the cauldron as though offering the water, imagine a current of blue light streaming in from the west and forming a sphere of blue light around the cauldron.  As you carry the cauldron around the grove, imagine the cauldron tracing a line of blue light in a circle around the outside of the grove. When you carry the cauldron back to the altar, see it trace a line of blue light in from the edge to the altar, and see the sphere of blue light remaining with the cauldron on the altar.

(If you are doing this in a natural setting, instead, observe the role of the element of water in the four directions around you, starting in the west.  Look at how the element of water manifests in the surrounding landscape.  Feel the moisture of the water on your skin, hear the nearby sound of the stream.  Feel the element of water coming into your sacred space, see it tracing a line of blue light around your space and then, from the west, see it tracing a line of blue light into the center of your space.)

(When you have finished, say:)

Let this Grove and all within it be purified with earth.

(Go to the northern side of the altar, pick up the cauldron with the salt, and carry it to the northern edge of the space.  Pause there, holding the cauldron out as though offering the salt, and then walk in a clockwise circle once around the outer edge of the space, tracing a circle around the grove with the cauldron from north to north.  When you’ve come back around to the north, return the cauldron to the altar.

(While you do this, visualize the following. When you hold the cauldron as though offering the salt, imagine a current of green light streaming in from the north and forming a sphere of green light around the cauldron.  As you carry the cauldron around the grove, imagine the cauldron tracing a line of green light in a circle around the outside of the grove. When you carry the cauldron back to the altar, see it trace a line of green light in from the edge to the altar, and see the sphere of green light remaining with the cauldron on the altar.

(If you are doing this in a natural setting, instead, observe the role of the element of earth in the four directions around you, starting in the north.  Look at how the element of earth manifests in the surrounding landscape.  Feel the solidity of the land beneath your feet, see the mountains in the distance on the horizon.  Feel the element of earth coming into your sacred space, see it tracing a line of green light around your space and then, from the north, tracing a line of green light into the center of your space.)

(When you have finished, say:)

### Invoking the Holy Powers through the Druid’s Prayer

I invoke the blessing of the holy powers with the words that have been the bond among all Druids:

Grant, O holy ones, thy protection;

And in protection, strength;

And in strength, understanding;

And in understanding, knowledge;

And in knowledge, the knowledge of justice;

And in the knowledge of justice, the love of it;

And in that love, the love of all existences;

And in the love of all existences, the love of Earth our mother and all goodness.

(When you’ve finished the druid’s prayer, chant the word Awen three times; with each chant intone it. Draw the word out into its three syllables – Ah-Oh-En – and let it resonate throughout your body and the Grove.

AWEN, AWEN, AWEN

Then perform AODA’s sphere of protection  [AODA’s Sphere of Protection ceremony](http://aoda.org/publications/articles-on-druidry/introduction-to-the-sphere-of-protection/) to complete the opening.

**Blessing your Air Touchstone**

To place the blessing in an object, have some tool that is air-oriented: an incense stick, smoke-clearing stick, knife, wand, or feather.  You will use this tool to trace the symbols in front of the object during the Sphere of Protection. For the purposes of this write-up, we will use “air tool” to represent this tool.

Using the [AODA’s Sphere of Protection ceremony](http://aoda.org/publications/articles-on-druidry/introduction-to-the-sphere-of-protection/), perform the Sphere of Protection with the air touchstone at the center of your Sphere of Protection. (Given here are words for the base ceremony; you may make any adjustments to the wording as you see fit. ) If you choose to bless multiple air touchstones, draw the symbol on each object and give them a group blessing at each of the directions.

Move to the east and face the altar. Taking your air tool, light it (if appropriate) and then draw the symbol of air (a circle with a line extending from the top) on or above the air touchstone.

Say: “With the blessing of the hawk of May, the energy of the rising sun, and the power of the east, I ask for the blessing of the air upon this air touchstone, and thereby, upon the sky realms.” Visualize the energy of the air, a bright yellow, flowing into the air touchstone.

Move to the south and face the altar. Using your air tool, draw the symbol of fire (right-side up triangle) on the air touchstone.

Say: “With the blessing of the white stag in the summer greenwood, the energy of the noon-day sun, and the power of the south, I ask for the blessing of the fire upon this air touchstone, and thereby, upon the sky realms.” Visualize the energy of the fire, a bright red, flowing into the air touchstone.

Move to the west and face the altar. Take your air tool and draw the symbol of water (a triangle with the point facing downward) on the air touchstone.

Say: “With the blessing of the salmon of wisdom, the energy of the setting sun, and the power of the west, I ask for the blessing of the air upon this air touchstone, and thereby, upon the sky realms.” Visualize the energy of the water, a deep blue, flowing into the air touchstone.

Move to the north and face the altar. Take your air tool and draw the symbol of the north (a circle with a line extending downward from the bottom of the circle) on the air touchstone.

Say: “With the blessing of the great bear in the starry heavens, the midnight sky, and the power of the north, I ask for the blessing of the earth upon this air touchstone, and thereby, upon the sky realms.” Visualize the energy of the earth, in deep green, flowing into the air touchstone.

Remain in the north for the rest of the blessing. Pick up the air touchstone in both hands and hold it above your head. Imagine the sun’s rays of light shining down on the air touchstone. Say “With the blessing of the solar currents and the turning wheel of the celestial heavens, I ask for the blessing of the solar current upon this air touchstone, and thereby, the sky realms.” Visualize the energy of the solar current—a golden light—flowing into the air touchstone.

Place the air touchstone back upon the altar (alternatively, you can take the air touchstone to the ground and kneel on the earth). Place your hands on the air touchstone and say, “With the blessing of the telluric currents and the flows of energy in the deep earth, I ask for the blessing of the telluric current upon this air touchstone and thereby, the sky.” Visualize the energy of the Telluric current—a light gold-green light—flowing into the air touchstone.

Hold the air touchstone in your hands in front of you, over the altar. Say, “By the six powers here invoked, and here present, and with the blessing of the lunar current and the inner realms of spirit and flow of Nywfre (NOO-iv-ruh), I ask for the blessing of the lunar current upon this air touchstone and thereby, the skies. May the skies of the earth be protected this day, and always, across the whole earth.” Focus on the energies present in the air touchstone and then chant, “Awen, Awen, Awen.” Envision the energies of the air touchstone melding to create a multilayered sphere. Say, “The energies of blessing, protection, and healing will be carried by this air touchstone to the skies and air flows throughout the earth, which will receive this blessing.”

Pause, then say, “I thank the sky realms—the clouds that carry rain, the air that carries oxygen that we breathe, the trees that cycle the carbon dioxide, the jet stream, and all of the flows of air—for the gift of life. Blessings to the sky realms, this day and always.”

Sit in meditation for a time once you are finished seeing if any additional insights or messages from the living earth arise. You might use a divination system (ogham, tarot, etc) for additional insights. Perform any other work you choose to perform. Close the grove and give thanks to the living earth.

## Solitary Grove Closing

(When the work of the Grove is completed, sit down in the chair in the north and let your mind return to stillness. When you’re ready, rise and go to the north side of the altar, facing south across it.  Say:

Let the powers be attentive as I am about to close a grove of Druids in this place.

(Go to the eastern side of the altar.  Take the cauldron with the incense to the east, and hold it outward as though offering the incense, as in the opening. Say:)

### Releasing the Elements

With thanks I release the powers of air to their rightful places. May peace prevail in the east.

(As you say this, imagine the yellow light that surrounds the cauldron flowing back to its sources in the east.  When this is finished, return the cauldron to its place on the altar, and go to the southern side of the altar. )

(Alternatively, if you are outside, imagine the energies of air leaving the center of your grove and flowing back to their sources in the east.)

(Take the cauldron with the flame to the south, and hold it outward as though offering the flame, as in the opening. Say:)

With thanks I release the powers of fire to their rightful places. May peace prevail in the south.

(As you say this, imagine the red light that surrounds the cauldron flowing back to its sources in the south. )

(Alternatively, if you are outside, imagine the energies of fire leaving the center of your grove and flowing back to their sources in the south.)

When this is finished, return the cauldron to its place on the altar, and go to the western side of the altar.  Take the cauldron with the water to the west, and hold it outward as though offering the water, as in the opening. Say:)

With thanks I release the powers of water to their rightful places. May peace prevail in the west.

(As you say this, imagine the blue light that surrounds the cauldron flowing back to its sources in the west. )

(Alternatively, if you are outside, imagine the energies of water leaving the center of your grove and flowing back to their sources in the west.)

(When this is finished, return the cauldron to its place on the altar, and go to the northern side of the altar.  Take the cauldron with the salt to the north, and hold it outward as though offering the salt, as in the opening. Say:)

With thanks I release the powers of earth to their rightful places. May peace prevail in the north.

(As you say this, imagine the green light that surrounds the cauldron flowing back to its sources in the north.

(Alternatively, if you are outside, imagine the energies of earth leaving the center of your grove and flowing back to their sources in the north.)

When this is finished, return the cauldron to its place on the altar, and remain at the northern side of the altar, facing south. Say:)

Peace prevails in the four quarters and throughout the grove.

### Returning Power to the Land

Let any power remaining from this working be returned to the Earth for her blessing.

(Any grove working leaves some energy behind it, and this can usually be sensed as a mood, a feeling, or a subtle sense of presence in the space.  Imagine this flowing inward toward the altar, down through it to the earth, and then down to the earth’s center.  Keep concentrating on this until the grove space feels clear of any leftover energy and you feel that this work is done. Then say:)

### Invoking the Sword of  Swords

I now invoke the Sword of Swords.

(If you have a sword, draw it and hold it high with the hilt up and the point down. If you don’t have one, visualize a great medieval sword in that position, hovering in the air before you, and raise your hand in salute.  Say the following incantation:)

From the rising Sun, three rays of light;

From the living Earth, three stones of witness;

From the eye and the mind and the hand of wisdom, three rowan staves of all knowledge.

From the fire of the Sun, the forge;

From the bones of the Earth, the steel;

From the hand of the wise, the making:

From these, Excalibur.

By the Sword of Swords, I pledge my faithful service to the living Earth, our home and mother.

(Chant the word Awen once:)

AWEN.

(As you chant the word, imagine the sword—whether physical or imagined—dissolving into pure light, which draws together into the image of the Sun, standing at the zenith in the south. Lower the sword, sheath it, and put it back in its place, or lower your hand, and leave the altar; walk in a clockwise circle around the grove to whichever gate your degree entitles you to use, and exit the grove.  This concludes the closing ceremony.)

**The Ceremony, Part II:  Outdoor Air Blessing**

Take your air touchstone to the place where you will be offering the air blessing.  At this point, the nature of your object will determine your next course of action (playing music, burning the object to release the air to the sky, hanging a mobile, beating on a drum).

As you place the object or engage in the activity surrounding air, envision the elemental blessing you placed earlier within the object radiating outward, being taken up by air currents, and moving into the world. During or after, chant nine Awens (Ah-oh-en), varying the tone and quality of the awens as you see fit.  You may also choose to do other intentional breathwork, singing, or chanting at this time to support the flow of air.

Conclude with a prayer:

Spirits of the air,  
Invisible ocean of unified breath  
Carrier of spirits on the back of golden eagles  
Carrier of scents, sounds, and memories  
Carrier of my breath to the four directions  
May this season and these workings bring you healing  
May the song of this my blessing be joined by the chorus of the birds in the sky,  
May the spring breezes bring peace and balance  
May the song of this my blessing be joined by the chorus of the birds of the sky,  
Radiating in clear tones throughout all existences

Do any other work you are led to do. Meditate on the experience and thank the air for its ongoing gifts and blessings.

After the ceremony, we suggest that you also do something to support the air. This allows you to balance both physical and metaphysical work.  This might be limiting your trips out using fossil fuels for a month, making a commitment to walking more places rather than driving, reducing the number of new goods that you buy and buying used goods, salvaging, or making your own goods from local materials whenever possible, planting trees or plants to help with carbon dioxide sequestration, working in your community to support clean air initiatives, or doing other activities that support the air.

**Special Thanks**

Special thanks to Amy Michelle and Christina Dearman for contributing poetry.  Special thanks also to all members of AODA who joined our Winter Solstice Water Blessing call in January 2022 and who helped develop the framework for this ritual. Special thanks to  Christina Dearman, Amy Michelle, Nathan Stillings and Claire Schosser for their feedback