



books★ gardening★ recipes★ ritual elements★ articles

# Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada



Vol. 9 | #2

Yule  Imbolc

Dec 21, 2025 – Feb 1, 2026

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.

# The Wheel of the Year



In our Pagan Wheel of the Year, we observe the arrival of the Winter Solstice, and like many cultures, we celebrate it with Light. Sitting between an ending—Samhain—and a beginning—Imbolc—the Winter Solstice is a natural time for reflection and renewed focus. We stand at the threshold of change, a season for letting go, offering farewells to what no longer serves us, and releasing lingering regrets. Samhain granted us closure; Yule celebrates the returning spark of life and reminds us that the future can be bright. With intention and trust, we place our hope in the rebirth that Imbolc will soon bring.

Our reverence for bringing light into our windows, our hearths, and ourselves is an age-old response to holding the cold and darkness at bay. We share stories of survival and resilience—of light triumphing over darkness—and through these stories we connect, carrying hope from one heart to another.

Many Pagans view this sacred time as the rebirth of the Great God, embodied as the newborn Solstice Sun. Across countless cultures, winter-born deities are honored, each echoing the timeless themes of rebirth and the return of Light. The customs, symbols, and rituals of this season blend joyfully with those of other spiritual traditions like Yule, Christmas, Hanukkah, and more. Regardless of myth or miracle, Pagans today breathe life into Light by sharing it and by creating new traditions rooted in ancient ways, through ritual, feasting, and communal celebration.

Do what brings you joy. Laugh freely. Celebrate fully. In doing so, you help return Light and laughter to the world. Traditions speak of feasting, gift-giving, visiting, storytelling, plays, and staying awake through the longest night, all woven together to strengthen the bonds of community.

In the deep dark of winter, let us invoke the forces of pleasure and love that make life worth living. Soon, the Earth will begin to warm from within, and Imbolc will rise from that powerful place between the glory of Yule and the joyful awakening of Ostara. The Wheel turns once more ... let us reflect, rejoice, and honor the beauty of celebrating our Light.



# STONES WITH SORCHA

# QUARTZ

Quartz crystal is known by many names; Crystal, The Witch's Mirror, Rock Crystal, Star Stone, and Zaztun to name a few. It is a mineral made of oxygen and silicon atoms (silicon dioxide), and it occurs as prismatic hexagonal crystals in compact masses or druses. It forms in igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks; often associated with hydrothermal veins. It is transparent to translucent, commonly with a clear, glassy luster. It registers at 7 on the Mohs Hardness scale, therefore being one of the harder stones that can tolerate the elements a bit better. It is found on nearly every continent, being one of the most abundant gemstones.

Clear Quartz is derived from the Greek word "krystallos", meaning "ice" because it was believed to be water frozen so hard it could never melt or thaw. Many ancient cultures have used Clear Quartz in religious and shamanistic rituals for thousands of years. Shamanistic beliefs are that the crystal is the Shaman, and the Shaman is the crystal, having no difference between the two, thus being the perfect tool of the Shaman. Clear Quartz has been treasured by nearly every civilization as far back as Atlantis and Lemuria, mainly used for healing, meditations and spiritual development, as religious objects and in funerary rites, and to dispel evil and magical enchantments.

**Element:** Fire & Water

**Energy:** Projective

**Planet:** Sun & Moon

**Chakra:** All – especially beneficial for the Crown

**Zodiac:** Aquarius, Aries, Cancer, Capricorn & Gemini

**Tarot:** The Star

**Sabbat:** Yule

**Magical Properties:** Astral Travel, Clairvoyance, Clarity, Cleansing, Creativity, Divination, Harmony, Healing, Introspection, Joy, Manifestation, Power, Protection, Psychism, Purification, Spiritual Growth, Transformation, Wisdom

## Magical Uses

You can use a piece of clear quartz in your home or office space to diffuse negative tensions, ushering in an uplifting and harmonious atmosphere. Place it in a central space and let it do its magic. Sleep with a tiny sphere of Quartz crystal under your pillow to induce prophetic dreams and enhance your psychic abilities. Wear a piece of Quartz directly against your skin, whether in a pendant or bracelet, to help with maximizing energy absorption and to alleviate and shed any barriers in place. Storing your tarot cards with pieces of Quartz will empower your readings by unleashing prophetic and powerful energies that will amplify your psychic visions. You can also inscribe or paint pieces of Quartz to use in rune readings. Wear a Clear Quartz point to strengthen your connection with the Divine. Gift a baby or toddler their own special Quartz crystal in a pouch or small purse that can be put in their nursery initially then kept throughout life. Over time it will increase in power and serve as a personal guide, talisman and source of light and hope

## Healing Uses

Clear quartz is a master healer and has numerous benefits for an array of ailments, conditions, and overall wellness. It brings multitudes of powerful, positive vibrations, accelerates deep soul cleansing, and enhances our spiritual connection. Quartz is a powerhouse when it comes to stimulating the immune system, kick-starting your metabolism, and ridding the body of harmful toxins. It is truly beneficial in helping relieve headaches, and releasing built-up anxiety and stress. Mentally and emotionally, it is a shield against negative energy, infusing brighter and more optimistic feelings, and takes the most minute inkling of joy and turns it into something larger than life if you allow it to. Clear Quartz is a master of energy, and it knows exactly how to channel excess energies to bring about the best results.

At this time of Yule, many of us long for our deceased loved ones, or heartfelt human interaction. We have beautiful memories that will bring a smile to our face or a tear to our eye. Inviting Quartz into our life now will spark joy and harmony, helping us keep fond memories alive while lifting our spirits so that we may enjoy all of life's precious moments. This is a time of happiness and festivity as we welcome the rebirth of the Sun and return to longer days. Let us lift our cups to a toast. Cheers!



# The Sabbath Table

## Candied Ginger Shortbread

In ancient times, Scotsmen marked the winter solstice with bonfires, entreating the sun to return over the course of the year's longest night. From this tradition was born first a round cake, notched on the side to represent the sun's rays; and then today's familiar wedge-shaped shortbread. This version of classic shortbread incorporates crystallized ginger, which adds a spicy-sweet kick.

### Directions

- Preheat the oven to 325°F. Lightly grease two 9" round cake pans
- In a mixing bowl or bowl of your stand mixer, combine the butter, salt, sugar, and vanilla. Beat until smooth.
- Place 1 cup (120g) of the flour in a food processor with the crystallized ginger. Process until the ginger is finely minced; this may take up to 1 minute.
- Add this mixture, along with the remaining 1 1/3 cups flour to the butter-sugar mixture. Beat until well combined.
- Divide the dough in half (about 385g each) among the two prepared pans. Press into an even layer, smoothing the surface with your fingers or a pastry roller. Prick the dough all over with a fork; this will prevent it from puffing up or developing air bubbles as it bakes.
- Bake the shortbread until it's golden brown all over, and a bit browner around the edges, about 35 minutes.
- Remove it from the oven. Loosen the edges of the shortbread from the pan using a table knife.
- Wait just a minute or two, then turn the shortbread out of the pan onto a piece of parchment or a clean work surface. Use knife, or a rolling pizza cutter to cut each round into 12 wedges. Do this immediately, while the shortbread is still warm. If you wait, it'll be difficult to cut.
- Transfer the wedges to a rack to cool.
- Store any leftover ginger shortbread, well wrapped, for up to a week; freeze for longer storage. The flavor improves as the shortbread ages.

### Ingredient Checklist

- 16 tablespoons (227g) unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 2 1/3 cups All-Purpose Flour, divided
- 2/3 cup) crystallized ginger

Yield: 2 dozen shortbread wedges

For a simple but festive decoration, sift 1 cup confectioners' sugar into a medium bowl. Gradually add 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, stopping when your glaze is thin enough to drizzle but thick enough to hold its shape. Drizzle it over shortbread with a spoon or fork, or transfer it to a pastry bag or plastic bag with the corner snipped and pipe on decorations. Before the glaze has set, sprinkle the shortbread with sparkling sugar if desired.



# Bellas' Book Nook



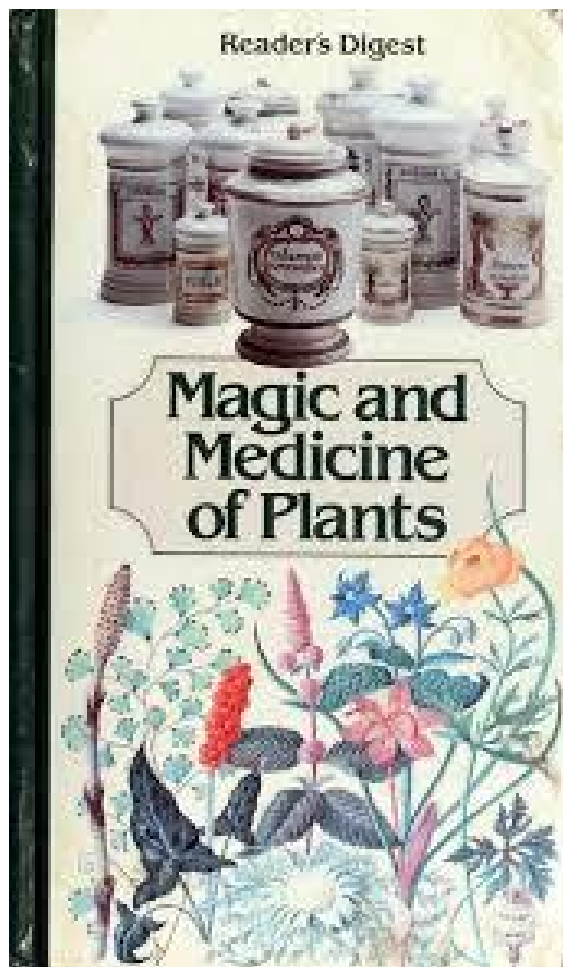
It's that time of year, and some folks are in panic mode. Books can be rather expensive, and it can be quite daunting to walk into a bookstore without a clue what to look for. Sometimes, the best place to start looking for interesting books, is a second-hand bookstore. You'll never know what gems you might find.

Recently, I went home to continue a de-clutter of the old parental home. In amongst all the old horoscope books from the 1960's, 70's, and so on, I found the **Reader's Digest - Magic and Medicine of Plants, which was published back in 1986. ISBN: 0-89577-221-3.** This book is 39-year-old, 464 pages, and still relevant today. It comes complete with a

caveat that this is for educational purposes only and to seek a physician/medical professional for any medical issues.

The book begins with a brief history of how plants were an integral part of myths and folklore, and how that was perceived as magical. Even in our modern times, some plants are still used to ward off evil. Are those Rosemary bushes by the front door???

The next chapter becomes a lesson in basic botany, with plenty of illustrations and explanations. A who's who of Botanists explaining their contributions to the field is a nice touch as well. This leads us to the guts of the book, entitled Gallery of Medicinal Plants, which is close to 300 plants. Everything from Agrimony to Yellowroot. Each entry lists the common and botanical names, as well as a few lesser-known names. There's a basic description of the plant, which includes a small photograph and a beautiful illustration. Along with the plants' historical uses, the information includes growing conditions and the areas these plants are found.



As with all good books on the plant kingdom, it's important to note that some plants are indeed poisonous, even if they appear to be so beautiful, in your local garden center. There is a list of plants to avoid or at least, handle with extreme caution. Just like the previous pages, some of these plants are beautifully illustrated.

My favourite section is entitled... Exotic Plants, (pages 359 to 391.) I rather enjoyed reading about the Chocolate Tree, Corkwood, and Papaya! (One of these days I'll create a greenhouse... ah, to dream...)

The last section is dedicated to How to Grow Herbs, how to create a wild garden, how to cook with herbs, make your own Florida water, you get the ideal. I'm tempted to get a Witch Hazel, just to make my own skin tonic.

All in all, if you can find this old gem, it's well worth the money. At a second-hand shop, I saw one or two priced around \$15.00. Not available at Indigo books, but you might find it at Abebooks. It's one of those classics that surprises you with the information it holds. Or you can join the Internet Archive and read it for free!

As Winter Solstice is just around the corner, I wish you good health, good company, joy and happiness, for this Yuletide. Until next time, stay safe and stay warm.

Happy Reading!



# Myrrh

*Herb Lore  
with Glenys*

## Myrrh and Winter Solstice

The dark continues to engulf us leading up to the longest night and the hope for the enduring Sun to rise again to warm and sustain us. One of my favourite herbs for the season is not truly an herb but a resin. It is the resin of Kings and one suited to the celebration of the night.

Myrrh is a natural gum or resin collected from the *Commiphora* sp. tree by cutting into its bark and letting the sap flow.

The *Commiphora* sp. The *Commiphora* trees are small and thorny. These trees are members of the *Burseraceae* family, commonly known as the Torchwood or Incense tree family. It is in this family that most of the fragrant resins or woods belong (Myrrh, Frankincense, Palo Santo, etc.) The *Commiphora* trees are found in the Eastern African or Arabian Peninsula where they enjoy arid to semi-arid climates.

Visually, myrrh appears as irregular, yellow to dark amber-coloured tears or globules, which darken as they age. When held up to the light, high-quality myrrh is glossy and appear almost crystalline. It may also have a white powdery exterior with rich amber interior.

The scent of myrrh is earthy, warm, and woody with a balsamic note. Its scent may be a bit sweet or even spicy, varying by the region where it grows and your personal sense of smell. Its aroma is both grounding and uplifting, making it a cherished ingredient in incense, perfumes, and spiritual rituals.

The healing properties of myrrh are referenced in historical texts such as ancient Egyptian medical papyri as well as traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine. In ancient

history, myrrh was prized for its preservative and antiseptic properties. It was also used in embalming and anointing practices.

Myrrh contains compounds with anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and analgesic properties, making it useful in treating wounds, infections, and oral health issues such as gum disease and mouth ulcers.

Myrrh is considered a resin of profound spiritual potency. It is often associated with the element of Water, reflecting its emotional depth, intuitive qualities, and its role in purification and healing rites. Myrrh is also connected to the element of Earth, emphasizing its grounding and stabilizing influence.

Myrrh is considered feminine. Astrologically, myrrh is commonly linked to the Moon, whose cycles govern the tides of emotion, intuition, and spiritual transformation. It is also sometimes associated with Saturn, symbolizing structure, endurance, protection, and introspection.

Myrrh holds a special place among deities of transition, healing, and protection. It is sacred to goddesses such as Isis (Egyptian), known for her powers of magic and restoration, and Hecate, guardian of crossroads and the unseen realms. Myrrh is also associated with Osiris, who is associated with death and rebirth.

The Winter Solstice, which marks the longest night and the rebirth of the Sun, is a time of introspection and renewal in pagan traditions. Myrrh's dark colour acknowledges the long night and its rich, warming scent reminds us of the Sun and symbolizes the return of light, warmth and hope for the coming Seasons.



# 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 2021**

# HAMILTON TEMPLE

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

**CONTACT US**

TEMPLE STAFF:

[wcchamiltontemple@gmail.com](mailto:wcchamiltontemple@gmail.com)

PRIESTHOOD:

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

## December @ Obskurah Bazaar

**December Schedule**

**Birth Chart, Tarot  
& Astrological Readings**  
Wed Dec 3 & 17 Book at [Spiritreading.ca](http://Spiritreading.ca)

**Restorative Reiki**  
Thurs Dec 11 Book @ [Ravenscreations.ca](https://Ravenscreations.ca)

**Orisha Shell Readings**  
Sat Dec 20 Book @ [obskurahoccultshop](https://obskurahoccultshop.com)

**Turkish Coffee, Tea Leaf  
& Tarot Readings**  
Sat Dec 13 Book @ [vestikasodditieswellness](https://vestikasodditieswellness.com)

**Yuletide Spirits;  
An Evening of Mediumship**  
Sat Dec 13 7pm Tickets: [obskurahbazaar.com](https://obskurahbazaar.com)

**Magical Community Meet Up**  
Thurs Dec 18 6-9pm  
Free Drop In at Obskurah

### The Occult Shop

[www.theoccultshop.ca](http://www.theoccultshop.ca)

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.

### 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.



# WINTER SOLSTICE MEDITATION: RETURNING TO THE LIGHT

Find a quiet space, settle into a comfortable position, and let your eyes close gently.  
Take a slow, deep breath in...  
And exhale fully, releasing any weight you've been carrying.

Feel the ground beneath you, steady, cool, and supportive. Notice the stillness of the air, the quiet that winter brings. Let your breath become slower, like snow drifting softly to the earth.

Winter Solstice is the longest night. Imagine this darkness as a warm, protective blanket, not something to fear, but a space where seeds rest, where ideas gather strength, where you, too, may pause.

Let yourself soften into the quiet.  
Let any tension melt into the night around you.

Now, in your mind's eye, picture a single candle before you.  
Its flame is small but unwavering. This is your inner light ... your resilience, your wisdom, your hope.  
Watch it flicker gently. Feel its warmth reach you.

With every exhale, imagine sending something into the darkness, a worry, a habit, a heaviness you are ready to release. Watch it dissolve, absorbed by the long night, transformed into stillness.  
Breathe... and let go.

Now imagine the candle beginning to glow brighter...just a little. Like the first lengthening day after the solstice. With every inhale, welcome something you want more of: clarity, creativity, peace, courage, self-kindness.

Let the flame expand until it fills your chest with gentle light.

Say softly within your mind:

"May I move into the new season with ease.  
May I carry light within me.  
May the days ahead bring renewal."

Take one more slow breath.  
Feel your body again ... your hands, your feet, the room around you.

When you're ready, open your eyes.

Carry this quiet glow with you.





# 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



Music for  
flute  
inspired by  
Canada's  
wild spaces

New music for flute in a  
variety of small ensembles  
that include harp,  
percussion, bassoon,  
Indigenous storyteller,  
and piano

Download from  
fluteinthewild.com or  
support the artist with  
merch from the store!

FLUTE IN THE WILD  
Jaye Marsh, flute



**Supporting pagan arts,  
music and knowledge**

**WILDMOOD**

[Cloud.collectorz.com/hamiltontemple/books](http://Cloud.collectorz.com/hamiltontemple/books)

## HAMILTON TEMPLE LEGACY LIBRARY



*Learning through  
lending and legacies.*

Membership requests can be sent to  
[WCCHamiltonTemple@gmail.com](mailto:WCCHamiltonTemple@gmail.com)  
subject line: HTLL

**WildFlute on Spotify  
brings you music inspired  
by wild spaces, and  
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**