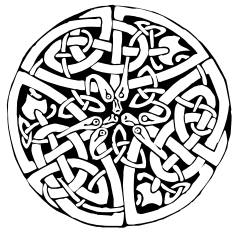
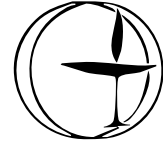




Earth Healer



A Unitarian Universalist Congregation



The Official Newsletter of the friends and members of Gaia Community June 2004

GUILT-EDGED GUILT

by Barbara Griggs

Frequently as I am listening to a fellow Unitarian Universalist speak of his or her personal spiritual odyssey, I hear them speak of guilt. People tell of other paths they have followed which left them scarred with often crippling guilt—over lifestyles, mores, beliefs, practices, and omissions. Evidently I was blessed, for my family brought me up eschewing all forms of organized religion, and I do not carry this particular form of guilt.

However, as I recently remarked to some friends, my life is not guilt-free; and if anything, I find I experience a very particular sort of UU guilt. I feel only a mild twinge of guilt if I, for example, miss a Sunday service, and none at all for lusting after some inappropriate person in my heart, or coveting my neighbor's BMW. (Well, okay, you have to stretch the definition of "neighbor" there, to get to the BMW.) However, the UU guilt is copious. There is always more recycling I could do; or I could ride my bicycle 10 miles a day to work; I still eat chicken, patronize MacDonald's, use plastic, turn the air-conditioning on. I love

fruit from Chile and wear leather shoes sometimes. The list is endless. Everywhere I turn there are liberal causes I believe in but under-support; worthwhile work I am not volunteering for; actions I take that harm the earth. It is not that these opportunities were not there before I discovered I was a UU, or even that the guilt was not there. It's just that my association with UU's means that I can always find someone who is doing that thing I haven't gotten around to doing, or doing without that something I haven't been able to bring myself to do without. UU Guilt.

Does this mean that, after all, Unitarian Universalism offers no escape from the discomfort of feeling guilt? Unfortunately, I fear it does. Is this a bad thing? Does it mean that all religions, even ours, by their very nature must inspire guilt? . . . Maybe.

On the other hand, is it accurate that there is no particular guilt in the purely secular arena? As I observe friends and colleagues in purely secular situations and settings, I immediately notice that guilt is not actually absent. In a given day, virtually everyone I meet expresses what I have dubbed "secular guilt." The most common US citizen's item of secular guilt? No, it's not war, or neglecting the poor, or over-using Earth's resources, or having more of everything than everybody else. No, according to my informal and unscientific survey, the single most common item inspiring secular guilt today in the US is food/exercise/

weight. Barely an hour passes without someone speaking with regret of having committed a food sin. Whether it be carbohydrate grams, fat grams, calories, or points, people are agonizing over consuming them. In the next instant the same person will mention the exercise not taken, laps not run, reps not accomplished. Not far behind this in frequency is guilt about over-spending. My singularly un-scientific observations also note that people do not seem to be made measurably less uncomfortable by this guilt than by religious guilt.

I assert that human beings were constructed with an ability to feel guilt. In fact, for the small segment of people who actually feel none at all, it is usually part of the diagnostic criteria for the severe psychiatric disorder of psychopathy.

If we step back from it a moment: what IS guilt, anyway? The definition that applies to the *emotion* of guilt is consciousness of having done "wrong". Thus the belief that the *problem* of guilt lies in someone, somewhere, giving us the idea that certain conduct is wrong; then, when I do that conduct, I feel guilt. If no one had ever tried to teach me that certain actions were wrong, I would feel no guilt, do whatever I felt like, and everything would be fine . . . or would it? At this moment, you are seeing the catch: what if what *she* feels like doing interferes with *me*? That would not, after all, be fine.

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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

Sunday, June 6

Ritual—Dancing on the Edge

Are you a risk-taker? Or do you worry about having to attempt the uncertain? Either way, this may be a ritual you will enjoy; give it a try and see what comes out of your will

Sunday, June 13 facilitated by Collene

Forum—Patriotism

As the fourth of July holiday draws near, and the global political situation continues to change daily if not hourly, what does patriotism mean to you? Come share your feelings in this facilitated discussion of patriotism and the feelings that can go along with it. All viewpoints are welcome; please be respectful of others. Tues, June 15th

Sunday, June 20

Sabbat—Summer Soltice (Father's Day)

The longest day of the year, and our Father's Day celebration to boot! Join us for a sun-filled ritual celebrating the good in the masculine and the divine, and bring the Wheel of the Year to its high point!

As with all Sabbats, we will be holding a potluck, so bring a dish for 8 hungry people and remember to label the ingredients! In order to care for the earth and each other, we ask that you refrain from using disposable containers or tableware if possible. .

Sunday, June 27 assisted by EIR graduates

Fund Raiser—"God Auction II" -

The God Auction II (over 18 only, please) 'Gaia' Style Ritual The God Auction is something we learned about during the Kemetic Orthodox chapter of last year's "Wheel of Traditions". The Egyptians would have a contest among the temples of the City to see who the patron deity would be for the coming year; whoever's temple gained the most tribute (in money and goods) won the auction and the honor!

While we're not going back to Kemetic Orthodoxy per se, we did think it would be fun to implement the idea of a "god auction" as our summer fundraiser. So please bring either your cash or your non-perishable goods (which will be donated to Harvester's Food Bank) as currency for participating in this year's auction.

Note: Unless you hear otherwise, there is a possibility for adult content again in this year's ritual. Therefore we ask that all participants be 18 years of age or older, and conduct themselves appropriately - within the context of the auction, of course!

Ritual Team Members:


Kitty Degler
Jacki Kelly
Collene Newby
Jeff Park


Caroline Baughman
Nicole Turner
Eric Simpson


Kimberly
Carey Oxler
David Reynolds

EIR Graduates
Liz, Daniel, Brian,
Debbie, Via, Drummel

MAY YOU NEVER HUNGER. MAY YOU NEVER THIRST.

WEAVE AND SPIN

Splinters from the Board

From Debbie Dozier, Secretary

Here's a summary for this month:

We went over the results of the online poll to see what the community's opinion of Games Night is. There seems to be a desire to have it continue if we get the key issue straightened out.

We also talked about possibly changing the night and broadening the theme. Look for a new poll soon both online and in the EH.

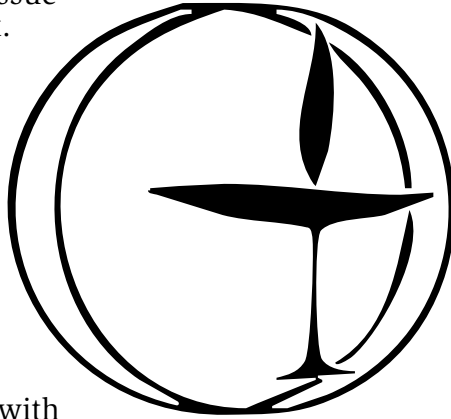
There have been some problems with the pay company we use.

Other alternatives are being investigated.

The bulk of the meeting was a discussion of the proposed budget for next year. There are not many changes for this year's budget. The final budget will be voted on at the next meeting, so contact a board member for details or with any questions you might have.

David is going to get the carpooling map back up on the website. With the recent increases in gas prices, it is hoped that this will help everyone.

The next Ritual for Business is June 12th at 9:30 am. Terry Ross is the contact person.



Debbie Dozier



Gaia Community Board Members

President—Barbara Griggs
bpmg@earthlink.net or
816-587-2350

VP—Terry Ross
teross49@yahoo.com or
816-520-8245

Treasurer—David Reynolds
naebli@kc.rr.com or
816-941-7626

Secretary—Debbie Dozier
ddozier@everestkc.net or
913-894-8131

Members at Large

Carey Oxler
gaia-kat@kc.rr.com or
816-941-7626

Liz Ticer
femainoregon@excite.com or
913-636-4924

Jeff Park
jpark2@kc.rr.com or
816-361-0465

New Member Class

Now Forming

See Barbara or Jeff
or Michael or Terry
at the Greeters Table

Seeking Director of Children's Programming.

Gaia Community of Kansas City is seeking a part-time Director of Children's Programming (DCP) responsible for directing and coordinating a holistic education program for children from nursery through 12th grade. Our current DCP will leave the position in December 2004.

The DCP position averages 15 hours a week. The hours would be divided among Sunday, evening meetings, occasional Saturday activities and hours spent in preparation and administrative activities. The primary requirements are a familiarity with and commitment to Earth-based spirituality and Unitarian Universalism and experience and training working with children. Desirable attributes include a four-year degree, strong listening, communication (both written and oral) and organizational skills, experience working with volunteers and participation in the UU Renaissance Program (or a comparable program). Word processing and basic computer experience is required.

To apply, send your resume (including three references) and a one page personal essay explaining your philosophy of working with children and your vision of an Earth-based UU children's program to DCP Search Committee, Gaia Community, PO Box 45307, Kansas City, MO 64171-8303. Resumes and essays may also be e-mailed to DCPsearch@gaiacommunity.org. Please specify "DCP Search" in the subject line. Application deadline: September 30, 2004. For more information, contact Kidspace chairperson, Linda Boyce at 913-385-7743 (evenings) or 816-419-9447 (days) or e-mail llboyce@mindspring.com.



continued on page 1

Guilt is actually a useful emotion, in that it lets us know that we have not lived up to standards that we ourselves have, if not created, then internalized. If the standards are unrealistic, or useless, or counterproductive, then so is the ensuing guilt. However, once we realize that we cannot be totally free of guilt feelings, we *can* empower ourselves to determine what actions represent our personal standards and teach ourselves to transfer guilt to those areas. There arises, for me, UU guilt. I know what my standards are, I know when I don't meet them, and then I know that the emotion of guilt is one that is there to help me remember to alter my behavior in future. It is in a sense my Higher Self sending a little memo to the part of me that is in action—when working perfectly, the memo gets there *before* the action; but seemingly most of us, much of the time, just get the memo late. This, then, is the actual function of the feeling of guilt: notify us when we have acted in ways inconsistent with what we are committed to.

I once heard a wise person distinguish between guilt and a closely related, far more pernicious emotion: shame. Guilt is the emotion of remorse over an action or behavior. It can be useful in helping a person notice that they have not been acting consistent with their commitments. Shame, on the other hand, is remorse for *who you are*. Shame is not useful, because no amount of remorse is going to change who a person is. Shame can lead to deep-seated, long-standing dislike and distrust of oneself. And when some speak of pasts overshadowed with guilt that cannot be forgotten, I name it shame. Shame tries to convince you that there is something *fundamentally wrong* with the person you are—when there isn't. Whoever you are, whatever you have done, at base, you are, well, perfect *exactly the way you are*. I'm not going to argue with you here. Maybe you can point to this or that thing that you have done wrong. Fine. Have some guilt-UU guilt, environmentalist guilt, Druid guilt, Greek guilt. Pick your flavor of guilt, and have it with a grain of salt. We all do now and then. But don't let anyone talk you into being *ashamed of who you are*. To quote another very wise person, you are a child of the universe. Celebrate who you are: a person so perfect, that you can formulate a standard of behavior for yourself, and hold it out there, and give yourself some guilt if you don't reach it

PARTY FOR THE PLANET

For the third year in a row Gaia Community has participated in Party for the Planet. The Kansas City Zoo's Earth Day celebration was a rainy one so we were inside at the end of "The Journey" entrance to the zoo. The recorded refrain "So, as you see the animals on you safari today make sure to stop and say you'll help or say goodbye . . . forever." It is a lovely sentiment, but heard repeatedly with a 2 second pause for 8 hours tends to push one a bit to the cynical side. Luckily we had lots of kids and adults come and plant seeds in our biodegradable planters (egg cartons) many were quite excited too, sometimes the adults even more so. We also had a number of people express more interest in Gaia itself. I'd like to thank Linda, Christopher, Debbie, Cory, Sam, Mac, Sadie, Bryce, Kieran, Sam, Mari, Greta, Kate, Jackie, Debbie, Tony and Rowan for all their help.

WYRD

Gary Stanfield

A theological concept that separates Teutonic polytheism from religions which might be more familiar to most Gaians is that of limitation of deities. That is, in Teutonic polytheism no deity nor any group of deities can do anything he/she/they might please. In the Norse version, the limiting circumstances are produced by three witless (female) giants called Norns. In the English version, these circumstances are produced by one witless) male giant named Metod (The Allotted). The giants who produce these circumstances cannot be all-powerful because they are not sufficiently aware to carry out intentions, and because they do not reach everything that is or that happens. This is a doctrine that some things happen without conscious intent.

In the English version of Teutonic polytheism, there is a handy term for the circumstances in question: *wyrd*. (In Old Norse, there are three words for these circumstances.) *Wyrd* is that which does not have a visible etiology, which cannot be resisted, and which cannot be changed. It does not have to be fair, beneficial, or harmful.

Wyrd is not fate (which is an outcome). Nonetheless, since Old English does not have a "fate", Old English scholars sometimes rendered the Latin for "fate" as *wyrd*.

Wyrd affects humans as well as deities. Thus, Teutonic polytheism acknowledges that there are circumstances that we have to accept and adapt to in everyday life and in extraordinary times. In addition, this religion avoids the need for explaining why a loving god or goddess makes us suffer when we have done no wrong. For some of life things should be fair, and for some of life the question of fairness does not apply. To me this is seems pretty realistic.

Other religions may or may not have a similar notion.

The details and evidence support of these assertions are on my web site: http://pages.prodigy.net/gary_s/toc.htm.

The case is made in two papers: "Appendix E: Wyrd" in The OERP Book; and "Giants in the Teutonic System" under Other Philology. Not everyone agrees with my assertions, but not everyone backs up their assertions with evidence of how the ancients used their words.

Special KidSpace Committee Meeting

June 11, 2004; 7 P.M.—SMUUch

June 24, 2004; 7 P.M.—Greta's

The June 11th agenda will include important decisions about where to post for the Director of Children's Programming position opening in December, updating KidSpace policies, and questions about registration of children and fees. This is serious stuff we need to get through. Anyone who is interested in how KidSpace is run now and in the future is encouraged to attend. Copies of the position description, KidSpace mission statement, and the policies and procedures are available at the greeter's table on Sundays or from Linda Boyce (816) 419-9447 or lboyce@mindspring.com

Linda Boyce

GAIA AROUND TOWN—EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Voices of Gaia will meet this summer!

Thursday, June 10th, 7:00—8:30 P.M.

Voices of Gaia will continue meeting this summer on the second Thursday of the month. Please plan to join us on June 10th, July 8th, and August 12th from 7–8:30 p.m. downstairs in the Jefferson Room at Shawnee Mission UU Church. In June we'll sing songs for the Summer Solstice, continue working on *Benedicta Es* (Blessed Be), and learn the devoking chant that was created at the Chant Writing class in February. We'll also sing chants you bring along. I'm challenging Voices of Gaia folks to each bring at least one chant to share to one of our summer meetings. Newcomers are always welcome. If you have questions, or want more information, please contact Kitty Degler, songbird@kc.rr.com or 913-469-8779.

KidSpace Committee Meeting

Friday, June 11th, 7:00 P.M.

The KidSpace Committee Meeting is a place for all parents, kids at heart, and KidSpace volunteers to come together and discuss the future of our children. Plans for future activities, volunteer opportunities, dinner, and the direction of the future of KidSpace could all be on the agenda.

Come to the meeting or contact Andrew Turner, our Director of KidSpace Programming, for more information at agmnmn@kc.rr.com or (913) 706-9167.

Games Night

Friday, June 18th, 7:00–10:00 P.M. at SMUCh

Games Night is a chance for gaians to get together for fun, frivolity, and food, and NO OFFICIAL BUSINESS allowed! (We're not kidding—the Games Guru has spoken on this.) Bring a game (or ten), bring a friend (or ten), or just bring yourself and a willingness to play and visit. Snacks are welcomed but not required, to help the gaming crowds keep up their strength!

Friday Night Supper Club


Friday, June 25, 7:00 P.M.

Join your fellow Gaians for food, friendship, and frivolity. Kick back and stuff yourself silly! Check the e-groups or weekly announcements for where we will be eating. For more information contact Jeff Park at jpark2@kc.rr.com or 816-361-0465.

Caring Committee Connection Circle

We will meet every Sunday before Ritual. We will start at 2:30 P.M. This is a place to meet and talk. If you've had a bad week, and you need to talk about it, come on by. If you've had a good week, and need to shout it from the rooftops, come on by. If you just need to be with people, or whatever, come on by. We'll have coffee and tea, and if you'd like bring some food. Bring enough to share!

A look ahead at next month

July 4 Ritual—"Picnic in the Park" - 

July 11 Ritual - "Pet Blessing" - KidSpace

July 18 Forum - "Urban Paganism" - Jeff

July 25 SOS - "Fires of Freedom!" - Debbie

Aug 1 Holiday - Lughnassadh - New Ritual Team

Membership Committee

is looking for a

few good smiles

inquire at the Greeter's table

COMMUNITY CARES

Joys and Concerns

Compiled with YOUR input.

Peace & strength to . . .

- Friends who are rolling with the punches of unemployment and job searches.
- Those struggling with substance abuse and addiction.
- Those in our community experiencing the pain of divorce or separation.
- congratulations to Kieran MacDonald on his graduation from pre-school!



Happy Solar Return to people celebrating their birthday this month:

6-3: Jennifer G.

6-41: Gwen K.

6-16: Alex S.

6-27: Tony K.

6-27: Nicole T.

If we've missed you, clue us in again! Let Earth Healer know—earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org or 816-361-0465 or just sort of let the people at the greeter's table know.

And a special welcome to the folks who visited us for the first time recently!



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

Address Correction Requested

SUBSCRIPTION NEWS

Gaia Community pledging members and people known as "Friends of Gaia" receive the newsletter by snail mail and many elect to obtain the newsletter online (the online subscription is free to all), but due to the raising cost of printing and mailing the Earth Healer, we regrettably will be cutting the number of curtesy copies we mail out to new visitors and long standing friends down from our standard six months. You may obtain a full year snail mail subscription for \$12 a year or hop on-line and get it for free...all you need is internet access and Adobe Acrobat reader.

Contact the Earth Healer Curmudgeon at the above address or email: earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org for information on your subscription.

Contact Earth Healer

Send letters, articles, poetry or prose, borrowed wisdom, comments and suggestions to: earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org or by phone (number inside) no later than the 17th of each month.

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



June 2004						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Adult RE 7 pm Sacred Rhythms	2 Site Committee Meeting 7-9 pm	☉ 3 Ritual Teams Meeting 6:45 pm	4	5
CCCC 2:30 SR 3pm 6 Ritual: Dancing on the Edge 4 pm	7	8 Adult RE 7 pm Magical Workshop	☾ 9	10 Voices of Gaia 7 pm	11 KidSpace 7 pm	12 Ritual of Business 9:30 am
CCCC 2:30 SR 3pm 13 Forum: Patriotism 4 pm	14 Deadline for EH sub- missions	15 Adult RE 7 pm Druid Study Group	16	● 17	18 Games Night 7 pm	19
CCCC 2:30 SR 3pm 20 Ritual: Summer Solstice 4 pm Potluck Father's Day	21 Summer Solstice	22 Adult RE 7 pm Wicca 101	23	24	☾ 25 FNCS 7 pm	26 Craft Circle 1-4 pm
CCCC 2:30 SR 3pm 27 Fundraiser: God Auction 4 pm	28 KidSpace 7 pm	29	☀ 30			