

ASIC 2020 Yule Tableau

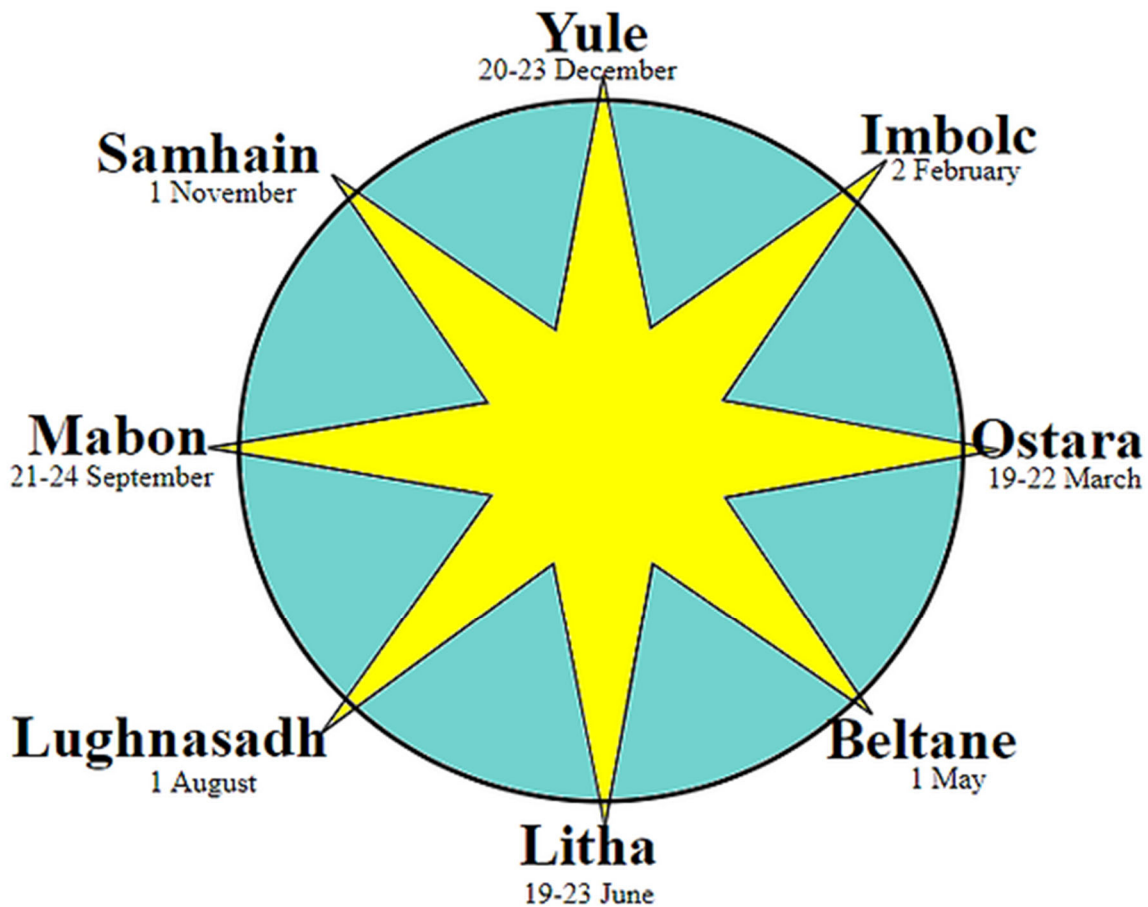
The USCB Center for the Arts and the City of Beaufort co-sponsored outdoor displays of holiday traditions in December 2020. **Celebrate the Season** was a walkable outdoor art installation for the enjoyment and education of families and an excellent opportunity to discover others' traditions for a better understanding of the diverse and growing cultures in Beaufort County.



Attendees learned more about the symbols in our tableau by following the QR code at the bottom left of the display. The QR links are described below.

Wheel of the Year

The Wheel of the Year is the nature-based calendar of Wicca based on four solar festivals and four seasonal festivals between them. Collectively, these holidays are known as sabbats.



Yule

For Wiccans and other Pagans, Yule is the sabbat that begins our spiritual year. The name "Yule" comes from the pre-Christian festivities of Germanic tribes and is believed to have meant "feast". In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the Winter Solstice—the shortest day and longest night. The actual date varies slightly each year, yet we typically celebrate the holiday around December 21st. (Since sabbats are seasonal, Pagans in the Southern Hemisphere celebrate Yule about June 21st.)

Wreath

Wreaths were also traditional in ancient times for they symbolized the wheel of the year and the completion of another cycle. They were made of evergreens and adorned with cones and berries and hung as decoration throughout the home. They were also given as gifts to symbolize the infinity of goodwill, friendship and joyfulness.

Pentacle

The primary icon of Wicca and many other Pagans is the pentagram. Generally, the pentagram is only the five-pointed star and the pentacle is the star with a circle enclosing it. In traditional Wicca, the points of the star represent the four Platonic elements – Fire is the lower right, Earth the lower left, Water the upper right, and Air the upper left. The point at the top symbolizes Spirit – the place where the elements come together and connect us to the Source.

Meditation

Since the Sun's light is still dim for several more weeks, this sabbat reminds us about the virtue of patience. Meditating on the enchanting stillness, the crystal clarity of the twinkling stars in the cold night sky above, creating spells for peace, love, harmony, family, and new beginnings can be physically represented by bell ringing and caroling. Looking ahead, the waning half of the year is over, and warmth, growth, and light will return again in the Spring.

Lady of the Sea Islands

The emblem of Ancient Sea Island Continuum represents our connection to the cycles of life upon the Sea Islands, and to the many cultures that have lived here in relation to the natural environment. This affinity is felt most vividly in the life cycle of spartina, the marsh cord grass that surrounds the Sea Islands.



These grasses support an abundance of living things, converting the sun's energy into food and structure, and as they die, they feed the shrimp and shellfish harvested in our oceans.

We connect with this cycle throughout the year, as we watch the colors of the reeds glistening green in the summertime, and in the winter, turning brown and dying, the bundles collecting and drifting out to sea. Against this direct association to the seasons, we understand on a higher level our own community's and our own individual connection to the earth.

The Horned One

The short version of the Wiccan Rede archaically says, "An ye harm none, do what ye will". The Rede is the key moral system in the religion of Wicca and other witchcraft-based faiths. The 17th stanza of the longer version shown here pertains to Yule and invites attention to the male aspect of Divinity.



In the Wheel of the Year, Yule marks the death and rebirth of the Horned God, an aspect of the sun god when the mother Goddess, the moon, gives birth to him once again. And as the days grow longer the Horned One rules a bit more with every passing day.

Evergreen

Ancient Celtic Druids believed the evergreen was sacred and represented everlasting life because it did not shed its leaves as the deciduous trees did. Therefore, they represented the eternal aspect of the Goddess who also never dies. Their greenery was symbolic of the hope for the return of the Sun's light and warmth.

Yule Log

The custom of burning a Yule Log began with ancient Scandinavians who burned a huge log, felled from an Ash tree, to honor their god Thor. In the Celtic tradition, a continual hearth fire was kept to prevent spirits from entering the home. In order for the fire to keep burning, a large oak tree was felled and brought into the home where the tree was placed trunk first into the hearth, with the last remnants set aside to burn with next year's fire. It was also believed that the longer the Yule log burned, the faster the sun would come to warm the earth.

Holly

Holly, which represents the masculine element, was often used to decorate doors, windows and fireplaces. Because of its prickliness it was thought to capture or ward off evil spirits before they could enter a home and cause harm. To the ancient Celts, the red berries corresponded to the menstrual blood of their beloved Goddess.

Yule Playlist

Here is a short list of Pagan oriented Yule songs with their lyrics that we recommended to be played at ***Celebrate the Season***.



Lindsey Stirling – Carol of the Bells

<https://youtu.be/EKkzbbLYPuI>

"Carol of the Bells" is based on the traditional Ukrainian folk chant "Shchedryk". The original title translates to "the generous one". It tells of a swallow flying into a household to proclaim the bountiful year that the family will have. The chant is considered to be of **prehistoric** origin.

Shchedryk, shchedryk, a shchedrivka [*New Year's carol*];
A little swallow flew [into the household]
and started to twitter,
to summon the master:
"Come out, come out, O master [of the household],
look at the sheep pen,
there the ewes have yeaned
and the lambkins have been born

Your goods [*livestock*] are great,
you will have a lot of money, [by selling them].
If not money, then chaff: [from all the grain you will harvest]
you have a dark-eyebrowed [beautiful] wife."
Shchedryk, shchedryk, a shchedrivka,
A little swallow flew.

Lisa Thiel – Yule (Winter Solstice Song)

<https://youtu.be/h0Xz5w-Sr5g>

Enter the night and you'll find the light,
That will carry you to your dreams.
Enter the night, let your spirit take flight,
In the field of infinite possibilities

On the longest night we search for the light,
And we find it deep within.
Open your eyes to embrace what is wise,
And see the light of your own soul shining.

Wrap up in the cloak of starry darkness my child,
And you'll find the center of all things.
For from this space of the deepest dark place,
Life Eternal does spring.

So, when you find that spark
When you dream in the dark,
Hold it close to your heart and know.
All that you see is all that can be
When you give birth to the dreams of your soul.

Lea Morris — Honor the Dark

<https://youtu.be/oEztYaguqKY>

Honor the dark
As you do the light
We see the gifts that come to us
by day and by night
I choose to honor the dark
Uncertainty and change
Deliver us from fear
Until only love remains.

Dar Williams – The Christians and the Pagans

<https://youtu.be/U1yMSgNOus4>

Amber called her uncle, said "we're up here for the holiday
Jane and I were having Solstice, now we need a place to stay."
And her Christ-loving uncle watched his wife hang Mary on a tree
He watched his son hang candy canes all made with red dye number three
He told his niece, "It's Christmas Eve, I know our life is not your style."
She said "Christmas is like Solstice and we miss you and it's been a while."

So, the Christians and the Pagans sat together at the table
Finding faith and common ground the best that they were able
And just before the meal was served hands were held and prayers were said
Sending hope for peace on earth to all their gods and goddesses

The food was great, the tree plugged in, the meal had gone without a hitch
Till Timmy turned to Amber and said "is it true that you're a witch?"
His mom jumped up and said "the pies are burning" and she hit the kitchen
And it was Jane who spoke, she said "it's true your cousin's not a Christian
But we love trees, we love the snow, the friends we have, the world we share
And you find magic from your God and we find magic everywhere."

So, the Christians and the Pagans sat together at the table
Finding faith and common ground the best that they were able
And where does magic come from? I think magic's in the learning
Cause now when Christians sit with Pagans only pumpkin pies are burning

When Amber tried to do the dishes, her aunt said "really, no don't bother"
Amber's uncle saw how Amber looked like Tim and like her father
He thought about his brother, how they hadn't spoken in a year
He thought he'd call him up and say "it's Christmas and your daughter's here"
He thought of fathers, sons and brothers, saw his own son tug his sleeve
Saying "can I be a pagan?" Dad said "we'll discuss it when they leave"

So, the Christians and the Pagans sat together at the table
Finding faith and common ground the best that they were able
Lighting trees in darkness, learning new ways from the old
And making sense of history and drawing warmth out of the cold.



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