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# Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada

Vol. 6 | #6

S. Solstice



Midsummer June 21 – August 1, 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](mailto:LPH.WCC@gmail.com) with your email address.

# Xylia's Wheel of the Year

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!"





# STONES WITH SORCHA

## YELLOW JASPER

Yellow Jasper is from the micro-crystalline quartz family, typically under the name Chalcedony or its subcategories Agate and Jasper. It is found in metamorphic and sedimentary rocks, being found in the crevices, cracks, hollows and fissures of this rock. Yellow Jasper picks up its colouring from the iron content in the surrounding rock.

It is an iconic, revered stone that helps one understand the interconnections of all life, and Earth's energies. Yellow Jasper was worn throughout history as a protective amulet against evil spirits, and witchcraft. It was often used for carving texts or sacred amulets on, then being placed on the bodies of the dead to ensure a safe passage to the afterlife.

**Element:** Earth

**Energy:** Receptive

**Planet:** Saturn & Earth

**Chakra:** Solar Plexus

**Tarot:** Strength

**Sabbat:** Litha

**Zodiac:** Leo, Sagittarius & Capricorn



### Magical Properties

Attracts Positive Energy, Willpower, Success, Clears the Mind, Balancing, Re-calibrates & Heals, Nurturing Energy, Protection, Healing, Grounding, Insight, Self-Confidence, Enthusiasm, Deflects Jealousy & Spite, Attunement, Enlightenment, Optimism

### Magical Uses

Use Yellow Jasper in magic rites to keep your feet on the ground while your spirit soars. You can carry or wear Yellow Jasper to develop a psychic barrier around oneself, to ward off gossip or bitter feelings from colleagues or relatives. You can place a piece of Yellow Jasper on your desk at work to help keep you on track and complete work tasks. It helps animals acclimate to new surroundings and helps relieve their anxiety. Wear it to help yourself ground and center after heavy magic ritual, psychic, or spiritual work.

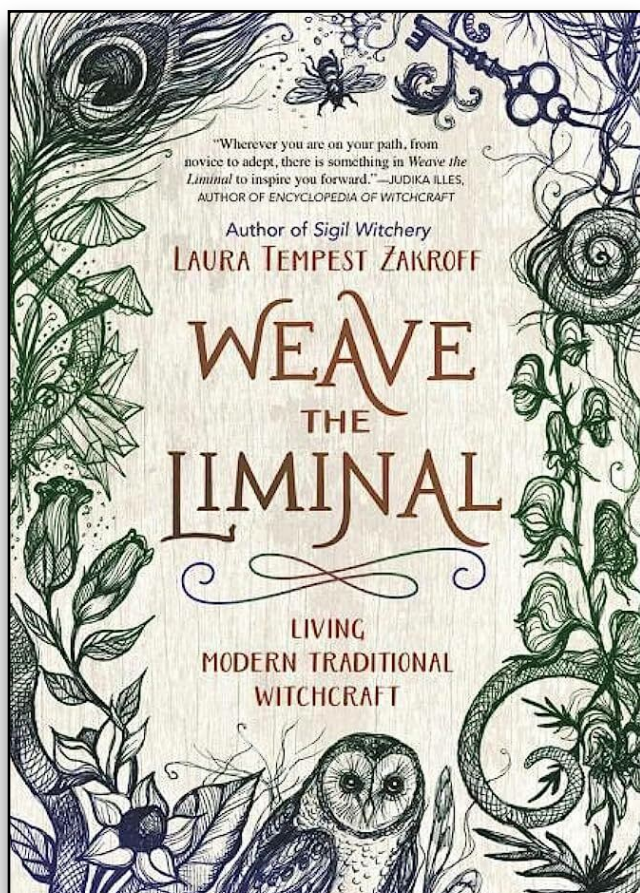
### Healing Uses

Yellow Jasper is thought to clear the body of environmental toxins and impurities. It aids in developing the immune system, helps with digestive issues of the stomach, issues with the gall bladder, liver, pancreas, spleen and kidneys. It helps one sort out their emotions, allowing them to come to a positive direction and realistic solutions. Yellow Jasper helps one feel as if they truly matter, creating self-confidence and inner strength, providing the tenacity and perseverance to overcome the obstacles one faces. Laying it over each chakra, it will cleanse, boost and realign them, and helps immensely in cleansing one's aura.

We can use Yellow Jasper at Litha to help let go of fears, doubts, and insecurities. Litha symbolizes a grand portal of energy, space, and opportunity, and Yellow Jasper helps us step out in faith and helps us imagine what's fully possible for ourselves. With the high Sun, it brings awakening, enhances our creativity, boosts our enthusiasm, and lifts our moods. Get out and enjoy the sunshine, work in your gardens, invite family and friends over for a BBQ and drinks. **LIVE LIFE AND CONNECT!**



# Bellas' Book Nook



**ISBN: 978-0-7387-5610-3.**

Ah, Summer Solstice, the time for delightful weather, amazing thunderstorms, farmer's markets and so much more. Time to enjoy life, pause, read, and look forward to all that summer holds.

Laura Tempest Zakroff's, **'Weaving the Liminal – Living Modern Traditional Witchcraft.'** Published in 2019, by Llewellyn Publications . This book was bought, mainly because of the write-up on the back cover, and a few paragraphs that I read once I flipped through a few pages. I was hooked, the list price on the Llewellyn Worldwide site has it at \$19.99.

The first time I read, it, I thought it was a nice book. The second time I read it, well, that's when I found the gems that made sense. Zakroff's explanation of what her book was and wasn't made me realize that sometimes I was self-sabotaging because in my mind, the ritual must be perfect, and yet, the author explained that, yes indeed, magic can be messy, and imperfect, and this, and that, and it doesn't have to be perfect to work. On page 4 of the Introduction...the section is entitled... "My Witchcraft Is..." Well worth reading again, and again. Think I will be writing that page out and framing it.

My witchcraft is messy, unable to be contained in pristine, neat rows and tidy jars. But it has a precise pattern, an order woven unto itself. My witchcraft lives within the hum of the bones of a city. It also dwells in the decaying depths of the forests....

This book also comes with a caveat of what it isn't... such as an ancient grimoire, not a spell book, and you won't know it all by reading just one book...

The first and second chapters attempt to explain what modern witchcraft is, and what witches are and are not supposed to be. Anyone who tries to define that, has their hands full. Further on (page 48,) came the author's definition of Authenticity: 'Doing what works best for you, with what you have available.' This is elaborated with, "If you strive to maintain balance, to know yourself, and to take responsibility for your actions, it doesn't matter how old or new the tradition is or who may approve or disapprove of it."

A Path of Your Own Making – chapter 3, contains another gem, a section entitled – A witch's Manifesto – pages 72 to 74. Take time to ponder this, as there are grains of truth to it. While Chapter 4 has another bit of wisdom called, Magic is not a Band-aid, (page 116-117.) It isn't until Chapter 5, that the author finally explains what she means by 'Liminal.' The build up to this point is quite extensive, and left me with a few eureka moments, (and I'm not talking about the vacuum cleaner.)

The final chapter, The Practical Witch, is about the practical things one needs to know, including how to find connections and community in places one would not expect to find it. It's about basic etiquette, troubleshooting and dealing with fears – pages 201-204, and ends with, We Are Aradia, and The Charge of the New Aradia.

If you can find it, it's well worth reading, pondering, and reading again. There are bits of wisdom scattered throughout and it's one of the many books, I'll be reading again.

So, in the meantime, enjoy the turning of the wheel, and all that this time of year has to offer. Until next time, Stay Safe, Stay Healthy and ...

Happy Reading,

Bella



**When** it comes to summer fruits, one of the first I look for in June is the Strawberry, *Fragaria ananassa*. It is sweet and sometimes slightly tart flavour is refreshing and immediately tells me Summer is nearby.

The common garden strawberry is a hybrid, first cultivated in Brittany France in the 1750s and is a cross of North American variety *F. virginiana* and a Chilean variety *F. chiloensis*. This variety is now the most common variety cultivated worldwide. Prior to that wild strawberries and garden varieties cultivated locally from the wild varieties were in common use. Early strawberries were small, and gardeners propagated them asexually by cutting off the runners. However, it was the introduction of the Chilean variety which had female flowers which when planted with the North American variety produced large and abundant fruit.

Strawberries are a perennial plant which are low growing and produce using runners that are rooted. They have a three-part leaflet with serrated edges and the flowers they produce are white. The single flowers produce the bright red heart shaped fruit that is familiar to most people. The wild varieties are indigenous to North and South America as well as Europe and Asia. All strawberries are edible although a few strawberries have little or no flavour. In North America, strawberries flower in May and fruits ripen in June.

Strawberries (*Fragaria*) is a member of the Rosaceae family which gives us roses, rowan, hawthorn, among others. The common name comes from Anglo-Saxon word "streoberie" or Old English "steawberige". Common belief is that the word describes the fact that early gardeners grew them in a mulch of straw. There is also reference to the fact that it could refer to the fact the runners are strewn or scattered.

Although we consider strawberries a fruit, they are a multi-fruit with the fleshy part acting as the carrier for the tiny fruit seeds known as achenes or akene; each achene being an ovary and single fruit. They are also not a true berry by botanical definition. Berries are a simple fruit formed from a single ovary and contains multiple seeds. Examples of berries are bananas, grapes, tomatoes, and oranges.

Many cultures have used the strawberry fruit for millennia. Ancient Roman and Asian literature mention the use of strawberry. The earliest references relate to the healing properties of the "fruit" and not a food source.

In the earliest Roman and Greek writings, there is reference to the use of the strawberry fruit to treat gout and digestive issues. In Asia, the Yellow Emperor used the leaves in a tea to detoxify the

# Strawberry

## *Herb Lore with Glenys*



blood. North American Indigenous cultures used strawberries in women's medicine to clear toxins and boost fertility. The leaves are mildly diuretic and can be used to treat digestive and bowel issues. One of the most common treatments for diarrhea today is Fowler's Wild Strawberry which has been in use since the beginning of the 20th Century. There is also evidence the fruit reduces inflammation, increases antioxidant capacity, and increases Vitamin C as reducing cholesterol and lipid levels.

Magically strawberries are feminine, associated with the planet Venus, and the element of water. It is also associated with the goddesses Venus, Aphrodite, Frigga, and Freya as well as the Virgin Mary in Christian culture. There are many legends and traditions around the world related to strawberries use for love, lust, and luck.

Use strawberries in any ritual related to love, luck, fertility, and healing especially related to heart, digestive, fertility, childbirth, and other female related issues. You can dry the leaves or berries to use in incense or consume the fruit or leaves (in a tea) as part of the ritual. Finally incorporate strawberries as part of your feast for Summer Solstice



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subject line: HTLL



# 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.

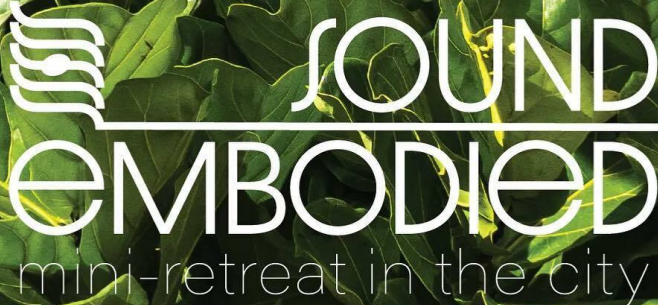
Whether the conversation is around sharing how you honour your Gods, your magics, or just to soak up the support of community during a tough time, it is a great get together. Come on out and join in the fun!

**Email [LPH.WCC@gmail.com](mailto: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**



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<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/639656227997>



# The Sabbath Table

## *Summer Solstice Strawberry-Mint Sun Tea*

**Summer means fresh strawberries and an abundance of fresh mint. This is a delicious summer tea refreshing and full of flavor using mint and strawberries to help transition us into summer!**



### INGREDIENTS

- 6-8 cups cold water
- 4 Ceylon tea
- 2-4 mint sprigs with leaves
- 30 frozen whole strawberries
- Ice Cubes
- Simple Syrup or Honey to taste
- Fresh strawberries and mint for garnish

### DIRECTIONS

1. Place the cold water in a large glass pitcher or beverage dispenser.
2. Add the tea bags and mint. Cover and allow the tea to brew in direct sunlight for 4 to 5 hours.
3. Remove the tea bags, add  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the frozen strawberries to the brewed tea, and allow to sit for 10 minutes and stir.
4. Divide the remaining strawberries and ice between six ice tea glasses.
5. Discard the tea bags and mint leaves and fill each glass.
6. Sweeten with simple syrup or honey to taste.
7. Garnish with a single strawberry and a small sprig of mint.

\* If you would like to drink your tea more quickly, brew the tea and mint on the stove in a pot with 2 cups of water. Once the water comes to a boil turn off the heat and allow the tea to steep for 2 minutes. Pour hot tea over ice, water, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  frozen strawberries and allow to sit for 5 minutes. Divide the remaining strawberries and ice between six tall glasses. Discard the tea bags and mint and fill each glass. Sweeten with simple syrup or honey to taste.



# FORESCOPES

by Lady Iris

As the Sun enters Cancer on June 21st at 10:57 a.m. EDT, we can all breathe a sign of relief. It seems we have all been under the tension of the shifts of this spring and the warm embrace of Summer Solstice is welcome. Still, there is plenty of work to be done. If you followed the directions of the clearing and planting season, you will be kept busy watering and weeding to ensure your garden of mind, body and soul brings in a good harvest this year. Since the double New Moons in Aries earlier this year, we are all experiencing the pull-push of lunar wave action working in a reverse manner. Usually, each astrological sun sign is introduced with its matching New Moon, but this switches after "Blue" moons. June's Gemini New Moon arrived on the 18th, almost through the solar season of the twins. So, now we build into each sign, with the solar signs moving toward the lunar activity rather than from it. Strange but true, this happens pretty regularly but many people (other than astrologers) often miss it. Use the energy to back out of corners you put yourself in, and ease through conditions that seem unfavourable with a smile.

With Neptune retrograde in Pisces from June 30th what was previously hidden to us may become crystal clear. This depth of clarity may cause us to look again at where we thought we were going, so that the coming bright moon will be welcome to enlighten our shadows. By the Full Moon in Capricorn of July 3rd, we have the gumption to really climb to the heights to see what is ahead on our path. As Mars enters Virgo on July 10th, we will be catching all the clues to better our endeavours in all areas of life.

Take courage and use your inner fortitude to forge ahead alone or with a specially-chosen crew up for the task.

The New Moon in Cancer on July 17 heralds another chance to understand your own self-constructed barriers to receiving from others. Like a crab in its shell or a turtle hiding within its own home, you might have a tendency too retract into your own projects. Be willing to accept, and even ask for, help from others. You may be surprised that just a little teamwork goes a long way. A few days later, as the Sun enters Leo on July 22, you can fit into a leadership role with more pizzazz and get creative. But, don't forget to thank the people who helped get you there and continue to hold you up in their esteem. Without an audience, any show is just a narcissistic puppet act.

By the Full Moon in Aquarius on August 1, we are ready to begin picking those first fruits of our harvest. Hopefully you were able to prune away the higher branches leading nowhere earlier, and the low hanging fruit has been eaten by the early birds. This should leave the best for your consumption. Be prepared to share the bounty with your team and even preserve some for those helpers who have yet to show up in your life. Lammas arrives at the halfway point between Solstice and Equinox on August 6th. As is the case every year, as the harvest begins, so does the planning for what might return next year. So, as you reap, remember you will sow again in the future. Take some tips from what worked well and leave the rest, unless you have the determination to break new ground for growth.

## Forescopes for Summer Solstice to Lammas 2023



## Forescopes by Lady Iris

**ARIES:** It's funny how every day truly can be a new beginning if you intend it so. The worst place for you, ram, is in a rut. Doing the same old same old is insufferable to you. Change things up. Go somewhere or do something you've never done before. Even failure is better than boredom. Explore your options.

**TAURUS:** Lucky you! Take a break to understand how you got to this moment and who you have to thank for it beyond yourself. When opportunity knocked, you not only opened the door, you ushered in change like it was invited. Set the table and continue to welcome your fortune. Share the wealth.

**GEMINI:** Sometimes you feel like you have to run just to keep up with your ideas. The muses of inspiration have been busy in your mind and your heart is full of wishful thinking. However, your feet still need to find the best way along this skipping voyage you are on. Don't be a fool. Tread carefully.

**CANCER:** It's your season to come out of your shell and let the sun at your hidden bits. Put aside the defenses you so often use to keep admirers at bay. Instead, recognize your soft heart is most nurturing to others and yourself when it is willing to experience some vulnerability. Trust the process.

**LEO:** Busy, busy, busy. Whatever your intention, be sure it reflects how you really feel, not some projection that will make your ego happy. Talking with others to share ideas and come up with a collaborative plan may go against your normal operations, but it is worth a try. Lead by following.

**VIRGO:** Your constantly changing persona is confusing some people. They don't understand how you do it. We all want to be someone better than we were yesterday, but it seems you sometimes throw out all the old aspects rather than just shifting perspectives. You don't have to be so harsh. Be kind to yourself.

**LIBRA:** The field is clear for you to take on any challenges you may want to tackle. You may take time to determine your goal and weigh all the options before you make the first attempt. Just know that once you do decide, there is a path ahead with surprising opportunities for support. Let go and move.

**SCORPIO:** Do you sometimes feel like every time you take two steps forward, there are a corresponding three steps backward. This frustrating energy of getting nowhere could weigh you down and discourage your momentum, unless you make it into a dance. Don't let disappointments discourage you. Go for it.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Your targets have been many this year, as change and transformation have visited on numerous occasions. It has been hard, but it also suits your preference for something new to learn and discover and share. Ponder on the lessons life has presented and be prepared for more. Keep going.

**CAPRICORN:** There's a depth to your perception that comes from your tendency to always take the long view on situations. There is often a "what's in it for me?" consideration but also "how does this affect my situation?" lesson to be learned. Letting others see your big picture would help. Expand your focus.

**AQUARIUS:** While you work up the courage to shine a light into your own inner shadows, others see your bright light and want to warm themselves by it. Don't be greedy with your beacon of hope, even as you fuss around in the basement of your own soul. Take some time to glow for others too. Stay golden.

**PISCES:** Signs and symbols are your stock in trade. Even if you don't know what scholars think, you intuitively follow the guidance you glean from every little thing you notice. Sometimes it can be a bit overwhelming, so ensure you have some method to offload your thoughts. Keep a journal.

*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](http://cafeastrology.com).*



# A Meeting of Cultures – The Story of Niibin

~ Jaye Marsh

flutist, recording artist, writer, graphic designer

For 'The Sword & Chalice' for non-exclusive use.  
Author retains the right to publish in any medium without reserve.

Niibin (Summer) is a new instrumental work of music that I asked a dear friend and composer, Richard Mascall, to write me for my recording project. He has a long and deep connection to the Ojibway in Canada, enough so that they honoured him with a name, Singing Beaver on Water. This is no small honour and it was in this light, in the meeting of two cultures in joy and sharing, that I asked him to write me a concerto for flute and Indigenous storyteller. A piece that would illuminate the place that he and co-writer John Rice knew best, Manitou Gume (Spirit Lake). We have come to know it as Georgian Bay, and it is a special place for my family as well.

John Rice is the storyteller on the recording. He is also known as Zahgausgai "Sun Ray", Mukwa "Bear Clan", is an Ojibwa

Anishinaabe and a 3rd Degree member of the Three Fires Midewiwin Society. John's home community is Wasauksing First Nation near Parry Sound, Ontario, Canada. He has made it a life passion to study the "Mlikaans" Teaching which is about the whole development of the human before, during and after life. John's childhood was rich in the stories of his people. Stories from his childhood included the migrations of the Anishinaabe, creation stories of his people and various sacred items. John generously shares his knowledge throughout the Central Ontario Region. He currently works as part of the Counselling and Wellness Team at Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Indigenous Interprofessional Primary Care Team in Barrie, Ontario. John employs Anishinaabe stories and teaching as a narrative to guide individuals through life events and mental health struggles. He travels internationally and is a well respected teacher and elder in the Anishinaabe Nation. John is a Story Teller, Big Drum Carrier, Ceremonialist, Singer and Dancer. His greatest joy is watching Ojibwa youth learn and practice the culture.

Niibin (Summer) is a work that tells of the traditional summer activities of the Anishnaabe and is constructed of several small sections, each beginning with the story and then the music comes to the fore and intertwines the tale. The recorded work is a short suite for flute, storyteller, and piano but the entire work will be staged with orchestra and have many more tales and teachings to offer!

It is quite challenging for both flutist and pianist! Parts of it was premiered in Chicago last August and there is a full video of the first Ontario performance on YouTube. As it was during a lockdown, there is a live performance of the full suite planned for the Parry Sound High School and will be accompanied by a learning workshop for the students, perfectly in keeping with John's purpose.

I hope you'll give the piece a listen and perhaps you'll try some of the activities he describes yourself this summer!

Miigwetch, Blessed Be

~jaye/willow



'John Rice and Jaye Marsh' credit: Robert DiVito;







# LOCAL RESOURCES

Looking for ritual or metaphysical supplies for your Craft? Check out our local favourites and support the stores in our communities.

## Obskurah Bazaar

[www.obskurahbazaar.com](http://www.obskurahbazaar.com)

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.

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[madame-phoenix-online.myshopify.com](http://madame-phoenix-online.myshopify.com)

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Summertime is  
always the best of  
what might be.  
*Charles Bowden*



# 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!



Wiccan Church  
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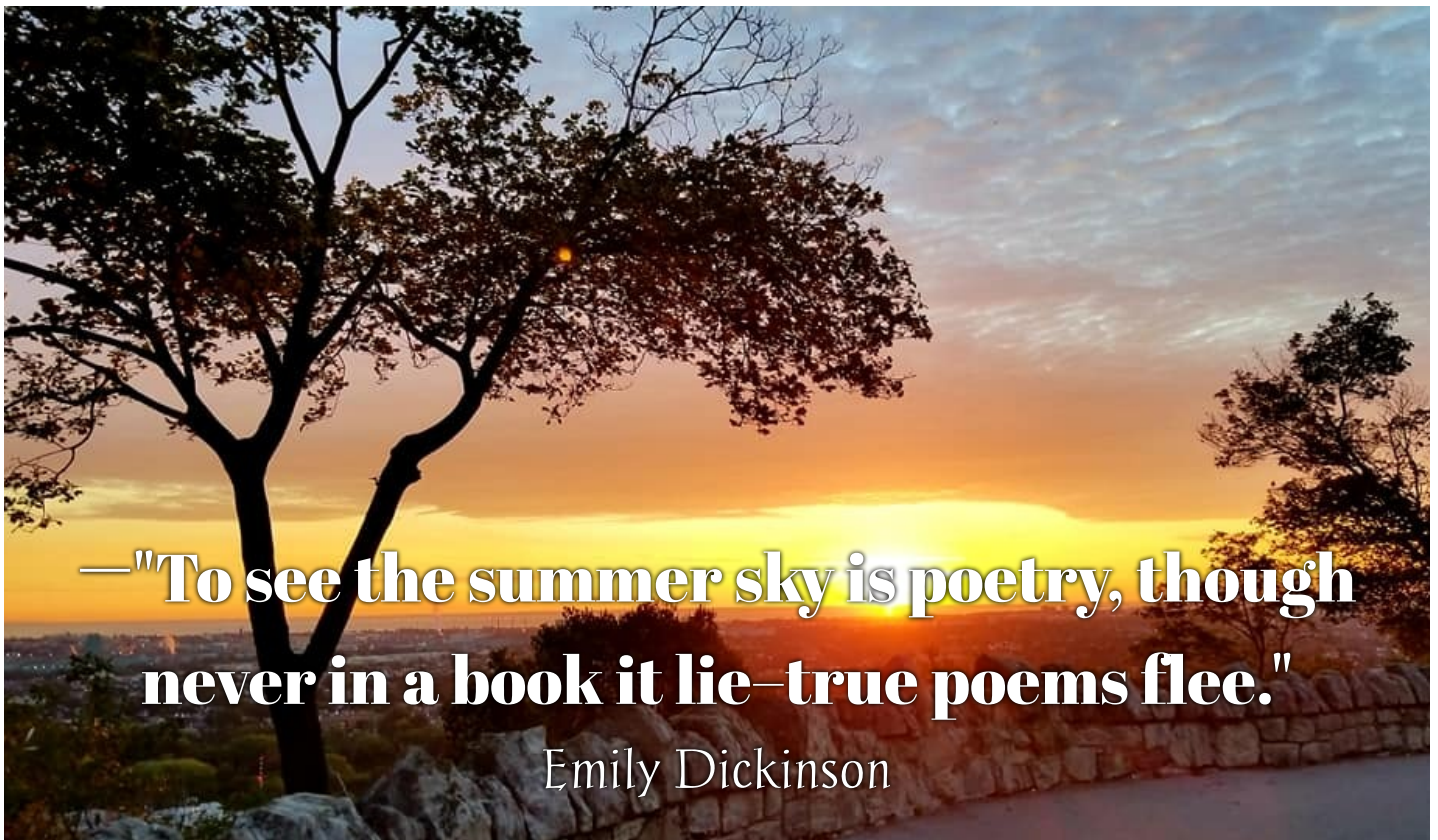
Hamilton



Toronto



Windsor



—"To see the summer sky is poetry, though  
never in a book it lie—true poems flee."

Emily Dickinson