



# Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

## "The Full Moon Folk"



### **JUNE 9, 2017 OPEN FULL MOON**

Hearthstone meets the Friday before or the Friday of the Full Moon. June 9 will be our last OFM in the upstairs chapel at the First Unitarian Church at 14th and Lafayette in Denver. (See notice below about new location!) The church doors open at 7, and we like to start at 7:30. This month's ritual is FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2017.

The June 9<sup>th</sup> ritual will be presented by Clan of the Golden Condors of the Black Forest Tradition. For this ritual we will be taking a guided meditation and journey down the World Tree, Yggdrasil, to meet the Three Sisters, the Norns, who are female beings that rule the destiny of Gods and men, and roughly correlate to the Fates in the Greek pantheon. We will be meeting these three Divine beings, Urd, Verdandi, and Skuld to help us develop an understanding of the assistance they can offer us when we are faced with the choices we must make in our lives. We will enjoy some snacks and drink after the Ritual is complete and have time to discuss your experience if you so choose.

—Catherine

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### **GREETINGS**

What a month! It began with what seemed to be a tragedy we couldn't survive, and ended with a memorial potluck – in the spirit of the Orphans Thanksgivings and Yules of years ago. We remembered our friend Alia, realized how much we miss her, and still made it through. To be honest, I still talk to Alia – sometimes just sharing; other times telling her what she's missed. (We have a friend who is notoriously anti-vegetable and I caught him eating a cucumber at the potluck. See what you miss?!)

Meanwhile, life has gone on. Since Orpheus rehearsals are on summer hiatus, I managed to find another way to keep busy: I started taking a class in American Sign Language. I've taken ASL before, but like with any language, if you don't practice, you forget it. The last time I took an ASL class, there wasn't a sign for texting. There is now. All living languages change.

In thinking about this, life is change. We, like language, change the longer we live. I'll keep that in mind as I keep up my conversations with Alia.

—Catherine

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### **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 one of the Board members (Catherine, Arynne, Morgan, or Amy) to discuss – and hopefully resolve and heal – the issue.

—Catherine

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## THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT: MEMORIAL RITE FOR ALIA 5/5/17

Hearthstone's early May Open Full Moon ritual was scheduled just one week after our beloved Alia's unexpected passing. Hawk Shadow was planning a Beltane ritual, but she quickly offered to facilitate a memorial service instead, and we are very grateful to her. We are grateful as well to the 50 people who came to honor Alia and her legacy. Gypsy, who co-founded Hearthstone with Alia 26 years ago, flew from out of state to join the Hearthstone Community for this memorial tribute.

In Hawk Shadow's beautiful words that night: "We come together to celebrate and mourn a life now gone from us; to remember her vision, passion, and intensity." After Circle was cast, Hawk Shadow facilitated all present to speak of how they met Alia and the impact she had.

Some spoke of the high importance of Alia's oft-repeated declaration that, at Open Full Moon gatherings, "We don't expect you to come with Perfect Love and Perfect Trust, because there are people here you don't know, but we ask you to come with a willing heart and an open mind, and leave your differences at the door." This declaration makes Hearthstone a safe place, a welcoming place, a place without drama.

Gypsy spoke of 26 years ago when other leaders had begun a monthly open full moon in Washington Park, which was well-attended, but those leaders were going to discontinue it. Gypsy recalls Alia's enthusiasm, energy, and the spirit with which she picked up the event, reshaped it, incorporated as Hearthstone, and continued it forward.

Arynne spoke of how powerful, clear, and compelling Alia's vision has been over the years, that Hearthstone would be inclusive, accessible, compassionate, and welcoming.

Alia's husband Doug told us Alia loved providing Hearthstone and loved all of us.

Many spoke of how good a friend Alia became to them, how much she could be trusted and how much she trusted others, and how deeply they miss her. Several people recalled specific statements she made to them that stayed with them over many years. One person quoted her: "When my principles and my preferences conflict, I stick with my principles." Another quoted her: "When you keep your Sabbats and Esbats, you keep your power."

Several people in attendance met Alia as long as 35 years ago. They spoke of her friendliness to new people, how welcoming and open she was back when our community was more hidden and cautious. She had a vision of what the world should be and she strove to manifest it. She demonstrated a strong will, deep compassion, and showed us that we can believe differently yet work together with mutual respect. She inspired many people with her combination of vision, strength, humor, integrity, generosity, and compassion.

People said that just knowing someone like Alia was in our community strengthened us and influenced us. She was a powerful teacher of compassion and inclusiveness. It is our desire and intention to carry forward her values and vision.

Hawk Shadow closed this ritual with acknowledgement of "the Mystery of the Wheel that is ever turning through Life, Death, and Rebirth." We closed with the chant song: "When we are gone, they will remain: Wind and Rock, Fire and Rain. They will remain when we return; the Wind will blow, and the Fire will burn."

Blessings to all, and blessings to Alia's family and loved ones. We all grieve for what has been lost to us, yet we are grateful for what we have received.

*Arynne*

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## 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 donated 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 Hearthstone. **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. 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.

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## NEW LOCATION FOR HEARTHSTONE OPEN FULL MOON RITUALS

First Unitarian Society of Denver has informed us that they will be totally renovating the church interior starting on July 1, 2017. We are happy to inform everyone that we have found an alternate space for our rituals beginning in July, 2017.

Beginning with the July 7, 2017, Open Full Moon, we will be meeting in the library room at the Althea Center for Engaged Spirituality, 1400 Williams St., Denver, CO. It's simple to find, exactly four blocks east from our current location. There is a parking lot to the north of the building and another on the east side of the building. We are excited to see what the new space will bring us! Come join us!

Our plan is to meet for OFMs at the Althea Center for the entire second half of 2017.

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## DRUMMING DOWN THE SUN

Sunday June 18, 2017 from approximately 6:00-9:00 PM at the shelters at Addenbrooke Park, 600 S. Kipling Parkway, Lakewood CO 80226. All are welcome. Bring drums, rattles and other musical instruments in celebration of Summer Solstice and the turning of the Wheel of the Year. Suggested donation \$2 per adult to cover park rental costs. Wheelchair accessible. Playground adjacent to the shelters. RTD access within ¼ mile. Sponsored by Chrysalis Circle.

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## ALIA'S VISION

This is about Margaret Alia Denny, who stood for Hearthstone for so many years, and who was memorialized so lovingly at the last Open Full Moon. A lot was said that night about Alia's vision. It made me realize that when I saw a wonderful, capable and dedicated woman, I was only seeing a part of the amazing picture, just one tiny sliver of perspective.

Alia stepped up to save the Denver tradition of the Open Full Moons and, following that, acted as President and Founder of Hearthstone Community Church for nearly 26 years. The Open Full Moons of old were worth saving, they were a unique and open forum. They were well attended, and getting more popular all the time. They offered an opportunity to the burgeoning Denver Pagan community to forge an identity out of a common cultural experience and to see, moon by moon, the banquet of experience available in local practices. They were growing, they were potentially expensive, and they were exhausting. They were about to be abandoned.

But, apparently, Alia could see the incredible value of the Open Full Moons. Apparently, Alia had a vision.

But, we've all had visions, haven't we? We're all imaginative dreamers, visionary in our own right. But what Alia did was take action, delegate, recruit helpers, dig up information, make decisions, and take leaps. And she did it at the right time. And she did it for the right institution, in the right city. How often does that even happen?

I listened as friends lovingly related the stories of "the early days," the important action behind the scenes that made it possible for us to have Hearthstone today. They laughed as they related their own recruitment, the moment they said, "yes," and the whirlwind that they became a part of. She could never have done it alone. That's a lesson for each of us. She didn't bother trying. She made the decisions that were successful and success, so often, is a shared, rather than an individual, experience. We need friends, and allies, all of us, if we really want to make a difference in this world.

The world changes. People leave. Others arrive. People spoke about coming here from other cities, other Pagan communities, and about leaving here to go to other cities, to become a part of other Pagan communities. It turns out that Hearthstone Community Church is a pretty unique tradition.

I have to stop here, because I don't know how to express this clearly enough. Having a space where different traditions enter and offer their Full Moon ceremony, as guests, offer a taste of themselves for public consumption, through a centralized organization, without controlling that, is so amazing. It is flabbergasting. It is precious and rare. It is like a community well that constantly offers clear water, a resource for everyone, in a way that everyone understands, and respects.

It doesn't happen by accident and it doesn't happen without work, but the fact that it happens at all is astonishing. The fact that it has lasted over a quarter of a century is a testament to something I'm not even sure I understand.

She had a vision. That vision included location; the Open Full Moons needed to be centralized. They had to be accessible, in the fullness of that term. They needed to be available in central Denver, to people who use public transportation, or who walk everywhere. They needed to be accessible to people with physical challenges, they needed to be in a location that was wheelchair friendly, and there needed to be accommodation to include folks who couldn't stand through a whole ritual. Ensuring that Hearthstone OFMs are centralized and accessible is a part of the vision of service, truly serving the community.

I've been aware of the policy of the OFM to not enter "in perfect love and perfect trust," which is a cornerstone of Wiccan practice, but rather "to enter with a willing heart and an open mind, and to leave your differences at the door." I've always thought that it was a brilliant way to approach a public ritual. To me, it models the respect we have for proper boundaries and good personal choices. It is rarely appropriate to approach strangers in a public event in the spirit of "perfect love and perfect trust," since that's the essence of a sacred exchange that comes about as a result of a carefully considered and deeply significant personal decision.

To insist on “perfect love and perfect trust” in a public ritual, it seemed to me, would both require a reckless disregard for proper self-care, and a disrespect for the sanctity of that gift of love and trust that ought to be recognized with commitment and initiation.

So I was surprised to learn of the contention that had arisen out of Alia’s insistence on that point of policy. In retrospect, it makes sense. We stand on the shoulders of the tremendous amount of work done by the Wiccan community, particularly in the last century. The tenet of “perfect love and trust” is well established as central to identifying the ritual as Wiccan. Hearthstone is a Wiccan Church. And yet, for the reasons I mentioned above, it is counter intuitive to make this a part of the open, public, ever changing ritual offered at Hearthstone. Not having learned of the now-ancient controversy over this, I never had the chance to thank Alia for insisting on this significant difference.

As the leader of a Women’s Circle, I feel that it is critical that we not ask participants to give up their boundaries blindly in exchange for membership in the broader spiritual community, and participation in open events. Asking for blind trust reinforces the continual destruction of self-trust, so prevalent in the dominant culture and critical for maintaining an uneven power dynamic. It also provides a refuge for scoundrels. Whenever we create a space where no questions are to be asked, we create a shadow in which questionable motives can thrive. I don’t believe that an exchange of trust is always wrong or dangerous. I believe that it is significant, fraught and should be based on more information and experience than can be found in these public exchanges. I want the members of our community, whether young or old, to grow in confidence and maturity. I feel that that is contingent on dealing realistically and honestly with the issues of love and trust, and empowering people to trust themselves first.

I wish I could tell her how much I appreciate what she put into place. It’s easy to see, now, how well it works for Hearthstone.

Hearthstone matters to me. Hearthstone benefits me.

I listened as other leaders expressed that they found the same usefulness in Hearthstone that I have found. To share a bit of the path that means so much to me with others is so moving, and HCC offers, as a cornerstone of its existence, this incredible opportunity. I am positively anti-evangelical and so there is really no other way for me to offer my experience to such a large gathering, once or twice a year, year after year.

Additionally, conducting a public ritual is an important skill that requires practice. Hearthstone is a loving, tolerant and friendly place for someone to try out their skills. I have encouraged students on my path to participate or lead at Hearthstone. It is a learning experience that can’t be beat. The rituals that my circle have done at HCC have been written for the purpose, adapted to the space. This takes us out of our comfort zone, challenges creativity, demands flexibility, and reminds us of service.

It reminds us of service because Hearthstone isn’t a venue, it isn’t an audience, it’s a church; a Wiccan Church. The folks that gather are there for their spiritual nourishment. The privilege of offering out a sampling of the practice that means so much to me, goes hand in hand with the need to provide a satisfying spiritual experience, one part of a twelve or thirteen part song of the year, sung and received by the participants at Hearthstone.

May the song continue.

Now is the time for each of us to look within and see how we can carry on Alia’s vision. Success is a shared experience and it’s one that I’m ready to share with you, my community. Let’s keep the well clear, the water available, the stones in place. We have another twenty five years ahead of us to keep in Denver an experience that, if we can keep it working, may provide the needed model of shared open space for other communities.

I just got back from Kentucky and, while there, I found a little metaphysical store open on a Sunday, in a town where they tell me they could not have kept a store open ten years ago as the locals would have burned it down while singing hymns! I told them about Hearthstone, about its principles, and about Alia's vision.

We don't just have something to keep alive, we have something to teach. Please get involved, learn about Alia's vision, and carry this light out into the world.

Peace of the mountains to you,

--*Paulie Rainbow*

Founder: Denver Celtic Women's Circle

Member: Celtic Druid Temple of Ireland

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## ALIA'S INFLUENCE ON THE GREATER ESOTERIC COMMUNITY

Last month, as many of you already know, Alia Denny died. I am honored to have served on the Hearthstone Community Church board with her. She was very important to our little Open Full Moon community—quite simply, she was the heart and soul of Hearthstone.

Besides her influence on Hearthstone, she heavily influenced how some of us interact with the greater esoteric community. This point was driven home for me a couple of weeks after she died.

One of the groups that I belong to is the Tarot Blog Hop. Basically, the Tarot Blog Hop is a bunch of bloggers who agree to blog about selected Tarot topics eight times of the year, and agree to link to one another in a circle/chain. Every six weeks, one of the members of the group volunteers to wrangle the Hop, coming up with a topic, creates a sign-up sheet, and later shuffles the list, maintains the Master List, and generally tries to make sure that all the links for the Hop work correctly, giving a heads-up for bloggers who have link problems.

The latest topic had been put up by the next volunteer. One of the newer members of the Hop took issue with the topic, insisting that the wrangler had gone too far—that they were asking bloggers to do deep shadow work on their public blogs—something that this member objected to.

Now, over the five and a half years that the Tarot Blog Hop has been in existence, I have seen a lot of topics that could lead to deep shadow work. And this was the first time, I have ever seen someone have a problem with such a topic.

Before I became aware of the issue, both the wrangler and the creator of the Tarot Blog Hop, Arwen Poe, discussed this with the offended member. By the time, I got involved, it had already been taken private. Nevertheless, as one of the administrators of the Tarot Blog Hop, I decided that I wanted to issue a public statement.

I wrote, "The administrators of the Tarot Blog Hop do not police the topics that the wranglers come up with. The only restriction is that the topic has to be about the Tarot. Likewise, the administrators do not police the posts that the participating bloggers create using the topic. The purpose of the Tarot Blog Hop is to create community, and expose bloggers and their readers to new ways of thinking about and using Tarot." I also noted that a blogger only had to participate in two of the eight blog hops in any given year, and that they were welcome to sit this one out.

Anyone who has ever heard one of the Hearthstone board members talk about the purpose of the Open Full Moons will spot the fact that I lifted the most important sentence right out of the description that the board uses to describe the purposes of the OFMs.

One of the things that Alia added to the local community is the idea that one attended the Open Full Moons with an "open mind, a willing heart, leaving your differences at the door." She

believed that one could not have an inclusive community if we constantly judged one another for not having the right degree, the right tradition, the right teacher, or the right set of beliefs. It was perhaps the most important decision she ever made—that as a community, we needed more willingness to share our traditions with one another.

And this idea affected not only the OFM community, not only the Denver community, but also groups beyond Denver—such as the Tarot Blog Hop group. When Arwen Poe created the Tarot Blog Hop, it was after watching some bitter arguments arise among the Tarot community—arguments rooted in people thinking that their way of using and reading the Tarot was the one and correct way to do things. Poe decided to create the Tarot Blog Hop as a way to create community among Tarot bloggers. By the way, Poe had once lived in Denver, and had attended the monthly Open Full Moon rituals.

And this is just one of the examples I can think of Alia's idea of non-judgmental sharing affecting how some members of the greater esoteric community interact with one another. Alia may be dead, but her influence lives on.

[If one wants to join the Tarot Blog Hop as a blogger, the Hop can be found on Facebook.]

### **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](#); [Gleamings 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](#)

*Editor's note: As usual, the foregoing column reflects only the views of Morgan and are not necessarily those of Hearthstone or any of its other Board members. Please direct all comments to Morgan.*

**[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>

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## TURTLE MONKEY CHILDREN'S BOOKS



### **Introducing the Turtle Monkey children's book series.**

Turtle Monkey and Mama Monkey are the only green monkeys in the village. Turtle Monkey has lots of gas. She received Fuzztastic, her cat, as a Yule gift. Fuzztastic also has lots of gas—but he's afraid of it! Turtle Monkey spends most of her time outside when she isn't in school. Turtle Monkey's Uncle Red and Aunt Tawny live a ferry's ride away, and her Grandma and Grandpa live at the beach. Aunt Fuchsia and Uncle Titian are honorary family members that live down the street from Turtle Monkey and her mother. Turtle Monkey and her friends Coco Monkey, Cap Monkey, and Squirrel Monkey hide in the forest when Little Ape and his friend, Orangutan, are outside. Little Ape is mean, and Turtle Monkey and her friends avoid him as much as possible. Turtle Monkey is mischievous, this gets her into many awkward situations for which she has to think and talk her way out of. There are certain situations that Turtle Monkey cannot talk her way out of, and the results are hilarious. Her hobbies include hunting fairies, catching her own pets, and meeting new friends. Visit our website to sign up for our newsletter at [www.turtlemonkeybooks.com](http://www.turtlemonkeybooks.com)

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### **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. 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](http://www.meetup.com/EarthTemple).

Ritual dates 2017

June 24

July 22



August 19  
September 23  
October 21  
November 18  
December 23

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

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## **WHOM TO CONTACT**

Catherine's phone number 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 Catherine.

Hearthstone Community Church has an active website at <http://hearthstone.fnorky.com> where our dates and newsletters are posted monthly. We also have a Facebook page.

Catherine's e-mail address is [fionnula.harp@gmail.com](mailto:fionnula.harp@gmail.com). Arynne's is [ArynneD@aol.com](mailto:ArynneD@aol.com).

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## **GUEST COLUMNS?**

If you have something to say, and are willing to let Catherine edit it slightly, (generally for grammar – Catherine has been known to grammar-check television commercials) please feel free to submit your writing to [fionnula.harp@gmail.com](mailto: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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### **2017 Open Full Moon Dates**

June 9 at First Unitarian Society of Denver, 14<sup>th</sup> & Lafayette

#### **At the Althea Center, 14<sup>th</sup> & Williams:**

July 7  
August 4  
September 1  
September 29  
November 3  
December 1

