

# THE TEMPLE BELL

*Official newsletter of the Temple of Witchcraft*

Quarterly

Imbolc 2011

## From the Editor...

Blessings of this wild winter season! From where I write this, the snow, those white bees, has been flying for most of the day, and the ground is covered thick with silence and dreaming. Here in the upper midwest, the season of Imbolc is an undeniably freezing season, tinged every so slightly with the promising melt beneath the white ground, the slate colored lake, and the gray sky... the smell of moss beneath snow, the advent of snowdrops and candlelight. There is a serpent that lives in the earth, and it turns over in its winter sleep and opens one great eye for a heartbeat moment, revealing prophecy and announcing the coming of the Kore in spring. Dreams and hopes, a season of meditation and prayer.

There is a rich *cusp* quality to these times of year, Imbolc and Lammas – celebrating the seed of one season in what feels like the heart of another. Liminality. At Imbolc, it's the exaltation of fire in a season when the blanket of snow is at its most insistent. An explosion of poetry and song, the ringing sound of the smithy, the smoke in the clean and freezing air, coupled with the sweet and weighty hush of long and ancient nights, the bundle of bones beneath coats and scarves, the wind that whips words away from lips so quick it's best to keep speaking at a minimum... both bells and silence simultaneously it

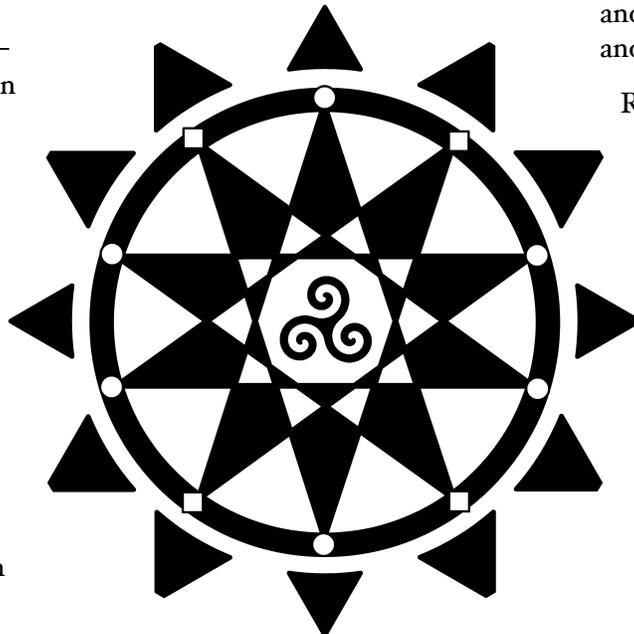
seems. And of course, we in the northern climes spend much of this time of year with our eyes turned yearningly towards the promise of crocuses and hyacinths. Wishing for birdsong. It seems as though the earth itself holds its breath in anticipation.

In the spirit of this complex and meditative time then, the Imbolc issue of *The Temple Bell* is full of inspiration for the season of candlelight. In our Founder's Corner, Adam Sartwell discusses ways to send healing love and energy to those on the Temple's healing list. Tim Titus gives us a thoughtful meditation on the season of Imbolc in California, and Myrddin describes his and his partner's personal journey exploring a Pagan monasticism. Daedalus shares a meditational journey as he prepares to move from Witchcraft II to Witchcraft III. Stevie Grant, Emily K. Jones and Shea Morgan share creative and evocative rituals, invocations and poems for this rich and

prayerful time of year. As Imbolc is a Sabbat of particular importance to the Celtic goddess Brigid, Raye Snover gives us a glimpse into the keepers of Her sacred flame. And continuing in the theme of monasticism, Reverberations columnist Tina Whittle interviews Dawn LaFrance-Linden regarding her role in planning the Temple's upcoming pilgrimage to Glastonbury, and Christopher Penczak ruminates on the meaning behind how we choose to collectively identify ourselves. And, as ever, updates from the Temple ministries as well as exciting news for the Temple as an organization! An issue packed to the gills with material to inspire, intrigue and inform us through these last winter months into spring.

The glorious planet turns, friends, and the sun gathers its strength. The serpent turns and the people throw their arms out toward the coming light. May your celebrations be joyous and may your ears ring with poetry! All best and blessings during this season of ice and fire!

Ruby Sara  
Editor-in-Chief  
Imbolc, 2011



*The Temple Bell is the work of the members of the Temple, and will continue to grow with your effort and enthusiasm! If you are interested in writing for The Temple Bell, please contact the editor-in-chief at [templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org). All works in this issue are copyright of the original authors.*

# THE TEMPLE HEALING LIST

by Adam Sartwell

The Temple's healing list is a great way to give back to the universe for our blessings from the comfort of our homes. One of our charges as witches is to serve: to heal and restore balance where and when we can. Temple members have asked me—as Virgo minister—how they can best use the healing list. There are multiple ways to use the healing list to help those in need.

One way is to use the healing list in a petition spell. The list on our website—[templeofwitchcraft.org](http://templeofwitchcraft.org)—is written conveniently like a petition. Print out the healing list on a piece of paper. To enhance the working you can use parchment paper or a colored paper that signifies healing to you. The more energy one puts into the creation of a spell the more energy it has to manifest. Examples of general healing colors are: green for growth, red for robust healing, gold for the healing solar power, purple for clearing, and blue for emotional healing and expression. Prepare yourself by casting a magic circle, calling quarters that you associate with healing, and calling your god(s) of healing. Once you're all set, read the list aloud; I like to read it three times, for the three worlds and my three souls. Then burn the petition in a fire-safe dish in your circle. If fire is not an option, you can bury it to bring the healing into manifestation—just be sure to use biodegradable paper! This is a simple way of working with the list and only takes up one night a lunar month.

If you want to give more time and energy to the healing list, you can create a healing box. In Christopher's book, *Magick of Reiki*, he details how to make a Reiki box. Understanding that not everyone has been attuned to Reiki, I have adjusted the spell for those of us with more witchy inclinations. Obtain a box that suits your fancy. I used a rather large box for my first healing box, but now have a smaller version that is more portable. Having the smaller box is helpful when I travel. I also like it because it will fit in my hand. My only requirement was that it be big enough to put a clear quartz crystal point or an amethyst inside, which you should also obtain.



In circle, cleanse your box and crystal with clearing incense, like frankincense and myrrh. Now charge the box so petitions placed within it will manifest for the highest healing good, harming none, and so that all petitions will be guided by the highest selves of all involved. Charge the crystal to direct and send out healing energies for the highest good to all named in the petitions of the box and to aid manifestation of all spells within the box, for the highest good, harming none, with free will to all. If you want to get fancy, you can inscribe or paint this in a magickal script on the box, thereby fixing your intention.

Wrap the healing list around the crystal and place it with in the box. Close the box and send energy into the box through visualization in meditation. I will often imagine multicolored light flowing through the box and out to the universe. The crystal sends the healing out into the universe for those in need.

Once you have set up your healing box, you can take some time after magic in circle, meditation, or even your daily devotionals, when you have extra energy, to hold the box and let healing energy flow through it, out to those in need. I charge my box every time I change the list, but that isn't necessary.

Another fun way I have worked with the healing list is by making a healing wand specifically for the list. I made my wand with a copper pipe, crystal, and leather wrapping. This is detailed in Christopher's book *The Outer Temple of Witchcraft*. The special thing about this wand is that one end comes off so I can roll up the healing list and put it inside the wand! Currently I am using Sanskrit chants to enhance my work. I hold the wand in one hand and my mala beads in the other as I chant *Om madne padne hum*, a chant used to connect with those enlightened who achieved Nirvana but heard the suffering of the world and remained to bring compassion and healing to those in need.

I hope this article will inspire readers to work with our healing list. It is a small commitment of time, space, and energy toward making a difference in the lives of people in need. Blessed be!

*Adam Sartwell is Temple co-founder and Virgo Arch-Minister as well as a natural psychic and healer. He maintains a website at [http://web.me.com/owlstar/Adam\\_Sartwell\\_/home.html](http://web.me.com/owlstar/Adam_Sartwell_/home.html)*

# TEMPLE NEWS & UPDATES

*Each issue of The Temple Bell features updates from some of the Temple's twelve Lead Ministers. All of the Temple's ministries are committed to doing important work in the community! For more information on each ministry please see the Ministries page of the Temple of Witchcraft website: [templeofwitchcraft.org](http://templeofwitchcraft.org).*

## NONPROFIT STATUS

The Temple of Witchcraft is pleased to announce it has been granted tax-exempt status, under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Federal tax code, thereby making it a recognized charitable organization as defined by the United States government.

Federal recognition was granted after a roughly year-long application process, and makes all donations to the Temple fully deductible from federal income taxes.

Christopher Penczak, Temple Founder and President, stated: "We are obviously quite pleased with this recognition and it will allow us to expand our educations, ministerial, and community programs, as well as furthering our goal of acquiring land and creating an actual, physical, temple space."

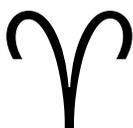
## VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The Temple has named RamaDanu, ordained minister and High Priestess, as its Volunteer Coordinator.

The Volunteer Coordinator's duties will be to work as a point of contact for those interested in volunteering their time with the Temple and its Ministries. She will field initial contacts, arrange connections between volunteers and Temple ministers, and assist Ministries in finding suitable volunteers to fill needed roles.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the Temple of Witchcraft should contact RamaDanu at [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org) to inquire. You can also find more information on the "Volunteering" page of the Temple website.

## ARIES MINISTRY



Since our last update The Temple of Witchcraft celebrated Samhain in which the Aries Ministry took part in the roles of the Holly King and Oak

King. In the ritual, the Holly King stood as guardian of the Oaken door to let the Oak King pass as he readied his rule for the next half of the year. This next half of the year which begins at Yule is called the light half of the year and hence the Oak King is often referred to as the God of Light during the time as the sun waxes to its peak at Litha.

On Veteran's Day, the Aries ministry organized an adhoc remote ritual. For the ritual we reached out through Facebook and other Internet media and welcomed folks to join with the Temple of Witchcraft in a magickal candle ceremony by lighting three candles as follows:

- ◆ A white or purple candle for remembrance of deceased veterans
- ◆ A white candle for remembrance and/or healing for living veterans
- ◆ A white or red candle for protection of veterans currently serving

We received great feedback from this ceremony and intend to make it a yearly event hopefully in conjunction with a public ritual.

In the coming year Aries will be active and participating in workshops and various events including Beltane and

TempleFest 2011. So keep an eye out via the The Temple of Witchcraft Facebook or Internet websites.

## SAGITTARIUS MINISTRY



The period between Samhain and Imbolc has been a busy time of transition for the Sagittarius Ministry. We

have graduated a Witchcraft I, II and V class, with many people traveling to NH for in person initiation ceremonies, and began a Witchcraft II and III course, along with our mentorship program. Students from the higher levels of training and graduates will be mentoring those starting on the Temple path. We also began our monthly educational series at Myths & Maidens in Manchester, NH, on the fourth Wednesday of every month, starting with an Angelic Witchcraft class by Christopher Penczak in November.

## PISCES MINISTRY



Friends! Temple Members!

Coven conflict? Trouble meditating? Networking questions? Pisces has answers! The Temple Bell will feature an advice column from our Pisces Lead Minister. Got a question you've been meaning to ask? Send it our way!

All names will be kept confidential. Please email your questions to [pisces@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:pisces@templeofwitchcraft.org) and put "Dear Pisces" in the subject line. By submitting a question you are giving permission for the publication of your question and Pisces' answer in a future issue of The Temple Bell.

# IMBOLC IN CALIFORNIA

by Tim Titus

A gigantic flock of seagull flies with purpose overhead, cawing and cackling to each other as they wing their way over the ocean. The waves crash rhythmically on the sand, warm sunlight glinting off them as they pulse along the smooth coastline.

An oversized American flag marks beach site of a Christian group who roasts hot dogs and stares at us in frank amazement as we stand in a circle, barefoot, openly calling the elements and drawing pentacles in the air. They are enjoying a day at the beach; we are communing with the sacred, for this is our Imbolc ritual.

Imbolc? On the beach?

I live in southern California, land of sunshine and surf. Out here, Imbolc is the hardest Sabbat for even experienced witches to get a feel for. We understand intellectually that most of the country is locked in the heart of a deep, frigid winter in early February. We understand that the very first sight of colorful tulips peeking out through the unbroken white expanse of snow must bring hope and inspiration to our kin in other climates.

We get it; we just do not experience the same drastic changes. In our land of suburban sprawl and mild weather, when new witches pick up a book on the Wheel of the Year and read about melting snow for their altars or divining the extent of winter by checking out the relative harshness of the weather on Candlemas, they can be left a little lost. This Sabbat, more than any, truly seems to be focused on weather – weather that we do not experience. We would like to join in celebration with our brethren, but it can be easy to give up in despair at our inability to adapt the traditional meaning of Imbolc to our daily experience.

But there *are* ways that Imbolc can be adapted to our temperate region. Just as Birgit, the goddess commonly associated with this holy day, rules creativity and blacksmiths, so can we create something wonderful from the base materials of our pleasant weather. We just need a little inspiration, and isn't that also one of Birgit's specialties? So let's stick some ideas into Birgit's forge and see what shapes we can hammer them into.

There are three major themes that run through the celebration of Imbolc. All of them work just fine in California. The first is the theme of returning light. While we may experience nice weather, we do go through the same period of darkness everyone else does. By early February, the days are obviously longer. That is as true here and anywhere. As a very sun-oriented culture, this is indeed cause for happiness! Traditional celebration techniques, such as turning on every light in your house at once or lighting your candles to entice the coming sunlight are perfectly appropriate.

The second theme is that of initiation. With the sun starting to make himself known, green patches of grass beginning to grow from our winter rains, and the promise of warmth just around the corner, Imbolc is a perfect time for initiations here, just as it is anywhere else. Since we are so sun-oriented, it is natural to align one's new life path with the coming of a stronger sun.

The last theme is that of cleansing. For us, this one is a little different, and, while it is equally important, it requires an understanding of our unique autumn weather patterns.

Out here, the fall is not a time of gently cooling weather and sparkling, colorful foliage. Instead, a southern California autumn is dry, hot, and violent. September is often the warmest month

of the year, and when combined with the bone-dry atmospheric conditions, that heat bakes our leaves to a crisp, making trees look more like a dusty canvas than a painted masterpiece. The dry heat transforms leaves from verdant green in early August to crackling, brown, dusty husks by Mabon. Hence our wildfires, which you may see on TV every October.

Then there are the infamous Santa Ana Winds. Beginning in October, our weather periodically reverses itself. Instead of getting pleasant, cooling breezes from the ocean, high pressure over Nevada forces desert winds that blast us with their desiccating heat. Under these conditions, we can have entire weeks in October, November, and December that are in the high 90's and dry as dust. For us, despite traditional Craft correspondences, fall is a time of fire, marked by a notable lack of water.

By late January, the winds come less often. When they do come, they are as cool as the desert night, though still dry. At this time, we move into a period when we usually receive our heaviest dose of rain – an absolute blessing from the Goddess after the dryness of the autumn. By Imbolc, we start to see green again. The tender green grass that begins to return to our parks in January is our equivalent to the tulips that bravely poke their heads through the snow in other places.

Our winter rains cleanse the dirt leftover from the fall winds. Combined with the returning light that is starting to warm the earth and feed the plants, the water nurses our land back to life. Light and water are both necessary to help things grow. In the fall (oddly) the light is dominant as its heat destroys our trees and dries our vegetation. Imbolc is a time of returning balance, when water comes back in the form of rain and nurtures our land back to life.

In California, we are happy to celebrate that returning balance of water and fire.

Since we are essentially a desert climate, rain is even more valuable, necessary, and life-giving. Where other places are too frozen to have liquid water, we are blessed with an early spring as rain brings our world back to life and strength just as mother's milk nourishes an infant lamb. Like newly born lambs, the Goddess nurses us with her rain.

The California Imbolc, then, brings in all the traditional themes of returning light and adds to them the tangible feeling of being nursed back to life.

The bowl of melted snow that often serves on the altar in other Imbolc observances should be a bowl of fresh rainwater in California. In other places, the snow pack protects plant life through the harsh winter and eventually melts in the spring to revive the earth. Here, our winter rains clear the dust of windy days and bring green life back to our parched, brown vegetation.

Elsewhere, snow protects the land beneath from wind and cold. Here, rain protects our land from heat and fire and makes new life possible. In both cases, we are working with the element that brings our world back to life. Our water just comes a little earlier than it does in other places.

While our weather seems to alienate us from the meaning of Imbolc, with a few adjustments we can take advantage of our fortunate climate and create some very meaningful rituals. We can still work with ideas of returning light, initiation, and cleansing. To that, we in California can add an ability dear to a witch's heart and impossible in most other parts of the country: we can be outside on February 2. In my mind, that makes up for the fact that we don't feel the same thing everyone else does this time of year.

Taking advantage of this ability, there is no end to the number of ritual ideas we can work with if we can heed Brigit's call to be creative. One possibility, with

fire and water such strong themes in our version of Imbolc, is for a mid-winter firelight poolside ritual and party. What better way to combine the celebration of the God's returning light and the Goddess' life-sustaining rain than in a circle, surrounded by tiki torches, with a crystal-clear pool of water at the center? Later, of course, the pool will transform from sacred altar to the center of the post-ritual party.

California residents can also take advantage of our greatest natural attraction: our beaches, which are devoid of their summer crowds in February. A barefoot ritual in the sand, around a blazing fire, with the rhythmic pounding of the Pacific Ocean just steps away, the waves connecting you to the cycles of the moon and the Goddess, is a wonderful experience. It connects California witches to the specific spirits and energy of our land in a way that little else can.

Either the pool or the beach offers a natural way to celebrate two of the other themes of Imbolc: initiation and purification. Initiations usually include a component of death and rebirth, and witches honor water as the womb of the Goddess. On a summer Sunday, beachgoers often see Christian groups performing baptisms in the ocean. There's certainly no reason why we can't do the same at our time of year.

Whether in a group or as part of your solitary practice, a full-immersion initiation, with symbolic elements focusing on being reborn from the Mother's womb, would be incredibly powerful. Before you can be reborn, though, you have to die. Take it from me – the Pacific Ocean is cold! Especially in February. Full immersion in its frigid waters during winter is perfectly adequate symbolism for death, especially when the rebirth includes breaking the surface, lots of hugs, a fire, and some very dry towels.

Initiation brings new life, but Imbolc is also a celebration of the light returning

to the land. Instead of focusing on water, it may be just as meaningful to focus on light and fire. Winter is still dark here, and traditional symbolism can lift our consciousness to the sun's return just as much as they can for anyone.

But we also have another advantage over our brothers and sisters from colder places: predictable road conditions. Whether it rains or shines, our roads are never clogged with snow. They are always passable. Plus, we are rarely uncomfortable being outside. These local facts make a meditative journey out into the community possible.

Sabbat rituals often include dramatizations of the holiday's themes. Where other witches are stuck inside, we can utilize our weather's stability as part of the enactments in an Imbolc ritual. One possible- and powerful - way to do this would be to hold a ritual scavenger hunt. Before the ritual, lights of some kind – candles, lanterns, or torches perhaps – could be hidden in important areas in the community, perhaps in the four directions. As part of the re-enactment of returning light, ritual participants could be sent out to find these lights and return them to the altar, bringing light back to the mundane and magickal worlds, echoing Prometheus' gift of fire to mankind and the God's return to the land.

Rain on that day would be even better. A dark, stormy day would be the perfect backdrop for a light-seeking ritual, and could symbolize either the blessing of the Goddess or the darkness through which the light must be retrieved and returned. With the lights returned safely to the altar, we truly can banish winter and welcome spring.

No matter where you live, there is a unique way to celebrate. For those in the grips of very harsh winters, Imbolc represents a blessed deliverance from darkness and cold. But that does not mean that those of us in warmer areas can't work with its energies in our own

way. It also doesn't mean that we have to use ritual ideas, symbols, and thought forms that are alien to us. The path of the witch is one of honoring and working with the natural cycles of the land, the Goddess, and the God where you live. It is one of being in tune with your home, your sun, and your land's patterns, not those of another location or time.

Wherever you are, may your celebration be inspired, creative, and nurturing.



photo by Stephen Pettinga

## WALKING WITH SHADOW

by Shea Morgan

*Walk with me my shadow  
Caress me in the dark  
Souls merging in the night  
Tell me your thoughts  
Let your heart beat rhythm with mine  
My touch is your touch  
My blood to yours  
With me now  
I am*

## CLASS NOTES: THOUGHTS FROM WITCHCRAFT II

by Daedalus

### SPIRIT POOL

As I move into the third year of study, the Temple of Shamanic Witchcraft, I look back and see the transformation of myself as an individual setting the groundwork and foundation for his departure point of the Inner Temple and year one. Then to the second year as a class of students learning to act in concert to combine power, come together as priests and priestesses of the Outer Temple. As I reflected on this and prepared the ceremony to mark our elevation to the second level I was compelled to reach out to my classmates and ask if they would be interested in the idea of becoming a more cohesive group for W3 and building an astral/class temple where we can all go to support each other and refresh our motivation, spirit and energy for the times of introspection ahead. This is the journey I went on that brought the idea about:

*He places his hands upon the World Tree and feels the comfort and connection that comes from feeling the rough bark beneath his hands. As always, when his hands touch the bark his pain stops. He closes his eyes, takes three deep breaths and descends through the roots, down and to the left he spirals until his feet are once again in contact with solid ground. He opens his eyes and sees he is in a rough hewn stone passageway and there is light ahead. As he walks toward the light he checks his pockets and finds some objects that he places to the side of the passage—he will need these later.*

*Before him in the light he sees the pool and the warm sun upon the blue/green water. As he walks to the shoreline and looks around he casts off his clothes and the attachments of the mundane world and leaves them on the shore behind him as he steps into the water. He stands for a moment to connect with the water then wades up to his waist. He stops again and gives thanks for safe passage on the journey thus far and the gifts of the healing water and the love of*

*the God, Goddess and Great Spirit. He asks for further blessings for himself and his classmates as they begin this new journey. He asks to be worthy, to have the strength to give when needed even if he is feeling drained or weak. He asks also to be humble so he may leave his ego behind and freely accept the help of his brothers and sisters, and receive their perfect love and perfect trust. He thinks "sink or swim," looks up, and in a strong voice proclaims, "So mote it be," and dives into the water and begins swimming in strong rhythmic strokes to the center of the pool where he first treads water then as he relaxes he floats and feels the love and support of the water which is the combined energy of the universe as well as that of his brothers and sisters in the Craft.*

*His mind travels to find the spring which feeds the pool and he sees there are many. His heart opens and he adds his energy to become yet another spring adding to the pool. If he were to dive down he would see that his true face resides at the bottom of the pool among the true faces of his brothers and sisters. He is at peace here and enjoys the rejuvenating and healing effects as he floats. The words from a song come into his thoughts, "Will I pull off my pride and swim to shore?"*

*When he is recharged he swims back toward shore and departs the waters. He sees his clothes are no longer where he left them. In their place is the robe of the shaman. He puts this on and walks toward the passageway to retrieve the things. First he places the combined cords of the Temple around his waist and ties them. Next he takes a small vial of a potion he has made in circle with his classmates and anoints his wrists with it, asking for good luck and proper guidance. Next he takes a boline and with it severs his hair which has grown long over the past 2 years as he has not cut it since beginning the classes. He leaves this as an offering to the Gods. He will be born anew and is confident that the future will be as bright as the light reflecting off the pool behind him and as warm as the water beyond that shore. He is calm and his mind is at peace. He knows how to return when needs be.*

*He steps off into the dark passage and begins the journey into the new work at hand: the work of the Shaman.*

My classmates have agreed a "spirit pool" would be of help to us and we plan to all meet in spirit on a proposed date to

transform this vision into our collective vision and give us all a place to come to feel the love and support of the group.

## KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

by Raye Snover • photo by Ruby Sara

At Imbolc, as we celebrate the increasing light of the lengthening days and the lactating of the ewes—all harbingers of spring—we also honor the Goddess Brigid. A Sun Goddess, she is also a deity of fire, smiths, fertility, healing and poets. She keeps the flame of hope for warmer times burning during the coldest days of the year. While many of us acknowledge her during our winter rituals, there are those whose devotion leads them to pay homage to her on a more frequent basis. These are the Flamekeepers.

The Flamekeepers are groups of diverse people whose common thread is an affinity for Brigid in one of her many forms. Via e-mail correspondence, Erynn Rowan Laurie, a flamekeeper and writer who is currently working on a book about the practice of flamekeeping tells us they are “dedicants of Brigid in one way or another, people called to her service and who wish to work in community in some way.. We may be women or men, or folks whose gender isn’t part of the binary—transfolk, genderqueers, gay/bi/lesbian individuals. Some groups restrict membership to only women (by whatever definition of “woman” they are using), others are open to all who keep the flame, regardless of gender.” Laurie herself keeps the flame because she has a “dedication to Brigid as one of several deities I have a strong relationship, but it is also part of my poetic practice as a writer... her altar is in my living room where I can see it all the time.”

In a phone interview, Kim Diane, founder and Abbess of Ord Brighideach, told the Temple Bell that she started her organization because of her Irish heritage. She says, “I really loved the peace of the old and new, and there’s so much conflict in Ireland. I was looking for a spiritual entity, guidance, something out there that can unite us, no matter what our history is, and she [Brigid] did that.”



Whether as a pagan Goddess or Christian Saint—some sources believe Brigid was absorbed into the Catholic faith when she was unable to be removed from the hearts of the Irish people. Brigid kept a perpetual fire at her home in Kildare which “nineteen virgins tended,” while Brigid herself tended on the twentieth day. It’s this model that the modern Flamekeepers follow. Though the original flames in Kildare were extinguished, once for being too pagan, and the second time on the suppression of the monasteries in Ireland, the call from Brigid was too strong. The fire was resurrected yet again, not once but twice. In 1993 Sister

Mary Teresa Cullen, leader of the Brigidine Sisters, relit Brigid’s flame in Kildare, and since then the flame has been kept by the nuns in their Christian center, Solas Bhríde. At Imbolc that same year, the Daughters of the Flame, a neo-pagan group, lit their flame and has it continuously tended by members of their group. Ideally, each group has clusters called “cells,” each containing nineteen members who select a shift during which they tend the fire, while the twentieth day is still reserved for Brigid to tend the fire herself.

At the core, while these groups are very similar, they each have differences that make them unique and some keepers may belong to more than one group. The Daughters of the Flame is small, local, gender-specific group restricted to women only. Although according to their website their participants “have primarily been neo-pagans,” they accept any female called to honor Brigid.

In fact, Kim Diane was once member of Daughters of the Flame. Like the Daughters, Ord Brighideach started small. When Diane wanted to start her own flamekeeping group, she was looking for “nineteen priests or priestesses to tend the sacred flame and... couldn’t find nineteen people.” As her group grew she joined the Daughters but she and some other members wanted to open the membership, so Ord Brighideach was created to become a “more global group.” They accept members from all genders, and while Diane

“hopes the membership doesn’t lead in one direction,” she believes her group is “more pagan leaning” though they have a “wide variety of participants” including Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, Druids, Wiccans, and reconstructionists, thus creating the largest group of flamekeepers with 435 members in eighteen countries.

Another dual member is Erynn Rowan Laurie, with Daughters of the Flame “since its inception in 1993.” Laurie is one of the founders of Brigid’s Irregulars, a Celtic Reconstructionist group open to all genders. According to Laurie, “Celtic Reconstructionist Paganism is specifically Celtic in focus (from any of the various Celtic cultures). It is polytheist and animist, relying as much as possible on historical practices, folklore, mythology, and archaeology, while acknowledging that there’s a lot we can never know about what the pre-Christian Celts were doing as part of their religion.”

Finally, there is Solas Bhride, a Christian center in Kildare that welcomes pilgrims of any denomination. Solas Bhride tells us on their website that their “focus is St. Brigid and Celtic spirituality.” Like Brigid’s Irregulars, Solas Bhride relies on mythology. During a short phone chat with Sister Phil (short for Philomena) she cites the story of Brigid giving away her father’s sword to a leper. Sister Phil uses this analogy to say, “If we gave families food instead of spending money on arms what a different world it would be.” Interestingly, being a Catholic order, although Solas Bhride considers Brigid not a Goddess but a patron Saint of

Ireland, they celebrate traditional holidays similar to pagan sabbats. When asked about celebrating the Winter Solstice, Sister Phil simply said “the rebirth of the sun is a light in the darkness, like our Lord.”

The main requirement of each flamekeeper during their shift is to tend the flame from sunup to sundown where safety allows. Though each individual group varies in its practices, Laurie tells us that Brigid’s Irregulars perform a ritual when “lighting and extinguishing the flame at the beginning and ending of a shift.” For this small requirement there seems to be great spiritual reward aside from the sense of community the flame tending instills. Diane likes the “meditative peace of the day and the guidance of the day” and finds it “uplifting.” And Laurie also says that “it becomes a very meditative thing, and brings its own slow rhythm to one’s ritual life. Tending the flame every twenty days takes enough focus to actually consult a calendar and to make room in a busy day to do a ritual and to be mindful.” Laurie further says, “For me, it has been having a regular devotional practice that allows me to take some time to remember what is sacred, and the blessing of creative work. The flame is a visual reminder of the presence of Brigid in my life as a spiritual mentor and as an inspiration. It’s a way to return something to her for all the gifts she has given me over the years. It offers me a profound sense of connection to divine things, encapsulated in a simple ritual and the very visceral presence of the flame itself.”

## TOWARDS A PAGAN MONASTICISM

by Myrddin and Rowan

It would be tempting to begin an article about Pagan Monasticism by referring back to a point in time when we first became interested, a kind of ‘light bulb moment’ when it all became clear that that was the direction we needed to head in. In fact, that isn’t really possible because of issues of personal history. So for the sake of clarity, here’s a brief guide to the ‘landscape’ that existed as we gradually got drawn further and further into this pursuit.

### BACKGROUND

Myrddin came from a background of Anglo-Catholic Christianity via evangelicalism, and was already by the year 2000 involved in ‘lay monasticism’ as a Benedictine Oblate of an Abbey in

Berkshire, England. From the time of his leaving the Church of England in 2004 and committing fully to a Pagan path, he only ever wanted to take the best of what Christianity has to offer to those walking a spiritual path and apply it into his new situation – and lay monasticism was most certainly among those ‘best things’! Rowan, having come from a more solidly Pagan background of some 13 years, was concerned at the lack of substance which seems to characterize much ‘institutional’ Paganism, certainly in the UK where we live, and wanted to form a practice which was regular and committed rather than just a few random attendances at moots and rather-badly-done ‘open’ circles, every few weeks. So we think the move towards some kind

of Pagan-flavored lay monastic practice was almost inevitable!

Enough, then, regarding the ‘wellsprings’ which gave rise to the start of the journey. Maybe we will write at more length about this at a later date – maybe there will even be a book. Certainly there is much more to be said, but it lies beyond the scope of this very short introduction.

### THE PROBLEM OF HISTORY

There is one major problem which presents itself to anyone attempting to set out on a Pagan ‘flavored’ monastic path (either ‘lay’ or in community), and that is that there is no recorded *detailed* history of Pagan monastic practice at

all! Whereas Christianity has a more or less unbroken history of monastic practice stretching back to about the third century CE and Saint Anthony, through Saints Francis, Bruno and Benedict, Saints Bernard of Clairvaux and Teresa d' Avila, Paganism hasn't adapted the ideals of monasticism for its own use (that we know of), so we knew from the start that this couldn't be a reconstructionist 'project'. Rather, we had to start with the *principles* of monasticism generally, and try to see how they could be adapted into reinforcing and enriching a Pagan daily practice. We were aware that the Vestal Virgins of ancient Rome were in effect a state sponsored priesthood, for example, but Rowan (in particular) has been unable to find any detailed record of cultic practices despite extensive research.

Next up was the need to take account of a couple of other difficulties. Firstly, there is not one single universally-accepted forms of monastic practice, but many, from the 'enclosed' prayer, work and study model of the Benedictines to the more 'service-oriented' practice of the Franciscans, to the stricter and almost solitary lives of the Carthusians. Obviously choices here come down to a matter of what kind of practice one feels called to by the Gods and Goddesses one seeks to serve. And therein lies the second major problem – whereas in a monotheistic religion such as Christianity, the worship of only one

God has to be considered and 'catered for', Paganism is a path of many Gods, Goddesses and pantheons. This was made more relevant for us by the fact that Myrddin is a predominantly Norse Pagan, Rowan is a Hellenist, and we both engage in traditional witchcraft practices!

## A FEW CAVEATS

So far we just seem to be cataloguing the problems we have faced in starting on the path of Pagan Monasticism, so maybe it's time we started offering some ideas about how we have set about solving them. It's important to add three 'pointers' here, as follows:-

Everything we are doing is 'work in progress'. As we've already said, there is no 'road map' for Pagan Monasticism. To those who accuse us of being historically unfounded in our practice, we would absolutely agree! However, we would add that we are most certainly

not out of step with the majority of spiritual practitioners down the centuries, in trying to forge a more substantial and regular practice than we have previously known. The desert monasticism of Saint Anthony was founded on the notion that the practice of the (by then) institutional churches was inadequate to support personal spiritual practice and development..... ring any bells?

Our practice isn't perfect! Indeed, we fail to achieve our ideals every day. In this we consider that we are no different from any other spiritual practitioners, either today or down the centuries. Please be clear on the fact that we are not setting ourselves up as being better/holier/more disciplined/more 'right' than you, dear reader, or anyone else!

Finally, we don't believe that what little progress we have made down this road thus far constitutes any kind of 'One True Way' of Pagan Monasticism whatsoever. The work we have done may be useful to you or it may not – but we hope that you will feel inspired to go away and create your own practice around some of these principles.

## FIRST PRINCIPLES

There's no doubt that those of us who live in modernized, developed, 'Westernized' societies live in a world where the widespread misuse of money, sex and power give rise to many of the problems we now face. For an excellent analysis of how the medieval (although now modernized) monastic principles of poverty, chastity and obedience can counter these abuses, we highly recommend reading Richard Foster's excellent book of the same name<sup>1</sup>. Foster proposes new, modernized 'monastic' vows of simplicity, fidelity and



photo by Kathy McKenna

service, and brilliantly shows how they can be used to counter these modern tendencies. This was the starting point for our thinking about the general principles with which we were going to undergird our lives as Pagans.

The other major source of inspiration we started with was Myrddin's history as an Oblate of Saint Benedict, and it was to a Benedictine 'flavor' of Pagan Monasticism that we aspired from the start of the 'building' process. To explain Benedictinism and Oblation in a few paragraphs is frankly impossible, but there are a couple of good introductions available<sup>2</sup>. Please remember that these books are written by Christians for Christians, as are virtually all the likely-useful sources on the subject, unless you use Buddhist monastic sources, which tend understandably to be more Eastern in their flavor.

Starting with the ideals of Simplicity, Fidelity and Service, and the classically Benedictine aspirations of prayer, work and study, our next challenge was to create for ourselves the means to bring these closer to home and to regularise them. Myrddin is fortunate enough to be self employed, and Rowan is a writer, artist and Hestian homemaker, so this wasn't too big a problem – everything could be (and is) accommodated within the home with only minor problems of adaptation (we had to slightly reluctantly give up a rather nice office/studio space, but financial simplicity provided an extra assurance that this was the right way to go).

## FURTHER STEPS

A bigger problem was the creation of full-blown Daily Offices (cycles of prayer and devotion that mirror the ways in which Christian monastics, and Benedictines in particular, structure their prayer lives. Usually these consist of up to eight Offices (times of prayer) daily, although we know of Benedictine Abbeys with as few as five Offices. This was where the lack of available material

really started to show – Rowan constructed a breviary (prayer book) largely based upon the Orphic and Homeric Hymns – the Greek equivalent of the Christian Book of Psalms which provides the heart of all Christian worship and prayer – while Myrddin, after some searching and researching, fell back upon some more modern material from the excellent Elizabeth Vongvisith and Galina Krasskova (and others) in the US, some structure 'borrowed' (with permission) from Mark Charlton, a monastic Druid living and working in South East Mexico, and some material borrowed and adapted from The Benedictine Prayer Book. All of this took a considerable amount of work, and prompted a certain envy of the wealth of readily-available prayer resources which modern Christians have at their disposal! However, with hindsight we both think that the act of having to create our own breviaries, while seemingly inconvenient, has been a hugely beneficial exercise. Maybe somewhere down the line we will publish some of this material – although in Myrddin's case in particular a lot of copyright permissions will have to be obtained! But the purpose of compiling the material was to support our own aspirations of a regularized, regular prayer life, and the material does that quite well. We adapt and change the material as it is tested in real life (what looks like good structure on the page doesn't always work in real life), with the aim of getting to a finalized version of each breviary after one or maybe two annual cycles have been completed.

The next step in the process – and the last step at which we have so far arrived – is the creation of an horarium (monastic timetable) to support the life we are looking to create. Every monastery has a timetable which serves to keep the members committed to a discipline which gives time and space to each of the elements of the life they are committed to live, and we see no reason why we should approach things differently. Carl McColman, once a neo-

Pagan but now a Catholic Christian has written wisely and eloquently about his own personal horarium in his blog at The Website of Unknowing. This is still very much work in progress for us, but those who would like to be party with us to this ongoing process of development can do so by joining the Yahoo group we have created to keep in touch with others (and there are others) who are trying to walk this path in its varied forms across the world – including many of those mentioned above. The group can be found and joined via <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/paganmonasticism/>, and anyone who wants to be part of this discussion is welcome to join.

So, our journey towards a form of Pagan Monasticism continues. We are very aware that we are making much of this up as we go along, while doing our best to draw effectively on all the resources which history has left at our disposal and acknowledging honestly where we have no resources but are in 'virgin territory'. Maybe in a year or more we will have something which looks very different to what we have thus far co-created with others worldwide. Maybe at last there will be more embryonic monastic communities, such as the order of the Sacred Nemeton, Mark Charlton's burgeoning community in Mexico or the Asphodel Farm community which Raven Kaldera hosts in Massachusetts. Maybe (we very much hope) there will be more and more solitaries who feel that this kind of lifestyle, undergirded by these kinds of principles, are what their Gods and Goddesses are calling them to,, those for whom a life without substance and examination truly is no life at all. The future for Pagan monasticism is very much a blank canvas at the moment, and we wait with interest to see what kind of picture will emerge.

<sup>1</sup> Roster, Richard, *Money Sex and Power: The Challenge of the Disciplined Life*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1985.

<sup>2</sup> In particular Tvedten, Br. Benet, *How to Be a Monastic and Not Leave Your Day Job: An Invitation to Oblate Life*, Paraclete Press, 2006.

## INTERVIEW WITH DAWN LAFRANCE- LINDEN

by Tina Whittle

In the millennia-old tradition of pilgrimage, the Temple of Witchcraft is offering a very special retreat during the summer of 2011. This event, offered from August 13 through August 21 and led by Temple founder Christopher Penczak, will take participants to the holy ground of Glastonbury, England, where they will explore the ancient Isle of Avalon. In addition to time set aside for spiritual work, plenty of opportunities for rest, play and independent exploration will be woven into the retreat. One full-day workshop and two evening events with Christopher are planned and included in the cost of the retreat, with the possibility of more workshops being added.

The Glastonbury area is rich in history both mundane and magical.

Archeological evidence suggests that the town has been inhabited since Neolithic times; its hand-laid wooden trackways are among the oldest engineered roads yet discovered. During the Iron Age, the town became a commercial center and also started gaining religious significance due to the presence of Glastonbury Abbey, where Arthur and Guinevere are said to be buried. This place of monastic retreat was founded in the 12th century and became an important cultural force in the area.

Planned events include lots of exploration related to the ancient narratives of the Arthurian tales. Participants will climb the winding processional way to the summit of Glastonbury Tor, where they will drink the healing water from the sacred Chalice Well and seek the lessons of the Grail. Also scheduled is a walk through the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey and a

visit to the Avebury stone circle complex – the largest in the world “ where participants will walk the great processional way and contemplate the mysteries of Silbury Hill and West Kennet Long Barrow. Also included is a trip to Bath, originally Aquae Sulis, to visit the ruins of Minerva’s temple and the Roman baths. There, in the spirit of the Temple’s pagan forbearers, the group will visit a modern spa and partake of the healing powers of Water.

A highlight of the pilgrimage will be a visit to Stonehenge, where a private-access ceremony led by Christopher Penczak is planned. This iconic stone monument, perhaps the most famous collection of standing stones in the world, was erected around 2500 BC. Efforts to preserve the monument “ which is listed as a World Heritage site “ mean that visitors are no longer allowed to touch or even walk among the stones; luckily, access is still granted through special bookings, which is what the Temple is applying for, says Dawn LaFrance-Linden, the Temple member in charge of organizing the retreat.

“Stone Circle access”—actually going amongst the stones—“is only available either before or after regular visiting hours,” she said, “and is based on reservations (made way in advance) and a fee. However *private* access is only available if you purchase all the admission slots (26) for a given stone circle access period. That’s what we’re in the process of doing.”

LaFrance-Linden agreed to share further information about the retreat with The Temple Bell.

**TB:** Could you tell us a little about yourself?

**DL:** I’m not too sure what would be interesting or relevant about me, but here goes. . . . I live with my four sons, ages 6 to 15, and my step-son (21); I have been separated from my husband for a bit over a year. Homeschooling my youngest three takes up most of my time and energy, although I also work

part time for the UU church here in Bedford and for the UU Partner Church Council, which is involved with coordinating trips to visit partner churches worldwide (among many other activities). I traveled on one of their trips to Transylvania this past summer.

I had been heavily involved in the Boston area pagan community from the late 80s through the turn of the millennium, but I gradually turned my focus to raising children and my involvement with any structured practice diminished. As my marriage was ending, I was looking to revive my own practice, so I attended some events at In the Lap of the Goddess productions in Cambridge. That’s where I met Christopher and soon after began taking classes. I am finishing WC-V this December.

**TB:** How did you get involved with the Glastonbury retreat?

**DL:** I have always had a love of travel, especially to ancient places and places of spiritual significance, but as with many other things, family life had caused me to put much of that aside for quite some time. During a meditation for one of the WC-V classes, it became clear to me that I needed to travel again. I spoke with Christopher who had just started looking for help planning a UK trip and after getting together a couple of times to discuss possibilities, we decided to go ahead with a pilgrimage to Glastonbury.

My role is to plan the trip and make all our logistical arrangements. Years ago, I had considered running tours in the UK, but then the reality of having young children set in. Fortunately for me, a friend who does run such tours regularly has let me come along as an assistant, so I could see the nuts and bolts of how such things work.

**TB:** Are you attending the retreat? If so, could you describe why you chose to do so?

**DL:** Of course! I don’t think I could bear all the work of putting it together

and let others have all the fun. I find the British Isles very magical and inspiring. The Glastonbury area, along with Stonehenge, the Avebury complex and the ancient Baths are among my favorite places in England.

**TB:** The materials mention that a visit to a modern spa is offered complementary to the visit to the ancient Roman baths at Aqua Sulis. Could you tell a little more about that?

**DL:** Since the ancient baths are unfortunately no longer usable, I wanted to offer a modern take on the experience of visiting Aquae Sulis for healing and restoration. In my experience, it is also important to provide travelers with some down-time and a bit of luxury, as even the smoothest of trips can still be quite tiring.

**TB:** Are there any other retreats in the works for the Temple?

**DL:** This is a test run. If all goes well, and there is sustained interest, we have all kinds of ideas for pilgrimages to sacred sites worldwide.

### TEMPLE OF WITCHCRAFT GLASTONBURY RETREAT

*When: August 13-21, 2011*

*Estimated Cost (airfare not included): \$2000-\$2500*

*Space currently limited to 10 registrants.*

*\$500 registration fee holds your place – fully refundable until March 21, 2011, after that only if we can fill your space.*

*Price includes accommodations, meals, admissions, ground transportation and workshop fees. Prices and exchange rates subject to change.*

*For further information, please contact LaFrance-Linden at [themorninglight@earthlink.net](mailto:themorninglight@earthlink.net)*

## IMBOLC RITUAL

by Stevie Grant

Imbolc is a Fire holiday. Important in forging the smith's tools and in heating and cooking, fire transforms one thing into another. Candles are often ritually lit at Imbolc to lure the slowly waxing Sun to return. But Imbolc may also be seen as a Water holiday. In early February in Europe, pregnant ewes begin lactating, signaling the coming spring. The many wells in Ireland named after the Goddess Brighid, closely associated with Imbolc, are magickally symbolic of the birth canal of the Goddess, from which all things are born.

This ritual, incorporating the symbolism of both fire and water, involves mysteries of Brighid, the Triple Goddess of smithcraft, poetry, and healing. To honor Her, the ritual is performed mostly in song or chant. I've composed words to some chanting tunes, which can be found in *Songs for Earthlings*, compiled by Julie Forest Middleton (SFE) or in *Circle of Song*, compiled by Kate Marks (COS).

When planning the ritual, ask each participant to bring an offering for Brighid's Well in the form of a small token of the person's art, craft, or healing skill. Examples of these tokens may be a pen, paintbrush, bunch of herbs, stethoscope, wrench, weaver's shuttle, pot used for cooking food, and so forth.

Set up the altar with:

- ◆ Your usual ritual tools
- ◆ A cauldron with water in it. This represents Brighid's well. Place it on an altar in the center of the circle.
- ◆ Candles placed around the cauldron. These represent Brighid's fire. The candles should be taller than the cauldron so that, when lighted, the candle flames shimmer on the surface of the water.

- ◆ A platter or tray under the cauldron and candles.

### Ritual Opening

You can do what you usually do. You might try chanting in a sing-song way the circle casting, Quarter calling, evocation of the Goddess and God, and so on.

Calling the Quarters can be done as a call-and-response chant, the Leader singing a line and the participants repeating it, using the following words to the tune of "Green God" (by Donald Engstrom, in SFE):

*East Quarter*

*Air Quarter*

*Spirits old of inspiration*

*Come now, join our circle*

*Guard it for us*

*South Quarter*

*Fire Quarter*

*Spirits old of will and power*

*Come now, join our circle*

*Guard it for us*

*West Quarter*

*Water Quarter*

*Spirits old of purifying*

*Come now, join our circle*

*Guard it for us*

*North Quarter*

*Earth Quarter*

*Spirits old of manifesting*

*Come now, join our circle*

*Guard it for us*

Evoking the Goddess Brighid can be done in song, using the following words to the tune of "Ancient Mother" (by an unknown author, in SFE):

*Ancient Maiden, O bear us calling  
O Brighid, our Goddess, descend to us  
With Your blessing of transformation  
And inspiration for healing and art.*

Evoking the God Pan can be done in song, using the following words to the tune of "Power, Power, We Are Calling" (by an unknown author, in COS):

*Pan, Pan, we're evoking  
You Who guide the animals' waking  
As the Earth begins to stir  
Come, come, join our Circle here.*

## The Working

Leader lights the candles around the cauldron and says:

*Tonight is the Goddess Brigid's night, with the first stirrings of life in the belly of the Mother. We seek Her blessing at Her well, Her womb. Collect the token of your art, craft, or healing skill. If you don't have it with you physically, imagine it in your inner mind. Breathe on it your request or wish from Goddess for healing or inspiration or blessing in creating your tools. (Wait for everyone to do this.) Now place it around the cauldron, which is Brigid's well. Watch Her fire from the candles illuminating the water as transformation takes place in the depths. You may see or sense a message. Receive Brigid's blessing.*

Leader waits for everyone to finish, then leads a bouncy chant, repeating it over and over, faster and louder, to raise energy. When enough energy has been raised, Leader lifts up both arms and all shout out, "So mote it be!"

I have used "She Changes Everything She Touches" (by Starhawk, in COS). This can be the chorus for all to sing, alternating it with the verses to "Kore's Chant" (by Starhawk, in COS), sung by Leader. After the last verse, the chorus is repeated over and over, faster and louder. Another possibility is to use "This Little Light of Mine" (by an unknown author, in COS).

Leader gives directions for everyone to ground.

## Ritual Closing

You can do the ritual closing in your usual manner, including Cakes and Ale, a final blessing, thanking Goddess and God for Their presence, thanking and dismissing the Quarters, and opening the circle.

Thanking Goddess and God for Their presence can be done in song with the following words to the tune of "Ancient Mother" (by an unknown author, in SFE):

*Thank You Pan, thank You Brigid  
For the blessing of Your seed  
And Your presence in these rites  
May we know You all the days and nights.*

Thanking and dismissing the Quarters can be chanted by using "We Come from de Water" (by an unknown author, in COS, and also popularized by Harry Belafonte):

*We come from the mountains  
Living in the mountains  
Go back to the mountains  
Turn the world around  
Blessed be*

*We come from the oceans  
Living in the oceans  
Go back to the oceans  
Turn the world around  
Blessed be*

*We come from the fires  
Living in the fires  
Go back to the fires  
Turn the world around  
Blessed be*

*We come from the breezes  
Living in the breezes  
Go back to the breezes  
Turn the world around  
Blessed be*

Opening the circle can be done by chanting "The Circle Is Open" (by an unknown author, in SFE):

*The Circle is open but unbroken  
May the peace of the Goddess go ever in your heart  
Merry meet and merry part  
And merry meet again.*

After the ritual, each participant takes home his/her now blessed token.

## Invocations to the Morrighan and the Daghdha

by Shea Morgan

The Goddess comes in many forms and names over the ages, but her story remains as true as it was the day it was written in the stars. Separate, but yet one. All encompassing. Blessed be.

*Hail to The Morrighan!  
Phantom Queen! Goddess of Fate!  
Bestower of Sovereignty!  
Goddess with many faces, many guises  
yet all one  
A drumbeat, a heartbeat, a thread  
through the ages  
You are the Horse Goddess, guiding me on my  
journey through life and the Otherworld  
You are the Goddess of Death and Rebirth,  
leading me through the fire  
of the inner mysteries  
I honor you and call on you to walk with me.  
Lend me your power  
as I seek to join my souls as one  
Safely hold the sacred space I have created  
through my will, join your will to mine.  
Guide and protect the Circle,  
guide and make safe my path.  
Hail, Honor and Welcome!*

The God comes in many forms and names over the ages, but his story remains as true as it was the day it was written in the stars. Separate, but yet one. All encompassing. Blessed be.

*Hail Daghdha! The Good God! Tribal God!  
Protector!  
You are the All Father, provider to all  
with your cauldron of life  
I ask you to feed my dreams  
and goals for the future,  
Gifting me with your wisdom  
and bringing me balance  
Lend me your club and shield; protect and  
defend me during these rites and in life  
I honor you and call on you to walk with me  
Lend me your power  
as I seek to join my souls as one  
Safely hold the sacred space I have created  
through my will, join your will to mine.  
Guide and protect the Circle,  
guide and make safe my path.  
Hail, Honor and Welcome!*

## WHEN TOMORROW SPEAKS TO ME: MEMOIRS OF AN IRISH MEDIUM

Bridget Benson  
Llewellyn Publications  
\$15.95

Review by Raye Snover

“My gift has saved me, burdened me, made me laugh, and made me cry,” says Bridget Benson in her breezy new memoir *When Tomorrow Speaks to Me*. Benson, an Irish clairvoyant medium hailing from County Mayo, gives an in-depth look at growing up psychically gifted.

More well-known in Ireland and England due to her many radio and television appearances, charity work, and assistance to local police, Benson tells her story to Sophie McAdam in a down-to-earth, friendly manner. Discovering early on that she had a more than passing connection with the spirit world set the stage for an existence where at times she was more comfortable with the supernatural than the “real” people around her.

Benson, the seventh of nine children, was three when a relative named Harry first appeared to her and started to chat. The only thing was, Harry had passed from the earth before Bridget was born. This was Benson’s introduction to the supernatural. Other members of her family such as her Great Aunt Bridget and her father also had this gift, but more often than not Bridget would have to keep her talent hidden. As practicing Catholics, Benson’s father used to tell her “you haven’t to tell people Bridget. It’s something people don’t want to hear, and the priest won’t like it.”

Despite hiding her natural ability Benson says she “never felt alone as a child,” due to her circle of spirit friends to keep her company. She would talk to them and they would help her with her chores on the farm. She would also play with fairies and interact with leprechauns enabling her to be herself and “feel happy and at peace with my gift.” It wasn’t until later that Benson

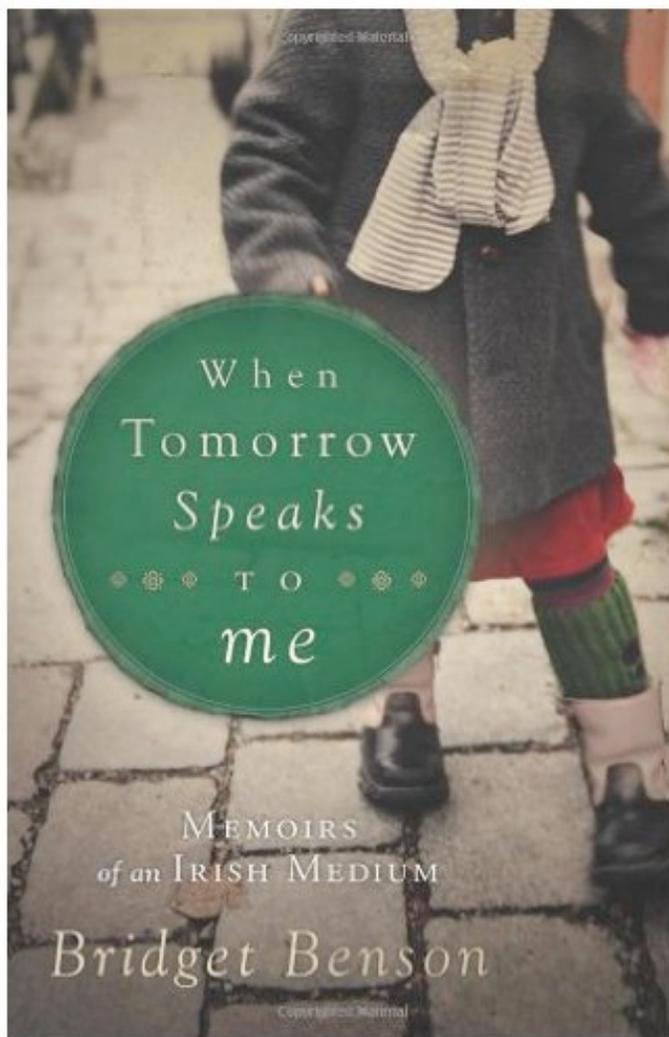
talent sustained her as she learned that she was never really alone and that her father was still with her albeit on a different plane.

It was during this time that Benson embraced her gift, devoting time each day to talking to spirits and developing her psychic ability. Benson’s clairvoyance gave her hope during some of her most trying times. Told she’d

never conceive naturally, Benson was able to ignore the medical professionals and not give up. She had three children. This hope however was always tempered with sadness, as she would know in advance about family tragedies and in some cases world events.

As Benson turned this ability into a profession, she learned that with this gift comes a responsibility. She had to often tell clients terrible news about loved ones in a sensitive manner, while comforting them with the knowledge that they weren’t completely gone, just in a different place. Though Benson’s life can’t have been easy she doesn’t allow that to make her hard or bitter, instead there is a gentleness about her that “can bring you peace, hope and the knowledge that your loved ones are only a thought away.”

*Raye Snover is a HPs in the Cabot Tradition whose work has appeared in The New York Times, The Daily News and Excalibur. She lives in Manhattan.*



learned of the dark side of her talent.

On her seventh birthday Benson’s grandmother died and Harry predicted the death of Benson’s father when she was twelve. While this news was devastating to her, this foreknowledge allowed Benson to consciously spend more time with her father, an opportunity most don’t get with their loved ones. After her father’s death the family moved to England. Benson’s

# MAY THE TEMPLE BE WITH YOU

by Christopher Penczak

Creating community is no easy task, particularly if you are a Witch. We do seek the company of our fellow walkers on the path—I know I crave it. Yet a big portion of our path is solitary. Our primary experiences are internal. They can be communicated, but no one else can truly share in them, though our sisters and brothers can have their own experience right next to us in ritual. Many of us are attracted to the path because we already feel like we are alone when in a crowd, seeing the world through different eyes.

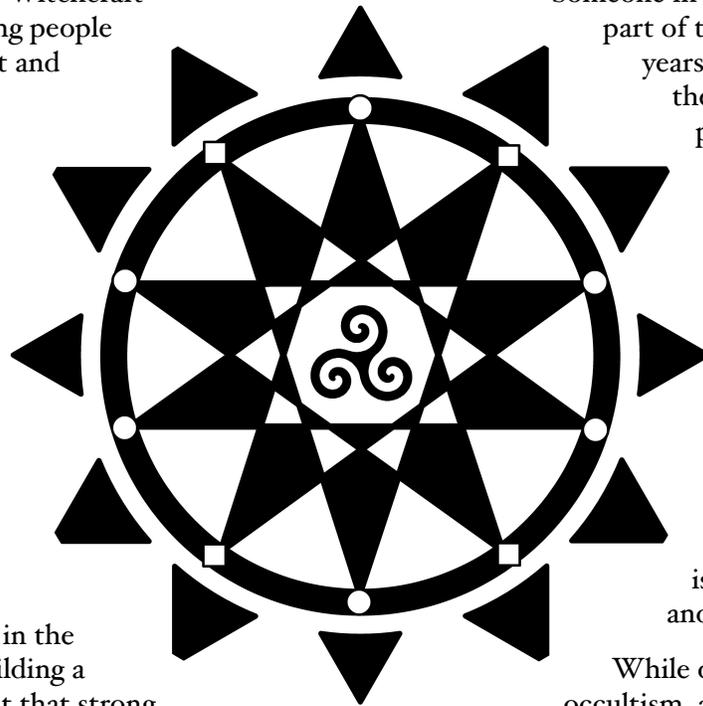
Still, we come together. We form covens and groups. We take classes and attend events. And we even form organizations like the Temple of Witchcraft and its related ministries, to bring people on the path together for support and to do great things that would be hard to undertake alone.

One of the tasks I'm spearheading is the educational work of the Temple. Teaching is the heart of my personal mission, but in the effort of community, the ministry is shifting. We're training our next generation to be teachers and mentors themselves. Letting go of control is no easy thing, but a shared vision with a strong foundation is necessary for something to survive and thrive in the coming age. Together we are building a culture and environment for that that strong foundation to form.

One of the issues that came up in a more advanced class of mentors was that of our group identity, as a class and as a Temple. Some folks have gotten in the habit of using the term Clan or Tribe to describe the class. While I think everybody has the right to use whatever terms they desire to self identify, I piped in as I do, to inform them that technically we'd be more of an Esoteric Order than a Clan or Tribe. As you can imagine, Order sounds a little cold, while Clan and Tribe sound more familial, and people reacted accordingly. Many people looking for community in the Craft are looking for family, and there was a bit of a discussion about the different words and their meanings, and exactly what I meant by Order in regards to the Temple

of Witchcraft. Folks thought I should share some of these thoughts in the Temple Bell.

I totally understand personal sentiments about the term Order vs. Clan and Tribe, though as a writer I'm a bit of a stickler for words, and as an occultist, even a modern occultist, I'm a stickler for what has come before and for honoring that as we forge new traditions. Ultimately I don't personally care what word is used, as long as the understanding of what is expected from all parties is clear. I think we often have some unrealistic expectations about modern spiritual communities, based on our past views on religion and family. The meaning is the important thing, the shared base, but words do help us find that common ground.



Someone in the class had mentioned being a part of the Rosicrucian Order for many years, but had never met anyone else in the flesh from the order, and had no particular "warm and fuzzy" feelings for anyone in the Rosicrucian Order, as they do for members in the Temple of Witchcraft, and particularly in their class. Though I do know a few friendly Rosicrucians, I can see how our own Temple community and classes are generally more social and friendly, yet the type of spiritual work directed by both the Temple and the Rosicrucians is really not that different from one another.

While often the spiritual Work of occultism, and thereby Witchcraft, can be friendly, supportive and even familial, depending on the group, it is ultimately transpersonal, going beyond the personal sphere to reach the mysteries. In some cases it can be seemingly impersonal and even cold. People in the Craft often get personal relationships mixed up in the efforts of the Work, and confuse personal love with Perfect Love, and substitute friendship/love for the Work, where in an ideal world, such friendship and love *support* the Work. When peers/teachers/mentors hold one to the standard of the Work, and a student is confused about the personal relationship, they take that to mean they are not loved or supported. Suddenly seemingly implied obligations are perceived as betrayals on the part of the one who has confused the personal and the transpersonal. Some of that can't be avoided, but if the structure is clearly spelled out,

much of it can. I think of it often in terms of hats, and we are each wearing different hats at different times.

In many ways, the Work is not meant to be warm and fuzzy, and the most Loving thing you can do at times is to be stern and disciplined, and not indulge in sentiment. Many can use sentiment to not fulfill obligations to the Work. Other times, warm and fuzzy is called for, and when a new level is met, the disciplinary mode can be released for a simple peer-to-peer understanding. And at times we have to discourage, or even bar, those whom we feel a personal warmth towards, from going onward. It is not reflection of our personal feelings, but can be necessary when someone is not ready for the next stage of the Work. If the overall tone is warm and fuzzy, and then you are stern, it can be very confusing for the person on the receiving end, even when it's necessary. Sometimes one must be cruel to be kind in the long run. An Order in the Temple implies the Work is first and foremost, and personal relationships can develop, but are not the basis of the Work.

While we can say the Temple is our "chosen family," that will mean different things to different people. In terms of Clan/Tribe, even if we omit the implied genetic/cultural common base that we don't really have as a group, such terms would imply that if someone lost their home, they would be welcome to stay with me, or you, until they did. If someone lost their job, their financial support would be a personal responsibility of the "tribe."

While I hope that we have more social support and services through religious organizations like the Temple for pagans, such structures also enable appropriate boundaries that are not always present when individuals take familial responsibilities for others. As a minister without a "church" for years, I've had people with no where else to go live with me until they were self sufficient. Though I don't regret those decisions, as it was a good learning experience for all, I don't want to repeat it unnecessarily. It was also a personal decision. Obligation was not implied in the way that Tribe/Clan can technically imply it. My Will was the deciding factor.

While we can enjoy everyone's company in a class or ritual, and we can say we choose our classmates and Temple-mates as family, ultimately they are here because they joined the organization and sought education. We have many people lurking who are not vocal. Did we choose them? How about people in the Temple beyond the class we have not met? How far do such responsibilities go? I know many of you are thinking "That's not what I mean when I say Tribe/Clan," but it is what is generally implied, more so than with other terms such as Tradition, Order, Group or even Temple. Perhaps a new word that has yet to be coined is more appropriate, but for now, I prefer Order as it's more specific to what has been created both within the classes and within

the greater body of the Temple. "Order" also implies the group of initiates who have taken education in the Mystery School in seminary, helping serve the overall body of the Temple, where the general members are less unified by the Work.

Covens often work within these frameworks to create familial connections, and use them to have people work through their familial issues before becoming HP/HPS. That's not the model of the Temple. The Temple assumes adult relationships and discourages parental and other projections upon peers, mentors and teachers. But covens are limited to thirteen members and require a much greater personal commitment than the Temple does. Many covens do not allow you to learn from other teachers/sources, while the Temple encourages it. While your spiritual community can often have a family feel, your spiritual teachers are not your parents, and do not have the same relationship with you as your parents do. While we see Goddess as Mother and God as Father, we are seeking to enter an adult relationship with the gods stressed by self responsibility, and enter that same adult relationship with our teachers, mentors and peers.

Witchcraft traditions that truly identify as a Clan and follow that model put group soul/group identity well before the individual. The Magister and Maid hold the virtue of the group and ultimately are the final authority, much like the Chief of a tribal structure. While I might hold the authority of a single class, and respect as a founder of the Temple and tradition, we have a system in place where I can be advised, and ultimately out voted if the governing body of the Temple feels my action are not in the Temple's best interest. That is more like an Esoteric Order. There is an intelligence guiding the body of the Order, and, like a good Aquarian model of leadership, many voices rule.

Clans require oaths and loyalties, much like an adoption process that really is difficult to break. Commitment is life long. The breaking of such ties usually implies that something has gone dreadfully wrong. In a magickal Order, on the other hand, one can usually resign if the paths now longer converge, with no hard feelings. Some groups identified with Clan/Tribe all live together, sharing both personal expenses along with a magickal path. The bond is much more personal and the commitment is far beyond that of an in person or online class, even if it's part of a larger body of training in a tradition.

And in many groups outside of popular neopaganism, the term tribe is considered to be offensive unless you are actually a tribe, by the strict definition of the word. Pagans who use the term loosely are often surprised to find they have offended someone.

An Order is a way of expressing a group of mystics and initiates, an expression of the universal sisterhood/brotherhood, without the use of a gender term that would be exclusionary. Fraternity or Sorority could also be used. If only there was a word that implied both without gender. But to my knowledge there isn't. The Mighty Dead, to the Theosophical Movement, were originally called the Great White Brotherhood. One can imagine the later problems as Victorian cultures changed in regard to gender and race with that title. Names that have come after include The Order of Blessed Souls or the Withdrawn Order, from various traditions, to imply that gender inclusive brotherhood/sisterhood.

In some ways, I find the bonds of an Order stronger, as it means everyone there has chosen to be there in every moment, and each has a way of reaching across to other groups. An Order is more universally welcoming. Anyone appropriate to the work can join the Order from different cultural backgrounds. Clan/Tribe can separate and divide, even if that is not their intention, stating "this is us" and "that is not us," while order is an expression of the Timeless Tradition. The Temple of Witchcraft as an Order is one expression of it. I see different expression of many of the same principles in the Gardnerians, Thelemites and even the Rosicrucians. We're simply newer, and have more work ahead of us. But the flavor of this expression speaks to my soul more than the others. So that's why I'm in this expression of the Timeless Tradition. The expression of an Order is a particular way of creating group identity and consciousness that can be quite different from Tribe/Clan and was purposely chosen by the founders and leaders of the Temple when we went public beyond the small groups studying the system of the Temple.

A helpful way for me to think of it, and perhaps for some of you, is like the Jedi Order from Star Wars. Though philosophically flawed a bit due to the dualistic nature of light/dark as good/evil that is not found in Witchcraft, in the movies it exists as a body of adepts in their magical arts. They share the common bond of training. They find kinship in common experiences and goals. They are different from the mainstream due to their abilities and experiences, and bond through it. They have faced similar ordeals. Similar ethics guide them, but they are all responsible for their own actions, spiritually and in the community. They support each other and their community. One through hard work can rise through the ranks of experience and eventually have a voice in leadership upon the council. A higher spiritual purpose is the shared vision. Everyone is personally sovereign and have no true obligation beyond the Work, and doing your True Will. If that takes you away from the Order, we wish you well. If it brings you back to the Order, we will welcome you. All of these things are part of an esoteric Order.

Different Orders express themselves and the timeless truths differently, based upon the time, space and people involved. Some are friendlier than others. Some are purposely impersonal at every step of the way to discourage undue sentiment. Some can be more tribal in their feel, even if they are not a Tribe. Ultimately an Order is a Mystery School and the community that supports it and is supported by it, and that is the ultimate purpose of the Temple, a school for the soul. The only true commitment you are making is to the Work and your part in the Work, to the level of your ability. If you choose to teach others in the long term – great! If you find really great friends in the order, even better. But some of you may find that you don't click with people around you and don't feel the instant bonds of friendship. That doesn't mean you are any less connected to the Order, or to the body of the work. Either those feelings will be a part of your work, or not. I know myself, in my first and second degree training, I can't say I really enjoyed too many people on a personal level. I found friendship in paganism later, but it was not mandatory to do the Work.

We can be a very friendly Order. We can be a social Order. We can be a very loving Order and supportive of each other. That can be our expression of it here and now. And we can call it whatever we want as individuals as long as we realize those are the parameters and not inadvertently make assumptions beyond it. Each class and group sets a different tone and should be free to do so. We must come to a common understanding, and words like Order simply help us to do so. Once we have common agreement and understanding, we can forge ahead in new ways, with a stronger foundation.

So when you think of the Temple and our bond through the Work of the Mysteries, it can be helpful to think of our space-faring sisters and brothers seeking the Mysteries of the Force. That level of dedication, training and intensity to the Mysteries is a good role model, as long as we don't get stuck in Hollywood cliches or substitute sci-fi morality for our true understanding of Witchcraft and divinity. But as an outer image, the Jedi can be quite inspiring for the Temple of Witchcraft.

So at your next Sabbat, May the Temple Be With You!

*Christopher Penczak is the co-founder of the Temple of Witchcraft tradition and organization, as well as a metaphysical author and teacher. His newest book, *The Three Rays of Witchcraft*, is now available from Copper Cauldron Publishing. For more information, visit [www.coppercauldron.com](http://www.coppercauldron.com) or [www.christopherpenczak.com](http://www.christopherpenczak.com).*

# CELEBRATING RA AT IMBOLC

by Emily K. Jones

As we near Imbolc, what I notice most is that the days are starting to stay lighter for a longer amount of time. It is no longer completely dark out when I leave work at the end of the day. For me, the primary focus of Imbolc then is on the growing power of the sun. As Ra is my patron God, I find Imbolc to be a perfect time to hold a ritual celebrating Ra as his strength increases. For my ritual in honor of Ra, I like to use quarter calls that celebrate him in some of his many forms. In the following quarter calls, the name Khephera refers to Ra coming into being in his scarab form at dawn, the name Sekhem-Ra refers to the power of Ra at noon, the name Ra-Atum refers to Ra completed and setting at sunset and the name Ra-Meket-Het refers to Ra protected in the womb of Nut where he spends the night, only to be reborn as Khephera in the morning.

## *East Quarter Call – Khephera*

Listen to the story of the morning of the world. Khephera becomes. Khephera rises up in the barque of the sun, floating and infinite among the flowing river of stars. Nut births him forth from her womb as the light of the world. This is the first glowing spark of creation. Khephera rises up glorious in the magic of his becoming. Khephera becomes the first light. Khephera becomes and it is the very first beginning. Khephera becomes and the shining dawn bursts forth to bless and become the day. Khephera becomes and the shining dawn bursts forth to bless and become the world. Every day, every morning, in this beginning, in this becoming, Khephera creates himself and radiance is born. Welcome Khephera!



## *South Quarter Call – Sekhem Ra*

Listen to the story of the power of the sun. Sekhem-Ra shines forth. Sekhem-Ra reigns from the barque of the sun, steady and on course at the height of his power. He radiates his light forth from the infinite source of himself. He illuminates the world with the brilliant radiance of his light. This is the sustained fire of creation. Sekhem-Ra shines glorious in the magic of his power. Sekhem-Ra is light and he sustains the world. Sekhem-Ra is glorious as the burning power of the noonday sun. Sekhem-Ra shines and the brilliant light bursts forth to bless and become the power of the sun at noon. Sekhem-Ra shines and the brilliant light bursts forth to bless and become the fire that sustains the world. Every day, every noon, in this shining, in this brightness, Sekhem-Ra bursts

forth and his radiance sustains. Welcome Sekhem-Ra!

## *West Quarter Call – Ra-Atum*

Listen to the story of the evening of the sun. Ra-Atum descends. Ra-Atum glides down in the barque of the sun, swiftly descending to the western horizon. This is the last glorious radiance of the sun as he begins his journey to the underworld. Ra-Atum descends into the magic of his mystery. He holds his secret name safe inside himself, taking it with him beyond the line of the horizon. Ra-Atum completed turns his barque toward the unknown. He carries with him the ending of all things. He carries with him all that fades away. Ra-Atum is setting into the ending of the day. He knows the magic of diminishing. Ra-Atum descends and the glowing light fades away to bless and become the evening. Ra-Atum descends and the glowing light fades away to bless and become the dark mystery enveloping the world. Every day, every evening, in this ending, in this setting, Ra-Atum descends and mystery is born. Welcome Ra-Atum.

## *North Quarter Call – Ra-Meket-Het*

Listen to the story of the midnight of the sun. Ra-Meket-Het waits. Ra-Meket-Het silent and motionless, protected in the dark womb of Nut. Ra-Meket-Het waiting patiently, not yet ready to be born. Ra-Meket-Het, a hidden and secret spark living deep within the belly of the Goddess, burning yet invisible. Ra-Meket-Het eclipsed in the magic of his gestation. He is the beginning of all things, waiting to be born. He is one with the void of all that is yet to be. Ra-Meket-Het waits and the light prepares to bless and become the day. Ra-Meket-Het waits and the light prepares to bless and become the world. Every day, every midnight, in this darkness, in this stillness, Ra-Meket-Het waits and

radiance lives in the void. Welcome Ra-Meket-Het!

After calling quarters with some of the forms of Ra, I also like to invoke both Nut and Ra. Even though Ra is already present because of the quarter calls, I have found it to add a great deal of power to the ritual to formally invoke him.

### *Invocation of Ra*

Listen to the story of the glory of the sun. Ra shines his power from high above the world, the source of all life radiates out from his glorious body. Ra, shining and infinite, who creates himself and orders all of creation. Ra shines above us, the Glorious One who enlightens the world. Ra, Great Father, pulses above us across eternity. Welcome Ra!

### *Invocation of Nut*

Listen to the story of the glory of the sky. Nut rises above the world, a thousand souls as stars in the beauty of her body. Nut, twinkling and infinite, who births the gods and creates the pattern of all things. Nut shines above us, the Great One who has become the sky. Nut, Great Mother, stretches above us across eternity. Welcome Nut!

For the body of the ritual, I usually journey to Ra to speak with him, then I offer him some incense and libations. If I feel inspired, I will also try to write a prayer or hymn to Ra. It is also nice to read one of Ra's many stories during the ritual. The body of the ritual can take any form that you like as long as it centers in some way on Ra. When the work of the ritual is done, say farewell to Nut, Ra and the forms of Ra.

### *Nut Farewell*

We have heard the story of the glory of the sky. Nut, Great Mother who rises above us, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

### *Ra Farewell*

We have heard the story of the glory of the sun. Ra, Great Father who shines above us, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

### *Farewell to Ra-Meket-Het/North*

We have heard the story of the midnight of the sun. Ra-Meket-Het who waits in the belly of the goddess, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

### *Farewell to Ra-Atum/West*

We have heard the story of the evening of the sun. Ra-Atum who descends beyond the edge of the western horizon, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

### *Farewell to Sekhem-Ra/South*

We have heard the story of the power of the sun. Sekhem-Ra who shines forth and thus sustains the world, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

### *Farewell to Khephera/East*

We have heard the story of the morning of the sun. Khephera who becomes and thus sparks creation, we have received your blessings and we offer you our thanks and farewell. Thanks and farewell!

*Emily K. Jones is a Tarot fanatic and workshop junkie who has been an active member of the Denver Pagan community for the past six years. She works at the metaphysical shop Full Moon Books, writes a column as The Denver Wicca Examiner and is always looking for new ideas, events, and practices to inform her spiritual journey.*

## TEMPLE BELL CONTRIBUTORS

*Shea Morgan is a Witchcraft III student with a 20 year career in government and public affairs. She is a student of all things spiritual and has been on the path of a Witch since 2001. She lives in St. Louis, MO with her cats and an ever-expanding collection of antiques.*

*Daedalus is a former bike club member from Texas. He has been married to the same wonderful lady for 35 years. Daedalus lives on the coast of Maine and works part time in a Pagan shop. The rest of his time is taken up doing metal and woodworking, mostly yacht work, ritual tools and wooden bowls.*

*Stevie Grant brings to the Temple her lifelong experiences as teacher, healer, student, poet, writer, and amateur musician. She and her husband Mark grow large exotic gourds in the Pacific Northwest and transform them into magically inspired art.*

*Kathy McKenna is reinvigorating her 20-year witchcraft practice by studying Witchcraft I with Christopher Penczak. She has recently been spending time earth walking, reading epic fantasy novels, and working with dragons.*

*Myrddin and Rowan are two traditional witches living in the South West of England and worshipping (respectively) the old gods of the British Isles and the Greek Gods, in particular Hestia. For more information please visit their website at [dumnoniiwitchcraft.co.uk](http://dumnoniiwitchcraft.co.uk)*

*Tim Titus is a Witchcraft II student who lives in Orange County, California where he teaches high school psychology and journalism. He also is a contributor to The Juggler, a Pagan News wire blog.*

*Tina Whittle is mystery novelist/freelance writer who lives and works in Southeast Georgia. She is a member of the Earth-based Spirituality Group at her local Unitarian-Universalist church, which she attends with her husband and daughter.*

The Temple and its Ministries are always in need of volunteers willing to contribute their time, energy, and expertise to our Great Work. You can contact the Temple Volunteer Coordinator at [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org). Specific volunteer opportunities include the following:

## DRUMMERS

The Leo Ministry wants more drummers for larger rituals, such as Samhain, and wants to establish a core drum group for Temple events and to develop new music and beats. Email [sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

## ENVIRONMENTALISM

The Taurus Ministry is looking for volunteers who would like to aid the Lead Minister in a variety of environmental projects and education. Please contact [taurus@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:taurus@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Gemini Ministry is on the lookout for Temple members with graphic design experience and resources, particularly Mac OS X based, and skill with page-layout and desktop publishing (iWork or Adobe CS). Email [gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## HEALING

The Virgo Ministry needs a volunteer to coordinate its healing work, including, but not limited to, organizing Reiki shares and other healing events and management of the Temple's online healing list. Experience in different healing modalities is preferred, but not required. Email [virgo@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:virgo@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to volunteer.

## MENTORING

The Sagittarius Ministry is looking for previous graduates of Witchcraft III, IV, and V interested in serving as mentors in the online education program. Mentorship includes giving feedback on homework, answering questions and encouraging students in the Mystery School and Seminary. Interested applications should email [sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:sagittarius@templeofwitchcraft.org).

## RAFFLE ITEMS

The Temple runs a regular raffle at our Sabbats, and we're always looking for new and unique items to be donated for the raffle to help raise funds. Email [raffle@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:raffle@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information or to donate items.

## WRITING & ART

The Gemini Ministry needs writers and artists to work on *The Temple Bell* newsletter. We're looking for articles, poetry, art, photos, and reviews. Contact editor-in-chief Ruby Sara at [templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:templebell@templeofwitchcraft.org) for complete submission guidelines.

The Leo Ministry is looking for artists interested in creating new pagan-oriented works for the Temple and its members. Contact the Lead Minister at [leo@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:leo@templeofwitchcraft.org) for more information.

You can also volunteer for work with particular ministries of the Temple by contacting the appropriate lead minister. See the Ministries page of the Temple website and **Contacting Us** below for details.

## CONTACTING US

- ◆ For general questions and inquiries e-mail [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org).
- ◆ For website or technical issues, e-mail [admin@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:admin@templeofwitchcraft.org).
- ◆ For questions or inquiries related to a specific ministry, see the Ministries page or e-mail that minister at (ministry name) @ templeofwitchcraft (dot) org, such as [gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org).

Send surface mail to:

Temple of Witchcraft  
PO Box 2252  
Salem, NH 03079

## NETWORKING

The Temple maintains an email notification list through Constant Contact, giving subscribers all the up to date information on our rituals, classes, and other events. To sign up, visit our website at [www.templeofwitchcraft.org](http://www.templeofwitchcraft.org) and go to the "Contact Us" page, where you'll find a "Sign Up for Our Newsletter" box. Just enter your email address to sign up.

If you are a Temple member at any level, you can also join the Temple Web, our interactive Yahoo! group email list for members to stay in touch and network. Registration requires membership verification, so please include your full name along with your request. You can find the mailing list's home page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/templeweb>

You can also find and friend us on Facebook and MySpace for updates and to help spread the word about the Temple!

# Donating to the Temple

*The Temple of Witchcraft is a 501(c)(3)e nonprofit organization, funded by the generous donations of its members to bring you services such as our website, mailing lists, and this newsletter.*

If you are interested in making a secure online donation via PayPal (including credit card donations), just go to the “Donations” page of our website and click on the “Donate” button and fill out the necessary information.

We can also accept checks and money orders (made out to “Temple of Witchcraft”) via surface mail at:

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PO Box 2252  
Salem, NH 03079

As a federally-recognized nonprofit, donations to the Temple are tax-deductible.

## LEVELS OF DONATION

The Temple welcomes donations in whatever denomination contributors can offer. We recognize five levels of donation:

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A special “Diamond” level is reserved for patrons of the Temple who establish

lasting endowments and trusts. Please contact us directly if you are interested in doing so.

We regularly thank members who donate to the Temple by offering special Wheel of the Year meditations as audio file downloads. See the Donations page of our website for the current thank-you offer and watch our website and social networks (like Facebook) for announcements concerning new thank-you meditations and special offers to our generous patrons.

## A B O U T T H E T E M P L E

**The Temple of Witchcraft** is 501(c)(3) religious nonprofit organization based in the State of New Hampshire. Co-founded by Christopher Penczak, the Temple started in 1998 as a system of magickal training and personal development, and eventually developed into a formal tradition of Witchcraft. Now, as an outgrowth of the work of students, initiates and graduates of the programs, the Temple of Witchcraft has evolved into an organization based on traditions of modern magick, Witchcraft, and Neopaganism. The work of the Temple is both otherworldly and terrestrial, seeking to strengthen the connections between spirit and matter through inner transformation and public service.

The Temple of Witchcraft’s goal on an individual level is to awaken the potential of the human soul to its natural gifts of psychic awareness, communion with nature and the spirits, and magick. Each individual seeks to live a magickal life. Through these awakenings, we seek an expansion of consciousness through the alignment of our souls with Love, Will, and Wisdom to complete the Great Work.

On a greater scale, we seek the restoration, maintenance, and evolution of humanity to the Garden of the Gods, the cooperative consciousness where all things are in harmony and community. Our myths define this awareness as the First Garden, known as Avalon, Hesperides, Zep Tepi, Shamballa, Lemuria and even Eden. We manifest this vision through both our inner workings and service to the greater community. By these actions, we plant the seeds and tend the garden of Witchcraft culture, tradition and community.

## Board of Directors

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For general questions regarding the Temple, or to contact the Board of Directors, please email [info@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:info@templeofwitchcraft.org). For technical or website related questions, please email [admin@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:admin@templeofwitchcraft.org).

Contact [gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org](mailto:gemini@templeofwitchcraft.org) for access to promotional materials, fliers, and other media.

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