



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



NOVEMBER 20 OPEN FULL MOON

Hearthstone meets the Friday before or the Friday of the Full Moon, in the upstairs chapel at the First Unitarian Church at 14th and Lafayette in Denver. The church doors open at 7, and we like to start at 7:30. This month's ritual is FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2015.

The Denver Celtic Women's Circle will present the November 20, 2015 Open Full Moon ritual.

Welcome to the beginning of winter. We are so happy to share a ritual with you for the full moon between Samhain and Solstice: a time of gathering and gratitude, sharing with our community so that we have more of ourselves as we enjoy the season of long nights.

Sweetness and abundance are the special qualities that we celebrate and share this season.

We will be honoring the elements, the Dagda, and the Morrigan. There will be a chance for you to release anything that no longer serves you, and to offer the energy of the circle to the beings that need our loving energy.

The Denver Celtic Women's Circle is a small, private circle in the Celtic path tradition, drawing on the tree Ogham, the sacred Colorado landscape and traditions of Celtic lore. We are currently offering an Irish Mythology Podcast Club and we will be collecting blankets for Urban Peak (services for homeless youth) during the SpiritWays Yule Fest 12-13 December.

—Catherine

<http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

Activities related to the Denver Celtic Women's Circle will generally be posted on: <https://www.facebook.com/TheGoddessOfDenver>

(There will not be an Open Full Moon in December, but we do plan to put out a newsletter! —Alia)

GREETINGS

The days have gotten shorter—helped along by Daylight Savings Time. I leave work in the dark these days and it's not because I'm working late. It is, indeed, time to find excuses to get out in the day to get some natural vitamin D (that is: sunlight.)

Tonight I'm wrapped up in a blanket, still enveloped by the glow of a great concert. There's something about a concert where everything seems to go just right. The music was grand—and we did our best to live up to the music. The audience seemed to enjoy it; better yet, the performers enjoyed it.

Best of all, we did this on my birthday! It turned out that one of the soloists and one of the other Orpheus members shares this natal anniversary. We spent our birthday surrounded by music. What could be better than that?

—Catherine

THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

Hearthstone extends our thanks to Vella Rose and Alicia for offering a late-October Samhain/Full Moon ritual that delved deeply into the theme of ancestors. Each participant was cleansed and consecrated, and the Elements were invoked with song. Herne and Hecate/Cerridwen were invoked through song as well. We contemplated our ancestors of three types: 1) familial ancestors, whether of blood, marriage, adoption, or family culture; 2) spiritual ancestors, whether of lineage, teachers, authors, or other; and 3) ancestors of place, those who lived on this land before us. After time for meditation, we stood in a circle and passed several large balls of yarn across the circle, holding on to the yarn, weaving a web back and forth while each of us shared the names and brief legacy of those ancestors who are especially important to each of us. We were allowed multiple opportunities to speak about whichever ancestors we felt called to honor and thank. Then the web was cut, and we each took home some of the yarn as a reminder of our linkages to our ancestors and to those who shared this remembrance with us.

Thank you, Vella Rose and Alicia, for creating this very personal, sharing, and supportive ritual, woven through with appropriate chants and songs. Blessings to you, to All, and to our ancestors.

—Arynn

Ride From Idaho Springs?

I received a call from a man who has moved to Idaho Springs from Connecticut. He does not have a car, but would like a ride to the Open Full Moon coming up this week. If you can help, please call or text me on 303-521-6620 and I will give you his contact information. Thanks!

—Alia

HEARTHSTONE RITUALS

Remember, please, that Hearthstone doesn't expect everyone to enter in Perfect Love and Perfect Trust, as there are people you don't know there, but to enter with a willing heart and an open mind, and leave your differences at the door.

Some traditions are more controversial than others, or may contain a component that disturbs someone attending an Open Full Moon. It is one of the risks of exploring different traditions. Should anyone be uncomfortable, unsettled, or upset about any ritual presented by Hearthstone, please contact Alia or Catherine to discuss—and hopefully resolve and heal—the issue.

—Alia

ON DONATIONS

Many of our local Pagan organizations run on a shoestring. Your donations do make a difference, and the cost of a movie ticket to one of these organizations from several of their patrons can make the difference between failing and thriving. (Not to mention making the organizers excited and happy that their efforts are of value to you.) If you'd prefer not to donate to Hearthstone, I encourage you to donate something to the organization of your choice. Your donations can make the difference between an organization thriving and folding.

We appreciate that many of you donate to the church. **We ask that you please give what you can to support the work and service of the church to the community. The more you can spare, the longer we will be around, and the more we can help those who need it. We will keep Hearthstone Community Church, Inc. running as long as possible, and we need your support to continue to serve the community.**

We aren't going to start collecting at the door, and no one will be turned away for not having a donation. However, we would like to *suggest* a donation of 5 to 10 dollars per person. (The extra is to cover the pagans that are unable to donate.) If you can't afford it, you are still welcome—if you can afford more, we'd be delighted to accept it.

NOTE: Hearthstone is a church and your donations to Hearthstone are **tax deductible**. If you would like to write a check so you can keep track of your donations, we can certainly handle that as well.

—*Alia*

PETS: Free/Low-cost Spay/Neuter and Vaccinations are available

CATS fixed for free / DOGS fixed for \$50

Dumb Friends League: Services valued on average at \$250 or more. Surgeries provided at above listed cost for owners with income of less than \$40,000 from all sources. You must qualify as low-income; bring documents. Spay/Neuter Clinics are offered on specific dates at locations across the metro area, from Aurora to West Denver, Arvada to Englewood. Arrive by 7:30 AM. First-come, first-served. Get more information by calling 720.241.7098 or by visiting the web site at ddfl.org

Reduced Cost Vaccinations for Dogs and Cats

Denver Animal Shelter: Saturday and Sunday mornings 9:00 – 11:00 AM at the shelter at 1241 W. Bayaud Ave, Denver. Vaccinations \$15 each, microchip \$25. You do not have to be a Denver resident. Details at 720.913.1311 or www.denveranimalshelter.org

ON COMPANION ANIMALS

I have received several requests to bring companion and therapeutic animals to Open Full Moons. We've spoken to the church, and they have agreed that mellow, friendly companions are welcome to join us at ritual. Please assess your pet carefully. For example, we know that Guinea pigs are lovely ritual companions, and easy to keep under control. Arynne has a lovely older dog who has severe separation anxiety, and will need to come with her so she is able to attend.

If you have a friendly, mellow animal who is not excitable and is good with attention from strangers, they are welcome to join us at ritual. Keep in mind that many cats do not do well with dogs, and since dogs are far more likely to have separation issues, expect a dog or two to be in attendance. I won't be bringing my pup; she adores people and likes to jump up on them and lick them all over, which is not good company behavior. At home I can direct her attention to me, but my own attention is divided at the OFM, so it isn't fair to her or the group to bring her until she mellows out and grows up a bit more, if then. So please, be judicious on deciding if your pet is a good companion for ritual. You are welcome to talk to us to help you decide if a particular animal would be suitable to join us.

If an animal does disrupt the group, you will be asked to take it outside, so do be aware of the possibility. (A bark or two before settling is probably OK. Lots of it, not so much.)

—*Alia*

MONEY AND OCCULT LEADERS: (Revisiting the thirteen warning signs part one)

Back in February 2014, I wrote a column on thirteen behaviors and procedures that I considered to be warning signs that a leader or occult group might be a bad one that one did not want to get involved with. Between the newsletter and republishing it to my occult blog (Gleamings from the Golden Dawn), the article has become one of my most read articles. It is also an article that I periodically advertise when I see the need to point out that some groups are more corrupt and dangerous than others.

As a result of my advertising it (often on Facebook), I have received more than the normal amount of feedback on it. Some of this feedback has been that the article is not a useful measure of the worthiness of a leader or group because many of the behaviors I describe can be used for good purposes. In other words, the very behaviors that I consider troublesome can also be the signs of a good group.

I am not really sure that I need to point out that these rebuttals to the article are being put forth by groups and organizers who use trademarks, non-disclosure agreements, and the degree system; sometimes from the very groups and leaders that I consider to be the most iffy. It is no surprise to me that those who engage in questionable behavior have rationalized and codified it as tools for magical and spiritual development.

I must admit that they are right. Just because a leader or group exhibits a behavior or uses a technique does not automatically make them a bad one. So it is now time to revisit my warning signs article and say that I was wrong, and apologize for implying that some groups and leaders are bad simply because they engage in certain behaviors.

But, while I am rethinking my position on my list of the worst warning signs, let us reexamine something that I stated was not a warning sign: the collection of money.

To say that the Western World has a toxic relationship with money is perhaps one of the biggest understatements that one can make. The idea that money is inherently evil is deeply rooted in our culture. And while Wicca and modern magical movements have attempted to step away from the idea that money is just simply bad, we do live in a culture which firmly believes that money is the root of all evil.

I, myself, have a toxic relationship with money. I am the oldest of eight kids. My father often worked two jobs while my mother stayed home to take care of the kids (at least until I was old enough to babysit them). On the rare occasions when I had made some money, it was my familial duty to surrender it to my parents, so that it could go towards things like paying for the lights. It was also my duty to not want things for my birthday and Christmas, so that my siblings could get presents. When I did get presents, it was often things that I needed—like socks. At dinner, I was not allowed seconds until the rest of my siblings had finished eating.

Between being forced to babysit my siblings (with the condition that babysitting them was more important than my school work), and the poverty of my parents, there were many things I wanted to do that I simply could not do. I wanted to be a boy scout, but my family could not afford the uniform and the other expenses that went with that. I could not go to school dances or football games, because tickets cost money. And I could not be a member of the chess club or do any after school activities, because I needed to be home to help take care of my siblings.

These poor conditions lead me to fail high school. Yes, I am a high school dropout. I failed typing three times, due to untimely funerals in other states and the inability to stay after school to catch up on the practice. I failed English twice, due to not turning in a term paper which was a conflict of interest—because babysitting was more important than me going to the library to do research. I left high school short just one class from meeting the requirements for graduation—that pesky English class.

I entered the work force as a high school dropout. I joined the army. While I was in army boot camp, my father died; this resulted in my discharge. The army expected me to go back home to help my mother—my mother, on the other hand, did not want me to move back home because she would receive far more from social security (survivor benefits) than I could ever earn. It was not the first time my family survived thanks to government benefits; all through my childhood, the family received food stamps and other aid.

(In all fairness, I probably should point out that I signed up for the military simply because I could think of no better option. When one of my high school teachers learned of my decision, he asked, “What? Is the army out of targets?” Given the fact that I was late to his class three times a week, thanks to my mother being out, I can understand his point. And in all honesty, even if I would have been a good student, I would have made a horrible soldier.)

Now, throughout my childhood, I was expected to take full blame for my lackluster school work. My mother was very much concerned with maintaining her reputation. So not only did I have to hide my actual religion, I also had to accept full responsibility for the fact that she refused to sign notes about why I was late to school. This concern over her reputation would become important when I finally discovered what I wanted to do for a living.

It was at a truck stop in Kansas that I realized that someone was making money writing. Up to this point, the only jobs I had ever been exposed to were back breaking jobs, such as construction, or were behind cash registers in restaurants and dime stores. And my realization that someone was making money as a writer came from the worst possible source.

Browsing a news rack, I picked up a small magazine. Given the fact that I was returning to Colorado after being discharged from the military, and still off-balance from my father’s death, I probably was not in my right mind. To say that this magazine was the most dubious material that I had ever seen in my life up to that point...well, it would be true. The magazine claimed that its stories and letters were written by actual readers; I instantly realized that was not true. Despite my complete lack of knowledge about writers and the market, I knew instantly that someone had to be getting paid to write this stuff; mainly because no one would actually admit to this sexual hang-up if they were not being paid for it. At this point, on some level, I made the decision to become a fiction writer, writing dubious erotica.

My life from this point on was a series of minimum wage fast food jobs. I flirted briefly with the idea of going to art school (but I was a high school dropout); later, I thought about joining the electricians' union as an apprentice (but I was too clumsy). The idea of doing regular construction

did not appeal to me. The only thing that ever indicated that I might not work forever as a minimum wage drone was the occasional check for the dubious erotica that I was guilty of writing; and quite honestly, that too was a low paying profession (for the record, your average writer would be better off working a minimum wage food service job—sad, but true).

I am, and have always been, a member of the lower class. I was born in a bad economic class; and unless I get a strange bounce on a project, I will die poor too. And trust me, being poor makes the entire subject of money stressful. The only reason that I do not have a full blown “money is evil” mindset is the fact that I am Wiccan. And given what I have written that I collected money for, it is just natural for me to assume that people do dubious things just for the money.

Now, a lot of people assume that the mere collection of class fees and membership dues is a sign that an occult leader or group is rotten. Fortunately, I actually paid for and took classes from good occult teachers before being exposed to the idea that spiritual and magical teachings should be given freely to all. I also came into the occult community before the advent of the internet, and the onset of pirated occult books—I had to pay for the books and lessons that I wanted.

But given my toxic relationship with money, I would never dream of actually collecting fees and membership dues from others. Besides, I write dubious erotica, which I know full-well makes me unsuitable to be an occult teacher and leader. The few times I have collected dues, it was simply because some members felt that it was wrong for me to cover the entire cost of a group by myself.

Now, just because I will not do it myself, that does not mean that I do not understand the need to collect some money to offset expenses and opportunity costs. I also understand the desire to earn money doing something that you feel that you are really good at. Having a place to meet and having sufficient handouts cost money; and taking time to organize events and teach classes does decrease the amount of time and effort that one can sink into other projects.

Between understanding these facts, and not believing that having sufficient amounts of money while living somehow prevents you from having a happy afterlife, money is not an automatic warning sign for me.

Yet, I will admit that at the root of all the bad groups and leaders that I have encountered, there is a striking commonality; that of Need. Typically, the need that one encounters is one or more of four types: power, sex, money and ego. And each bad leader has chosen to fulfill one or more of these needs by running an occult group. When an occult group turns into a business to fulfill the leadership’s needs for something lacking in their life; this is when they start to go bad and rot.

Now, not all occult groups go bad. Therefore, the conflict that many religions and systems see between money and spirituality might not be a universal law. So what keeps a group that collects money from going bad?

My current theory is that things go wrong with money when an occult group becomes a business with the end goal of collecting money from the membership. Many of the abuses that I mentioned in the original thirteen warning signs article are about leaders using business methods and laws to create a situation where they have a monopoly on a system, and therefore are the only ones that can collect membership dues from students of a certain system; or are concerned with having lots and lots of members, so that they can collect more dues. Basically, when the membership is viewed first and foremost as a money source—when the membership becomes the product—things start to go bad. The sad part is, often the members do not realize that they are merely an income

source for their leader, who often will talk about spiritual and magical advancement as the purpose of their group.

And as far as I can tell, what prevents a group from going bad is a conscious decision and continued activity on the part of the leadership to focus on actual spiritual and magical advances as their end-goal. In such a situation, the number of members does not matter, and the leader has no need to create an abusive monopoly or collect a large following.

Please note that with the other types of need (power, ego and sex), a small group serves to fulfill the leader's needs just as well as a large one in most cases. But if the end goal of a group is actually money; one is sure to see efforts to create monopolies, drive other groups out of business, and increase the number and size of the membership. Money is not evil, but it surely corrupts when one views an occult group as one of their income sources.

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](#)

EARTH TEMPLE

Earth Temple meets at Full Moon Books and Event Center, at 9106 W. 6th Ave. in Lakewood, for New/Dark Moon ritual work. All of our dates are Saturday evenings, and we normally begin our rituals right on the dot at 7:30 PM. Join our Meetup Group for reminders and information about specific rituals: www.meetup.com/EarthTemple. And, check out our Witchvox page for more info about us: http://www.witchvox.com/vn/vn_detail/dt_gr.html?a=usco&id=35084

Our 2015 dates:

Dec 12

Ritual dates 2016

January 9

February 6

March 5

April 9

May 7

June 4

July 2

August 6

September 3

October 1

Oct 22

November 26

December 17

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

WHOM TO CONTACT

Alia's phone number is 303-521-6620 (*NOTE: This number has changed. We are having issues with the house phone; please call this number instead. It has been changed on the web page as well*). Catherine's is 303-886-7067. If you would like to officiate at a future Open Full Moon, for Pagan or Wiccan clergy, or for any other Hearthstone business, please contact either Alia or Catherine.

Hearthstone Community Church has a website at <http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

Alia's e-mail address is teal.cuttlefish@gmail.com; Catherine's e-mail address is catherine@fnorky.com.

GUEST COLUMNS?

If you have something to say, and are willing to let Alia or Catherine edit it slightly, (generally for grammar—Alia has the soul of an English teacher and Catherine is simply a fanatic) please feel free to submit your writing to catherine@fnorky.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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2015 Open Full Moon Dates

November 20

December 25—we will not meet, as it would be the 13th OFM of the year and a US holiday.

2016 Open Full Moon Dates

January 22

February 19

March 18

April 15

May 20

June 17

July 15

August 12
September 16
October 14
November 11