



EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,

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

JANUARY 2007

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KidSPACE News

It's been a busy time in KidSPACE... we are still looking at the Wheel of the Year and getting to know the elements better. We'll begin something new around Imbolc, so if anyone would like to share their thoughts about what you would like our kids to learn about, please feel free! Our numbers continue to grow. We usually have about 3 in the WeeSPACE room, 12 in KidSPACE (with the majority of them falling between the ages of 4 and 8), and 4 or 5 in TeenSPACE. As always, we welcome volunteers who would like to help out. Curriculum is planned, but extra hands are always a blessing, especially with the age ranges in the middle class.

We are also still looking for someone regular to fill the position in the WeeSPACE room. If you know someone who is consistent, committed, compassionate, open, active, and works well with mild chaos while maintaining at least a sliver of sanity, please have them contact Anissa at gaiakidspace@yahoo.com. They will have to submit to a background check, so no criminals, please! :)

We're on the lookout for snacks for the kids... non-perishable items like fruit snacks and granola bars are good, and we are especially needing juice boxes. 100% juice if you can!

— *Anissa*

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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.

NomCom Wants You!

Our community thrives on the efforts of all of its volunteers: among them are those who help greet new people on Sundays, lead and assist in KidSPACE, prepare and perform rituals, file our paperwork and deposit our offerings in the bank so we can continue to afford our space. Not to mention those who make said offerings, of course!

But a particular level of service is effected by those individuals who volunteer to head our committees and serve on our Board of Trustees each year. A community of the size and complexity of ours, that offers as many different programs and services as ours does despite its relatively small size, relies on effective leadership. But it's a tough job; there are two theories on why the Board Member ribbon on our name tags is purple; it's either the color of royalty or martyrdom! And our bylaws state that no one may serve on the Board more than four consecutive years without at least one year off. Some of our current trustees are at or near that limit, and others have expressed a need to step back and concentrate on other priorities in the near future. This is where the Nominating Committee (or NomCom) comes in.

Don't be surprised if someone from NomCom contacts you in the next few months, ahead of our April election, to ask if you'd be interested in helping serve on our Board of Trustees, on the next NomCom (it's an elected position as well, and cannot be held twice in a row), or as a Delegate to the 2007 UUA General Assembly. You can, of course, forestall this inevitable call by contacting us first and offering to help out, but don't feel constrained to say "yes" just because we ask you. It's just a measure of our confidence in your ability to serve the community.

— *David Reynolds for the rest of the Nominating Committee (Andrew Turner & Greta Erhardt)*

Gaia About Town

Ritual Teams Meeting (1/3, 6:45 PM): At E3's house. Part-time slots to help with Sunday rituals are now available to formerly active ritualists, if you are interested please contact Devin in person or at rtc@gaiacommunity.org! February's meeting will be at Debbie's new house.

Tuesday Night Classes: Adult Education classes for January will start a new cycle (see page 4): The class on the 16th will be about Ásatrú, and then there will another Pagan Parenting session on the 30th. All classes start at 7 PM; childcare is available *on request* by contacting Kris Ennis in person or at adulted@gaiacommunity.org by no later than the Sunday before each class.

Ritual for Business (1/12, 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.

If you don't feel comfortable bringing it up in public, our Vice-President, Liz Ticer, serves as the community's Ombudswoman for hearing discrete matters; her contact information is on page 5.

Social Justice Committee Meeting (1/15, 7 PM): Andrew is reconstituting the Social Justice committee in response to some concerns and ideas raised among the community recently. Therefore, if you're interested in helping out with this effort, take advantage of the Martin Luther King holiday and join him and others at the Turner house (6012 Robinson St., Shawnee Mission, KS) this evening for a discussion of how to go forward.

Games Night (1/19, 7 PM): 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 may be inviting some new board game players from the Kansas City area starting this month, so bring your new games from Yule!

KidSpace Committee Meeting (1/21, 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 or catch them on Sundays!

Please see them as well if you are interested in helping out with our youngest kids in WeeSPACE.

Friday Night Supper Club (1/26, 7 PM): There are a couple options proposed for January's supper club, including MAUI Express, Oneill's, Cactus Grill, Chartreuse Caboose, and Garozzo's. Please watch the website, email group, and Sunday announcements, and let Kris Ennis know if you have any preferences!

Caring Connections Corner

Birthday blessings go out to John Carroll on the 4th of January, Roger Baughman on the 7th, Brian Butler on the 11th, Jan Wilner on the 20th and Sam Chapman (Kitty's husband) on the 24th. Let us know if your day got missed!

Our condolences go toward those working through difficult changes in their lives, be it financial, interpersonal, or spiritual. Please know that we as a community are here to help or listen when we can, and that you can and will survive this trial. This too, shall pass.

If you or another member of Gaia Community are hospitalized or going through a difficult time, please contact the newly reformed Caring Committee by emailing us at caring@gaiacommunity.com, or leaving a message on the Gaia Community voicemail at 816-931-9900, or by contacting one of the Caring 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, Sacred Rhythm Group at 3:30 PM

Sunday, January 7th

Ritual — Getting Past Perfect

Ritualists: Andrew, Kris, Eric, Carey

The perfect birthday, the perfect career, the perfect life... This ritual will be an experiential exploration of the concept of "perfect". Is perfection achievable? Is it a worthy and healthy aspiration? What does it look like from the other side, from beyond "perfect"?

Sunday, January 14th

Class — Welcoming Congregations

Facilitators: Barbara and Jeff

"For centuries, the church has been a leading force against sexual minorities." The Unitarian Universalist Association has developed a systematic program and a certification for congregations to examine their practices and assure that everyone, regardless of gender identity, is equally welcomed and included in congregational life. This class will examine the UUA's certification process and program, and initiate the discussion of how Gaia Community measures up to the UUA's standards in this arena. Unitarian Universalism is one of the very few major denominations in the US that has no official, organizational barriers to a full range of gender expression.

Sunday, January 21st

Ritual — Labyrinth

Ritualists: Barbara, David, Kimberly, Lizzy

Labyrinths have served many purposes throughout history; as a meditative tool, for religious pilgrimage, as decorative structures and as traps to contain and confine. If you think you know the "ins and outs" of our labyrinth at Gaia Community, you may be surprised with what you find at this ritual. Will you join us on the path?

Sunday, January 28th

Forum — Building a Religion (Congregational Paganism)

Facilitators: Kitty and Kimberly

Even after nearly ten years of operation as a congregation, the Gaia Community is still at work pioneering the concept of Congregational Paganism. We are building our religion, building it to suit our needs and to fulfill our dreams. The beginning of our story is written, but it is far from over, and the future is open to us and our unique faith. Please join us for a discussion of where we are, and where we go from here.

Sunday, February 4th

Sabbat — Imbolc (with potluck afterward)

Ritualists: Yale, Cynthia, Kitty, Eric

Imbolc's dawning fire is a beacon of warmth, a signal of creativity, and an encouragement for the season to come. Join us for a ritual dedicated to the first hints of spring.

As with all our Sabbat celebrations, this ritual will be followed by a potluck meal. Please bring a dish, dessert, or drink to share, and your own dishes & silverware if possible. Remember to care for the earth by bringing reusable containers and dishes, and to care for others by labeling your ingredients for those with allergies or food sensitivities.

A Look Ahead to Next Month...

- Feb. 4th – Sabbat: Imbolc
- Feb. 11th – Workshop: De-Armoring Your Heart
- Feb. 18th – Class/Workshop: Buddhist Meditation
- Feb. 25th – Ritual: Shadow & Light, the Quest
(New Member Sunday)

Current Ritualists

Devin Scrogum	Kimberly
Barbara	Lizzy Ticer
Eric Simpson	Cynthia Mathis
Kitty Degler	Carey Oxler
Yale Giffin	David Reynolds
Andrew Turner	Nicole Turner
Kris Ennis	Debbie Dozier

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

Adult Education in 2007

Our Tuesday Night Classes will offer some new things in the new year; if you have any interest in helping teach any of these topics, please let Kris Ennis know at adulted@gaiacomunity.org or 816-352-5787 – otherwise just come and learn and participate! All classes and topics are subject to change, of course.

January

- 16th: Ásatrú, the revival of Norse paganism
(*part of the new Traditions series*)
- 30th: Pagan Parenting

February

- 13th: Kemetic paganism, from Egypt
- 27th: Mythology Story Hour

March

- 13th: Chaos Magic
- 27th: Kitchen Witchery (herbology)

April

- 10th: Stegheria, a form of Italian witchcraft
- 24th: Pagan Parenting

May

- 15th: Vodou, the African Diaspora religion
- 29th: Mythology Story Hour
(*specifically focused on the possible deity candidates for the God Auction*)

June

- 12th: Santería, the Yoruba-based practice
- 26th: Mythology Story Hour
(*specifically focused on the four finalist candidates for the God Auction in July*)

Remember that childcare is available for these classes but *only* on request due to the infrequent need. Contact Kris by no later than the Sunday before the class to inform her that you would like to have someone there who can watch over smaller children who might not be able to sit through class. All ages are of course welcome in class if they think it will be interesting!

— *Kris Ennis*

July

- 10th: Huna, the Hawaiian mystical tradition
- 24th: Kitchen Witchery (candle magic)

August

- 14th: Shinto, the ancestral Japanese faith
- 28th: Pagan Parenting

September

- 11th: Slavic paganism
- 25th: Kitchen Witchery (cooking with astrology)

October

- 16th: Aztec belief system
- 30th: Pagan Parenting

November

- 13th: Hinduism
- 27th: Mythology Story Hour

December

- 11th: Buddhism/Daoism
- 18th: Kitchen Witchery (incense, oil, and brews)



Mooings from the CoW^{Committee of the Whole}

Summary of December's Ritual for Business (RfB)

- I. **Meeting called to order at 9:46.** Attending: Jennifer, Jeff, Devin, John, Barbara, Nicole, Terry, Lizzy, Carey, Kimberly, David.
Devotions inserted here, with special mention of volunteers who show up on Saturday mornings.
- II. **Agenda**—agreed
- III. **Minutes**—agreed, with amendments
- IV. **Treasurer's Report** —Pledges are up-to-date, save for the current week. Current income is slightly above current expenses, without taking Winter Bazaar into account. End-of-the-month bills also are not factored in yet because the checks have not been written. John will pay a portion of PS and UUA dues soon.
- V. **Standing Committees**—
 - A. **Ritual Teams**—RT created a task force to work out how to assign volunteer credits for God Auction next year. Devin is the new Ritual Teams Coordinator.
 - B. **Winter Bazaar**—We made as much profit as we normally do. WB made \$1,122, with two merchants still owing. The only expenses were table rentals, so actual profit might be higher than usual. The committee will meet in January to plan. We will need a new coordinator, and we need to explore the possibility of a different date to prevent conflicts with other events.
 - C. **KidSpace**—KS discussed a rumor going around that KS kids get a “free” cookie each Sunday. We had never heard of such a thing, and we want people to know it is a fundraiser and that sellers need to check with parents before randomly giving sweets to children. We also have plans to devise and conduct employee reviews.
Proposal: The CoW will empower KS to decide about a Yule bonus for the KS director not to exceed the budgeted funds. Agreed.
 - D. **Membership**—Membership offers its thanks to the Stewardship Committee for its help and support, especially for staffing the greeters table and offering hospitality to the community.
 - E. **Caring**—The committee is up and running. They need an updated directory to send cards for anniversary of membership. They want to consider hospital visits, when appropriate, for members. Folks can call the regular Gaia number, and John can forward the messages to Cynthia.

VI. Unfinished Business—

- A. **Broken Chair**—Barbara has offered for Gaia to pay for the chair. SMUUC has not responded.
- B. **Website Upgrade**—Carey reports that we do not need to upgrade the account, so there will be no cost. We still need to make the transfer to a new server. Whenever they do a server migration, Carey can upgrade the site.

VII. New Business (n.b.: Needs to include big-ticket items for future RfBs for community info of agenda)

- A. **Nominating John Blevins**—Seeking nomination for UUA trustee for the PS District. We need to send a formal letter of nomination from Gaia. John is very active in the UUA, serving and chairing several important committees. Several Gaia members know and respect John, who was a long-time Gaia supporter from All Souls. The board feels that John represents us well and that as long he is the trustee, Gaia is more than a name to the UUA.
Proposal: Gaia Community will nominate John Blevins for UUA trustee for the PS District.
Agreed, Jeff will sign the paperwork and mail it in.
- B. **UUA Annual Report**—This year's report is online. We need the congregation number and the password. We need to certify our membership to the UUA. John says we will certify 40 current, full, active members. The deadline is January 31. Jeff will certify members and secure the information and passwords.

VIII. The meeting adjourned 10:55.

— *Jennifer, Secretary*

Gaia Community Board of Trustees 2006-2007

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| President — Jeff Park
president@gaiacommunity.org
or 816-361-0465 | Members at Large —
Carey Oxler
gaia-kat@kc.rr.com
or 816-941-7626 |
| Vice-President — Liz Ticer
vicepresident@gaiacommunity.org
or 913-636-4924 | Yale Giffin
niveustigris@hotmail.com
or 816-797-8032 |
| Treasurer — John Carroll
treasurer@gaiacommunity.org
or 816-220-1804 | Devin Scrogum
dscrogum@gmail.com
or 913-708-5667 |
| Secretary — Jennifer Gadd
secretary@gaiacommunity.org
or 913-299-4587 | ... or contact them all at
board@gaiacommunity.org ! |



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 Kansas City, MO 64171-8303
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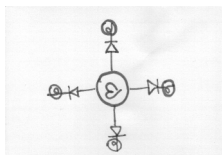
CARING FOR
 THE EARTH AND
 EACH OTHER
 BECAUSE OUR
 LIVES DEPEND
 ON IT.

Contact Earth Healer

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

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– *David, Editor*



JANUARY 2007						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Ritual:New Year's Eve	1	2	3 6:45 PM: Ritual Teams Meeting	4	5	6
7 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Ritual: Getting Past Perfect	8	9	10	11	12	13 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business
14 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Class: Welcoming Congregations	15 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i> 7 PM: Social Justice Committee	16 7 PM: Tues. Night Class on Ásatrú	17	18	19 7 PM: Games Night	20
21 2:00-3:00: KidSpace Meeting 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Ritual: Labyrinth	22	23	24	25	26 7 PM: Friday Night Supper Club @ TBD	27
28 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Forum: Congregational Paganism	29	30 7 PM: Tues. Night Class on Pagan Parenting	31	1	2 <i>Groundhog Day</i>	3