



books★ gardening★ recipes★ ritual elements★ articles

Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada



Vol. 6 | #8

Harvestide



Samhain

Sept. 21 - Oct. 31, 2023

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 Tuesday evenings 7:00-9:00 pm

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 Wheel of the Year

The Autumnal Equinox is a time of balance. We give thanks for the 2nd harvest, relishing the ripened fruits and vegetables that fill our table; while acknowledging the gift of time and energy we have each brought to harvesting the bounty of our summer labour. In that recognition we see a time to align oneself with the power of the nature, in the case of the Sabbat of Harvest-tide there is a powerful opportunity to restore balance in oneself, and in key life projects. Most of the crops have been gathered and it's a time of rest after hard work and the nights are getting colder, though the days are still bright and warm. We look at the dwindling days, and plan ahead for the final harvest and eventually the long dark season of winter.

Our family and friends come together to celebrate and count the blessings that we have among kin and community. We give thanks for the things we have, we dance and sing in triumph of our bounty and as our festivities wind down we

take time to reflect on the balance within your own life, honouring both the darkness and the light.

Spiritually, autumn represents a time to acknowledge growth and expansion as a natural evolution of being. Our lives go through cycles of growth, harvest, death, and rebirth just as we see in nature.



an intention. Go apple picking. Cut an apple width way and it reveals a pentagram - representing the elements of Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. It makes a perfect motif on the Harvest altar, alongside other seasonal fruits, to celebrate the gifts from the earth and give hope to the dark months ahead.



STONES WITH SORCHA

Blue Sapphire

A corundum based gem, the iron and titanium percentage during the formation will be dependent on the stone's hue. The more present, the deeper the hue will be. The colour of blue sapphire ranges from Kashmir blue to royal blue, cornflower blue and light blue. Sapphire stones hardness is only second to that of diamonds, being one of the most sought after stones. They have been prized as precious stones since as far back as 800 BCE. Blue sapphires are the most valuable, naturally blue-coloured gemstones in the world. A poet once described the blue sapphire as "the blue of a clear sky just minutes after sundown".

In ancient Persia, the people believe that the earth rested atop a giant sapphire pedestal, the reflection of the stone giving the sky its blue colour. They believed that all the sapphires found on earth are chips from the pedestal which broke off as the Earth settled into her position.

In Hindu mythology, the Vedic scriptures speak of a divine tree, the Kalpavriksha or Wishing Tree. It is said to have once lived on earth, the Tree of Life had the fruits of rubies, the trunk of diamonds, and the roots of sapphire. Mankind misused the tree by wishing bad thoughts, and angered by this, Indra, the King of Highest Heavens whisked the tree into heaven.

Element: Water

Energy: Receptive

Planet: Moon, Neptune, Saturn, Venus

Chakra: Crown, Third Eye & Throat

Zodiac: Gemini, Virgo & Libra

Tarot: Hermit, Wheel of Fortune

Sabbat: Harvest tide

Magical Properties: Attunement, Astral Travel, Banish Envy, Concentration, Creativity, Defensive Magic, Divinity, Fidelity, Happiness, Harmony, Healing, Intellect, Love, Meditation, Money, Peace, Prophecy, Protection, Psychism, Relationships, Transformation

Magical Uses: Worn to stimulate the 3rd eye and tap into the subconscious mind, stimulating psychic awareness. When carried or worn, it is a guardian of love, promoting fidelity and attunes the feelings between lovers. It can aid in reconciling with foes and promotes positive interactions. It will ward off the evil eye and helps in deflecting negative, baneful energies. You can wear it during meditation or times of deep contemplation to help bring wisdom and clarity of thought, enhancing psychic visions. To sleep with a sapphire under your pillow, it will bring vivid dreams. During litigation and legal matters, it will help the person in the right attain a successful outcome. It is used by magicians to strengthen their ability to tap and send forth power, being a favourite of witches.

Healing Uses: Place a sapphire to your forehead to help reduce fever and halt nosebleeds. You can use it externally or internally as an elixir to help heal and soothe all parts of the body. Sapphire water is thought to be a good purifier and should be drunk as the seasons change to help promote health and wellbeing. Sapphire releases depression and helps brighten one's mood, bringing calm to the wearer. A person can wear a piece of sapphire to gain a fuller understanding of themselves, assisting them with self-esteem issues.

We can utilize sapphire at this time of Equinox to help us to remain steadfast in our tasks of harvest, preparation, and through the transformation of the season. Coming are the colder months, a time of rest and contemplation for many, where we will retreat to our warm cozy homes and dream of what's to come. Feel the waning warmth of the Sun kissing your cheeks, making way to the brisk and cooler days of Autumn. Relish in the Autumn harvest festivals and enjoy the harmony of the season!



Bellas' Book Nook



Over the last 2 or 3 weeks, I've noticed that the hours of daylight are slowly fading away. Dusk comes sooner and the sun sets lower in the sky. The wheel of the year turns, and the changes are more noticeable. It's time for the curious to come out from hiding, and the questions (on various forums, and those I get from colleagues at work,) will be about becoming Pagan. How do you do that? What do I have to do? How do I tell my family? Or do I have to tell them? Are there any repercussions? What is the Pagan Path, and where do I start?

Well, one good place, would be to read, **Being A Pagan – Druids, Wiccans and Witches Today**, by Ellen Evert

Hopman and Lawrence Bond. The ISBN: **978-0-89281-904-1**, published by Destiny Books, (www.DestinyBooks.com), in 2002, for \$27.50 plus tax. Found this book in one of the local shops, in Burlington Ontario.

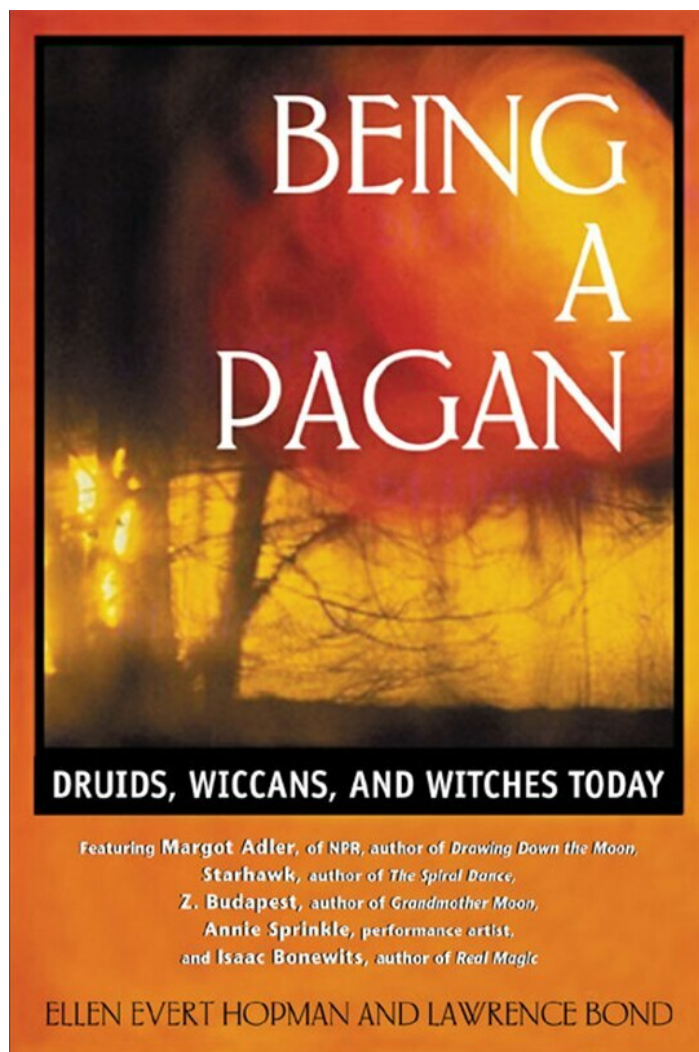
The forward is by Dr. Richard Kaczynski – Ph. D., the author of (1993). "The Structure and Correlates of Metaphysical Beliefs Among a Sample of Behaviorally Committed Participants". Doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University, Detroit. He explained the difficulty he had being taken seriously and the bias he had to navigate in order to do his research. From this standpoint, Ellen Evert Hopman, (who collaborated with Lawrence Bond to edit the many interviews with people in the Pagan community,) as part of her Preface, writes: My hope is that this book will provide an avenue-through the people, organizations, and publications presented-for ever person who has felt the call of the "spirit of the forest" to find a spiritual home.

This book delves into the many forms of Druidry, and the various Wiccan Traditions – which does include an interview with Richard and Tamarra James, pages 56 to 61. It brings to light the discrimination that some in our greater community have endured, in terms of politics – Sam Wagar – pages 160 to 168. Selenia Fox and Dennis Carpenter and the Circle Sanctuary interview runs from pages 215 to 228. Church of All Worlds interview (Oberon G'Zell) pages 197 to 214. It's a bit of a who's who of the pagan community with a deeper look at how things all came together, and what the traditions are about.

Other subjects covered include interviews with those from The Faery Faith, Military Pagans, Pagan Artists, and Writers such as Margot Adler, Rev. Paul Beyerl. Of course, no book would be complete without a decent bibliography, in this case, called Sources and Resources.

It is a well-rounded book for anyone who is Pagan curious. It's well worth finding, reading, and sharing.

So, until next time, Happy Autumn Equinox, Stay Healthy, and Happy Reading.



Mugwort: A Divinatory herb

Artemisia vulgaris

Mugwort is a tall-growing with angular often purplish stems. It was indigenous to Britain and Europe but now grows wild throughout Canada and the United States. The leaves are lobed and featherlike with the segments are lancet-shaped and pointed. They are smooth and dark green on top and are whitish underneath with a dense cottony down. You can see it start growing the leaves start to sprout as soon as the weather warms and it will reach its height of three feet or better around August when the flowers bloom. The flowers are in small oval heads, reddish or yellow cottony bracts surrounding them and arranged in long multi-branched stems

Generally, the best parts to use are the leaves and roots. The leaves should be gathered and dried in August before the plant flowers. The roots are cleansed in cold water, rootlets are removed and the roots should be dried completely to the core. They will be brittle and snap when bent.

Although it is best harvested in August, it is an ideal herb for Samhain because of its divinatory uses. There are several methods one can use to get the benefit of the divinatory properties. The dried leaves can be burned as incense with sandalwood before or during your favoured divinatory practice. They can also be sewn into small dream pillows and slept on or near to provide prophetic dreams. You can also scatter the dried leaves in a hot bath before your divinations and soak in it. For scrying purposes, you can create a wash using mugwort and other ingredients to cleanse your mirror or crystal to allow clear visions. It is also beneficial to place some under the base of your crystal or surrounding or under your mounted mirror.

Mugwort

*Herb Lore with
Glenys*



Finally, you can ingest the mugwort. The easiest and quickest way is to make it as an infusion by pouring boiling water over the dried leaves and steeping for a few moments. You will likely want to sweeten it with honey as it can be bitter. You can also make it into a tincture and taken in your favourite beverage.

Mugwort has a stimulant and tonic effect and can be used as a nervine and to promote blood flow, specifically in menstruation and also has benefits as a diuretic and a diaphoretic at the start of a cold.

As with any natural herb, you should consult your physician or naturopath practitioner before use as there are contraindications with different medications. Do not use if you are pregnant or the possibility of pregnancy and/or breastfeeding. Do not ingest anything you are not sure of.



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 2023



SABBAT SCAVENGER HUNT

a red leaf	3 apples	1 sheaf of wheat	5 acorns	a horn of plenty
have a picnic	a green gourd	find a journal	1 orange candle	find a scale

post your results on our Facebook group

The Sabbath Table

The magic of the sabbat can grace your table with loving intention! The versatility of root vegetables for grounding and enrichment is perfect for a little kitchen witchery of the season!

INGREDIENTS

Vegetarian Pot Pie



- 2 tsp. Olive oil : Magical properties: Peace,
- 2 cups Potatoes : Stability, protection, grounding
- 4 oz. Carrots : Fertility, grounding,
- 1/3 cup Onion : Banishing negativity, protection, healing
- 1/4 tsp Kosher salt : Purification, cleansing
- 1/3 cup Unsalted butter: nurturing, home protection
- 1/3 cup Flour : Abundance, protection
- 1 2/3 cups Broth : Nurturing, health
- 2/3 cup Milk : Growth, purification, nurturing
- 1/4 teaspoon Celery salt : Purification, clarity, psychic ability
- 1/2 tsp. Dried thyme: Beauty, happiness, strength, protection
- 1/4 cup Frozen peas : Prosperity, self-awareness
- 1/4 cup Frozen green beans : Prosperity, psychic ability
- 1 Pie crust or biscuits : Happiness
- 1/8c. Milk : Growth, purification, nurturing

DIRECTION

Preheat the oven to 425F.

1. Dice potatoes, carrots and onions.
2. Heat a large pan over medium heat. Add the oil.
3. Saute potatoes until they are partially translucent.
4. Add carrots and onions and saute until soft.
5. Add butter and salt to the sauteed vegetables.
6. In a small bowl, stir broth and milk together.
7. Place flour into a large bowl. Whisk in 1/3 of the broth and milk until smooth. Add remaining broth and milk mixture.
8. Slowly add flour, broth, and milk mixture to the pan, stirring as you add it.
9. Once combined, add celery salt, thyme, peas, and green beans. Stir until combined.
10. Pour into an 8" pan or 8 x 8" casserole dish. Top with crust or biscuits.
11. If you've used crust, cut slits into the crust to vent it. Brush the tops of your crust or biscuits with milk.
12. Bake for 30 - 45 minutes, until the crust is golden brown.

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inspired by
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Indigenous storyteller,
and piano

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Jaye Marsh, flute



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everything in between
compiled for your pagan
moods.



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FORESCOPES

by Lady Iris

This harvest season arrives Friday, September 23 at 2:49 a.m. EDT. After all the retrogrades of the summer have eased up a bit, with Venus and Mercury direct since mid-September, you may feel a slight relief. But Jupiter is still retrograde in Taurus, helping us all retreat and regroup. Bringing in your personal crop of ideas, culminating supportive actions and determining how you maintain and sustain this into the coming end of the year will be imperative.

Especially with the outer planets Saturn (between Aquarius and Pisces) signally a cosmic collaboration at play, Pluto in Capricorn (goes direct on October 10) showing you where change needs to be made after striving efforts, Neptune (retrograde in Pisces) seemingly reluctant to come up for air, and Uranus (retrograde in Taurus) slow on the surprises and hard on the challenge, you will need to keep yourself in check as well. Stay the course and go with the flow as opportunities arise in the days ahead.

The Moon shines full on September 29 in Aries, offering energy for new beginnings based on your past accomplishments. What do you have to show off at the fair? Step up and provide the evidence of your efforts to receive deserved recognition. By the New Moon in Libra on October 14th, your search for balance and ability to walk the tightrope between your ideas and manifestation could be leading you confidently to a renewed passion for what you dream of in this life. The Full Moon comes around again October 28th, where she is brilliant in the bull's sign of Taurus, ushering in the strength and energy you need to take your harvest to market. Just allow yourself to figuratively process your productions, make pies from your fruits, pickle up your garden for the added bonuses of the value you add.

Mercury went direct September 15 after causing some mischief in everyone's life. He does love to run ahead once he is free to do so, flying from Virgo to Libra on October 4th and on into Scorpio on October 22nd. What you have been waiting for is coming to fruition - fast. Be prepared with the "yes" the universe wants to hear from you. Venus likewise had some retrograde summer, but her dance forward is slower, moving from her headstrong Leo into service-oriented Virgo on October 8th. Take this as a sign you are in a slow dance with your emotions, this is not a tango. Allow yourself the time to appreciate the intricate steps of your counterpart to understand where your mutual awareness is focussed.

Mars goes from a relaxed Libra, where he is juggling the needs of the many into Scorpio on Oct 12, where his intensity raises the stakes. Some of those needs may be dropped in favor of more expedient actions. Just don't go all berserker on anyone as you let them go.

For those of you without the personal freedom to chase after all your dreams, know your efforts toward self-knowledge and collaboration with others does not go unnoticed. No matter your circumstances, there are inner planes for spiritual growth and individual practices meant to uplift your soul on this journey. There are many paths to the gods, and the garden is open to all.

By Samhain, which technically falls on November 6th as the midpoint between Solstices, there will be a chance for everyone to clear karma and heal ancestral wounds. Reflect on your personal growth and lessons this year and give thanks for the many opportunities you have and the friends you have made along the way. These days feed our cold season with visions of what may come.

Lammas to Autumnal Equinox 2023

Forescopes by Lady Iris

ARIES: As much as you want to charge ahead on your own, horns ready to ram your point across or succeed at whatever you choose, you will have to admit you really can't do it all alone. What is a butting head good for without one to receive its angst? Even a fight is a collaboration. Make it count.

TAURUS: Yes, you can...no, you can't...yes you can. How are you ever going to get anywhere without deciding on your own ability to fulfill your goals? You tend to take a tentative step forward, then as many as three backward. This is not getting you anywhere. Take yourself by the horns. Just do it!

GEMINI: Creative inspiration is often fleeting so be sure to "write that shit down" when it occurs to you. We are all our own muses dancing a fine line between artistry and madness. This harvest presents a blank calling card for you to fill in how you want to be presented to the world. Go for the red carpet!

CANCER: People might think you are shallow, because you like to keep one foot in the real world as you explore ideas with those you let into your protected space. There is actually incredible depth to your thinking and feeling, you just don't let many people see inside your shell. Open a window on your soul.

LEO: Can you give yourself a break, please. It is not necessary for you to be "on" all the time. Letting that wild mane down once in a while and retracting those busy claws could allow some people you see as prey to actually show you they are part of your pride. Hit the shade and let others hunt for a while.

VIRGO: Flip flop, stop the clock. Time is not always on our side when we are in a hurry. Rushing things may mean you miss some important steps along the way. If you skip ahead, you may need to retrace your path later. Take the time to get it right the first time and you will thank yourself. Be thoughtful.

LIBRA: The heat of the season will taper off soon enough, but not before it makes you sweat in your own indecision. Why do you always need so much information and contemplation before you make a choice. Life is not that complex. Take a chance and don't worry if you make a mistake. Courage is a virtue.

SCORPIO: Your sting is definitely worse than your claws. Grabbing at what you want may draw support, but everyone is watching for the inevitable tail-end treatment. Like the fable of the scorpion hitching a ride with a frog across a river, your sting is unavoidable. Maybe try a little kindness instead.

SAGITTARIUS: All clear ahead. The challenges of this year have been many. You have taken them on with vigour and it shows in the new-to-you nature you are revealing. These lessons were difficult but necessary for your next stage of growth. Take time to enjoy your bounty. There's more work ahead.

CAPRICORN: How is it you still can't see as far as the horizon, even though you have reached a great height in your life? Your hustle is commendable and has brought you many fruits from your labours. But there seems no end in sight and just more mountains to climb in some unending trial. Take a breather.

AQUARIUS: Your cosmic awareness can sometimes spend too much energy gazing outward and miss the personal intuition required to actually evolve yourself. A focus on the foibles of humanity distracts from your own responsibility for consequences to your actions. This may be your age, but is it your shoe size?

PISCES: Teaching fish to swim upriver is not necessary. While everyone else may be streaming with society, your nonconformity goes where you want. Just know your potential to cross currents and slip into erratic eddies, which catch some but let you jump free, may be disturbing others. Let go and flow.

The Forescopes are for entertainment purposes only. No claims are made for accuracy nor intention to affect the actions or outcomes of others. Everyone maintains their personal responsibility for use or interpretation of these Forescopes. Lady Iris has been an intuitional astrologer for almost 40 years. She charts the progression of transits through time using the Tropical Midnight Ephemeris in Eastern Standard Time available online at cafeastrology.com.

HARVESTIDE



R F O
 W J B S
 Q B Q O
 Y B C P
 J N U Q
 T R Y S J G A Q N U V R W H D J S C S
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 Y C V N X U Q P A W C

WORD LIST:

ALTAR
 APPLE
 BEAN
 BESOM
 BROWN
 CHALICE
 CIDER
 CORN

CRISP
 EQUINOX
 FALL
 FARM
 FURROW
 GRATITUDE
 HARVEST
 HONEY

LEAVES
 MABON
 MOON
 ORANGE
 PIE
 PUMPKIN
 RED
 SABBAT

SAMHAIN
 SPICE
 SPOOKY
 SUN
 WAGON
 WIND
 WINE
 WITCH



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HAMILTON TEMPLE

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

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Sword & Chalice is open to pagan writers with a vision of growth, encouragement and shared knowledge.

We're welcoming single submissions, regular contributions and an opportunity to shared what you know and love. Ask questions, offer recommendations or share your thoughts on your Path.

Sword & Chalice offers our pagan community a chance to connect, to showcase each others skills or wares, as well as the bards, artists and crafters. We want to talk about magic, and herbl lore and how to live in the wheel of the year, we want to hear from you and your Path. If you have the desire to share your voice and knowledge, we are waiting for you.

wccswordandchalice@gmail.com

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

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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