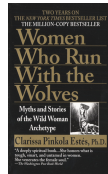


## Member Contributions

NOW DISTRIBUTED  
THROUGHOUT THE  
NEWSLETTER



WOMENSPIRIT  
BOOK CLUB  
PAGE 10



FALL EVENT  
PAGE 11



ORGANIZATIONAL  
NEWS  
PAGE 4

# SHE SPEAKS



Dear Sisters,

I just returned from a restful vacation in West Virginia, where I had the pleasure of visiting the Lost World Caverns. The caverns are 235 feet deep with stalagmites up to 85 feet tall. The temperature is a steady 52 degrees. The largest 'room' is twelve stories below ground.

[Into the Cave](#)



You can see light from the sky from a small opening above. It is, in short, another world.

Some people find caves uncomfortable or disconcerting, but I've always enjoyed them. Descending into the cool, quiet darkness gives the impression of being embraced by the Earth. Time seems to stand still as you are surrounded by rock that has been forming and changing for tens of thousands of years. You begin to feel both eternal and fleeting.

I imagine our ancestors as they gathered in caves on long winter nights, telling stories and painting pictures on the walls. They lived close to, and in some cases inside of, the Earth. They learned her patterns, felt her heartbeat, and interpreted her signs.

Fertility was a constant concern for our ancestors: fertility of the tribe, of the land, and of game. The earliest known symbols and deities were devoted to fertility. You can certainly see the inspiration for them in these stone formations. I noticed a number of natural formations that look much like the Venus of Willendorf and quite a number of stalagmites that resemble, well, her counterpart.

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\* SM = Sarah Mullers

Like our ancestors, we can turn to the Earth for comfort and safety. In times of distress, we can always return to the cave.

Be Well,

Shannon Browning-Mullis, editor

### **Dumb Luck/White Privilege**

by Sarah Muller

Dumb luck is what some call it  
White privilege is what others do  
In my case - they seem the same

Three of my four great-grandfathers went to college

The depression stole my mother's chance  
She would guard my chance with her life

Early retirement from disability  
opened up time  
Time to be something new

I love an English teacher  
Language moved to a deeper space in me  
Filling in crevices - I hadn't noticed

Born white middle class in the 50s  
Right time - Right place  
I never doubted - I would have a career

Feminism saved me from becoming my mother  
Illness saved me from becoming my father  
Choices saved me from following broken dreams

Computers saved me from low wages  
Books saved me from computers  
Words saved me from loneliness



## News from the CoCo

*From Gail Stephenson, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator*

The Coordinating Council has continued to meet virtually due to the pandemic.

For some reason, I had forgotten that we have this Lamas newsletter. I thought the Beltane one would be my last one and then realized this one falls just as I hand my job over to Nina Brewer-Davis.

We had a wonderful Membership Meeting on Zoom on June 18th, 2021. It was just prior to the virtual worship and only lasted a few minutes. Linda Sterner welcomed everyone and announced that the Fall Institute and Gathering will be October 6th-10th in person at The Mountain and that we will be having our regular in person membership meeting then. The theme will be "We were made for these times." She also let everybody know that the dates for the Spring 2022 have changed to May 18-22, 2022.

Alice Carnes proposed individuals needing to be confirmed. Nina Brewer-Davis for Marketing and Outreach Coordinator on the CoCo; Tammy Sadler as the Volunteer Coordinator on the CoCo; Linda Sterner serving a second term as the Registrar and Membership Chair on the CoCo; and Linda Sanders as a Searchette. These volunteers were affirmed and their terms begin on August 1st, 2021. Christine Grewcock has agreed to return as the Web Goddess and Adrianna Lee has agreed to be the new Emerald.

Krista Meinersmann thanked those who were leaving their positions. Stacy Leona as Web Goddess, Alice Carnes as Volunteer Coordinator for the CoCo; Gail Stephenson as the Marketing and Outreach Coordinator for the CoCo, Tammy Sadler as a Searchette and Valerie Stephenson as the Emerald.

Virtual worship was led by Reverend Maggie Lovins. Nina Brewer-Davis was in the East, Gretchen Ohmann was in the South, Kate Wolverton was in the West, and Tammy Sadler was in the North. They did a magnificent job and we are all grateful for all of the hard work that they put into it. It takes a lot of commitment to create a work of art like they did. The video of the worship is located on the Facebook group. It is marked as an announcement so you can find it easier.

**Save these dates for our next in-person events!**

October 6 - 10, 2021

May 18-22, 2022

October 5 - 9, 2022

May 17 - 21, 2023

## Interview with new Searchette Linda Sanders by Alice Carnes

*When did you start coming to UUWomenspirit?*

I think my first UUWomenspirit was in the fall of 1993. Back then, we only had fall events. Reid Suchanec brought me to my first event, and we have come together ever since. We missed a couple of years when my health wasn't good and she had some family commitments, but mostly we have been here every year and usually for both spring and fall events now.

*What was your experience then?*

My first event was both amazing and overwhelming. I loved the worship experiences, the singing, and the bonding with the wonderful women that I met. I remember my first track was an "earth circle" grounded in Native American beliefs led by Carole Eagleheart. During that track, I met Ethel-Marie Underhill and we became life long "soul sisters." Reid, Ethel-Marie, and I worked together on the PC for the 10-year anniversary UUWomenspirit event.

*Linda, you have had lots of volunteer experiences with UUWomenspirit. Would you like to share the ones that come to mind or were most enjoyable?*

Being on the Planning Committee (PC) for the 10-year anniversary event was a great experience. I loved going to the planning meetings and envisioning all the events we were planning for the event. We worked hard but we also had fun together! Since it was a special milestone anniversary, the Coco wanted a diverse PC representing several geographies. Reid and I drove together to Virginia for the planning sessions which Ethel-Marie, the Event Coordinator, hosted at her house. Ethel-Marie's daughter, Amy Lythgoe was also on the PC, but she was unable to attend the event due to a pregnancy. Reid and I were co-registrars because PCs had to run the registration and housing process back then. That was a tough learning curve and I think it's much better now to have a dedicated registrar for all events. I also enjoyed co-facilitating tarot workshops with Reid. She and I have been reading cards together for years and we enjoyed sharing our knowledge and approach to tarot with the women in our workshops.

*Thank you for your willingness to be interviewed. In closing, Is there anything else you'd like to share?*

UUWomenspirit is my spiritual home. I think the days spent on the Mountain with the women at UUWomenspirit represent the way I wish every day of my life could be like – the atmosphere of acceptance and kindness, the sisterhood I feel with the women there, the closeness to nature, the worship services, the crazy fun during cabaret, and the learning experiences I've had in the tracks and workshops! It doesn't get much better than that....

## Lammas

Lammas is a season of harvest. It is the time to reap the grain and bake the first loaves of bread. It is also a time to honor those with skills and crafts. The day is sometimes known as Lughnassadh after Lugh, who was, among other things, a master of all crafts and skills. In many regions, this was the season for craft fairs and festivals, a time for communities to come together. These great and joyful events have me thinking about gathering with community. After over a year in relative isolation, we face the prospect of increasing risk and the subsequent increase in protective measures.

Ancient communities were dependent on one another for survival in ways that were more visible, though no more real, than those we experience today. The community had to come together for defense, for planting, for harvesting, for food processing, and for child rearing. Their very survival depended on each person taking care of others and being cared for in return.

Today, it's less likely that we'll need our neighbors to help us harvest the grain, raise the barn, or repel invaders, but let us care for our neighbors anyway. Let us be the kind of community that puts the greater good above personal convenience. Let us consider the entire web of Earth's interconnected life our community and care for it accordingly.





### Lammas Ritual

Gather dried corn husks, a marker, and a candle. Decorate your altar with traditional harvest objects like grain, corn, squashes, and apples. Open a circle in the way that is typical of your practice. Take a moment to ground and center in your sacred space. Light your candle and breathe deeply in for one, two, three, four. Hold your breath for one, two, three, four. Exhale one, two, three, four. Hold one, two, three, four. Repeat until you feel calm and focused. Begin to think about all the things you feel thankful for, all the abundance in your life. Write one thing on each piece of corn husk. Make a pile of good fortunes, as many of you can think of. Now, begin to think of ways you can spread this abundance in your community. How can you protect, nurture, and support others? Record these ideas on individual corn husks, making a separate pile. Now, begin to hum a note that resonates within you as you tie the husks together, end to end or as a chain, connecting each boon of abundance to ways you can spread joy and ease in your community. Use the chain to decorate a space in your home. Perhaps, loop it over until its layers create a wreath. Sit and look at all you have to offer. Soak up the good in your life. When you are ready, close the circle in your typical way.

The ritual doesn't end there. Each morning when you wake up, think of one thing you are thankful for and one thing you can offer. Each evening when you go to bed, think of one thing you were thankful for on this day and one way you made your community better. Record these on paper. Try to keep the practice up at least until Mabon.

## Lammas Eve (A Toast to Juliet's Birthday)

Tomorrow and tomorrow, we celebrate the  
first ripe grains of the season.

We will bake a buttery loaf and tear off big  
hunks to share.

Feast on wedges of savory cheese.

And sweet peaches, dripping juices down our  
cheeks.

We will hug and laugh and slap each other on  
the back.

We'll raise a glass to the future.

And be amazed that we've come through the  
dark lonely tunnel.

But tonight, dear Juliet, we celebrate you.

Perhaps a quiet celebration this time around  
the sun.

A glass of the lightest and brightest rosé to  
toast your gifts of love and loyalty.

To the rose who outshines the sun and the  
moon.

To Juliet whose love is freely given and grows  
without bounds in the giving.

And to love wholly received.

A toast to undying romance –

even if the nightshade and the happy  
dagger didn't play fair.

A toast to the bright twinkling stars that light  
the way into the next year.

Don't blow them out

– not yet.

There's plenty of time for the sun to do that  
work at dawn.

For now, dear Juliet, make a wish.

A wish for all of us to know deep love,

love that springs out of hate for the  
perceived enemy.

Wish for us to unclench the feudal fist.

Wish for us to hate no more.

Wish for us to love and love and love.

And declare it so.

-Jennifer Evans

7/14/21

## Goodbye by Sarah Muller

She stood in the street by the old white Fairlane  
packed with everything I would take with me  
packed with everything I would ever take with  
me

I thought it was temporary

I would be back in a few months  
for Thanksgiving and Christmas

I would never be back back

She knew that

I was her youngest

Her last fledgling to fly the coop

They all came back for vacations

They never came back to be her child again

They all lived far away now

I was her baby

I bristled when she called me that

I was - though

Now I understand

# Field of Dreams by Sarah Muller

Tufts of white balls  
cover the lawn

Waiting for a child  
to pluck them  
to blow on them  
to seal a wish

My camera charging  
I left it at home

Tomorrow I say  
Tomorrow I'll capture it

But when I am  
not watching  
The mowers come



*Pele, a painting by Sue Hand*

## I believe by Sarah Muller

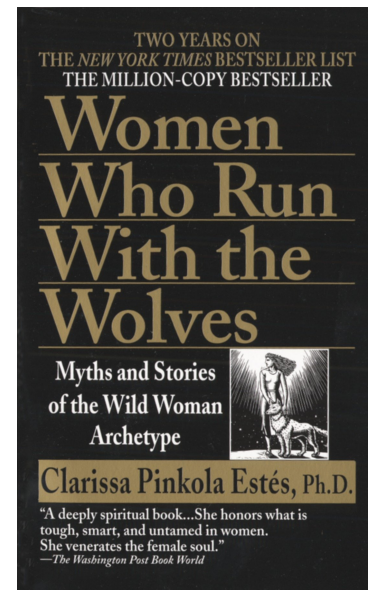
I used to recite the Apostle's Creed every  
Sunday  
The Nicene Creed on Communion Sunday  
I don't believe those words any longer  
I haven't believed them since I was a child

I believe in the vastness of space  
I believe in the kindness of strangers  
I believe that when the Sun warms the  
ground  
when rains fall from above  
A world that seemed dead is risen

## Womenspirit Book Club Review

Thanks to everyone so far who has participated in the *Women Who Run with the Wolves* Book Club. Special thanks to Nancy Hagman, Alice Carnes, Katie Bloedau, Susie Sherman-Hall, and Lisa Sherman for leading discussions! The first sessions have been quite popular, and the group has chosen to transition to monthly meetings. Come be part of the fun!

Continue to watch the UUWomenspirit Facebook group and your inbox for upcoming dates, times, and facilitators.



*Gaia, a painting by Sue Hand*

Invention by Sarah Muller

Mason stops by my chair  
He's freshly shaven  
In desperate need of love

I scratch his back  
He arches it to meet my hand  
Moving back and forth

Purring louder with each minute  
If humans didn't exist  
Cats would have invented them

# We Were Made for These Times



UUWomenspirit Fall 2021

October 6-10, 2021

We Were Made For These Times

Of all the times and places we could possibly have lived, we live here, now. As confusing and frightening as this world may be, we were MADE for these times.

We have the strength and courage we need to get through these challenges, and in the process build a strong foundation for the world we're creating for ourselves and future generations.

We'll build these strong foundations through strong connections. When we gather together this Fall, we'll reach out to connect to each other, our sisters.

We'll reach down to connect to the deep, rich magic of the earth beneath our feet. We'll reach back to connect with The Ancestors. We'll reach up to the stars to connect with our dreams of the world we'll create.

We're hard at work getting ready for a fantastic fall event. We're finishing up the brochure, and registration will be opening up sometime during August.

Tracks and workshops will include delights such as Weaving, Dancing, Meditation, Storytelling, and Tarot. We're all having a hard time deciding which ones we'll be participating in, and we sincerely hope you feel the same.

In Worship, we will celebrate an Appalachian Harvest, and connect with the deep energy of these ancient mountains. We will honor the spirits of the Earth, our grandmothers and grandfathers, the First Peoples and the Europeans who settled in the Appalachian mountains. We will use the knowledge and customs of the Old World and New World to create every day rituals we can perform at home.

Most importantly, we can barely contain our excitement about reuniting with our sisters, and connecting with new sisters we haven't met before.

Rain Pope - Event Coordinator

Helen Rogers - Worship

Cheryl Dent - Worship

Amber Grey - Tracks & Workshops

Beth Flanagan - Sales & Activities

Iris Padgett - Scribe

Amanda Morris - Chaplain

~Rain

<http://rainsews.com>

## Plant Profile: Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)

What better plant for this bright, sunny season than Calendula, whose blooms look like the radiant sun? Though calendula has many medicinal and cosmetic uses, it is most famous and commonly used as a wound healer. Just as the sun seems to heal the wounds of the soul, so the calendula flower heals most burns, cuts, and wounds of the flesh. Calendula oil and salve are simple to make and safe to use. There are no known counter-indications. The flowers are even edible. So, enjoy this miraculous plant abundantly and let it brighten your day and heal what ails you.



Introduction by Sarah Muller

As a girl

I stuck to the physical

Average height and weight

Brown hair- non-descriptive eye color

The same as Patty Hearst

No wonder it took so long to find her

As a mother

I stuck to my

job description

Two kids - house in the suburbs -

rocking chair - camera - a cat - a dog

At a party I was

Systems Programmer

What language do you program?

No one knew what I meant

It is still hard to describe

After forty I was

handicapped - not differently abled

unable to stand or walk

A wheelchair to get me

from point A to point B

As a grandmother

I stuck to my

job description

Four beautiful babies

Two boys - two girls

I went to the park everyday

Now I'm a little old lady

who writes about my world

just six feet around

and poetry comes out



Here we are dancing in person in Kevin Myers' lovely dance garden in Knoxville. After practicing Sacred Circle Dancing for many years, I have missed it terribly. I am one of those who just did not enjoy it on Zoom but am grateful to all the worldwide teachers who have offered their dances online for those who have enjoyed it. For me, I am just so happy to be dancing in person once again. Keep dancing, Goddesses! Love, Toni

## Prime Ages by Sarah Muller

Two

learning to talk back  
No - my favorite word  
trying to separate

Three

Living in my head  
Not noticing - that they left  
Lost by the library

Five

Kindergarten rules  
confused me so different  
from being home

Seven

Trying to write in  
cursive. Unable to bend letters  
to the ideal

Eleven

Told to be kinder  
Not really understanding  
What was the mean act

Thirteen

Someone boos the team  
We do not boo the others  
We only cheer our team

Seventeen

Life can be harder  
than I had imagined  
Too hard to survive

Nineteen

Standing on my own  
making adult decisions  
Sometimes not the best

Twenty-three

Working in a lab  
like my father. Feeding,  
weighing  
killing all the rats

Twenty-three

Working in a lab  
like my father. Feeding,  
weighing  
killing all the rats

Twenty-nine

Officer worker now  
Playing all day with  
programs  
Solving mysteries

Thirty-one

My husband busy  
with his career. More money  
Alone in fresh ways

Thirty-seven

Now group manager  
wearing silk suits when  
dining  
out with my bosses

Forty-one

On disability  
No longer able to walk  
Wheelchair beckoning

Forty-three

Children leaving home  
My bed in the living room  
unable to move

Forty-seven

Trying to work part-  
time but getting stronger -  
all  
of my children gone

Fifty-three

Learning to live with  
No career, no daily role  
My marriage ebbing

Fifty-nine

On my own again  
Discovering who I am  
Content with my life

Sixty one

New children to love  
grand-mothering so stress-  
free  
More time in the park

Sixty-seven

No more who I was  
Not confined to old plans  
I have broken free

## Membership Reminder

As you may know, UUWomenspirit membership is based on annual dues of \$45.00, which gives you a discounted rate for events, our quarterly newsletter, and the satisfaction of knowing you are supporting this wonderful organization, even if you are unable to attend every event. While we have been in our semi-sleep state, our paid memberships have dropped to almost zero. Membership dues are paid independent of event registration, usually in January. We ask that you pay your dues now to help support the behind-the-scenes activities and assure your ability to participate in the “business” of UUWomenspirit.

So let’s bring our blessed organization back to full vitality with a show of support by renewing your membership today. You can do this by going to the website, [UUWomenspirit.org](http://UUWomenspirit.org) and clicking on “Join”. Follow the prompts there, making sure to complete the membership form. You can also send a check or money order (include your email address), made out to UUWomenspirit, to:

Judy Padgett, Treasurer     241 Pheasant Creek Road     Casar, NC 28020

Music by Sarah Muller

To sing, first breathe  
Push the air out then pull it in

The breath filling you from  
Bottom to top and back to  
front

Listen to the breathing  
around you

Watch Marty’s face  
Breathe when she breathes

The entire room breathes  
together  
We her instrument breathing  
on her command

Add sound as you breathe  
Listen to the sounds Judy and  
Jennie make  
Try to make the same sound

Pitch, but also rhythm and  
volume  
Try to sound like they do  
One organism with 50 mouths

We start together  
We stop together

They can hear us  
In the last row

At the top of  
The balconies

Now we sing alone in our  
houses  
No longer able to breathe as  
one

We exhale not just pure tones  
but the virus  
They inhale our breath

In the last row  
At the top of  
The balconies

Breathing can be dangerous



### **Arianna Bara Jewelry**

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### **Wingshuck Corn Shuck Dolls**

Anne Freels

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

865-705-9755

[Www.wingshuck.etsy.com](http://www.wingshuck.etsy.com)

Facebook: Anne Freels and Wingshuck

I make colorful corn shuck dolls representing the seasons, the holidays on the Wheel of the Year, traditional Appalachian, altar dolls, kitchen witches and Halloween and Samhain witches.



### **Annie Egypt Herbals**

Anne Freels

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

865-705-9755

Facebook: Annie Egypt Herbals

All natural herbal soaps and skin care made in small batches without synthetics or preservatives.



### **Rain's Obsessive Stitchery**

Rain Pope

<http://rainsews.com>

[rain@rainsews.com](mailto:rain@rainsews.com)

615-238-7760

Hand-dyed yarn and clothing, embroidered items including towels, tarot bags, and UUWomenspirit logo items, chainmaille jewelry, and various other shiny things.



Snake and Snake Productions

<http://snakeandsnake.com>

919-627-3138

Susan Baylies makes her lunar phase card and related products, t-shirts, goddess jewelry, and astrology charts.

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Two Witches in a Kitchen

Maggie Lovins

[https://www.etsy.com/shop/TwoWitchesinaKitchen?ref=search\\_shop\\_redirect](https://www.etsy.com/shop/TwoWitchesinaKitchen?ref=search_shop_redirect)

Handmade, personalized items for you, your home & kitchen



Just Kidding Productions, LLC

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[shaunac47@gmail.com](mailto:shaunac47@gmail.com)

336-707-0136

<http://www.justkiddingproductions.com/>

I sell original photography based items: (coasters, greeting cards, prints, magnets, playing cards, coffee mugs, ornaments).