



EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,

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

DECEMBER 2009

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Longest Night Ball

We're almost ready for the second annual Longest Night Masked Ball! This year's event is a late-night party on Friday, December 18th, 2009 at El Torreon Ballroom (3101 Gillham Plaza in midtown KCMO). The party will run from 9pm – 1am, with music, dancing, art and entertainment, and a seasonal observance at midnight. Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door, and they are currently on sale at <http://longestnight.org>. You can also reserve your place on the guest list by paying Kimberly or Kit in person at ritual on Sundays, or by emailing longestnight@gaiacommunity.org.

This year, we'll have live music from local band 7 Mysteries, which we're very excited about. You can learn more about them at <http://7mysteries.com/>. The theme for this year's event is "To Create is To Live!", and we'll be working with that theme with an artist's market, and collaborative art projects happening at the Ball. There will also be a silent auction to benefit Gaia Community, and formal photography of you in your finery will again be available from local photographer Russ Matthews. You can visit <http://russmattphoto.com> to view some of his work. Food and non-alcoholic drinks will be available at no additional cost, and there will be alcohol available for purchase.

We're still looking for vendors for our artists' market, so if you would like to vend (or you know someone who you think would), please contact us at longestnight@gaiacommunity.org for information.

We're also still looking for volunteers to help make this party happen, so if you would like to participate in that, please contact us as well. Thanks, and we'll see you at the Ball! - *Stewardship Committee*

Becoming Trans Allies

Last month marked the 11th annual observance of Transgender Day of Remembrance, a memorial for transgender people murdered in the past year. In the United States, current statistics show that one in 12 transgender people will lose their lives to violence at the hands of another person. In addition to threats of violence, trans-people face institutional and individual bigotry and hatred in the workplace, in health care, from governmental agencies, and in most every other part of life. For most people living as the sex they were born into, the difficulties associated with transition and life outside "traditional" gender lines are, if not unimaginable, at least unimaginable.

Gaia Community's commitment to being a Welcoming Congregation includes extending our welcome and support to people of any gender. But is that enough? How can we enhance that commitment and take it outside of our circles? How can we become allies to the transgender community? Is there anything we can do to help?

This month, we'd like to open a discussion within the community about how we might support our members who are transgender or genderqueer, and the wider trans community, inside and outside our church services. Please join us at SMUUC on Tuesday, December 8th, at 7pm to join the discussion. This event will take the place of the usual Social Justice committee meeting.

- *Social Justice and Welcoming Congregations Committees*

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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.

Gaia About Town

Voices of Gaia is on hiatus.

Ritual Teams Meeting (12/7, 6:45 PM, at SMUUCH): All active ritualists must attend at least one meeting a quarter; please contact Devin or Kit, the joint Ritual Teams Coordinators, at rtc@gaiacommunity.org or in person if you have questions or wish to provide feedback about how a Sunday service went. As always, any member of the congregation may help with any particular ritual, so if you have an interest, let any ritualist know (they have blue ribbons on their nametags)!

Craft Circle (12/5, 1-5 PM): Craft Circle will be held at David and Kimberly's house again this month, 1306 E. 118th St. in KCMO. Any project you have or craft you'd like to share with the group is welcome; we'll almost certainly be working on projects to benefit and decorate the Longest Night Ball later this month.

Social Justice Discussion Group (12/8, 7 PM, at SMUUCH): In lieu of the monthly Social Justice Committee Meeting, we will have a discussion group on becoming a transgender ally. See the first page for details. If you have questions about this event, or about anything else the committee does, you can e-mail us at sj@gaiacommunity.org.

Storytelling Group (12/11, 7 PM, at James'): The fledgling Storytelling Group will meet this month at James' house. For more information about the meeting, or if you're interested in what they'll be practicing and working on, get in touch with Andrew (in person or at andrew@gaiacommunity.org).

Ritual for Business (12/12, 9:30 AM, at SMUUCH): 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 formal 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 (see page 5) should be sent to a board member, as shown to the right.

Games Night (12/18, 7 PM, at SMUUCH): 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 the Barn Chapel or downstairs in the Jefferson room, depending on weather and/or what games are available.

KidSpace Coordinating Committee (12/20, 1 PM, at Dunn Brothers): The KidSpace committee is for everyone; you do not have to be a parent to attend. Get in touch with Rosemary (the Committee Chair) or Linda (the KidSpace Coordinator) at kidspace@gaiacommunity.org or in person to find out more about what is on the agenda; this committee meets on the third Sunday of each month, at the Dunn Brothers Coffee Shop near Half-Price Books on Metcalf.

Friday Night Supper Club will not meet in December of 2009 because of the way the winter holidays happen on the calendar. See you in January, when we'll probably take a special trip out to Lawrence!

Board of Trustees 09-10

President — Erin Scrogum
president@gaiacommunity.org

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Vice-President — Amanda Pence
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Greta Erhardt

816-822-2070 or

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... or contact them all at

board@gaiacommunity.org!

Caring Connections Corner

Birthdays for this month include Caroline on the 10th, Judi McCannon on the 12th, and Kira on the 17th!

Please let the Caring Committee know of any others that we're missing, and congratulations and blessings to all those folks for another trip around the sun.

The Caring Committee is chaired by Jacki Kelley; please let her know of concerns or blessings you wish to share with the community, or if you have ideas for how to make this committee a more vibrant part of our community. Leave a message with her at caring@gaiacommunity.org if you have information for the committee.



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

Voices of Gaia is on hiatus until winter; Sacred Rhythms meets at 3:30 PM

Sunday, December 6th Ritual — The Dark Side of the Elements

Ritualists: Kit, Jamie, Kimberly, and Lizzy

Many Pagans embrace the idea of the Four Elements as metaphor for the components of our lives and personalities: Air brings fresh ideas, Fire brings transformation and passions, Water heals, cleanses, and represents the depth of emotion, and Earth nourishes and calms, and so on. The Elemental forces can be beneficial, but, when unbalanced, can also be detrimental or even dangerous. An overabundance of Air brings flightiness; Fire out of control burns in rage; too much Water brings drowning sorrow; an excess of Earth makes movement or change impossible. In this ritual, we will work with the Elements within us, seeking to balance their influences and bring our whole selves into a state of blessing. There will be several opportunities for drumming in this ritual, so feel free to bring your rhythm instruments. Also, as much of the work will be meditative in nature, this ritual is likely to be unsuited for children.

Sunday, December 13th Workshop — Herb Magic

Facilitators: Kelley and Aubry

Are you interested in herbs for medicinal and magickal uses? How about an herbal craft to share with your loved ones over the Yule holidays? Have you used herbs in your teas, baths, and crafts? Come celebrate the uses and joys of herbs in discussion and craft-making! Join Aubrey Gabbard and Kelley Montford in a class on Sunday, 12/13. We hope you can join us for a good thyme!

Currently Active Ritualists

Amanda Pence	Barbara
Cheryl Stice	David Reynolds
Devin S.	Eric Simpson
Erin Scrogum	Jacki Kelley
Jamie Peters	Jeff Park
Kelley Montford	Kimberly
Kit Peters	Kitty Degler
Linda Boyce	Lizzy Ticer

Please see Devin or Kit, the Ritual Teams Coordinators, if you are a former ritualist who would like to rejoin teams, or a newly trained ritualist looking to join for the first time.

Sunday, December 20th High Holiday — Twelve Blessings of Yule *(Ritual w/potluck)*

Ritualists: Cheryl, Jeff, Kitty, and Eric

*"Cold and Darkness cover the land, early falls the night,
Come we now with flame in hand, calling back the light."*

Come explore the essence of the season as we search for the Twelve Blessings of Yule. This will be an intergenerational ritual, for those 5 and up.

As always with our high holidays, there will be a potluck meal following the ritual. Please bring a food, drink, or dessert item sufficient to feed 8 hungry people, and remember to label your ingredients! For the Earth's sake, we also ask that you not bring disposable dishes if at all possible.

Sunday, December 27th Forum — Goal Setting

Facilitators: Linda

Over 80% of those who set "Resolutions" for the coming year break them before the end of January, according to a Harvard Business School survey. This workshop/forum is going to stir you to consider and commit yourself to what you want for yourself, and your community, in 2010, and beyond.

The first part of the time will be spent in community forum sharing why and how we set goals, and some techniques that may be useful. The second part of the time, a workshop format, will be spent in actual consideration and goal formation. Please bring a journal or notebook that you would like to use for planning your work. Also, if you have a particular item that you like to use for focus (small candle, crystal, small statue, etc...) please bring it also as we will be doing some individual work. Teens encouraged. Younger students will have more fun downstairs in Kidspace.

— *Ritual Teams*

A Look Ahead...

- Jan. 3rd — Ritual: Oh, The Places You'll Go...
- Jan. 10th — Ritual: Children's Dedication
- Jan. 17th — Ritual: Thoth's Festival
- Jan. 24th — Forum: How Shall We Honor the Divine?
- Jan. 31st — High Holiday: Imbolc *(w/potluck after)*

Notes from KidSpace

Thank you to all the parents, teachers, and supporters of KidSpace who donated snack items in the last couple of months. Special thanks to Erin and Devin for the healthy snacks for the kids and to Kelley for organizing the KidSpace cart so our teachers can grab their materials quickly. We continue to ask our students be stewarded regarding their health and we continue to take measures to keep our students healthy during the flu season. We are, at this time, seeking further donations; we've had a good group of students coming weekly. We have maybe 2 weeks of juice boxes and fruit snacks left.

We are changing our class format a little. Between 5:30 and 5:45 pm (or so), as the classes finish their crafts and lessons, we will gather all the classes together in one room to share some time together and, currently, practice the material for Jan. 10. Please do not be alarmed if you come down and your student is not in their regular classroom. We are just down the hall doing our closing and socializing. This change is in direct response to concerns that were brought to the KidSpace Committee. We appreciate the feedback. The only way we can provide our students with the best is by knowing how we are doing. The KidSpace Committee meets every 3rd Sunday at 1pm at Dunn's Brothers' Coffee on Metcalf. All interested in our programming are welcome and encouraged to attend. Jan. 17th will be the KidSpace Committee meeting at Dunn's Coffee. All are welcome.

Future Plans:

- ◆ Jan. 3rd will be an intergenerational ritual: *The Places You'll Go*, based on Dr. Seuss. Nursery will be provided for infants. Other students will be with their adults upstairs.
- ◆ Jan. 10th we will be doing an intergenerational ritual, *The Rainbow Connection, a celebration of Families and Community*. * In preparation for this we are working with the students on 2 pieces of music and the Gaia closing. If you have time, please encourage the students to work on these items. If you are unsure of how these go, please feel free to ask Linda, Kate, Kelley, or Kitty. If you know your students will/will not be at Gaia please let Linda know so we can plan accordingly.

Elemental chant (the adults have used this in ritual before):

/Earth my body, Water my blood, Air my breath, and Fire my spirit/

The Color Song (old teaching song)

/Red and yellow and pink and green / Purple and orange and blue

I can sing a rainbow, sing a rainbow, sing a rainbow too.

I can sing a rainbow, sing a rainbow, sing a rainbow too.

/*The Gaia Standard Closing* (the one we use most Sundays):

/By the Earth that is her body and the grove that is his home

By the air that is her breath and the music of his song

By the fire of her bright spirit and the heat of his passion

By the waters of her living womb & the dew that is his tears,

This circle is open but unbroken

May the peace of Goddess go in our hearts

And the dance of the Gods enliven our days

And may we care for the Earth and each other

Because our lives depend on it.

Merry meet, Merry part and Merry Meet again

- ◆ Plans for the coming year include finishing our tour of world religions and starting to examine closer the more common pantheons that our pagan children may come in contact with, especially those represented at Gaia. **If you would be interested in teaching any particular lesson(s), please let Linda know.**
- ◆ Field trips in 2009 included Broadway Baptist-Images of Christ and Gasper Family Farm. We are trying to get some more field trips and maybe a camping trip this coming spring/summer. Again, if you are interested, please let Linda know.
- ◆ SMUUCH has spoken to Kelley regarding sharing the OWLS program. Details will be passed on as they appear.
- ◆ The students will continue about once a month to learn about Social Justice, what it is and how they can affect it.
- ◆ A personal thank you from the KidSpace Coordinator to all those who taught and helped with KidSpace during my contract at KCRF. Also thanks to those who volunteered out there. It is because of you that I was able to accept the contract out there and know our students were continuing to have a quality education even though I was not there physically. I have been offered a contract as Children's Realm Coordinator for the 2010 season. I am planning to accept the contract. I know I can look to the KidSpace Committee and the Community at large to continue its support of the programming for the younger members of Gaia.
- ◆ A closing note: if the upstairs ritual is done early, please be patient with us if we need a little time to finish up. The students regularly cast a circle and call upon "Spirit." They are learning to do this and likewise to close the circle, like we do in our adult rituals. They are also learning simple magic through creating with crafts. Thank you so much for your patience and allowing the students to finish their work.

Again, thanks for all you do. Linda Lee Boyce

Trees schedule:

Coyote continues to teach our teens. This schedule is a living entity and is subject to change.

- ◆ Nov.29th, 2009: Hinduism 1B: History of the Aryan people and how they impacted what would become the Indian people, their language, and their culture.
- ◆ Dec. 6th, 2009: Hinduism 2A: Discussions of the stories of the Indian people and their implications.
- ◆ Dec.13th, 2009:Hinduism 2B: Conclusion of the stories and lore
- ◆ Dec.20th, 2009:Yule. If not intergenerational-discussion of Hinduism and Finalizing of Planning of Jan. 10 ritual
- ◆ Dec. 27th, 2009: Goal Setting-Trees upstairs for workshop/forum
- ◆ Jan. 3rd, 2010: Oh The Places You'll Go -- intergenerational ritual
- ◆ **Jan. 10th, 2010: Children's Ritual--The Rainbow Connection**, a celebration of Families and Community-- Intergenerational -- Trees in Ritual. (please let Linda know if your student will/will not be there)
- ◆ Jan.17th, 2010: Hinduism 3A: Social Customs
- ◆ Jan.24th, 2010: Hinduism 3B: Conclusion of Social Customs

Ritual for Business Minutes for November 14th, 2009

*In attendance: Rosemary, David, Gerri Lynn, Kit,
Jamie, Devin, Erin, Barbara, Via, John, Jack,
Barbara, Cindy*

I. **Approval of Agenda** – Approved.

II. **Roles** - Via as Non Sequitur, David as Red Tape,
Barbara as Devil's Advocate, Jack as Vibes Watcher

III. **Minutes** – Yay, approved!

IV. **Treasurer's Report** - 1633.73 in general, paid out
2,000+; rent and deposit on Longest Night Ball
space. 18 out of 44 people are eligible for voting
right now. Some members still need to fill out cards,
though are making pledge payments.

V. **Committee Reports**

A. **KidSpace** - We tried to have a meeting last
month, only two people were there, so no meeting.
Meeting will be tomorrow. Attendance is up, and
Linda is working on new field trips.

B. **Social Justice** – Met this week. Continuing to
work on LGBT issues through Yule. Transgender
Day of Remembrance is next Friday at 6:30 p.m.
LGBT stuff, food donations, and environmental are
current major subjects of focus.

C. **Communications** – EH went out on the 6th.
Website is having calendar problems; DST has
eaten its brain. Meetup.com profile has been
stopped. Public events are being put up on
Facebook (which is free!).

D. **Membership** – Jamie has put out a message to
committees for 2010 New Member class schedule.
They are broken into three independent classes that
will be taught on a rotating basis. Gotta collect 'em
all! Greeter's table is having a problem with one
person who has not shown up. Could use a few
more people.

1. **Library** – It exists. Very low volume of use
right now.

E. **Site** – Still planning a post-T-Day meeting.

F. **Welcoming** – Transgender Day of Remembrance.
Had 40 signatures for GLBT petition, including a
city councilwoman. Standing on the Side of Love

got 360,000-ish signatures total. Next week,
UMKC is doing a week-long series of transgender
topics.

G. **Ritual Teams** – Decided that, in general, any
member of the community can come to RT
meetings. When talking about confidential stuff,
they will close the meeting when they come to that
topic. Ritual schedule for the first half of 2010 has
been finalized.

H. **Caring** – We had nobody present from the
committee, so there was much hugging to
demonstrate that Caring still cares.

I. **Nominating Committee** – “Keeping our eyes
open for opportunities for people other than us to
serve.”

J. **Stewardship** – Been busy-ish. In the process of
putting together LNB theme, and website is up and
running. Site is at 31st and Gillham. Live band,
looking into finding entertainers. Looking for
vendors, looking into cash bar, looking into silent
auction. Photography confirmed. Collaborative
art. Costume contest.

VI. **Old Business** – none of note.

VII. **New Business**

A. **Craft Circle** – proposed a covenant. COW
consented.

B. **Greeter's Table Box** – Proposal to put a
suggestion box on Greeter's Table. Suggestions
can be anonymous; will go to Ombudsman, who
will sort through and send suggestions to
appropriate committees. Consensus, woot!

C. **Movie Night Stuff** – Erin cannot make it to the
Tuesday, Nov 17th showing of Renewal. She is
asking for someone else to fill in. Via declared that
she could do it, and there was much rejoicing.

D. **Request – RT Tuesday** – RT wants 3rd Tuesday
in January for discussion about professional
development. They can has!

– *Rosemary, Secretary*

Agenda for the December 12th Ritual for Business:

- Regular business (committee reports, etc.)



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Address Correction Requested

CARING FOR
 THE EARTH AND
 EACH OTHER
 BECAUSE OUR
 LIVES DEPEND
 ON IT.

**Contact Earth
 Healer**

Send letters, articles, poetry or prose, borrowed wisdom, comments and suggestions to: earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org or by phone (816-508-9086) no later than the 24th 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*

DECEMBER 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 3:30-4PM: Sacred Rhythms 4-7 PM: Workshop: Winterization	30	1 World AIDS Day 7PM: World AIDS Day Service @ All Souls UU Church	2 ○	3 Int'l Day of Disabled Persons	4 Rites of Bona Dea	5 Stalk Like a Ninja Day 1-5PM: Craft Circle @ Kimberly's
6 3:30-4PM: Sacred Rhythms 4-6 PM: Ritual: The Dark Side of the Elements	7 Pearl Harbor Day Bodhi Day 7-9 PM: Ritual Teams Meeting @ SMUUCH	8 ●	9	10 Int'l Animal Rights Day	11 7-9PM: Storytelling Group @ James'	12 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business @ SMUUCH
13 3:30-4PM: Sacred Rhythms 4-7 PM: Workshop: Herb Magic	14 Monkey Day	15 Bill of Rights Day	16 ●	17 Saturnalia begins	18 9PM-1AM: LONGEST NIGHT BALL @ El Torreon	19
20 1 PM: KidSpace Meeting 3:30-4PM: Sacred Rhythms 4-7 PM: High Holiday: 12 Blessings of Yule (potluck afterward)	21 Winter Solstice	22	23 HumanLight	24 ●	25 Christmas	26 Kwanzaa begins
27 3:30-4PM: Sacred Rhythms 4-7 PM: Forum: Goal-Setting	28	29	30	31 ○ New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day	2 1-5PM: Craft Circle @ Kimberly's