



The Journey...

Official Newsletter of Church of the Spiral Tree - an Ecumenical Pagan church



Church of the Spiral Tree News

Annual Membership Drive

CST's annual membership drive is coming up soon! The dates are August 1 through September 18 (Auburn Pagan Pride Day). One-year individual memberships will be just \$12.50, instead of \$20, and one-year family memberships will be \$20, rather than \$35. Please encourage your friends to join CST during this membership drive!



Meetup.com

Our Meetups are now a regular monthly happening, and we seem to have settled on meeting at local coffee shops, as they are low-cost and low-key. We've decided to renew for another six months, at the full price of \$59.97.

2016 Pagan Pride Day

This year's Auburn PPD is scheduled for Sunday, September 18, 2016. There are home football games throughout the whole month of September, so unless we hold PPD in late August or early October, there is just not any other time. Sundays aren't typically as well-attended as Saturdays, but we will make it work.

PPD will again be at the Davis

Arboretum on the Auburn University campus, in Auburn, Alabama. PPD is an all-day event, open to everyone, children included, and is free to attend. Please bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to the East Alabama Food Bank.

We will have a Members' Meeting and an election this year at Pagan Pride Day.

Pagan Prisoner Pen-Pal List

Please consider writing to an inmate! Unsure who to pick, out of the 235 listed? Choose someone who is close to release. You could make a serious difference in his/her life after prison. For the list, please visit

spiraltree.org/prisoner.shtml.

Litha 2016, #62

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CST Directors:

Faerie Faith Representative
..... *skippy*

Solitary Representative
..... *Madeline Wells Smith*

Gangani Tribe Representative
..... *Vacant*

Member-at-Large ... *Vacant*

Founder *Linda Kerr*

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Circle of Life

Birthdays for July-August-September! Happy Birthday to the following CST members:

Jason Aleric V. (July 15)
Richard P. (July 15)
Rob V. (July 16)
Joshua R. (July 18)
Michael D. (July 25)
Holly Ann K. (July 29)
Robert K. (August 3)
Kim R. (August 6)
Seth L. (August 14)
Matthew P. (August 25)
Dakota Y. (September 4)
Tyler R. (September 21)
Kimberly M. (September 25)



CST Ministers

CST, being a church, may ordain any member meeting the below eligibility requirements as a minister.

The policies below have been put in place to ensure that CST and our ordained ministers remain committed and connected to each other, and is effective for all ministers ordained in the year 2012 and on.

Eligibility Requirements:

You must be a currently paid member of Church of the Spiral Tree, and not incarcerated.

You must have been a paid member of CST for at least one year previous to applying to become a minister.

You must be at least 21 years of age.

Your application must include a photocopy or scan (front and back) of official picture ID; e.g. driver's license, student ID, state ID, work ID, etc.

Your application must include your payment of \$50 for the ordination fee.

Important:

Paid members of CST who are currently incarcerated are not eligible to apply for ordination through CST.

The Board of Directors of CST reserves the right to deny and/or revoke any ordination as determined by vote of the Ministerial Committee and the Board of Directors that said minister has misrepresented him/herself or CST; or has behaved in a manner that is inconsistent with the policies or bylaws of CST or behaves verbally or physically in a manner that has a negative impact on the reputation or credibility of CST.

It is the responsibility of all ministers to be informed of, and conduct ministerial work in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

Ordination is for Three-Year Period:

Your ordination will be good for a period of three years, during which you must maintain your paid CST membership. After this three-year period, and if you still meet the eligibility requirements and your membership has been maintained continuously, you may apply to renew your ordination (\$25 fee).

Maintaining Paid Membership:

If the paid CST membership is not maintained during this three-year period or at any time thereafter, the ordination will lapse 30 days after the membership lapses. After renewing your membership, you may apply again to become ordained, for a \$50 fee.

How to Become Ordained:

The ordination process begins with your application (found on our website: www.spiraltree.org/ordain.shtml) along with the \$50 fee. Your application will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. If you are not approved, \$40 of your fee will be refunded.

If ordained, you will be entered into our database, and will soon receive your certificate of ordination and a card to carry with you.

About CST

Church of the Spiral Tree (CST) is a non-profit, volunteer-staffed, ecumenical Pagan church, designed to foster and celebrate a sense of community and family among Pagans, both locally and in other regions of the country/world. CST celebrates the unique Pagan family: parents, children, elders, and extended family. It is an ecumenical church in that it encompasses all traditions, and is non-exclusive. It welcomes all who revere the Earth Mother and who respect themselves and others, regardless of which tradition one is affiliated with.

CST was incorporated in August 1997 to provide a legal, tax-exempt status to the Pagan community. This status enables us to offer to the community a variety of open rituals that anyone may attend, to ordain ministers, and to extend our tax-exempt status to sub-groups of CST. CST also has a Community Relief Fund, so we can collectively donate money in the name of an established Pagan church to individuals in need and to disaster relief efforts, including the American Red Cross.

Church of the Spiral Tree is classified as a 509(a)(1) & 170(b)(1)(A)(i) organization. We are tax-exempt under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

Lammas, Lughnassadh, Lughnasad August 1st/2nd

From: <https://www.goddessandgreenman.co.uk/lammas>

It is now high summer and the union of Sun and Earth, of God and Goddess, has produced the First Harvest. Lammas is the celebration of this first, Grain Harvest, a time for gathering in and giving thanks for abundance. We work with the cycle that Mabon or the Autumn Equinox is the Second Harvest of Fruit, and Samhain is the third and Final Harvest of Nuts and Berries.

The word 'Lammas' is derived from 'loaf mass' and is indicative of how central and honoured is the first grain and the first loaf of the harvesting cycle.

Lugh

It is also the great festival of Lugh, or Lug, the great Celtic Sun King and God of Light. August is His sacred month when He initiated great festivities in honour of His mother, Tailtiu. Feasting, market fairs, games and bonfire celebrations were the order of the day. Circle dancing, reflecting the movement of the sun in sympathetic magic, was popular, as were all community gatherings. August was considered an auspicious month for handfastings and weddings.

But underlying this is the knowledge that the bounty and energy of Lugh, of the Sun, is now beginning to wane. It is a time of change and shift. Active growth is slowing down and the darker days of winter and reflection are beckoning...

The Grain Mother

At Lammas the Goddess is in Her aspect as Grain Mother, Harvest Mother, Harvest Queen, Earth Mother, Ceres and Demeter. Demeter, as Corn Mother,

represents the ripe corn of this year's harvest and Her daughter Kore/Persephone represents the grain - the seed which drops back deep into the dark earth, hidden throughout the winter, and re-appears in the spring as new growth. This is the deep core meaning of Lammas and comes in different guises: it is about the fullness and fulfillment of the present harvest holding at its heart the seed of all future harvest. (It is a fact that a pregnant woman carrying her as yet unborn daughter is also already carrying the ovary containing all the eggs her daughter will ever release - she is already both mother, grandmother and beyond, embodying the great Motherline - pure magic and mystery.)

So as the grain harvest is gathered in, there is food to feed the community through the winter and within that harvest is the seed of next year's rebirth, regeneration and harvest. The Grain Mother is ripe and full, heavily pregnant she carries the seed of the new year's Sun God within her. There is tension here. For the Sun God, the God of the Harvest, the Green Man, or John Barleycorn, surrenders his life with the cutting of the corn.

John Barleycorn

The Sun God, Lugh, as John Barleycorn, is the living Spirit of the corn, or grain. As the corn is cut so John Barleycorn is cut down also. He surrenders his life so that others may be sustained by the grain, so that the life of the community can continue. He

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is both eaten as the bread and is then reborn as the seed returns to the earth. The first sheaf of corn is supremely important, produces the first (and best) seed and assurance of future harvest. Death and rebirth. Everything dies in its season. Everything is reborn. This is our whisper of immortality. And the wonderful bittersweet of Lammass.

Customs of Cutting the Grain

There are many customs throughout Europe around the cutting of the grain or corn and they applied to all cereal crops including wheat, barley, rye and oats. Both the cutting of the first gain and the last grain are significant.

The first sheaf would often be ceremonially cut at dawn, winnowed, ground and baked into the Harvest Bread which was then shared by the community in thanks. The first barley stalks would be made into the first beer of the season. The first sheaf guarantees the seed and thus continuity.

The last sheaf was also ceremonially cut, often made into a 'corn dolly', carried to the village with festivity and was central to the Harvest Supper. The corn dolly was made into a Corn Maiden (after a good harvest) or a cailleach, hag or cone (after a bad harvest). She could be dressed with ribbons, even clothed.

This last sheaf would live in the home, often above the fireplace or hearth of the home, until the next harvest. Or it might be placed in the branches of a tree or mixed with the seed for the next year's sowing. In some way it eventually needed to return to the earth from whence it came so that the fertilizing spirit of John Barleycorn, of the Harvest God, could pass from harvest to harvest. It could be ploughed back, returned to decay and rot, or burnt and the ashes scattered.

In some parts of Europe the

tradition was to weave the last sheaf into a large Corn Mother with a smaller 'baby' inside it, representing the harvest to come the following year. Once the harvest was completed, safely gathered in, the festivities would begin. Bread was made from the new grain and thanks given to the Sun's life-giving energy reborn as life-giving bread.

Herbs and Plants of Lammass

All grains: Wheat, barley, oats, rye, all representing both fulfillment and potential.

Meadowsweet: Also known as Queen-Of-The-Meadow, Bridewort and Bride of the Meadow. One of the most sacred herbs of the Druids, this was often worn as a garland for Lammass celebrations and was a traditional herb for wedding circlets and bouquets at this time of year. Also used for love spells and can be strewn to promote peace, and its heady scent cheers the heart.

Mint: Mint is another of the three most revered herbs of the Druids (vervain being the third, according to Grieve). Its magical properties are both protection and healing, and at this stage in the year, its properties of drawing abundance and prosperity, are most appropriate.

Sunflower: We take sunflowers for granted, they are perfectly named and loved by children of all ages. By this stage in the year the flower heads are full and heavy with that wonderful spiral of seeds



and they spend the whole day gently turning their heads to gaze at the sun. In the Aztec temples of the sun, priestesses carried sunflowers and wore them as crowns. They symbolize the fertility of the Solar Logos.

Calendula: Little suns, pure joy, in all their shades from deep orange to pale yellow.

Colours of Lammass

Still green, with every shade of sun and harvest, from gold and yellow to deepest orange.

Lammass Altar

Wheat and all grains, corn dolly, bread, sunflowers and calendulas (pot marigolds).

Things To Do

Lammass Charm For Gathering In Abundance

You will need:

- A broom or besom - Don't worry if it isn't a traditional besom, any broom will do as it is always intent that is important. If you have no broom collect a bundle of twigs and tie them at the top with Lammass ribbon to make

a hand broom shape. The besom/broom is a potent symbol of hearth and home, found in some form in almost every household. It is a traditional magical tool useful for everyday charms as it has the imprint of its owner firmly on it. Sweeping is a natural gathering gesture.

- Ribbon - A piece of green ribbon (for abundance), a piece of gold ribbon (for prosperity and gathering) or ribbon in Lammas harvest colours would be equally suitable.
- A sprig of mint - Ideally a sprig of mint from your garden (but you can get this from any supermarket), or dried mint - put it in a pouch. The mint represents abundance and plenty and is easily accessible to the urban hedgewitch.

Take your broom and tie your ribbon around the stave or top. Tie in your sprig of mint or securely fasten your pouch. Take your broom outside, place both hands on the stave and focus on your intention - gathering in your harvest for winter. Turn slowly three times in a clockwise direction then start to sweep towards your door saying:

"By one, two, three and four, sweep Lammas gifts to my door. May abundance be a constant friend, by my hearth till Winter's end."

Repeat this three times, then take your besom/broom back into your house and put it in its usual place. You can leave the ribbon on for as long as want to, for a lunar month, or until winter is done. If you have made your own broom you can place it where you consider the heart of your home to be. The mint can be returned to the earth with thanks.

If you do not have an outside space you can sweep from your front door inwards to either your kitchen or hearth using the same charm.

Make A Grain Mother

Make your own Grain Mother or Corn Dolly. Go for a walk and see what you can find - stalks of wheat, oats, barley, rye often left growing on the edges of fields after harvesting, failing that any grasses and/or reeds you can find. Let your creativity out - if you feel confident, weave your Grain Mother into being, but equally you can just lace and tie her into being with Lammas coloured ribbons. As you do so, give thanks for the gifts of Harvest. Place your Grain Mother on your altar or at the centre of celebrations. At Samhain, return the grain stalks to the earth, they contain the seeds of future harvest...

Bake Buttermilk Bread Charm for Lammas

You will need:

- 3 mugs of strong white flour
- 500 ml of buttermilk (available from the supermarket)
- 1 teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda
- Lammas ribbon in your choice of colour - gold, orange, yellow
- Sprouted seeds - these represent regeneration. Can even be bought in the supermarket now. Frequently found in whole food shops - or sprout your own.

Place the flour in a large bowl. Make a well in the centre. Sieve in the blended salt and soda and pour in the buttermilk. Mix well with a wooden spoon until the dough feels springy and then mix in the sprouted seeds. If it feels too sloppy just add a little more flour. Turn it onto a board and cover with a fine dusting of flour. Pat it with your hands until you have a round shape. Take a sharp knife and score lightly into eight sections, one for each festival. Our picture shows the bread cut into five sections, making a pentacle.

Place onto a greased baking tray and pop your buttermilk bread into a moderate oven for about

20-25 minutes. Keep an eye on it. When the bread is ready it will change colour and it will sound hollow when you tap the bottom. Cool completely on a wire rack. When it is cool, tie it with Lammas ribbon.

Take time to concentrate on the bread you have created and turn the loaf three times saying "From the fields and through the stones, into fire, Lammas Bread, as the Wheel turns may all be fed. Goddess Bless."

Now take your bread and share it with your family and friends and pass on the generous blessings of this bright and bountiful festival. Eat it fresh, as soon as it is made if you can.

Recipe donated by the Counter Enchantress. Adapted by the Boss Lady with permission.

Collect The Seeds Of Future Harvest

Involve children if you can. Collect and dry them in the sun, ready for next year's planting. Consider giving them as gifts at Samhain or Yule. Seeds are such amazing and mysterious things - each tiny seed contains within it the blueprint for the whole plant it will become. It will mirror its mother plant, the mother that raised the seed and returned it to the earth with the help of the light of the sun. It's a miracle every time.

Above all - Have fun, give thanks, and celebrate!



Witchcraft: The Festival of Lammas

From: <http://www.witchcraft.com.au/festival-of-lammas.html>

Lammas is the first of the three Harvest Festivals in a witch's seasonal cycle, the others being Mabon, and Samhain. Also known as Lughnasadh, by Irish-Gaelic traditions, it marks the end of summer and the coming of autumn; the days slowly become shorter, giving way to the growing nights.

This festival symbolizes the fading power of the Sun God, and calls attention to his willingness to sacrifice himself to the Moon Goddess so that we can make it through the coming winter with the fruits of the first harvest, knowing all the while that he will return to us again as the cycle continues.

It's a time to give thanks for the people and things that we have, to feel grateful for what we have and share it with others, therefore planting the seeds for a future harvest.

The most common theme associated with this Festival, is that of "eating, drinking, and making merry." A baker's oven goes into over-drive making loaves to be broken with friends and family, and the message is that of sharing what we have with others so that they might benefit from our good fortune as well.

Lammas Ritual for the Solitary Witch

Keep in mind that this ritual isn't written in stone, you can change and adapt it to what best suits your needs as a witch.

Your altar and circle should be decorated with mostly grains, sheaves of wheat and barley, or, if you're like me and like to use what you have on hand, a few handfuls of rolled oats will do in a pinch. The altar cloth should be red, or



reddish-hued, while the altar candle should most certainly be orange. If you notice, the whole colour scheme is very "earthy" in nature.

Note: some witches prefer to have a ritual bath before they get started, that is, a quick dip in the tub to which herbs and salt have been added...it can help put you in the right frame of mind.

When you're ready, cast your circle, call the elements and invoke the Gods, and then begin. Standing in front of your altar, take some of the grain or oats in your hand and hold it high. Say something like:

"Upon us is the First Harvest, a time when the fruits of nature sacrifice themselves so that we may survive. Now, as the Sun God prepares for death, I ask that his sacrifice helps me to understand and accept the "sacrifices I must make in my own life. Now, as the

Moon Goddess' power grows, I ask that she whispers her secrets and magick on the night winds, so that I can hear them and use her wisdom wisely.

Rub the oats between both hands so that it falls onto your altar. Then take a piece of fruit, like an apple, and bite into it, allowing yourself to fully experience the taste. Then say something like:

"I share in the fruits of the First Harvest, so that I might share in the wisdom it offers. Goddess of the Moon, Mother of All. God of the Sun, Father to All. I thank you for that which you've given me. May I always remember "harm none", and may all that I do be in reverence of you."

Now you can eat the rest of the fruit. Meditate, or reflect, on the good things that have happened to you thus far, and the sacrifices you had to make to get to this point. Think about how you've shared your good fortune with others, even if it only meant smiling at a stranger. Any magickal works should now be done, or write about your experiences in your Magickal Journal...if you have one.

Thank the Gods and the Elements for their attendance, and let them know that while you appreciate their presence, it's now time to go. Release the circle, and then carry on with the Cakes and Ale ceremony, or so "eat, drink, and be merry" with some good friends.



Contacts

You get a free contact listing with your membership. You may also submit your listing at any later time. As an additional service, you can send letters to CST, and we will forward them to your intended recipient.

Rev. April Iris McLeod: P.O. Box 916, Grand Bay, AL 36541.

Douglas N. Cole #137773: My Wiccan name is Levi Brummy. The chaplain does not have a Pagan/Wiccan service. I practice solo. Contact me at DRU, 880 East Gains St., Dermott, AR 71638. I am seeking all information of current events.

Gary Fimple #1204170: I am looking to correspond with any Wiccans. Augusta Correctional Center, 1821 Estaline Valley Rd., Craigsville, VA 24430.

Dr. Katharyn Privett (and family): Minister, Priestess of Gangani Tribe of Alabama.

LaTonya Jones of Peoples Care: Auburn, Alabama, (334) 524-1364.

Madeline W.S.: makalinakittenmother@yahoo.com.

Michael Anthony Eric Draven #57995-083: Wiccan, wrongfully convicted, devout to our community. Open-minded, only wish for true friends. I value loyalty, love, and trust. I love studying and research, have many plans for our community, am a poet and a photographer. Write to me at: USP Allenwood, P.O. Box 3000, White Deer, PA 17887.

Matthew Thomas Parker #281518: I am new to Wicca and would like to correspond with like-minded people. Easterling, 200 Wallace Dr., Clio, AL 36107.

Neil Ferrell #39921: Eclectic practitioner of witchcraft for the last 10 years, and I will be a free man in April 2016. I would like to establish some like-minded contacts. Lovelock Corr. Center, 1200 Prison Road, Lovelock, NV 89419.

Nion and LeePhether: We are vibrational alchemists who facilitate Reiki sessions/attunements based on Usui, Lightarian, and other non-traditional methods. Ordained as clergy (Nion CST, Lee CST & ULC), we offer handfastings/weddings, baptisms, requiems (passing-on rites), as well as spiritual guidance. We are on the council of The Sweet Potato Clan of The Free Cherokees and are pipe carriers. As certified Angel Therapy Practitioners (ACP) and certified Wholeness Blessing Facilitators we are excellent listeners. We reside in west Georgia and can work in the Southeast USA. Contact info: Nion011@aol.com, Leephether@gmail.com, or (404) 789-4178.

Ricarda Munch: (256) 590-8502.

Richard Peebles #523160: I will correspond with Wiccan gay or straight males and females alike; I only ask to write and make friends, and an opportunity to learn something new in Wicca. Riverbend C.F., ED115, 198 Laying Farm Rd., Milledgeville, GA 31061.

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: "Skippy" Rob Von Allmen, 425 Webster Road #934, Auburn, AL 36832, <skippy_the_witch@yahoo.com>, (334) 707-9076.

Robert Kaczorowski: <Bobbykacz@silverhands.net>.

Siryndolphinsong-Bradford: <la.siryndolphinsong@yahoo.com>

Travis Wayne Baczewski #1656476: I am looking for a pen-pal in the Pagan community to talk about spirituality. I am also the neo-Pagan coordinator for my unit and always looking for contacts in the Pagan community to help. If either of these pique your interest, please write me at Polunsky Unit, 3872 FM 360 South, Livingston, TX 77351.

Zebate bon Manbo (Danielle Bozeman): dunes38@ymail.com.



CST Calendar

CST and its affiliate Groves welcome church and community members, beginners, newcomers, solitaires, and anyone else interested in participating in rituals honoring the Sabbats and new & full moons. You need no experience or knowledge to participate, but we do request you come with an open mind and heart, and show respect for your fellow participants. We usually share a potluck dinner after each ritual, so those who come are asked to bring some type of food to share. Please wear something comfortable and appropriate for outdoors. Ritual robes are welcome but not necessary. Children of all ages are welcome. You do not have to be a member of CST to participate! Donations to the Church are entirely optional but appreciated.

Note: the schedule below is subject to change! Firmer times and locations of all rituals will be available closer to the date of the ritual. Please visit <www.spiraltree.org/upcoming.shtml> for up-to-date information, directions, and links to RSVP for each ritual. Rituals without at least five attending will be cancelled.

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION/HOST
Litha Ritual	6-18-16	Roxanna, Auburn, AL/CST
Lammas Ritual	8-7-16	Roxanna, Auburn, AL/CST
Auburn Pagan Pride Day	9-18-16	Arboretum, AU, Auburn, AL
Samhain Ritual	10-30-16	Roxanna, Auburn, AL/CST

Board of Directors' Meetings: The next BoD meeting will be held Thursday, May 26, 2016, at Moondance at Roxanna, Alabama. BoD meetings are held four times a year; check website at <www.spiraltree.org/upcoming.shtml> for exact date and location of the next meeting.

Upcoming Alabama Festivals (Not CST events, admission fee charged):

DragonStead Litha: June 24-26, 2016, Roxanna, Alabama

DragonStead Lammas: July 29-31, 2016, Roxanna, Alabama

FallFling: October 6-9, 2016, Roxanna, Alabama

DragonStead Litha: October 28-30, 2016, Roxanna, Alabama

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED