



books★ gardening★ recipes★ ritual elements★ articles

Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada

Vol. 5 | #7

Midsummer



Harvestide

Aug 1 – Sep 21, 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.





Xylia's Wheel of the Year

The wheel turns yet again and we celebrate another Sabbat. August 1st - some call it Lammas, some call it Lughnasadh, but which is it?

Well both are of British origin. Lammas is Old English for "loaf mass" and is a celebration of the cutting of the first grain. Lughnasadh means "marriage of Lugh" and honouring of the great Celtic god in this golden season. However, commonly, this Sabbat is about the celebration of the first of three harvests we have in the Wheel of the Year. Traditionally, it was a time of feasting, prowess in games, and celebration.

These first fruits are ready for our table, a time of joy for our success. Yet there is an awareness that the year is now drawing to a close and the Harvest is still yet to be fully realized out of this first promise. Another God of the harvest is the Green Man. He sacrifices himself every year in order to keep true to the cycles, His mythos tells us of His endless cycle of renewal, one that accepts change as inevitable.

It marks a time when Mother Earth is praised for her bounty and the God of the Harvest sacrifices himself; every year to provide food for us and to ensure future harvests with seeds for planting. It is a time of transformation, with growth, death and rebirth being important in the cycle. It is a time to reap what you have sown in the spring, whether it be plants or plans for a project.

So how can you celebrate? Honour the Gods and the bounty of the land! There are many that are associated with grains, harvest and transformation. Have some fun researching and create ways to honour them.

- Use a variety of grains, leaves and seeds to create Nature Art.
- Make a picture or design in a small picture frame using craft white glue and summer flowers (dries clear) to put on your altar or to use as a Paten (cake plate) for your rituals.
- Go to a local farmers' market or craft store to collect some wheat sheafs to make a centerpiece for your altar or feast table.
- If you can get enough wheat sheafs, you can bind them together to make a torch to burn (safely) at the setting sun, honouring the transition of life to death.

And as you celebrate, remember some of the words from one of my favourite chants:

"Corn and Grain, Corn and Grain, all that falls shall rise again".

So give thanks for the Gods' sacrifice, giving of himself, and for the Goddess who holds the seeds in the earth.

Sabbat Blessings to you all

Sabbat Scavenger Hunt

- 1 sun symbol
- An ear of corn
- 1 sunflower
- 3 gold candles
- A loaf of bread
- Summer wild flowers
- An image of a rooster
- 1 lion aka Leo
- An image of a horse
- Some fresh berries

Post photos of your success in your local Temple Facebook group.



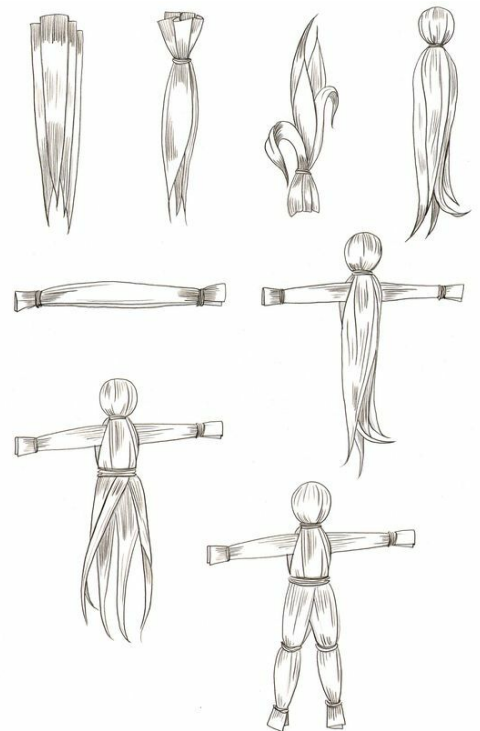
HARVEST MAGIC

Corn dollies were and still are used in many pagan ceremonies. Whether representational of Spirit or a protective talisman it is still a decorative art form which reflects ancient and superstitious beliefs.

They are used to thank Earth for the Harvest and bounty while also as a symbol of good luck and fertility. The making of corn dollies goes back many hundreds of years. It is a ritualistic custom and evolved from the beliefs of agricultural people, those who believed in the Corn/Grain Spirit. Corn dollies were made at Harvest time from the last sheaf of

corn cut. The Corn Spirit was supposed to live or be reborn in the plaited straw ornament or corn doll and was kept until the following spring to ensure a good harvest. The corn dolly often had a place of honour at the harvest banquet table.

What better future do you work for? Whatever form of greater increase and prosperity you desire, perhaps keeping the Spirit of the Grain in a safe, warm place through times of lack. Whatever shape or form they take, the "Spirit of the Grain" is still a potent Pagan custom and magical working, and you don't even have to be a farmer to take advantage of its talismanic power. It can represent success and bounty, and the fervent hope the future will hold prosperity and abundance.



Herb-craft with Glenys

CARAWAY

As the wheel turns with the First Harvest, we turn to the kitchen to look at a tiny "seed" that is an ingredient in many rye breads. Caraway (*Carum Carvi*), also known as meridian fennel and Persian cumin, is a member of the Apiaceae family (carrots, celery, dill). Note: It is not to be confused with Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*), although it too is a member of the Apiaceae family. Like other members, the plant has feathery leaves with thin divisions on 8 to 12 in. stems. The main stem grows tall (12 to 24 in.) and is topped with an umbrella of tiny flowers. It is actually the dried fruit from these flowers which we call Caraway seeds. Caraway is an annual (warmer climates) or biennial plant (temperate zones) native to Europe and Western Asia. Since the growing zone is Zone 4 to 10, it has become naturalized in North America. It can be grown in most areas of Canada and is commercially produced in Alberta.

It is an ancient spice with known uses going back millennia. It is one of the one of the ingredients used in treating ailments mention in the Papyrus Ebers, one of the oldest know surviving medical documents written in 1500 BC

The plant is ready to harvest in mid to late Summer. It has a long history of association with grain. In *A Modern Herbal* by Mrs. Grieve, she writes "The scattering of the seed over cakes has long been practiced, and Caraway-seed cake was formerly a standing institution at the feasts given by farmers to their laborers at the end of the wheat-sowing." As such the use in any Lughnasadh ritual or feast food would be appropriate.

Not only is the seed useful in making your favourite rye bread, it is a wonderful addition to any rice,

potato or meat dish. It is often used in flavoring root vegetables and one of the ingredients in sauerkraut.

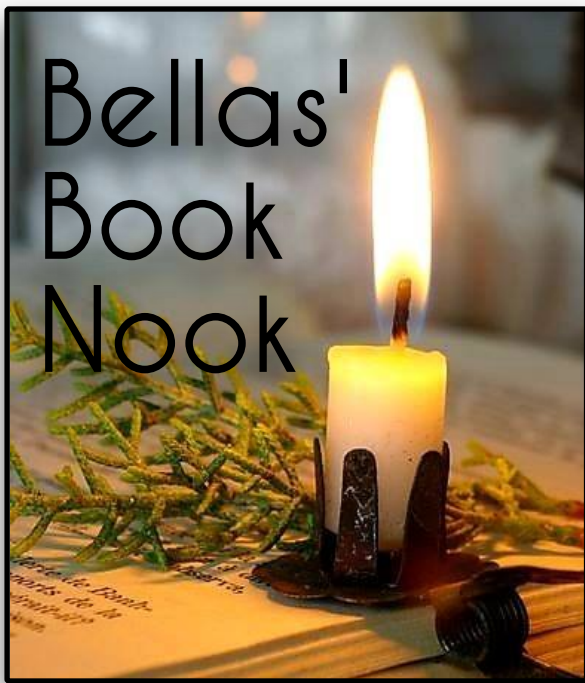
Caraway has long been used as a digestive aid and breath freshener. It is one of the seeds that is common in comfits, sugar coated confectionaries, once popular as favors used in celebrations or other social gatherings. It is also an ingredient in a variety of European liqueurs or cordials. There are medieval recipes outlining the creation of such treats. The roots are also edible and the taste is similar to parsnips

Caraway is an excellent source of Vitamin A, Potassium, Magnesium, Calcium, Phosphorus, Niacin and folate. As a member of the carrot family, it has high levels of lutein which aids in eye health. It is also high in anti-oxidants. Not only is Caraway used to aid digestion, with its flavour being similar to licorice, Caraway seed has been used as an anti-inflammatory. It is also said to lower high blood pressure.

Magically, Caraway is a masculine herb, linked to Air and the Planet Mercury and to Gemini. The herb is used in magic relating to protection and consecration as well as communication, travel and psychic endeavors. It has been used to repel negativity and to ward off disagreeable spirits. It is often used in spells related to retention whether that be memory, wisdom, material items or fidelity.

It is also a popular herb used in spells related to matters of the heart. It is said that chewing caraway seeds will attract someone to you - although that may be because your breath is sure to be fresher!





As the First Harvest arrives. It is a time of practical labours, of gathering, of weeding, of cutting the first ripe grains, it is a time of plenty. It's a practical time, about learning the basics, so as you learn the why's and what for's of harvesting your herbs.

Herbal Alchemist's Handbook – A Complete Guide to Magickal Herbs and How to Use Them

by Karen Harrison

published by Weiser Books in 2020.

ISBN:978-1-57863-705-8.

With a hefty 236 pages plus a recommended reading list and a few blank pages for your own notes, its at Indigo Books for \$26.95. It's a bit pricey, but it will be invaluable. This book is a wonderful start for anyone who is building their own table of correspondences on herbs and their lore.

The book is divided into 3 sections. The first is Herbs and their Planetary Signatures. Each planet is explained in terms of its' energies, stones, deities, and plant associations, and some chapters have meditations linked with the plants, and others have idea for rituals you may want to use the herbs for.

The second section is about the practical skill of making your own tinctures, your own incense, and ritual oils, salts and teas for bathing, etc. Again, everything is tied into the various planetary influences, as well as added crystal association.

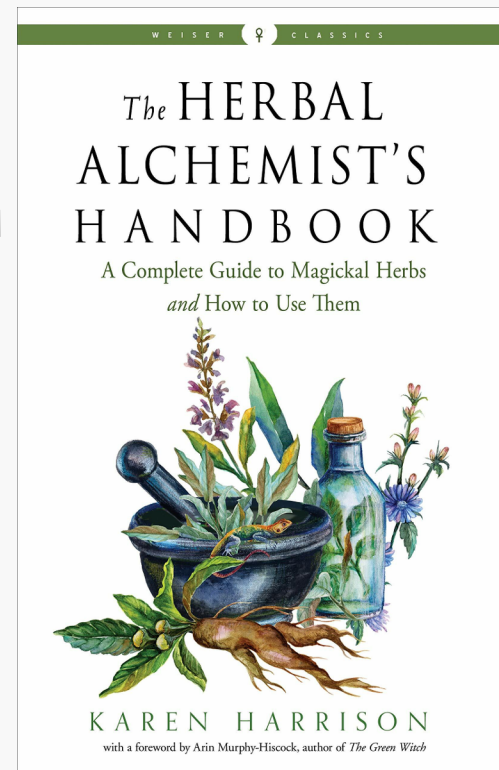
The third section is called Combining the Planetary and Elemental Influences. Such as, chapter 16 - Custom Formulas to Balance, Transform, Empower and Manifest. Or chapter - Custom Formulas Using Numerology, to create an incense or scent that corresponds to achieve a desired goal.

The best part of this whole book is the Appendix A – Herbal Materia Magicka. From pages 119 until 198, there is a description of assorted herbs with the scientific name to ensure you have the correct herb, elementary and planetary influences, the part of the herb to be used and the general use of the herbs.

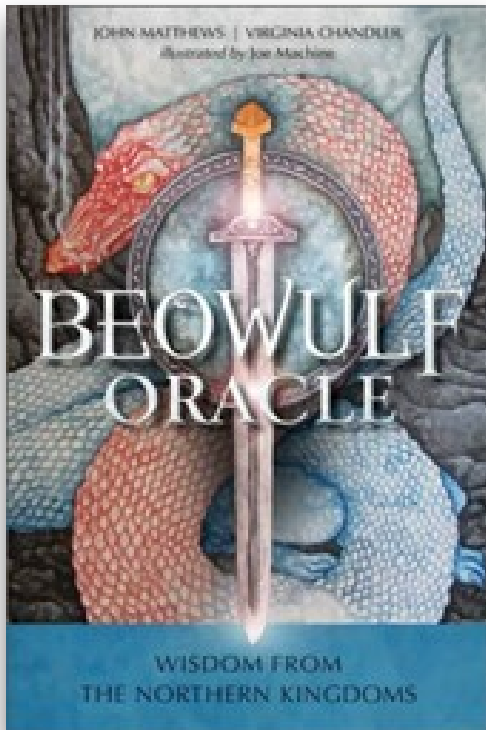
Appendix B to H consist of lists of herbs with other planetary/elemental affinity as well as basic recipes for planetary oils, and a reading list that includes other books worth consideration. One of these books happens to be rather difficult to find. It's the Herb Book by John Lust, check second-hand books stores for this one. Also listed for those who wish to learn more is Paul Beyerl's – Master Book of Herbalism, but for that book, I would like someone else to write that review... Hint, hint, you know who you are... wink!

So until next time, stay safe, stay healthy and Happy Reading!

Bella



ON DECK with Trelew



Beowulf Oracle

Wisdom from the Northern Kingdoms

By John Matthews & Virginia Chandler

Illustrations by Joe Machine

The review is made possible because of wonderful gift from our book guru, Bella. As with most tarot traditions, a goodwill gift will speak more clearly and promote better karma. So thank you Bella!

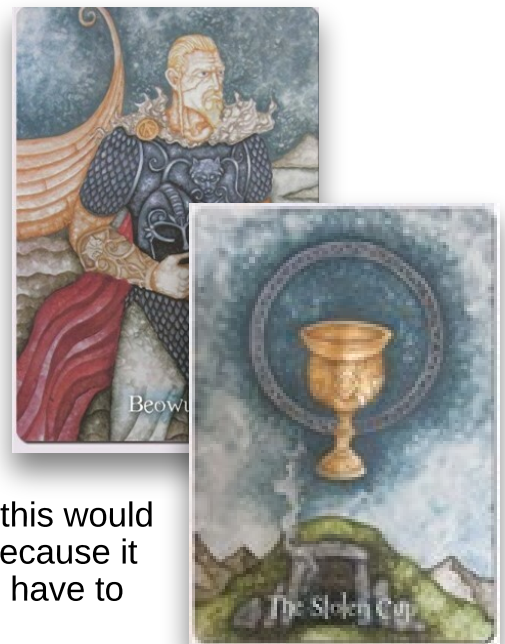
Beowulf is one of my go to's for heroic literature. An epic poem from the late tenth century, filled with virtues, high standards, and heartfelt motivations of the hero Beowulf. He faces his challenges with loyalty, compassion, honour, and bravery. It's no surprise that this poem has been used as the foundation for this Oracle deck. It has every aspect of humanity in it.

The deck comes in a very sturdy box with a sliding drawer, containing a 23 card deck, the cards are matted and durable. Twenty of the cards are colourful stark artwork. These are the characters and objects from the poem. The last three cards depict the Norns, and are in black and white

The guidebook covers a lot of ground. The first couple of chapters deal with history and commentary of the poem Beowulf. A section about skalds as it relates to Oracle readers. The rest of the book deals with methods of using the deck and descriptions of the cards. Each card, has a full page image, an interpretation along with Jennings and stanzas that are used for the readings. Also, each card also has a futhark rune assigned to it, which deepens the meaning.

This is a very involved deck to work with, for both the reader and the questioner. If you are a fan of the poem, a follower of Norse traditions, or doing a very literary style of reading, then this would be a deck for you to check out. My concerns with the deck is because it so involved with stanzas and Jennings to do the read, you will have to refer to the guidebook constantly during the read.

Using the deck is going to be a bit of a steep learning curve, especially if you want to do reads without the guidebook. It's a bit of involved process. This starts with forming a proper way of requesting help from the Norns, selecting a Norn to guide you, choosing your companion, determining if it's a hero or a challenge to you, finding your way in the nine realms, and then finishing off with a weaving of the Norns. This is your wyrd.



Sorcha's Moss Agate

Moss Agate is oft times called the 'gardener's stone' because of its association with plant growth. To the indigenous of the Americas Moss Agate brought rain in times of drought, and helped balance weather patterns. In Europe, it was placed in gardens, orchards, and fields of the land as an offering to the guardians of the lands and to bring about an abundance of crops. European farmers would hang Moss Agate stones from the branches of their trees and from the horns of their cattle, believing that this talisman would bring a bountiful harvest.

Moss Agate is not completely an Agate in scientific terms as it's not banded, but it is a variety of Chalcedony. It's a semi-precious stone made from silicon dioxide. It is mainly clear to milky white in colour with inclusions of manganese or iron that has grown into patterns similar to moss. You may see spots of red in the stone, and sometimes it will be darker green with bluish inclusions.

Element: Earth

Energy: Receptive

Planet: Earth & Mercury

Chakra: Heart & Root

Zodiac: Gemini, Virgo

Tarot: The Fool & The Hermit

Sabbat: Lughnasadh/Lammas



Magical Properties: Abundance, Agriculture, Anger, Calm, Communication, Confidence, Connections, Creativity, Emotional Balance, Energy, Favor, Fertility, Friendship, Growth, Guidance, Happiness, Harmony, Healing, Hope, Life, Longevity, Money, Optimism, Power, Self-Work, Spirituality, Strength, Truth, Wealth, Well-Being

Magical Uses: Pulled when divining, it's a very lucky omen for the gradual growth of what you currently need in your life; money, promotion, health or love. Dreaming of it signifies a magical journey. Worn to filter and cleanse your aura. In spell work, it magnifies the intentioned energy and assists in achieving goals. It opens the lines of communication with the Nature Spirits. It also helps clear and overcome negative karmic attachments from past lives. Plant it in a flowerpot or in a field to help your plants grow in abundance. Used in the workplace, it will draw expansion and increasing prosperity gradually. Moss Agate can be used for all rituals that take place in drought-ridden areas.

Healing Uses: Worn to strengthen the eyesight, heals heart pain, eases anxiety, brings about calmness, helps you to cope with stressful situations. Worn by a person with low self-esteem to help bring about confidence, balances a low frequency person when worn or carried. It encourages growth of healthy cells and tissue within the body, to relieve skin infections, and to fight colds and flu. It helps eliminate depression, and stimulates mental function by improving concentration, perception, and analytical abilities. It is helpful to the circulatory and digestive systems, and aids in the elimination of toxins from the body. You can place a Moss Agate in a pet's bed to help quell anxiousness and put them more at ease.

Moss Agate is a magical stone that brings you back to nature, no matter how far away you are. It heightens your awareness of Mother Earth and all of her splendors. In this time of the first harvest, we can truly appreciate the bounty and abundance that has been bestowed upon us.

The Sabbat Table

LAMMAS BREAD PROTECTION CHARM

Anglo-Saxon folklore advises the crumbling of the Lammas loaf into four pieces and the burying of them in the four corners of the barn to make it safe for all the grain that would be stored there. You can use this old spellcraft in a protection spell for your home.

Bake a Lammas loaf, and when it is cool break it into four pieces don't cut it with a knife and take one to each corner of your property with the words:

*I call on the spirits Of north, and south, east and west. Protect this place Now,
at the time of this Blessing and ever more.*

Leave the bread for the birds to eat or bury the pieces.

Note: bake two so you can actually eat one. Even if you've never made homemade bread or worked with yeast before, this homemade artisan bread is for you.

Ingredients

3 and 1/4 cups (about 430g) bread flour (plus more for hands and pan)

2 teaspoons instant yeast

2 teaspoons coarse salt

1 and 1/2 cups (360ml) cool water

optional: cornmeal for dusting pan

In a large un-greased mixing bowl, whisk the flour, yeast, and salt together. Pour in the cool water and gently mix together with a rubber spatula or wooden spoon. The dough will seem dry and shaggy, but keep working it until all the flour is moistened. If needed, use your hands to work the dough ingredients together. The dough will be sticky. Shape into a ball in the bowl as best you can. Cover the dough tightly with plastic wrap or aluminum foil and set on the counter at room temperature. Allow to rise for 2-3 hours. The dough will just about double in size, stick to the sides of the bowl, and have a lot of air bubbles.

Lightly dust a large nonstick baking sheet with flour and/or cornmeal. Turn the cold dough out onto a floured work surface. Using a sharp knife or bench scraper, cut dough in half. Some air bubbles will deflate as you work with it. Place dough halves on prepared baking sheet. Using floured hands, shape into 2 long loaves about 9×3 inches each about 3 inches apart. Loosely cover and allow to rest for 45 minutes. You will bake the dough on this prepared baking sheet.

During this 45 minutes, preheat the oven to 475°F (246°C).

When ready to bake, using a very sharp knife cut the top of bread loaves with 3 slashes, about 1/2 inch deep. Place the shaped and scored dough (on the flour/cornmeal dusted pan) in the preheated oven on the center rack. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the crust is golden brown. Gently tap the loaves— if they sound hollow, the bread is done.

Remove the bread from the oven and allow to cool for at least 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

Store leftovers loosely covered at room temperature for up to 5 days or in the refrigerator for up to 10 days.

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

THE COBWEB AND THE BROOM.

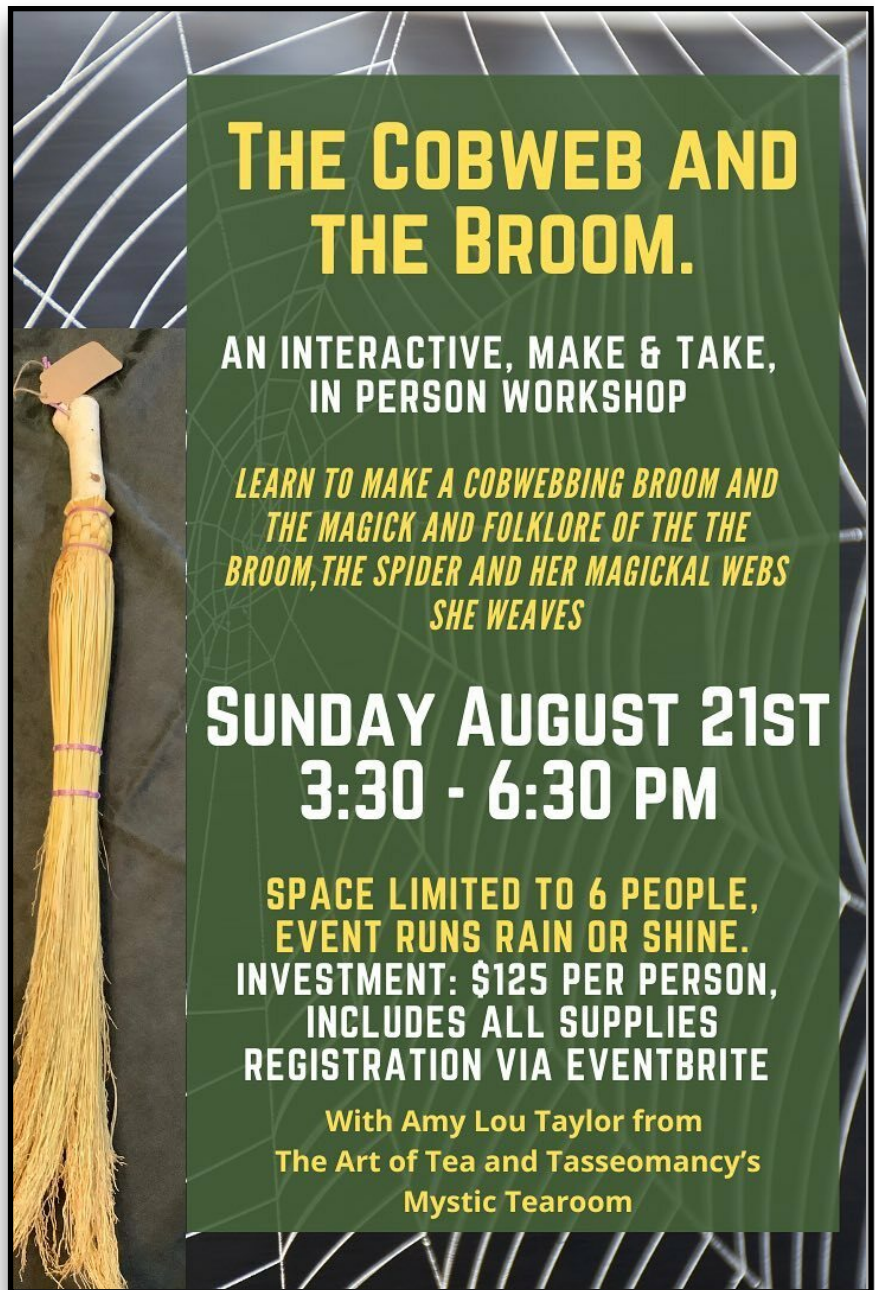
AN INTERACTIVE, MAKE & TAKE, IN PERSON WORKSHOP

LEARN TO MAKE A COBWEBBING BROOM AND THE MAGICK AND FOLKLORE OF THE THE BROOM, THE SPIDER AND HER MAGICKAL WEBS SHE WEAVES

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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

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

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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.



Thank You

The Wiccan Church of Canada would like to thank Tribal Hearth, a polytheistic community of diverse spiritualities, for its generous donation to our ongoing Outreach and community support projects. Northern Lights Gathering and Hearthfire events offered many WCC members the opportunity to enjoy a safe spiritual and communal space through the Tribal Hearth organization. These events hosted by Tribal Hearth offered knowledge, experience and sacred places, and we at the Wiccan Church of Canada are grateful to have shared those spaces. This gift allows the WCC to continue to expand its outreach across our communities with winter support and full backpacks in times of need. This year, when we light a candle against the dark, let it be the Tribal Hearths fire burning bright. On behalf of the WCC community, and those in greater need, we thank you. May the gods guide your paths now and always.



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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Sword &
Chalice