

Freehold Calendar

The Freehold Calendar is designed to serve as a baseline for members and Kindreds of the B.C. Heathen Freehold, feel free to adapt it to suite your needs. There are four Major Fainings and five Minor



Fainings in the Freehold Calendar, with the Liturgical Year beginning at sunset on the 20th of December each year. The preferred term for Freehold Ritual activities is Faining. We have opted to call our Ritual Activities “Fainings” rather than “Blót” due to the specific associations of “Blót” with “animal offerings”, while “Faining” has a literal meaning of “to exalt” or “to make glad”. This fits much more appropriately with Freehold Custom and Practice.

Faining Dates

- Yule: from Mothers’ Night, sunset on the 20th of December, until sunset on the 1st of January.
- Dísablót: Same date as BC Family Day, 3rd Monday in February.
- Eastertide/Sigrblót: Same dates as the Easter Weekend Statutory Holiday. Weekend including the first Monday following the Full Moon occurring after the Vernal Equinox.
- Æcerbot: Same as Earth Day, 22nd of April. May be combined with Eastertide if occurring the same weekend.
- May Day: 1st of May.
- Midsummer: 21st of June.
- Lammas: the same as BC Day, 1st Monday in August.
- Winternights: same as the Canadian Thanksgiving weekend, 2nd Monday of October.
- Einherjar Blót: same as civil Remembrance Day, 11th of November.

Major Fainings

Yule

Yule is the beginning of the Freehold Liturgical Calendar. Yule is a midwinter celebration to commemorate the end of the Wild Hunt and the lengthening of days. Yule is one of the three ritual dates that is recorded in both Anglo-Saxon and Norse source material as a major Holy-Tide. In Anglo-Saxon sources we learn of Mothers' Night, dedicated to the Ancestral Mothers', this was recorded by Bede to be the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon year. In Norse sources Yule is a time for gathering as a community to share a feast and make offerings that all might survive the winter.

Recommended Deities: Odin, Freya, Frigga, or the Disir/Mothers.

Eastertide/Sigrblót

The Anglo-Saxons celebrated Ēostre at the full moon following of Ēostremonath (aligns with the Jewish Paschal full moon), a festival dedicated to a goddess of the same name, who ruled over rebirth, rejuvenation, and new beginnings. Sigrblót means Victory Blót and was celebrated at the same time as the Anglo-Saxon Ēostre, it is a festival marking the end of winter and the beginning of summer. At this time the Norse would make offerings to ensure success in the campaigning season. Sigrblót/Ēostre is one of the three festivals that both Anglo-Saxon and Norse sources recognise as major Holy-Tides. The Freehold has adopted the name Eastertide for our modern celebration, as a modernisation of the ancient Anglo-Saxon name, while also acknowledging Sigrblót as an alternative name.

Recommended Deities: Odin, Tyr, Freya, or Ēostre.

Winternights

Winternights is the last of the three major Holy-Tides found in both Norse and Anglo-Saxon sources. This is the end of summer and the beginning of winter, the third and final harvest festival of the year. A time to celebrate the great bounty that we have received from the Earth, we gather with friends and family to give thanks. The specific dating of Winternights seems to have varied yet it was always tied to the end of the harvest season. For this reason, the Freehold has settled on Thanksgiving as our date to hold Winternights; this aligns with Canadian agricultural practices and traditions celebrating the harvest each year at this time.

Recommended Deities: Freyr, Skaði, Hel, or Odin.

Midsummer

Midsummer is a common folk celebration throughout Germanic countries to this day. It is a time to mark the pleasantries of summer and the recreational activities it affords us. While there are no surviving attestations of the ancient Germanic peoples celebrating Midsummer, the Freehold has chosen to include it as a modern celebration, due to its prevalence in Modern and Mediaeval Germanic Countries. The likely reason there was no major Faining during Summer in ancient times is that most of those who could vote in a Thing/Moot would have been away, raiding, trading, or exploring during the season of war and commerce..

Recommended Deities: Loki, Tyr, or Wayland.

Minor Fainings

Dísablót

Dísablót is a festival honouring the Disir in Scandinavia, Tribal customs placed it either before or after Yule. The Freehold has opted for the early spring date. While the name of this ritual varied widely between Germanic Tribes it seems to have been a fertility rite, making offerings to the Disir or Vanir to ensure fertility of the fields and crops within them. In Anglo-Saxon England the rituals conducted in Solmonath (roughly February) included burying cakes within the fields to ensure prosperity.

Recommended Deities: Disir/Mothers, Frigga, or Freya.

Æcerbot

A Ritual derived from an Anglo-Saxon Charm recorded in the 11th century. The date is set to coincide with the modern Earth Day, to acknowledge Nerthus, the Earth Mother, and all her gifts in an appropriate Heathen Context.

Recommended Deity: Nerthus

May Day

An European folk custom, May Day was the traditional end of Spring and beginning of Summer in England. The practices while only recorded post-conversion likely trace back to Heathen roots.

Recommended Deities: Freya and/or Freyr.

Lammas

The term Lammas is Old English for “loaf mass” where the first loaves of bread made from the current year’s grains were shared and eaten by the community in early Mediaeval England. Though not directly attested from pre-Christian sources, the customs and practices associated with Lammas strongly imply pagan traditions carried forward into Christian times. The Freehold has chosen to participate in this practice.

Recommended Deities: Thor, Tyr, or Freyr.

Einherjar Blót

The Einherjar Blót is a modern Heathen celebration in honour of those who have fallen in battle, it coincides with the Commonwealth Remembrance Day that commemorates the end of the First World War. While this Faining has no historical equivalent, the members of the BC Heathen Freehold wish to give honour and remembrance in our own custom to those who made the greatest sacrifice for us.