



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



APRIL 15, 2016

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 15, 2016.

In March we energized actual seeds for spring, for April we are going to continue along that theme with a meditation to start some seeds of change within ourselves. Deb will also be sharing some of the new growth herbs that are early birds, and some other fun stuff!

—Catherine

GREETINGS

Apparently Winter was not quite done with us! Since the last time I wrote, we have had a blizzard, as well as a couple of small storms. As I type, it's raining outside.

This week has had its highs and lows. In the last month or so, my brakes have been making those dreaded crunching noises. I'm not sure there are many other sounds that hit my stress buttons harder than that noise. It becomes a reminder that it's time for a "major expense." And of course, I had to wait until there was enough to spare to pay for those new brakes.

This week as I crunched home, a man came up to me and offered to fix those brakes for an incredible price over and above the parts. I was not thinking clearly. For some reason, I thought that of course it would be a great idea to have a total stranger work on my car. He also said he could clean my yard for a minimal amount of money and could even fix my van. The van has a bad fuel pump and cannot be fixed without dropping the fuel tank. This should have been a clue. He said he would come by Saturday to do the work.

When I finally got in the house, I came to my senses. The next morning, I called my regular garage and made arrangements to get the car in on payday. They fixed it by afternoon – it cost more than I liked, but less than I feared. In other words just about right.

I guess the moral to this story is to remember to budget for the emergencies – and even if they're not budgeted for, find a way.

The high point came today when I went to a master class for my voice teacher's studio. Basically, a master class is a group class where an outside expert comes in and makes suggestions to help improve the performance of a particular song. It has been a long time since I've attended one – I believe the last time had to do with the harp. I'm also fairly new to the studio and didn't know most of the others. The expert in question is the musical director for a touring show that is in town right now. The class went well: several singers sang and it was wonderful. I sang and had a great time, while improving my art. We had a short gathering afterward, and got to know each other more. What a lovely evening!

By the way, the volunteer mechanic never showed up. Good thing I got those brakes fixed!

—Catherine

<http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

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

THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

We tip our hat to Amy Harper (NyteRoze), assisted by Don and Adara, for our Open Full Moon ritual that was near Spring Equinox. In correspondence with the season Amy offered us a rite focused on charging the seeds of our goals with intention. Within Circle our focus was "Intention is the creative power that fulfills all our needs." We each received a fortune egg (same concept as a fortune cookie) which contained a fortune and a mini egg, and as well, we received a cup with soil and seeds that had been blessed in the moonlight the night before. We charged these with our personal intentions, and took them home. But not before "cakes and wine," of course!

I liked the words spoken at the Release of the God/dess: "We are grateful for the wisdom we gain from you, the lessons we learn from you, and the happiness we share with you. We will remember that we are never alone and always loved."

The seeds in my cup have put up little sprouts. How about yours? Are you focusing your intention on growing what you need and want?

Thank you, Amy, for leading our ritual with intention and joy. Blessings to all!

—Arynn

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*

A Midsummer Night's Sing

Saturday, May 14th at 7:30 PM

Wash Park Center for Music & the Arts

400 S Williams St. in Denver, CO

*Magical music and lusty lyrics for Midsummer,
with poetry and music by Shakespeare (of course),*

Loreena McKennitt, James Agee, Brahms,

Morton Lauridsen, Mendelssohn, Eric Whitacre, and a host of others.

[Click here to see the full concert program](#)

\$20 per person / \$15 Seniors & Students / Under 12 free

[Click here to buy tickets](#)

BELTANIA

Beltania, a Pagan festival and musicfest, is having its 9th annual event on May 19-22, 2016 at La Foret Conference and Retreat Center near Colorado Springs. Tickets can be purchased at www.beltania.org

STARTING ON THE CELTIC PATH

You might be a person interested in the Celtic path and looking around for a place to start.

First and foremost, blessings and welcome! When you're looking for a new path, lead with your heart and your curiosity. If you are drawn to the Celtic path there is no DNA requirement. While many people choose a path to explore their ancestral heritage, an equal amount of people follow a path because they are engaged by the spiritual principles and the way that the lore and the rituals express the inner faith.

The so-called Celtic Path actually offers many paths to explore.

You may wish to start by following a well-worn track laid in place by many others who have spent years, or even decades, seeking out wisdom and ways of practice. For this you can look to in-country, out-of-country and international or local Celtic/Druid groups that have already made some decisions for themselves. Check out what they have done and see if that is what you are looking for.

Here are a very few examples: OBOD, the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids is a long established, international organization with much to offer. They have been in existence for over 50

years and, while claiming Druidry as their specific form, they are very open in their practices, very Pan-Celtic and open to followers of all faiths. OBOD relies heavily on the Druid Revival movement of the late eighteenth century, as well as the deep well of Welsh myth and folklore. Ár nDraíocht Féin is an international organization incorporated in the U.S. 26 years ago that defines their practice as Pan-IndoEuropean, NeoDruidism. Since their practice encompasses all IndoEuropean Pagan traditions, it matters what Grove or ProtoGrove you associate to if you are looking for a specifically Celtic practice. For an out-of-country organization, the Celtic Druid Temple is the first Druid organization in, and recognized by, the government of Ireland and seeks to share a reclaimed indigenous Irish tradition. A local organization dedicated to reconstructionist Celtic practice is Cró Dreoilín, they have meetups and they sponsor the annual Paths and Traditions Fair.

Each of these groups, and others like them, offer a great start on the Celtic path.

When I decided that I needed more information than I had at hand, I started with OBOD. I had enjoyed the rituals and workshops provided at DragonFest by the TreeHenge OBOD group out of Fort Collins, so that was a natural avenue. From such a broad swath of practitioners and information it was possible to find a starting place for myself. Eventually, I decided that I wasn't interested in Druid Revival material, and, sometime after that, I narrowed my focus from a Pan-Celtic view to a passion for the Irish path.

To explore the Irish path and transpose it onto my own life I was going to have a better understanding of Ireland, Irish myth, folklore and manuscripts. That's a tall order.

If you are looking to explore the history and lore by yourself, or if you already have some understanding of the tradition you are interested in but want to deepen that understanding, look for authorities on translation, and authors that can open up the keys to the great myths and folklore. I greatly enjoy the work of John and Caitlin Matthews. Particularly, these two titles: "Encyclopaedia of Celtic Myth and Legend: A Definitive Sourcebook of Magic, Vision, and Lore", and "The Encyclopaedia of Celtic Wisdom: A Celtic Shaman's Sourcebook." Yet I felt like somehow my understanding was second hand. I didn't want to reinterpret the original words through the lens of my modern experience. I wanted to go into the original meanings. So, I was thrilled to find the Story Archaeologists podcasts. They can be an end in themselves, or they can lead you further on. They offer a deep dive on Irish Mythology that is unmatched, with new, original translations and a website that is packed with additional material. I listen to them over and over and always learn more.

If you are exploring the Celtic path as an ancestral path, you might want to start planning a trip. I have traveled to the region that my ancestors are from and I have stood in the standing stones and monuments there. It was a connection unlike any other for me. Nothing beats the real experience of being there, watching the sunrise and sunset, breathing the air, touching the earth, watching the rustle of the wind in the leaves of native trees and the way that the light interacts with the landscape. Even if this is not an ancestral exploration for you, you may wish to see, rather than imagine, the landscape that produced your tradition. In the end, all the original Pagan practices arose out of the land on which it was practiced. After three trips to Ireland for a total of nearly two months of days in two different seasons, I feel like I know much more about the soil that formed the line of my people, and wrote the tales of their historical and spiritual world. I also feel like I know so much less than I would need to know to really understand.

And, because of that, I believe that you practice where you are, so I have personally made use of Steven Blamires suggestions in "Celtic Tree Mysteries: Practical Druid Magic & Divination" as a tool for practice in my local, Rocky Mountain region. I have used the USDA Plants database online to help me seek out the real, native cognates to the original Irish "artificial" trees mentioned in the Scholar's Primer in the Book of Ballymote. It is from this practice, among others, that I have provided the information in the Colorado Celtic Weekly Planner that I have been publishing for the

last five years. The practice of growing in the knowledge of this land has deepened my spiritual connection to the Druid path.

I have been a part of the drumming up of the sun at the Winter Solstice and have seen the first rays of the Summer Solstice sun burst through a cleft in the mountains. I have slept on the banks of Western Slope rivers and gazed up at the “fire in the sky” immortalized by John Denver while snuggled in a sleeping bag by the coals in a fire pit high in the mountains. More than that, I have stood outside here in Colorado and honored my path at every moon over the last decade, when I wasn’t standing somewhere else. Colorado is sacred land and it is a simple thing to step out and begin to be a part of it.

There are many legitimate discouragements and many “experts” would find reasons to shoot down any of the suggestions I offer here.

Even in the best translated or oldest untranslated manuscripts much is Christianized. The Tree Moon stuff is a modern invention, scoffed at by many critics. In the original languages, even the names of the Goddesses and Gods are seemingly unpronounceable, place names are worse. All of the heroic figures are complex, some of the descriptions are simply bizarre. In Ireland, I was told directly that, if I wasn’t practicing in Ireland, I wasn’t practicing the Celtic path at all, and I was curtly advised to seek out Native American advisors for my Colorado practice.

But the trees were a part of the lore, and associated to the Ogham, even if merely as mnemonic devices. We can seek them out and reacquaint ourselves. Open a modern Irish language calendar to the fifth month and you’ll see that May is still called Bealtaine, flip three pages to Lúnasa, flip three more to Samhna. Anyone who practices NeoPaganism or Wicca has strong connections to the Celtic path. It is right there, like the otherworld, parallel to our own.

So, where can anyone start? If you are really looking for the Celtic path the worst thing is to stay lost in a new age world where every “pantheon” can be substituted for any other “pantheon” and all things are equivalents. This is like treating all lovers like your first lover and never learning what the human being in front of you is really about. Be present. Open yourself up to the new, unique gifts of the path you are exploring. Abandon preconceived notions and dig in! Be challenged by the quirks and baffled by the languages. Let yourself be imperfect on the journey. Allow the gaps to be gaps while you look for the reasons for the absences and oddities.

Denver has more parks than any other similarly-sized city. We have accessible hiking and accommodations at our many state parks. The wilderness is still available for those who have made themselves prepared for its many moods and challenges. We have planetariums, open spaces, and back yards.

Above all, be true to yourself and begin. Now is the only moment in which magic can be made.

Peace of the forest to you on your path.

---Paulie Rainbow

founding priestess: Denver Celtic Women’s Circle

WHY WE DO NOT MENTION SEXUAL PREDATORS BY NAME

Recently, one of the local community organizations, WSLA, held an event where they talked about what women should do when they encounter and receive dubious sexual attention from people who are employing behaviors and tactics of sexual predators. The reaction to this seminar was disturbing in many ways.

On several occasions, I have written articles and blog posts about sexual misbehavior in the esoteric community. Typically, I speak out about esoteric leaders and teachers, who trade degree advancements in exchange for sexual favors. While I seldom name offenders by name, my audience generally know whom I am talking about, and what offenses they are committing.

And if I am being completely honest, I have written about sexual predators in the pagan, Wiccan, and occult communities so often that I always give a little Homer Simpson scream whenever I realize that it is once more time for me to get up on my soapbox and rant at the moon about the sexual predators in the occult community. In my ideal perfected universe fantasy, I never have to write another one of those damn articles about being aware that some sexual behaviors are worrisome and quite possibly predatory. Unfortunately, that magical day when I never have to mention this subject ever again seems to be as far away in time as the birth of the first test-tube unicorn, and is in all likelihood decades and centuries beyond that particular magical event.

Given how often I write about the issue, I was glad to see someone else addressing the topic. And as a writer about such dubious matters, I could not help but notice the reaction to the seminar, a reaction that created that sinking feeling in my stomach as I realized that it is that once again time for me to address the issue.

What followed the seminar was screams of libel, slander, and fear-mongering. I was surprised when I opened up my email box and saw the exchange that was occurring in the comment section of one of the event's announcement pages. Basically, the way I was reading the reactions, it seems that some attendees decided that because WSLA was presenting stories of misbehavior, but not naming names, that WSLA was simply making stuff up and trying to create strife and fear in the community.

Sigh. As someone who writes about such matters on occasion, I have a unique viewpoint about this subject. There are good reasons not to name names. For one thing, it helps protect the innocent, the victims. For another, often these events are the subject of legal matters—universally, the reaction of those of us who are in watchdog positions is to advise the victim to go to the proper legal authorities. While we can provide emotional support and the occasional hex, the uglier cases require legal action for justice to occur.

And if you want to see tall tales, insidious rumors, and bad blood, just name one of the predators without having multiple screenshots, and documented legal complaints. Predators, in the defense of their own “good name” fall all over themselves to talk about how the victims are making stuff up, how the victims invited the sexual attention, and how they secretly enjoyed it. Furthermore, predators will threaten legal actions, both against the victim and anyone who defends and supports the victim.

I will admit that this does lead to a problem where certain individuals should have been named long ago, so that further innocents are protected. But living in an imperfect world, we have to default to using the option that causes the least amount of grief for both the victims and the community in general. And just because we never publicly named someone as a predator, it does not mean that we are making up stories to pursue an agenda of fear and scandal; it merely means that the wheels of justice has not caught up with the individual yet.

And I do understand why people do not like these stories. We like to think that as pagans and Wiccans, we are better than this—that our little section of humanity has risen above such petty nonsense, that we treat each other fairly when it comes to sexual matters. It is a nice myth; but it is untrue, for we are still humans in a human society. People in a position of power will often use their position to fulfill their sexual needs.

We also like to believe that our community would not cover up such matters and protect the predators—but as long as the predators can rain down bucket loads of grief on their victims and

their support network, the best that we can do is to teach people about the warning signs, tell them how to proceed to deal with it using the law, provide emotional support (and the occasional hex) for the victims, and privately whisper a hint in the ear of anyone we see headed in the wrong direction. It is not perfect, but it is the best that we can do.

Morgan Drake Eckstein

Morgan Drake Eckstein writes about Golden Dawn, Wicca and other mystery traditions on his blog at: [Musings from the pen: The writer blog of Morgan Drake Eckstein](#); [Gleanings from the Dawn: Thoughts about Golden Dawn from one of its members](#) and [Book Reviews by Morgan: My archive for the book reviews that I have done](#)

[Morgan's wife, Khari, sells mundane pottery on Etsy at: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/celticsouljewelry> and witchy pottery at: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/Khariswiccantreasure>

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

Ritual dates 2016

May 7
June 4
July 2
August 6
September 3
October 1
Oct 22
November 26
December 17

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

WHOM TO CONTACT

Alia's phone number is 303-521-6620. 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 teal.cuttlefish@gmail.com; Catherine's e-mail address is fionnula.harp@gmail.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 fionnula.harp@gmail.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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2016 Open Full Moon Dates

April 15
May 20
June 17
July 15
August 12
September 16
October 14
November 11