



THE CUUPS NEWSLETTER

Late Summer/Early Fall 1998

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Messages from Our Officers ♦ Covenanting
Interfaith Work ♦ Working with the Media
GA Results ♦ Convo Info ♦ Book Reviews
lots of poetry ♦ ...and so much more!

*as of the red moon eclipse 1995
changed eather 12/5/95
and circa 6/6/94
recorded change in fire
summer solstice 95
Published in Feri newsletter Fall 95
changed eather summer 97*

Daily Prayer

SALLY KEITH AMSBURY

MYRAID

Mother Sky, Arida feathered serpent
Oya, Oestara, Gna on Hoof Tosser
You are my breath, You are my voice
We are all the Air blowing

Mother Fire, Pele, Amaterasu
Brigante, Hestia, Tana, Shapesh
You are my Fire. That which consumes and powers
We are all the Energy that moves

Mother Ocean, Tiamat-Leviathon
Imanja, Ymeya, Star of the Sea
You are my blood and my emotion
We are all the Waters flowing

Mother Earth, Yeodaze
Gaia, Erda, Ver-avna, Demeter
You are my body and all manifestation
We are the Living Earth Herself

Mother Ether, Sugmad, Nuit
Nameless and all names, the Dancer and the Dance
You are the Void, and all viewpoints
We are nothing, we are All-That-Is

Source of all, Holy Spirit,
Wakan Tanka, Unnamed One, great Om
You are the Center, You are the Circumference
We are Your children, Your creator, We are One

Mothers Earth, Air, Fire, and Water
You are my Breath, my Blood, my Body, and my Power
We are each other, Our names and Yours are Myriad
In You I live, I move, and have my being
We are Who is, Who was, and Ever more shall be

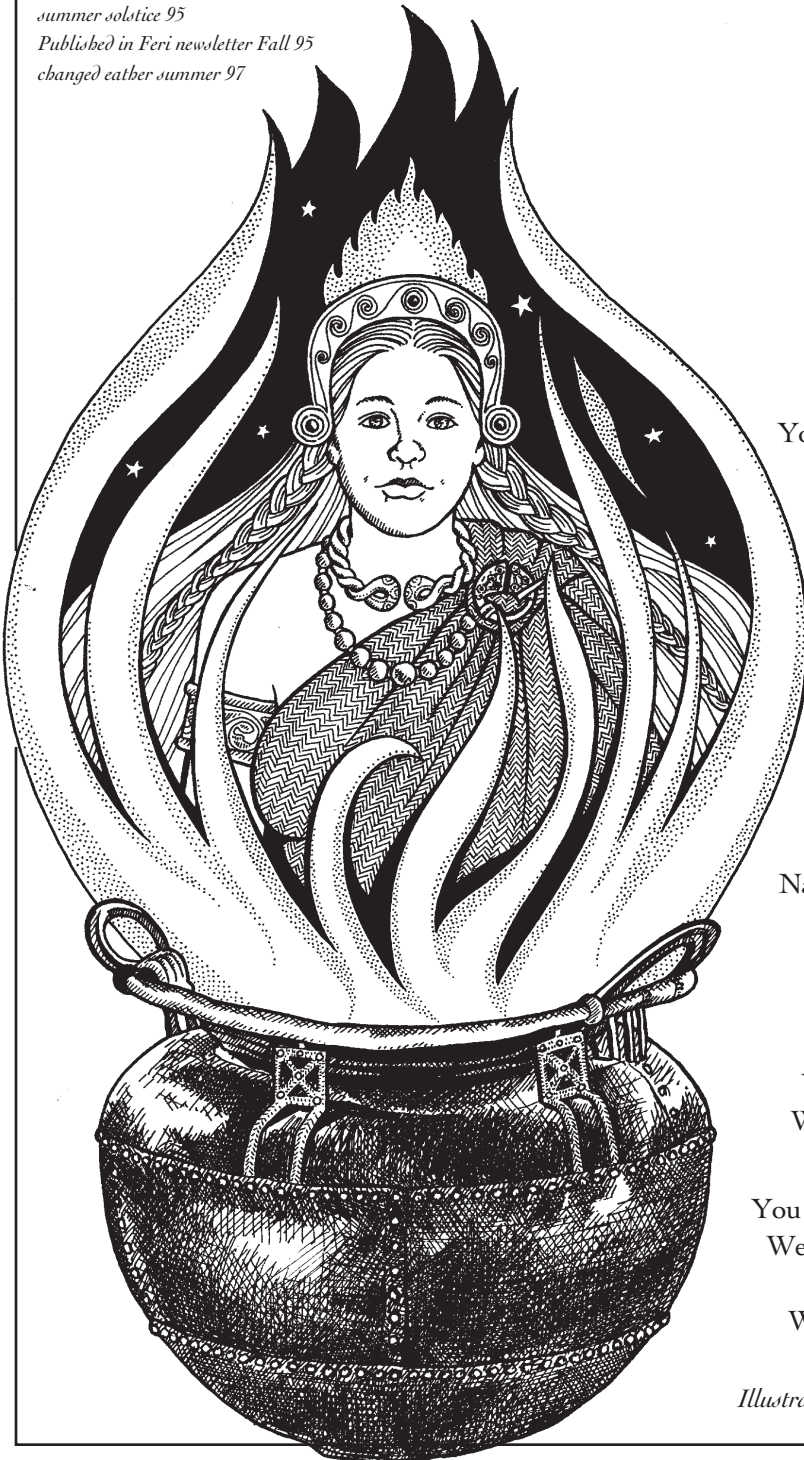


Illustration ©Lauren Foster MacLeod

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*Ancient cultures purposefully added mis-
takes into their work to show it to be the
work of humans. While we will work to
make our publications as perfect as possible
...we will always be human!*

There You Are...

So much happened at the General Assembly in Rochester that it is difficult to know where to begin. Of course, there were the usual and expected minor glitches in communication and airline delays and technical matters.

Someone actually stole the tape recorder and tape following Isaac Bonewit's lecture. But overall, the three lectures/workshops, the annual meeting, the solstice ritual, and our concert came together quite nicely. CUUPS people even led the Friday evening main worship service.

First thing I need to do, however, is acknowledge the great volunteers that made it all possible. Of course, most of the board members were there and participated heavily throughout the gathering. As always, many well-deserved thanks go to (in alphabetical order): Margot Adler, Stacey Greenstein, Jerrie Hildebrand, Maggi Joseph, Brydie Palmore, Beowulf Pearce, David Pollard, and Patrick Price.

Other volunteers staffed the table, helped with food at the concert, baked cookies, helped set up for the annual meeting, assisted with the solstice ritual, passed out flyers; and some did all of these things and more.

Much gratitude is due: (in alphabetical order)

Cindy and Peter Glaze
Judy and Susan & Ben Craft
Rod Debs
Stephen Estes
David and Barbara Griffin
Charlie & Wesley Hildebrand
Christa Landon
Khryso (Chris) Wagner
Glendon Mills
Susan Shaw
Phaedra Oorbeck
Mary Radiewicz
Sylvia Wheeler

And, of course, our speakers and workshop leaders and musicians:

Isaac Bonewits
Bekki Shining Bearheart & Crow Swimsaway
Mary Grigolia
Khryso (Chris) Wagner
John Gilmore
Nancy Veder-Shults
Carole Eagleheart

If I've inadvertently missed anyone, please, please accept my most profound apologies and let me know so we can acknowledge your contribution.

Special thanks to Peter Glaze for the great job he did in helping the sound recording technicians check out the church site of the concert and design the microphone arrangement.

In summary, our GA income and expenses were:
Income + \$ 6,542.44
Expense - \$ 3,652.17
Net = + \$ 2,890.27

And I know we will actually increase the income from the future sales of the concert tape. The musicians at the concert were simply superb and the crowd was extremely receptive. Even the the sound technicians we hired to record the concert were impressed and assured us that the CD and tape would be good. We are now in the process of getting the DAT mastered to eliminate a few extraneous sounds (such as my introductions of the musicians.)

On Friday of GA, over 160 people attended the Shamanism 101 workshop with Bekki and Crow. Several non-Pagan UUs expressed to me their pleasure with having the chance to learn more about this subject.

Margot Adler led and preached the main worship service that night. Maybe 1600-1700 were in attendance. It was a wonderful response.

Saturday, there were over 200 people at Isaac Bonewits' lecture. It was well received despite the fact that the overhead projector was late and not of the proper kind. It went very well even though someone stole the tape recording of the lecture after the event was over. (That was a bit shocking to us all.) We've asked Isaac for a hard copy transcript of the lecture.

At the Annual Meeting, we honored Rev. Mike Thompson with the Fuller-Thoreau award for 1998. Rev. Thompson is the minister at Spindletop UU congregation in Beaumont, Texas, who was recently convicted of trespassing at a local revival meeting where he defended the right to religious freedom of the CUUPS members in his congregation. The Board also recognized the extraordinary efforts of one of its members and presented David Pollard with a gift of appreciation.

We did have quorum under the new regulations and several things were voted on. We elected a new Nominations Committee and Polling Committee for next year. (Members, please check your copies of the new regulations to note the importance of these two committees.) The quorum of members also decided to elect the next Board by postal ballot, even though they could have held the elections at the annual meeting. CUUPS members will soon be receiving a ballot in the mail.

Yes, a postal ballot means that the old board is hanging on a bit longer and the candidates are facing a bit of uncertainty, but it's a small price to pay for greater participation by ALL of our members in the election process. The new board will have its first face-to-face meeting and review/revise committee assignments at Convocation in September.

The solstice ritual was in a lovely space and place. I did not personally count the number of folk attending, but it was huge. Maggi Joseph led us in weaving our hopes and dreams into an eye of the Goddess sculpture. And there were a number of great drummers who helped out. Unfortunately, I don't have a list of their names and can't acknowledge their efforts.

This ritual was followed by our evening concert at First Universalist. As I said before, the music was tremendous. It was unfortunate that the only time we could were able to schedule this was against a lecture by Robert Bellah, but no one knew that going into the planning. Even so, the recording will be wonderful and we will offer it for sale through the newsletter and the website as soon as we get it edited and reproduced.

Monday, Mary Grigolia, Khryso and John Gilmore ran a workshop on the use of sacred chant in Sunday Service. Once again, the room was packed beyond anyone's expectation. We can only hope that the next GA CUUPS workshops will be so well attended.

When all is said and done, we did a lot at GA this year. Some might say we did too much and more than a few board members were feeling completely exhausted at the end. But I truly believe that it was all worth the effort. My undying gratitude to each and every one of you that gave your time and efforts and talents to make it happen.

Blessings!

Joan VanBeelaere
CUUPS President

From the Treasurer...

CUUPS Financial Overview, Annual Meeting, June, 1998

The intent of this report is to provide our current bank balance and a narrative overview of major debts and expenditures of the last year. A more complete reporting of income and expenditures is being compiled by Jerry Wagenman and we anticipate printing it in the Fall newsletter. Bank of Columbia, SC, balance on June 22, 1998: \$ 484.70

Debts: On March 18, 1997 CUUPS, Inc. started out with an organizational transition debt which we took on from our predecessor, of some \$ 19,700. As of June 22, 1998 we had reduced it to nearly \$ 3,800. (Hooray!!!) Most of this was paid off, but some of this original debt was forgiven and/or converted into long-term or lifetime memberships. (Bless you!!) We anticipate being able to clear this transition debt within the next few months. (Yippee!!!)

As of June 22, 1998 the following operating expenses were outstanding. We owe a balance of \$216.75 to our attorney and we should have this paid off by the end of July. The balance of outstanding debts are reimbursements of \$651.97. nearly all of which is owed to Secretary David Pollard for office expenditures. We are looking to pay this down ASAP and to not let this level of reimbursement debt build up again, cash flow permitting.

Primary expenditures: Since July 1997, after debt retirement, our single greatest expenditure has been our newsletter's printing and postage at \$7,442.54. We currently carry a small credit with our printer. This is seen to be one of our primary income generators by stimulating new memberships and renewals.

If you have further questions please contact me. For information on specific types of income, please contact our Secretary, David Pollard. Thank you.

Post GA Update: 7/10/98

Here's the final word on finances for June and early July. Everyone who has submitted any kind of bill or request for reimbursement has a check in the mail for the full amount of whatever was requested or billed. We have approx \$700 in the bank with another \$1,400 check I'm needing to sit on until August to deposit and another packet coming from David Pollard for just over \$600.00. So by the beginning of August we will have just over \$2,700 to work with and only current bills and debts to deal with. We have paid off our debt to our attorney and we also have credits with Arena Press and MCI. This is a good position to be in going into Fall.

What I can determine based on information CUUPS Secretary David Pollard has provided on income and all the payments I have made or have cash receipts for, our preliminary balance for GA income/expenses is a follows:

Income + \$ 6,542.44
Expense - \$ 3,652.17
Net = + \$ 2,890.27

Not bad! See you soon.

Faithfully Yours.

Patrick Price
CUUPS Treasurer

From the Secretary...

Congratulations! We have successfully restated our Articles and Bylaws. As announced at CUUPS Annual Meeting on June 27th an adhoc Polling Committee composed of the Rev. Christa Landon, Judy Craft and Susan Craft counted the received ballots from our

restatement election. The results were as follows:

FOR - 225
AGAINST - 3

No vote, invalid or spoiled - 6

As over two-thirds of the votes received were voted in favor and the number of votes exceeded the quorum of 129 votes the restatement passed.

Voting membership in CUUPS has recently taken a little dip to around 600 due to that many are slow in renewing. Please check the mailing label of this newsletter - unless the date shown is September 1998 or after it is time (or past) to renew.

Currently, I'm gearing up for Convocation near New Orleans. Please check the information we have on it further into this newsletter. I hope to see many of you there.

David Pollard
CUUPS Secretary

About Communications...

Things are running smoothly with the newsletter and website. Many of you are sending articles. Thank you. It is your contribution to the newsletter that makes it successful. This month I again thanks Lauren Foster MacLeod for her illustrative talents and Gretchen Ohmann for her great proof-reading skills.

All newsletter articles are up on the website now, too. These are great for researching what we are all about.

Currently, I am creating some networking in the larger Pagan community for specialized articles this next year.

If you are interested in participating in the newsletter writing, editing or whatever please feel free to contact me.

Jerrie Hildebrand
VP of Communications

DAILY PRAYER REFERENCES

SALLY KEITH AMSBURY

MYRAID

Arida; Gardnerian air Goddess

Oya; Yoruban wind and storm, and cow and other things, Orisha

Oestara; Saxon Goddess of the dawn and youth and spring. Easter

Gna, Hoof-Tosser; little mentioned servant/messenger of Frigg, Queen of the Norse Aesir, and her flying horse

Pele; creator of Hawai'i, the geothermal force that is the volcano, patron of her family

Amaterasu; the sun in Japan, the ancestor of the emperor

Brigante; Brigit, the Celtic forge fire, black and silver-smith, bard and well of healing

Hestia; Greek hearthfire and dweller in the temple of independent women

Tana; the Celtic Goddess of Fire

Shapesh; Canaanite Goddess of the Sun

Tiamat-Leviathon; Hebrew Goddess of water and the deep ocean Creatrix

Imanja, Ymeya; Brazilian and Yoruban spelling of ocean/river Orisha

Star of the Sea; Celtic title of Mari taken over by Mary the Christian Mother of God

Yeodaze; the name of earth in Maidu, a northwestern central valley California First Turtle Island Tribe

Gaia; preGreek and now scientific name for She who is the Earth

Erda; Earth to the Norse and a grand opera part

Ver-avna; Earth Goddess, the real truth in Latin

Demeter; The Greek earth and Her abundance, sister and equal of Zeus, Hera, Posidon, and Pluto; and triple goddess with Hecate and Persephone

Sugmad, Star Goddess, the ancient Providence

Nuit (Nut), Egyptian star Goddess, the ground of being, night

Holy Spirit; Christian undefinable divinity, part of the trinity of source, life and offspring

Wakan Tanka; Lakota Great Spirit, translated by the Christian missionaries as God, now used by many tribes and others

Om, the vibration of the universe, I don't know, anybody willing to give the authoritative derivation and current American meaning for this one?

Joy is

She whose name is Myriad

ROMUVA: BASTION OF EUROPEAN PAGANISM

DIAN FIREBEARER

Lithuania, the last Pagan country in Europe, hosted the June 20-25 World Pagan Congress, with the grand opening at the Summer Solstice festival of Rasa on Jun 21.

Although it's now predominantly devout Catholic, the nation had to be converted in stages. Having become a federation in the 5th century under Pagan theocratic rulers, it was more closely united by Mindaugas (also called Mindove or Mendog) after the 1230 invasion of Teutonic Knights. Mindaugas renounced his Paganism in 1251 and was crowned king under the authority of Pope Innocent IV. But before he died in 1263, the king reverted to Paganism and even sacrificed captured Knights to the old Gods.

The Pagan Grand Duke Gediminas (aka Gedymin or Gedimin) founded the capital at Vilnius in 1323; two years later, he married his daughter off to the Polish prince. Although he offered to accept Christianity in a letter to Pope John XXII, both the Knights and Poles objected on the grounds that they wanted political and spiritual supremacy.

At this time, trees were an important part of Lithuanian Paganism and were revered in groves. Frazer reports in *The Golden Bough* that oaks and other large shade trees were worshipped and would impart oracular information. The groves were considered to be houses of God, in which followers would ask for rain and sunshine. Sun worship was popular among some tribes, and Z. Budapest notes in *Grandmother Moon* that Lithuanians view it as being a Goddess, with the Moon being a God and the Earth their offspring.

Conversion began during Lithuania's commonwealth union with Poland in 1385, and continued in 1413 after final victory was won over the Knights. But because of the strong Polish influence of the Church, villagers held out, even during the 16th-c. Protestant Reformation. The last temple closed in 1790, five years before the bulk of Lithuania was annexed by imperial Russia. In the following century, Paganism experienced a revival as part of the resurgence of cultural identity, and retained a link with Lithuanian nationalism when the country reasserted its independence in 1918.

Romuva, the primary Pagan group, was banned after the 1944 Soviet occupation, but kept alive by people like Jonas Trinkunas, a religion scholar, who reformed it in the 1960s. Many Romuvans were imprisoned by the KGB following their 1971 Rasa which attracted hundreds of revellers. Trinkunas was ejected from his post at the university, and exiled to the countryside until 1986.

At the height of its revival in the 80s, over 1000 people attended Pagan festivals, though Romuva now claims only about 200 members. During Perestroika, renewed nationalism went hand-in-hand with an increased curiosity in Romuva and

Pagan traditions which had survived intact for centuries. Many practices were assimilated into Christian observations, including Rasa customs which were syncretized into Jun 24 St. John's Day celebrations, as were Summer Solstice rites in other countries.

On the feast day, Lithuanians party all night by lighting bonfires and floating candle-lit wreaths on rivers. Young couples go off into the woods in search of a mythical fern. According to Budapest, at the Full Moon of July, Vainikinas (the Binding of Wreaths) is celebrated, mirroring Beltane customs of warmer areas. Flowers and green boughs are cut by young people who've trekked into the woods at sunset, then woven into wreaths and garlands. Two birch or linden trees are tied together to create an arch, and when members of the opposite sex meet each other as they parade under it, they kiss and sing invocations of blessings from Goddess.

Trinkunas describes Romuvan Paganism as "modern, a sort of intellectual Paganism" that is "very different from natural Paganism, which could have elements of blood sacrifice. In the old traditions, we know that there were blood sacrifices, but only rarely of men." Participants at the congress were treated to lectures and other events in addition to the Rasa celebration.

Roughly 20 Pagan groups from Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Britain, Russia, and the US exchanged ideas at the congress, and Trinkunas hoped the gathering would help garner them more political power. Romuva, for example, isn't officially recognized as a religion. "We want to have some kind of common movement and we want official recognition," Trinkunas explained. "The common bond is that all of these small groups feel the oppression of large, traditional religions."

MONEY MAGIC

A BOOK REVIEW BY SUSAN M. SHAW

One of the most popular kinds of magic practiced is money magic. People will invoke any number of spells, prayers, and even curses to see them through month after month of bills. A few folks are fortunate enough to have mastered money manipulation and no longer need the constant focus on getting the bills paid. This review isn't for them. For the rest of us I have a book that offers incredible money magic without the typical hype.

In this book you won't find any mention of green candles, instead you will find the magical principles behind them. "How to Get What You Want in Life with the Money You Already Have: Simple Yet Revolutionary Ideas for Reaching Your Dreams While Still Paying the Bills" is written by Carol Keefe. I have no idea what Carol's personal faith is because she gives no overtly religious advice in the book. Instead she

focuses the topic of money on changing perceptions, clarifying goals, and taking action. Those principles are basic building blocks of magic in my definition.

Since this book is classified as Personal Finance/Self-Help, I didn't at first make the connection that what I was reading was practical magic. It clicked when I decided to take the first step in Carol's advice. Carol suggests setting up a Dream Box and diverting all loose change into the box. She stresses how important it is to define a specific goal instead of a general one. For example the goal could be "Attend Rites of Spring" instead of "Go to Pagan Festivals." The more specific the goal the more likely we are to do the work to attain it.

While nodding along in agreement I cast my mind around the house for a container to use as a Dream Box. As I thought about the last container I had used to save change I remembered it was a small cauldron. I had used it with a thankfulness of always having enough. The change covered unexpected expenses that came up without the need to run to the bank. It was one of those "Aha!" moments.

The same magical work could be done on a grander scale without the need to cast spells to win the lottery (an attempt that competes with every other hopeful lottery winner's prayers). Instead of focusing on outside intervention Carol suggests changing your perception of money and especially of bills. The change in perception leads to the freedom to imagine, to dream, and to plan. With clear goals in mind Carol outlines specific actions that can help you achieve your dreams. The key to success is taking action. It is simple, logical, and highly magical.

If you struggle with the need to pay off the bills before you start to live your dreams, then this book is definitely for you. Take a chance at transformation and check it out. You won't find it in the Pagan section of your local bookstore but I promise it holds the best money magic I've ever read.

CRAFTS FOR THE CRAFT

SUBMITTED BY SUSAN M. SHAW

I have a friend whose business card claims "Crafty Lady" among the other descriptions. For those of us in the know it is a delightful play with words, because she is involved with the Craft as well as many other hand crafts. This review is for her and all of the other creative men and women out there.

• Craft/Crafts is a quarterly publication that will delight crafters who are looking for projects that reflect their Paganism. My first issue was Volume 4 number 1, Spring '97. Inside was an Earth Rise cross stitch pattern, Pentacle cross stitch border, a beaded salamander, and much more. Issues include articles, poetry, recipes, recommendations for Pagan and Wiccan catalogs, word searches, plus lots of different

crafts. Some of the crafts covered in past issues include: Magical quilting, Green man embroidery, Ogham alphabet cross stitch, Incense making, Magical gardening, Handmade ritual paper, Wheatweaving, Portable altar storage box, Pentagram to crochet or cross stitch, and old Celtic recipes.

• Craft/Crafts is a photocopied production with approximately 24 pages per issue. The charts and diagrams show up well but photographs are sometimes too dark to do justice to the items pictured. A big compliment goes to the convenient three hole paper used allowing crafters to organize issues in a three ring binder. Subscriptions are \$13.00 a year in the US, \$18.00 for Canada, and \$20.00 for all others (US funds only please). Send to: Craft/Crafts, PO Box 441, Ponderay, ID 83852. For information on back issues send a request with a large self addressed stamped envelope to the same address.

Another source for cross stitch designs is Original Magick Designs, PO Box 5100, Suite 206, Tyler, Texas 75712, or e-mail at N2MAGICK@BALLISTIC.COM. Trish Worrell is the designer behind the company. Her catalog features designs for all of the Major Arcana of the Rider-Waite tarot, as well as stunning designs for astronomical sights like the Ring Nebula, the Cat's Eye Nebula and more. There is even a Wiccan Rede with a Celtic border.

Karen Everson of Moongate Designs, 44791 Windmill Drive, Canton, MI 48187, (734) 451-6839, publishes The Moongate Book of Signs and Symbols: Earth Religions, Patterns for Counted Thread Embroidery. Karen also has books with astrology symbols, mythical beasts, and many collections of interest to people involved with the Society of Creative Anachronisms. She also publishes poetry, including a collection of Pagan prose.

For those who are internet savvy, check out <http://www.tapdancinglizard.com>. This site offers charted designs for knitting, beading, and needlework. Past charts are available on request.

I recently ordered a stunning collection of Green Man, Flora, and Fairy designs for only \$10. Ask about the willow and oak pentagram design they have. I promise you it will be worth searching out. This site also has custom made bodices and will create a knitted design uniquely your own.

Finally, get a hold of the recently published book "Magical Needlework" by Dorothy Morrison, ISBN 1-56718-470-7. One of the designs in the book is of a Goddess hugging the Earth. Some of the other designs included are the Neophyte's/Initiate's Coverlet to quilt, a Book of Shadows Cover, a Blessed Be sampler to cross stitch, a Cat and Pentagram Vest and a Pentacle Wallhanging to crochet. This book also has plenty of reference materials, like a chart of Deities and Dates associated with different crafts, plus crafting instructions included. Most of all, this book is brimming with inspiration, from chants to say while creating crafts to

ideas for choosing the crafting medium that will match a spell you want to manifest.

If you know of other crafting resources for Pagans send a review into the CUUPS Newsletter, or send me a note, care of CUUPS, and I'll include it in a future review. Enjoy a spell of crafting with any or all of the resources above. Blessed Be!

BOOK REVIEW

SUSAN M. SHAW

The Wicca Source Book: A Complete Guide for the Modern Witch Gerina Dunwich, copyright (c) 1996, ISBN 0-8065-1830-8

Have you ever gone on vacation and wanted to know what attractions would interest Pagans? Or wished for an easy reference that could tell you where the occult shops are in a city you are planning to visit? Or been moving to a new place and wanted to know how to make contact with some local Pagans? Or perhaps you've always eyed your friend's collection of mail-order catalogs with amazement because of all of the Pagan related businesses operating?

Look no further, you too can have access to an international collection of churches, schools, businesses, and even publishers, that all deal with Pagans. *The Wicca Source Book* is a little gem I found at my local library. I'm hopeful that new editions will become a regular occurrence, but that will only happen if this book has a marketplace wanting the information it contains.

Chapter headings in the book include: Organizations, Pagan and Wiccan Churches, Schools, Books and Publishers, Periodicals, Astrology, Herbs, Magickal and Metaphysical Shops, Mail Order, Pagan Potpourri, Who's Who in the Wiccan Community, and Recommended Reading.

I now have a list of places to see when visiting family in New Jersey and Michigan, as well as some new places to shop closer to home. I'm still reading about all of the periodicals available and making a list of catalogues to request. As a networking tool, this book is proving to be worth it's weight in gold, but luckily it is much less expensive. For only \$10.95 (\$14.95 in Canada) I hope you'll add this to your own book collection soon.

LOVING BEING

There are only two choices.
We are either fearing being
or we are loving being.

If you aren't loving being,
it's really quite easy to fix:
become a loving being.

If you don't know how to become a loving being,
hang out with loving beings who are loving being.
You'll catch on!

© 1998 Bob Boyle

We thought this poem spoke to the spirit of CUUPS. We have persuaded Dr. Bob to allow us to copy and distribute his poem free of charge. He asks only that it be forwarded intact including byline, copyright and hyperlinks and that his name be as small as possible! Please help us keep our word to him.

And more of his work can be seen by going to Dr. Bob's Isle of Wonder on the internet at:

<http://members.aol.com/WizrDrBob/index.html>

GA SOLSTICE RITUAL

MAGGI JOSEPH

The GA Solstice Ritual was planned by Maggi Joseph with help from members of Celestial Celebrations Circle (CUUPS chapter in San Antonio) and the Re-Formed Congregation of the Goddess (who loaned their gorgeous banners).

Those who called and/or held the energies of the Elements were: Joan VanBecelaere, John (Beowulf) Pearce, Marty McAnulty, Ben Craft, Susan Craft, Rev. Christa Landon, Glendon Mills, Phaedra Oorbeck, and Margot Adler. There were many wonderful drummers, most of whom I cannot name. Brydie Palmore and Dick Merritt were among them.

The ritual leaders were late getting to the place because of coming from the CUUPS Annual Meeting. There was a crowd of about 200 waiting for us in a area with seats near the ritual space. We unfurled the banners and processed behind them to the ritual spot. The circle was cast by the participants circling the area with the banners. Then the Directions were called:

Spirits of the East
Powers of Air
Powers of Dawn and the Crescent Moon

We call you in a spirit of fulfilling the promise
We ask you to join us as Awakener.
Please repeat after me:
Breathe us
Bless our beginnings with your gentle rays.
We bid you welcome!
Blessed be.

Spirits of the South
Powers of Fire
Powers of Noon and the Full Moon
We call you in a spirit of fulfilling the promise
We ask you to join us as Nurturer.
Please repeat after me:
Kindle us
Bless our true will
with your powerful light.
We bid you welcome
Blessed be.

Spirits of the West
Powers of Water
Powers of Dusk and the Waning Moon
We call you in a spirit of fulfilling the promise
We ask you to join us as Giver of Rest.
Please repeat after me:
Flow in us
Bless the tides of our emotions
with your fading light.
We bid you welcome
Blessed be.

Spirits of the North
Powers of Earth
Powers of Midnight and the Dark Moon
We call you in a spirit of fulfilling the promise
We ask you to join us as Mystery.
Please repeat after me:
Support us
Bless our times of renewal
with your darkness.
We bid you welcome
Blessed be.

Goddess & God
Shining Ones
Powers of Time Beyond Time
Powers of the Cycles of the Moon
We call you in a spirit of fulfilling the promise
We ask you to join us as the Eternal Dance of Light
and Dark.

Please repeat after me:
Stir us
Bless our journeys
with your dancing light.
We bid you welcome
Blessed be.

The circle is cast. We are between the worlds. And what happens between the worlds changes the worlds. Blessed be.

We are gathered here to reconnect ourselves to the seasonal cycle and to each other both personally and as UU pagans and friends of pagans. You have each been given two strands of cotton yarn--red representing the setting sun and what is past and yellow representing the dawning light of what is yet to come. We will tie them together and the knot where they meet will represent the present moment. As we knot together our own past and future, let us think about how in this moment we bring these strands of time together. What are the promises which we have fulfilled? What are the promises we wish to make for the future for ourselves, for our communities, for the wider UU and pagan communities, and for the world?

Now let us connect our personal strands of time to those of the person to the right and left of us. We are weaving the strands of time, the strands of our promises here in this moment to empower us for fulfilling our future. As we make these connections, let us chant:

Let the path be clear before me
Let all go as I will.
And the past be clean behind me
Let all go as I will.
And the ones I love beside me
Let all go as I will.
And the goddess light above me
Let all go as I will.
And the solid earth beneath me
Let all go as I will.
And my own true self within me
Let all go as I will.

Once all the strands were connected except for one beginning and one ending, a Spirial Dance was commenced holding the thread and eventually the circle spiralled inward and began to pass the thread along from hand to hand into the center where Margot Adler wove the strands into an, Ojo de Dias whose 8-spoked frame was made from 4 sticks of native wood: Ash (baby mountain ash, from the fenceline, a "weed" tree.), Oak (wind dropped residue, from the lawn of the local Quaker Meeting House), Apple (Winesap, an antique apple, from our backyard), and Maple (Another hedgerow wand, probably sugar-maple).

The chant during the Spiral Dance was:
Weave and spin, weave and spin
This is how the work begins
Mend and heal, mend and heal
Take the dream and make it real.

The thread represented weaving the strands of time, weaving our community, weaving our promises. We charged the thread and the Ojo and everyone was invited to come forward and pick up a sun disc to take home to help us remember our promises.

Then what had been invoked was thanked.

Goddess & God
Shining Ones
Powers of Time Beyond Time and the Cycles
of the Moon
We are grateful for your Eternal Dance of Light
and Dark
Please repeat after me:
Thank you for stirring us and for blessing our journeys.
Go in peace.
Blessed be.

Spirits of the North
Powers of Midnight and the Dark Moon
We are grateful for your Mystery.
Please repeat after me:
Thank you for supporting us and for blessing our times
of renewal.
Go in peace.
Blessed be.

Spirits of the West
Powers of Dusk and the Waning Moon
We are grateful for your gifts of Rest.
Please repeat after me:
Thank you for bathing us and for blessing the ebb
and flow of our feelings.
Go in peace.
Blessed be.

Spirits of the South
Powers of Noon and the Full Moon.
We are grateful for your Nurturance.
Please repeat after me:
Thank you for kindling us and for blessing our true will.
Go in peace.
Blessed be.

Spirits of the East
Powers of Dawn and the Crescent Moon.

We are grateful for your Awakenings.
Please repeat after me:
Thank you for breathing us and for blessing
our beginnings.
Go in peace.
Blessed be.

The circle is open but unbroken.
Merry meet and merry part and merry meet again!
Blessed be!

THINGS COMMONLY BELIEVED AMONG US

BY DAVID O. POLLARD, IV (1987), ARLINGTON, TX

Things Commonly Believed Among Us was written in 1887 by Rev. William Channing Gannet to help heal the divide in Unitarianism between Liberal Christians and Religious Theists of that time. It also can be considered a direct ancestor of today's Principles and Purposes. Because of the strong transcendentalist themes in this document, it in some ways comes closest to accomodating today's UU-Paganism (apart from its sexist wordings) of any Unitarian document written - until the Women In Religion Resolution was passed ninety years later.

The Western Conference has neither the wish nor the right to bind a single member by declarations concerning fellowship or doctrine. Yet it thinks some practical good may be done by setting forth in simple words the things most commonly believed among us, - the Statement being always open to re-statement and to be regarded only as the thought of the majority.

All names that divide "religion" are to us of little consequence compared to religion itself. Whoever loves Truth, and lives the Good is, in a broad sense, of our religious fellowship; whoever loves the one or lives the other better than ourselves is our teacher, whatever church or age he may belong to.

The general faith is hinted well in words which several of our churches have adopted for their covenant: "In the freedom of the Truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of man." It is hinted in such words as these: "Unitarianism is a religion of love to God and love to man." Because we have no "creed" which we impose as a condition of fellowship, specific statements abound among us, always somewhat differing, always largely agreeing. One such we offer here:

"We believe that to love the Good and to live the Good is the supreme thing in religion;

"We hold reason and conscience to be final authorities in matters of religious belief;

"We honor the Bible and all inspiring scripture, old and

new; "We revere Jesus, and all holy souls that have taught men truth and righteousness and love, as prophets of religion.

"We believe in the growing nobility of Man;

"We trust the unfolding Universe as beautiful, beneficent, unchanging Order; to know this order is truth; to obey it is right and liberty and stronger life;

"We believe that good and evil invariably carry their own recompense, no good thing being failure and no evil thing success; that heaven and hell are states of being; that no evil can befall the good man in either life or death; that all things work together for the victory of Good.

"We believe that we ought to join hands and work to make the good things better and the worst good, counting nothing good for self that is not good for all;

"We believe that this self-forgetting, loyal life awakes in man the sense of union here and now with things eternal - the sense of deathlessness; and this sense is to us an earnest of the life to come.

"We worship One-in-All - that life whence suns and stars derive their orbits and the soul of man its Ought, - that Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, giving us power to become sons of God, - that Love with which our souls commune."

WELCOMING NEW CHAPTERS

We have applications from Pueblo, CO and College Station, TX that need to be voted on.

Other fairly recent additions you may or may not have: Jackson CUUPS meets at the UU Church of East Liberty (MI).

Castle Crossing Circle meets at the UU Church at Washington Crossing which is between Trenton, NJ and Philadelphia, PA.

Gaia Community of Kansas City, MO has requested an "Institutional Membership".

CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Witches Ball in Fort Lauderdale

We had a fine Circle last Sunday evening. The Goddess spoke to our High Priest of the Day telling him to be more spontaneous by setting his notes on fire.

Our Witches Ball is a go for October 31st. For \$7 at the door, we will provide music and munchies. We are looking for help with decorations, ticket taking, Circle planning, protocol advice, general helpers, and underwriting. Yes, we are a 501(c)(3). Visit <http://members.aol.com/uucfl/wball.html>.

Our idea is to bring people together who are looking for a place to go for Samhaine. There are Witches Balls in Ohio, Boston, and Roundtree, Texas. Now it is our turn. We are looking to have some fun and then do a New Year's Open Circle. For more coming events, check the MoonPath homepage at <http://members.aol.com/uucfl/cuups.html>

If you know of others who would be like to be added to this email list, or if you would like to be removed, please email me back at spelcastor@writeme.com.

Blessed Be, Spelcastor

THE COVENANT OF COFFEE CUUPS

On Wednesday, April 8, the newly forming CUUPS group at First Unitarian-Denver presented its request for approval to the Board of Trustees of the congregation. The Trustees of First Unitarian approved the new chapter and, later, the CUUPS Board gave its approval.

In its presentation to the Board of Trustees at First Unitarian, the new CUUPS group created a Covenant agreement form stating the new group's commitment to the congregation and asking the Trustees to formalize its commitment to the new CUUPS group. This Covenant document was very well received.

As a consequence of this formal Covenant, the new CUUPS group not only has received recognition from the congregation but has the right to petition for budget and will have its own representative on the congregation's new Program Council. In other words, this new CUUPS group will be a fully integrated and active part of congregational life at First Unitarian-Denver.

We want to share this Covenant document with other start-up CUUPS groups who may be wondering how to approach their home congregations.

The new Denver group took awhile to find a name. But we finally settled on COFFEE CUUPS. Now we have to decide what COFFEE means: at this time, we think it will stand for Community of Family, Friends, Earth and Everything or some variation on this theme.

Joan Van Becelaere, Denver, Colorado

A Request For Approval of Formation And A Covenant Proposal April 8, 1998

The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) was organized in 1987 as an Independent Affiliate of the Unitarian Universalist Association and currently lists approximately 70 organized chapters and 30-40 new chapters in development. The goals of CUUPS and its chapters are to: enable networking among Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists; provide educational materials on Paganism for UU congregations and the general public; promote dialogue between Pagans and followers of other faith traditions;

encourage the development of theo/aological and liturgical materials based on earth- and nature-centered religious and spiritual perspectives; encourage inclusion of celebration of the Wheel of the Year in music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story, and creative ritual in UU worship and celebration; provide support for Pagan-identified UU religious professionals and ministerial students; provide outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the broader Pagan Community; and foster healing relationships with our mother the Earth and all her children.

To facilitate these purposes, the newly formed CUUPS Chapter of First Unitarian-Denver requests approval to organize as a formal chapter of CUUPS by the Board of Trustees of First Unitarian-Denver and proposes the following covenant agreement:

CUUPS of FUSD promises:

To maintain membership in good standing in the continental CUUPS organization.

To actively and fully participate in the congregational life of First Unitarian-Denver.

To offer to the entire congregation of FUSD educational programs for adults and children, rituals, and celebrations of earth-based spirituality

To require that elected leadership positions in CUUPS of FUSD be filled by members or active friends of FUSD.

In return, CUUPS of FUSD asks the Board of Trustees of FUSD:

To grant approval of the chapter's formation, which is necessary for recognition by continental CUUPS.

To grant CUUPS of FUSD the same rights, privileges and duties granted other congregational committees and organizations.

To include CUUPS of FUSD in all appropriate congregational information networks.

To grant CUUPS of FUSD the opportunity to participate as a group in Sunday services and congregational events as the congregation and Sunday Service Committee deem appropriate.

North Shore CUUPS Readies for the Fall

As the Fall approaches, activities here in Salem, MA pick up. We are working on coordinating interfaith Sabbat circles for Fall to the Spring for our community.

We are also currently working with our church board to develop our covenant with the church. The board has now given us a liaison to them to work with and we have a seat on the church council of committee chairs and IA coordinators.

Our Annual Samhain Circle for those of you traveling this way is on Sunday, November 1, 1998 at 7:00 pm at First Universalist Society in Salem, MA. For more information please call the church office at 978-744-3224.

CHAPTERS, MEMBERS AND THE MEDIA: WHAT TO DO?

JERRIE HILDEBRAND

As we enter the Autumn-time I am always ever present to what I call the “rent-a-witch” season. This is when the media decides it needs to speak with a local witch, or coven, or group of Pagans, on witchcraft or any other occult or psychic phenomenon. With preparation it can be fun. Without preparation it is a possible nightmare.

What do you do when your local media calls your CUUPS chapter about witchcraft? Paganism? An event you are holding? How do you keep things from being blown out of proportion or sensationalized? Do you have structures in place for spokespeople from your chapter to the press? Does your congregation’s board support your work with the media?

These and many more questions are what CUUPS chapters and members talking to the media about earth religions, Paganism and witchcraft need to sort out for themselves. Even the most savvy of speakers can get tripped up in an interview.

My first rule of thumb is to have policies in place for speaking to the media. In our congregation we hear from reporters a lot asking for information about Paganism and such. When it comes to interacting with the media, present things factually and to the point. Using Pagan jargon and lingo may not support the image you are looking to project nor really get your message across to those not familiar with earth religious thinking. Use comparative religious structures to illustrate what you are talking about. Plain straight language with short brief statements are more difficult to edit unwisely. Less is left on the floor of the editing room. Stay on topic also. Don’t let yourself be led off of the topic you were invited to speak about.

If you are going on a television interview, be sure to dress well. Don’t go in sloppy clothes or even ritual garb. Don’t try and show the audience how Paganism looks by doing a small ritual. The more conservative your look and the more you look like anyone else, the more seriously folks will listen to you and take you seriously. You are representing more than just yourself. You are representing your congregation too.

Know your audience. If it takes telling the reporter to call back later then fine. Do your research. This will enable you to speak wisely to those who are the audience of that particular media setting.

I also encourage the reporter to speak with the minister first to clarify the congregation’s official position on anything. That is not your job unless of course you happen to be the minister of a congregation. It is important to bring non-Pagan participants and authorities into a piece to validate your position and information. These can be other religious authorities or academic figures.

Remember you can really and ultimately only speak for yourself on what Paganism is or isn’t. We are a diverse community. Do not try to speak on traditions you know nothing about. Instead research who the reporter might call for more specific answers. You cannot speak for all on earth religious journeys. You can only speak to what you know. Give the reporter reference materials, books, websites, and other related information to do research with. A good reporter will do more research than just talking to you and will welcome the resource list.

There are many resources on the internet for dealing with the media. The best one I have found is The Witches Voice at <http://www.witchvox.com/xwhite.html>. Wren Walker has many years experience in dealing with the media. On the site is a section called “White Pages” filled with valuable information in dealing with the media on many issues.

Most importantly however, make sure you talk to someone in your congregation before accepting or doing any interviews. Work with them to set your boundaries. Work with your congregation’s board to establish policies for your group and the congregation. Your congregation’s name and reputation is valuable. Also feel free to contact me or the CUUPS board for input or information on working with the media. We are here to support your chapters and you the members. Brightest Blessing to you!

CHAPTERS AND INTERFAITH WORK WITH THE GENERAL PAGAN COMMUNITY

JERRIE HILDEBRAND

How does your chapter, or you as a solitary CUUPS member, network with the Pagan community in your area? Do you work together?

I have been looking at the interfaith diversity present to honor and celebrate in the earth religious community. It is both inspiring and overwhelming. Our CUUPS chapter is always looking for how to better interfaith relations among our own peers in the larger community. We live in a very diverse community of Pagan traditions and work to learn about each group.

Our community together has tried a number of things through the years to work at coming together a little more.

*Register for
Convo ‘98 today!!!*

Sometimes it has worked and sometimes not. Witch wars get in the way or misunderstandings escalate with no mediation. Each time, though, we stand to throw our hats in the ring hoping that this time folks will begin to work together.

One of the ways we have been successful in bringing better understanding of other groups to our CUUPS chapter is by having discussion groups. We invite various traditions in to speak to us about their thinking and why they have chosen the path they have. We have heard from Traditionalists, anti-defamation activists, various divination teachers, and this year we have a scientist coming to speak of Paganism from a scientific perspective. Each discussion leads to the education of not only the CUUPS group, but of the folks doing the presenting about UU Paganism, too. All of our discussions are open to the congregation and the public at no charge. We try to get speakers who can come for free or at least dinner afterwards.

We have participated as a chapter at Pagan gatherings. This year we combined our efforts with some folks from other CUUPS chapters and took on creating a grieving ritual at Rites of Spring in western Massachusetts. Our chapter has done this for three years, now. It gives us the opportunity to create ritual together in the context of the larger community so they have an experience of who we are.

Whatever the size of the community in your area there are many ways to foster interfaith understanding within our earth religious circles. The key to success, from what I am seeing, is to learn to listen and be open to giving others the same respect and caring that you would want for your group. Talk about UU Paganism at general community events or when at gatherings. Folks will not know who we are and how we are different if we don't share.

Remember, celebrate the diversity among our faith path whether it be UU or Pagan. We are walkers between both worlds.

ARE COVENS OBSOLETE?

BY ROBERT ECHLIN

Are covens obsolete? No way! But there is also a role for the larger organizations, such as CUUPS.

This question was recently considered on the CUUPS-L electronic mailing list as part of an ongoing discussion, one of many on the mail list, about the role of CUUPS in the pagan community and its relationship to other parts of that community, such as Wiccan traditions.

Many points were made about the benefits of covens. One person, who uses the net-name HarmonyFB, commented that "the function of the coven and the function of the umbrella group are two very different things." She went on to list counseling, support, and helping each other to "learn difficult lessons" as examples of things that can be done in the intimate

trust of a coven setting but not in a larger open group like a CUUPS chapter.

David Burwasser asserted that pagans do not have the same need for larger organizations that other religions do. He pointed to pagan festivals and pagan anti-discrimination groups as examples of pagans gaining the benefits of larger groups without giving up the benefits of covens.

Several people pointed out that covens, with normally up to about a dozen people, are a good size for energy raising and for direct contact with the divine, but that larger groups were less suited to these activities.

Several writers suggested that some religious and community roles could not be performed as well by a small group like a coven. Examples given were social, supportive, and caring roles, as well as providing for the teaching of children. A CUUPS chapter is a good place to do that, with the additional resources of a local UUA congregation available as well. Some mentioned the value of festivals in performing some of those communal functions.

The strong role of CUUPS in the larger pagan community was a controversial topic for me. I thought some people might be being overly partisan. But as Jerrie Hildebrand pointed out, leaders of other pagan organizations often ask her, in her role as a CUUPS representative to an inter-tradition organization, "how we have been able to retire over \$15,000 worth of debt in less than a year! How we have kept a consistent membership number. How we foster chapters and much more. How do we produce fairly on time newsletters."

Although covens may have developed partly as a way to hide magical and religious activities from oppressive authorities, the pagans on CUUPS-L believe they are still valuable today. The discussion was fruitful. I believe we make better choices after thoughtful discussions, on the internet, at pagan gatherings and in our local CUUPS groups.



OF COVENANTS, CONTRACTS, AND THE FREE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. PATRICK PRICE

DELIVERED AT THE CUUPS ANNUAL MEETING,
JUNE 27, 1998

Last November in our board meeting during the CUUPS Convocation at The Mountain in North Carolina, we were discussing issues of chapter and member relations, and how we all relate to each other in as part of CUUPS and the UUA. I raised the issue of covenanting and spoke somewhat about it. The board felt the membership there and here at General Assembly should hear some of this and hope for the opening of a larger conversation about covenanting.

On November 11, 1620, in a cabin below the cold windswept decks of the Mayflower, the leaders of the religious settlers we have come to call the Pilgrims, met to draw up a document to affirm and guide their purpose. This was a covenant now known as the May Flower Compact. I realize the irony of me, a Wiccan, calling upon our Puritan ancestors for a lesson on creating community.

OK so what is a "covenant?" UU minister, George Kimmich Beach writes that "The word `covenant' signifies a frame work within which intentionality takes effect." And the Rev. Robert Latham, defines a religious covenant as "a compact among a group of people which states their mission and how that mission will be transformed into reality by their life stewardship." This is not the same thing as stating a belief or purpose. Those may not entail any pledge or commitment to fulfill or carry them out. A covenant on the other hand is explicit in its intention to fulfill its purpose. "While purpose calls for an empowerment of its vision, covenant empowers its vision with commitment." Let me repeat this for emphasis. "While purpose calls for an empowerment of its vision, covenant empowers its vision with commitment."

Covenants ask and answer two basic questions. Why have we come together, and how are we to be together? What are our purposes in making this free and mutual agreement, and in that light, how do we go about living with each other? Consequently, covenantal living confers identity and builds community.

Clarity is crucial on these questions of why and how. If we do not know why we are together, then we will lack focus and direction. Our salt loses its flavor and we will very likely fall back on formality and structure as the central organizing principle of our collective existence. The motto of this kind of group is, "tradition is sacred above all else and we have always done it this way." Maintenance of the structure becomes our purpose and our source of identity. We become the guardians of tradition for tradition's sake. Because there is no underlying focus or purpose, the threat of change to the ossifying structures is per-

ceived as a threat to the existence of the community itself. A malaise settles over the group and it becomes inward looking, and narcissistic. We may have a beautifully made chalice, but we have no fire in it.

When people join a UU congregation whose purpose is clear and held high, they understand WHY they are joining. Without this understanding, a non-creedal group's religious purpose is vulnerable to being reshaped into the images of personal agendas.

On the other hand, without clarity on how we will be together, we lack security and trust with each other. We do not know how to manifest the purpose we have agreed upon.

Communication is halting and garbled, and our energies are diffused. Communities in which there is a lack of clarity by members about how they will be together are usually, small, ineffectual, and distrustful. We may have the fire of a thousand suns burning in our breasts, but we have no way to give it shape in the world. Without knowing HOW we are doing, we have no gauge for our actions. We become builders without blueprints.

When our covenant is clear about why we are together and how we will be so, we know where we want to go and how we will get there together. The visible out workings of our covenant are our ministry. The Rev. Robert Latham writes that, "Ministry is covenant in action. It is covenant stewardship. And the only appropriate gauge for measuring the effectiveness of ministry is the covenant it seeks to embody."

Implicitly or explicitly, a covenant expresses our collective understanding of what we hold to be of worth and what our relationship is to it. It may be a belief in divine salvation through grace or our inherent worth and dignity, and interconnection through the web of existence. In this, the purpose of covenantal community is to call us back into our commitment to our chosen relationship when we stray from it.

In creating or joining a covenantal community we enter into commitment with each other and our covenant. It is the act of entering a UU congregation's covenant that determines when someone becomes Unitarian Universalist. Without membership commitment there is no identity with the body. Contrary to popular belief among UUs, there are no UUs who do not know it any more than there are Baptists, Methodists, or Masons, etc... who don't know it. Public entry into commitment with our covenants announces the point at which we become a UU. This does not mean that those who have made the commitment and have lapsed are not UUs. They are simply inactive, but they have had to have first made the commitment. You can't be a non-practicing UU without first becoming a UU.

As UUs we are the direct inheritors of the Mayflower Compact and the Cambridge Platform of 1648. As institutional descendants from the Pilgrims and Puritans, through the Congregationalist Standing Orders of New England, and through our Unitarian forebears, who became the Standing Order in much of Massachusetts, we have a claim to this part of

history. We have identity and roots in the democratic myths of the Western Tradition and are not simply eclectic borrowers who believe whatever we want.

But, this claim to history does not legitimate the claims that covenants have on us as religious liberals. It would be contrary for us as religious liberals to claim authority from tradition alone, since that is exactly what liberalism came into being to reject. That just because our forebears did it we should do it. I point to history, not for authority, but as an example from our own past.

We can also claim the importance to us of covenanting because it seems to work in the long term. That we are simply better off using this model of relationship.

While it is true, that if a system doesn't work we won't have to worry about it for very long, because it won't stick around, I believe it is equally invalid for us to claim authority for covenanting amongst ourselves based solely on its apparent practicality. While it is attractive to look at the bottom line of the efficacy of a method, success is not a moral barometer or theological justification. Just because something works, doesn't mean it is right or divinely ordained. There are many very functional systems which are inherently evil and oppressive.

Rather it is through covenants freely and mutually entered into, that we recognize and exercise our freedom of will and choice. Hence, we are also called to recognize the free will of others, and our responsibility for the obligations we recognize towards each other, in particular and in general.

Covenants in their very nature embody basic theological understandings we hold as Unitarian Universalists. First, we have free will to make sense of and express our understanding of our relationships with each other and that which we consider of ultimate importance. Secondly, we each have value in and of ourselves which must be recognized and respected by each other through our obligations to each other individually and collectively. Third, our emphasis on the ways we will be with each other as a process, and not just as a means to an end, is a manifestation of our understanding that existence is incremental and constantly evolving. And, consequently, we do not know what will happen in the future and that revelation and possibility are not closed or preordained. We can assume neither damnation or utopian progress, but have hope and optimism in the limitless possibilities of existence.

Through our covenants we call each other into free and responsible commitment to build our common good. Robert Latham adds,

Since covenant involves a pledge to make purpose reality, it is a commitment of the heart. And all human resources follow the heart's lead. The non-creedal congregation has no ground of authority except its covenant.... The centrality of covenant in the non-creedal religion's life is the source of its strength and power behind its social witness. As such, it is the *sine qua non* of Unitarian Universalist existence.

We know today that the promised land of the Pilgrims was already someone else's. But this does not diminish the importance of the vision and commitment they demonstrated in the effort. Like them, we here in CUUPs are setting out on uncharted waters to explore the unfamiliar. As UUs we have a deep history to draw upon to help us, and in our covenantal tradition if we may find maps, compass, stars and ships by which to approach our promised lands together.

For some time, we in CUUPs have been struggling with the issue of the nature of our relationships between our chapters, our congregations and with CUUPs continental. I feel that a formal but flexible process of covenanting between chapters and congregations will greatly clarify and strengthen these often tenuous and ambiguous ties. In turn and explicitly, covenantal relationships between chapters and CUUPs as a whole will better layout our responsibilities to each other and provide for better accountability and more open communication going both ways.

For our individual members, entering into a covenant with CUUPs will again articulate our mutual expectations. For those in Chapters, I feel a process of covenanting within a chapter would go a long way towards creating a greater sense of connection by clarifying expectations, hopes and desires. Within more orthodox and creedal Pagan traditions there are often pledges and various vows made, some covenantal, some contractual. By being explicit about our being covenantal we are intentionally placing our identity as Contemporary Pagans within the sphere and influence of liberal religion.

Let me briefly state what I understand to be the difference between liberals and radicals. Radicals of any stripe or loyalty are identifiable by their belief and practice of a philosophy that "the ends justify the means." On the other hand, liberalism, especially religious liberalism, is identified by an emphasis and commitment to the philosophy of process. For us as religious liberals, the end does not justify the means, and in fact the ends only have the integrity which the means bring to them. This dynamic is in part why the UUA as whole is currently embarked on our Fulfilling the Promise campaign. It is an attempt to clarify our covenant with each other, to bring greater integrity to our various relationships and to the ends we achieve together.

I believe that if we as CUUPs members and CUUPs as a whole enter into a process of covenanting with sincerity and follow-through, we may be able to create a way of being together that will not only be a role model for other UU affiliates, but also for the Pagan community at large. We are being watched by many and we have a chance to influence the nature and fabric of Contemporary Paganism for the foreseeable future. If we take seriously our liberal ideals and principles as a way of living and being, then their influence in the larger Pagan sphere is not only desirable but necessary for the manifestation and ongoing embodiment of the Beloved Community we aspire to foster and to be in the world.

WHY START A CUUPS CHAPTER IN YOUR UU CONGREGATION?

DAVE BURWASSER

UU Pagans can certainly do their UU Pagan thing in a UU congregation without the absolute need for a local Chapter of CUUPS. The Pagan and Pagan-curious members of a UU congregation can certainly plan rituals for themselves and compose Sunday services for the congregation without need of a formal local organization. What are some of the advantages to forming a Chapter?

CONCERTED PURPOSE. Ideally, the Pagan presence in a UU congregation should be the local "agent of the Sixth Source" -- the steady representation to that congregation of how Earth centered spirituality intertwines with Unitarian Universalism. It's a bit much to expect individual Pagans make that dedication the center of their existence; get-a-life problems quickly ensue. The CUUPS Chapter, as an intentional organization, can be so dedicated, effectively, without undue stress on any of its members.

PLUGGING INTO THE CHURCH STRUCTURE. Excepting the smallest Fellowships, UU congregational activities are generally done through internal groups -- the Board, the RE staff, the choir, the finance committee, the social concerns committee, etc. And it sometimes will have a Church Council of committees and associated groups to coordinate the calendar. Having an organization makes it much easier to interface with the rest of the congregational structure.

INTERFACING WITH THE LARGER PAGAN COMMUNITY (aka Attribution Issues). UU Pagans in your congregation want to put on a Lammas celebration for the whole local Pagan community? Great! But who's the sponsor? "A bunch of Pagans from XYZ UU Church of Your Town?" Churches can be touchy about attribution of implied association. Much smoother if there is a CUUPS Chapter with its own name and identity as a focus for that sponsorship.

FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION. The UU Pagans, the Pagan-curious UUs in the congregation and the UU-curious Pagans in the local community might get chances to confer one-on-one throughout a given month, but might never all get together for an exchange of ideas. The meeting of a Chapter is a premise for that kind of get-together.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION. You want to get the word of UU Pagan activities out to a number of people outside as well as inside the congregation. That's a premise for a

newsletter. Being clear about whose newsletter it is, and getting it run off in the church office, is a lot easier if it is the newsletter of the CUUPS Chapter.

EQUINOX FUN FOR THE FAMILY!

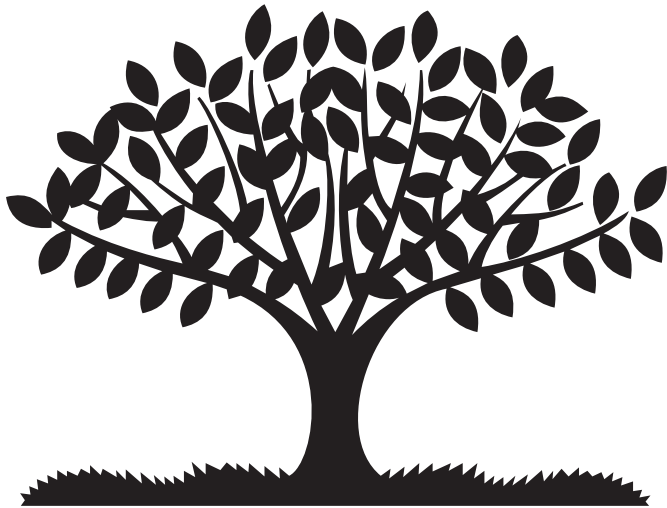
JERRIE HILDEBRAND

We love to take hikes in the woods in the Fall! Collecting leaves is a favorite and then we make things from them. Not only is this fun with children, but for a group of adults any age!

A couple of sheets of clear contact paper make beautiful altar covers when filled with leaves, shells, and other gifts along the trail. Place them between the two sheets of contact paper, trim and use. Placemats, altar covers, coasters, window ornaments can all be made to decorate your house for the Equinox. Our home will be beautiful.

So get outside this Fall...walk a trail, jump in a pile of leaves, pick the last flowers of the year, and share the tales of the Earth's creatures and plant life with a child in your life. Bright blessings this Autumn season

Ad for Sage Woman or
PanGaia here!



**The Tenth Annual
Covenant of
Unitarian Universalist
Pagans Continental
Festival & Gathering**

**Friday, Sept. 18 to
Sunday, Sept. 20, 1998**

Camp Fontainebleau, LA
(near New Orleans)

**Weaving an
Institution**

What is Convocation ?

Convocation, or "Convo" as it's often called, is the annual continent-wide gathering for CUUPS. Usually, it has been held near the East or West Coast. This is the first time it has come to either the Mid-South or Southwest Districts of the UUA. There will be rituals, wonderful New Orleans food, workshops, a theme speaker, a few vendors and some free time to make new friends or catch up with some old ones.

Eating & Sleeping?

There will be five meals (dinner Friday to breakfast Sunday) provided by members of First UU Church of New Orleans. Crystal Crescent CUUPS Chapter coordinator JB Gautreaux is coordinating these efforts. On request vegetarian options will be available.

Camp Fontainebleau provides dorm-style sleeping arrangements with air conditioning. You need to provide your own bed linens and pillows.

Our Theme Speaker

This year our theme topic is going to be an unusual one for a Pagan gathering: Institutionalism. What effect is it having on Paganism and UU-Pagans? We'll have an expert on the topic, Dr. Helen Berger, tell us. She is a sociologist and an associate professor with West Chester University in Pennsylvania, and has made a major part of her career studying Pagans. In November 1998, the Univ. of South Carolina Press will be releasing a book she wrote called "*A Community of Witches: Contemporary Neopaganism and Witchcraft in the United States.*"

Our Workshops

Institutions are not just big brick buildings that people worship in. Our legal system is also an institution. How we relate to it, as members of a minority religion, will be part of a talk given by Jaye Jacobson, Executive Director of the Texas state chapter of the ACLU. (American Civil Liberties Union.)

One of the newest institutions is the Internet. From the start, it has been a hotbed of Pagan activity. Two longtime participants in this are CUUPS Boardmember Stacey Greenstein (aka Uther) who has been editor/compiler of Pagan Digest since 1989 and Donal (aka Bill Smith) who helped create the soc.religion.paganism Usenet newsgroup and also operates Brewich BBS, the largest Pagan-oriented BBS in the South.

New Orleans Voodoo will be led by The Rev. Melanie Morel Sullivan. Learn about the background of the African-Caribbean-Catholic spirituality that is New Orleans Voodoo, led by the contributor of the section on vodoun in the UUA curricula, *Rise Up e' Call Her Name*. Participants will make voodoo grisgris bags, hear some modern interpretations of New Orleans voodoo chants, and, transportation permitting, travel to visit the tomb of 19th Century voodoo priestess Marie Laveau, where we will perform a ritual.

Creating Interfaith Dialogue Among Ourselves and Our Communities is an inter-institutional topic that will be covered in a workshop given by CUUPS Newsletter Editor and Board officer Jerrie Hildebrand.

Other workshops are in the works. A final list will come out around Lammas (Aug. 2) and will be distributed to early registrants, so that they can have first choice of any that are limited in number of participants. If you would like to facilitate a workshop please contact the CUUPS Office before July 1st.

So What Are The Kids Doing?

We are planning to provide childcare for children ages 4-15 during the programming periods. Individuals with references who would like to help with childcare can qualify for up to a 50% registration discount. For more information please contact the CUUPS Office.

CUUPS Board Meeting

The CUUPS Board traditionally meets on Friday morning and early afternoon. Our meetings are open to CUUPS members. If you'd like to attend, please contact the CUUPS Office.

CUUPS Raffle

Participants at CUUPS Convo are encouraged to bring one or more items to contribute to a raffle being held to raise money for CUUPS programming. Please also come prepared to buy chances on the nifty items which will be on display.

Rituals

Like most years, there are three main rituals at Convocation. They help provide a balancing counterpoint to all the "intellectual stuff" that goes on in the workshops. Our Opening Ritual will be on Friday after dinner has been cleared. It will include a water sharing ceremony in it, so please bring a small vial of water with you to Convo. This ritual will be conducted by members of the CUUPS Board.

The Main Ritual will be Saturday night and will be conducted in large part by our host chapter, Crystal Crescent CUUPS of New Orleans.

Our closing ritual will occur shortly after Noon on Sunday. The WaterOak Chapter from Spindletop UU Church in Beaumont, TX will bring us closure to the weekend.

Around Camp Fontainebleau

From the time you turn into Fontainebleau's main entrance and begin to drive through dense stands of oak, sweet gum, magnolia, hickory and pine, you'll realize that this park is something special.

The 2700-acre park is located on the shores of Lake Pontchartrain. The park's nature trail is a favorite. Signs along the trail will help you to identify many of the common trees and shrubs. Over 400 different species live in and around Fontainebleau. A great variety of habitats is the main reason for this large diversity of animal and plant life.

Prices for CUUPS Member

General Public add \$10/person those lodging offsite may lower their payment by \$10/person

Reg.before	Adult	Child 4-15
Sept 11	\$119	\$79
Walk-in	\$139	\$99

Prices include Programming, Food (5 meals) and two nights lodging. Camp Fontainebleau provides dorm-style housing.

Convo Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Phone: _____

Email*: _____

UU Church*: _____

2nd Name: _____

3rd Names: _____

4th Names: _____

Ages of children (if present): _____

Special Needs:

- Vegetarian food. First floor lodging.

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
(US Funds only)

Make checks payable to CUUPS and send to:

CUUPS Convo
8190-A Beechmont #335
Cincinnati, OH 45255-3154

* optional information



8190A Beechmont Avenue #335
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45255-3154
 Phone: 817.557.3949
 Email: CUUPS@aol.com

At no time does CUUPS sell or promote the use of the members or subscribers lists for commercial purposes. The use of these lists are for member purposes only and CUUPS related business. To ensure this we are offering three levels of confidentiality, at this time. Please check one.

Level 1

Your name, address and phone number will be available only to the current members of the CUUPS Coordinating Committee, Administrator and their agents.

Level 2

Your name, address and phone number will be available only to the current members of the CUUPS Coordinating Committee, Standing Committee Chairs and Chapter Coordinators in your area.

Level 3

Your name, address and phone number is available to anyone interested in UU Paganism!

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP FORM

I want to become/remain an active member in CUUPS, Inc. I understand as a active member of CUUPS, Inc., I will receive a minimum of four newsletters per year, a membership packet, membership card and mailings regarding upcoming events for CUUPS, Inc.

Please find enclosed my membership fee as checked below. This is in US funds, Canadian or British denominated money orders and paper currency. All personal checks must be in US funds only.

_____ Basic Active Membership \$30 (\$C45/21BP)

_____ Basic Active Family membership \$45 (\$C68/31BP)
(Family means any two adults and/ or children at one address)

_____ Full time Student/Financial Hardship \$15 (\$C23/11BP)

_____ Non-member subscriber to the CUUPS Newsletter \$12
 (\$C20/10BP) (\$14 outside US)

_____ New _____ Renewal

I would like to make an additional contribution to CUUPS of:

\$25 \$40 \$75 \$100 \$200 \$ _____

I wish this contribution to be used toward the payment of CUUPS debt.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

Email _____



8190A Beechmont Avenue #335
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45255-3154
 Phone: 817.557.3949
 Email: CUUPS@aol.com

PRODUCT & SUPPLY ORDER FORM

All prices are in US Funds and are postage paid to North American addresses.

CUUPS Resources:

- The Well Grounded CUUPS Chapter* - \$5 A short (16pg) booklet on CUUPS Chapters and UU-Paganism based on the experience and opinions of CUUPS Board Emeritus David Burwasser.
- Gift Subscription to CUUPS Newsletter* - \$12 (2 for \$20)

Back issues of Newsletters: (While supply lasts)

- The CUUPS Newsletter -\$2
 - Winter 1996/7
 - Spring 97
 - Late Winter 98
- Pagan NUUS - \$1.00
 - Spring/Summer 1996
 - 9.1 Fall/Winter 1995
 - 8.1 Fall 1994
 - 7.2 Winter/Spring 1994
 - 5.1
 - 4.2
- Summer 97
- Fall 97
- Spring 98
- Spring/Beltane 1996
- 8.2 Winter/Spring 1995
- 7.3 Spring/Summer 1994
- 7.1 Fall 1993
- 4.3
- 4.1

T-shirts: Coffee \$15 for med., large & X-large. \$18 for XX-Large

Goddess Cards: Packages of 8 for \$12

Tapes Chants For Celebrating the Earth \$12/\$10

Brochures

- All About CUUPS Chapters*
- Women and Paganism*
- Men and Paganism*
- What is Paganism?*
- Ancient Roots with Modern Branches*
- What is CUUPS?*
- Become an Active Member of CUUPS*
- Celebrating Paganism with Children*
- The Wheel of the Year*

Minimum postal order is \$1. All prices listed here include shipping costs.

- Deluxe Pkg - 100 of all 9 for \$59
- Large Pkg - 50 of all 9 for \$34
- Chapter Pkg - 25 of all 9 for \$19
- Fellowship Pkg - 10 of all 9 for \$9
- Individual panels - \$.10 each (on all quantities of individual pamphlets)

Books

- UU-Pagan Hymnal Sourcebook \$2
- Writing the Circle \$12
- Origins of the Sacred \$12
- Walking With Mother Earth \$10
- Earth Poems \$12
- Gaia and God/ Reuther \$10
- Metamorphosis of Baubo \$12

Order from:

Name _____

Membership Expiration Date _____

Chapter/ Organization _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____

Postal Code _____

Country _____

Number of Items ordered _____

Amount of Order \$ _____

Ohio Residents Add Ohio Sales Tax \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Please include fee and mail to the CUUPS, Inc address on this order form.

Bottom for Office use only. Tear-off shipping Label

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Ship to:

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State _____ Postal Code _____



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NOTE!

Check out our
website at
www.cuups.org