



Galam

Händer

Holy Church of Hander

Common Names

Officially supported by the Church:

Hander's Church, the Believers, Handerists, (Handerians)

Slang: Conformists (negative), Circlists

Symbol

Trinity Circle, also known as the Fount of Life



"Know then, my children, that this is the divine wisdom of Hander, the One. Before Hander we were not truly alive. Only by his worship and divine being do we come to a deeper understanding. These are the three Eternal Links that make up our faith and our life. The Body in which we reside shall be the first link, the physical part of our Life and shall be placed left for without a Body we won't reside on this planet. The Soul, the inner core of our being, that small part of us that will combine with Great Hander after our demise is the second Link. Without a soul we do not exist therefore it shall be placed at the right side. And the last link, our link with the One - the Divine Hander-, our Faith shall prevail over everything. Each Link connected to the other, only by combining all three can we reach true life and unity with Hander."

~From a sermon of Patriarch Everaldu Balduin, Prophet of Hander

The rise of Händler

Händler was there from the beginning. Like all spirits in the early days, he was a part of the natural world. But unlike the countless others, he was no normal spirit. Händler was the spirit of fire. Fire became increasingly important for the forefathers of Calam. Men discovered more and more of the wondrous properties of fire. Not only the cooking of food, but also the protection it offered from the elements, the wild animals and other dangers in the dark.

Slowly the fire began to grow. People did not understand, they did not know what happened. They understood that if the fire was gone, they would return to the darkness from before. They brought sacrifices. It were dark times, not only crops and livestock were used, but men from their midst were delivered to the fire, captives from other tribes as well as their own tribesmen.

Men did not understand that the light existed to vanquish darkness. Light did not want human sacrifices. The other spirits expected subjugation and sacrifice, they wanted people to beg, to crawl. But Händler wanted something else. He gave himself to men so that they could become more than this.

Little by little, the fire, Händler became more aware. Not as before, then he existed, but in a different manner. One day he spoke to men. By then, there were many other spirits who had grown and developed a consciousness of sorts. But Händler was the first to truly rise



above the others. He did not want to limit himself to his domain, maybe because of the nature of fire, and maybe it's through the ash that forms a connection from the spirit world to the material world. He wanted to be a beacon for humanity. No longer should Men live ignorant in the filth of the earth, they should rise in the light of the One True, the only one who deserved worship, the only one fit to be a God.

By the time the forefathers founded the kingdom of Calam, Händer began to gather more strength. In every house there was a fire and people thanked it daily. In the end the power of Händer grew so large, that he could be more than the other spirits. He chose one Man, a prophet, to spread his name and to lay out the order of the world.

Different sects within the Church of Händer

The Believers (Conformists: negative term)

The majority of the faithful are not interested in the more subtle teachings of Händer. They know the major lines of the religion, go to a celebration a few times a year and burn their dead. They believe and are guided by the Defenders and the Guides of Faith. Most of the time they don't ask questions. It's a mass that wants to be lead by the clergy. They are relative easy to sway and prone to superstition, in these aspects, they don't differ much from their spirit worshipping countrymen. Most priests, Defenders and Guides, find themselves in this situation, the only difference is that they know more of the rites and the learning's of Händer. In theory every believer can call upon the power of Händer. There are cases of farmers and ordinary townsfolk who did miracles in the name of Händer. But this is the exception. Most of the time it are only the priests in possession of a sacred amulet of Händer who have the means, the power and the knowledge to work miracles in the name of the One.

Officially there are no longer sites of spirit worship. In truth, there are still places where people, Handerites, worship sacred trees, holy wells and other natural places.

The Inquisition.

The hard-line faction within the Church. They have gathered more and more strength these past few years, within the church and on a more worldly level. After the admission of the King to quell the masses, they have an armed militia at their disposal. The Inquisition of Händer is an out of control means to protect the faithful and to eradicate sources of witchcraft. On the present day the Inquisition is under the firm leadership of his Eminence Bishop Darren Blackwood. He tended and guided the Inquisition to its current form, as one of the most powerful factions within the Church, a faction that whispers to his holiness the Patriarch Everaldu Balduin.

The structure of the Inquisition stands alone from the regular structure within the Church. They are independent and only a member of the inquisition or a higher ranking Church official can give them any orders. Prelates and even bishops are afraid to correct a member of the Inquisition. The militia exists of a number of very religious, even fanatic believers who are willing to do anything to spread the word of Händer. Everything not human has to be hunted down and eradicated. Every non believing human should be converted. It is better to die in the cleansing fire of Händer than to refuse His word.

The Other Ways

A reaction to the extremism of the Inquisition. Rooted in an elder, more gentle form of the Faith. It is a way that preaches a more gentle approach. Not to bring people to the faith through sword and fire, but through the teachings of Händer and through the miracles the priests do in his name. This faction has been losing influence the last decades, mostly to the Inquisition. In more rural provinces such as Leikland, where the power of the Inquisition is still weak, there are places where priests are still taught and raised in the old way.

The practitioners of these learnings aren't pacifists, they do believe that the only true faithful is one that embraces the faith, out of free will, not because one is forced to do so. The faithful will be protected, by force of arms if necessary. Everything non human is not something to hunt down, but something to be weary of. They are looked upon with distrust and it is better to evade them all together.

Apart from these three factions there are other groups and sects within the church, they have different accents and slightly different beliefs. Yet all these groups are united in their faith and under the authority of their patriarch.

Celebration

A celebration of Händer usually happens in the local place of prayer, a church. It is possible to do it anywhere if the need arises. Traditionally a place of prayer is triangular of form. In the upper point there is a altar to the One True Händer. Outside in front of the place of prayer there is usually a large, paved space. This space is used for funerary rites.

If there is a gathering outside a place of prayer it is customary to take a triangular shape, with the exception that the faithful form the sides of the triangle. In a place of prayer there is often on the left a place for the nobility and other people of importance, here they have a place to sit.

Most celebrations start with a reading of one or more of the commandments of Händer. There are several prayers recited, this depends on the priest. The most important part of the celebration is the credo, to confirm the belief in Händer. After the credo follows the consumption of the fire of Händer. Most of the time the celebration is closed with a preach by a present priest.

Funerals

Unlike the mountainfolk from the north, Handerites do not bury their dead. They burn them. After the death of the person, it is necessary to release the soul by burning the dead body. Although the body is one of the three pillars, after it deceases it is accustomed to use the light of Händer, the cleansing fire, together with the faith of the gathered Handerites to guide the soul to heaven where it can join Händer.

Unlike the rituals of the Mountainfolk and the Barbarians of the Souths, where the body is buried, the body is put upon a wooden scaffolding along with herbs and sacred oil. Here it is guided to the heavens under the guidance of a priest and the relatives and other members of the community.

Festivals

When winter starts the Prophet saw his first vision. This night, the holiest of them all



Harbingernight

At the beginning of spring the Prophet returned, ignoring the warnings of those who cast him out, restoring the True Faith. The Festival of Restoration.

When summer starts the faithful gathered in true communion for the first time.

The Day of Harmony.

Händer Bible

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The Body in which we reside shall be the first link, the physical part of our Life and shall be placed left for without a Body we won't reside on this planet.

The Soul, the inner core of our being, that small part of us that will combine with Great Hander after our demise is the second Link. Without a soul we do not exist therefore it shall be placed at the right side.

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- Patriarch Everald Balduin, Prophet of Hander

Revelations

It was early in the morning when Gerhard led his flock of sheep towards the pastures closest to the borders of the Kingdom. Once again he was sent away and punished to herd this tiny flock of sheep by foot. Once again their ancestral spirit had cursed Gerhard for his inventive ideas.

The shodded quarterstaff that he made was a blemish in the eyes of the spirit. "A shepherd's son should be a shepherd! Adhere to the ways of our family and the spirit of your great-grandfather!" his father had said. But Gerhard Shepherd's Son knew there was more than this simple existence. He dreamed of the day when he could improve the world through his inventions. It was a foolish dream according to his family for all was well and they had the guidance of the spirits. It was here, in these pastures that Gerhard first saw Divine Hander. In the form of a spirit he approached the shepherd and bade him to sit down and talk to him. Gerhard obeyed for this was a spirit and he had been brought up to listen to their requests. Long they talked and of many things: of men and spirits, of Gerhard's ideas. Gerhard was amazed that this spirit's ideas seemed to be the same as his own: let man grow and evolve. "Who are you, good spirit," he asked, "that you talk to differently than other spirits?" As he asked this question the spirit next to him faded and a pulsing light replaced it: "I am Hander. I am the Creator of the people of these lands. I am the one true leader. The spirits have strayed from their path to help mankind and thus I have come." Gerhard knelt and praised Divine Hander, Lord of Creation.

"Come, young one, have faith in me. You will announce the True Faith to the world. Man has to leave his cities to worship the spirits. They shun and constrict his progress. I shall enter the cities unseen and right these wrongs. You shall be my Harbinger." And thus Gerhard

followed Divine Hander who led him across the border into the wild lands, to the corpse of a barbarian. And Hander commanded: "Take the wealth of this man for he stole it from my people. Take all his gold and gems, those things he stole from my own. Take them and ask the best jeweler in the cities to make you this," and image of a symbol formed in Gerhard's mind, the symbol that would signify the True Faith. And so he let the symbol be made and returned to the pastures with it where Hander awaited him. "I shall fill this symbol with my presence. I shall drench it in my power so that people will recognize you, my Harbinger. And for my people, you shall hear my sorrow and you shall know that you must be my Prophet and lead them away from certain doom." The blinding light that was Hander surrounded the symbol. And, as He had said, He screamed in anguish. Terrible screams, the sorrow for his Children lead astray. So great was his sorrow that Gerhard could not endure it and fainted. When he woke Hander was gone but behold! The symbol in his hand pulsed with the Divine Light and True Faith returned to the world...

Commandments

Worship Hander and no other, for he is the one True Lord
Spirits have strayed from their path to help mankind, be wary of them!
All are equal in the eyes of the Lord.
That what is unjust must be stopped.

Prayers

We gadriap in nihtscuan (We gather in shadow,)
Neoðan þin gledstede, (Beneath your altar,)
þin li fæst in blode ond lie e. (Your image in blood and flame.)
Nu þin ebann, æpreddap us (By your command, deliver us)
To þæm anli um æltæwan gastcynige (Unto the One True God)
Händer, ure dryhtweorþ nergend (Händer, our divine savior)
Nu ond æfre to alder. (Now and for eternity.)

Fæder ure, (Our father)

ðu ðe eart on heofenum, (who art in heaven)

si ðin nama gehalgod; (hallowed be thy name)

to-becume ðin rice; (thy kingdom come)

geweorpe ðin willa on eorðan (thy will be done, on earth)

swa swa on heofenum. (as it is in heaven.)

Urne ge dæghwamlican hlaf syle us to-deag, (give us today our daily bread)

and forgyf us ure gyltas (and forgive us our trespasses)



swa swa we forgifaþ urum gyltendum, (as we forgive those who trespassed)

ane ne gelæde ðu us on costnunge, ac alys us of yfle. (

Amen.

Credo

Priest: Lord Händer protect us

All: We are alone in the dark

Priest: Lord Händer guide us

All: we are in search of the truth

Priest: Lord Händer learn us

All: we will find wisdom in His light

Those that are gather here around this table.

Thank Hander for his Divine Providence,
that we may serve him and love him,
and abide by his ways.

So be it.

By the grace of Divine Hander,
By His all-encompassing understanding,
Keep (name) safe from harm,
Shield (name) in battle's yet to come,
Oh, my Lord, watch over this servant of your Will,
For this servant is Your sword and Champion,
By your Shining Grace and Our Faith,

Shepherd of my soul ,
let me be strong and wise.
Shepherd of my life,
be with me always.
Divine Hander,
do not let me go astray.
Into thy arms I come,
to understand all.

"And when I vest my flashing sword
And my hand takes hold on judgement
I will take vengeance upon mine enemies

And I will repay those who haze me
O Lord Händler, raise me to Thy right hand And count me among Thy saints."

Variation (the original):

For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever
if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment,
I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me.
I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh—
with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired heads of the enemy.'
Rejoice, O nations, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will
render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land and His people."

"Never shall innocent blood be shed.
Yet the blood of the wicked shall flow like a river.
The righteous shall spread their wings and be the vengeful striking hammer of our lord
Händler. "

Oh divine lord Händler
shield our women and children
safeguard our houses from fire
keep our fields free from harm
protect our harvest and the fruits of our labour
watch over Your children
so they may thrive and worship Thee all the better
until we are taken into Your fire.

OS LUSTI MEDITABITUR SAPIENTIAM
ET LINGUA EIUS LOGUETUR IUDICIUM
BEATUS VIR QUI SUFFERT TENTATIONEM
QUONIAM CUM PROBATUS FUERIT
ACCIPIET CORONAM VITAE
KYRIE, IGUIS DIVINE, ELEISON

the mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom
and his tongue shall speak judgment
blessed is the man who endures temptation
for, once he has been tried
he shall receive the crown of life
oh lord, oh holy fire, have mercy