

The Journey...S

Official Newsletter of Church of the Spiral Tree
an Ecumenical, Faerie Faith church

Issue 3
Summer Solstice, 1998

Linda's Letter:

Considering that we have members in places too far away to easily visit Auburn, Alabama for our regular rituals and gatherings, I thought of an idea to better include everyone. Before each of our planned rituals, we will mail, email, or FAX a copy of the ritual to members who choose to participate this way, along with the "kick-off" time and date of the ritual. Then, members who wish can do the same ritual the rest of the group is doing, at the same time, on the same day.

If you think you'd be interested in participating this way, just send me email or call me to let me know. As our rituals sometimes are not completely written till the night before, I'll need either an email address or FAX number to quickly send you the ritual. However, you will know the date and time of the ritual well

enough in advance (at least 2 weeks) to make plans for it.

Once you sign up for this "Faerie Faith Link," I'll continue sending you rituals until you tell me otherwise. Of course you'll need to keep your email and/or FAX number current with me.

The first ritual we'll be doing this Link with is the Lammas/Holly Moon ritual on August 8. If you'd like to participate, let me know SOON!

In addition to the rituals, I'll be publishing articles on the elements of Faerie Faith rituals, so you'll know why we're doing certain things, and what they mean. The first installment is in this issue.

I'd like to make this work out for everyone, so please send me your feedback!

-Linda Kerr

What's Happening So Far:

Moondance went exceptionally well. It was our first one held at Dragon Hills near Carrollton, Georgia, but not our last! The site is beautiful, with green rolling hills, lots of wooded areas, a nice stream, an outdoor covered kitchen with stove and fridge, and a covered stage, but the big selling point were the hot showers!

We had about 120 in attendance this year, and met some wonderful new folks. Shelly did a great opening ritual Friday night, after which we had lots of drumming and dancing around the bonfire. Saturday night after the pot-luck, Moonstruck played, then Gaelen emceed a talent show. Steven won first place with his poetry and stories; Kevin took second with his "Ravings of a Lunatic," stories about his family; and Odessa was third with her blues guitar and singing. I didn't know our folks were so talented! After the prizes were given out, we had a Hot Buns content for the guys. David won, with a free entrance to Moondance 99. Boy, it was fun judging that one! By the time all this was over, the party at the main bonfire was in full swing, with lots of drumming and dancing.

Sunday we all slept late, and had more great classes. That night was our main Faerie Faith ritual, written by Gil. It was meant to be a solemn ritual, it really was, but the day needed a bit of silliness in it. On the way to get Willow branches, our foragers were accosted by some of the local farmers, twice, but they prevailed, and we got our branches. During the ritual, we were supposed to splatter people with water using these Willow branches, but instead, the mood took over, and the Super Soakers came out! We couldn't help ourselves, really... To top it all off, Freddie, our fire cauldron, decided to be spectacular, and got "friendly" with Krys. Fortunately, she just got a couple of singed spots on her dress, and a case of the shakes. It was definitely a ritual, and a Moondance, to remember!

Results of Annual Membership Meeting

Held at Moondance 98, May 24, 1998, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, Georgia

Officers Elected:

President: Linda Kerr
Vice-President: Craig Kerr
Treasurer/Secretary: Sherry Holmes
Member-at-Large: Robert Von Allmen

Membership voted affirmatively that the By-Laws be changed to include a new sentence: "*The incumbent officers shall be automatically nominated for office again each year; other nominations may be made by any active member at the Annual Meeting or any time within a month prior to the Annual Meeting, by sending notice to the current Directors, by mail or by email.*" To be placed at end of second sentence in Article VII, Section 7.2.



Who Are We?

The Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed, ecumenical pagan/wiccan church, designed to foster a sense of community and family among pagans, both locally and in other regions of the country/world. It is an ecumenical church in that it encompasses all traditions, and is non-exclusive. It welcomes all who revere the Earth Mother and adhere to the tenets of the Wiccan Rede ("An it harm none, do as you will"), regardless of which tradition one is affiliated with. CST is also a Faerie Faith church, in that it has a goal of spreading the teachings of the Faerie Faith to all who are interested, and giving people better access to this ancient and beautiful Irish belief system. The Faerie Faith itself is a non-exclusive faith; one who is studying the Faerie Faith is always free to study other traditions or join other organizations.

If you would like to help with any of our projects, have any further ideas for the church, or have any resources which would be of benefit, please contact us. CST is also seeking volunteers to help with various parts of the church, such as:

- writers and artists for the CST newsletter
- editing and publishing the CST newsletter
- handling networking contacts, including publishing lists in newsletter
- other business and administration associated with the newsletter

Newsletter Staff:

Editor/Publisher Linda Kerr

CST Board of Directors:

President Linda Kerr
Vice President Craig Kerr
Secretary/Treasurer Sherry Holmes
Member-At-Large Robert Von Allmen

CST Staff:

Hospitality Officer Odessa Crenshaw

Church of the Spiral Tree

PO Box 186

Auburn, AL 36831-0186

334-821-4683 (Linda Kerr)

spiraltree@mindspring.com

<http://www.mindspring.com/~spiraltree>

CONTACTS:

Remember, you get a free listing with your paid membership. You may also submit your listing at any later time.

Amy Blount: I wish to correspond with all members. Contact Amy, < hudd2@bellsouth.com > , or write to: 4650 Perry Rd., Gainesville, GA 30506.

Marijane Wilcox: Crone goddess, minister/spiritual counselor/herbalist. Montgomery, Alabama. Email: < marijane@mindspring.com > .

Mark Morey: Rt. 2 Box 2715, Roberta, GA, 31078-9620, 912-836-3525 (Licensed minister).

Matt "Kylln" Rhinehart: I am always happy to talk with other Wiccans about things of a spiritual nature or just to talk. Cartersville, GA, 770-606-8647.

Melody Pettus: I would welcome meeting or writing to any like-minded Faery trained folks in the Atlanta area. 2347 Melinda Dr., Atlanta, GA 30345-1914, or email to < c..robinson@worldnet.att.net > .

Morgain: 40 year old eclectic witch (bi). Enjoys the outdoors, tarot, Pathway cards, children, crystals, and stone people. Open minded to all the universe has to offer. Seeking pagan/metaphysical friends. P.O. Box 16536, Panama City, FL 32406.

"Skippy" Rob Von Allmen: Tired? Bored? Wanting to find true love and happiness? Well, what are you doing talking to me?! I don't have all the questions, much less the answers. But I do have a clue (I found it in a cereal box) and am licensed to share the wisdom of the ages (answered an ad in Rolling Stone). If you also ponder such mysteries as "Is there life after death?," "Was he a man dreaming he was a butterfly...?," and "Where am I parked?," then please drop me a line at: 3512 Clairmont Ave. #501, Birmingham, AL 35222.

Stephanie A. Farrow: Seeking friendship & wisdom from a fellow Celtic Wiccan. Possible coven. Blessed be! 151 Buckingham Cir., Montevallo, AL, 35115, 205-665-2229.

Steven D. Richert: Celtic shaman, still new t this path, is seeking any others of like mind to correspond with while I'm in prison and out. Steven D. Richert #17987, W/D-128-T, U.S.P., P.O. Box 250, Draper, UT, 84020.

MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

WANTED-YOUNG PEOPLE (age 12 to 17) in the Atlanta, Georgia and surrounding areas, interested in participating in an alternative Choral Group starting September 1998. We promote tolerance of all Earth honoring paths and offer the gift of sacred songs and chants. If interested in more details, please send SASE to F.W.E.C., 2347 Melinda Drive, Atlanta, Georgia, 30345-1914.

CST Calendar:

We tentatively plan on having a ritual and/or a celebration to mark the 8 Sabbats, on the Saturday closest to the date. These will usually (but not always) take place near Auburn, Alabama. Notices will be emailed or snail-mailed to all members with more specific information on each. (PLEASE keep your email address updated with us—very important!)

Upcoming CST sabbats and other 1998 happenings:

Lammas:

August 8, 1998, Waverly, AL (near Auburn). Lammas/Holly Moon (full moon is Aug. 7) ritual. Ritual will begin at 7:30 pm, with a party afterwards at Odessa's house (bring munchies, appetizers, drinks). Since it gets dark late, plan on eating dinner before the ritual, and we'll just munch afterwards. Crash and tent space available. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

September:

Earthdance is Sept. 11-13, and Ceren Ered is having a Mabon festival Sept. 18-20 in Tennessee.

Fall Equinox:

September 19, 1998, Waverly, AL (near Auburn). Mabon ritual. Ritual will begin at 7:00 pm, with a party and pot-luck afterwards. Crash and tent space available.

October:

FallFling is Oct. 15-18 at Dragon Hills, near Carrollton, Georgia. Serpentstone is hosting Witchstock at Draggintail Farm near Macon, GA on Oct. 22-25.

Samhain:

November 15, Waverly, AL (near Auburn). Samhain/Ivy ritual. Ritual will begin at 5:30 pm, with a pot-luck and a fun, fun, fun party—Moosemas—at Linda's house afterwards. (Also Linda & Susan's birthday party.) Crash and tent space available, and encouraged! Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

Yule:

We probably won't have anything this year for Yule, because Serpentstone is having a Yule festival at Draggintail Farm near Macon, GA on Dec. 18-20. The only other Saturdays available are December 12 (too early) and December 26 (day after Christmas!).

Imbolc:

February 6, Waverly, AL (near Auburn). Imbolc ritual. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

For info on any of the above, email Linda Kerr at <spiraltree@mindspring.com>.

Note that on a couple of the cross-quarter festivals the dates are a few days after the traditional date. This is because we celebrate the cross-quarter days on the astronomical date. To get this date, count the number of days from the previous Solstice or Equinox to the next Equinox or Solstice—usually about 92 days. Divide this by 2 (usually about 46 days). That day halfway in between the Solstice and Equinox or Equinox and Solstice is the actual cross-quarter day. For 1998, the actual dates would be: Imbolc - February 3-4; Beltane - May 5-6; Lammas - August 6; Samhain - November 6.

Don't Forget to Tell Me if You Want to Participate in the Faerie Faith Link!! The First One Will be Lammas, August 8.

Upcoming Festivals (Not CST events):

Earthdance	September 4-6, 1998	FDR State Park, Pine Mtn, GA
FallFling '98	October 15-18, 1998	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA
Witchstock '98	October 22-25, 1998	Draggintail Farms, Roberta, GA (near Macon)
Yule	Dec. 18-20, 1998	Draggintail Farms, Roberta, GA (near Macon)
Moondance	May 20-24, 1999	Dragon Hills



Faerie Faith Rituals

The Elementals

by Linda Kerr

Have you ever done something just because it was always done that way, because that's how it was given to you, and you never really questioned it or wondered about it? Well, that's how I was concerning which elementals are associated with the different directions in a Faerie Faith ritual. In our rituals, East is Fire, South is Earth, West is Water, and North is Air. This always made perfect sense to me. As I branched out a bit more and began learning about other traditions, I realized that most Wiccan circles have as their elementals Air at East, Fire at South, Water at West, and Earth at North, with Spirit at the center. Apparently we'd been doing something rather different. Hmmm...

The typical Wiccan elemental/directional associations seem to stem from the Gardnerian/Alexandrian tradition, which originated in England. These elementals/directions probably work fine for most folks, especially if that's what you're used to. But let me explain a bit why we do what we do, and how similar our directions are to the Native Americans, on whose soil we live (when in Rome...). And after all, the Faerie Faith is not Wiccan. We are pagan, but we are a more shamanic/mystery tradition than anything else, and we use very few of the standard Wiccan elements in our rituals.

In their ceremonies, the Native Americans honor each of the four directions, then the earth, then the sky. (Brown, 35) Apparently they don't associate a particular elemental with each direction, but they do, however, associate a color, an animal, and a few key properties with each one. According to H. Storm, a Cheyenne, East is yellow, Eagle, illumination, seeing things clearly far and wide. South is green, Mouse, innocence, trust. West is black, Bear, introspection, the looks-within-place. North is white, Buffalo, wisdom. (Storm, 6) Black Elk, in describing one of the Oglala Sioux rites, says that east is where the sun comes up, and where wisdom comes from; south is the source and the end of all life; west is where the purifying waters come from; and north is where the purifying winds come from. (Brown, 35) He also tells us that in sweat lodge ceremonies, the entrance to the sweat lodge is always at the east, for it is from this directions that the light of wisdom comes. (Brown, 32)

From these descriptions, we can almost assume that each of the four directions may have an elemental associated with it, even though it is not overtly stated. The illumination of the East, where the sun rises,

sounds more like Fire than anything else. South, being the source and end of all life, could easily be Earth, where we experience things as a Mouse, close to the ground. West is mentioned as where the purifying waters come from—pretty unmistakable. And the purifying winds of the North definitely sounds like Air.

We in the Faerie Faith have very similar understandings of the four directions and their properties, and we do associate an elemental with each one. Fire at East is the place where the sun rises, and signifies light, illumination, and passion. Earth at South is the earth under our feet, and signifies a childlike nature and innocence. Water at West is where the sun sets, and signifies the waters of the unconscious, or introspection. Air at North is the air around us, the sky over us, and signifies intelligence, wisdom, and higher knowledge.

Another point is that with Water in the West and Fire in the East, and Air in the North and Earth in the South, you're dealing with direct (and logical) opposites.

When we invoke the elementals, we don't "call in the Watchtowers"; rather we invoke the personality or aspects of that elemental to visit us during our rite, to bestow upon us their gifts, whether of introspection, passion, wisdom, or trust, and to depart when we finish the rite and go in peace. We feel that the elementals are around us always, and will be there whether we invite them or not, so we make it a positive experience by extending the invitation to them. We don't necessarily use incense or a bowl of salt to represent the elementals, either. The air is around us already; it's not going anywhere (hopefully!). The earth is below our feet. Water is within us and around us, in the earth and in the air. Fire might be the only thing we'd use a representation for, in the form of a candle. But even that isn't always necessary, if you have a bonfire going, or are doing the ritual in the daylight, or you have a pipe burning. As we are a nature religion, we tend to keep it simple and let it flow with the energies of the now.

I know this is brief, but I'll write more on this topic later. If you have questions, just email me!

Sources:

Hyemeyohsts Storm, Seven Arrows, 1972, Ballantine Books, New York, NY.

The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux, Recorded and Edited by Joseph Epes Brown, 1953, Norman and London, University of Oklahoma Press.

MINUTES
CHURCH OF THE SPIRAL TREE
Board of Directors
May 3, 1998

The meeting was called to order by Linda Kerr at 6:00 pm, at 1831 Opelika Road, Auburn, Alabama, with the following Directors present:

Linda C. Kerr, President
James C. Kerr, Vice-President
Sherry Holmes, Secretary/Treasurer

Approval of minutes

It was moved, seconded and unanimously carried that the minutes of the meeting on February 8, 1998 held in Auburn, Alabama be approved.

New Business

It was moved, seconded, and approved that the By-Laws be changed to include a new sentence: *“The incumbent officers shall be automatically nominated for office again each year; other nominations may be made by any active member at the Annual Meeting or any time within a month prior to the Annual Meeting, by sending notice to the current Directors, by mail or by email.”* To be placed at end of second sentence in Article VII, Section 7.2.

Relevant section of Bylaws is noted below, with proposed change in italics.

ARTICLE VII
OFFICERS

7.1: The Officers of the Corporation shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may as needed be combined into one office and held by one person. These officers shall also serve as the Board of Directors of the Church, along with one or more Members-at-Large, as per Article VI.

7.2: At the Annual Meeting of the General Membership, these officers/Directors shall be elected by a vote of the Active Membership. All officers must be active members in good standing and qualified to perform the duties of their office. *The incumbent officers shall be automatically nominated for office again each year; other nominations may be made by any active member at the Annual Meeting or any time within a month prior to the Annual Meeting, by sending notice to the current Directors, by mail or by email.*

This proposed change in By-Laws will be voted upon at the Annual Membership Meeting, to be held at Moondance, Dragon Hills, Carrollton, Georgia, on May 24, 1998. Mail-in ballots will be sent to all members so that those unable to attend will have the chance to vote on the matter.

It was motioned, seconded, and approved that Robert Von Allmen be nominated as the “Member-at-Large” Director; that Linda Kerr, incumbent President, be nominated as President; that Craig Kerr, incumbent Vice-President, be nominated as Vice-President; and that Sherry Holmes, incumbent Secretary/Treasurer, be nominated as Secretary/Treasurer. Again, these nominations will be voted upon at the Annual Membership Meeting, with mail-in ballots sent to all members.

The next two meetings were scheduled to be held August 9, 1998, and November 15, 1998, in Auburn, Alabama. There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

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Church of the Spiral Tree

Membership Application

Legal Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you wish to be listed in the **Contacts** section of the newsletter? If so, please use the space below to write your listing exactly the way you want it published. Be sure to include a way for people to contact you. **WRITE LEGIBLY!** We are not responsible to errors due to "chicken scratch."

We have several different types of memberships available to suit your needs. All include full membership benefits, and run for one year, with a renewal notice sent to remind you next year.

_____	Individual	\$20.00	
_____	Student/Poor Person:	\$15.00	(please attach a short note demonstrating financial need)
_____	Family (includes kids):	\$35.00	(must be in immediate family only, same address)
_____	Sustaining Member:	\$50.00	(receives all benefits plus our undying thanks)
_____	Contributing Member:	\$100.00	(receives all benefits, our eternal thanks, and a listing in the newsletter once a year)
_____	Patron(ess) Member:	\$200.00	(receives all benefits, our everlasting gratitude, a yearly listing in the newsletter, and a certificate)

OTHER:

_____	Donation to CST	\$5 & up	(all donations are tax deductible; you will be sent a receipt for your records, as well as our undying thanks)
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Make checks out to: The Church of the Spiral Tree, Inc., and mail to:

Spiral Tree
P.O. Box 186
Auburn, AL 36831-0186
334-821-4683
spiraltree@mindspring.com

Visit us at our web site! <<http://www.mindspring.com/~spiraltree>>

CST Calendar:

Board of Directors' meetings:

August 9, 1998, Auburn, Alabama
November 15, 1998, Auburn, Alabama
February, 1999, Auburn, Alabama
May, 1999, Auburn, Alabama

Annual Meeting of the General membership:

May 23, 1999, Moondance, Dragon Hills, near Carrollton, Georgia

Celebration Dates (subject to change!):

Lughnassad	August 8, 1998
Autumn Equinox	September 19, 1998
Samhain	November 14, 1998

Festivals: (not CST events!)

Earthdance	September 4-6, 1998	FDR State Park, Pine Mtn, GA
FallFling '98	October 15-18, 1998	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA
Moondance '99	May 20-24, 1999	Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA

Church of the Spiral Tree
P.O. Box 186
Auburn, AL 36830

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED