



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



AUGUST 4, 2017 OPEN FULL MOON

Hearthstone meets the Friday before or the Friday of the Full Moon. Beginning in July 2017 we are meeting in the Library Room at the **Althea Center for Engaged Spirituality, 1400 Williams St., Denver, CO**. The Althea Center is easy to find, exactly four blocks east of our previous location. Enter through the Main Door at the corner of Williams St. and 14th Ave. The doors open at 7:00, and we like to start at 7:30. This month's ritual is Friday, August 4, 2017.

The full moon in August has several names including The Grain Moon. That which was planted is now ready to harvest. But with harvest also comes the concept of sacrifice, an act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy. With hard toil was the field cultivated, planted, and nurtured to ripeness, and then the grain is cut so that the community may eat. In the time of our ancestors a sacrifice may have meant offering a prize lamb or calf. Or even perhaps the life of a valued member of the community as a gift to the gods in thanks for a good harvest. Of course, today we do not practice blood offering, so what does it mean to sacrifice? Please do some meditation before this ritual of what you might sacrifice (something of importance or worth, and given willingly) for something else even more important or worthy. In this ritual, we will honor all of the deities of grain and harvest.

GREETINGS

It's hot – which I suppose it should be, given that it's August. The monsoon weather is upon us, so there is a storm almost every afternoon. It doesn't always cool things off, but I noticed that the fire danger in the national parks is low for a change. And they are beautiful right now.

It's also Lughnasadh – or Lammas, if you prefer. The first harvest. I wonder if my cousin has started harvesting yet? Yes, I have cousins who still live on their family farms. When I was a kid, we visited my grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins every summer. Many of them lived on farms. We saw the first harvest close up. My uncles and aunts worked hard to bring this about. So did my cousins. We city kids couldn't really help with the harvest, although one of my aunts always put me to work baking: she used to say my cookies were better than hers.

So, what do I bring to this harvest? Well, I wanted to make progress in my voice lessons – and I have: once I started to put as much energy into them as I wanted to get out. That's the thing, you see: whether our harvest is fruits and grains, artistic, or otherwise, we must put energy toward our hopes and plans succeeding or they haven't a chance. Our projects still may not succeed, but just sitting back and wishing pretty well guarantees that they won't.

So, how's your harvest coming?

–Catherine

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 confuses or 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 discuss it with the ritual leaders or one of the Board members (Catherine, Arynne, Morgan, Amy, Cynthia, and Deb) so that we may hopefully resolve and heal your concern.

THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

Hearthstone Tips our Hat to Morgan and Toni for a most interesting journey to Egypt at our July Open Full Moon rite, our first OFM at the Althea Center. Morgan first gave us some history of Egypt, and how the Golden Dawn was the first magickal organization to pull from ancient Egypt. Circle was cast, and gods and goddesses were called in the Quarters. Isis and Osiris were invoked. After participants were cleansed and consecrated, Morgan, aided by Toni, told/enacted three stories, with voluntary participatory roles for many attendees. One was about the sun god Ra, walking across the world from east to west each day, returning across the Underworld each night. One was about the God of the Moon, who revealed his many faces. The last was about three boat-masters on the Nile; the moral of this one stuck with me: Don't overload your boat! (This applies to one's life, too, I'm pretty sure!)

Thank you, Morgan and Toni, for transporting us into Egypt's history and culture and bringing it alive for us. Blessings to all!

---Arynne

ON DONATIONS

Hearthstone's primary expense is leasing the space for our monthly Open Full Moon rituals. Your donations to Hearthstone and other Pagan organizations make the difference between failing and thriving... and reassure the organizers that our efforts are of value to you. We encourage you to donate to Hearthstone or to the organization of your choice.

We appreciate that many of you do donate to Hearthstone. Thank you! **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 don't collect at the door, and no one will be turned away for not having a donation. However, we *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'll be delighted to accept it.

Hearthstone is registered as a church and your donations to Hearthstone are **tax deductible**. If you wish, you can write a check so you can keep track of your donations.

NEW LOCATION FOR HEARTHSTONE OPEN FULL MOON RITUALS

Hearthstone is now 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 previous location. NE corner of East 14th Ave. and Williams St. There are two small parking lots on the north and east sides of the building. Enter through the Main Doors. Come join us! We will meet for OFMs at the Althea Center for the entire second half of 2017.

FREE Cat Spay/Neuter Surgeries

The Dumb Friends League is offering free cat spay/neuter surgeries regardless of income. Visit ddfl.org/catclinic to schedule your appointment. Hearthstone supports animal welfare and an end to pet overpopulation. Thank you! Please Adopt, don't Buy your next pet!

PAGAN IN THE SUMMERTIME

It's wonderful to be Pagan in the summertime!

There are gatherings and festivals and warm, full moon nights! I remember dancing at "the Farm" up near Boulder, so long ago, feeling the hard ground turn to a soft fine dirt under my dancing feet while the stars whirled overhead through the branches of a nearby tree and the warm fire contrasted with the cool night air on my flesh as I handed my body off to the drum beats like a bucket of water passing through the strong hands of a fire brigade. We whirled round and round. It was sacred and it was open and it was good.

I found the cool interior of my first occult shop when I ducked in out of the relentless sun of a summer lunch hour, back when LoDo was mainly deserted and a little dangerous and mainly warehouses and dust.

And there is nothing like campfires shared with magical friends, and music, and song.

Even the folks who practice indoors come out in the summertime and there's nothing more real than standing in the moonlight that blessed our ancestors.

Truly, it is wonderful to be Pagan in the summertime.

Now, when I am too busy for drummings, and dancings and am so rarely naked or even half-naked in public, I am getting ready for my one festival of the year, Dragonfest! I am so grateful for the traditions that we build on. I confess, I don't even know when Dragonfest started, it was a veritable antique the first time I made it up there.

And this is the world our ancestors gave us. You might think of ancestors as folks that lived hundreds or thousands of years ago, but in fact we have a much more recent ancestry to honor and cherish. As I head for Dragonfest to offer a workshop on the Celtic path, I am very aware of the gifts of our neo-Wiccan heritage.

It's trendy now, with so much information at our fingertips, to pull away from Wicca, to pick at the edges of it, to scoff or be skeptics. These days I fall asleep listening to a podcast out of Ireland where a woman with a Master's degree in Early Irish offers original translations of texts that I never even knew existed. I have online access to texts and translations that were only visible to scholars twenty or thirty years ago. I have stood in the chambers of a Neolithic structure and on a windswept hilltop next to an ogham inscription dedicated to a Goddess I still have not read about in books.

Long gone are the days when some opportunist can make up an "ancient" faith out of whole cloth and find a willing audience without question. (Yes, I'm looking at you, Witta.) These days we are being forced to confront the newness of our "neo" practices and the realities of appropriation.

And this is very good. An Irish triad says, "Three candles bring light into darkness: truth, nature, and knowledge." We should be kept honest. It helps us to grow and to grow strong.

But we mustn't overlook the truth about what treasures Wicca has given us. Leaving aside all of the valid arguments about appropriation and the nitpicking about authenticity, it is time to raise our glasses to the pioneers of the last seventy-five to one hundred fifty years. Wicca has been an amazing revolution in religious freedom. Wicca has given rise to practices that provide peace in

prisons, comfort and strength in wars, generations of flower-filled and firelight-filled memories. If it were not for Wicca we wouldn't have this flowering of neo-ancestral, or European indigenous traditions. Wiccans stood up and said they had a right to be. Men and women organized rituals, drum circles, stores, festivals. They put their careers and families on the line and worked to make sure that a country with religious freedom as its foundation, lived up to that reputation.

They taught with earnestness what they had been taught and formed bonds that lasted lifetimes. And as time and technology have pulled away some of the mystery, have pointedly corrected some of the claims, many of our leaders have opened up with grace to talk about the conundrum of the changes that they have lived through, the growth that has come from the challenges to their own beliefs. They have offered an excellent example of wisdom and enduring, growing faith when it might have seemed easier to be defensive or deceiving.

Don't sneer at Wicca. It is truly ours. You don't have to wonder what it would be like to be present at the beginning of a tradition, because here we are. In spite of any and all truth about the ancient-ness of the practice, Wicca is the newest real religion. The originators of this modern practice are dust, the elders are elderly or already dancing in the Summerland. We are at a crossroads and it is imperative that we recognize our debt to the shoulders we stand on.

Do not overlook these recent ancestors. Whatever real joy we may derive from pulling ancient truth from the ground of the pre-Christian past, we only have that luxury because we live in the world that Wicca helped shake to its core.

Even as we pull away into separate corners of ethnic practice, we will survive if we remember that the dominant, monotheistic culture wants very much to scatter us to the winds and stomp out the smaller, separated embers. We have ancestors in common. That is strength. We have songs in common. That is strength. If we deny the truth of our existence, the very real debt that we owe to the very recent past, we risk undermining our strength.

Wicca is the legacy of every neo-Pagan tradition today. Whatever our path, our practice, our gender, our sexuality, our identity, Wicca is our ancestry. We compromise nothing by remembering our connection. We risk everything if we pretend otherwise.

So, as I make my way into the mountains again, to offer what I have found of my Irish Celtic tradition, I will be standing in traditional neo-Wiccan circles and lifting my voice in the songs created and shared over the last few decades, struck with gratitude and joy at the boldness and bravery of these recent ancestors of the neo-Wiccan tradition. I will be happy to carry on my part of this revolution.

It's wonderful to be Pagan in the summertime!

Peace of the mountains to you,

--Paulie Rainbow

Founder: Denver Celtic Women's Circle

Member: Celtic Druid Temple of Ireland

WRESTLING WITH MY OWN MENTAL HEALTH DEMONS

One of my ongoing concerns with the occult community, and let's be honest—the world in general, is what I can only view as an ongoing mental health crisis. I have joked on more than one occasion that one can hop onto any online occult forum and see more mental illness in an hour than your average mental health care professional sees in a week. I have also joked that the quickest way to be burned at the stake by other occultists is to suggest that meds are a viable option to treat some of the over-the-top behavior you see on such forums.

I am especially sensitive to the issue because of my own background. For years, I walked around being an untreated bi-polar with...well, let's just say that the local community can provide a laundry list of other possible mental health issues that I might be suffering from—the most serious of which is that I have a tendency towards serial ax murdering. At least one person in my family also needed treatment—my dear mother was probably also bipolar with tendencies of serial ax murdering.

“Do you suffer from Bordenitis? Do you frequently sharpen hatchets? Do you get a crazed look in your eyes when you can't handle the stupidity of other people anymore? Ask your health care professional about Anti-Liz. Side-effects can include, but are not limited to, overwhelming urge to eat the entire pan of brownies...”

I am happier while on meds. And I like to think that I am a nicer person when medicated...but I could be completely wrong about that one—even on meds, I have my intense moments. If nothing else, I am less prone to random ax murderings. Unfortunately, my meds are still not exactly right, due to the glacier speed that some health care systems operate (it took over a year from the time my regular doctor decided that maybe I should be on some meds to the issuing of the first prescription—the wheels of mental health care move extremely slow).

The fact that I am a better person on meds surprised me. During high school, my grades tanked. I went from being an A and B student to being a D and F student in the space of just a couple of months. What happened was that my father lost everything (car, house, etc.) in a business failure, and we were forced to move from Denver to Brush, Colorado. And my dear mother lost her mind.

Now, my mom was always a little crazy. But over the years, it got steadily worse. The loss of her house did not help any. The move to Brush corresponded to the start of what can only be politely described as child abuse. It is amazing how quick your grades can drop when you are forced to put babysitting your siblings above your homework, when violence is bestowed for any disobedience, and you are constantly called stupid and retarded for your failing grades.

The school district was concerned about my sudden drop in grades. They were worried that I might have suffered brain damage somehow. They had me tested. And I was not allowed to know what they were testing me for, nor was I told the results of the tests.

This lack of information on my end allowed my mother to con me into believing that the test results showed that I was completely and utterly insane. My mother told me that the only thing keeping me out of the nuthouse was her—therefore, I had to doubly please her. This part was how she managed to turn me against the social worker that the school district assigned to deal with me.

One day, frustrated with my sudden hostility, the social worker asked me why I did not trust her, and I exploded, exclaiming how my mother told me that I was doomed to be locked away in a padded cell. At this point, the social worker told me the truth about what the tests revealed—they were IQ tests, and I was not crazy or retarded; I was gifted. But the threat that my mom used poisoned my attitude—from that point on, I refused to seek out any mental health care.

Over the years, I will admit that I grew steadily more unstable. Honestly, I am lucky that I have never actually knifed someone in a fit of uncontrollable rage. What finally broke my resistance to seeking out treatment was that another aspect of my mental illness almost killed me.

There is no one that knows me for longer than an hour, who does not know that I have self-destructive tendencies. But most do not catch onto the fact that my self-destructive tendencies include thoughts of suicide. A few years ago, I came awful close to taking my own life. Regular readers of this newsletter will remember a period a few years ago where my column did not appear for several months—well, I was under the influence of such a dark cloud that I was incapable of writing and was just one bad hour away from ending it all.

It is not something that I like to admit. And even today, I have those moments where this overwhelming cloud of darkness descends upon me, and I once again consider just stepping out of this body. I do my best to conceal this from my friends and loved ones.

So why am I talking about it today? Well, just ten days ago, my mother-in-law committed suicide. In her case, it was because of a tar ball of health issues, including chronic pain and lack of sleep (her doctor took away her sleeping pills over a year ago). She decided to end it all because she could just not handle the pain anymore. And as one might imagine that event has unleashed echoes of my own mental health issues.

I still wrestle with mental illness. And I know that I am not alone. I sincerely hope that someday we as a society properly address the mental health care crisis that rots unseen in our society. And I hope that I live long enough to see it happen. Blessed be.

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](#)

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>

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

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.

Ritual dates 2017

August 19
September 23
October 21
November 18
December 23

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

WHOM TO CONTACT

For Pagan or Wiccan clergy or for any other Hearthstone business, please contact Catherine by phone or email, or contact Arynne by email. Catherine's phone number is 303-886-7067, and her e-mail address is fionnula.harp@gmail.com. If you would like to officiate at a future Open Full Moon, please contact Arynne at ArynneD@aol.com

Hearthstone Community Church has an active website at <http://hearthstone.fnorky.com> where our dates and newsletters are posted monthly. You can contact us through our web site as well. Hearthstone also has a Facebook page.

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. Content will not be edited. We can usually make room for more voices. We appreciate our contributors!

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

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2017 Open Full Moon Dates

At the Althea Center, 14th Ave & Williams St:

August 4
September 1
September 29
November 3
December 1