



Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

"The Full Moon Folk"



MARCH 18, 2016

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, MARCH 18, 2016.

Amy Harper (NyteRoze) will be presenting this month's ritual. Following the Wheel of the Year, we will be considering the things we decided to bring into our lives at Imbolc and raising energy to charge the seeds we intend to plant. If you have seeds of your own you'd like to charge, please bring them. If you do not, or you need more, seeds will be provided for you. We will also take a look at what may be out of balance in your life that you may want to focus on bringing back into balance.

All ages are always welcome to Amy's rituals. If you bring little ones, please bring colors and paper or some other quiet, non-electronic, activity they can work on within our circle so they, and you, can be with us, even if their attention is elsewhere. Some coloring pages will be provided, we do not have crayons or other coloring tools. Please bring tools for them to color with if possible.

—Catherine

GREETINGS

I have a parable for you today.

A couple of weeks ago, I came home to a crisis – a canine crisis. When I opened the front door, one of my dogs met me at the door, scolding as usual; telling me that I had been gone “forever!” However, the other dog wasn't at the front door. This usually means mischief.

Some background is necessary here. Misha (the “other” dog) has a talent: she can get tangled in almost anything. Yarn, thread, plastic bags, plastic tubing, etc. This occasion was no different. I peeked in the house and she was at my desk, trying to get to the door.

I went in to see what she had gotten tangled in this time, only to find that it was the “Grabber” I keep to get to high shelves. The Grabber lives fairly near the bin where I lock up the dog food. Apparently, the Mish (one of her nicknames, which also include Monster One and Orneriness) had attempted to get to the dog food and had slipped – onto the plastic tongs of the Grabber. She then ran into the office and somehow managed to wrap the power cord to my router around the pole – then managed to get the pole stuck under the desk.

While trying to contain my laughter, I looked around for a pair of scissors – all of which had managed to hide themselves. Finally, I found a pair of embroidery scissors: about 1½ inches long and very pointed at the end. I sat down on the floor and started the process of getting the Mish unstuck. Believe me when I tell you that curly fur twisted several times and caught up in anything is a challenge to cut with big scissors, much less with embroidery ones. Add to that a panicky dog and it becomes an adventure.

Eventually, I got her free, at which time she dashed, first to her water dish and then to the corner of the bed. Meanwhile, I unwound the power cord, which had miraculously not gotten broken in the struggle.

I've told this tale several times and come to some conclusions. It's terribly easy to get tangled up in things – especially if you're going after something that has been put out of reach. Panicking when you get tangled makes it worse; tangling things further and adding to the tangle. If it gets to the point of needing help to release the tangle, it's time to calm down. And remember, even embroidery scissors will cut through a knot eventually.

The Grabber has been put elsewhere to avoid new tangles.

–Catherine

<http://hearthstone.fnorky.com>

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

THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

Hearthstone Tips our Hat to Hawk Shadow, priestess of our Feb. Open Full Moon rite. Hawk Shadow explained to a large group of participants (including many teens from a religious studies class) the origins of Wicca, the concept that the Divine is both feminine and masculine, and the concept of sacred space.

After cleansing, casting, and calling the Elements and Deities, aided by assistants Richard and Deb, Hawk Shadow led a meditation. She began with the idea that our lives have seasons, not necessarily linear, and that at any age we can experience a personal "Winter" of sorts. We visualized a snow-covered mountain, cold and white, yet on a sun-baked outcropping we saw 5 green leaves, the first Spring growth of a wild mountain rose. She spoke of the wild mountain rose having the tenacity and determination to crack open granite if necessary, to reach for the Sun and bloom again and again. She encouraged each of us, when we experience our own "Winters", to reach down to our deepest roots and know ourselves to be tough and enduring like the wild mountain rose. We too can bloom again and again.

Thank you, Hawk Shadow, for sharing the gift of this lesson with our Hearthstone community. Blessings to all.

–Arynn

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

A Midsummer Night's Sing

Saturday, May 14th at 7:30 PM

Wash Park Center for Music & the Arts

400 S Williams St. in Denver, CO

*Magical music and lusty lyrics for Midsummer,
with poetry and music by Shakespeare (of course),*

Loreena McKennitt, James Agee, Brahms,

Morton Lauridsen, Mendelssohn, Eric Whitacre, and a host of others.

[Click here to see the full concert program](#)

\$20 per person / \$15 Seniors & Students / Under 12 free

[Click here to buy tickets](#)

BELTANIA

Beltania, a Pagan festival and musicfest, is having its 9th annual event on May 19-22, 2016 at La Foret Conference and Retreat Center near Colorado Springs. Tickets can be purchased at www.beltania.org

A DRUID'S MEDITATION PRACTICE

The earth, the sun and the moon are constantly in galactic motion, in beautiful, powerful and life-giving relation to one another. For us it is a spiral dance like no other, the spiral dance on which our lives depend.

Our turning draws the light of the sun across the earth's surface, constantly casting circle. The moon's orbit around us as we spin on our axis and orbit the sun, all counter-clockwise, is another layer of magic in the gravity of our dance. Even the seas rise to meet her.

At the beginning of the OBOD (Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids) circle cast is this phrase: Let all disturbing thoughts be laid aside. We stop our inner chatter and pay attention to the magic. We are present for the magic. As I have often said, now is the only moment in which magic can be made. It requires our attention.

And that call to attention, that releasing of all other distractions, is so parallel to the Tibetan Buddhist practice of outbreath meditation. Lay thoughts to the side and attend to this moment. It is a practice of stilling, for a moment, the greedy, brilliant, darting of our minds. My mind is like a child, so eager to play, to show off, to have my attention. When I can relax its grasping of thoughts and simply be, I have found great benefit.

I found great benefit, for a time, a while back.

And until recently, I couldn't find and stick to a practice that retrieved that benefit for me.

I dove deep into my druidic practice. I deepened my studies and understanding. I spent four years publishing a calendar that suited my own needs, changing it slightly every year as I learned more about living the Wheel of the Year. This year, every single day has the time of sunrise, sunset and solar noon. The purpose, I believed, was to help anyone, on any day, pick up the thread of full consciousness of this life on the Wheel.

And then, in Brigit's month, I realized that I was the person that needed that thread.

Random meditation wouldn't work for me anymore. I needed to let all disturbing thoughts be laid aside and pay attention to the circle cast of light.

I started simple, very simple. I am awake before sunrise to look out a window at the eastern horizon for that minute when, beyond the houses and trees, I know the sun is breaking into day and I say, "In the beginning is the light."

Then at evening, I am sure to be standing, looking out a window at that moment when, beyond buildings and houses, I know the sun is setting into night and I say, "In the end is the light." And so, in a very real way I am aware of our circle, the circle of our horizon, the circle that the light casts across our day.

This little change in consciousness, in a tangible awareness of the day of light, was a tremendous help and I was easily able to add a ten minute meditation to it.

I have found that it is challenging to be aware of the change in the bright light during daylight hours without clamping down my focus on a shadow.

But in the ten minutes that follow sunset, there is a dramatic change in ambient light, in any room with a window, regardless of the direction that window faces. It does not take a hardened focus to be mindful in midst of that change.

Similarly, the ten minutes before sunrise have that same, subtle drama that is effortless to witness.

And so I sit, in gentle awareness of the present moment, in the ten minutes before sunrise. "In the beginning is the light." and then after sunset, after greeting it, "In the end is the light."

Every moment is precious and it is so easy for me to live, distracted. Yet, I could no longer find any meaning in meditation until I connected it to the changes of the Wheel of the Year, the lengthening minutes of the day, the continual shifting northward of the sunrise and sunset toward the summer solstice.

Equinox is nearly here, the day and night of equal length.

In Ireland, at the monument at Knowth, Brú na Bóinne, on the equinox, the sun at sunrise will shine down the passage on the eastern side, and at sunset it will shine down the passage on the western side. Five thousand years ago my ancestors built this, and so many other monuments, to capture and observe these moments, to stop and be aware of this passage.

In the beginning is the light. In the end is the light.

I have found great benefit in being present for it.

Let all disturbing thoughts be laid aside.

This is our circle, the circle of our horizon, and of our lives, and our land, and of time, the year, the seasons, the months and the days. Thus is the circle cast.

Blessed be.

---Paulie Rainbow

founding priestess: Denver Celtic Women's Circle

HEX THE VOTE (PART ONE)

Every couple of years, Americans look at the television set, or their computer, or smart phone, and say to themselves, “Damn, American politics is fucked up.” OK, maybe that is too much of a generalization. Some Americans say that every day while others might never notice that politics is a mighty strange business. Meanwhile, the rest of the world can't figure out how our system of government works—which is not very surprising considering that not even members of our own government can explain our government in terms that a five year-old can understand—which in turn, says nothing about the intelligence of people in foreign countries, and everything about the fact that our system of government was designed by people who did not trust any form of government that they were familiar with and therefore, decided to create a brand new way to mess things up.

In the United States, we have a democracy. And by democracy, I mean that we cast votes for people who are supposed to represent our interests, and for little key chunks of law that entire pyramids of legalistic goo are built upon. It is a representative democracy.

Our representative democracy exists for two reasons. One, the technology for a direct democracy, where one person's opinion equals the exact same weight as someone else's opinion, and a simple majority carries the day, simply did not exist when our system of government was created; tallied votes could only travel as fast as a horse mired in a swamp. Two, the founding fathers did not believe that everyone's knowledge of government and the law was equal, therefore, they gave more weight to the opinions of “political experts” than to your average tavern stool sitter.

Now, let's be clear about something: direct democracy would lead to our extinction. Take for instance, the issue of witchcraft. Given that many people believe that we should be a pure Christian nation, believing that the founding fathers meant for the Bible to be the guide of law in this country, anything that goes against what they think the Bible says, in the minds of these people, should be against the law. And given that the Bible says that one should not allow witches to live, well, it does not look good for the witches. Don't bother to argue that those who embrace the Bible are selective in what they believe that the Bible outlaws; for instance, bacon loving tattooed men are outlawed; such arguments are ignored by those who insist that the Bible is the end-all of morality and law. And the people who believe such things, if given the route of direct democracy, would vote to throw witches in jail before dousing them with gasoline and lighting matches.

Fortunately, direct democracy was feared by the founding fathers. In order to jail and burn witches, first you have to convince enough people that it is a good idea. Second, you would have to change the Constitution, which contains an amendment that hints that freedom of religion, even nasty unchristian religions, is allowed; because otherwise that nasty judicial branch might strike down your law, and tell you that you are not allowed to roast marshmallows over a burning witch. Those nasty founding fathers simply did not trust people to play nice with one another. Unfortunately, the fear of direct democracy also gave rise to professional politicians and experts.

At top of the United States' political heap is the office of the President. Every four years, we have a Presidential election, including a campaign cycle that seems to just be getting longer and sillier. The voters have two says in this matter, once in the primaries and caucuses, and once during the actual election itself. Bookmarking these events are enough political ads, debates, and other strange nonsense that one finds themselves believing that American politics is overseen by a zombie donkey and zombie elephant because there is no way that either animal could put up with that much nonsense and still be alive.

During this process of selecting a President, not everyone's vote counts the same. In one of those political arenas that requires a political pundit to explain, the votes of certain states matter more than those of other states. And in a couple of these caucuses, recently we saw a coin flip, or card draw, determine the final vote. Plus, there is this strange concept of super-delegates, where one person's vote (select elected officials) count as much as thousands of other votes made by ordinary people. On top of this, we have the Electoral College, where the votes of certain states are worth more than others. And after all this, if things go really odd, one can end up with the Supreme Court deciding who is President.

Given all this complicated procedure, one can easily come to the conclusion that one's vote does not count. That is not true; it is just that our system is designed so that the masses who only think about politics every four years can't completely take over. Our system is designed to be run by professional politicians, but—and this is when you have to remember what type of democracy we actually have—they are supposed to represent the people.

And in order for them to represent us, they have to know that we exist. If we want our opinions about how this country should be run, and what laws and regulations are needed, and what programs funded, to be considered by the professional politicians, then we have to be visible as a voting bloc. Politicians need to know that we exist. Now, while it is too late to get involved (or interested) in certain parts of the process this time around, it is not too late for the next stage of the process. And there is always the next cycle. It is never too late to get involved.

Therefore, I encourage you to register to vote (if you are not already registered); learn what you can about the issues and candidates, and vote whenever you can.

A useful site to learn more, including voter registration deadlines, is Rock the Vote: <http://www.rockthevote.com/get-informed/elections/voter-registration-deadlines.html>

Another educational site is USA.gov: <https://www.usa.gov/election> .

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](#)

[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>

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

Ritual dates 2016

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. 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 fionnula.harp@gmail.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 fionnula.harp@gmail.com. Content will not be edited. We can usually make room for more voices.

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

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2016 Open Full Moon Dates

March 18

April 15

May 20

June 17

July 15

August 12

September 16

October 14

November 11