

WOMEN AND PAGANISM

Contemporary Paganism entered the consciousness of the Unitarian Universalist community mostly through its women members and their explorations of Women's Spirituality. Their ground-breaking work paved the way for contemporary Paganism as an active spiritual path for men and women in the UUA.

THROUGH UU ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Goddess is a potent image in contemporary Paganism. Many Unitarian Universalist women were introduced to the Goddess through the religious education classes "*Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*" and "*Rise Up and Call Her Name*". Some women have chosen to focus exclusively on images of the Goddess who may be maiden, mother, crone, teacher, lover, healer or death bringer.

THE DIVERSITY WE CELEBRATE

God images, male faces of Divinity, are also very much present and a part of modern Pagan culture. Some women embrace the complement in a polytheistic view of male Gods, who might be young, old, wise, tricky, strong, or physically challenged. This multifaceted view of Gods provides an insight many women seek in their relationships with men.

Although a significant minority of women on the Pagan path choose to explore their spirituality by worshipping exclusively with other women, the majority of contemporary Pagans commonly worship in mixed gender groups. Many Pagan groups explore the partnership of Goddess and God, using governance models of equality and shared leadership.

WOMEN WHO INSPIRE AND TEACH US

The modern Pagan movement owes much to the women who shaped its direction and brought it to public notice. Women like Starhawk, author of the best selling book *Spiral Dance*, founder of Reclaiming Collective and the Compost coven, teacher; Margot Adler, National Public Radio reporter, author of the pioneering book *Drawing Down the Moon*, board member of CUUPS; Z Budapest, founder of Dianic Wicca, author, teacher; Margaret Murray, anthropologist, archaeologist, Egyptologist; Doreen Valiente, poet, teacher, author, considered one of the most influential modern witches.

In addition to Margot Adler, two other Unitarian Universalist women who greatly influenced this movement are Rev. Shirley Ranck, author of "*Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*", and Elisabeth Fisher, author of "*Rise Up and Call Her Name*".

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

One source for more information about Paganism within the Unitarian Universalist Association is the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans:



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