



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



APRIL 3 OPEN FULL MOON

Hearthstone meets the Friday before or the Friday of the Full Moon, in the upstairs chapel at the First Unitarian Church at 14th and Lafayette in Denver. The church doors open at 7, and we like to start at 7:30. This month's ritual is FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2015.

On April 3, Lady Nightshade and the Coven of the Golden Condors of the Black Forest Clan will be honoring the element of water and its importance in spring for a successful planting season, whether it be physical or metaphysical seeds. If you can, please bring a small jar or container of water to bless. There will also be small containers available to fill at the church.

—Catherine

<http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

GREETINGS

At this time last month, I wrote about the wonders of a late spring snow. We needed the snow (and still do – after all, we live in a desert climate). The snow had another effect – I didn't drive my car for three days and when I tried to start it, I found that the fuel pump had died. So, no car for me, at least at the moment. Like many folks these days, I live close to the edge and must save up for major repairs.

Fortunately, I have an EcoPass and live relatively close to the light rail. My office is a little further from the station, but it's not an unmanageable distance. In fact, on these warm days, it's pleasant. On the snowier days, it's more of a challenge. I am getting a very good idea of the problem of being carless in a city developed with the idea of individual transportation. It takes planning. A last-minute trip isn't practical when you need to plan to catch multiple trains/buses in order to arrive at your destination. Bringing extras of things isn't possible either. I nearly tore my shoulders out carrying my usual bags. I've found other ways to bring what I want to have with me.

All in all, while I can't say this month has been a great experience, it has been good. Besides, I get to see the new athletic fields at Metro taking shape. My walk to work takes me right past them.

—Catherine

THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

Our February Open Full Moon celebration was an unusual and beautiful ritual honoring and praising the ancient Sumerian goddess Inanna. Hearthstone offers our thanks to lead priestess Deb Hoffman and her assistants Vella Rose, Chris, Bonnie, and Cynthia. This rite included a number of chants, prayers, and readings of the words of an ancient priestess written in 2200 BCE. Deb explained the story of Inanna, the Queen of Heaven and Lady of the Largest Heart, and how "with Inanna as our guide, we find truth deep inside." Toward the end of the ritual we processed past the officiates and the altar. Each participant received an anointing with oil, a rose petal to infuse with a prayer, the option to offer our prayer to Inanna by placing the rose petal in a bowl of sacred water on the altar, and last, a necklace with a lapis bead.

Thank you, Deb and friends, for bringing to life the ancient lore of Inanna. With Her blessing, may we all "find truth deep inside" indeed. Blessings to all!

–Arynn

HEARTHSTONE RITUALS

Remember, please, that Hearthstone doesn't expect everyone to enter in Perfect Love and Perfect Trust, as there are people you don't know there, but to enter with a willing heart and an open mind, and leave your differences at the door.

Some traditions are more controversial than others, or may contain a component that disturbs someone attending an Open Full Moon. It is one of the risks of exploring different traditions. Should anyone be uncomfortable, unsettled, or upset about any ritual presented by Hearthstone, please contact Alia or Catherine to discuss – and hopefully resolve and heal – the issue.

–Alia

ON DONATIONS

Many of our local Pagan organizations run on a shoestring. Your donations do make a difference, and the cost of a movie ticket to one of these organizations from several of their patrons can make the difference between failing and thriving. (Not to mention making the organizers excited and happy that their efforts are of value to you.) If you'd prefer not to donate to Hearthstone, I encourage you to donate something to the organization of your choice. Your donations can make the difference between an organization thriving and folding.

We appreciate that many of you donate to the church. **We ask that you please give what you can to support the work and service of the church to the community. The more you can spare, the longer we will be around, and the more we can help those who need it. We will keep Hearthstone Community Church, Inc. running as long as possible, and we need your support to continue to serve the community.**

We aren't going to start collecting at the door, and no one will be turned away for not having a donation. However, we would like to suggest a donation of 5 to 10 dollars per person. (The extra is to cover the pagans that are unable to donate.) If you can't afford it, you are still welcome – if you can afford more, we'd be delighted to accept it.

NOTE: Hearthstone is a church and your donations to Hearthstone are **tax deductible**. If you would like to write a check so you can keep track of your donations, we can certainly handle that as well.

–Alia

ABOUT OUR ANIMAL COMPANIONS

Our Hearthstone community includes many pet-lovers, and we strongly encourage spaying and neutering to reduce the tragedy of excess, uncared-for animals. Many beautiful, sweet animals are euthanized due to excess births, and many others sadly try to fend for themselves without needed food and veterinary care.

People with lower incomes can get spay/neuter services for their cats and dogs at reduced fees, subsidized by Dumb Friends League donors, when one of their mobile spay/neuter clinics visits their neighborhood. DDFL also partners with local animal welfare organizations in a trap-neuter-return (TNR) program for community (un-owned) cats to help reduce the number of unwanted litters born and the number of kittens and cats brought to shelters. Please call DDFL's mobile spay/neuter help line at (720) 241-7098 for questions and information, or find details, schedules, and locations at: <http://www.ddfl.org/content/mobile-spay-neuter-clinics>

WICCA BASICS CLASS

Hello to all Hearthstone Wiccan Church friends!

Chrysalis Circle, an eclectic Wiccan teaching coven, is offering its eight week Wicca Basics class beginning on June 21st each Sunday, Noon to 4PM.

For more information about Chrysalis Circle, and our Wicca Basics program and all our other offerings, please go to www.chrysaliscircle.org.

You can also find more details about the 4th Annual Drumming Down the Sun event in Lakewood, CO, on Friday, June 21, 2015, which is sponsored by Chrysalis Circle as a free, open to all, public event.

Cordially,

Sage and HavenWood

HPS/HP of Chrysalis Circle

DEATH AND FAMILY SECRETS

Over the last few months, I have been dealing with the issues of death, family secrets, and toxic patterns. Back in August, my mother was diagnosed with stage four cancer that was all over her body (in her stomach, in her intestines, in her lungs, etc.). The family secrecy kicked in instantly; outside of two of my sisters, she did not want any of us kids to know about her condition. One of my sisters in the loop did manage to convince her that the rest of us kids needed to know the truth.

But we were not allowed to say anything to anyone, or post any information on Facebook, or do anything that would result in someone outside of the family and the doctors knowing what was going on. I cannot speak for the rest of my family, but I found this need for secrecy difficult to cope with. The embargo on revealing information was that Mom wanted no one to know that she had cancer.

This attempt to conceal her condition made no sense to me. A couple of my friends suggested that it was because of her religious beliefs—the possibility that she believed that cancer was a sign that her faith in god was not strong enough. Until the very end, she would insist that a miracle was going to happen, so that theory is probably right on some level.

Of course, my Mom's need to appear perfect has always annoyed me. There were multiple times that I was forced to lie about stuff, in order for my mother's reputation to be spared. The biggest lie I ever told was that I adopted a pen-name for the lion's share of the writing that I do. My real birth name is not Morgan—Morgan is a name I used so that my activities would never reflect badly on my mom.

In all honesty, it was actually a pointless exercise. My parents moved to a small town after my father lost everything in a bad business venture. And one of the worst things about small towns is perhaps the fact that everyone knows everyone's business. To your face, people are polite and pretend to believe the lies, but privately people talk. At one point in time, my mom decided that it was better that people thought that I was in prison, rather than know the truth that I refused to talk to her anymore because of her attempts to save me from the horrors of my chosen religion. I guess it worked for a time, but once someone learned what I was really doing—writing articles on Wicca and Golden Dawn—it was only a matter of time before everyone in town knew what the real story was.

In the end, the story of having a son in jail did turn out to be real, except that it was one of my younger brothers, who got busted with drugs. I sometimes wonder if some perverse god decided that it was a good joke to turn the lie into a truth.

A couple of weeks ago, upon receiving news that my mother was no longer lucid, I finally posted something about her condition on Facebook. At that point, I felt that she only had a couple of weeks to live and that it was time for me to start coping with the issue in the manner that I cope best. After all, I am angry blog dude—my emotions and thoughts tend to be gist for my mill of fevered writings and rants.

Unfortunately, this opened the door to my younger brother to post a statement of outrage on my Facebook page. My dear brother believes that I was merely faking my difficulties with coping with my mother's impending death. This was not the first explosion that I was on the receiving end of in this situation. When Mom was first diagnosed, he decided to explode at me—telling me that I was a big baby for allowing myself to suffer from depression (I had a severe bout of depression in June and July that got so bad that I became suicidal), and that I needed to grow up and get a job.

The extent of his rage made me think; just maybe he is really unhappy in his own life. And worse, one of my long-standing predictions was coming true. My mom, in her efforts to control the family, and perhaps ensure that none of us ever succeeded at anything, used to play the game of Favorite Child and the Outcast Child. Both the current favorite and the current outcast were targets of all their siblings. There are eight of us, so it could get complicated and extremely ugly. The sad part is that the prize of the game was Mom's approval. At a certain point, I quit playing the game, and embraced my exile. It was probably the best thing I ever did for my mental health.

A few years ago, I made the prediction that this sick game would continue after Mom died. I am sad to say that it looks like I going to be proven right. My brother's attacks on me merely signal that certain siblings will refuse to have anything to do with certain other siblings. So the days of my mom having a child that she refused to talk to is going to be replayed by my family, even after she is gone.

Now, I must admit that on some level, I am dealing with my mom's situation slightly differently than the rest of the family. I have always had a funny relationship with death. I don't mourn at the same deep level that other people do. It comes from having "friends on "the other side"—when one occasionally sees ghosts and has flashes of past lives, death becomes something that is not nearly as final as some people believe it is. There is a quote from a cult TV show, *Red Dwarf*, which I fully embrace: "Death is not the handicap to your career it was in the olden days."

The truth is that my entire family has a strange relationship with death. Before my mom became a hard core Christian, back in the days when my aunt Vickie was alive, Mom believed in reincarnation, and she was visited by her dead grandfather on occasion. The day of my aunt's funeral, my mom went into labor with one of my sisters. My father was extremely annoyed with me that day; I was the only one that knew that my mom was in labor during the funeral, a secret that my mom insisted I keep. And when my father died, back in 1984, after his funeral I saw him walk into the bathroom to wash his hands.

This strange relationship with death continued this time around also. As I write this, my mom has been dead for two days. She chose an odd day to die; it was the birthday of two other relatives, one of my nieces, and one of my nephews. The habit of keeping secrets automatically continued—one of my sisters made me swear that I would not say or post anything for two days. This was one of the few times that the need for keeping family secrets made any sense to me, not that it was obeyed by the whole family (my two sisters who have spent the longest time in exile, having been disowned by Mom, posted openly the fact that Mom was dead—this included the mother of my nephew who now shares a birthday with my mom's deathday).

And I imagine that my mom would have been so thrilled if she would have learned that just a week ago (on the Spring Equinox), I asked the Norse goddess Hel to help me in my hour of need. Probably as thrilled as she would be that I am talking about her death, and my emotional turmoil with those I consider to be my pagan family—my fellow and lady seekers, many who have just finished reading this article. Thank you, dear reader, for being the family and tribe that I choose to belong to.

Morgan Drake Eckstein

Morgan Drake Eckstein writes about Golden Dawn, Wicca and other mystery traditions on his blog at: <http://gleamingsfromthedawn.blogspot.com/>

Editor's note:

My sympathy and love go to Morgan and his family for their loss. We lost my father 2½ years ago and I still remember both the sorrows and stresses of that time. Morgan, I am proud to be a member of your chosen tribe.

---*Catherine*

TURTLE MONKEY CHILDREN'S EBOOKS

Hi all, this is Jo. I recently completed the 14th book of my new Turtle Monkey series! This is a pagan friendly children's eBook series. All of the series is transitioning thanks to Crystal Publishing.

Here is the link for Crystal Publishing: <http://www.crystalpublishingllc.com/>

The new editions of the first book and the holiday book are now available on Amazon.

Here is the link: http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Jo+Fontana

The hard copies will be coming out shortly. Also, please check out our new and improved website @ <http://www.turtlemonkeybooks.com>

Coming soon: My new Young Adult Novel: **The Egg Quest!** More information should be available soon.

Thank you for all your support!

—Jo

AN ACCESSIBLE, WELCOMING FESTIVAL FOR ALL PAGANS

[Beltania](#), now in its 8th year, is moving to a location only about 45 minutes south of Denver at La Foret Conference and Retreat Center. From May 14-17, Beltaine will be celebrated just a tad later, in concert with our high-altitude Springtime weather. We've struggled with spring camping in the wilderness, and so have our guests, so this move to a facility with greater amenities and lodging options offer our guests not only greater comfort but greater safety and convenience.

Why focus on sharing this first? Are we turning into soft, suburban, latte-drinkers who can't handle Mother Nature? Well – maybe so (as I sip my latte at my laptop at Starbucks), but that's not the point. It's so we can get back to the reason for the season – celebrating Beltaine, worshiping as we choose, and building community. When our focus is so often diverted to basic survival in wind, snow, or broiling sun and cacti, we lose precious time of these few days we come together. Now, instead of canceling ritual we can simply move indoors to a gorgeous timber lodge's ballroom.

Much better than shivering in a puddle alone in one's tent! Also we have many community members who simply can't camp in the wilderness due to being differently abled, and this way more of us can be included. The trees, meadows, and forests will still be there, but so will a shuttle van, actual cabins, yurts, showers and toilets, along with tents. We even have a full staff member who is our Access Coordinator, to do sign language interpreting and provide assistance to anyone with accessibility needs at this almost completely ADA-accessible site.

Beltania is hosting a truly top-notch group of [musical performers](#) this year, including Lunar Fire, SJ Tucker, Betsey Tinney, Orpheus Pagan Chamber Choir, Oak Ash and Thorn, and more. Sweat lodges, enhanced offerings of sacred space at [Hearthfire Sanctuary](#), an indoor merchant marketplace, two professionally-run food service areas and more rituals and workshops than ever before will be presented. In fact, please consider this your invitation to come present at Beltania! Occasionally the comments will come in, saying "Why don't you have rituals in X tradition?" and the response is, because you didn't volunteer to do it! If you'd like to share something, whether it be a discussion panel, ritual, workshop, or fellowship event, please [submit a proposal](#). This year you can look forward to a Girls' [Moonrite](#) (accepting candidates now!), a [Young Men's Rite of Passage](#), a [Croning Ritual](#) for our women Elders, and a [Saging Ritual](#) for our men Elders in addition to the maypole dance, all night drumming and dancing, and more. Our [Rainbow Welcome Center](#) is there to support and celebrate absolutely everyone.

Why go to a festival, if you've never been? It's hard to put into words. To have a place where you can just be yourself – your best version of you, working towards an even better version of you – with others who are deeply seeking connection with the Earth, the Divine, and with each other – is a very powerful thing. To me, it's a time to refuel my reservoirs so that I can make it through the rest of the year. My optimism in humanity is restored, a vision for the future clarified, and connections to the ancestors and the ancient ways of gathering together to turn the wheel and invoke the Gods of old are deepened. Gone is the day job, gone are the worries and concerns, and it's just people, as they are, and as they wish to be. Beautiful and blessed!

Other wonderful festivals that take place throughout the year include Dragonfest, Heartland, Starwood, Pagan Spirit Gathering, St. Louis Pagan Picnic, and of course several local Pagan Pride events. Smaller retreats include COG Summer Solstice near Bailey, Dancing with the Goddess Women's Retreat held each September, and many more. Colorado and the US are blessed to have the freedom and opportunities of many excellent events for Pagans and members of other alternative, minority, magickal, and Earth-honoring religions to gather.

-Joy Burton

[Living Earth Church and Open Circle](#)

[Living Earth Center](#) – 2120 S Holly St. #9 in Denver

EARTH TEMPLE

Earth Temple meets at Full Moon Books and Event Center, at 9106 W. 6th Ave. in Lakewood, for New/Dark Moon ritual work. All of our dates are Saturday evenings, and we normally begin our rituals right on the dot at 7:30 PM. Join our Meetup Group for reminders and information about specific rituals: www.meetup.com/EarthTemple. And, check out our Witchvox page for more info about us:

http://www.witchvox.com/vn/vn_detail/dt_gr.html?a=usco&id=35084

Our 2015 dates:

Apr 18
May 16
Jun 20
Jul 11
Aug 15
Sep 12
Oct 10
Nov 7
Dec 12

*---Chris, Dara, and Michelle
the Earth Temple steering committee*

WHOM TO CONTACT

Alia's phone number is 303-680-1741. Catherine's is 303-886-7067. If you would like to officiate at a future Open Full Moon, for Pagan or Wiccan clergy, or for any other Hearthstone business, please contact either Alia or Catherine.

Hearthstone Community Church has a website at <http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

Alia's e-mail address is real.cuttlefish@gmail.com; Catherine's e-mail address is catherine@fnorky.com

GUEST COLUMNS?

If you have something to say, and are willing to let Alia or Catherine edit it slightly, (generally for grammar – Alia has the soul of an English teacher and Catherine is simply a fanatic) please feel free to submit your writing to catherine@fnorky.com. Content will not be edited. We can usually make room for more voices.

This newsletter is for Hearthstone Community Church, Inc. of Denver, Colorado. Editor: Catherine Mock. Publisher: M. Alia Denny

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2015 Open Full Moon Dates

April 3
May 1
May 29
June 26

July 31

August 28

September 25

October 23

November 20

December 25—we will not meet, as it would be the 13th OFM