



# EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,

An Earth-Based, Pagan-Themed, Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Kansas City

AUGUST 2007

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## Brigid wins the 5<sup>th</sup> God Auction!

With appeals to the our sense of harmony and community spirit, Brigid won the patronship of the God Auction this past month! This marks the end of Hestia's tenure as community patron, but since both goddesses share a love of home and hearth, and affinities with fire, some things will not change. Brigid's challenge during the God Auction was for community members to not only use and grow their skills (as we did with Lugh several years ago), but to work on passing those skills on and teaching them to others, so that all can grow and prosper from them.

Further information about Brigid (also spelled Brigit) is available at the Patron Class on July 29<sup>th</sup>, but here follows a quick summary: *Brigit is an Irish goddess of enduring popularity whose followers transformed her from goddess to saint and back again. Lore associates Brigid with the functions of poetry, smithing, and healing, and popular tradition also associates her with hospitality, generosity and the blessing and fertility of the earth and of the people. She is also sometimes depicted with spear and shield, and the Romans associated her with Minerva. She is associated with both fire and water; as a goddess, she is patroness of a number of sacred wells, and as a saint, an eternal flame is kept in her honor, perhaps continuing earlier pagan tradition. She also has associations with the blessing of households and families. At Imbolc, Brigid's feast day, folk traditions include a variety of ways to invite Brigid in to the house and ask her favor. She is also called upon to assist with the birth of a child, and in the stories of Irish Christians, served as midwife to Mary when Jesus was born.*

As we mentioned at the event itself, this marks a change of patron for the community; Brigid is not expected or required to become anyone's personal patron, and you do not have to change anything about your personal practice because of this event. What you will see, instead, is an increase in classes, workshops, and rituals that align closely with her interests and areas of influence.

## Article II of the UUA's Bylaws

Every ten years, the Unitarian Universalist Association reviews one of the articles of its bylaws, to make sure that they are still appropriate, complete, and in line with the association's needs and focus. This year's general Assembly completed the major phase of a review of [Article II](#), which encompasses several major areas defining what the UUA is:

- the Seven Principles, last changed in the early 1980s to add the seventh one (affirming the interdependent web of all existence), and the Six Sources, last changed in 1995 to add earth-centered traditions;
- the statement of purpose of the UUA;
- the declaration of non-discrimination;
- and the affirmation of freedom of belief.

(full text at <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/bylaws/articleii/>)

As you can tell, a lot of these areas directly impact our congregation, as we would probably not exist without the changes made in the 1980's and 1990's. The Commission on Appraisal has engaged in a multi-year examination of this article, and the process now continues (following a report at General Assembly in June) with discussions among the member congregations. It's important that we give our input on any changes (and indeed if change is needed or not, since if the only feedback is for change, change will occur!). To this end, Gary Stanfield has agreed to help present a workshop very similar to the one he has organized for SMUUCH; the August 19<sup>th</sup> forum will be our opportunity to engage in this discussion in a formal manner. Further conversations by the community can continue at least until the September Ritual for Business, at which time we will need to decide what, if any, recommendations to make to the CoA.

Some things that have been brought up for discussion or review elsewhere are as follows:

- ✓ the Principles and Purposes are too wordy and could be shortened or tightened;
- ✓ the words "use of the democratic process" excludes things like consensus in favor of a win-lose decision-making process;
- ✓ proposing Islam as another Source, together with Jewish and Christian teachings;
- ✓ "respond to God's love" excludes humanist/atheist views;
- ✓ "the inherent worth and dignity of every person" does not encompass all life forms;
- ✓ the statement of purpose emphasizes congregations over individuals.

It's a lot of information and a lot to cover, but please join us on August 19<sup>th</sup> to make sure your input is heard! The Commission on Appraisal has a packet of talking points available at their website, <http://www25.uua.org/coa/>

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## Gaia About Town

**Ritual Teams Meeting** (8/1, 6:45 PM, Lizzy's place): These meetings allow ritualists to critique past rituals and plan for the future. Part-time slots to help with Sunday rituals are now available to formerly active ritualists; if you are interested, please contact Debbie (the new Ritual Teams Coordinator) at [rte@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:rte@gaiacommunity.org) or in person. As always, any member of the congregation may help with a particular ritual, so if you have an interest let someone with a blue ribbon on their nametag know!

**Ritual for Business** (8/11, 9:30 AM): This is our monthly "church business" meeting. Anyone, member or not, is welcome to come and provide input or ask questions, although only Full Active Members can participate in the consensus process. If you've ever had an official question or concern, this would be the place to bring it. Any questions or items for the agenda can be communicated to the board at [board@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:board@gaiacommunity.org) or in person (they have the purple ribbons on their nametags).

**Pagan Pride Day 2007** (8/11, 12 -6 PM): The tenth consecutive Pagan Pride Day event will be held at Macken Park, 900 E. Clark Ferguson Dr. in North Kansas City again this year! The charity this year is [Lakemary Center](http://www.lakemaryctr.org/) (a place for children and adults to reach beyond their disabilities, <http://www.lakemaryctr.org/>), so please attend and take part on the silent auction or just donate to the cause! In addition, Gaia Community ritualists and members will be performing the closing ritual this year, so please come and lend your energy and enthusiasm for that as well. More information and directions to the event can be found at PPD's website, <http://www.kcpaganpride.com/>

**Games Night** (8/17, 7 PM): Yes, we'd thought to discontinue this event due to low attendance, but we're going to give it one more try after July's turnout! Kick back and relax; NO OFFICIAL BUSINESS IS ALLOWED! Bring a game, bring a friend, bring some munchies, or just bring yourself! Usually held in either the Barn Chapel or downstairs in the Jefferson room, depending on weather/games available. We've gotten some new board game players from the Kansas City area to join us through <http://meetup.com>, so come join the fun!

**KidSPACE Committee Meeting** (8/19, 2 PM): *Parents, volunteers, and anybody with ideas or an interest in our kids are welcome!* Meetings are held in the Childrens' Classroom section of SMUUCH before ritual on the 3rd Sunday of the month; contact Jennifer or Linda (the KidSPACE Co-Chairs), or Anissa (our Director of Religious Education) for more information. E-mail [gaiakidspace@yahoo.com](mailto:gaiakidspace@yahoo.com) or catch them on Sundays! Also, any adult with a red ribbon on their nametag works with KidSPACE and can probably answer your questions.

**Social Justice Committee Meeting** (8/20, 7:30 PM): Andrew and Cynthia have rebuilt the Social Justice committee in response to some concerns and ideas raised among the community recently. If you're interested in helping out, e-mail them at [sj@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:sj@gaiacommunity.org) or find them in person! Meetings are held at Andrew's.

**Friday Night Supper Club** (8/24, 7 PM): The August Supper Club location has not been decided yet; please watch the announcements and the website for more details. Please RSVP to Kris in person or at [supperclub@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:supperclub@gaiacommunity.org) to save your spot!

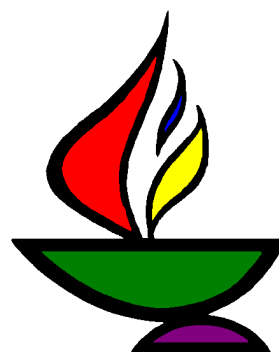
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## Caring Connections Corner

Birthday blessings go out this month to Dan Symes on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Kieran on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Kimberly on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Daniel Ticer on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Matthew MacDonald and Gary Stanfield on the 24<sup>th</sup>, Janine on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and Ann Allegre on the 29<sup>th</sup>!

If you are another August birthday, let us know so we can celebrate with you! In addition, our sympathies go out to those dealing with illness in themselves or loved ones, changes of job or other life-altering events during this early harvest season...

*If you or another attendee of Gaia Community are hospitalized or otherwise going through a difficult time, please contact the Caring Committee by emailing us at [caring@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:caring@gaiacommunity.org), leaving a message on the Gaia Community voicemail at 816-951-9900, or by contacting one of the Committee members in person: Cynthia Mathis, Terry Ross, or Debbie Dozier.*



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

*Voices of Gaia meets at 2:00 PM (not 8/5 or 8/12), Sacred Rhythms at 3:30 PM*

### Sunday, August 5th

#### **SABBAT — Lammas**

*Ritualists: David, Eric, Jeff, Linda*

Lammas celebrates the start of the harvest season. Last year we explored the story of John Barleycorn and some of the sacrifices made by the Corn King to keep the bounty flowing... but what happens next? This intergenerational ritual (teens and children 6 and older are welcome) will explore the ways in which we all help our community grow throughout the wheel of the year, from harvest to harvest.

As with all eight high holidays, this ritual will be followed by a potluck meal. Please bring a dish, drink, or dessert to share among at least eight people, remembering to care for the earth by bringing reusable containers and dishes, and care for each other by labeling your dishes for those with dietary concerns.

### Sunday, August 12th

#### **Ritual — Hanging from the World Tree**

*Ritualists: Andrew, Barbara, Devin*

Odin dedicated himself to himself, sacrificed for the sacred runes, sacrificed for wisdom. Like him, we will seek answers. This is designed to be intense personal work, but is open to our teens if they wish to attend. What are you willing to sacrifice for? Is it worth the sacrifice? Know what you are seeking and bring what you will sacrifice or a representation of that sacrifice to ritual. Be ready to work.

### Sunday, August 19th

#### **Forum — Article II of the UUA's Bylaws**

*Facilitators: Devin, Linda, Gary*

Every ten years, the Unitarian Universalist Association takes a close look at one of the Articles of their Bylaws; this year, it's Article II, which among other things outlines the Seven Principles, the Six Sources, and the ideas of non-discrimination and freedom of belief. The full text can be found on their website at <http://www.uua.org/aboutus/bylaws/articleii/> or you can see more information about the discussion we'll be having on page 1. Gary Stanfield will also be leading this discussion for SMUUCH's Sunday service the week prior, if you want to get a jump on things.

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

Sept. 2nd – Sharing Our Spirits Ritual (Labor Day)

Sept. 9th – Patron Ritual for Brigid

Sept. 16th – Workshop on Sacred Bundles

Sept. 23rd – Autumn Equinox (Sabbat)

Sept. 30th – Class on Welcoming Congregation, the Next Steps

### Sunday, August 26th

#### **Ritual — The Magician**

*Ritualists: Eric, Kimberly, Kris, Yale*

Come join us for an afternoon of intense magical work. Bring your wand if you have one and a journal to record the experience. We'll be working with the archetype of the Magician to develop tools that we can use to manifest our will in the world. The ritual will involve a closed circle, so please be prepared to start promptly at 4 pm and remain within until 5:30. Teens are welcome to attend.

### Sunday, September 2nd

#### **Sharing Our Spirits Ritual (Labor Day)**

*Facilitators: Kitty, Kris*

Sharing Our Spirits, or SOS, rituals are designed to be co-created by the very people who show up that day! One or two members of our ritual teams will be there to help, but all ideas, songs, intentions, and ritual styles are on the table! Please bring any ideas or ritual tools you wish to help make this day exactly what the people there will be looking for.

- *Ritual Teams*

#### **Current Ritualists**

Andrew Turner	Barbara
Carey Oxler	Cynthia Mathis
David Reynolds	Devin Scrogum
Eric Simpson	Jeff Park
Kimberly	Kitty Degler
Kris Ennis	Linda Boyce
Lizzy Ticer	Nicole Turner
Yale Giffin	

*Please see Debbie Dozier, the new Ritual Teams Coordinator, if you have feedback or ideas regarding rituals, or are a former ritualist who would like to rejoin teams.*

## Mooings from the CoW (Committee of the Whole)

### *Summary of August's Ritual for Business (RfB)*

- I. **Meeting called to order at 9:45AM.** Attending: Terry, Nola, David, Carey, Kimberly, Andrew, Greta, Gary, Devin, Erin
- II. **Agenda** - agreed
- III. **Secretary** - taken from Earth Healer and consensed
- IV. **Treasurer** - new report has a cover sheet as a summary. Anonymous donation of \$14,500 was added to the CD roll-over, which was greatly appreciated. The new summary format was very well received. The actual totals showed that pledges were more realistic, because we exceeded expectations there. A correction was made to the math on the Fundraisers section: \$3477.52.
- V. **Standing Committees** -
  - A. **Social Justice:** The Wayside Waifs collection was not nearly as successful as that for Hope House, but we are sending 10+ people after RFB to do a workday. The new charity is to provide support (care packages, phone cards, etc) to pagan members of the military. We collected nearly 600 pounds of food at God Auction, which was a pallet 4 feet tall. A list of donations needed for the military donations will be forthcoming. Also Social Justice now meets on a regular basis: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month. This was taken as a good thing. There was also a discussion of modifying the guidelines for food donations to God Auction, but that will be referred to committee.
  - B. **Communications:** Earth Healer went out on July 1<sup>st</sup> as expected, but short some information due to people not getting information in on time. Nicole's deadline is generally Saturday, but information given Sunday may make it in, if possible.
  - C. **Ritual Teams:** Picnic in the Park is not going to be a Sunday event next year (it was not meeting congregational needs), but it could continue as a Saturday/4<sup>th</sup> of July event run by someone else.
  - D. **Caring:** Not meeting currently, they will try again for a month and perhaps disband/pass it on.

- E. **KidSPACE:** Looking for a new committee chairperson, as the co-chairs are having scheduling issues. David suggested contacting the Nominating Committee (Jeff, Carey, John) to help find a replacement. Someone brought up questions about Anissa's attendance/performance. The committee needs to be functional before they can really address that, but Terry had some suggestions regarding benchmarks.
- VI. **General Assembly report** - Greta brought back a lot of information from General Assembly. We have not been getting the appropriate mailings from the UUA, and she wants to recommend setting up a Prairie Star District liaison, who can continue to serve this function throughout the year. The ribbons are valuable, particularly the Fair Share Congregation and APF Improvement. 6000 delegates were present; this was the second largest ever, behind Boston. 4 congregations were recognized as Breakthrough Congregations; one of them was All Souls. They had their own conference slot, mention in plenary, etc. All Souls had 30 people present; SMUUCH had 2. Reverend Jim Eller is the 'head' (President?) of the Prairie Star District now, which would make it very easy to have a liaison with them. UUA is adopting a strong anti-racism stance, making it a pro-active focus rather than just trying to eliminate passive/institutional racism. They also addressed Article 2 of the UUA's Bylaws (that dealing with the Principles, Purposes, and Sources): The Commission on Appraisal is working on a "My 2c Campaign" and Greta recommends convening a committee to make sure our voice is heard; however the timing is tight because we need to have it by September, as they'll be making a decision/finalizing the proposal in November, and probably deciding it at the 2008 GA. In regards to CUUPS/ Independent Affiliates, the word is that the new Board reviews all IA applications, and they were getting up to 90 a year. It was too much, so they cut back to core affiliates that are open to all members of the UUA. Two of those approved were the youth affiliate and the camps affiliate. There are still some questions regarding the "theological perspective"

affiliates, which had a breakout session she was not able to make it to. All of the breakout sessions from GA were recorded and are available on the website. Andrew suggested that we discuss and come back with a proposal for next month. Greta will be the central focus for that.

VII. **Lease** – Changes were fairly minor this year. Lizzy is the liaison to SMUUCH so any changes/ special use requests need to go through her (give her at least a week, preferably two!). If the space we are using is not acceptable, make sure Lizzy knows (as well as putting it on the checklist) so that she can inform SMUUCH. They were horrified that the space was not maintained before our use at times. The workdays in Spring and Fall are still there, but the lead-time is extended to 30 days so we can get notice in the Earth Healer. The deposit from last year was returned and renewed; no expenses were incurred, so it essentially rolled over.

VIII. **Old Business** ~

- A. **Board Retreat**: Still have not set a date.
- B. **Union Bank**: Bank account is closed, finally.
- C. **Garage Sale**: Many thanks to Linda for pulling this event off. We continue to have enough stuff to get rid of at these each year (SMUUCH got rid of some furniture as well, which benefited us). The truck appears to have been worth it this year, although it may not be necessary every year. Accounted for in the 2006-2007 budget under Facilities: Miscellaneous. Sodas were bought and sold and made us a little money as well, so we should probably repeat that. Linda said that she will probably have storage space for

more stuff over the coming year, but they may not be able to hold it at her house next year.

IX. **New Business** ~

- A. **Stewardship**: We do not have a functional committee at present. Nola suggested Linda as our new chairperson. She will need a functional committee of people behind her though. Andrew suggested that we let them organize themselves at a different time. Group consensed to endorse the revitalization of a Stewardship Committee.
- B. **Pagan Pride Day**: They have asked us to do the main ritual at the August 11<sup>th</sup> PPD this year, and to come back to do recycling bins. E3 will get their bins to Andrew who can bring it to the event on behalf of Social Justice. Linda, Amanda, and Greta are available to do the ritual. The labyrinth is also available. Group consensed to go forward with helping with those two parts of the event.
- C. **PSD Liaison**: Per above discussion, we should have at least one and preferably two liaisons, probably also the people who are going to GA. Cynthia proposed keeping the two roles separate, which may provide greater continuity. Greta asked to be able to contact PSD for what they would want out of a liaison. Consensed to pursue that course, and come back next month with more ideas/proposal.
- D. **Article 2**: Gary brought up that Article 2 covers a lot more than just the Principles and Purposes. Group consensed to replace the August 19<sup>th</sup> “Sacred Work” forum with a forum on Article 2. He will work with Communications & Ritual Teams to get the information out and get a co-facilitator.
- E. **Games Night**: No one is attending except E3, occasionally Yale, and 3-4 people from outside the community. Since it is costing Kimberly money and not meeting a community need, the group consensed to kill it.

X. **Meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.**

– *David, Communications Chair,  
for Jennifer, Secretary*

**Gaia Community Board of Trustees 2007-2008**

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 BECAUSE OUR  
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Send letters, articles, poetry or prose, borrowed wisdom, comments and suggestions to: [earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org](mailto:earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org) or by phone (816-941-7626) no later than the 22nd 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.

— *David, Editor*

AUGUST 2007						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 3:30-4 PM: Sacred Rhythms 4 PM: Patron Class	30	31	1 <i>Lammas/Lughnassadh</i> 6:45 PM: Ritual Teams Meeting @ Lizzy's house	2	3	4
5 3:30-4 PM: Sacred Rhythms 4 PM: Lammas (Sabbat, w/potluck)	6	7 <i>World Wide Web debats 1991</i>	8	9 <i>Sistine Chapel opens 1483</i>	10	11 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business 12-6 PM: Pagan Pride Day @ Macken Park, NKC
12 <i>International Youth Day</i> 3:30-4 PM: Sacred Rhythms 4 PM: Hanging from the World Tree (ritual)	13 <i>International Lefthanders Day</i>	14	15 <i>Flooding of the Nile</i>	16 <i>Portunalia</i>	17 7 PM: Games Night	18 <i>19<sup>th</sup> Amendment ratified, 1920</i>
19 <i>Vinalia Rustica</i> 2-3 PM: KidSPACE Meeting 2-3:30 PM: Voices of Gaia 3:30-4 PM: Sacred Rhythms 4 PM: Forum on the UUA's Article II	20 7:30 PM: Social Justice Committee Meeting @ Andrew's	21 <i>Laurence Massacre</i>	22 <i>Formation of the Red Cross</i>	23 <i>Vulcanalia</i>	24 <i>Eruption of Mount Vesuvius 79 CE</i> 7 PM: Friday Night Supper Club @ To Be Determined	25 <i>Eruption of Mount Vesuvius 79 CE</i>
26 <i>Eruption of Krakatoa 1883</i> 2-3:30 PM: Voices of Gaia 3:30-4 PM: Sacred Rhythms 4 PM: The Magician (ritual)	27 <i>Eruption of Krakatoa 1883</i>	28 "I Have a Dream" speech by MLK, 1963	29 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Day of Tooth</i>	30 <i>International Day of the Disappeared</i>	31	1