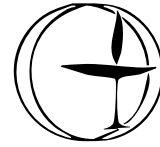




# Earth Healer



A Unitarian Universalist Congregation



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

## GAIA COMMUNITY SHINES

### AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE *by Barbara Griggs*

The 2004 annual conference of the Prairie Star district of the Unitarian Universalist Association was hosted by All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church April 23-25. In May of 2003, Gaia Community's Ritual for Business resolved to support the neighboring church to help make the conference a rewarding experience for all participants. This resolution led Barbara Griggs to volunteer to serve on the four-person steering committee, with *Jeff Park* and *Kitty Degler* serving as alternate representatives.

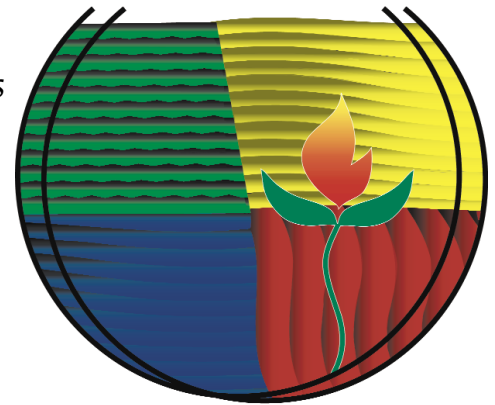
*Jeff Park* designed the logo for the conference, reproduced at the left. The logo represented the theme "Growing Season" by suggesting the UUA's flaming chalice logo in the form of a growing plant, set against a circular background representative of the four seasons. This logo graced the conference flyer, handouts, name badges, banners and was generally on view throughout the conference.

The conference content was focused on today representing a "growing season" for the UU movement and individual churches. Gaia Community contributed to that theme by provid-

ing opportunities for those attending to expand their ideas about worship.

At the Friday night worship service, a fabulous ad hoc Ritual Team headed by *Kitty Degler* presented a ritual based on familiar Unitarian Universalist themes together with the "growing season" imagery, knit into a "Gaia-traditional" format. Participants eased from a chant of "Gather Here" from *Singing the Living Tradition* through a tree-themed purification, grounding and circling. The elements were honored rather than invoked and center/deity/Gaia was honored with a chalice lighting. Participants meditated on their intentions for growing their congregations or the movement with the help of polished stones, then lit candles, transforming the center altar into a gleaming beacon of hope and commitment, and raised energy to fuel their commitment with a chant of "We are the rising sun," before a element-based benediction closed the service. In addition to *Kitty*, the ritual team included *Jeff Park*, *Nicole Turner*, *David Reynolds*, *Barbara Griggs*, *Collene Newby*, *Eric Simpson*, *Kimberly*, *Carey Oxler*, *Vicki Guhr*, *Greta Erhardt*, *Katherine Menges*, and *Jan Wilner*. Everyone's help was greatly appreciated! Lovely directional altars including *Brian Butler's* chili-pepper fire altar enhanced the effect. Many compliments were heard afterwards and the next day.

Saturday, Gaia Community hosted a labyrinth walk and meditation room to allow conference attendees



*Growing Season*

a respite from the busy, linear activity of breakout sessions. The labyrinth construction was designed by *Via Baker*, adapting the Flaming Chalice labyrinth design posted on the internet by *Dick Shelton*. *Debbie Dozier* coordinated the construction over a two-month period, organizing several work sessions and providing a base of operations, as well as sewing, painting, sketching, and jeopardizing her health cavorting barefoot outdoors in February. Many Gaia members and friends contributed to the effort, including the *Boyces* hosting and *Christopher Boyce's* enthusiastic contributions to painting the flame-colored background, and *Carey Oxler's* execution in painting the labyrinth walkways. Dozens of UU s took the opportunity to practice the walking meditation, and again, many appreciative comments were heard. The portable, painted-canvas labyrinth will remain a permanent resource for Gaia Community.

Gaia also hosted a meditation room throughout the day. A design team

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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, May 2nd 4-7 pm** 

### Sabbat-Beltane in the Park (with potluck beforehand)

Last year the storms kept us inside; this year we're going back to the park! Gaia Community has done Beltane at a park in mid-town KCMO for 7 years now, enjoying the beautiful weather and celebrating our birthday (Charter Sunday was Beltane 1999). This year we'll be at Theis Park, across the street from the Nelson Atkins Museum.

*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, May 9th** facilitated by Nicole

### Sharing Our Spirit-Mother's Day

Sharing Our Spirits rituals are a chance for everyone to co-create a ritual together. Bring music, poetry, inspiration or a desire for something you'd like to see done and we'll see if it can be worked in. The theme for this day's ritual is "Mother's Day".

**Sunday, May 16th** 

### Ritual—Circle of Stone

Humankind through the ages have found solace in stone. We have built sacred structures and have carved and painted our legacies on them. Stones hold wisdom that only timelessness can see and can impart their knowledge in ways known only to the asker. Open yourself to the wisdom of the stones.

**Sunday, May 23rd**

### Class—"Aromatherapy" - TBA

Which scents attract a mate? What smells excite that mate? Which scents soothe and calm? Just some of the questions you might be asking in this class.

**Sunday, May 30th** facilitated by Jacki

### Sharing Our Spirit- "Dust in the Wind"

Sharing Our Spirits rituals are a chance for everyone to co-create a ritual together. Bring music, poetry, inspiration or a desire for something you'd like to see done and we'll see if it can be worked in. The theme for this day's ritual is "Dust in the Wind".

### Ritual Team Members:



Kitty Degler  
Jacki Kelly  
Collene Newby  
Jeff Park



Caroline Baughman  
Nicole Turner  
Eric Simpson



Kimberly  
Carey Oxler  
David Reynolds

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

**MAY YOU NEVER HUNGER. MAY YOU NEVER THIRST.**

## WEAVE AND SPIN

### Splinters from the Board

From Nicole Turner, outgoing Secretary

This is my final report to *Earth Healer* as Secretary for Gaia Community. It's been an honor to serve as your "chronicler" for the last 2+ years (give or take)—but it's also a pleasure to pass the baton now. As we grow, I think it's more important than ever that the community's "institutional memory" not depend upon any single person, or even a small group of people, for very long. That's why every Ritual for Business is open to all interested friends in addition to our members . . . and it's why we have annual elections and limited terms of service for our Board. You can count on me to stay involved—whether you like it or not!—but I'll get on with business and report the highlights from April's Ritual for Business, which focused primarily on our annual elections.

Here are the folks you can feel free to comfort with your praise, afflict with your questions and generally consider to be servants of the community for the coming year (effective May 1st). Look for their contact information below and in forthcoming newsletters:

- \* President: Barbara Griggs
- \* Vice President: Terry Ross
- \* Treasurer: David Reynolds
- \* Secretary: Debbie Dozier
- \* Member At-Large, two-year term: Carey Oxler
- \* Member At-Large, two-year term: Liz Ticer
- \* Member At-Large, two-year term: Jeff Park (*starts the second year of his two-year term.*)

Unless otherwise noted, these are 1-year terms—which means that even returning officers and board members had to stand for election by our Committee of the Whole (comprised of all full active members who provided absentee ballots or who were present at the meeting).

#### 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

naebis@kc.rr.com or

816-941-7626

Secretary—Debbie Dozier

ddozier@everestkc.net

#### Members at Large

Carey Oxler

gaia-kat@kc.rr.com or

816-941-7626

Liz Ticer

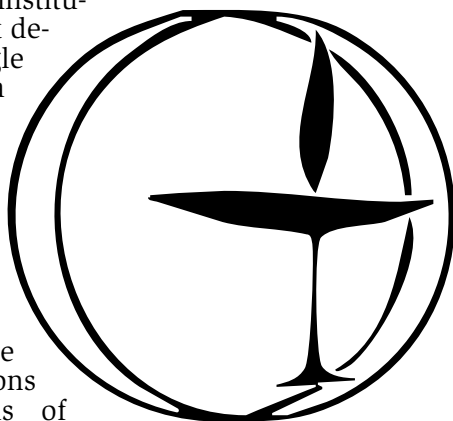
femainoregon@excite.com or

913-636-4924

Jeff Park

jpark2@kc.rr.com or

816-361-0465



In addition, we also addressed election of two other groups of people: our Nominating Committee and our General Assembly Delegates.

- Nominating Committee, one-year term: Linda Boyce, Kimberly, Jacki Kelley and Collene Newby. The Nominating Committee's charge (well, one of them, anyway) is to keep an eye out for talented folks who are ready and willing to serve the community on a committee or in some other role. They also keep in touch with leadership to determine where there's need for such ready and talented folk. **Talk to them. Don't run from them.**
- General Assembly Delegates: The UUA General Assembly this year is in Long Beach, CA. At this meeting, we didn't have any volunteers . . . which means it doesn't look like anybody is going to be able to attend and therefore be named as Gaia Community's delegate(s) for questions that call for a vote from the member congregations. Since we can't pay anybody's way, it's really up to individuals who want to go and can afford it on their own. This issue may be addressed again at the May meeting, but it isn't a life-or-death matter if we don't have delegates this year.
- There was some discussion as to the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter. Several options are being investigated and will be reported on at the May meeting.
- There were some questions on the membership directory. This matter was tabled back to the membership committee for review.

Our next Ritual for Business will be 9:30–11:30 A.M. on Saturday, May 8th. We meet downstairs at Shawnee Mission UU Church and sometimes there will even be doughnuts and coffee. Pajamas are welcome. Contact Barbara Griggs no later than Thursday, May 6th if you'd like to add an item to the agenda.

*That's about it for now. Respectfully submitted,*

*Nicole*

## New Member Class

### Now Forming

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

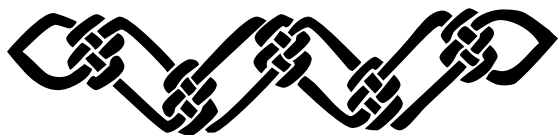
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headed by Kimberly created six altars corresponding to the six *Sources of the Living Tradition* identified by the UUA. The center altar, scaled down from that used Friday night, represented the direct experience of transcendent awe and wonder; two east altars honored words and deeds of prophetic women and men, and the contributions of humanists including respect for scientific method; in the south were representations of world religions; in the west, the Judeo-Christian teachings were given reverence; and in the north, an altar to earth-based spiritual traditions was placed. The room was hung with colorful “prayer flags,” and cushions and chairs were available for comfortable meditation while appropriate music was played.

A number of conferees expressed a desire to create a similar experience for their own home congregations. Comments were awed and appreciative.

Many of the same Gaians listed above helped with the set-up, tending, and removal of these experiences, and Terry Ross, Nola Cavanaugh, and Michael O'Reilly also assisted.

As conference-goers learned about growth issues in fund development, membership, religious education, leadership, and other topics, Gaia Community helped them learn that there are many ways to experience the sacred and express worship. For a congregation of 40 members, Gaia cast a very long shadow during this district conference. All volunteers are profoundly thanked for their extraordinary service and commitment!



## SHAMELESS DRUIDRY

Save the Date!

Tuesday, May 18th, 7-9 p.m.

Shawnee Mission UU Church

Back in March, we talked about research, scholarship and evaluating sources. In April, we went on to a discussion of cosmology and approach to worship of the Three Kindreds. Our third of nine classes on Druidic Study this year completes the Land Triad: laying the foundations. On May 18th, we're going to get a bit more physical by establishing some understanding of why and how a basic ritual is structured and performed.

Even if you attended the “Elements of Druid Ritual” class back in October, you can expect the evening to be both more deeply informative and more demanding of your participation—which I happen to think are Good Things.

Feel free to bring an item for our Shrine that symbolizes your connection with the godden (of any pantheon), your ancestors or our kindred in nature. Additionally, you may also contribute a small sacrifice for our offerings—please contact me in advance so we can talk about what's appropriate.

As with any Tuesday in Gaia Community's Adult Ed endeavor, there's no prior experience with druidry required,

but please know we are planning this series to build upon itself...it gets better every month!

Get in touch with me, David (naeblis@kc.rr.com or 816-941-7626) or Debbie (ddozier@everestkc.net) for directions, details or some “Last Time on Bonanza” notes if you'd like some advance perspective.

*La Druides,*

*Nicole*

## Heartland Pagan Festival 19th Annual

“Insight by Firelight”

May 27th–31st, 2004

www.kchsa.org

### What is the Heartland Pagan Festival (HPF)?

Heartland Spiritual Alliance organizes an annual five-day festival on Memorial Day weekend that promotes education, appreciation and celebration of a variety of alternative and mostly nature-oriented religions and philosophies. HPF promotes personal and spiritual growth through workshops, rites of passage and other ceremonies, speakers, music, and access to a large community gathered in one place. The festival is held on the grounds of Gaea Retreat Center (<http://www.campgaea.org>). Camp Gaea is a healing, spiritual, and natural environment located in a rural area of Kansas just west of the Kansas City metropolitan area. The land offers numerous gardens and secluded areas for meditation and relaxation as well as a large pond for swimming and woods for hiking. HPF also raises money as a benefit for the Gaea Retreat Center and is committed to helping maintain and preserve the land we hold so dear.



## SACRED DRUMMING

Every first Tuesday of the month is set aside for Sacred Rhythms. From 7:00 P.M. to around 8:30 P.M., we gather in sacred space and use drumming, and whatever other means of rhythm making, to pray, to heal, to journey and seek answers.

The evening Sacred Rhythms is slightly different from the Sunday afternoon at 3:00 P.M. gathering. While we still use an open and ad libitum style to our music making, the intent is to create a situation for each participating person to use the group experience and energy in a safe, secure positive way. Whether your intent is for prayer or healing or shamanic journeying...we help each other achieve that first stepping stone from the profane to the sacred and hold each other steady through the experience. Sunday afternoon is a place to hone your skill, Tuesday evening is the time to fly. Join us on every first Tuesday of the month. Donations are gratefully accepted for Adult RE.

*Jeff Park, facilitator*

## GAIA AROUND TOWN—EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### Voices of Gaia

Thursday, May 13th, 7:00—8:30 P.M.

Voices of Gaia will meet downstairs in the Jefferson Room at SMUUCH. We'll sing chants and songs for spring and summer and play with improvisational singing. We'll also talk about meeting dates for June, July and August so please everyone, bring your calendars! For more information contact Kitty Degler, [songbird@kc.rr.com](mailto:songbird@kc.rr.com) or 913-469-8779.

### KidSpace Committee Meeting

Friday, May 14th, 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 [agrmn@kc.rr.com](mailto:agrmn@kc.rr.com) or (913) 706-9167.

### Games Night

Friday, May 21st, 7:00–10:00 P.M. at SMUUCH

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, May 28th, 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 [jjpark2@kc.rr.com](mailto:jjpark2@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

June 6 Ritual—"Dancing on the Edge" - ☯

June 13 Forum—"Patriotism"- Collene

June 20 Ritual—"Midsummer/Father's Day" - 🍷

June 27 Fundraiser—"The God Auction" - everyone

July 4 Ritual—"Picnic in the Park" - ☯

July 11 Forum—"Urban Paganism" - Jeff

### 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.
- Toast to chosen Family.



Happy Solar Return to people celebrating their birthday this month:

5-5: Mikki MacDonald

5-11: Ana Roberts

5-13: Eric (Drummel)

5-15: Victor Costello

5-31: Cathy Combs

*If we've missed you, clue us in again! Let Earth Healer know—[earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org](mailto: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*

## NEW ADULT RE TUESDAYS!

First Tuesday on the month  
**SACRED RHYTHMS**

Second Tuesday  
**MAGICAL WORKSHOP**

Third Tuesday  
**DRUID STUDY GROUP**

Fourth Tuesday  
**WICCA 101**

### Contact Earth Healer

Send letters, articles, poetry or prose, borrowed wisdom, comments and suggestions to: [earthhealer@gaiacommunity.org](mailto: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 May *Earth Healer*.



| May 2004  |   |  |           |  |                              |   |
|---|---|--|-----------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Sunday  | Monday                                    | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday                                   | Friday                       | Sat/ 1st  |
| 2<br>Ritual:<br>Beltane in<br>Theis Park<br>4 pm<br>Potluck at 3    | 3   | 4<br>●<br>Adult RE<br>7 pm<br>Sacred<br>Rhythms    | 5         | 6<br>Ritual<br>Teams<br>Meeting<br>6:45 pm | 7                            | 8<br>Ritual<br>of Business<br>9:30 am<br>Craft Circle<br>1-4 pm |
| 9<br>CCCC 2:30<br>SR 3pm<br>SOS:<br>Mother's<br>Day<br>4 pm         | 10  | 11<br>◐<br>Adult RE<br>7 pm<br>Magical<br>Workshop | 12        | 13<br>Voices<br>of Gaia<br>7 pm            | 14<br>KidSpace 7<br>pm       | 15  |
| 16<br>CCCC 2:30<br>SR 3pm<br>Ritual:<br>Circle of<br>Stones<br>4 pm | 17<br>Deadline<br>for EH sub-<br>missions | 18<br>Adult RE<br>7 pm<br>Druid Study<br>Group     | 19<br>●   | 20   | 21<br>Games<br>Night<br>7 pm | 22  |
| 23<br>CCCC 2:30<br>SR 3pm<br>Class:<br>Aromatherapy<br>4 pm         | 24  | 25<br>Adult RE<br>7 pm<br>Wicca 101                | 26        | 27<br>◐                                    | 28<br>FNCS<br>7 pm           | 29  |
| 30<br>CCCC 2:30<br>SR 3pm<br>SOS:<br>Dust in the<br>Wind<br>4 pm    |   |  |           |  |                              |   |