

The Journey...S

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

Issue 5
Yule, 1998

We've been busy lately, with planning and writing lunar rituals for 1999, and hosting FallFling, Samhain, and by the time you read this, Yule. Church of the Spiral Tree is now registered to do business in Georgia. This means that anyone wishing to put together a branch of the church there can do so. If anyone in another state wishes to start a branch, you just need to let us know so we can take care of the legal end here.

There've been several questions about starting a branch of the church, so at Yule, the BOD will sit down and hash out the particulars. What we come up with will be published in the next newsletter (Spring Equinox), but if you're interested before that time, you can just call or email us.

Another thing in the works is a temple building at our land in Waverly. After it rained on us at Samhain, Craig decided we need somewhere to hold rituals in bad weather. So at Yule we'll begin working on a roundhouse. This will be fairly simply built, and hopefully cheaply, too. This isn't an official church project, since we plan on selling that land in a couple of years. We'll probably pay for it out of our pockets and with member and community donations, of both money and materials. Again, more on this will appear in the next newsletter, after we've gotten started on it and decided what it will look like and how much it will cost.

Faerie-Faith Link: Don't forget that you have the option of participating long-distance in our rituals. All you have to do is let us know that you want to do this, and before each of our planned rituals, we will mail, email, or FAX a copy of the ritual to you, along with the "kick-off" time and date of the ritual. This way, 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.

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 second installment is in this issue.

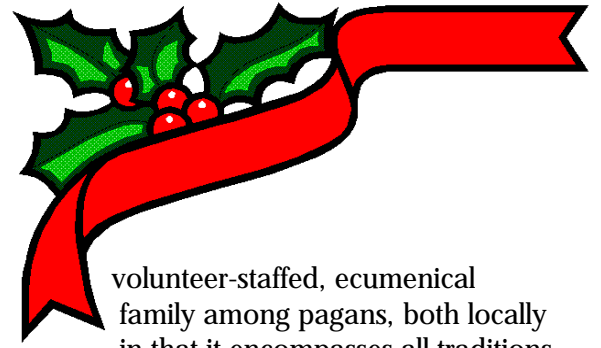
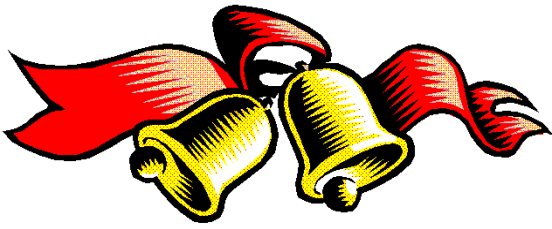
I'd like to make this work out for everyone, so please send me your feedback!

-Linda Kerr

FallFling, run by Linda and Craig, was fun and a bit crazy. The festival was held at Dragon Hills in Carrollton, Georgia, October 15-18. We had a great talent show, a costume contest (Doyle won!), an interesting ritual walking through the four quarters of the Medicine Wheel, and an Asatru Winter-Finding ritual. It was a very busy and fun-filled weekend, with something for just about everybody.

FallFling was held the weekend before **Witchstock**, held at the same site (run by SerpentStone), so lots of people left their tents in place, or even stayed there themselves, till the next weekend. Craig & I left our tent there, and came back on Friday for Witchstock (it had started on Thursday). Apparently it wasn't as big as the previous two years, which were over 1000 and 1500, but it looked pretty big to me! Final count, I believe, was around 800 people. I had a great time, mostly because it was a festival I didn't have to run!

Having the two festivals back-to-back was great fun, and we'll try to do it again next year, if the schedule provides. I've heard that SerpentStone may not put Witchstock on again, but FallFling will definitely happen again.



Who Are We?

The Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, pagan/wiccan church, designed to foster a sense of community and and in other regions of the country/world. It is an ecumenical church 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.

volunteer-staffed, ecumenical family among pagans, both locally in that it encompasses all traditions,

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

CST Staff:

Hospitality Officer Odessa Crenshaw



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spiraltree@mindspring.com
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About the Rituals:

During 1998, we've had rituals to celebrate the Sabbats. In 1999, we're going to concentrate more on the Esbats, or full moons, and possibly also do the Sabbats. (We'll see how the work load goes!) Doing the lunar rituals each full moon will give interested people a chance to experience the full lunar cycle Faerie-Faith style, as each will focus on one of the trees of the Celtic Tree Calendar. Note that these are working rituals, rather than celebratory ones. We'll be learning and teaching, and also doing energy work.

These rituals will be much simpler and shorter; there will be no gathering or pot-luck afterwards, and the rituals may even be done in someone's back yard to make the whole thing easier to set up and clean up. Therefore, these lunar rituals are primarily aimed at nearby members who don't have a large commute to make on a monthly basis. However, they are open to any and all.

We expect that these lunar rituals will have a smaller turnout than our bigger, more celebratory sabbat rituals. As always, notices about upcoming rituals will be emailed or snail-mailed out to members ahead of time.

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.

Frank Palmer: #546776, 2101 FM 369N, Iowa Park, TX, 76367-6568. Eclectic Druid student (nearly full Druid priest), male, feminist, seeking anyone who wishes to correspond. I study Ayurvedic Healing, plus any other healing methods. I'm knowledgeable in several forms of magic and divination. Please write? I practice a zoomorphic form of Druidism and am a 2nd year Shaman student.

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

Mark Morey: Rt. 1 Box 3060, Musella, GA, 31066, 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 <mpettus@telco.com> or <mpettus@atl.mediaone.com>.

Morgain: 40 yr. 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.

CST Calendar:

Note on the Lunar Rituals: The 13 lunar tree rituals are Faerie Faith rituals, with all of the Faerie Faith trappings (somewhat different from traditional Wiccan rituals). It is strongly suggested that if you would like to attend these rituals, you should plan to attend all 13 rituals, rather than just one or two throughout the year, in order to get the full benefit from them. Also, several of the rituals will be set for early to late afternoon, so we can go out and cut wands from the appropriate tree in daylight, and do some other workings before the ritual actually begins. Please pay attention to the stated arrival time! Firmer times and locations of lunar rituals will be available closer to the date of the ritual.

January 1999:

January 2, 5:00 pm, Birch Moon ritual.

January 30, is Rowan Moon and Imbolc ritual, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 5:30 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

February:

February 27, 5:00 pm, Ash Moon ritual.

March:

March 20, Spring Equinox, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. At midnight, Gwalchmai and Pelayah will be handfasted at Roxanna, nearby.

April:

April 3, 6:00 pm, Alder Moon ritual.

April 30, Friday, 6:00 pm, Willow Moon ritual.

May:

May 1, Beltane, at Waverly, AL. We will hold our traditional May Day celebration, which does not include a ritual in the usual sense, but will be a lot of fun! Plan to arrive at our place in Waverly by 9:00 am, (morning!!) and bring some sort of fun costume to wear. There'll be a pot-luck and party that night. Crash and tent space available. Please RSVP, so we know how many ribbons to cut for the May pole. Cost: CST members are free; others \$1.00 to pay for ribbons, munchies and cokes. Most anybody is invited, but please ask first! We don't want spectators there—this is one of our chances to get wild and crazy and go with the energies of the season. Also, weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

May 29, 6:00 pm, Hawthorn Moon ritual.

Moondance will be May 20-24 at Dragon Hills near Carrollton.

June:

June 19, Summer Solstice, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 7:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.
June 26, 7:00 pm, Oak Moon ritual.

July:

July 31, Holly Moon and Lammas ritual, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 7:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.

August:

August 28, 7:00 pm, Hazel Moon ritual.

September:

September 25, Vine Moon and Fall Equinox ritual, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

October:

October 23, 5:00 pm, Ivy Moon ritual.

November:

November 6, Samhain, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 6:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards. Weekend of Board of Director's meeting.
November 20, 4:00 pm, Reed Moon ritual.

December:

Yule and Elder Moon ritual, December 18, at Waverly, AL. We will meet at 4:00 pm, with a pot-luck and party afterwards.

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

Upcoming Festivals (Not CST events):

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| FallFling '98 | October 15-18, 1998 | Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA |
| Witchstock '98 | October 22-25, 1998 | Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA |
| Moondance | May 20-24, 1999 | Dragon Hills, Carrollton, GA |
| Earthdance | Sep. 10-12, 1999 | FDR State Park, Pine Mtn, GA |

Faerie Faith Rituals

Water Sharing

by Linda Kerr

The third main difference in Faerie Faith rituals is our Water Sharing ritual (rather than closing with cakes wine). Water, to us, is symbolic of the common bond of all life as well as being a reminder that the sacred wells, springs, and rivers were the sites which enhanced the sharing between humans and the Faerie realm.

We all know that water is intimately linked with the cosmos, as can be seen in the ebb and flow of the tides. Water covers most of the earth's surface, and is continually in motion. There is such unlimited movement in this sheath of water, in fact, that on a global scale, water can be considered an organ mediating between earth and cosmos, integrating the earth into the course of cosmic events.

In the Huna system, water is the symbol for mana, or the vital force produced by the body. Water was pictured in different ways by the Kahunas; where the mana was the vital force generated by the Low Self from food consumed and air breathed, the symbol of plain water was used. Water raising up in an overflow, as in a fountain, was the symbol of mana being accumulated in a surcharge by the Low Self. The mana of the High Self, originally taken from the Low Self by way of the connecting aka cord, was symbolized by clouds and mist, which are made up of fine droplets of water. These, when falling in the form of fine rain, symbolized the return of mana which had been transformed to carry the blessing of the High Self as it fell on the Middle and Low Selves to help and to heal.¹

Almost all traditions confirm the role of water in the genesis of life. In the ancient Finnish epic, the *Kalevala*, the Virgin of the Air descended from the sky onto the boundless, foaming sea; "then the sea and the wind blowing on her breathed life in her."² She then became Ilmatar, Mother of the Waters, and after seven centuries of swimming the oceans she gave birth to the first human, the bard Väinämöinen. The belief in the sea as mother of all life has survived into modern times.

And finally, Theodor Schwenk, in his wonderful book *Sensitive Chaos*, gives us some spiritual insights into the significance of water. "Wherever there is water, life can become active in the material world; where there is no water this possibility ceases. Water is essentially the element of life, wherever possible it wrests life from death. It is the great healer of all that is sick and has lost its living poise; for water forever strives after balance, a living balance, never a static one that would extinguish life. It is everywhere a mediator between contrasts, which grow sharper where it is absent. Thus it brings together elements hostile to one another, constantly creating something new out of them. It dissolves what is solid, rendering it back to life."³

"To a great extent withdrawn from the force of gravity, it maintains a central position between earth and

cosmos, never losing itself to the one or the other and yet remaining closely connected with both, uniting them in an eternal circulation. Water holds a balance between extremes of solidification and evaporation, always retaining its possibilities of transformation. Like an echo of the ever changing events of the heavens, the fullness of form in the world comes froth from water."⁴

So now, with a better understanding of water, here is the Water Sharing Ritual which brings those of the Faerie Faith closer to each other and the cosmos.

Water Sharing Ritual

At the close of the ritual, before the grounding of the energy by putting out the fire cauldron, the High Priestess or Faerie Queen takes a sip of water from the altar chalice. The chalice is then passed around the circle for all to share from, and finally returns to the High Priestess. The High Priestess says, as it goes around the circle:

Share of my water and know that as the Rain, it is the Bringer of Life.

Share of my water and know that as the Oceans and Seas, it is the Womb of Life.

Share of my water and know that as the Clouds, it is the Seeker, the Traveler with a Mission.

I share of the water, and may all know that as the Streams and Rivers, it is the Shape-Changer, the Destroyer of Old, and at the same time, through change, the Creatrix of New.

Knowing well that water is the essence of Life, we have shared and become One, and now as One we offer our lives to She who is the Mother of All Life, in service and in love.

"Thus water becomes an image of the stream of time itself, permeated with the rhythms of the starry world. All the creatures of the earth live in this stream of time, it flows within them, and, as long as it flows, sustains them in the stream of life."⁵

Notes:

¹ Long, Max Freedom. *The Secret Science at Work*. 1953. DeVorss & Co., Publishers, Marina del Rey, CA, pg. 11.

² Markale, Jean. *Women of the Celts*. 1972. Inner Traditions International, Ltd., Rochester, VT, pg. 43-44.

³ Schwenk, Theodor. *Sensitive Chaos*. (Published in mid-1960's.) Schocken Books, New York, NY, pg. 98.

⁴ Ibid, pg. 99.

⁵ Ibid, pg. 68.

MINUTES

CHURCH OF THE SPIRAL TREE

Board of Directors

November 15, 1998

The meeting was called to order by Craig Kerr at 5:00 pm, at 1831 Opelika Road, Auburn, Alabama, with the following Directors present:

Linda C. Kerr, President; James C. Kerr, Vice-President; Rob Von Allmen, Member-at-Large

Old Business

A letter was received from the IRS saying our application for tax-exempt status, mailed August 28, had been received, and will be acted upon soon.

The church had a bake sale as a fund-raiser at FallFling on October 17. It wasn't as successful as the one at Earthdance, but we did make \$7.00.

New Business

Craig suggested we build a temple building at the Waverly site, which is owned by Linda & Craig Kerr. The land is privately owned, but used on a regular basis for church functions. The temple will give us a place to hold our rituals in a warm, dry environment when necessary. It will also give members a retreat, a place to come when they need to "get away." Members will need to contact Craig or Linda first to get permission and a key to the gate.

Linda mentioned that the land will probably be sold in 2 or more years, and with it, the temple building. Therefore, she doesn't want to make it an official church project financed by member fees. Rob mentioned the possibility of constructing the temple so it can be disassembled and moved, but Craig said that would not be feasible. We will simply build a new temple on whatever land is purchased after this land is sold.

This will not be an official church project. Funding is as yet uncertain, but will probably come from member and community donations, with a large portion from Linda & Craig Kerr. Craig will do a cost evaluation and come up with a design. Rob suggested we put it out as a general referendum to members and church friends for donations, ideas, labor, and support, and put a flyer about it in the newsletter.

The next CST ritual will be on December 19, for Yule. It will be held at Waverly. We still need to get the outhouse from Roxanna moved out to Waverly. Craig plans to fix the tires on a trailer and move the outhouse.

The church will definitely do full-moon rituals in 1999, in addition to Sabbat rituals. We don't anticipate as many members showing up for these, but for the few who do it will be worthwhile. The schedule for 1999 commits us to at least 16 weekends of rituals. Craig & Linda do Living History as a hobby, so sometimes Linda won't be in town to perform the ritual. Therefore, Carol and Rob have been appointed as "substitute Priest/ess." One or both of them will preside over the rituals which Linda is unable to attend.

We gained two new members at the Samhain ritual. Linda also mailed out renewal notices to those whose memberships were about to expire. So far, of the seven members, only two have renewed.

The Samhain ritual went very well - Cathy wrote it, and did a great job. Because of rain, the ritual was moved to the house next door to Linda & Craig. We placed a sign at the gate to Roxanna to alert new arrivals, and we don't think we lost anyone due to the site change.

The next two meetings were scheduled to be held January 31, 1999, and May 2, 1999, in Auburn, Alabama.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 5:45 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) |
|-------|-----------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Make checks out to: The Church of the Spiral Tree, Inc., and mail to:

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P.O. Box 186
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334-821-4683

spiraltree@mindspring.com

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

CST Calendar:

Board of Directors' meetings:

January 31, 1999, Auburn, Alabama, May 2, 1999, Auburn, Alabama

Annual Meeting of the General Membership:

May 23, 1999, Moondance, Dragonhills, near Carrollton, Georgia

Lunar Dates (all subject to mundane schedules, of course):

| Lunar | Date of Full Moon | Date of Ritual |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Birch | January 2 | January 2, 1999 |
| Rowan | January 31 | January 30, 1999 |
| Ash | March 2 | February 27, 1999 |
| Alder | March 31 | April 3, 1999 |
| Willow | April 30 | April 30, 1999 (Friday) |
| Hawthorn | May 30 | May 29, 1999 |
| Oak | June 28 | June 26, 1999 |
| Holly | July 28 | July 31, 1999 |
| Hazel | August 26 | August 28, 1999 |
| Vine | September 25 | September 25, 1999 |
| Ivy | October 24 | October 23, 1999 |
| Reed | November 23 | November 20, 1999 |
| Elder/Birch | December 22 | December 18, 1999 |



Sabbat Dates:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Imbolc | January 30, 1999 |
| Spring Equinox | March 20, 1999 |
| Beltane | May 1, 1999 |
| Summer Solstice | June 19, 1999 |
| Lammas | July 31, 1999 |
| Fall Equinox | September 25, 1999 |
| Samhain | November 6, 1999 |
| Yule | December 18, 1999 |

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED