

# Heathen Kinship Asatru Kindred

Introductory information

[www.goheathen.org](http://www.goheathen.org)



## Welcome to The Heathen Kinship, an Ásatrú Kindred

### How to become a Novice of the Kindred

At The Heathen Kinship we welcome all new folk who may be interested in learning more about us or, eventually, in joining our group. We offer the following two articles, and our oath of membership, as a good way of determining what Asatrú is, and who we are. We want all new folk who may be interested in joining our group to know exactly who we are, what we stand for, and what we will not stand for!

All new Folk who wish to enter The Heathen Kinship must complete the following before being accepted as a Novice. As a Novice in the Heathen Kinship, you have no oathed obligation to the group, you are free to come and go, or choose a different path with no further obligations to the group.

Applicants must read the article *What is Asatrú. (attached in this packet)*

Applicants must be familiar with the concepts of Asatru, such as the 9 Noble Virtues, the importance of personal honor, and our concept of Orlog before applying to the Heathen Kinship to be accepted as a Novice.

Acceptance to the Heathen Kinship is based on a majority vote of the members of the kindred.

You cannot apply to our Kinship if you do not believe in and follow the Aesir and the Vanir as your primary gods.

Applicants must discuss with a Godhi the Oath required of all new members, why it is required, what it means, and how it relates to you. **PLEASE NOTE It is not required that you take any oath at this point!**

When these things are completed, a new person is welcome to apply for acceptance as a novice of the Heathen Kinship.

Being a part of the Heathen Kinship Kindred is being a part of a family. The word "Kinship" means family or clan... kin. After a year's "apprenticeship" to The Heathen Kinship the existing members vote on whether or not to accept the "novice" as a full fledged member. Becoming a full fledged member of the Kindred means that you are accepted into our "family" and as a clan or tribe of people we will care for you and take on certain responsibilities to you. As a member of the family you would also have responsibilities to us. This is the central concept of our Kindred. It is not for everyone, as it does entail work, responsibility, and commitment.

Is it for you?

The following are some terms and their definitions that you might encounter during discussions on Ásatrú. These are included just for your reference to help you get used to some of the terminology you might encounter.

Ásatrú - The native religion on the Northern European / Teutonic peoples. The religion may stretch as far back as 3000 B.C. or further, and was practiced in one form or another by the Teutonic peoples until Christianity swept through Europe. The religion is a family-oriented tradition with a strong warrior influence. It includes within it a priesthood, a magical tradition, a shamanic path, an unwritten code of morals, a pantheon of god and goddesses, a tradition of prophecy, an emphasis on poetry, wit, wisdom, individual strength (both of body and of will), and a tradition of honoring kin and ancestors. The term Asatru is a compound word; the first part "Asa" refers to the tribe of the gods known as the Æsir, and also implies the tribe of the gods known as the Vanir, the second part of the word, "Trú" is derived from an Indo-European word that combines the concepts of loyalty and faith. Thus the term Asatru literally means "Those who are Trú (loyal) to the Æsir and Vanir (i.e. the gods). Asatru is also sometimes referred to as The Troth, or Our Way, or The Old Way.

Asatruar - singular or plural reference to a person or persons who are of the Asatru religion.

Asgard - The world of the gods and goddess of Asatru

Godhi or Gydhja - Sometime also spelled Gothi, Godi, Githja, Gythjia or etc. This is the Priest class within Ásatrú.

Galdr - A magical practice that utilizes physical sounds as an integral part of its nature. Most often used in combination with runes.

Gothar – Within the Heathen Kinship this term applies to the Godhis or Gythjas (male or female priests) collectively.

Kindred - A family unit composed of adopted Asatruar members who have pledged lifelong loyalty to one another. This is a clan in the truest sense of the word.

Harrow - Altar. Asatruar often like to utilize natural substances to create their harrows; stone, or sections of tree, or even handworked wood are some of the most common materials used.

Ljosalfheim - The home world of the light elves.

Oath – Speaking your word, pledging your fate and Orlog into the eternal stream of consciousness of Asgard and the Nine worlds, your standing before the gods, mankind, and in your own estimation to be determined by whether or not you fulfill your pledged word.

Odian – Someone who attempts to emulate Odin, in an effort to become more like Odin, at least in one aspect.

Odinist – Someone who follows Odin as their primary, or one of their primary gods.

Orlog - The "destiny" of a person or wight. The Orlog of a person is changeable, and a man or woman has various means of effecting their own Orlog. Nonetheless it is similar to the modern concept of fate, and even more similar to the medieval concept of "doom". It is the natural result of the actions of all your ancestors and you that have led you up to the situation you are in today, and will lead you to the situations that you face later in life. This "doom" can be reshaped to an extent by the actions that you choose today, but in the end... no man escapes his doom.

Runes - The original "alphabet" of the Teutonic peoples. The runes are also utilized in divination and magical workings. Odin, who sacrificed much to gain knowledge of the runes, gave them to mankind.

Seidhr - A magical practice often associated exclusively with women. It can be used to describe the passive magical experience that can result in visions or prophecies, or used to describe the shamanic type magick involving the amassing of emotions and physical energy.

Thegn or Thane - A warrior of the Kindred

Vé - Altar Room. Room set aside for use in religious practices

Vitki - Practitioner of runic magic.

Wyrd - Is often inaccurately equated to Fate or Karma, though these words bear similar concepts to Wyrd. Wyrd is the pattern that encompasses the Orlog of all the wights of the nine worlds.

## What is Asatrú?

I'm not sure how many people have asked me this question since I have been Asatru, but it has been many. And the answer is difficult to define to the satisfaction of other Asatruar. There is an individuality within Asatrú, which is both a very great strength and a deadly vulnerability. Asatrú is the spiritual beliefs and traditions of the Teutonic peoples. The author Edred Thorsson explains the etymology of the word Asatrú on pp. 2-3 of his, "A Book of Troth". He states that Asatrú is an Icelandic word made up of two parts; Asa, meaning "of the Aesir" and tru, usually translated as "faith". The author goes on to say that in order to completely understand the word's meaning you must examine the root of the term "tru". Tru is derived from the root word "deru" (Indo-European) meaning firm, solid, or steadfast. The terms troth, trust, true, and even tree are traceable to the root of "deru". In popular usage, however Asatrú has come to refer to not only to those who are "Trú to the Aesir", but to those who are "Trú to the Vanir", and even to those who are "Trú to more or less following some of the traditions of the Teutonic Folk". If you ask a hundred Asatruar this question, "What is Asatrú?" you will get a hundred different interpretations. To some of us, it is a term which describes the traditions of the Teutonic peoples, meaning their culture, customs, festivals, etc.; and to those Asatruar, this is not a "religion", it is a way of life. Others of us like to think of Asatrú as a religion, while still others have as many different views on the gods and goddesses and our relationship to them as one could possibly come up with. In order, then, to better define the answer to the question, "What is Asatrú?", let's look at what, if any, elements of belief, or tradition are common to almost everyone calling themselves Asatruar. Not everyone who calls themselves an Asatruar believes the same things about the gods and goddesses, even to the point of some of us holding conflicting beliefs about which of the gods and goddesses are still existent! At the Heathen Kinship we believe in the existence of the gods, as individual entities who are actively involved with life on Midgard (Earth). We believe they habitually perform miracles, and are personally accessible to their followers.

We all subscribe to some basic ideas about personal honor, ethics, and following through with our convictions, no matter who it may offend. These convictions of personal honor are well described by the Nine Noble Virtues and the Six - Fold Goal. The Nine Noble Virtues are: Courage (heartiness), Truth, Honor (worthiness), Fidelity (troth), Discipline (hardiness), Hospitality (friendliness), Industriousness (work), Self-reliance (freedom), Perseverance (steadfastness). And the Six - Fold Goal is: 1.Right 2.Wisdom 3.Might 4.Harvest 5.Frith 6.Love. The Nine Noble Virtues are matters of personal honour, which we, as Asatruar all strive to attain.

The Six - Fold Goal is a statement of our beliefs as a people. Though some Asatruar have never even heard of the Six – Fold Goal, it fairly well describes those things for which we are willing to live, and die. We believe we have the right to 1. Right. The following of Just Law for the benefit of all. This does NOT mean restrictions, this means that we, as a people, generally recognize that there must be just Laws if we are going to exist together in an advanced society, and that having and following those Laws is Right. We also believe in the society’s right, as a whole, and the individual’s right to attain 2. Wisdom. We recognize the importance of 3. Might as it relates to both individuals and societies and we hold that it is Right and True for the Might of the individual or society to dominate those of lesser Might. In this case, this is more of a recognition of a reality that exists in our physical world of Midgard, than it is of any kind of idealist belief that “Might Makes Right”. We recognize that it is good and Right for a person or a society to develop their Might. The next Goal, that of 4. Harvest, is the belief that we deserve the fruits of our labours. That it is Right for us to reap the cycles of nature, to provide nourishment for the folk. 5. Frith is the peace and prosperity that comes with the fulfillment of the Nine Nobles Virtues and all the Six - Fold Goal. Frith refers to the thriving of the folk, in this case, the Asatruar. 6. Love, is the Goal most often unappreciated, in my opinion, by the rest of society. When most people hear Love as one of the Goals, they assume it to mean the romantic love between two people, or maybe the love of an adult for their child. And while these are beautiful and worthy things, the Love referred to here is the vitality and lust for life embodied in Frey and Freyja. It is the erotic thrill of life itself, the lust of passion and the senses, the enjoyment of pleasure. This is natural to our people and, we believe, Right for us to enjoy. These things, then, are some of the basic ideas which go into defining “What is Asatru?” All Asatruar strive for some variation of the Sixfold Goal and try to attain the Nine Noble Virtues, although how each of these is understood is largely a matter of individual interpretation. These are *our* values, made by *our* ancestors and by us, and will form a foundation of strength for the modern Asatruar. Now, it is up to us, the modern Asatruar, to use these values, passed down to us, to find a way to make the individuality which permeates paganism as a whole, and practically *defines* Asatru, into a source of great strength. Our challenge is to keep that same individuality from dividing us against ourselves; as united individuals, we can accomplish anything.

**Onward to Victory!**

## Oath to the Heathen Kinship:

New Folk are encouraged to read through this and the Profession that follows and decide if you can see yourself making an expression of commitment similar to this. This example is for someone converting from Christianity, but it can be customized to whatever is appropriate for the specific individual.

{The follow section to be oathed only if the candidate is coming from Xianity & is optional, any other name(s) may be added or substituted at the candidate's request. This section is only for the candidates sense of closure, and may be adjusted for the religious background from which they come.}

Speaker: Forsakest thou the angels of alienation?

Candidate: I forsake the angels of alienation!

Speaker: And all the services of the White-Christ?

Candidate: I forsake all the services of the White-Christ!

Speaker: And all the Christian works?

Candidate: And I forsake all the works and words of the so-called Father, and his son named Jesus, and their unholy spirit!

{This section is for everyone regardless of their past.}

Speaker: Trustest thou in the mighty All-Father?

Candidate: I trust in Woden, the mighty All-Father.

Speaker: Trustest thou in Thunar, warder of the world?

Candidate: I trust in Thunar, warder of the world!

Speaker: Trust thou in Frey and Freyja, the lord and lady of our folk?

Candidate: I trust in the Lord and Lady of our folk!

{Naming: the candidate kneels or sits behind the altar facing North. The speaker sprinkles water or mead on the candidate.}

Speaker: I throw water upon this sib newly born, and give him/her the name

\_\_\_\_\_...  
Hail \_\_\_\_\_! Welcome to the Folk!

{the following is the oath to the Heathen Kinship}

Speaker: Do you \_\_\_\_\_ now swear by Woden, Forseti, and Tiw, your oath to promote the growth and well-being of the Heathen Kinship and all of the sibs of it?

Candidate: I swear by all the holy gods and goddesses to hold ever high the Banner of the Heathen Kinship, and always to promote the growth and well-being of the Kindred and all of the sibs of it. I swear my troth (and that of my family) to the Heathen Kinship. By Woden, Forseti, and Tiw I swear this Oath!

Speaker: Do you swear to remember the gods and honour the gods during the festivals of the year?

Candidate: I so swear.

Speaker: Do you swear to make yourself available whenever possible to those of the Kinship who may need your help, despite any inconvenience to you?

Candidate: I so swear.

Speaker: This is \_\_\_\_\_ a new member of our clan and family, and by the authority entrusted to me I speak for the whole of the Heathen Kinship when I oath before gods and men, that the Heathen Kinship pledges our loyalty, support, training, and kinship to you! May the gods Woden, Forseti, and Tiw witness the oaths spoken here today, and enforce those oaths for all days to come!



## Profession

The Profession can be made in lieu of the Oath. The Profession is more appropriate for someone who is NOT converting from another religion.

Profession is one of the most important ceremonies in Asatru. To Profess one's belief in and kinship to the Gods should be an important turning point in ones life and the beginning of a new understanding of the self. Profession is, however, a very simple and rather short ceremony. In our kindred we usually profess people during a regular meeting, but either before or after the blot offering.

Profession is not an occult or initiatory ceremony. It is nothing less than its name: one professes (declares, affirms) his wish to become one of the Asafolk. This oath is usually taken by the Kindred-Gothi on the oath ring or some other Holy object as follows:

The Gothi stands in front of the altar and says “[insert name here] come to the fore.”

After he or she does so "Is it your will to be here?"

“Do you design to earnestly swear your loyalty and kinship to the Gods of Asgard, the Aesir and Vanir?”

If the answer to both these questions is in the affirmative the Gothi takes up the oath ring (or some other holy object upon which oaths are sworn) and holds it out to the person professing and says

"Repeat after me. I oath to ever uphold the ways of the north, to always act with honor and bravery, be faithful to the Aesir and Vanir and to Asatru. By the Gods I do oath. On my honor I do oath. On this Holy Ring I do oath. Hail the Gods."

The kindred then replies "Hail the Gods!"

and the Gothi finishes "Then be ye welcome to the service of Asgard and the community of Asatru." (optional: I name this new sib xxxxxx)

The essence of Profession is making a commitment to Asatru. It should not be undertaken without thought and prayer. When one Professes, one is leaving behind other faiths. If one isn't yet comfortable in doing this, then Profession should be put off, perhaps indefinitely. It should be reiterated here that there should be absolutely no pressure put on people to Profess. False or coerced Professions merely cheapen the ritual and the commitment that it represents. It should also be said that Asatru ritual is open to anyone. You do not need to have undergone a ritual of Profession in order to attend kindred events or worship the Gods. You must, however, undergo a profession or Oath in order to join our Kindred.

There is another celebration connected to the Profession ceremony. When someone joins our kindred, we hold a Sumbel of nine rounds, each dedicated to one of the values (virtues) of Asatru and toast those values to the new kinsman.

Summary:

1. Read the Article "What is Asatru"
2. Read the Oath (and Profession) – discuss with a Godhi (Gydhja)
3. Tell a Godhi that you wish to become a Novice.