



EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,

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

New Gaia Website in Place!

Finally, the revised Gaia Community website is in place and activated for all the world to see... well, mostly.

If you've been to <http://gaiacommunity.org> recently, you've probably noticed a dramatically different look and feel to our community's website. The old design dated back to the turn of the century (no, the 21st Century) and the new one (powered by the Drupal Content Management System) has already garnered a lot of praise from visitors and members alike.

Some new features you might find of interest:

- ◆ a calendar-style events page;
- ◆ a customizable navigation menu;
- ◆ a search bar for when the menu lets you down;
- ◆ comment and contact forms;
- ◆ PayPal integration for paying your pledge;
- ◆ but the big one we're excited about is a website login. Anyone can register for use of the website, but Gaia Community Members who do so will find that they have the ability to update committee, event, and ritual information themselves as needed! Different levels of access are set for your account depending on what volunteer roles you have within the community.

Not everything is done, though. We wanted to get the new site out and running before 2009 started (after promising it for some two or three years!), so it still may look a little plain and have some rough edges. You'll notice a continual increase in the amount of information, graphics and photographs from the community, and other add-on features in the coming weeks and months. Eventually, there will be an entire section of the website where community members can pay or check on their pledge, update or view the directory, and view community records.

Your assistance in spotting any empty pages, broken links, or other problems you encounter with the new website is greatly appreciated! Just use the contact form for feedback, or send us an email to communications@gaiacommunity.org.

- *Communications Committee*

Excellence in Ritual 2009

Interested in joining the Ritual Teams? Gaia's public ritual training course, Excellence in Ritual, is starting the week of January 19th, 2009. Students in this course will learn:

- The philosophical underpinnings of Gaia Community ritual;
- How to adapt ritual techniques from coven to congregation;
- Facilitation skills, including vocal techniques, chant-teaching, common ritual dances, and storytelling;
- How to ritual accessible to participants of differing systems of belief;
- Safety and liability considerations for public ritual;
- Tricks for handling Gaia's non-ritual services, including classes, forums, and Sharing Our Spirits Sundays;
- ...and more!

The class meets once a week for eight weeks, culminating in a ritual performed by and for the class, with the assistance of the instructors. Students then participate in an internship, in which they will assist current ritual team members in planning and facilitating several Sunday rituals. At the end of the internship, Excellence in Ritual students will design and present their own ritual on April 26th for the congregation.

Fees for this participatory training are \$35 for members, \$50 for non-members. Contact Kimberly, the Ritual Teams Coordinator, at rtc@gaiacommunity.org or 816-914-3227 for more information.

- *Ritual Teams*

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.

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Gaia About Town

Voices of Gaia (every week before ritual, at SMUUCH): Voices of Gaia is Gaia Community's choir. We sing pagan chants and songs, usually with harmony parts, for rituals and other events. We meet Sundays from 2-3:30 p.m. downstairs at SMUUCH. Since the piano has been moved to the newly remodeled High School/Teen room, we'll be moving rehearsals to there. We are once again welcoming singers of all voice parts, though the majority of our core group is currently female. Our primary requirement is that you can match pitch, though some familiarity with reading music is useful. If you have questions, please contact Kitty Degler at voices@gaiacommunity.org or in person.

Craft Circle (1/3, 1-5 PM, at Jamie & Kit's house, 3228 Campbell): Craft Circle will be relocated to midtown, since David and Kimberly will be out of town. Any project you have or craft you'd like to share with the group is welcome; contact Kit or Jamie for directions.

Ritual Teams Meeting (1/7, 6:45 PM, at SMUUCH): Part-time slots to help with Sunday rituals are now available to formerly active ritualists; if you are interested, please contact Kimberly, the Ritual Teams Coordinator, in person or at rte@gaiacommunity.org. As always, any member of the congregation may help with any particular ritual, so if you have an interest let a ritualist know!

Ritual for Business (1/10, 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 should be sent to a board member, as shown to the right.

Social Justice Committee Meeting (1/13, 7 PM, at Andrew's): This meeting will be at Andrew's apartment: 11132 W. 76th Terr. #34 in Overland Park; you can also e-mail him at sj@gaiacommunity.org or find him in person. The committee will be working on the ongoing social justice project with Salvation Army.

Stewardship Committee: Stewardship will probably resume once-monthly meetings in January, following the successful conclusion of the Longest Night Ball, but details are not worked out yet. Get in touch with Kimberly or Via in person or by email at stewardship@gaiacommunity.org if you'd like to be a part of this group as they plan events for 2009!

Games Night (1/16, 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 (1/18, 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 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 (1/23, 7 PM): January's supper club will be at Ghengis Khan Mongolian Grill in Westport, 3906 Bell St. in Westport. Mongolian grills allow you to choose your own ingredients which they then cook for you, so vegetarian and non-spicy options are easy to come by. Please let Jamie or Kit know if you are coming this month, as the place is relatively small. Parking is best behind 39th & State Line, in a lot around the corner.

Board of Trustees 08-09

President — Lizzy Ticer
president@gaiacommunity.org
 or 913-636-4924
Vice-President — Linda Boyce
vicepresident@gaiacommunity.org
 or 816-419-9447
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 816-822-2070 or
greta@gaiacommunity.org
 ... or contact them all at
board@gaiacommunity.org!

Caring Connections Corner

Birthdays for this month include: John Carroll on the 4th, Roger Baughman on the 7th, Brian Butler on the 11th, Jan Wilner on the 20th, Sam Chapman on the 24th, and Michelle Solvej on the 30th. 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.

In addition, our thoughts go to all of those who are moving, changing jobs, taking long trips, or experiencing difficulties in health or well-being. As the weather turns cold finally, we hope that everyone is staying healthy, warm, and content with their life in general.

The Caring Committee is now 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 on our answering machine at 816-931-9900 or by e-mail at caring@gaiacommunity.org.



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

Voices of Gaia meets at 2:00 PM, Sacred Rhythms at 3:30 PM

Sunday, Jan. 4th

Ritual — The Swords *(Tarot arc)*

Ritualists: Jacki, Eric, and Jeff

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! You are invited to sit in the presence of the Royal House of Swords. Their Highnesses, of the House of Swords from the Realm of Tarot, will be holding court on the first Sunday of the new year. The King and Queen of Swords request your counsel and conversation on the goings and comings of the noble court.

This ritual is the first in a four-part series that will examine the suits of the minor arcana. Come explore how the tarot may provide insight and direction in your daily life.

Sunday, Jan. 11th

Workshop — Ritual Consciousness and Altered States

Facilitators: Kimberly and Erin

In many traditions, the ritual space is a place and time outside of the boundaries of everyday life. In this space, magic can happen, transformations can be made, and the gods speak clearly to those who listen. Practitioners of ritual arts create this space to their own design through force of will and tricks of mind and body that subtly alter their realities. This workshop will explore the process of coming to a state of "ritual consciousness", ways to achieve gnosis or enter non-ordinary reality in a ritual setting, and techniques for grounding and returning to the everyday world.

A Look Ahead to Next Month...

Feb. 1st - Sabbat: Imbolc (w/Wild Hare Grove)

Feb. 8th - Ritual: The Cups (Tarot arc)

Feb. 15th - Ritual: Thor (Patron Rite)

Feb. 22nd - Workshop: Kirtan

Sunday, Jan. 18st

Ritual — Americana

Ritualists: Devin, Barbara, and Kitty

This Sunday we will be exploring the myths that make up the collective past of the United States, and how they relate to us personally and as a community. Be prepared for the possibility for deep work if you haven't really thought about this before and for an interesting challenge if you have.

This is the first of a three part arc exploring America's past, present and future.

Sunday, Jan. 25th

Forum - Everyday Divinity

Facilitators: Linda and David

How do you communicate with your gods, spirits, and powers on a daily/regular basis? We'd like to have a discussion on this topic to help kick off the new year. Whether you have a daily practice, questions about how others do it, or have tried and failed to set up a routine daily form of home worship, your opinions and questions are welcome. Remember to be respectful of others, however.

- Ritual Teams

Currently Active Ritualists

Barbara	David Reynolds
Devin Scrogum	Eric Simpson
Erin Truitt	Jacki Kelley
Jeff Park	Kimberly
Kit Peters	Kitty Degler
Linda Boyce	

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

KidSpace Code of Conduct

With the new year, it's worth revisiting the Code of Conduct we adopted some years ago. It helps provide an expectation for all children attending Gaia Community events that they can all understand, and encompasses behavior most adults will follow as well. All adults are empowered to help ensure that the rules are being followed (in a pleasant way of course), or redirect them to a parent or guardian. Of course, if an adult is telling them to do something they think is bad or wrong or dangerous, that's a different story. We hope that these expectations for both our kids and our adults will help everyone be safe and get along.

Respect Others – listen to each other, no hurtful teasing, name calling, interrupting.

Leave others' stuff alone, keep your hands to yourself,
no pushing, hitting, or throwing things at people, etc.

Walk – don't run while in the building!

Feet on the Ground – no climbing on things inside the church;
outdoors, the playground equipment is okay, the flowerbeds are not!

Respect Barriers – when the white chains are up across the staircases, don't go up or down past them!

The same thing applies if you see **CAUTION** tape up inside or outside the building.

– *KidSpace Committee*

**Happy
New Year!**

Ritual for Business Minutes

for December 13th, 2008

Started at 9:44 AM

In attendance: David, Via, Linda, Kimberly, Jamie, Lizzy

- I. **Approval of Agenda** – approved
- II. **Minutes** – approved
- III. **Committee Reports**
 1. **NomCom** – No attendees from the committee were present to give a report.
 2. **Ritual Teams** – Linda now has Kitty and Cheryl to help with End-of-year Ritual on Dec. 28th.
 3. **KidSpace** – Field trip went off very well; Barbara Criswell even did a short singing bowl ritual for them. They have started the New Testament unit but it will continue into the new year. They are planning another field trip in January to see Broadway Church's Jesus Portraits. They are also hoping to get a field trip to Gasper Farms in the spring, to observe sustainable farming.
 4. **Membership** – No one in attendance from the committee.
 5. **Library** – Debbie Dozier donated a lot of books; no one is making much use of it at present (donating or borrowing). Lizzy would like to borrow the CueCat.
 6. **Communications** – Earth Healer went out a few days late, but complete this time. Advertising online and locally for Longest Night has been ongoing and seems to be pretty successful. The new website is going to go live this weekend; there may be some brief outages while the DNS servers update from the old site to the new site. Some things will be added ongoing, like photos and member profiles.
 7. **Site/Lease** – No changes from Site. Lease continues apace; their HVAC was killed by some invading squirrels. Also, they are leaving coffee service, cups, doughnuts, and such out, which is probably contributing to the vermin problem. We are passing that on to them...
 8. **Welcoming** – Our official posters arrived in the mail, and Kimberly got a frame so that will appear on the Greeter's Table tomorrow. We got our information put into CAMP for the holiday services we're doing, including the Longest Night Ball.
 9. **Caring** – No one from the committee present.
 10. **Stewardship** – Advertising for Longest Night is working so well that *someone invited Kimberly* to the event! People

Agenda for January 10th:

- Final Report regarding the Longest Night Ball.
- First report from our new Treasurer.
- Further updates on the New Gaia Website.
- Other business as per usual (committee reports, etc.)

we don't know are registering; only 22 tickets actually sold so far, but another 20-25 people have sworn they are coming. 80 people is the target attendance to make the traditional \$1000 profit, but that doesn't include any sales from the silent auction, drinks & food, vendor donations, etc. A few more volunteers are needed.

Gift wrapping is not happening this year; we have been unable to secure a space that wants us to do it, and it nets us very little money for the effort.

Upcoming Stewardship events are the pledge drive, possible sales space at Heartland Pagan Festival, and the now-concluded Sunday Vendors project.

11. **Social Justice** – Working on the Salvation Army project; they have not set a date yet.

IV. Old Business

1. **Compassionate Memberships** – no one in attendance from Caring to speak on this.
2. **Internet Advertising** – Kate was not present, and we have no new data yet to make a decision on this.
3. **Site Usage Procedure** – Lizzy brought a proposal for an official process to utilize space outside of the usual. *“Established groups: Will contact Gaia President and discuss. President will coordinate with SMUUC Liaison regarding the dates. New and Non-Gaia Member groups: Will bring a proposal to RJB for approval of space use. They shall then contact Gaia President with proposed dates. President will coordinate with SMUUC Liaison regarding the dates.”* Approved with one change from “Gaia President” to “Gaia Liaison” in case those duties are later split out.

V. New Business

1. **UUA Presidential Candidates** – Both candidates contacted Lizzy to ask for Gaia Community's endorsement. We consensated to endorse both candidates, as that enhances the democratic process and no one saw any reason either would be unsuitable. Lizzy will complete the paperwork before December 31st.
2. **Treasurer Candidate** – John Boyce was approached as the candidate for Treasurer. He was not able to be present, but sent a letter. There was a concern about John writing checks to himself or Linda; the group agreed to let the Executive Committee sign checks when John is unavailable/inappropriate.

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 AM.

– David, Secretary



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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

JANUARY 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 2-3:30: <u>Voices of Gaia</u> 3:30-4: <u>Sacred Rhythm</u> 4 PM: Ritual: <u>Milestones</u>	29	30	31 <i>New Year's Eve</i>	1 <i>First Day of 2009</i>	2	3 1-4PM: Craft Circle @ Jamie & Kit's
4 2-3:30: <u>Voices of Gaia</u> 3:30-4: <u>Sacred Rhythm</u> 4 PM: Ritual: <u>The Swords (Tarot series)</u>	5	6	7 7PM: Ritual Teams Meeting @ SMUUCH	8	9	10 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business @ SMUUCH
11 2-3:30: <u>Voices of Gaia</u> 3:30-4: <u>Sacred Rhythm</u> 4 PM: Workshop on Ritual Consciousness and Altered States	12	13 7 PM: Social Justice Committee Meeting @ Andrew's	14	15	16 7 PM: Games Night @ SMUUCH	17
18 1 PM: <u>KidSpace Meeting</u> 2-3:30: <u>Voices of Gaia</u> 3:30-4: <u>Sacred Rhythm</u> 4 PM: Ritual: <u>Americana</u>	19 <i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>	20 <i>Inauguration Day</i>	21	22	23 7 PM: Supper Club @ Genghis Khan, 3906 Bell St., KCMO	24
25 2-3:30: <u>Voices of Gaia</u> 3:30-4: <u>Sacred Rhythm</u> 4 PM: Forum: <u>Everyday Divinity</u>	26	27	28	29	30	31