



# EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,  
An Earth-Based, Pagan-Themed, Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Kansas City

AUGUST 2006

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## Hestia chosen in God Auction!

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, Gaia Community held our fourth annual God Auction. Members and friends voted with dollars and non-perishable food donations to Harvesters, and chose Hestia, the Greek goddess of hearth and home, as our new patron for the year.

Hestia is the patron of family and community, and facilitates communication between mortals and the gods by maintaining a connection between the sacred hearth at the community's heart and the hearth on Olympus. She is honored in Hellenic worship with the first and last offering of each ritual, even though she has no rituals of her own.

To honor Hestia, we'll be lighting a flame each week in the "God Box", our portable shrine, and continuing to uphold the values of community and friendship throughout the year. If you have images or offerings appropriate to Hestia and would like to contribute them to the shrine, please bring them on Sundays and put them in the God Box.

We will also be focusing this year on how to increase our contributions to the wider community. One way we can do this is by keeping in mind our weekly donation to Harvesters. We collected a mountain of food donations at the God Auction itself, but hunger in the community is a problem that will not be solved by a single week's work. We collect non-perishable foods every week, so please, if there is room in your budget to help feed the hungry, bring something on Sunday.

## *In Praise of Hestia*

Hestia is the Greek goddess of the hearth and home. Her flame is the vehicle of prayers, the heart of the family, and the center of every community. She dwells in all flame, and is the most gracious and gentle of the gods. Where there is anger, she cools it. Where there is strife, she ends it. She teaches the virtues of home and family life, the sweet rewards of labor, the joy of friendship, and the value of good food and good rest.

### *Homeric Hymn XXIV. To Hestia:*

Hestia, you who tend the holy house of the lord Apollo, the Far-shooter at goodly Pytho, with soft oil dripping ever from your locks, come now into this house, come, having one mind with Zeus the all-wise -- draw near, and withal bestow grace upon my song.

### *From Homeric Hymn XXIX. To Hestia:*

Hestia, in the high dwellings of all, both deathless gods and men who walk on earth, you have gained an everlasting abode and highest honour: glorious is your portion and your right. For without you mortals hold no banquet, -- where one does not duly pour sweet wine in offering to Hestia both first and last.

### *Orphic Hymn to Hestia*

Daughter of Kronos, venerable guardian of the hearth, we honor you. You protect the foundation of every house of Gods or men. Your beauty and laughter inspire trust. Give us health. Help us discover the necessity of hospitality. Teach us patience.

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All Sunday activities take place at Shawnee Mission UU Church;  
7725 W. 87th St., Overland Park, KS (near 87th & Metcalf)  
and begin at 4 P.M. unless otherwise noted.

## Sunday Schedule *(held at 4pm unless otherwise noted)*

*Voices of Gaia meets at 2:00 PM, Sacred Rhythm Group at 3:30 PM*

### Sunday, August 6th

#### Ritual — "Labyrinth"

**Ritualists:** Nicole, Andrew, Cynthia, Debbie

For centuries, spiritual seekers all over the world have walked labyrinths as a devotion and as a way to meditate on their journey through life. Across time and cultures, the labyrinth has become an archetype of transformation, serving as a bridge from the mundane to the divine. This Sunday, we'll lay out Gaia Community's own labyrinth for a ritual within a ritual, where we'll embark upon personal journeys within a community-supported experience. Come prepared to think, and breathe, and walk. Feel free to bring your own journal or divination tools. As always, the labyrinth is just a tool . . . the real gift is the time and attention given to prayerful attention.

### Sunday, August 13th

#### Class — "Sustainable Living"

**Facilitators:** Devin, Eric

"We care for the Earth and each other because our lives depend on it." - Okay, great, but how do we do that first part? This Sunday's class will offer suggestions on ways to reduce your environmental impact, create a more sustainable future, and integrate responsible habits for the planet into your own life.

#### A Look Ahead to Next Month...

Sept. 3 – Sharing Our Spirits Ritual (Labor Day)  
 Sept. 10 – Ritual for Prosperity  
 Sept. 17 – Forum on Education  
 Sept. 24 – Fall Equinox (w/ Potluck!)

#### Current Ritualists

Devin Scrogum	Jeff Park
Barbara Griggs	Liz Ticer
Eric Simpson	Cynthia Mathis
Kitty Degler	Carey Oxler
Yale Giffin	Debbie Giffin
Andrew Turner	Nicole Turner
Kimberly	David Reynolds
Brian Butler	Via

Please see Kitty, the Ritual Teams Coordinator, if you are a former ritualist who would like to rejoin teams.

### Sunday, August 20th

#### Ritual — "Technopaganism"

**Ritualists:** Devin, Eric, Kimberly, Yale

As Pagans, we know that inspiration for spiritual growth can be found in the ways of the past, but we are living in a modern age. Technopaganism seeks to find similar inspiration and magic in our modern lives -- blending science and magic in new ways to form traditions for the future. In this ritual, we'll be working with familiar elements of ritual in new forms, supported by technology. Our ancestors used the technology available to them, why should we be shy about using the technology available to us?

### Sunday, August 27th

#### Ritual — "Waters of the World"

**Ritualists:** Barbara, Via, Jeff, Cynthia, Kitty

As summer ends we celebrate our ingathering as a community with a UU tradition: a service celebrating all the blessed waters of the world, and our own lives as individuals drops in the great ocean of life. Please bring with you the small quantities of water (about 2 oz. is plenty) you have collected on your travels or during significant events over the summer, as well as your memories of the joyful or bittersweet experiences the water represents. We will share our precious memories with each other as we commingle our separate vials of water and our separate thoughts and feelings, joining together in community.

#### Gaia Community Board of Directors 2006-2007

**President** — Jeff Park

[president@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:president@gaiacommunity.org)  
 or 816-361-0465

**Vice-President** — Liz Ticer

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 or 913-636-4924

**Treasurer** — John Carroll

[treasurer@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:treasurer@gaiacommunity.org)  
 or 913-334-2834

**Secretary** — Jennifer Gadd

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 or 913-894-8131

**Members at Large** —

Carey Oxler  
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Yale Giffin  
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Devin Scrogum  
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 or 913-708-5667

... or contact them all at  
[board@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:board@gaiacommunity.org)!

## Splinters from the Board

### Summary of the July Ritual for Business (RfB)

I. John called the meeting to order at 9:43.

II. The agenda was approved (Barbara moved, David seconded, consensus achieved).

III. The minutes for the Special RfB were approved as amended. (Jeff moved, Barbara seconded, consensus achieved.) June minutes were approved. (David moved, Carey seconded, consensus achieved).

IV. Treasurer's Report: Last year's budget had a \$700 surplus (due mainly to last minute pledge catch-up) for fiscal year. The extra funds were placed in the New Home Fund. His assessment was that the usual post-holiday slump was countered by honestly informing the congregation of our financial needs.

New fiscal year budget for the month shows little activity. The rent needs to be paid, and our Missouri incorporation was paid. He further mentioned that our Kansas incorporation for visiting foreign entities (which indicates that we do not owe them taxes) had been dropped and that he will reactivate it. Approved (Barbara moved to accept, Yale seconded, consensus achieved).

V. Standing Committees—

Closet Task Force has erected the new door, which was constructed to match the other downstairs doors in that hallway. It also locks. It still needs molding, finish, and paint. We still need additional shelves for KidSpace, as well as volunteers for remainder of job. Keys will be copied for access. Rodent Report: infested completely, so candles or things with seeds or greenery need to be in airtight containers, as well as food. Everything is labeled, so put it back where you find it!

Adult Ed: There has been very low attendance, so Kris plans pare down to about twice a month. She will contact Communications of changes. The class with the most interest is Kitchen Witchery. She noted that the day and time seems to conflict with other Gaia meetings. If we want to use the space for other events, we need to notify SMUUCH, but it shouldn't be a problem. Contact Barbara, and she will contact SMUUCH. If someone uses the space, they need to make sure they have a key to the building.

Communication: The Earth Healer has been on time for two months in a row! David noted that the website is primary source of contact. Kris added that newcomers confirm this.

KidSpace: Greta is stepping down as coordinator; Linda is considering taking over. Karen is definitely leaving at the end of this month. Anissa was willing to cut back hours and pay, but this is not necessary. Little kid room needs staff ASAP. There need to be three adults at all times. KidSpace campout scheduled and reserved at Camp Gaia Aug 4-5, but interest seems low and no one will head it up. The cost is \$10 per tent.

Stewardship: The committee has tabled several fundraisers because most restaurants don't have summer fundraising programs. They are still working out details on carwashes. Via mentioned some other corporate Fundraising ideas.

Ritual Teams: Rites of Passage team will take two years to fully empower. In the meantime, specific authorization can be arranged. There was discussion whether this should be for internal weddings or for outsiders. Barbara thought Kansas is okay, but Missouri says one party must be a member. No one was sure whether this means where the license would be filed or where the couple lives. (Via moved, David seconded that in the meantime, members only is policy, consensus not reached. Tabled pending research on family law by Greta, who will contact Jeff).

VI. Unfinished Business

Retreat: A community-wide retreat was requested by Kitty. There was discussion about merging this event with the KidSpace campout Jeff will recruit leadership to see if this is feasible.

Lease and Obligations—Barbara reviewed changes from old lease:

- contact person is Deb Markum, SMUUCH employee, contact during work hours.
- lowered rent
- security dep. of \$100 (due date unspecified)
- late fee \$10 on rent
- potlucks scheduled in advance and moved to Fellowship Hall
- Fellowship Hall will be used 1st and 3rd Sundays at their request
- moved out of closet; we will maintain office in clean and orderly manner
- no open flames, but unscented candles are okay, with no limit. Strong scents will not be used to excess in Fellowship Hall
- we gave up Mondays

VII. New Business

A. Consensus—Cynthia brought concerns about the consensus process used at the Special RfB. For everyone's benefit, the board reviewed discussion from the previous meeting, which seemed to address her concerns. It was also mentioned that on July 23, David and Andrew would be teaching a class to help familiarize the congregation with the process so it can run more smoothly and fairly next time. Kris also offered Adult Ed time for further teaching and practice.

B. Problem Attendees—Liz brought the concern about a family that was being uncooperative while she was trying to close up the building. This family remained in the building after a polite request to leave the facility (as per our lease.) It was reported that this family was trespassing on a neighbor's property. KidSpace also reported issues with the family, pointing out that sometimes the craft or curriculum needs to be changed when they attend. The board was reluctant to institute a blanket policy to cover one issue, but was unanimous that Greta was authorized to handle a KidSpace issue as she thought best. After church, everyone is expected to leave the building and property within a reasonable time, but we cannot force people to leave the grounds.

C. Phone Change—John notified the board of change in our long distance plan that will lower our bill to \$15/month.

VIII. The meeting adjourned at 11:37 by general consensus. Carey will chair the next meeting.

— Jennifer, Secretary

## Other Events About Town

**Ritual Teams Meeting** (8/2, 6:45 PM): At the Giffin's house. Part-time slots to help with Sunday rituals are now available to former ritualists, if you are interested contact Kitty in person or at [rtc@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:rtc@gaiacommunity.org)!

**Tuesday Night Classes:** Adult Education classes will be reduced in number somewhat in coming months; for August, look for the Pagan Parenting session on 8/1, the Kitchen Witchery class on 8/8, and the Mythology Story Hour on 8/29. All classes start at 7 PM; childcare is available by contacting Kris E. in person or at [adulthood@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:adulthood@gaiacommunity.org).

**KidSpace Meeting** (8/16, Noon): Parents, volunteers, and anybody with ideas or an interest in our kids are welcome! Meetings are held at Linda B.'s house; contact her or Anissa for more information. Send email to [gaiakidspace@yahoo.com](mailto:gaiakidspace@yahoo.com) or catch them on Sundays!

**Games Night** (8/18, 7 PM): Kick back and relax; NO OFFICIAL BUSINESS IS ALLOWED! Bring a game, bring a friend, bring some munchies, or just bring yourself!

**Friday Night Supper Club** (8/25, 7 PM): This month's supper club will be announced at a later date; please check with Kris Ennis, or see the Sunday announcements/e-mail list for more information!



P.O. Box 45307  
 Kansas City, MO 64171-8303

*Address Correction Requested*

MAY YOU  
 NEVER  
 HUNGER.  
 MAY YOU  
 NEVER  
 THIRST.

*Contact Earth Healer*

Send letters, articles, poetry or prose, borrowed wisdom, comments and suggestions to: [earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org) or by phone (number inside) no later than the 19th of each month.

Please tell us if you are receiving duplicate copies of *Earth Healer*, if we're getting your name or address wrong, or if you prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail. Let us hear from you before the next *Earth Healer*.

– *David, Editor*

AUGUST 2006						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Lammas (SABBAT)	31	1 7 PM: Tues. Night Classes, Pagan Parenting	2 6:45 PM: Ritual Teams Meeting @ Haven	3	4	5 KidSpace Campout @ Camp Gaea
6 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Labyrinth Ritual	7	8 7 PM: Tues. Night Classes, Kitchen Witchery	9 9	10	11	12 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business
15 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Class on Sustainable Living	14	15	16 16	17	18 7 PM: Games Night	19 Noon: KidSpace Meeting @ Linda's
20 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Technopaganism Ritual	21	22	25 25	24	25 7 PM: Supper Club @ A Place To Be Determined	26
27 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Waters of the World Ritual	28	29 7 PM: Tues. Night Classes, Mythology Story Hour	30 30	31	1	2