



# Welcome back Balder!



December 21st is the Winter Solstice and Odinists celebrate Yule. On this day Odinists welcome back the sun and welcome back their God named Balder. During the Yule celebration they light a fire with the Yule log from the year before (cut from last year's Yule tree). They must keep this fire burning all day and all night. It was said that if the fire was not tended to all night that the sun would not return. At Yule Odinists celebrate the return of Balder by burning sun wheel symbols, the Yule celebration can last up to three days.

## The story of Balder

Balder the Good was having really bad dreams about people hurting him and killing him. When he told the Aesir about these dreams they went to get protection for Balder from everything in the world. Frigg asked for an Oath from fire and water, iron and all metals. She asked for Oaths from stones, earth, trees, and animals. They all said that they would not harm Balder.

Once Balder could not be harmed the Aesir thought it was a funny game to throw darts, rocks, even arrows and blades at Balder the Good. Loki however did not think that this was funny at all.

Loki dressed up as an old woman and went to ask Frigg in her hall, Fensalir, about the oaths that were made by all things on earth. Loki found out that Frigg did not ask a small little bush called mistletoe for an oath because she thought it was too small to hurt Balder. Loki then went to find the mistletoe bush. Once he had found the bush, Loki made a dart from a branch. He gave that dart to Balder's brother Hod who was blind. Loki told Hod to throw the dart at Balder to join the other gods who were having fun. Hod threw the dart and it killed Balder. Everyone was very sad that Balder died because he was the most loved God by all who met him. The Goddess Hel said she would only allow Balder to return if the whole world cried for him. Frigg sent out messengers to ask if everyone would cry for Balder's return. Loki this time dressed himself as a Giantess called Thokk and told the messenger that he did not care if Balder was to return, because of this Balder had to stay in Helheim until Ragnarok. When the Aesir found out that Loki was the one behind all of this trouble they went to capture him to punish him for what he had done. Loki changed himself into a salmon and hid in a waterfall called Franang. When Odin saw Loki from his throne, Hlidskjalf, the Gods went to find him. They found his house and a net that Loki had made and tried to destroy. Kvasir, the wisest of all the Gods knew that this was how they were to capture Loki. The Gods took the net and swept the river floor. They missed the first time. They tried again, this time Loki escaped by jumping over the net. The Gods tried for a third time and when Loki tried to jump over the net again Thor caught him by his tail. The Gods locked Loki up in a cave where he is tied to three rocks with a venomous snake that lies above him dripping poison onto his face. When the earth shakes it is because Loki's wife Sigyn has gone to empty the bowl of poison that she holds above Loki's face and Loki is shaking from the pain on the venom. Loki's sons were also captured and brought into the cave. The Gods then turned Vali into a wolf and Vali then ate his brother Narfi. The Gods used Narfi's insides to bind Loki. Loki and Vali have to stay in this cave until Ragnarok.

Notes:

Frigg is Balder's Mother.

Aesir are the Gods that live in Asgard (one of the nine worlds).

He' is the world of the dead (one of the nine worlds).

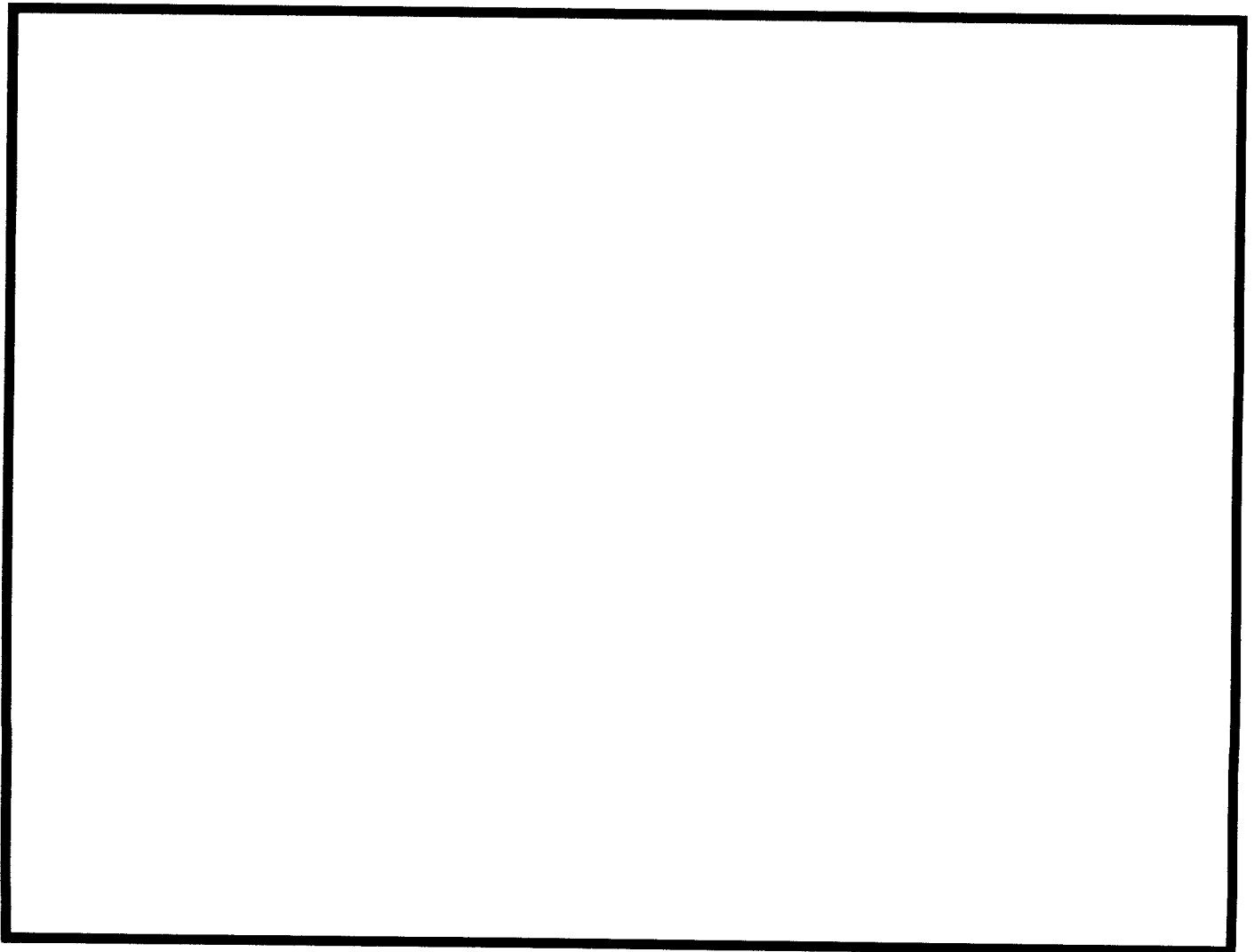
Ragnarok is the final battle in which all the Gods die and Balder returns. Therefore life is reborn.

# The Wild Hunt

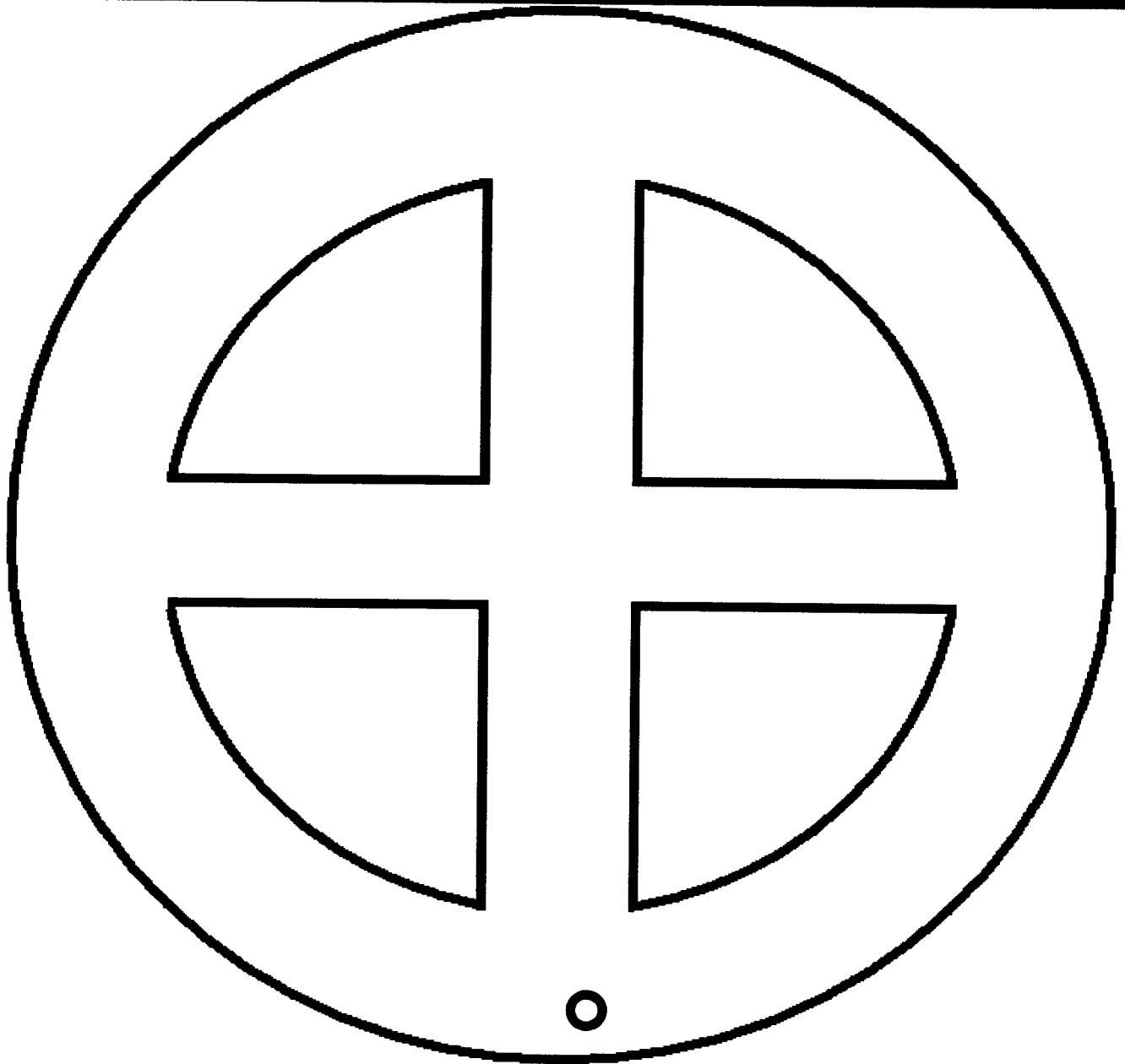


*And  
The twelve  
Days  
Of Yule.*

During Yule and the winter months, Odin and his eight legged horse, Sleipnir, ride throughout the lands for the Wild Hunt. The Wild Hunt lasts for twelve days and since it is such a long journey, Odin and Sleipnir need to stop and have something to eat and drink. Odin and Sleipnir will stop at all of the boys and girls houses for some hay and sugar for Sleipnir and some milk and cookies for Odin. Draw a picture of Odin riding Sleipnir on the Wild Hunt.



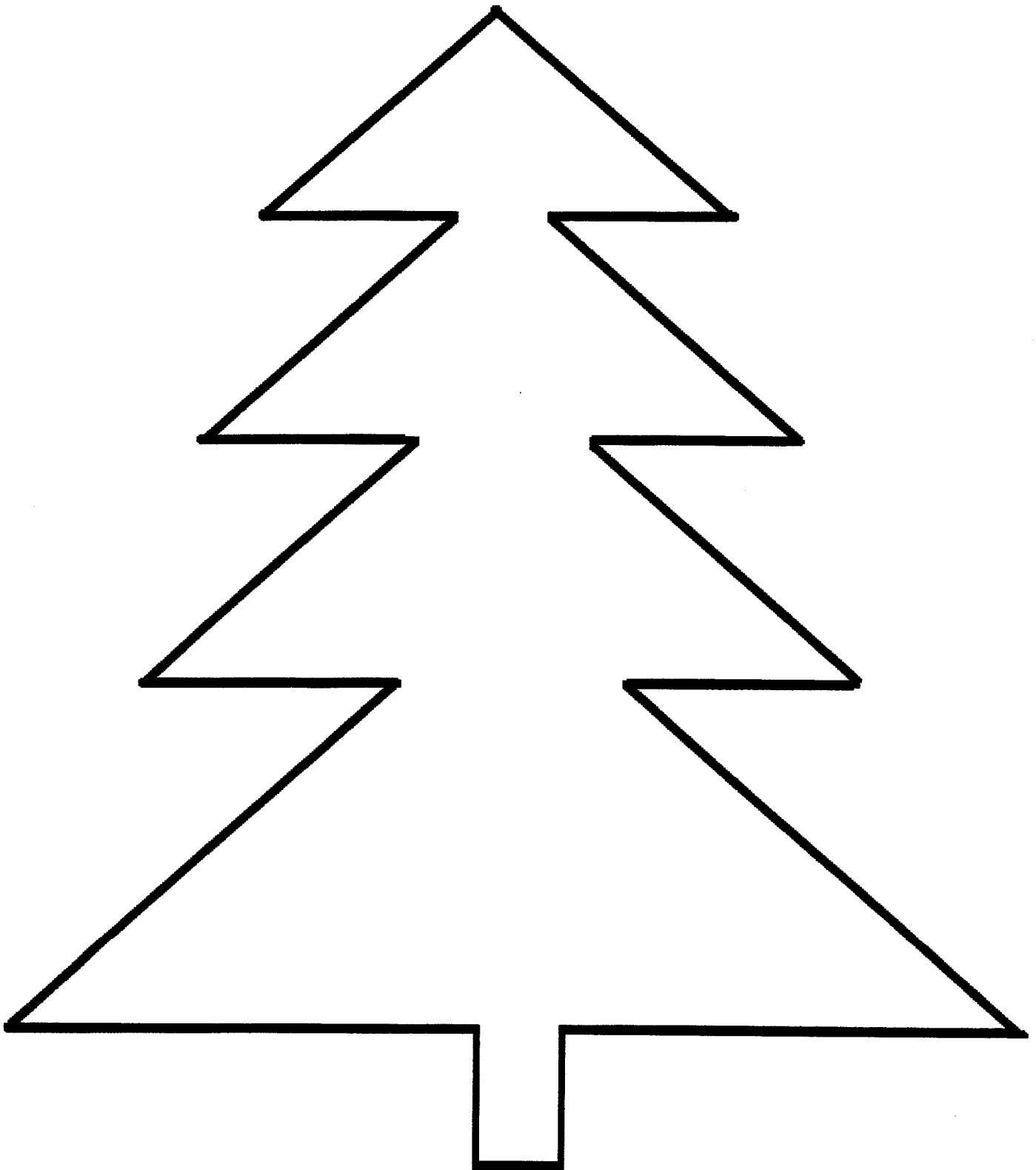
Hail the Sun!  
Hail Balder!



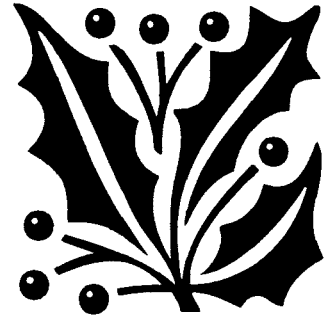
**Color and cut out the Sun Wheel and the Hails.  
Punch out the holes and attach string to make a mobile.**

# Yule Tree

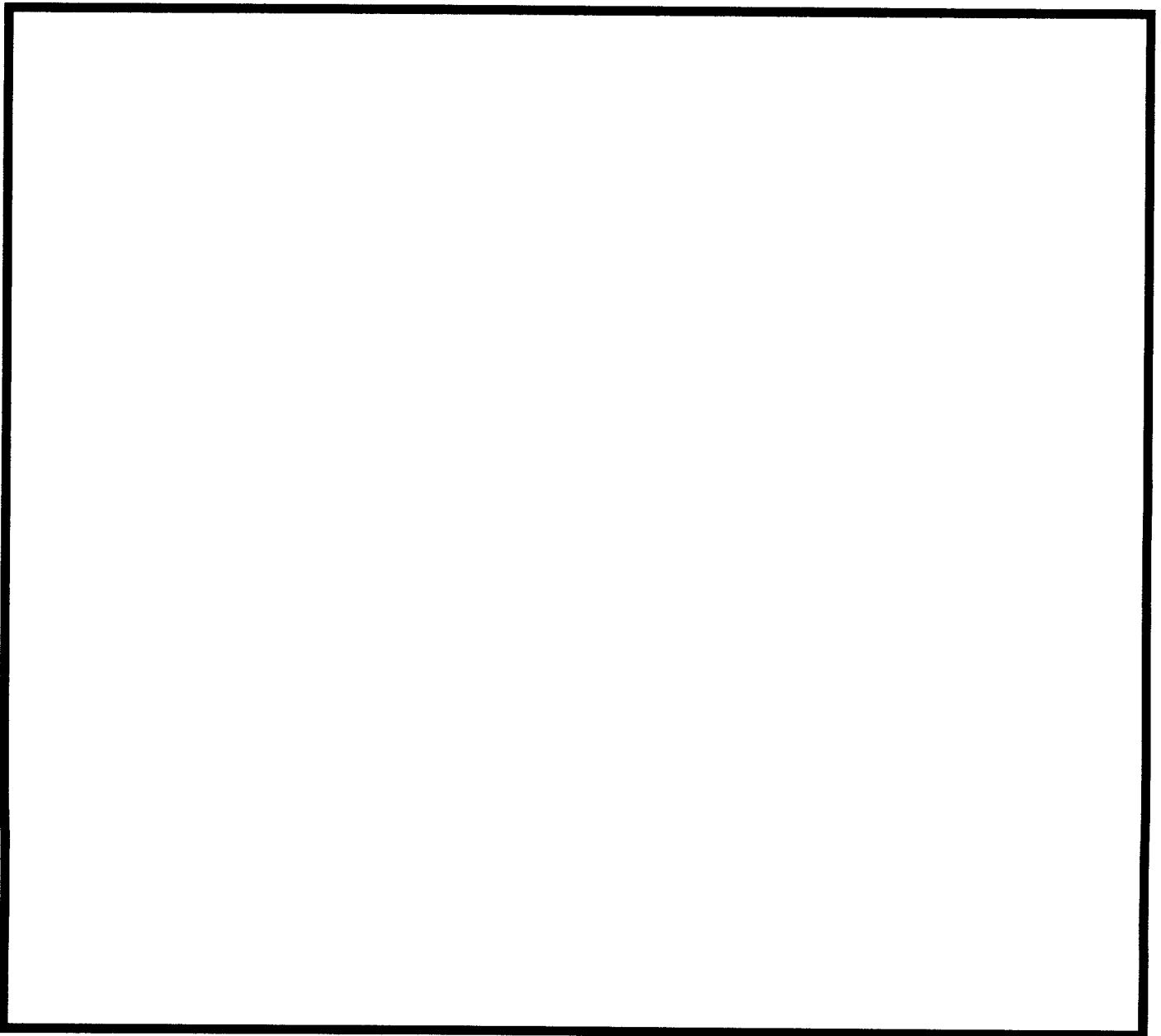
**Color and decorate the Yule Tree with the acorns, candles and holly.**



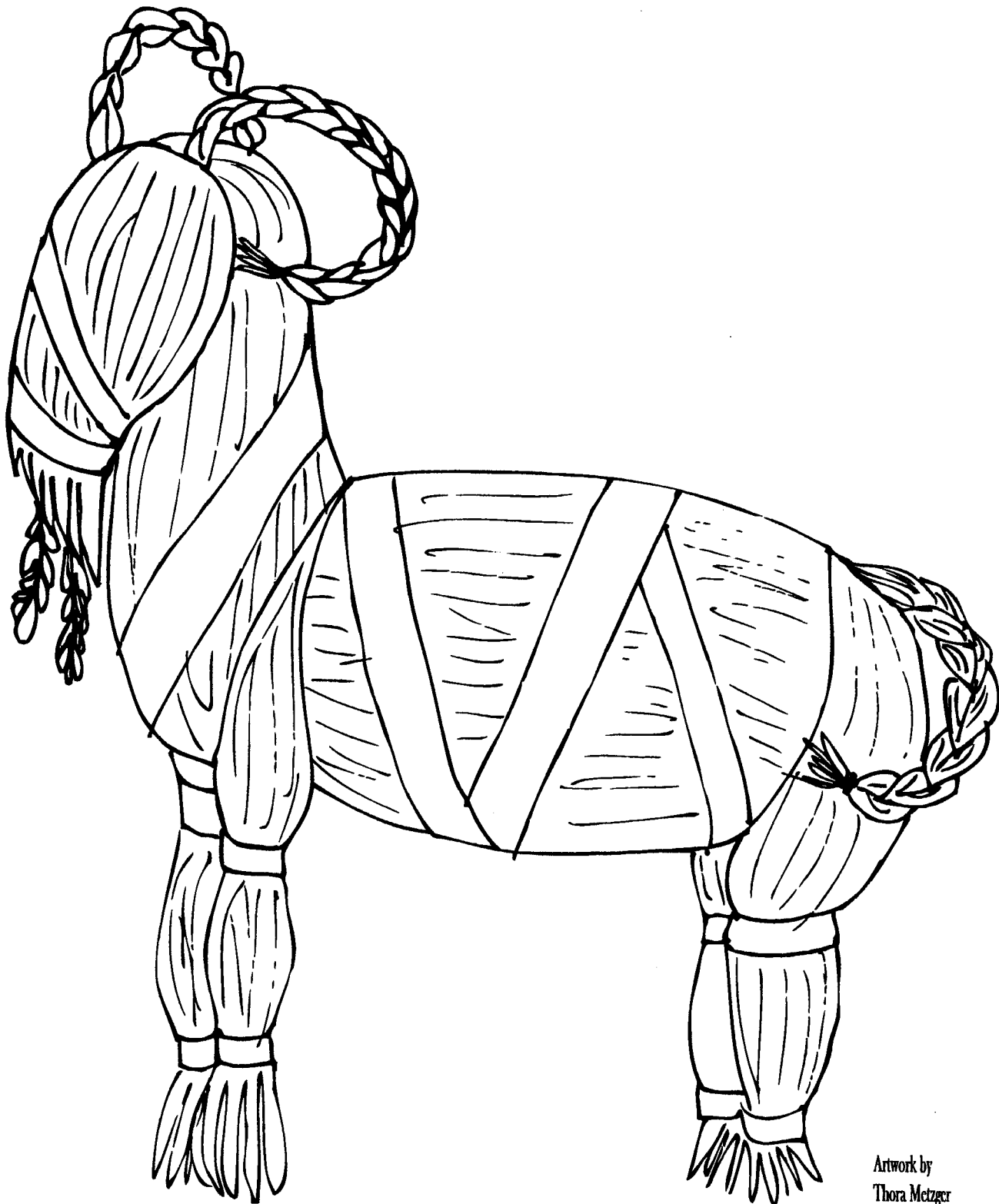
# A gift for A gift



It is said that if you leave a gift for Odin and Sleipnir that Odin will leave a gift for you. Draw a picture of what you would like Odin to leave for you.



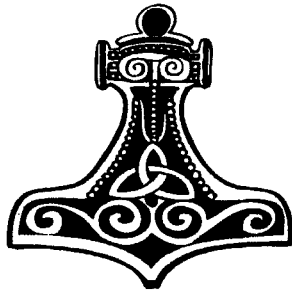
# Merry Yule!



Artwork by  
Thora Metzger

The Julbock or Yule Goat is a Scandinavian custom. In ancient times the Julbock was accompanied by the God Thor. Today the Julbock is accompanied either by Santa Claus or the "Tomten" (Yule Elf).

Whoever visits the Yule home with the Julbock, he always brings gifts for the children. Children would also leave out their shoes with sugar cubes and hay for the Goat. Color your Julbock and display it for all to see!



# A YULE WORD SEARCH

N F M G Y N C R R  
T L Y E R A Q O E  
R Y R U N E N H D  
E F L D L I E T L  
E G L L D E D N A  
P E T O O M E M B  
T F I G C H R J T  
Y A H G E T I H W  
T S L E I P N I R

Balder

Odin

Candle

Red

Frey

Sleipnir

Gift

Thor

Green

Tree

Hay

White

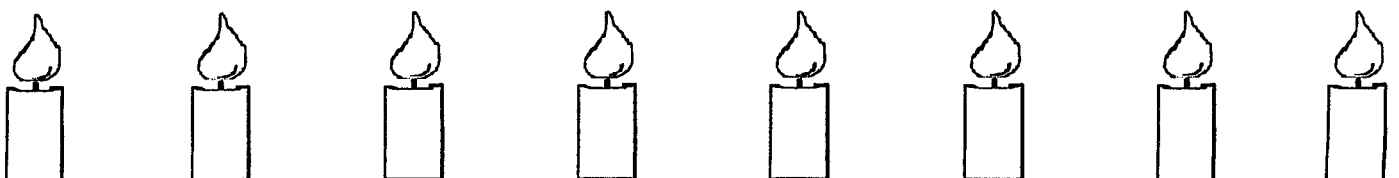
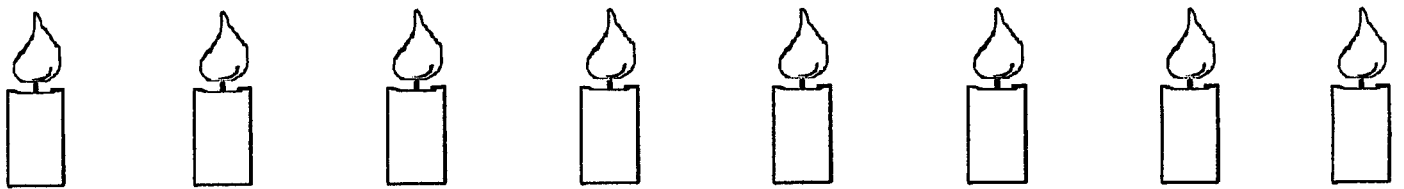
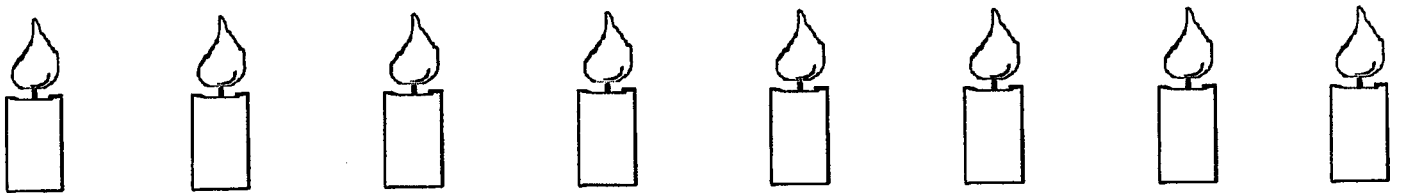
Holly

Yule

# Yule Tree

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Color and decorate the Yule Tree with the acorns, candles and holly.





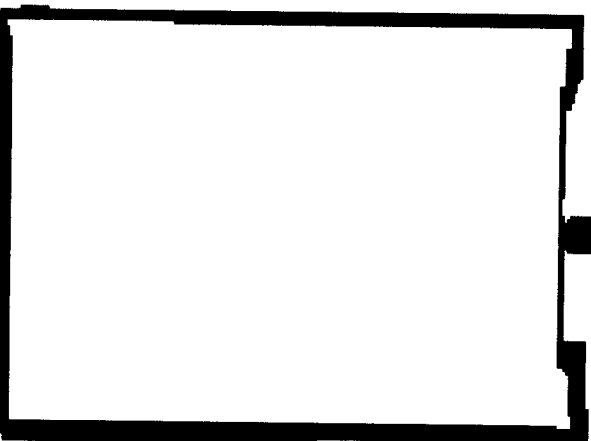
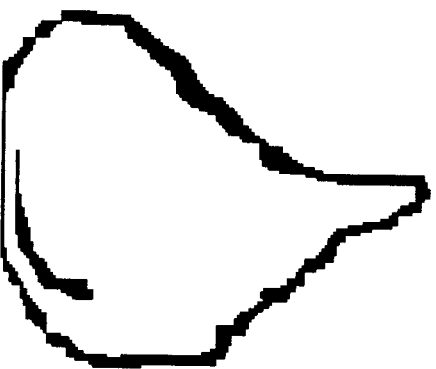
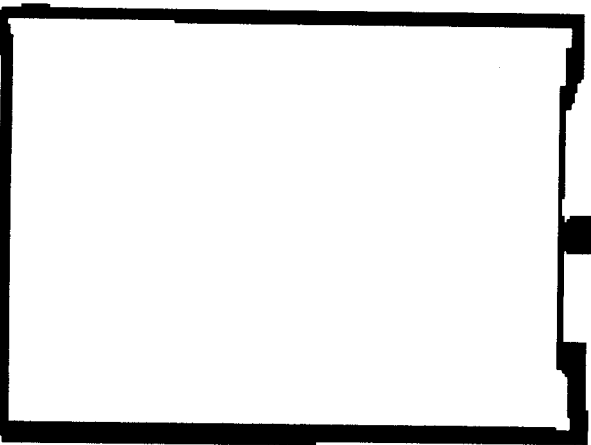
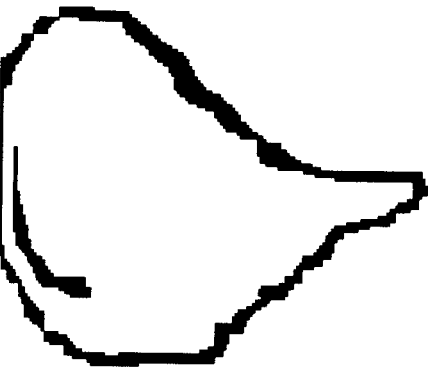
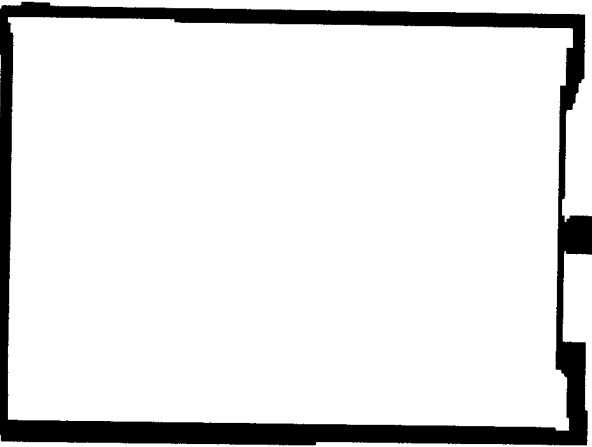
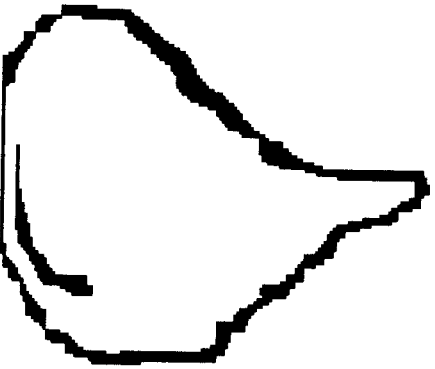
Yule candles are burned for twelve hours to represent the twelve days of Yule and the twelve months of the year.

Green stands for life during the winter months and for the God Thor.

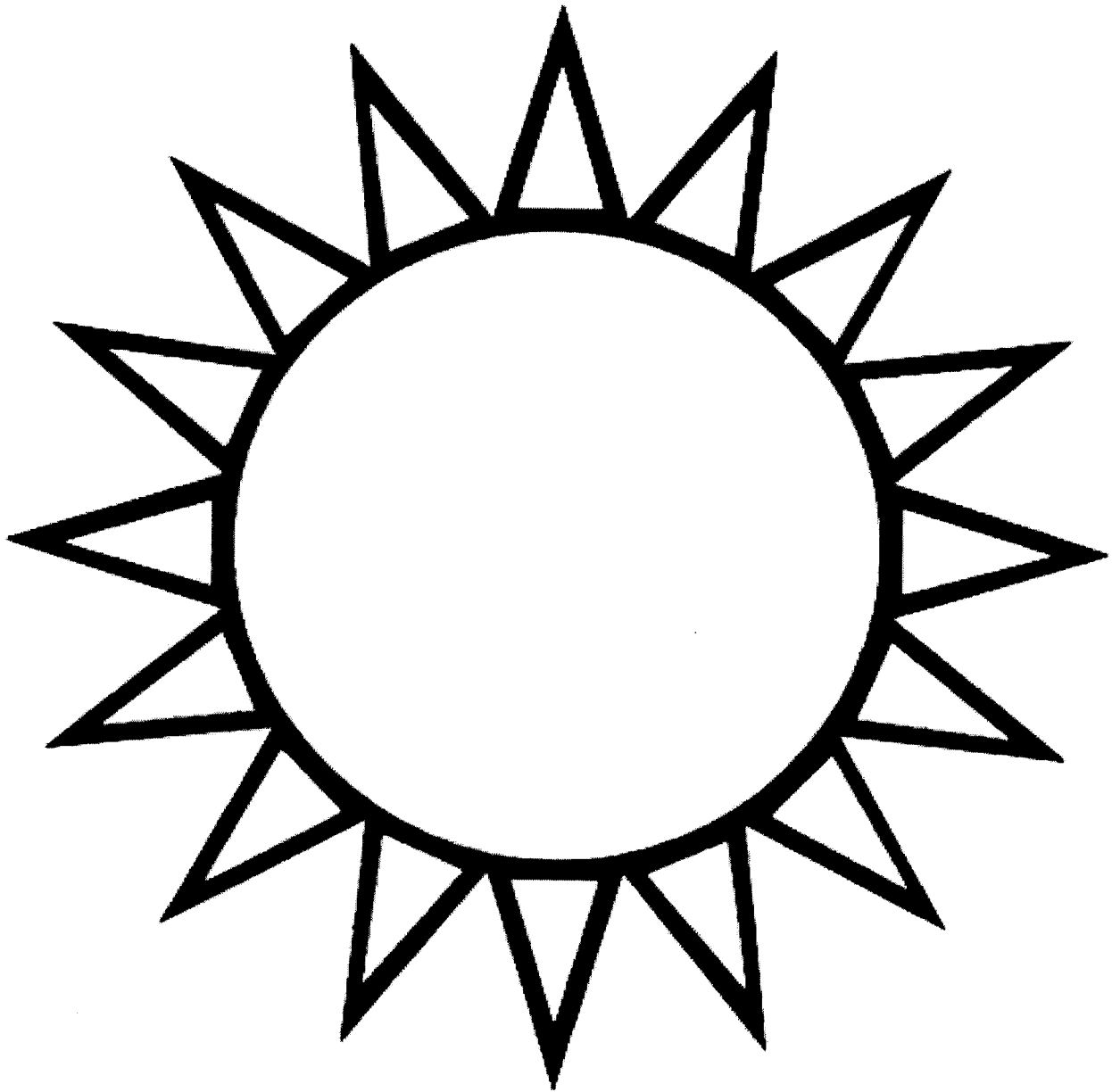
White stands for Purity, Courage, and Strength and for the God Odin.

Red stands for our Folk and Kin and Blood and for the God Frey.

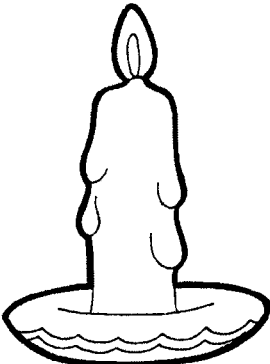
Color the candles below.



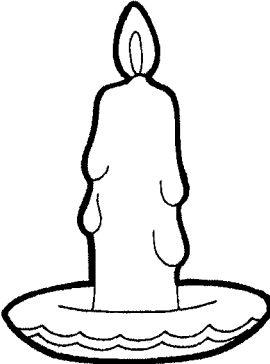
MERRY YULE!  
COLOR THE SUN BELOW.



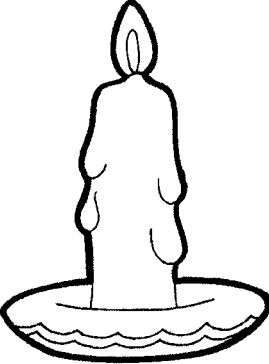
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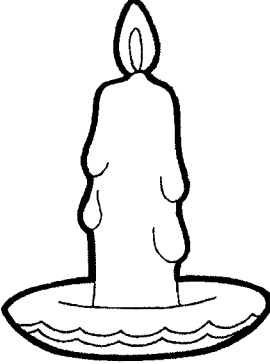
One



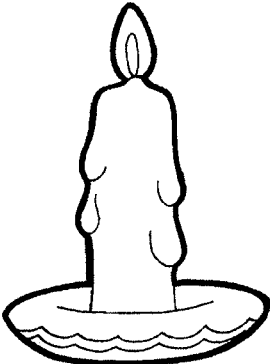
Two



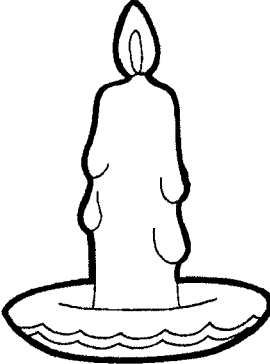
Three



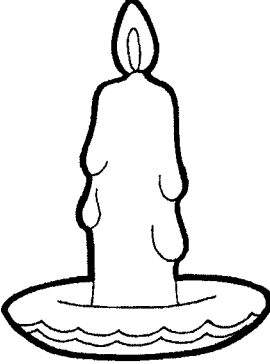
Four



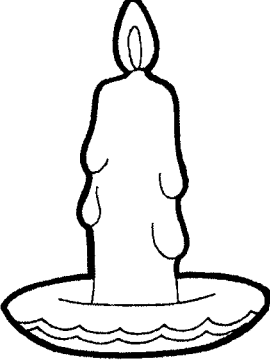
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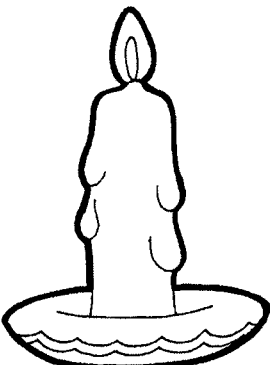
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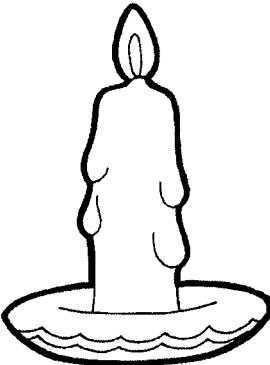
Seven



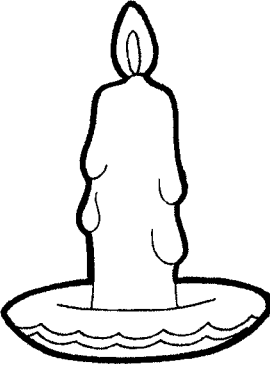
Eight



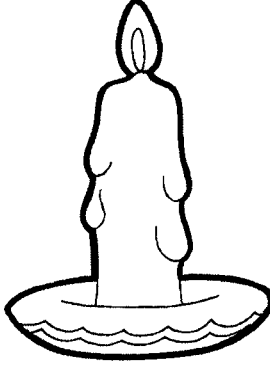
Nine



Ten



Eleven



Twelve