



EARTH HEALER



The Official Newsletter of Gaia Community,

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

Covenant Groups Enacted

At our April Ritual for Business (see page 5 for minutes), the Committee of the Whole consented to authorize "Covenant Groups" within the larger context of the community. This concept is sometimes referred to as "Small Group Ministry" in other UU congregations, and comes directly out of the feedback from the January forum on Congregational Paganism. Here is what was accepted, in case you are interested in starting such a group:

Covenant groups are groups formed to meet a spiritual, social, or recreational need among the membership of Gaia Community which is not generally addressed by the Sunday service. Covenant groups could form for any number of purposes, including but not limited to: study and/or practice of a particular religious, spiritual, or magical tradition; social contact and discussion of similar life experiences; pursuit of recreational activities in a sacred context, and so on. Some possible examples of covenant groups might include a Norse Paganism study group, a Reclaiming coven, a Pagan Parenting discussion group, or a Sacred Crafting group.

A covenant group would be convened by a full active member of Gaia Community. This convener would be responsible for performing administrative duties related to the group, including acting as a liaison between Gaia Community and the group, ensuring that the group met often enough to serve its needs, overseeing the creation of the group's covenant, scheduling any time that the group would use Gaia Community's leased facilities, and so on. The convener would also be responsible for notifying the Committee of the Whole in the event of a covenant group's dissolution.

In addition to the convener, at least 50% of the membership of a covenant group must be full active members of Gaia Community.

Membership in a covenant group would be limited to those people willing and able to agree to the group's covenant, a document which describes the purpose and function of the group, lists any requirements for membership, sets out any financial expectation placed upon group members, and includes any other information that prospective new group members would need to know before joining the group. In addition, the covenant must include a statement that the group will affirm and promote the Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes.

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.

Responsibilities of Covenant Groups:

- ✓ To draft a covenant, as described above.
- ✓ To present their covenant to the Committee of the Whole at a regularly scheduled Ritual for Business, and have that body review and approve the covenant.
- ✓ To present the covenant to each prospective group member for review, and to have each new group member sign in agreement.
- ✓ To meet regularly enough to serve the needs of the group.
- ✓ To contribute to the welfare of Gaia Community. The recommendation is that groups take an offering at their group meetings and share that income with the Community, but other forms of contribution would also be welcomed.
- ✓ To review their covenant annually and participate in an annual 'check-in' with the Committee of the Whole at the March Ritual for Business.
- ✓ To conduct their business in a way that is consistent with their covenant.

Responsibilities of Gaia Community to Covenant Groups:

- ✓ To offer space on the website, in the Earth Healer, on the gaiauu e-mail list, and in weekly printed announcements to covenant groups to promote their work.
- ✓ To offer meeting space to covenant groups where allowed by Gaia Community's lease agreement.
- ✓ To provide the opportunity to covenant groups focused on spiritual or magical practice to present Sunday services, in partnership with Gaia Community's ritual teams.

So far, one group has already been proposed: Devin and Erin are looking at convening a Pagan Parenting group, they would like to have interested persons come to Antioch Park on May 12th at 1PM; contact them for more information on the idea.

- David, Communications Chair

What's Inside This Issue

GAIA AROUND TOWN, CARING CONNECTIONS CORNER.....	2
SUNDAY RITUAL SCHEDULE.....	3
KIDSPACE INFORMATION.....	4
RITUAL FOR BUSINESS MINUTES.....	5
CALENDAR	6

Gaia About Town

- Ritual Teams Meeting** (5/2, 6:45 PM, Andrew'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. As always, any member of the congregation may help with a particular ritual, so if you have an interest let someone know!
- Tuesday Night Classes:** The Adult Education classes for May will be a session on Vodou on the 15th, and a Mythology Story Hour on the 29th, centered around the God Auction candidates. All classes start at 7 PM; childcare is available *on request* by contacting Kris Ennis in person or at adulsted@gaiacommunity.org by no later than the Sunday before each class.
- Ritual for Business** (5/12, 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. Remember that May is the month we take our first look at the upcoming year's budget, which gets approved in June.
- Games Night** (5/18, 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've invited some new board game players from the Kansas City area to join us through <http://meetup.com>, so bring your new toys and your game face!
- KidSPACE Committee Meeting** (5/20, 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!
- Social Justice Committee Meeting** (5/21, 7 PM): Andrew and Cynthia have rebuilt the Social Justice committee in response to some concerns and ideas raised among the community recently. If you're interested in helping out or have ideas for a charity to support, e-mail them at sj@gaiacommunity.org or by finding them in person!
- Friday Night Supper Club** (5/25, 7 PM): The May Supper Club will be at a new Caribbean restaurant in town, Tropical Palms at 9331 Hillcrest Road in southern KCMO (just north of Bannister Road). Please RSVP to Kris Ennis at supperclub@gaiacommunity.org or in person to save your spot!

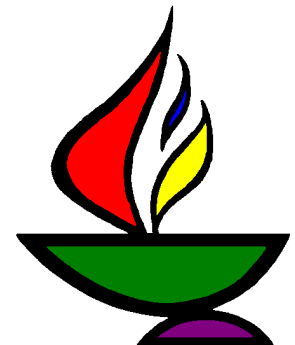
Gaia Community Board of Trustees 2007-2008

President — Lizzy Ticer president@gaiacommunity.org or 913-636-4924	Members at Large — Carey Oxler gaia-kat@kc.rr.com or 816-401-1963
Vice-President — Terry Ross vicepresident@gaiacommunity.org or 816-966-9186	Yale Giffin niveustigris@hotmail.com or 816-797-8032
Treasurer — Nola Cavanaugh treasurer@gaiacommunity.org or 816-966-9186	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 !

Caring Connections Corner

Birthday blessings go out this month to some long absent folks: Mikki on May 5th, Jai on May 11th, Heather Ventura on May 12th, Drummel on May 13th, Judy Overstedt on May 16th, Kim Bowie (now Kim Loxterman) on the 30th, and Star Kenney on the 31st. Victor's birthday is on the 15th, though, and he's still around to congratulate! I'm sure there's other people around currently with May birthdays, but we may not know who you are.

If you or another attendee of Gaia Community are hospitalized or going through a difficult time, please contact the Caring Committee by emailing us at caring@gaiacommunity.org, leaving a message on the Gaia Community voicemail at 816-951-9900, 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, May 6th

SABBAT — Beltane *(w/potluck after)*

Ritualists: Kris, Jeff, Carey

Hooray hooray, the first of May! We're extending this festival all week because you can never have too much of a good thing. Our Beltaine celebration will be a Huna-flavored ritual celebrating our connection with life force, that passionate, attractive force that holds the universe together and inspires all life to flourish. We will use the ritual to help us to draw more deeply of the life force within and around us, and to channel it to achieve our desires. **This ritual will be held at SMUUCH!**

As with all High Holidays, there will be a potluck meal afterward, so please bring food or drink for eight hungry people, and remember to label your ingredients for those with dietary restrictions; for the earth's sake, we ask that you refrain from using disposable dishes and containers if possible.

Sunday, May 13th

Ritual — The Empress *(Mother's Day)*

Ritualists: Kitty, Lizzy, Yale, Nicole

Walk with us in beauty as we awaken and delight our senses in honor of the Empress (and Mother's Day). We invite you to wear clothing in which you feel glorious and comfortable. (Note to those sensitive to scent – there will be lots of flowers such as roses.)

Sunday, May 20th

Pet Blessing

Facilitators: Andrew, Devin, and KidSPACE

We will be blessing all kinds of pets at separate altars. Please have your pet in a cage or on a leash at all times. There is no set central ritual, and blessings will run from 4-5:30pm. We will also have a remembrance altar in a quiet place to remember lost pets. Please bring donations for Wayside Waifs!

Sunday, May 27th

Ritual — Sharing Our Spirits *(Memorial Day)*

Facilitators: David and Kimberly

Sharing Our Spirits (SOS) rituals are co-designed by those in attendance, with the assistance of one or two trained ritualists. Please bring any ritual items, songs, instruments, scraps of invocations or ritual ideas you may have to help make this an interesting and interactive ritual! The theme of the day, of course, will center somewhat around the Memorial Day holiday, if that helps you think of something to bring.

Ritual Teams

Of note: the Excellence in Ritual students will be completing their classwork in early May, and assisting with rituals through much of May, June, and July. Therefore you will often see additional ritualists not specified above.

A Look Ahead to Next Month...

June 3rd – Ritual: Boom, Boom, Boom

(Ritual in Rhythm)

June 10th – Forum/Debate: Soapbox Sunday

(issues for General Assembly)

June 17th – SABBAT: The Emperor/Sovereignty

(Summer Solstice)

June 24th – Class: The Contenders

(God Auction candidates)

Current Ritualists

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

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



KidSPACE and TeenSPACE

KidSPACE Update:

We have begun **All the Children of the World**, our next curriculum adventure. We'll be taking a closer look at how kids live around the world by building on what we know about elements. For Earth, we will see where other children live. What do their houses look like? When they go outside, what do they see? What do their family structures look like? What do they eat? Do they have chores? For Air, we'll find out how kids in other places learn. Do they go to school? or do they learn at home? What kinds of things do they learn about? Since Air also corresponds with sound, we'll hopefully learn a song from each place, and also learn how to say the words Hello, Peace, and Thank You. For Fire, we'll learn about how other kids have fun. What kinds of games do they play? Do they have computer and video games like we have? Do they do crafts or is sacred drama part of their culture? What kinds of stories do they tell? Water, as it always seems to be, is deeper than some of the other elements. This will be our social justice piece to our curriculum, and will focus on problems, issues, and resources found in other countries. Because in so many places, including our own, both the problem and the solution are found in beliefs, we will also be taking a look at what other children believe.

The places we will be visiting we chosen via Earth-ball oracle: We tossed the ball and pointed. Here is where we'll be going: Southeastern Russia near the Caspian Sea; East Central Africa (just a note... these are general regions, and will get more specific, depending on places I can find information on in each area); Central Brazil; Canada; Northwestern India; Central Australia; the South China Sea (since Taiwan and Japan are more well known, I'd like to find another, smaller island with good information, if I can); Cuba; Germany; the tippy top coast of Northern Scotland; the Northeastern African Coast, and Mexico.

Don't forget about the KidSPACE meeting on May 20th before ritual! 2:00 PM at SMUUCH; it is an important (but usually short) meeting that everyone is invited to, parents or no.

I would also like to ask for the assistance of parents with one part of our curriculum. We will be making boxes (or maybe jars) to save change in. Don't focus on the amount, because no one will be keeping track of who saves how much. The idea is to raise awareness that no matter what our own circumstances, it's always important to be able to help others. At the end of the year, we will vote as a group on an organization to donate our pennies to. We'll choose from groups that are reputable, focus on sustainable programs, and remain sensitive to cultural diversity. A good example would be Heifer International.

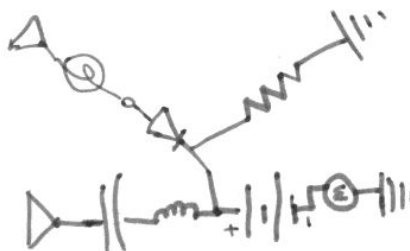
In other news, we are, as always in need of non-perishable snacks and juice boxes. Also, KidSPACE is growing, which is good, but that means I need volunteers for classroom assistants. Right now, we have a class of 10-14, ranging in age from 4 – 11. Because of the differing needs, it's almost critical to have someone available in case there is a bathroom problem, a behavior problem, and to help those little ones who are not as confident in skills like cutting, glueing, and such things. I will have a sign up sheet at the Greeter Table. Pick a Sunday in the next year and come play with us!

- Anissa, Dir. of Religious Education

TeenSPACE Schedule:

- April 29 – 4 Levels of Reality (Kitty) - introduction to the 4 Levels of Reality from the Excellence in Ritual material
- May 6 – TEENS IN RITUAL
- May 13 – Intro to Runes (Erin)
- May 20 – TEENS IN RITUAL
- May 27 – 4 Levels and Tarot (Kitty) - using the 4 Levels of Reality in interpreting tarot cards
- June 3 – TEENS IN RITUAL

- Carey and Kitty



Mooings from the CoW (Committee of the Whole)

Summary of April's Ritual for Business (RfB)

- I. **Meeting called to order at 9:45?** Attending: Jennifer, Jeff, David N., David R., Andrew, Nicole, Devin, Greta, Debbie, Kimberly, Carey, Terry, John, Nola, Yale, Erin (for election only)
- II. **Agenda** - agreed, with amendments
- III. **Reports**
- A. **Secretary:** minutes, agreed with amendments
- IV. **Treasurer:** Pledges at \$13,000, Friends of Gaia at \$430, Greening the Basket at \$600. We have paid PSD and UUA dues in full. Pledges a little lower than should be, but we're pretty much where we expect to be. Pledges got behind over winter holidays and people are catching up.
Everyone present was certified as eligible to vote in the election.
- V. **Elections** - the following were elected:
President—Lizzy Ticer
Vice President—Terry Ross
Secretary—Jennifer Gadd
Treasurer—Nola Cavanaugh
Delegates to General Assembly convention—
Lizzy Ticer and Greta Erhardt
Nominating Committee—
Jeff Park, Carey Oxler, John Carroll
- VI. **Standing Committees** -
- VII. **Ritual Teams:** The next 6 months have been scheduled, along with the Sabbats for the next twelve months, as per our lease agreement.
- VIII. **Rites of Passage:** The committee has two new members.
- A. **Social Justice:** Blue River Cleanup was a success. Most members of our group, including children, were more experienced than the assigned leader.
- B. **Nominating Committee:** Andrew and David will be doing a refresher consensus course for the new Board. The election was held. The CoW commends the committee for the timely availability of election materials.
- C. **Caring Committee:** Cynthia continues to work on cards. The committee is communicating concerns via the Yahoo group and other channels.

IX. Unfinished Business -

- A. **Greening the Basket:** *The CoW requires that those who lead rituals make requests of the treasurer for designating Greening the Basket donations in writing. The treasurer will decide whether to approve or deny the request or to refer it to the executive committee for a decision. Those leading the ritual will ensure that those attending have a clear understanding of how they can designate their offerings.* Agreed.
- B. **Strategic Planning:** tabled; forwarded to next month, or next time Lizzy can be present.

X. New Business -

- A. **Lease Negotiations:** Barbara requests a committee be appointed to do this, although she is willing to remain in her current position as liaison. *"An ad hoc committee will be formed to negotiate this year's lease with SMUUCH. This committee will include the president, the treasurer, and the site chair. This committee will hold at least one "town-hall" meeting with the CoW for wider community input, but the committee will be empowered to negotiate the lease."* Agreed.
- B. **Small Groups:** The CoW agreed upon a proposal from the covenant group planning committee that establishes a procedure and the permissions for Gaia members to form small covenant groups. Full text is on page 1 of the May Earth Healer.
- C. **Speakers:** Information was received by mail regarding inspirational speakers from IFP Enterprises, and passed on by the Communications Chair. No action necessary.
- D. **Garage Sale:** tabled
- E. **Check-Writing Operating Procedure:** A secondary signature by another board member will be the new procedure for check writing for the remainder of John's term. This is a process he requested, not a requirement imposed by the CoW.
- F. **Soap-Box Sunday:** Because our GA delegates are to represent the whole community in assembly decision-making, we will have an upcoming Sunday set aside for speakers to address issues for discussion purposes. Kimberly is looking for speakers.

XI. Meeting adjourned at 11:47 by mob consensus.

- Jennifer, Secretary



P.O. Box 45307
 Kansas City, MO 64171-8303
 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 (816-941-7626) no later than the 22nd 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*

P.S. We are in need of a new person to handle the Sunday printed announcements. If you are interested, please let me know by May 30th.

MAY 2007						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Forum: Love, Sex, and Intimacy in Religion	30	1 <i>Beltaine, May Day</i> 7 PM: Excellence in Ritual class, final & ritual	2 ☉ <i>Vesak (Buddha Day)</i> 6:45 PM: Ritual Teams Meeting @ Andrew's	3 <i>National Day of Prayer</i>	4 <i>No Pants Day</i>	5 <i>Cinco de Mayo</i>
6 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: SABBAT: Beltane	7	8	9	10 ☾	11 <i>World Fair Trade Day, Tourel Day</i>	12 9:30-11:30 AM: Ritual for Business
13 <i>Mother's Day</i> 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Ritual: The Empress	14	15 7 PM: Tues. Night Class on Vodou	16 ●	17	18 7 PM: Games Night	19 <i>Armed Forces Day</i>
20 2:00-3:00: KidSPACE Meeting 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Pet Blessing	21 7 PM: Social Justice Committee @ Andrew's	22	23 ☾	24	25 7 PM: Friday Night Supper Club @ Tropical Palms, 9331 Hillcrest, KCMO	26
27 2-3:30: VOG 3:30-4: SR 4 PM: Sharing Our Spirits Ritual (Mem.Day)	28 <i>Memorial Day</i>	29 7 PM: Mythology Story Hour (God Auction candidates)	30	31 ☉	1	2