



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



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SEPTEMBER 2019 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**. There are two small parking lots: to the north (next to the building) and to the east of the building (across the alley), each with spaces for 20 cars. 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, Sept. 13, 2019.**

For our September 13 OFM, Morgan Eckstein will perform his signature ritual: The Magical Images of the Wiccan Sabbats. This ritual is meant to familiarize participants with the wheel of the year as a whole, the agricultural cycles that underlay the symbolism of the eight Sabbats, and to introduce a set of useful and evocative magical images based on the Sabbats. Join us for an in-depth tour of the Wheel of the Year, a sacred mystery of Wicca.

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 Rainah and her student Alli for offering to the Hearthstone community our August Open Full Moon ritual. They began by cleansing widdershins to the sounds of thunder and waves. They explained the astrology of this moon, and that our meditation would be a contemplation of how even the smallest thing we do affects everything around us. Volunteers were invited to call the Elements, then the two priestesses invoked the goddess Quan Yin, Mother Goddess of Compassion ("She Who hears all prayers"), and Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Infinite Compassion. Each person received a smooth stone, then Rainah led us through a beautiful, gentle, relaxing ten-minute meditation. We started as a raindrop, splashed into a pond, rippled outward, intersected with other ripples, flowed into a stream, traveled alongside a fallen leaf, eventually joined a river, then flowed into the sea and became part of the waves. Throughout the meditation we were repeatedly encouraged, very gently, to "just flow". So peaceful. We were then led in the singing of the beautiful chant song "The River is Flowing". Cakes and ale were shared by all.

Blessings to you, Rainah and Alli, for bringing us into Circle with Quan Yin (a favorite goddess of many), introducing us to Avalokiteshvara (for those who didn't know him), and leading us on this fluid, peaceful journey of contemplation.

Blessings and peace to all!

---Arynn

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 let the organizers know 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. We will keep Hearthstone 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 \$5-10 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 Community Church, Inc. is registered as a church and your donations are **tax deductible**. If you wish, you can write a check so you can keep track of your donations.

A Man Among Trees

(Part 10)

Riley Hosick, aka Thunderbunny Riley

The smell of fall was in the air as the man sat down on a wooden bench at the edge of a pond he affectionately called his pond of peace. The trees around him were beginning their early stages of color change and soon they would start falling off their respective trees. He had been coming here at least once a month, since Tine had told him of this spot eight years ago. In that time, he had become very familiar with the area and its seasonal cycle. He let out a sigh and looked out over the pond, watching a few ducks gracefully impact the water. Time had really

flown by also, he thought, and he closed his eyes for a few moments. Taking a deep breath in and letting it out slowly, the man allowed the sounds, smells and feel of nature take his focus. He listened as the ducks quacked at each other, and other birds seemed to join in immediately and chirped back. The wind made the trees rustle overhead and brought with it a feel of comfort and peace. Opening his eyes, he smiled, knowing he was truly lucky to have the life he lived. Still he wished he could make everything right.

Laughter interrupted from behind him, snapping him out of his thoughts. The man looked over his shoulder at a teenage girl reading a book. His daughter was laughing at something in her book and it made him happy to see her smile. It had been a few weeks since he had seen it and though she did not believe him, he understood why. She had lived here her whole life and now he was taking her from her home. She did not care that he had gotten a promotion that allowed them more opportunities. Opportunities that he never had at her age. These were opportunities that would allow a strong foothold to her future. He just hoped he was making the right decision. The man returned a smile to his daughter, but she did not notice, so he turned back toward the pond. She had been reluctant to come out today, but finally agreed to come along as long as he did not try to talk to her. He also understood just how important this place was for her. She had been coming here since she was eight years old and this was also one of her favorite places. This place was full of wonderful memories that he would always cherish. He glanced over to the well and thought about the lady he had met on his first trip out. The trees around the well had been well used for games of hide and seek when she was younger. Today he wished it was one of those days.

The man heard movement behind him, and he turned again to look at his daughter. She had put her book back in her bag and stood up. He made eye contact with her as she put her bag on her back. Then with a loud huff and a stomp, she tromped into the woods and out of his line of site. He wanted to say something that would comfort her but knew she would not care about anything he said right now. If she were younger he would have been concerned with her walking in the forest alone, but she was a girl of nature. She knew her way around these woods, and he knew she would be fine. The man closed his eyes and listened as her footsteps became fainter, letting him know she was further away. "I wish there was something I could say to make her feel the peace she needs." The man spoke softly to himself.

"Life is always changing and so unpredictable" A deep, resonating voice spoke as the man opened his eyes. Quickly looking to his right, and to the open spot on the bench. The man now saw a younger gentleman sitting casually next to him staring across the pond. His red hair hung just past his shoulders and curled at the ends. His beard was barely more than a five-o-clock shadow, but it looked intentionally kept. He wore thin looking white slacks and a deep purple equally light weight shirt. "It can and often does twist and turn unexpectedly, causing us to grow and develop in ways we can never truly foresee." The gentleman finished, as the man tried to figure out where came from. The man opened his mouth to speak but was cut off. "Often, young one" the gentleman continued, "The inner journeys of life are more important than the outer ones. Remember that the most important things are to stay connected regardless of the environment." Looking over his shoulder the man looked for his daughter but saw she had not returned from her walk. "No, young one" the young gentleman spoke as if he knew what the man was thinking. "She is still walking through the woods. And while she is struggling with the changes in her life as well, she will eventually understand that this is a necessary part of life." The gentleman pulled a small, leather, old looking canteen from his pocket. Opening the lid the gentlemen smelled the contents before drinking deeply from it. The man watched as some of the

liquid escaped the side of his mouth and into his beard, it looked like wine. “Who are you?” The man asked, though he felt he already knew the answer. “Are you.....?” he continued, before getting cut off by the response “Muin, but I have been called many names before.” The gentleman grinned. “You came out here hoping to talk to your daughter” The man nodded in agreement. “Then take some time to think before you start speaking. It is better to be honest with her than to tell her what she might want to hear.” The gentleman turned his head and looked back across the pond. “There is both joy and anger in her; let her have both.” The gentleman paused. “This is a time in her life that she is sensitive and maybe even over-critical, but it is just because she is vulnerable.” Before the man could ask what he should do, he heard footsteps and the snapping of branches. On impulse he turned to see his daughter emerging from the tree line. Her eyes were still puffy and red from crying, and the man turned his head back toward the pond and the gentleman sitting next to him, only to find he was gone. His eyes searched the edge of the pond and the tree line past, but saw nothing.

The man was confused at first, until he looked to the seat next to him. Now, instead of the sitting gentlemen, there were a pair of bracelets. He reached over to pick one up, hoping he could figure what they were made of, and was surprised. Each bracelet was half an inch thick and seemed to be made of wood, though twisted. He felt it give and bend when he applied any amount of force. They appeared to be hand crafted and bore a small indentation that wrapped the opposite direction of the bracelet. “Are you ready?” His daughter spoke. With all his attention focused on the bracelets, the man had not heard his daughter approach. It slightly startled him, and he dropped the bracelet on the ground in front of him. He bent over to grab it and she continued talking. “What's that?” Grabbing the bracelet, he turned his head to see his daughter pointing to the other bracelet. He retrieved the one he dropped. He responded by grabbing the other bracelet and motioning for her to sit beside him. To the man's surprise, she was not reluctant to sit next to him and she moved around the back of the bench. She smiled at him and stuck out her wrist. He returned her smile and slid one of the bracelets on it. He wanted to say so many things to her in that moment. He wanted to tell her that he would do anything to make her happy. That he did not like seeing her in pain and that he loved her. But he did not. Rather he stuck his wrist out as well, and kept smiling as she put the other bracelet on his. For the next few minutes, they stared out over the pond. He watched the ducks, and suddenly he knew what to say. Without turning his head, or causing her to turn hers, he broke the silence. “When we get to Colorado, there is somewhere I want to take you.” He looked at her with tears welling up in his eyes as he smiled. “Somewhere that is special to me and your mother.”

--Thunderbunny Riley

(Part Eleven continued next month.)

Terms of Belief

There's one part of my workshops that gets a lot more attention than I expected. It's the part where I spell out what we all kind of know, but, apparently don't really stop to think about.

Maybe it's like your first selfie, or your first vacation caricature. Suddenly you're checking out the little details you hadn't seemed to notice in the past. So, let's take a look at this together.

“Welcome to Monotheism,” is as far as most of us get when we get stopped by religious bias and dominant culture assumptions. But, guess what? That foot on your neck isn't specifically monotheism!

It's a little more subtle, and a little less self-reflective than that.

Think about it. Monotheism is the belief in, and/or worship of, a single deity.

Polytheism is the belief in, and/or worship of, multiple or at least more than one deity.

Every single polytheistic culture has space for and recognizes the worship of and dedication to a single deity among the deities. In contemporary polytheism it's not unusual for a family or an individual to have a specific relationship to one deity. Polytheism includes monotheism. Simple monotheism exists within polytheism.

And simple monotheism is not the denial of other deities. It's just the worship of one of them.

Extreme monotheism is the exclusion or denial of other deities.

Radical monotheism is the practice of eradicating the belief in other deities, or the idea that there can be other deities, or practices that reflect the beliefs in other deities.

If there's a foot on your neck, it's probably radical monotheism. But since we live in a culture that is dominated by extreme and radical monotheism, it normalizes itself and minimizes its extremism by just being called "monotheism." That's subtle yet effective.

Now let's look at the differences between polytheism and essential monotheism.

We already know what polytheism is, we looked at it above. But what about these ideas?

One Goddess, Many Names

We all believe in the same thing, we just call it different things.

These, and other similar concepts, describe the idea that, regardless of forms and names, we are addressing a single divine force that underlies everything. This is essential monotheism.

There's nothing wrong with essential monotheism, but it is helpful to put it into context.

As a person engaged in Celtic Reconstructionism (CR) I came to understand that essential monotheism was not at all how my Celtic or Irish predecessors regarded the "Gods and Not-Gods." For them, there was no single, unifying force underlying it all in their practices. Each of their Gods and Goddesses were completely unique and real, fallible and sometimes even mortal. But above all, they were themselves, whole unto themselves, and not at all interchangeable.

I came to realize how much essential monotheism was a fallback for me. In fact, it's comforting to think that there's one underlying, and hopefully benevolent, force. The Gods and Not-Gods of my spiritual ancestry aren't unified and not consistently benevolent, which is much less comforting. And there's another aspect of essential monotheism that is comforting and tempting, it is a unifying force. When we appear to have differing, even clashing, ideas from our fellows we can fall back on the notion of underlying agreement. We may seem to have different religions, but "aren't we all really driving at the same thing?" In this fractious world that's like a refreshing nap on a dreary afternoon!

But it's lazy. It keeps me from the hard work of finding ways to accept and work with my fellows while accepting and not glossing over their differing motives and morals. It keeps me from the work of true diversity. It also allows the dominant paradigm to take the wheel.

My practice is polytheistic and animistic truly, in as close a manner as I can get to my spiritual ancestors. It is challenging. It has taken a lot of work and it failed to offer substantial comfort for a long time. But finally, it does. And it offers more than comfort. I feel a sense of truth in my practice that is refreshing to me. And I feel a little more clarity about the broad work of diversity. I do not get diversity by falling back on the assumption that you are just like me. I get diversity by having the foundation, the energy, and the will to listen to your differences and being fully present for them.

Letting go of the hidden echoes of essential monotheism and grappling deliberately with true polytheism has been immensely rewarding in surprising ways.

Examining the terms of belief, their definitions, and comparing that to the world around me has been equally helpful. There is so much power in naming and framing and shifting perspective. I'm so grateful for the challenges of the path.

Peace of the Mountains to you,
Paulie Rainbow
founder: Denver Celtic Women's Circle.

Turtle Monkey children's book series

For information on any of our books please visit: www.jofontana.com

Turtle Monkey is a read to me book series. There are 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.

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.

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

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

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?

Print book available on Amazon at: https://www.amazon.com/Egg-Quest-Demon-Coast/dp/198354714X/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1518571543&sr=8-2&keywords=The+egg+quest

COMING SOON:

Gods of the Bay

Comfort Food for All Seasons

The Demon Swarm (Book 2 of the Demon Coast Series)

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 and age-appropriate vaccinations** to any Colorado cat regardless of owner's income. DDFL also offers **\$50 dog spay/neuter surgeries including basic vaccinations 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!

WSLA MEET & GREET

**Celebrate our Pagan Community
and Get Information about Upcoming Community Events!
Sunday, October 13, 2019, 1-4pm**

Bring Your Community Announcements
about Festivals New Initiates Events and Classes
SUPPORT OUR LOCAL PAGAN COMMUNITY!

Pagan Plumbers, Carpenters, Health Care Workers, Teachers, Readers, Counselors, Artists and ALL
Come with your business cards and let the community know about you so we can put you to work!

We'll be at the fabulous MERCURY CAFÉ
2199 California Street Denver, CO 80205
(come via the Light Rail station at 16th & Stout or 20th & Welton, by bus or
there's free parking all around)

See old friends and meet new friends!
Annual WSLA fundraising table of magickal goodies
Credit cards accepted www.wsla-co.org
Women's Spiritual Leadership Alliance

EARTH TEMPLE

Here is the list of 2019 ritual dates for Earth Temple. We are still at Full Moon Books and Event Center, 9106 W. 6th Ave. (at Garrison) in Lakewood.

We have a NEW DAY for rituals this year; these dates are all **FRIDAYS**. Start time is 7 pm, the same as last year, so 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!

Sep 27, 2019

Oct 25, 2019

Nov 22, 2019

Dec 27, 2019

--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 2019! 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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Hearthstone Open Full Moon Dates

September 13, 2019

October 11, 2019

November 8, 2019

December 6, 2019