



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



JANUARY 26, 2018 OPEN FULL MOON

Hearthstone meets the Friday before or the Friday of the Full Moon 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. There are two small parking lots on the north and east sides of the building. Enter through the Main Door at the corner of Williams St. and 14th Ave. **The door opens at 7:00 pm, and we must lock the door at 7:30 to secure the building.** Please be prompt as we don't want you to be locked out! This month's ritual is Friday, January 26, 2018.

On Friday January 26, 2018, Brigid's Forge Coven will lead us as we delve into the coming of the season of awakenings. We will take a meditative journey to discover the potentialities we possess, already planted in our souls. Please bring along your sense of wonder, and an open mind and heart to assist us in our journey.

----*Catherine*

GREETINGS

What a month! As most of you know, I managed to fall on some steps and break a bone in my leg. Thank you all for the card, and for the healing energy you sent me; it does seem to be helping me heal more quickly.

Of course, we had a bout of what many of us in Denver call "Stock Show Weather" – cold and mostly dry. I'm not sure why we call it Stock Show Weather. It doesn't really happen every year, nor do we only get cold, dry weather during the Stock Show. I suppose each community has its myths: It doesn't always snow on Halloween, yet we expect it.

Lastly, I had a bit of sorrow come into my life this month. Misha, my very old dog, finally decided it was her time. She passed over quickly and quietly, in my arms. I'm sure her sister, Kate, met her at the end of the rainbow. I'm also certain Tobi, Bibi, Coco and Scrounge (the cats) met her there. I miss them all, but as my boss said: Mourn her and then find another dog. I almost certainly will do both.

I have a hard time sharing my sorrows. The only reason I told anyone about my leg was because I wouldn't be at the OFM that night. I didn't tell my mother or sister about it until I had seen the orthopedist. I suppose at least some of that is because I didn't want them to fuss over me. Fussing could make me cry, and I don't like to cry. I would much rather make jokes about my woes.

It was harder for me to joke about Misha, so I didn't tell anyone at first. I finally did tell folks at work; holding back tears and making some joke about living in a country song. I do miss her, though. Although she was mostly blind and deaf, she still met me at the door every evening. She would go outside and wander down the sidewalk: first looking for the outside water (as opposed to sink water, which she also liked); then she'd zigzag to the front gate and back. She'd head toward the lawn, hit that, and then head toward the van in my front yard. When she hit that, she started back toward the yard. I miss my little pinball dog.

Perhaps, as my resolution for this next year, I should plan on sharing more. Of course, that may mean crying more. That might be healthier.

Blessings,
—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

We Tip our Hat this time to our newest Hearthstone Board members, Deb and Cynthia, who gave us a beautiful ritual the Friday of New Year's weekend. After grounding, participants were cleansed, Circle cast, and the Quarters and God/dess called. At this traditional time of endings and new beginnings, they suggested we look into our centers, seek the stillness within, our inner wisdom...and then from that centered place within, stoke our inner fire.

The guided meditation led us through a forest, discovering and gathering into our basket those qualities we want as resources for the new year ahead. We listened in the stillness for clarity as to our true work at this point in our lives. We were encouraged to approach this work as would an artist, and we were challenged to commit to it, and to pray to Spirit for support.

A bowl of small beads of snowflake obsidian was passed around for each person to take one, the black symbolizing the stillness within, and the white flakes symbolizing the wisdom found within the stillness. We then raised energy to fan our inner flame! (We further nourished our inner flame with cookies and juice, being that we live in physical bodies.)

Thank you, Cynthia and Deb, for providing us a peaceful ritual experience in the midst of the busy holiday season, and reminding us of the importance of creating the stillness in which our inner wisdom can speak to us. Blessings to All as Winter progresses and the cycle of the new year begins!

---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, as well as assure 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.

Cat & Dog Spay/Neuter Clinics

<http://www.ddfl.org/spayneuter/>

Hearthstone cares about pet overpopulation! The Denver Dumb Friends League (DDFL) cares too, and through generous grants and donors, they offer **FREE cat spay/neuter surgeries** to anyone regardless of income. DDFL also offers **\$50 dog spay/neuter surgeries to lower-income dog owners**. The details, locations, and qualifications are at their web site above. It takes ALL of us to reduce the overpopulation problem and move toward a world where all pets are wanted and cared for. Thank you!

RIGHT ANSWERS, RIGHT ACTION

I watched with interest the stories of the Pope's visit to Chile. The church is nothing if not an example of religious power raised to a global level and an example of all that can happen in that circumstance. By all accounts, it was hoped by his supporters that he would give a boost to the fortunes of the Catholic church in Chile, where its credibility has been rocked by yet another child sex abuse scandal. Some stories reported on the humble papal apology made. Others reported on the fact that he called the accusing victims of these crimes, slanderers. I read the stories more closely to get an idea of how these dramatically conflicting results came out of a single trip that had a clear single purpose.

While one bishop was convicted by the Vatican of the horrendous pattern of crimes, the pontiff has remained loyal to that man's associates, even though the abuser was clearly allowed to continue to abuse children over many years because of those connections.

It was a missed opportunity for the human leader of a global religious organization to grapple with a difficult, a challenging, legacy, one that I believe affected him personally.

I remember that J. K. Rowling put these words in Dumbledore's mouth: 'It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.'

Well, I think it's more than bravery. I think it is a personal, spiritual journey and if it's worth anything at all, it's imperfect and it's hard.

A friend of mine, who rightly questioned my reluctance to cut off an important associate in the face of bad behavior, later faced a similar quandary with a respected community leader. I was gratified to see it, not because I wanted her to walk in my shoes, but because I wanted her shoes to be honorably worn in on the trail of real spirituality. It deepens us to be faced with human imperfection in a personally meaningful way.

We stand in what could be one of the most pivotal times in our history. All around us we have the opportunity to challenge abuse, dishonesty, brutal unfairness, injustice, inhumanity, and damage to the fabric of our world. We don't just have the opportunity, we are exhorted to take it up.

It almost seems too easy to pick sides and throw our energy into a cause teetering on the edge of success.

And that's good. There are thousands of us that have time, money, energy, even anger, available to throw in bulk at problems that a paltry few of us have toiled away at for decades. I welcome that. It is incumbent upon leaders with experience to point that energy in clear and helpful directions and not drain the enthusiasm of the crowd with boring lectures on the complexity of problems.

I see also the richness of intersectionality rising up, the information on marginalized groups isn't staying in the margins, it is being reported on, shared, passed along, and allowed to affect the middle. This is great. This is a deepening of our social and spiritual legacy.

But one of the best things that can happen to me is internal conflict. I listened while someone I respected used offensive language to describe a person who seemed to be provocative and offensive in a teaching space, and I was deeply troubled. I watched while a leader I hoped to stay in association with posted words that could only be read as a bitter bias against another religious path and I was really challenged.

What challenged me wasn't the behavior of the other person. What challenged me was my own ambitions about that person, my ambitions about my relationship with that person, my ambitions about the world that we shared together and my vision of that cooperation. I was invested in a view of that person's humanity that was wholesome and positive and to admit the truth about this abusive language, this dark attitude, challenged my own pretty vision of our shared world.

I gain very little by cutting off someone I despise. It's too easy. I gain very little by switching my perspective from "friend" to "evildoer" and then cutting someone off.

It was hard to take my time. I value my friends' respect and by delaying action on this situation I called my own integrity into question. It was hard to look at how much I am willing to excuse a single comment, or two, when I am invested in my own vision and hopes. It was hard to not deliver an incisive judgement on someone who was so "wrong."

But after that, after my own personal process, it was so good. It was good to say only what was needed, and not something satisfyingly superior. It was good to feel clear in the choices that flowed out of my decisions. I wasn't reluctant. I didn't feel coerced. Once I took my time, once I faced myself, my flaws, my ambitions and my disappointments, and then released pettiness and defensiveness, things flowed into place. Vengeance and anger are powerful, but short lived and short sighted and they frequently hide our own embarrassment or complicity.

I cut off ties with a person who was taking actions that I felt were wrong. I didn't advertise, or justify. I made simple announcements during events that were affected by the change. I scrubbed my social media presence without comment. I added some information on the values I stand for in public postings. I wrote, and then discarded, statements about that person, their choices, their associations. They weren't needed. It felt good to have written them and then put them aside.

Disappointment might be the most difficult thing that we wrestle with when we deal with one another, but it also might be the experience that provides the most powerful results.

I will not always be the one to climb on board with denunciations, waving banners of anger. But I will seek to do the right thing. I may not take action as quickly as my hindsight would wish. But I greatly value integrity and it matters to me that mine is not to be assumed, but to be tended. I would very much prefer that my community be respectful, even heroic, and I will choose to lead by example rather than act to police. But, when it comes down to it, I will attempt to choose my words, even my denunciations, carefully; we are all imperfect and what we do today, we leave as examples for tomorrow. I will choose to spend my energy on right action rather than public judgement, but I will speak out publicly when I feel it will be valuable.

I want less for you to know what I think is right and what is wrong, and more for you to know how I come to my conclusions. You may not face the same questions I face, but you will face the need for answers and I want you to know how I have sought for them.

If this little religious experiment of Neo-Paganism is to have any lasting value at all, we will have to know, not what is right and wrong, but how to find that for ourselves in an ever changing world.

Peace of the mountains to you,

Paulie Rainbow

founder: the Denver Celtic Women's Circle

author: the Colorado Celtic Weekly Planner 2018

IF I WAS TO TEACH...

It is the beginning of a brand new year, that delightful time of the year when I think about new projects not yet started and revisit old projects long ago abandoned.

One of the projects that I think about this time of year is how I would go about teaching the occult, whether in a generalized manner, or a more focused approach (such as Wicca or Golden Dawn).

Now, let's be honest, I am not actually going to teach a course, for that involves not only getting my own act together, it also involves rigging things so that it does not interfere with the schedule of my wife, who periodically gets sick because she has a tendency to overwork. Furthermore, at some point in time, I decided that I wanted nothing to do with the reputation building process that an occult authority has to do before they teach anything, nor do I want to be bothered with any of the politics that plague the occult field.

And besides, it is fair to say that I torched the Occult Authority Bridge when I decided that I would much rather make fun of occult authorities, nay the entire field of the occult—one cannot be the court jester of the occult and an occult authority at the same time. I would love to claim that was a conscious decision on my behalf; but let's be honest, it wasn't – I just like telling jokes too much to keep a serious face on long enough to become a proper occult authority.

Nevertheless, the fact that I torched that bridge does not stop me from kicking around what and how I would have taught the occult in a world where I was far more willing to be a good little boy, and play by the rules that society says occult authority need to play by.

There are several approaches that one can take when teaching the occult.

Some occult authorities become experts in narrow fields. At least, on the surface, they are operating in narrow fields. One of my online friends is an expert in medieval grimoires. With a dollop of shamanism, and a pinch of Golden Dawn tossed in for good measure. And they get told by the hecklers that they should not be teaching grimoiric techniques because they have added a dollop of shamanism and a touch of Golden Dawn.

And that is my biggest problem I have with the idea of teaching anything. There are “experts” that will promptly declare that you are doing it all wrong because you have violated their pre-conceived notions about what you are teaching.

My second biggest problem is that while I know that initiations make a big difference, I am not willing to fight to justify that position. Today, lots of people have decided that initiations makes absolutely no difference, and that the initiations are no longer needed. Unfortunately, this seems to be one of those “all or nothing” positions in modern occultism – you either insist that everyone

needs an initiation, or you declare that anyone can declare themselves “whatever flavor of occultism that we are talking about” and not have to do a single initiation because they are just ego boosting rituals.

My actual position is that anyone can declare themselves to be students of the various occult fields, especially Wicca and Golden Dawn, and survive without an initiation; but the initiations will affect your understanding of the occult in ways that are near-impossible to explain to someone who has never undergone an initiation.

Given my interest in everything, and lack of desire to defend the “initiations are important” approach, I am not sure that I am suited to teach anything other than Wicca and Golden Dawn 101s. Well, if I could be bothered to act dignified for more than thirty seconds that is. Still one does wonder what I would include in such a course....

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>

WELCOME 2018

I used to dread January. It felt very dreary, especially after the highs of the holidays. The only bright spot of the month was my birthday. It wasn't until more recently that I came to appreciate what I think is the calmest time of the year. I suspect that I may not be the only one who feels this way.

It's this time of the year that I review the past year's accomplishments and plan for the coming year. It's exciting to see how many projects have been successfully completed and what new things can or must be done in the coming year. It's also a time when I assess if I'm in a magical rut.

I don't think I'm the only one that has ever suffered from a magical rut. As a matter of fact, I'm now just working through one. This past year, I realized I had a lot on my plate as far as work and creative projects. I was constantly creating and refining. I suspect that I'll be busy creating this coming year, and that isn't a bad thing. However, I noticed that my spiritual practice suffered greatly. It seemed the more I created, the less time I had for spiritual practices. In short, magic became less magical.

One thing that I like to do when I realize I'm in any type of a rut is to change the way I do things, even if it's only slightly. I've been going to a discussion group that has evolved into a study group. Attending more of these sessions may help balance creativity and spirituality, but I know more than that needs to be done. Another thing I'll be doing is more reading on practices that interest me because I noticed that I didn't do much of that last year. New ideas alone are almost

guaranteed to provoke me into trying new things and may even help me identify patterns in my practice that no longer work for me.

I sincerely hope that if any of you are in a rut, some of my ideas will help. May this coming year be fruitful and more magical for everyone. Welcome 2018!

-----A.J. Hallows

Introducing the Turtle Monkey children's book series.

Turtle Monkey is a read to me book series. It's printed in the font in which children are taught to read and write. There's just enough pictures to hold their attention while being read to before they eventually read the books on their own prior to tackling chapter books. 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. Join us as Turtle Monkey learns about the world and how to cope with challenges. www.turtlemonkeybooks.com

Now available at Amazon: *APPROACHING DARKNESS*. This is an anthology of twelve short stories. Some are horror, some are bizarre, and some are unnerving. These stories will make you look under the bed and keep your feet from dangling over the edge at night. Read as a child fends off a horror from beyond the grave with just a nightlight, listen in as Gods debate the future of humankind, or root for twins who battle a lady made of plants. Written by Jo Fontana under A. J. Hallows, one of her many pen names. eBook available on Amazon at:

https://www.amazon.com/Approaching-Darkness-anthology-J-Hallows-ebook/dp/B076RXYG3B/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511241909&sr=8-1&keywords=Approaching+darkness&dpID=51aYZRms3-L&preST=SY445_QL70_&dpSrc=srch

Print book available on Amazon at:

https://www.amazon.com/Approaching-Darkness-J-Hallows/dp/197915001X/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&qid=1516143137&sr=8-4&keywords=Approaching+Darkness

Coming soon by Jo Fontana & Teresa Horton. *THE EGG QUEST*. Book One of the Demon Coast series.

Reyden Frost leaves the sanctuary of the library to experience the world, despite the advice of Master Levik. His focus, a petrified egg, is stolen by a mysterious criminal his first night in the town of Hollow Harbor. Reyden reluctantly joins forces with a man of the law and another magic worker who was also a victim of the thief. The chase takes them across the continent of Ator, gathering new companions along the way. Will Reyden's past interfere with his future, or will he overcome it on the journey to retrieve the egg?

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 have a NEW start time for most rituals this year. Please arrive at the store between 6:30 and 7:00 pm, since the store closes and the door locks right at 7. Hope you can join us!

Jan 13
Feb 17
Mar 17
Apr 14
May 12
June 16
July 14
Aug 11
Sep 8
Oct 6
Nov 3
Dec 8

--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. At this point we have ritual leaders scheduled for all of 2018! Thank you all for volunteering your talents!

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

GUEST COLUMNS?

If you have something to say, and are willing to let Catherine and Arynne edit it slightly, (generally for grammar and spelling: 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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Upcoming Hearthstone Open Full Moon Dates

January 26, 2018
February 23, 2018
March 30, 2018
April 27, 2018
May 25, 2018
June 22, 2018
July 27, 2018
August 24, 2018
September 21, 2018
October 19, 2018
November 16, 2018
December 21, 2018