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Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada



Vol. 8 | #2

W. Solstice



Imbolg

Dec 21 '24 – Feb 1, 2025

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.



Letter from the Editor

When Sword & Chalice offered its first newsletter in 2010, it was a 2 sided single page print out from my desk that found its way to coffee shop counters, community bulletin boards and into WCC members pockets after a sabbat. It was always a way to reach out, connect or share experiences between sabbats – a kind of “What’s Up, Hamilton” for Hamilton Temple and our local pagan community. We followed the moon and wheel of the year with Moots and gatherings, made public the class schedule, and our resident herbalist shared her seasonal tips and lore. Our goal was to celebrate the wheel of the year with other pagans in the area. To offer those who were seeking, a light in the window, a place to rest and learn. Sword and Chalice ran for 2 years, sharing 16 sabbats, promoting Outreach and making countless new friends! However, with our ability to share information quickly online and within our own temple Facebook groups, the printer went quiet.

October 2019 brought the next evolution of our newsletter back into circulation – more local pagans looking for more connections! This time Hamilton Temples Sword & Chalice opened the forum to more contributors, more voices from our community - all willing to share skills, interests, and knowledge. We wanted to reach out to local vendors, merchants and pagan services; supporting their workshops and wares.

Coming online allowed Sword & Chalice to promote community, and to broaden opportunities for local pagans. It allows us to share common experiences and support each other in our areas. Bringing back our Herb witch got us back in touch with nature and its magic. While our book reviews give us the opportunity to bring you more resources, and feedback on some of the best pagan books on the shelves - plus even a few hard-to-find gems. Another member is a wizard in the kitchen, became our temples’ most popular cook and agreed to share some of his favourite seasonal recipes. Something that we could each bring to our own table, from local farms and fields. And so, we continued – offering connections and shared interests.

With the onslaught of Covid-19 and the closing of so many doors, Sword & Chalice received requests to broaden our circle. To be more inclusive of all our WCC temples and make it relevant to everyone. It became clear that our readership had grown beyond just Hamilton, and that our own growth should enrich everyone’s Path. Here at Sword & Chalice we hope to continue providing connections to the things and places we love most, we hope that our content is reflective of our common experiences, and the knowledge we share with each other no matter how far apart we may be. In the meantime, we’re dedicated to building bridges and keeping a light in the window. In fact, 2022 saw us coming full circle with a special edition of Sword & Chalice and back to the ink! Our Special Edition is designed for those who are off the grid, on the streets or otherwise unable to access our online community.

Thank you for your continued support of this publication and each other, it means alot to all of us. Marlyn

Editor in Chief,
Founder of Sword & Chalice

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marlyn". The script is elegant and flowing, with long, sweeping lines.



The Wheel of the Year

In our pagan wheel of the year we observe the arrival of Winter Solstice and like many cultures, we celebrate with Light. As the winter solstice sits between an Ending (Samhain) and a Beginning (Imbolc), it is a natural time for us to become reflective and re-focused. We are in the initial stage of change, a natural time for letting go and

saying farewell to the old and leaving regrets behind. Samhain gave us closure, while Yule celebrates the returning spark of life and reminds us that the future can be bright, we knowingly put stock in the rebirth that Imbolc brings.

Our faith and reverence in bringing the light into our windows, our hearths and ourselves is an age old response to holding the cold dark at bay. We tell our stories of survival, of light triumphing over darkness and we connect with each other through sharing that light and hope.

Many pagans see this time as an opportunity to celebrate the rebirth of a Great God, who is seen as the newborn solstice sun. Winter-born gods are celebrated through-out many cultures, often sharing a re-occurring theme of rebirth and the return of Light. Most of the customs, symbols, and rituals associated with this time of the year mesh joyfully with other spiritual cultures - Christmas, Hanukkah, Yule etc. No matter the myth or miracles' origin, pagans today can themselves bring Light to life by sharing and re-creating new traditions that draw on old ways, through rituals, feasts, and other activities. Do the things that bring you joy and enjoy yourself as much as possible on the Winter Solstice, this will bring back light (and laughter) into the world. Different traditions mention feasting, gambling, giving gifts, visiting, putting on plays and staying up all night, all relevant to knitting the community tighter.

During the dark of winter, let's invoke all the forces of pleasure and love which make life worth living. Before you know it, the slow heating of the earth begins from within, and Imbolc will welcome us from a seat of power, that deep place between the glory of Yule and the joyous madness of Ostara ... The turning of the wheel is upon us; let us reflect and rejoice in the beauty of celebrating our Light.



STONES WITH SORCHA

BLOODSTONE

Bloodstone, also known as Heliotrope, is a combination of Jasper and a Chalcedony variety of Quartz and may be classified as one or the other. It is normally defined as a dark green Chalcedony with blood-like specks or spots of red.

In ancient times, it was said to be a semi-precious stone, being used extensively in signets and seals, jewelry, and was carved into ornate cups, vases, and statues. Ancient and medieval writers and creators held Heliotrope (Bloodstone) in the highest regard, declaring that it gave the wearer a long, mentally stable life, and bringing the wearer consideration, respect, fame, and guarded that person from deceptions. The Leyden papyrus in the 3rd century A.D. praised the Bloodstone amulet saying, "The world has no greater thing; if one has this with him he will be given whatever he asks for. It also assuages the wrath of kings and despots, and whatever the wearer says will be believed." It also claims, "Whoever bears this stone, and pronounces the name engraved upon it, will find all doors open, while bonds and stone walls will be rent asunder."

Element: Fire

Energy: Projective

Planet: Mars

Chakra: Heart & Root

Zodiac: Aries, Capricorn, Libra, Pisces, Scorpio

Tarot: Death, The Emperor, The Hermit

Sabbat: Beltane & Yule

Magical Properties: Adaptability, Aggression, Anger, Balance (mental), Battle/War, Beginnings, Business, Concentration, Confidence, Courage, Decision, Emotions, Energy, Faith, Fame, Fear, Focus, Healing, Honesty, Integrity, Justice, Life, Longevity, Obstacles, Passion, Power, Pregnancy/Childbirth, Prosperity, Rebirth/Renewal, Relationships, Spirituality, Stimulation, Strength, Stress, Success, Vitality, Wealth

Magical Uses

A quite popular stone with athletes, they will wear it to increase physical stamina and strength, and to help them win competitions. Carry or wear a Bloodstone when attending judicial and legal proceedings as it may aid in securing a victory. It attracts abundance and wealth to the wearer and oft times it will be placed within a business' cash drawer to draw sales in. Wear a talisman of bloodstone to increase the effectiveness of your magical workings. In the workplace, it is beneficial against mental and physical drain, and will support you emotionally and physically from bullies. Use Bloodstone in Goddess rituals and for exploring past lives and dream work.

Healing Uses

Bloodstone is a wonderful purifier and cleanser of both the blood and whole system. It is especially beneficial for the digestive and urinary tracts, more so the liver, kidneys, intestines, and will help you stay on course if you're beginning a detox programme or diet. An excellent female stone, Bloodstone aids in relief of menstrual and menopausal symptoms, and helps women keep their strength during labour. It can be beneficial when used for blood circulation and purification, and aids the lymphatic system in functioning properly. It is an amazing emotional healer and carries a great power to ground one in the "here and now", aiding us in our capacities to function with strength, determination, and courage. Bloodstone helps us connect with the Divine; letting us know that isolation and loneliness are simply mere illusions. For those that are severely ill, it is an excellent talisman for facing the realities of mortality and death, and will bring us the strength and courage to look at the truth, and to move forward appropriately.

Bloodstone was known in the ancient world as Heliotrope, from two Greek words signifying "sun-turning". At this time of the Equinox we see the shift from the longest night, to the rebirth of the Sun, the God. As the dark half of the year relinquishes to the growing days, we celebrate the rebirth of the Oak King, the giver of Life that warms the Earth. Using Bloodstone in our sacred and celebratory rites at this time inspires us to look forward to the longer days ahead, getting our creative juices flowing for our plans of the oncoming season. Crush some up with your mortar and pestle, mix it with the fiery herbs of cinnamon and basil and toss it upon the licking flames of your Yule bonfires to celebrate the return of the light!

The Sabbat Table

Moon Cookies



This delicious seasonal treat is surprisingly easy to make. Moon Cookies or Moon Spell Cookies are treats made any Wheel of the Year celebrations and changing of the seasons.

Directions

- Cream together butter and sugar until fluffy and light.
- Add grated lemon peel, salt, flour, grated almonds, and 1 tsp. vanilla; mix thoroughly.
- Place dough in bowl. Cover and chill thoroughly.
- When the dough is well chilled; or the next day, roll out dough to 1/8" thickness and cut with moon/crescent cookie cutter.
- Place 1/2" apart on un-greased baking sheet.
- Bake in preheated 375° oven for 8-10 minutes.

Icing:

- While cookies bake, combine confectioner's sugar, vanilla and water.
- Spread over the tops of cookies while still warm, but not too hot, as icing will melt.
- Thin with additional drops of water if glaze is too thick.
- Allow cookies to cool.

Ingredient Checklist

- 1 cup butter
- 1 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tsp. grated lemon peel
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/3 cup flour
- 1 1/2 cup grated almonds (blanched)
- 1 tsp. vanilla

- Icing:
- 2 cups sifted confectioner's sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 1/2 Tbsp. water

Yield: 10 dozen cookies

Kitchen witchery add ins:

Love - Add a few pinches of rosemary, sweet basil, cinnamon, and honey.

Prosperity - Add cinnamon, nutmeg, basil, and grated lemon peel.

Protection - Add cloves, rosemary, anise, and cinnamon.

Psychic Ability - Add star anise, nutmeg, orange, and thyme.

Bellas' Book Nook



As we look to The Winter Solstice/Yuletide, we will light candles and celebrate Long Night. We will rejoice that, the days will slowly, get longer, a few seconds at a time. Some people relish the cold wintry days, and hibernate with a few good books. Other folks, enjoy the crispness of the cold air and the brighter blue sky.

While on a grand adventure, I discovered a boutique book shop. To my delight, the shop had several Wiccan-esque books. As I love my lattes, I just about howled with laughter as I stumbled upon a book, entitled, **Coffee Magic**

for the Modern Witch, by Elsie Wild. ISBN: 978-1-64604-550-1. Ulysses Press, Berkeley, California, 2023. It's 190 pages of coffee magic, which includes magical and health properties, associations, and in some instances Medical Warnings. Coffee rituals are also written with milk alternatives. According to the author, Coffee contains all four elements, and states that: Earth, where the beans are from; Fire, which roasts the beans; Water, which is poured over the grounds to create coffee; and Air, which represents the steam from a fresh, hot cup. Each type of coffee has its own magic, and the way it is brewed brings out different qualities. Needless to say, it's a wonderful new addition my collection, and yes, I'll be adding chocolate...but, you'll have to figure out why. Available at Indigo for \$24.95, plus taxes.

The second book, is seasonally appropriate, and is entitled, **Pagan Christmas – The Plants, Spirits, and Rituals at the Origins of Yuletide. It's by Christian Ratsch and Claudia Muller-Ebeling, published in 2003. Translated copyright in 2006, by Inner Traditions International, Rochester, Vermont. ISBN: 978-1-59477-092-0.** Including the Index, it sits at 213 pages. This book is an absolutely amazing book has 13 chapters plus a bibliography and index for cross-referencing, with everything to do with the history and traditions that surround Yuletide. This would include, but not limited to, a full explanation of the Christmas Calendar, (which begins on November 11, - St. Martin's Day, the first slaughter feast after Samhain,) poetry, songs, crafts, smudges and incense blends, the significance of various flowers associated with the time period, and the list goes on and on. If Yuletide/Winter Solstice is your favourite time of the year, you might consider this for your collection. Available at Indigo for \$34.95, not including taxes.

And finally, while I was on my usual hunt for interesting books, I came across, **Earth Magic – Elements of Witchcraft by Dodie Graham McKay, published in 2021 by Llewellyn Books. ISBN: 978-0-7387-6432-0.** To say it was fascinating, is an understatement. Divided into 3 sections, and is filled with mythological Earth creatures, various Earth Goddesses, (the Invocation to the Cailleach by Angela Grey is beautiful.) Honouring Earth Gods and building shrines, Earths herbs and botanicals, sacred sites, crystals, how to connect to the land, and basically, the works! Chapter 11, contain Earth Rituals and spells; while Chapter 12 is filled with recipes for celebration on the Wheel of the year. I highly recommend that if you find this book, you re-read Chapter 9 on a regular basis. The advice is sound. In case you're wondering, the author is Indigenous and was the Canadian Correspondent for the Wild Hunt. So, you may also want to check out what else she has done. With the index, it has 209 pages, and is available at Indigo Books for \$26.95.

So, with that, I wish you a wonderful Yuletide, and may the New Year bring unexpected Blessings your way!

Stay healthy, and Happy Reading!

Mistletoe

Herb Lore with



With another turn of the wheel, Yule has arrived with its myriads of traditions, some ancient and some more modern. Although real mistletoe is hard to find outside of Europe, we still cling to the tradition of kissing under the mistetoe by using artificial replicas

European Mistletoe (*Viscum alba*) is the most common variety of mistletoe and belongs to the Santalaceae or Sandalwood family. It is a hemiparasitic plant that derives most of its nutrients from its host plants but does contain chlorophyll and can produce some of its own food. Although, most people associate mistletoe with the Oak tree, it can be found on a variety of trees through the British Isles and Much of Europe.

Although the European Mistletoe is the original identified species, the name Mistletoe has been applied to similar plants in other genera of the Santalaceae including *Misodendrum* and *Loranthaceae*.

Mistletoe species can be found throughout the world except in the coldest climates. The American or Eastern Mistletoe (*Phoradendron leucarpum*) can be used as a substitute for European mistletoe. It is found in temperate regions of North America

Mistletoes are spread by birds that eat the berries and then deposit the seeds on the branches of trees. Depending on the bird and/or species of mistletoe it can be deposited via regurgitation, bird droppings or from the birds wiping their beaks on the branches or leaves of the tree. The seeds are coated in a sticky substance that will harden on the branch and allow the seed to germinate.

Mistletoes are evergreen plants. The European Mistletoe has smooth edged oval leaves found in pairs on a woody stem. The berries are white and waxy. They appear in small clusters of two to six berries.

Mistletoe features prominently throughout history including Roman and Norse mythology as well as the use for medicinal purposes in Greek and Roman cultures.

Medicinally, mistletoe has been used to treat various illnesses including diabetes, seizures, cardiac issues, and cancer. Note that all parts of the mistletoe are toxic and should not be ingested without being prescribed by a certified medical practitioner.

Magically, mistletoe is considered both feminine and masculine. The green leaves representing the fertility of the Goddess and the white berries representing the male aspect, specifically the semen of the God. It is associated with the sun and the element of air. It is associated with the Gods Apollo, Venus, Frey, Odin and Balder.

Mistletoe is believed to offer protection especially against lightning and fires, provide luck, and can be used to attract love. It can be used in spells related to forgiveness and reconciliation. It can banish negativity and unwanted spirits as well as nightmares. It has been used to protect children from the fae.

So, where does the tradition of kissing under the Mistletoe at Christmas come from? Its roots are found in the Roman Festival of Saturnalia. In Victorian times, where public displays of affection were to be avoided, standing under the mistletoe was an invitation to be kissed.

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 2021

HAMILTON TEMPLE

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

CONTACT US

TEMPLE STAFF:

wcchamiltontemple@gmail.com

PRIESTHOOD:

LPH.WCC@gmail.com





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

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.

Madame Phoenix Esoterica

madame-phoenix-online.myshopify.com

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

Madame Phoenix products are hand made in Canada. We use only the highest quality, earth friendly, fair trade ingredients.

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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.



Toronto Temple

Inquiries and donations: toronto.sc.wcc@gmail.com

Find updates on our Facebook group.
Circles every two weeks at
The Society Clubhouse 967 College St.



A message to the WCC

I personally would like to send my thanks and acknowledgement to the staff and group of the WCC, and the heartfelt thanks to those who put together the Sword & Chalice. As a practicing Wiccan inside prison, it is hard to be fully able to practice our lifestyle and have a steady source of information. From the beginning of being incarcerated it was difficult to be a practicing Wiccan and learn and grow in the Craft. But since being at this institution and seeing the assistance, we have been able to get from the WCC, it

made a world of difference in being able to practice our beliefs, learn and grow in the Craft. The fact that we have volunteers that come to help and teach and assist us with learning, plus the Sword & Chalice as a valuable resource that we look forward to each month so we can see what is going on on the outside. The articles are thought felt, and we with our limited resources, can follow along and it is very appreciated.

The Book Nook is crucial as it give us a guideline of what books we should request for the library. The recipes are valuable to us, also delicious and fairly easy to replicate. Without the aid of the internet, the Sword & Chalice acts as our Wiccan "Google" once a month and we are very appreciative. From the articles, we see about what is going on event wise and also see that there are resources that are available to us upon release, and a community we can belong to. For some members on the inside, the call of Wicca didn't come to them until they were inside and really able to mute the noise of the real world and focus on their beliefs

We are forever grateful to Ross and Janice for their unwavering support, patience and pleasant demeanors, as well as being extremely knowledgeable they are a joy to be around. We want to again thank the Wiccan community for not forgetting about those of us inside practising, learning, growing, and assisting us with kind words, reviews and resources.

Thank you again, Blessed Be.

M.Nurse



Winter Wonderland

W	I	C	G	N	I	T	A	K	S	T	R	Z	D
N	D	N	A	L	R	E	D	N	O	W	D	C	L
W	O	N	R	A	R	O	R	K	A	W	O	Z	L
S	B	T	S	S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E	L
K	D	R	N	I	I	C	I	C	L	E	L	N	N
I	L	N	O	L	L	O	W	Y	T	S	O	R	F
I	N	T	W	L	F	L	C	S	L	S	P	N	S
N	S	R	B	A	R	L	A	N	L	L	G	I	N
G	L	E	A	F	O	T	L	N	I	P	P	Y	S
N	K	T	L	W	Z	S	L	E	D	D	I	N	G
A	S	N	L	O	E	L	G	L	I	S	T	E	N
D	D	I	W	N	N	Z	N	A	D	L	O	C	T
S	O	W	E	S	D	R	A	Z	Z	I	L	B	O
W	H	O	T	C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	I

NIPPY
 SNOWBALL
 HOT CHOCOLATE
 SNOWFLAKE
 FROSTY
 ICICLE
 SKATING
 WONDERLAND
 SLEDDING
 FROZEN
 BLIZZARD
 SKIING
 SNOWFALL
 GLISTEN
 WINTER

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/597/>



SABBAT SCAVENGER HUNT

gold Yule
tree

an icy fae

a candy
cane

5 candles

Gingerbread
boy

3 silver
bells

a wreath

a burning
yule log

mistletoe

7 blue
snowflakes

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wild spaces

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Jaye Marsh, flute



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WILDMOOD

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Membership requests can be sent to
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places.**

**Jaye Marsh offers
Classical, Rock and
everything in between
compiled for your pagan
moods.**



Listen on
Spotify

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 of
Canada



Hamilton



Toronto



Windsor