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Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada



Vol. 5 | #6

Solstice



Midsummer Jun 21 – Aug 1, 2022

HAMILTON ★ TORONTO ★ WINDSOR

The Wiccan Church of Canada

The Wiccan Church of Canada has offered open Wiccan temples facilitating classes, rituals, and training to the public since 1979.

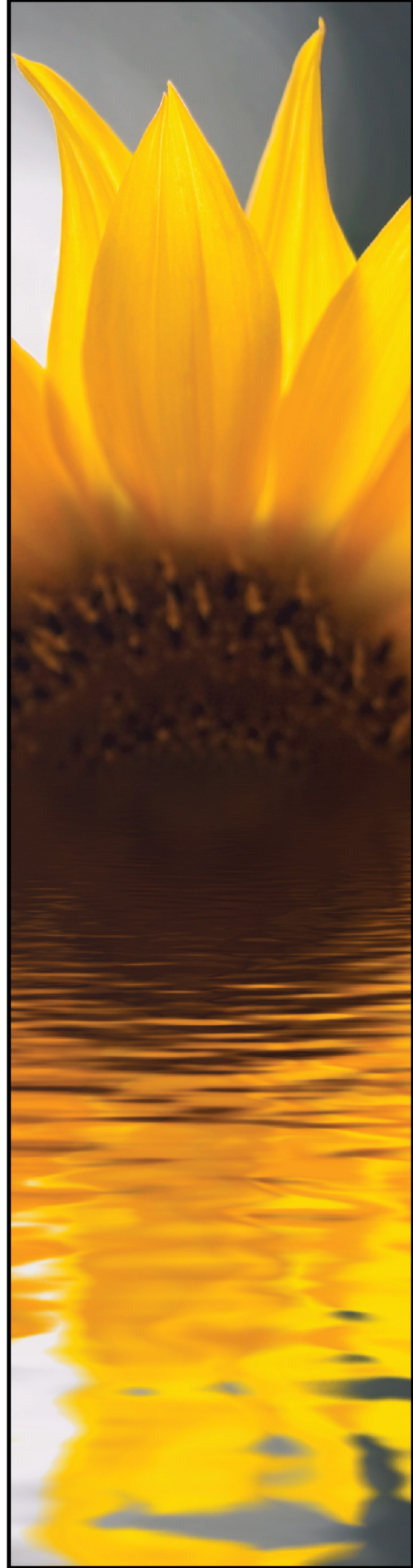
Drawing on resources available in our own communities and temples, we are a diverse, accepting, caring group of people united by our love of the Gods and our own journeys. W.C.C. classes and rituals are open to one and all, regardless of one's level of experience in the Craft. We offer an open, and accepting place to worship as an experienced practitioner or someone who's vaguely curious, all are welcome. We encourage you to check out the F.A.Q section on our website or contact us if you have questions.

We hope our publication will reflect the diversity of our membership in offering a local pagan magazine written by the community for the community. Our articles are the voices of our community, those with knowledge and resources to share. Herbs and seasonal recipes we've tried and keep bringing back to our feast tables. We'll keep you abreast of pagan events, vendors and local artisans, as well as WCC classes & rituals.

The WCC is pleased to offer free online weekly classes alternate Saturday & Sunday.

As well as a social Meet & Greet every Wednesday night via the ZOOM conferencing app.

**If you wish to participate, please email
LPH.WCC@gmail.com with your email address.**





The Summer Solstice has come. The longest day of the year. It is the day when the Sun Gods and Goddesses are at their greatest power. Celebrate!

With all that we have gone through this year (or two), this is the perfect Sabbat to celebrate. It has been a trying time, with many people fighting dark moments in their life. We have all felt it. But this Sabbat brings us brightness, a light that casts all darkness from our souls. Take this time to soak in the energies of the sun while it is at its strongest – a day when we will have more light than any other day this year.

Let the strength of the Sun burn away all those things that hold you back, burn away the clouds blocking your vision, so you can see clearly a direction to move you forward.

Sunrise is a time of transition. Rise early and welcome the dawning of the day, watch the sky brighten, and listen to the birds sing up the sun. What rises within you? The awaking and re-charging of your spirit? Or do you have a song in your heart to sing up the sun?

Mid-day is the sun's strongest time. Glory in the life that is around you. All of this made possible by the very same sun that warms your skin and fills your heart. Give thanks for the blessings. Consider a Summerpole: much like a Maypole but add flowers and leafy branches and dance in the heat of Summer Solstice.

At sunset, another transition. A time to say farewell to the Sun. Did you spend the day wisely, soaking in all the rays of healing, rejuvenating energy? As the light fades from the sky, give thanks for all that the Sun gives to us.

And as the darkness of night envelopes you, light a small bonfire or even just sit outside with a candle. The sun hasn't left you to the dark, it is in the flames and if you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of fireflies piercing the darkness of the night. Lie back in the heat of the Solstice night and gaze up. In the dark velvet of the sky, look for the stars, little orbs that reflect the blaze of the sun and know that the Gods' light watches you always.

As you prepare for your journey through Solstice day, look for things that cross your path that remind you of the sun. Gather them, decorate your altar or shrine.

With the solstice and thereafter, take the time to celebrate through all the elements of your day. Wear bright colours or red, orange, yellow or gold – colours of the Sun; make some wonderful feast food, for yourself and for the Gods (remembering to give back to Nature's creatures) – round, sun-coloured fruits and vegetables, or food grilled on an open flame capturing the essence of the sun; take in all the beams of glorious light and let it inspire you to create – make a craft, a tool relating to the sun, paint a picture, write a story, all with the energies of the day.

Spend a day doing something you love!

And take the time to say to someone "Hello Sunshine". It will make their day!

"HAIL THE SUN! HAIL THE GODS!"



SUNFLOWER

Helianthus annuus

The quintessential plant for celebration of the Summer Solstice. It's right there in the name, whether it's the common "Sun" flower or the Latin botanical name *Helia* coming from the Greek *Helios* (Roman *Heli*us) both the word for sun and the name of the Sun God

Who doesn't like the easily recognizable happy faces of this tall flower whose large face reminds

one of the sun with its radiant yellow petals which reach out like the warming solar rays?

There are about 70 different Sunflower species (*Helianthus* sp.) which are members of the Asteraceae family (asters, daisies, etc.). Most are native to North or Central America with only 3 species which hail from South America. The most likely point of Origin is Mexico and spreading from there. It was domesticated there as far back as 2600 BCE. *Helianthus annuus* is considered the common Sunflower. Sunflowers usually grow tall and can be annual or perennial in nature. They can grow as tall as 10 feet (with the tallest recorded one being 30.1 ft). The common Sunflower is an annual

The flower head itself is actually a collection of small, individual 5 petal florets in the centre. The outer petals of the sunflower are ray flowers and are sexually sterile. The flowers in the very centre which are arranged spirally are called disk flowers. It's these flowers that mature into the sunflower seeds. It's interesting to note the Sunflower florets are arranged in a natural spiral with a Fibonacci sequence

Young sunflowers will orient themselves east and follow the direction of the sun throughout the day ending in the west. In the evening they will reorient themselves to the east in anticipation of the day. This movement is called heliotropism. Mature flowers consistently face east.

Sunflowers grow best in fertile, moist and well-drained soil with lots of mulch

The kernel of the Sunflower seed is edible when it is mature. They are a healthy addition to the diet containing healthy fats and several vitamins and minerals as well as natural fiber. They can aid in reducing the risk of common health problems such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. They are particularly high in Vitamin E, copper, manganese and selenium. It is from the kernels that sunflower oil is derived. Note that the only edible part of the sunflower is its seed kernel and ingesting other parts including petals, leaves stems and the outer shell can cause a variety of issues. However, the flowers are useful as a source of yellow or orange dye.

Sunflowers are a masculine herb, associated with the Sun and the element of Fire. are sacred to all Sun Gods but especially Huitzilopochtli (aka Uitzilopochtli, Xiuhpilli (Turquoise Prince) or Totec (Our Lord), the Aztec Sun and War God. It can also be used in rituals to honour Demeter.

Sun flowers are symbols of good luck. Planting around your home is said to bring fortune your way. As will wearing a freshly cut Sunflower. Although the petals cannot be ingested, they can be used in a ritual bath where they are said to promote fertility and/or happiness/joy. They can also be used as protection. The Nahuatl, indigenous peoples of Central America, refer to it as what translates to "shield-flower" in their native tongue. The sunflower is also symbol of truth loyalty and honesty. A ritual to determine the truth of something is to sleep with sunflower under your pillow and the truth of something will be revealed the next day. Use Sunflowers in any ritual to promote positivity and bring the joy of the Sun into your life.

Sorcha's Tiger Eye

Tiger's Eye has long been associated with the tiger, representing prosperity, strength and courage and has been used as a talisman since the early days of human existence. Roman soldiers wore engraved Tiger's Eye in their breastplate to protect them in battle, and as a sign of gallantry in combat. It is still used as a protective stone today by many cultures. It's oft times carved into amulets and worn to ward off bad spirits, protecting its wearers from curses and vexing. In ancient Egypt, the bands of gold displayed by the stone were believed to be the rays of Ra (Re), and the darker bands to be of Geb, the god of the growing land, providing protection of the sun and earth combined. It was regarded as one of the most prized gems of the Nile River Valley. Lore and legend says that the stone holds the power of the midday sun, the hottest time of day, and is symbolic of the peak of the life force. Pharaohs and other high-ranking Egyptians wore jewelry made from Tiger's Eye, believing it would give them vitality and strength. The gemstone represented the concept of the all-powerful eye and was a precious, sacred offering to include in the tombs of the pharaohs to help them navigate the afterlife. The ancient Greeks also harnessed the power of Tiger's Eye, adorning themselves in jewelry made of it to strengthen their senses for focus and to provide protection. Dreaming of a Tiger's Eye stone is believed to indicate that deceit and treachery are near.

Element: Earth & Fire

Energy: Projective

Planet: Sun

Chakra: Sacral & Solar Plexus

Zodiac: Gemini, Leo & Capricorn

Tarot: The Sun

Sabbat: Litha/Midsummer



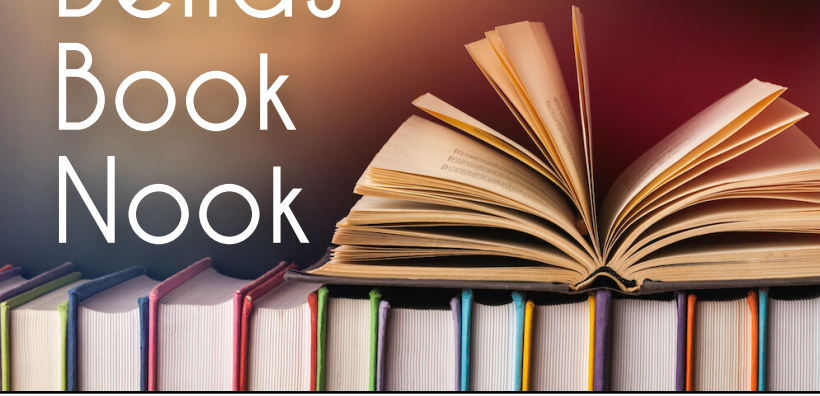
Magical Uses: Balance, Confidence, Courage, Divination, Energy, Luck, Money, Protection, and Success. Wear or carry Tiger's Eye for increasing insight and perception in unfamiliar places or circumstances, and for protection from negative intentions of others. When worn, it helps sharpen the senses, helping one pay attention to details and prepare for positive action. Use it as a support stone to help overcome fear during exams, competitions, public performances, or presenting ideas in important meetings and negotiations. Place it in your home near doorways or entranceways to help protect it from thieves and keep negative intentions out. You can place it in office spaces or rooms where decisions are made as it encourages and helps with positive decision making.

Healing Uses: Traditionally used to heal disorders of the eyes and throat, and to improve night vision. It is incredible for the mind, helping balance emotional extremes and scattered thoughts, helping things come together in a way that makes sense. It brings focus and stability, enabling one to make decisions from a place of reason rather than emotion. It will help one find purpose, keeping one optimistic and confident. It aids in SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) when worn, and helps balance the endocrine system.

Why use Tiger's Eye with Summer Solstice?

Tiger's Eye is connected to our solar plexus chakra, bringing joy and the warm energy of the sun into one's life. At this time when the sun is at its apex, we can wear this stone to show honour to the sun Deities, welcoming them into our lives. It is the time when we celebrate the union between heavens and earth. Summer is the time we tend to be more active and live life a little more. Let this sunny stone bring happiness and growth within and get those creative juices flowing!

Bellas' Book Nook



As you know, others are often invited to share meaningful books that have impacted them in some way. When the Norse book review began, it was about books that made a personal impact. However, its just as important to find those with the same passion and get their most recommended titles! Kelly Wyrð, an Odyssean Norse priestess was invited to share a recommendation to compliment this Norse journey.

"I came across the author of the book on YouTube 15+ years ago. I was intrigued by his videos and his drumming and the word that I had heard in passing in North America "Seidr". Of course, I had heard of Asatru and was mildly interested since my heritage is German and Welsh but the authors that I knew of were all American and I felt that any information I would glean from their books would always have that certain perspective.

I friended Runic John on Facebook and soon learned of his book

"The Book of Seidr, The Native English and Northern European Shamanic Tradition"

author, Runic John,
Capall Bann Publishing.

My edition is 2011 original publication date
Oct 2004.

ISBN 186163229-0.

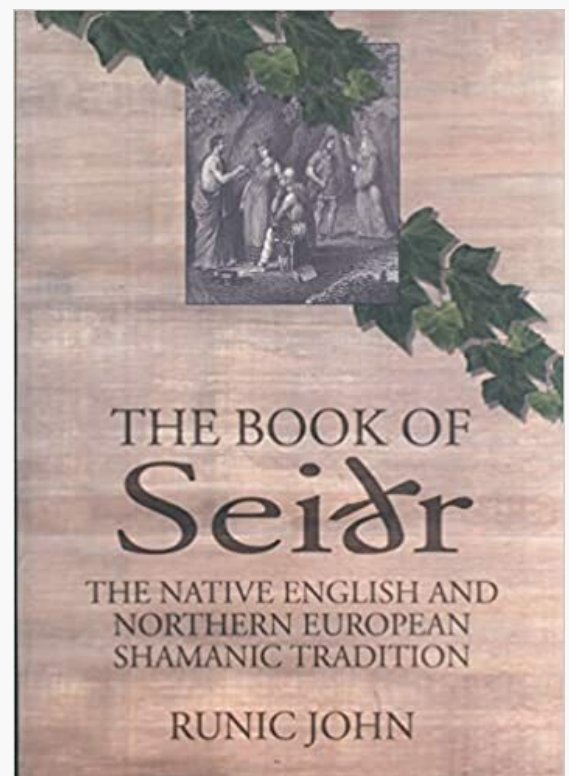
This book is for anyone wanting to learn more (about) Seidr practice. I am going to stop here and

point out that the spelling of Seidr varies from region to region. I have noted that Seidr is predominantly from the British Isles whereas Seidhr is used in the Scandinavian countries as well as Germany. The pronunciation of the word varies as well. Saith, Seeth, Saithr. We will never truly know which our Ancestors used is any at all. But I digress

The book itself is a wonderful treasure of knowledge about Seidhr; various tools that can be helpful; a quick introduction to some of our Gods; a great (new) perspective of the Nine Worlds; how to safely journey; how to access the Nine Worlds, knowledge on the various aspects of "body" and suggested exercises and rituals to start to access your own personal journey.

The book is a mix of concrete sustainable knowledge with some of John's personal journeying experiences.

This was the very first book of Seidhr that triggered something within my soul that aligned with my way of thinking and being. I believe that with every book we read; every ritual or journeying we do, it brings us closer to our true nature; our true purpose. It brings us closer to the Gods and opens an energetic pathway that allows those long-ago unknown Guides and Ancestors to offer their wisdom, teaching and healing to those who travel this Path."



A big thank you goes out to Kelly and all those who offered their own recommendations. However, to finish out my own Norse book saga, remember the incident at the book store? Well, the book on Norse mythology that fell from the shelf, was -

The Penguin Book of Norse Myths – Gods of the Vikings.

Introduced and retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland.

Re-issued by Penguin Books, in 2011, with a revised Bibliography.

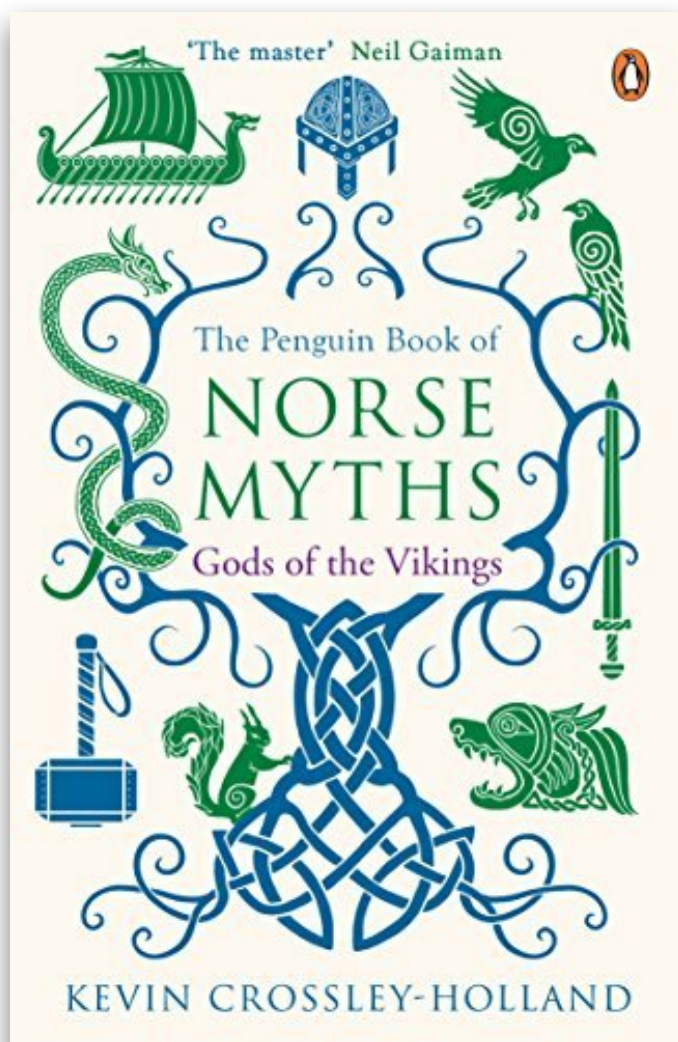
ISBN: 978-0-241-95321-1.

Indigo has it for about \$27.99 CDN, but keep an eye out on the bargain book section, I've seen it there for about \$5.00.

The myths/stories are only a few pages long and quite enjoyable. As with many mythologies, the Introduction is quite well done, explaining the Norse world, the cosmology and the pantheon; so, with that in mind, the first Chapter, is The Creation... Burning Ice, Biting Flame, that is how life began....

The last is Chapter 32, Ragnarok... "An axe-age, A sword-age, shields will be gashed: there will be a wind-age, and a wolf-age before the world is wrecked." And the last paragraph reads... "Lif and Lifthrasir will have children. Their children will bear children. There will be life and new life, life everywhere on earth. That was the end; and this is the beginning."

Not to be overlooked is the section, entitled Notes. Each chapter has its' notes, with a further explanation of the story that was told. From chapter One – Creation, all the way to Chapter 32 – Ragnarok. Each chapter is detailed and examined. Take the time to read this, after each chapter. If something was unclear in the story, the notes section will give you further insight, and further read. Don't forget to keep an eye on the Glossary and the Bibliography.



It's an amazing book, take your time reading it, and it will be a worthy addition to your library.

As for parents, and occasional sitters out there, these stories are enjoyable and can easily be retold or read aloud to children. As the Hamilton Temple Bard, I have retold some of the stories, in my own fashion, even on lay-overs...but that's a whole other story.... for another time.

Bright Blessings Litha, Happy Summer Equinox, and...Happy Reading!

Until next time, stay safe, stay healthy!

Bella

ON DECK with Trelew

The Steampunk Tarot

By John & Caitland Matthews

Calibrate your anti-grav boots, harness your Telsa pistol, and adjust your aether goggles, cause we are about to go down that stylish rabbit hole that is sreampunk. Welcome to a world where there is a hunger for adventure and exploration into places that only our imagination can fathom. This is a tarot where the Aether-Mage is king, and Punk Diva is queen.

For those that are unfamiliar, genre that combines Victorian and style. This themed deck world. The major Arcanum are Court cards are the mediators of the four leagues. The court navigators, ladies, and and pages). Each of the four worlds of airships, engines, swords, wands, cups, and

This is very much a reader, who is also a genre. The book Steampunk genre, to feel like you are a manual. It loosely tradition as every to fit the genre. As a liberties with the interpretations.

Don't count on being reads, as the deck time with the read. in detail, with an

Imagery is everything in this deck, which can easily overwhelm you. The other concern I have with this deck is that there is a heavy use of photos and digital media. For the most part, it works, but, there some that looked like they were cut and pasted into place.

I would recommend this deck for advance readers who are fans of the Steampunk culture. This is a very good deck but I personally find that the art work is very uneven. You have cards that shine, and others not so much. Also they have gone so far off the beaten path of standard tarot interpretations , that this should have been done as an Oracle deck instead.



Steampunk is a science fiction gothic, with a surge of imagination has completely embraced this now The Gods of the Machine. The of the Machine, the ambassadors is made up of commanders, messengers (kings, knights, queens, leagues oversee the elemental submersibles, and leviathans (coins).



deck for an advance dedicated fan of the dives deeply into the the point you almost reading a novel and not follows the RWS card has been reworked result, a lot of creative standard

able to do quickie forces you to take your Each card is explained accompanying spread.

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Find a copy from
Dark Dragon Publishing

Local Artist: Michelle Bond, Crowskin

Crowskin is the pen name of Michelle Bond - an Ontario freelance artist and the creator of "Spirit-Deck: Intuition Cards". Her art and illustration work leans heavily into the realms of fantasy and pagan spirituality.

Trelews' Tarot review: At this year's Brantford PPD, there was a debut of a brand new Oracle deck from artist Michelle Crowskin Bond. A small but powerful 23 card deck. This is a solid deck just slightly smaller than a standard deck. The box is a slim And sturdy, compact enough to take anywhere. The booklet gives you a brief explanation of each card, but you are encourage to find your own meanings for the cards as well.

The surreal artwork taps into the subconscious, and the black & white colouring adds a dreamy glow to the cards. This is a deck that works best with small spreads, 1, 3, or 4 cards. The only concerns I had was the lettering on some of the cards seem to disappear into the artwork. Also, I found a card or two invoked a different concept than was described on the card. Despite this this deck was still very easy to use. To find order the deck and see the other artistic talents of Michelle Crowskin Bond, go to www.eyesofacrow.com



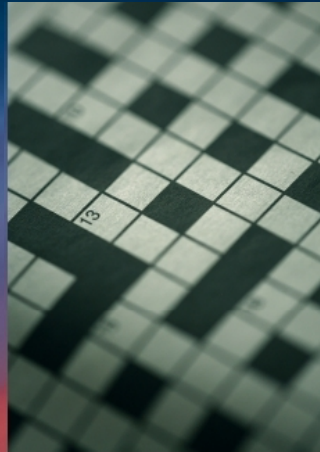
PUZZLE PAGE

PUZZLE LINKS

click the image for this
sabbat's challenge



AT A LOSS FOR
WORDS



CROSSED PENS



BUILD YOUR OWN
ONLINE MAZE

**Lamma Night is a fictional
novel featuring witches
written by what author?**

- A. Kelley Armstrong
- B. Ursula Le Guin
- C. Katherine Kurtz
- D. Thorne Mooney

What's That Phrase?

fareedce

“What is harder
to catch the
faster you run?”

Honey Mug Cake

Feast food for one? Divine libation? Dive your spoon into this sweet Honey Mug Cake. A soft, sticky and gooey mug cake made with honey, then topped with a delicious buttercream frosting. A delicious cake in less than 5 minutes!



MUG CAKE

2 tbsp butter
2 tbsp runny honey
1 medium egg
½ tsp vanilla extract
3 tbsp light brown sugar
4 tbsp self-raising flour, see notes
pinch of salt

FROSTING

2 tbsp butter, softened
4 tbsp icing (confectioners') sugar
(optional) runny honey

DIRECTIONS:

Add the butter to a mug and melt in the microwave for around 10-20 seconds.

Add the honey, egg and vanilla and beat with a fork until combined.

Add the sugar, flour and salt and beat again until fully combined and smooth.

Cook in the microwave for around 1 minute 15 seconds to 1 minute 30 seconds (depending on your microwave power), then allow to cool to room temperature.

Meanwhile, to make the frosting, add the butter and icing (confectioners') sugar to another mug and use a fork to cut the butter into the icing sugar until it reaches a clumpy texture, then beat with the fork until fluffy, around 1-2 minutes).

Spoon the frosting into a small piping bag or a ziplock bag fitted with an open star or plain round tip and pipe a swirl onto the top of the cooled cake.

(Optional) Drizzle with extra honey and serve immediately.

NOTES:

If you do not have self-raising flour, substitute with plain (all-purpose) flour and add ¼ tsp baking powder.

Don't fancy drizzling the honey? Just add between ¼-½ tsp runny honey to the frosting to taste. Hey presto, honey flavoured frosting!



Community Happenings

WCC Meet & Greet

Meet the Wiccan Church of Canada community every Wednesday evening @ 7 pm via Zoom. Open to the public across Canada, as our members across the country sign on for our online Community Get Together. A time to meet new friends, see the faces you have been missing.

Whether the conversation is around sharing how you honour your Gods, your magics, or just to soak up the support of community during a tough time, it is a great get together. Come on out and join in the fun!

**Email LPH.WCC@gmail.com FOR THE
LINK**

Toronto Pagan Pub Moot

"It is an open and friendly social event that meets in person every Third Calendar Monday of every month and virtually every Fourth Calendar Monday of every month. It is open to Pagans, Wiccans, Witches, Druids, Asatru, etc of ALL ages and those who are new and would like to learn more, to those who have been walking the path for decades."

TPPM dates 2022



**"BEING A WITCH MEANS
LIVING IN THIS WORLD
CONSCIOUSLY, POWERFULLY
AND UNAPOLOGETICALLY."**



LOCAL RESOURCES

HAMILTON

Obskurah Bazaar

Candles, Tarot & Oracle decks, magical curios, ritual supplies, spiritual self-care items, herbs, books, incense and occult inspired accessories are available online or at our retail shop in Hamilton, Ontario. Our goal is to provide ethically sourced, sustainably made, fair trade and ecofriendly products that support fair wages and working conditions for the makers and honor their traditions.

Treasures for the Soul

We offer a variety of New Age, Self Help and Metaphysical Products and Services to aid in your journey of Spiritual Development. You can find many products ranging from spell kits and ritual supplies to herbs, oils, candles, divination tools, magical items, home decor, books and much more

ETSY

Madame Phoenix Esoterica

Madame Phoenix produces hand made, top quality spiritual and occult supplies using only the highest quality, all natural ingredients from beginning to end.

TORONTO

The Occult Shop

Your one stop shop for quality occult, Pagan, Santeria and Wiccan spiritual supplies & gifts.

Specializing in custom incense sticks and cones, herbal blends, bath salts and over 2,000 magical oil blends. All made in house. We also carry a variety of books, candles, herbs & roots, jewellery and much more.





Looking to find out whats going on in your local temple? Perhaps you have questions regarding classes and rituals. Maybe you're a new seeker, or a solitaire looking for company or to share favourite seasonal fare; all are welcome. Our online communities are rich with diverse experience, skills and pagan knowledge. WCC Facebook groups strive to be safe spaces to discuss the Wiccan Craft and explore ideas of paganism in general without politics or proselytizing. Come see what we get up to between the sabbats!



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