



# Hearthstone Community Church, Inc.

## "The Full Moon Folk"



### **OCTOBER 19, 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.** There are two small parking lots, to the north (next to the building) and 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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, October 19, 2018.

Hearthstone board member Morgan Drake Eckstein will be leading the October Open Full Moon ritual. During this ritual, he will talk about his experiences and thirty-four year journey through the Denver Wiccan community, and share memories of those wonderful witchy women (and the occasional man) who shaped his ideas about Wicca, magic, and community. Attendees are encouraged to wear their "Sunday best" (or should that be "Friday night best"?)--wild and interesting t-shirts, large hats with fruit and feathers, and other clothes that might be able to be seen from outer space. For long time attendees, Morgan will share his most emotional Alia story.

----*Catherine*

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### **GREETINGS**

From Fall to Winter in a week. At least that's how it felt to me. I should be used to fast-moving days and seasons. For the last couple of years, it seems like the time from mid-August through May is jam-packed. Hearthstone meets once a month, but the week before tends to be active. Add to that the schedule with Orpheus Pagan Chamber Choir, and it's rather like working two jobs. I enjoy them and they certainly make the time go more quickly.

In two weeks, it will be Samhain. In some ways, I've started the holiday early. I've spent time lately remembering my friends who have gone ahead. It seems a natural thing to do when it gets cold. I've also been thinking a lot about family. As you know, I've been working on my genealogy lately. I'm getting to know my great-grandparents, even though I never met them in life.

My great-grandfather, Johannes August Johannesson (John A. Johnson) emigrated to the US in the 1800s. He married my great-grandmother (Ida Matilda Jonsdotter) once he settled in McPherson, Kansas and proceeded to raise a whole flock of children. Once they were grown, he picked up and moved to Texas – where it was warm. He took Ida Matilda with him. My grandfather was his third child. Grandpa was born in Kansas, but he still had the lilt of a Swedish accent all his life.

Going through the genealogy is like reading lots of stories. I've always loved to read – especially on cold days when I don't want to go outside. I'm still reading everything, but part of my reading strengthens my connection to my family – even those I never knew. I will include them in my Samhain rituals this year.

–*Catherine*

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## 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.

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## THANKS AND A TIP OF THE HAT

Hearthstone offers our gratitude to Carri and Martin of Alexandria Temple for leading a beautiful Drawing Down ritual for our September Open Full Moon. They were happy to receive a donation from Hearthstone Community Church demonstrating our support for their Wiccan prison ministry work.

Circle was cleansed and cast, and volunteers called the Elements. God and Goddess were invited. Martin led his always amazing, deeply relaxing meditation, and encouraged us to make contact with our Light Body. He and Carri spoke of both Mabon and Full Moon being times of *Balance*, also of Mabon as the second Harvest festival. We were encouraged to pay attention to what we harvest, as it reveals to us what we planted...along with some things we didn't plant intentionally and which we might want to trim out.

During the Drawing Down, the Goddess spoke about the most important concept in our lives being Love. Individuals were invited to speak individually with Her. When those who wished had finished, cakes and juice were blessed, and Carrie and Martin explained more about their ministries for incarcerated and released inmates, and answered questions.

Thank you, Martin and Carri, for sharing your skills with us...and Happy Wedding Anniversary!

---Arynne

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## 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 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.

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## **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!

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## **LETTING GO**

"The trees around us manifest how beautiful it can be to let go."

I am nearing the end of a year of mourning.

I have been challenged, struck down, resistant, denying, dismayed, lost, empty, all of the things that mourners are. All of the things that the grief stricken are.

I can see the last bend in the road around the wheel of this year. The road is wet with my tears, the leaves are brilliant with the colors of memory and love, many of the branches are already bare, showing the stark emptiness where a life once was. It is fitting that it is autumn, and that the anniversary of that heart-stoppingly sudden death is where the cold emptiness of the dark of the year begins, where the edge of winter is.

Death struck as winter walked in.

A voice was stilled just as the hush of the seasons descended over the world I walk in.

And I kept walking.

Because we do. Because even though my heart was stubbornly, rebelliously, stuck in the days before my loss, the sun will stubbornly rise and set, will change daily in its intersections with the horizon, shift its way down the line of the mountains to the west until it sets below the most southern peak that I can see it kiss from my back porch, and the longest night sets in.

And rises again on that special morning while my husband and I watch it rise behind that one huge pine tree, a half a block away, on that shortest day when my household fills with baking, and candles and hospitality. It's our sign that the sun will move north again.

And it did, whether I wanted it or not.

Everything was new in a dreadful way. Each holiday had a new configuration, filling in a space that my heart railed against. I wanted my tears to banish death the way that water diminished and dismissed the Wicked Witch of the West. They did not.

But we were strong together, walking through these unrelenting days.

I confess that it felt deadening and endless. I confess that an emptiness seeped in that I thought would last forever, and that that emptiness was contrasted only by surprising bouts of weeping at moments unexpected. I confess that the wheel of the year no longer felt like a circle, but like a flat line of marching days.

And I kept walking.

Although the landscape around me seemed, at moments, colorless, I believed, somewhat intellectually, that if I kept on the color would return. I carried faith in a tin bucket to others. I

choked on the stale bread of prayers that had been warm, sweet fruit. I wept and shook while uttering the assurances of strength that had empowered me in the past. I meditated, furiously, energetically, insistently. I gave up. And started again. And surrendered repeatedly. And took that right back.

I rose up. I laid down.

I kept walking, dragged like stumbling toddler by the firm hand of the sun, the sweeping grasp of the moon.

I lost hope in color; me, whose very name holds that promise. I punished myself with the unrelenting pressure of the ordinary until my body shrieked back at me in headaches. I sought an uneasy treaty with myself.

And suddenly it is here, the chorus of color that sings of the end of life. And I can see it.

Some part of me is grateful that the end of this yearlong journey is near; the journey that spirals on and never really ends at all. Some part of me is heartened by the confidence that the sheer physicality of mourning will shift, I can feel it shifting, even as I am dismayed at any, any, any acceptance of this brutally unfair loss.

I miss the music of a voice whose chords I will never hear again. And I always will.

But now, I am sure, that I will cry tears that do not choke me, do not burn in my throat with the smoke of the fires of death. I will carry faith in the wooden bucket drawn up from a precious well. I will find sweet, warm faith again, in words that comfort me. Someday I will speak again of strength in a voice that doesn't tremble with the weakness of a shattering loss.

Now as the color of endings flares up around me, as every leaf falls, only once, and relinquishes its own small space, bequeaths small emptiness to the branches, reveals a small piece of the sky, now I know I will feel again, and I will also feel absence. Now I see color again, I see the precious Colorado blue sky through spaces I wish weren't empty. And it is a brilliant sky. And I welcome it back, with a sadness that is slowly healing.

Now I can see the curve in the road of the wheel of the year. It is wet with my tears. It is bright with the color of love and memory and it is a road that will lead me home.

And we will keep walking.

You can keep up with the activities of the Denver Celtic Women's Circle on Facebook or Meetup:  
<https://www.facebook.com/DenverCelticWomensCircle/>  
<https://www.meetup.com/Denver-Celtic-Womens-Circle-Events>

Peace of the Mountains to you,

*Paulie Rainbow*

*founder: Denver Celtic Women's Circle.*

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## **How I write a public Wiccan ritual**

It is once again time for me to think about writing an OFM (open full moon) ritual. This month is my annual OFM; I have been performing public ritual for...well, let's just say that it has been awhile. Exactly how long I do not know. At some point, I lost track of the number of OFMs I have performed. That figure is just one of many statistics that I can't cite without performing a memory walk while counting on my fingers.

Basically, I entered the Denver community in 1984—thirty-four years ago. And I was a witch when I walked in. Over the years, I drifted in and out—for the most part, my work schedule determined my

level of involvement. There were a couple of times that I spent so much time at a couple of occult stores, taking every class and attending every discussion group available, that random customers thought that I was an employee. In '91, I became aware of the ceremonial magic tradition commonly referred to as the Golden Dawn; within a year, I would be a card-carrying member of a private group utilizing the initiation rituals and lesson plan of that system. Around this time, I also “healed” my Wiccan lineage. Combine that with lots of hands-on experience in various other systems (Norse runes, “shamanism,” Thelema, grimoires), and at some point I found myself to be considered an expert by others. Occasionally, an editor for one of the many locally produced pagan magazines would corner me and get me to agree to write a small article or two.

At some point, I started to attend the Hearthstone OFMs. One of the board members told me about the rituals. For several years prior, I had been forced to pick between my job and...well, the rest of my life—it is what happens when you feel that you are only qualified for minimum wage jobs. Being freed once again to have a personal life, done by the expedient of accepting a management position at a restaurant that was only open for the downtown lunch rush, I slipped back into the community.

The first OFM that I wrote started off as an odd idea. I allowed other people to think that one of my friends wrote the ritual. It worked. Why would I do this? Because one—I didn't want to be a leader, and two—I thought that I wasn't qualified to be a leader. My efforts not to be a leader unfortunately would lead to some grief—and “valuable lessons.” In my head, I was just some bloke who occasionally had a meltdown over the abusive behavior that I witnessed from some people that thought they were God's gift to modern occultism. I failed to miss the fact that it did not matter what I thought of myself—what mattered was that I knew more about certain subjects than others did.

My second OFM was...well, I still think of it as an unmitigated disaster. At the last moment, my volunteers backed out—so I ended up grabbing a random idea to allow me to do the ritual completely by myself. I had not yet learned the trick of asking for help from the participants. To this day, my friends tease me about the ritual I performed. I also hadn't found my “voice” as writer and teacher. Still it was an important ritual for me; I survived the performance and was allowed to volunteer to lead a ritual in the following year. Since then, I have done at least one OFM per year, besides occasional public ritual elsewhere. Over the years, Hearthstone saw me grow; the church also watched me as I learned to deal with the mental illness that was hard-wired into my brain (slight case of bipolar). I gained lots of ritual experience. As an initiate, I would watch other people's rituals and borrow ideas. If I am a little fuzzy about how many OFM rituals I have performed, that pales in comparison to the countless rituals I have watched performed by other people. All became gist for the millstone. I started blogging; and nine years ago, I started writing columns for the Hearthstone newsletter. It is safe to say that I have been at it for a while. As an initiate and experienced ritualist, I have developed a system for writing my OFM rituals.

It all begins with an idea. Nice thing about ideas is that for practical purposes there are a bottomless well of them. In the past, I have used the ideas of proverbs recast in other cultures, tales of the gods of chaos and mischief, Wiccan societal roles, paper dolls, among others in previous OFMs. A few years ago, I combined the Golden Dawn godform/magical-image techniques with the symbolism of the wheel of the year to create a ritual that became my personal favorite OFM, and a key part of any future Wiccan course that I teach. And future years might see a Doctor Seuss styled ritual, as well as one that springs from a public ritual course that I have considered writing.

To illustrate how the process of ritual design works, consider the idea that underlies my October 2018 OFM ritual—Church Lady Wiccan. Initially, the idea arrived in the form of someone telling me to be quieter, an event that happens often and has an equal chance of me reacting like one

of my sisters, or my mother. My sister would just get louder, or resort to competitive sarcasm; that would be the polite response. My mom...look, you know how occasionally I overreact? That's my mom. She is the original church lady in my universe. Mom is the reason that I write under a cavalcade of pen-names, and am generally evil in my speaking out about what I see as esoteric leadership misdeeds. Mom might be bipolar.

By itself, this small event would have been quickly forgotten. As long as I don't open my mouth and let my Mom out, everything will be okay. I noted the incident and continued telling the joke I was in the midst of—but I will admit that I had an evil thought, for I saw the signs for the other event happening that night. Jewish music festival. The thought went like this, "I know my ancestors. They are a loud people. I wonder at what point in the ritual we will hear their music. It will probably be more disruptive than me. After all, I make an effort to be quiet after the community announcements are over." That is why I laughed when Jewish music crept up during the meditation—for me, it was a punchline.

Now, I have been trying to work through my childhood issues. It is not pleasant work—I am bipolar and might have a touch of PTSD. Some of this work has taken place in the form of a novel that will never see the light of the day...under my own name. Inside the scene that hushing me created, my mom is railing against the potential minister that told her how to do things in "her church"—a minister that my mom and her friends went out of their way to make sure did not get hired, despite the fact that the majority of the congregation liked the man. At this point, I realized that I had turned into an evil church lady myself. Fortunately for me and the community, during my time in the Denver Wiccan community, I have been exposed to less evil church ladies. Now, that would be a ritual!

Thinking about those teachers and leaders and volunteers, and having a desire to be positive, lead me to the idea of sharing some of the positive lessons and life-rules that I learned over the years. One of the shocking things that I have learned online is that not everyone has an open sharing community. Okay, I should have figured this out from the fact that people are human, but the sheer extent of the limitations of other communities caught me off-guard. Yes, I live in a nasty online world where lawsuits in Salem are normal, but I also live in a physical world where we set aside our differences and meet peacefully. For several years, I have meditated on what makes Denver an open community.

I ended up with a list of names of people that influenced the community: a list of shop owners, event organizers, artists and teachers—people who had adopted a simple operating principle. Looking at their opposite numbers in the more distasteful world of lawsuits and trademarks, I realized that they too had a basic operating assumption. It was "win-win" versus "zero-sum." I liked one community model better than the other. I definitely had an idea that could be expanded.

For me, the idea is the hardest part of planning a ritual. Once I have an idea, it merely becomes a matter of plugging things into my basic framework of ritual stages (opening, consecration and purification, casting circle, calling quarters etc.) and the underlying floor patterns (ex. Air in the East). Merlin's knickers, if I have an idea, I can do a pop-up ritual (better known as "Can you assemble the symbols of the four elements from items that you have in your purse?")—not alone design a ritual that has a script.

Take for instance my upcoming OFM, I have decided that I want to tell five stories (mostly positive—but at some point, I will have to mention my mother). Over the years, I have experienced a lot in this community—so I have a lot to work from. The trick becomes figuring out which five I want to use and put them in appropriate places during the course of the ritual. One of the stories will be an Alia story—that one will probably occupy the center spot, the capstone story of the ritual,

the emotional climax of the ritual. Another story I want to use is Morning Glory's "Occasionally, people just need to poop" story. What quarter would this story belong to? Does it fit more with water or earth? Does the energy feel right when I stick it there? The same process applies to the other stories that I will use (still subject to revision). This is the process I use for every ritual that I write.

There is one more step I use which is very exciting—the final rewrite and trim during the performance. I tend to overwrite; we could be there for days if I actually performed any ritual in its fullest form. And during the writing, I am missing an important bit of information—who showed up to the ritual. Adjusting the ritual to the level of the audience is something I have learned to do on the fly. Sometimes, I am awash with attendees (and potential ritual helpers) with years of experience; other times, I count the number of people who have not attended a single ritual before, and decide that just maybe we will focus on the basics. And if I picked the right idea, I can do both extremes and all points in-between. Here's to a good idea!

### **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>

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## **Turtle Monkey children's book series**

We're diversifying our brand. Stay tuned for changes! If you'd like to give us input, we'll be creating a survey on the new website that should be ready by July 1. Speaking of new websites, our new web address is: [www.jofontana.com](http://www.jofontana.com)

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About Turtle Monkey: 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.

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

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It's here! 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](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)

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## **A RITE OF REMEMBRANCE**

As the veil thins and darkness descends, join us for beautiful music honoring the people who have passed on before us. Then, light a candle for them on our Dia de los Muertos altar.

Together with your energy, music, words, and silence we will create a meditation on love, life, and that which lies beyond.

A special part of the rite is dedicated to those members of the military who fell in the line of duty.

A limited number of free tickets for members and veterans of the military are available, thanks to the SCFD.

Tickets are \$20/\$15 for Seniors and students. Free for those under 12.

For all tickets, including those for the military, go to :[www.orpheuspcc.org](http://www.orpheuspcc.org)

### ***A Rite of Remembrance***

Saturday, November 10th at 7:30 PM

Wash Park Center for Music and the Arts

400 S. Williams Street at Dakota Ave in Denver

Easily reached by the No. 3 bus (E. Alameda Ave)

There is ample free parking.

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# WSLA

Celebrate our Pagan Community and Get information about Upcoming Community Events at the WSLA Meet and Greet!

Sunday 11/11/2018 1-3:30pm  
at the fabulous MERCURY CAFE  
2199 California Street Denver, CO 80205  
(get there by the Light Rail station at 16th and Stout,  
come by bus or there's parking all around)  
See old friends and meet new friends!

~ Community Events announcements at 2pm ~

Meet local Teachers, leaders of several Wiccan/Pagan organizations, including members of WSLA and other people just like YOU who are searching for community Open to the entire Wiccan/Pagan community

Food and Beverages will be available for purchase until 3pm

Also a fund raising Holiday Bazaar – gift items, mead, jewelry and more! Sales support WSLA sponsored community events (like this one) – get your holiday shopping done early!

[www.wsla-co.org](http://www.wsla-co.org)

Women's Spiritual Leadership Alliance

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## 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!

Nov 3

Dec 8

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

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## 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](mailto:fionnula.harp@gmail.com). If you would like to officiate at a future Open Full Moon, please contact Arynne at [ArynneD@aol.com](mailto: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.

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## **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](mailto: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**

October 19, 2018

November 16, 2018

December 21, 2018