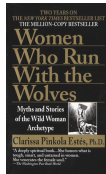


Member Contributions

NOW DISTRIBUTED
THROUGHOUT THE
NEWSLETTER



WOMENSPIRIT
BOOK CLUB
PAGE 10



FEATURE ARTICLE
PAGE 11



ORGANIZATIONAL
NEWS
PAGE 4

SHE SPEAKS



Dear Sisters,

I recently saw a post on social media that caught my attention. I don't remember who posted it and I can't relocate it. Unfortunately, that means I can't credit them properly. There is also no way I'll remember it exactly, but here's the gist. Pumpkin spice is just the

Just say, "Yes."

traditional spices used in fall recipes for generations. It's the particular blend we include in pumpkin pie, apple pie, cider, and a host of other comforting recipes. We've enjoyed these flavors our entire lives because of women's domestic labor, because our mothers, grandmothers, and aunts sweated away in the kitchen preparing foods that nourished and comforted us. And then, one of them realized that adding these spices to coffee created a delicious treat, something they could savor while driving the kids to school, paying the bills, or doing any number of other domestic chores that fall disproportionately on women. And the world collectively decided that women enjoying something just for themselves, for their own joy, was worthy of ridicule. No one made fun of these spices for the last hundred years while they flavored our favorite dishes. They only became worthy of mocking when they allowed women a moment of joy only for themselves.

Reading that post was a bit of an epiphany for me. I can get caught up in mocking with the best of them, but I also enjoy a good pumpkin spice latte. Now, don't get me wrong. The extreme over production and marketing of pumpkin spice products is fairly worthy of the jokes, but the mocking started before that. I've learned two important things from the pumpkin spice scandal: first, never ridicule something that brings someone else joy if it isn't harming anyone. Because, why? Just, why? Second, squeeze every single ounce of joy out of this life that you possibly can. Yes, life is hard. It always has been. What better reason to smell the flowers, eat the dessert, hug your loved ones, and sip your damn latte?

As adults, we often make things harder and less joyful than they need to be. We think of all the barriers in the way of joy, rather than the ways we can just get out of the way. When our children or grandchildren ask us to go to the park, we think about the house that needs to be cleaned, the picnic we'll need to pack, and the parking spot we'll have to find. Why can't we just grab a water bottle, head to the park, put

Table of Contents

Letter from the Editor	1
Labor Day by Sarah Muller	3
News from the CoCo	4
Samhain	6
Samhain Ritual	6
Dorothy by Sarah Muller .	7
News from the Volunteer Coordinator	8
Plant Profile	9
Womenspirit Bookclub .	10
Poem and Painting by Penny Featherstone	10
Remembering Carol Christ by Carole Eagleheart	11
Vendor Listings	13

our phones down, and swing like we're six years old?

I've made myself a promise. I'm going to let life be as easy as it can be, accept all the joy that comes my way, and luxuriate in all the world has to offer. My daughter asked me to take her to the trampoline park and jump with her for her fourteenth birthday, and I did. And, it was amazing. And, every other parent there alternated between staring at their phone and looking at me like I had lost my mind. But, I had a blast, got in a cardio workout, and my daughter decided that I was by far the coolest mom there. What are we waiting for?

So, here's your quarterly call: let life be as easy as it will be, squeeze every bit of joy out of life that you can, and get out of your own way.

Be well,

Shannon Browning-Mullis, editor

Labor Day

By Sarah Muller

Preparations began in August
wearing a sweatshirt and long
pants at band practice by 8
returning home in a t-shirt at
noon

Learning new music
practicing marching formations
in the teachers' parking lot
painted with streets and sidewalks

In July, it had kid-sized buildings
a small town designed
to teach five-year-olds
how to safely walk to school

Trying on our woolen uniforms
last year's too small
too warm for August
Unisex - though that wasn't a
word yet

On Labor Day
we would meet across town
lining up where we were told
tuning our instruments

Nervous that we might be
following a horse
with its unsanitary offering on the
street
"Step in it" - we were told
"It will make you grow"

After the parade - by "The Lake"
in the basement of the Masonic
Temple the Kiwanis had made
breakfast for the entire town

We would all eat pancakes
with Aunt Jemima syrup
still in our blue uniforms
with family and friends

Our friends - not musical
flipping the pancakes
cleaning the tables
pouring the orange juice and
coffee

We would trudge back over the
viaduct only to return to "The
Lake" again its pair of swans
unperturbed by the unusual
activity

We would be armed with change
to buy food that was only served
at the carnival this one day of the
year
corn dogs - caramel apples -
cotton candy

We carried blankets to spread
on the banks of "The Lake"
another full day of freedom
tomorrow
we can stay to the end

Fireworks exploding in the sky
above us
The finale - on the ground - on
the other bank
always a train with a smokestack
Firey smoke

No parade, fireworks, carnival,
pancakes on the Fourth of July
this was our holiday
in our proud union town

News from the CoCo

The Coordinating Council, or CoCo, is the governing body of UUWomenspirit. The current members are Nina Brewer-Davis (Marketing and Outreach Coordinator), Tammy Sadler (Volunteer Coordinator), Linda Sterner (Membership Coordinator and Registrar), Judy Padgett (Treasurer), Krista Meinersmann (Program Resource Liaison), and Melissa Christopher (Scribe and Keeper of the Sacred Text).

Save these dates for our next in-person events!

May 18-22, 2022
October 5 - 9, 2022
May 17 - 21, 2023

Greetings, dear ones, from the CoCo. I took up the role of Marketing and Outreach Coordinator last summer from Gail Stephenson. I am grateful to Gail for all her support and knowledge during the transition, as well as the many improvements she made ushering UUWomenspirit into social media and overseeing website changes, all during a time of profound social and physical change.

The CoCo has been overseeing many adaptations, both temporary and permanent, in these pandemic times. Thanks to the dedicated work of many, we had a fall event October 6-10, at our beloved Mountain, our first in-person event in two years. The CoCo developed a COVID policy in response to the recent rise in cases regionally to insure a safe event. This policy will be revisited for future events as circumstances develop. The event was wonderful and heart-filling. Sixty-one women attended. 10 of those were newcomers, and others have been attending for 30 years or more. By age, 8 of the participants were under 40, 8 were between 40 and 50, 14 between 50 and 60, 13 between 60 and 70, and 18 who were 70 and up. These broad representations across age and length of membership are indicators of sustainability for our organization.

Other adaptations include new ways to connect online, especially our new book club and online social hours, which will continue. The book club reads and discusses a chapter each month of *Women who Run with the Wolves*, coordinated by Alice Carnes. Social Hours will now include hosting by volunteers. If you would like to volunteer to host a social hour, please let me know! This month's social hour had a guest speaker: Holli Emore, the Executive Director at Cherry Hill Seminary, a seminary for Pagan and Nature Spirituality, based in Columbia, South Carolina. In addition to these events, our social media presence has increased as a result of the efforts of Adrianna Lee, our new Emerald. You can find UUWomenspirit on Facebook (private and public groups) and Instagram. On YouTube you can find several videos, including some of the online worship services that were developed during our time of seclusion. Please like, comment, subscribe, and share.

Clarification of Transgender Inclusion

Before the pandemic began, the CoCo had begun a process of conversations regarding updating our language and clarifying our policies around the inclusion of transgender women in our organization. It had been noted that while transgender women had previously attended events, we had no explicit policy regarding trans women's inclusion. The CoCo held a focus group on this topic in summer of 2020 over zoom, in which it was agreed that while there are still questions to be worked out regarding our policies and bylaws, transgender women are welcome at UUWomenspirit. During the general meeting at the fall event in 2021, the general membership recognized by consensus that transgender women are women, and are welcome at UUWomenspirit.

Following this recognition, the CoCo has assembled a group of volunteers from the membership who will be charged with reviewing and updating the bylaws and policies of the organization to reflect this position. The CoCo also has put specific language on the website stating: "All women are welcome at UUWomenspirit, regardless of sex assigned at birth. Here, we believe and affirm that transgender women are women. While we recognize that we are still learning and growing, we aim to be a welcoming and inclusive place for all women who wish to celebrate the Feminine Divine."



Samhain

As many of you know, Samhain comes from the Gaelic for “Summer’s End.” It can be bittersweet. We bid a fond farewell to sundresses and flavorful tomatoes and a less fond farewell to mosquitos and sweating your make up off before you leave the house. We look forward to wearing boots and flannel and curling up by the fire, while we dread darker days and the constant chill. This is the stuff of Samhain: beginnings and ends, light and dark.

It’s also the stuff of life: joy and heartache, want and plenty, work and play. Samhain is a season of preservation, when we put away the garden’s harvest for leaner times. Let’s use this Samhain to harvest more than vegetables. Let’s put away enough joy, plenty, and play to sustain us for any heartache, want, and work that may come.



Samhain Ritual

This ritual is going to be simpler and longer than any we’ve done before. No sacred space or altar necessary. Real life will do just fine. I’m asking you to spend the next few months saying, “why not?” and letting life be as easy as it can be. Remove the barriers to your joy and do whatever you want to do (assuming it harms none). Ask yourself, “if I could do anything in this moment, what would it be?” Lay in the grass and stare at the clouds? Jump into a pile of leaves? Run through your yard like a lunatic? Howl at the moon? Dance around in your underwear? What are you waiting for?

Dorothy

By Sarah Muller

When I met her she was
about the age my daughter is now
Less than half the age
she was when she died

I knew her first as his mother
adolescent and disdainful
He called her Dot
to diminish her power over him

I never thought
she thought
I was good enough for him

I was breaking free of the life she had lived
I had plans - a career, not a family
Even though of course I had a family

A different generation

I cut my hair short
Worked outside the home
Wore pants more often than skirts
So many trivial things

My husband's job was
no more important than mine

Still, we had much in common
that we never acknowledged
I learned a different style of mothering from her
A more hands-on emotional mothering

When her son and I parted
she and I would still talk
about my children
about her trips

She was crazy about my children
My children were crazy about her
I sent them across the country to see her

She was in terrible pain most of the time I knew
her
Her hands and her knees cried out to her

She knitted to exercise her hands
Later I did the same
I took piano as well to exercise the joints

She loved food - she taught me
how to rub the dill between my fingers
to work the phyllo quickly
to boil the honey for the Baklava

I spoil my grandchildren like she spoiled hers
I love my children like she loved hers



News from the Volunteer Coordinaor

Thank you for my nomination to the position of Volunteer Coordinator. I hope to serve UUWomenspirit the best that I can. I have a terrific group of Searchettes – Shannon Browning Mullis, Nancy Hagman, and Linda Sanders. You may have spent some time with one of these energized volunteers during our Fall event as they asked you questions about your skills, interests, and volunteering history. We are hoping to create a database of all UUWS members that will help us in looking for volunteers to fill the upcoming positions. If you have not talked to one of us, don't worry. We will be contacting you soon.

Speaking of upcoming volunteer positions, the Searchettes will be looking for several positions opening next year. These positions include a Program Resource Liaison and a Scribe for the Coco, a Searchette, and Event Coordinators for future events. We also have other positions that need to be filled, such as a Book Club facilitator and Social Hour facilitator. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact me, Tammy Sadler at volunteer@uuwomenspirit.org.



Plant Profile

Cinnamon *Cinnamomum verum*

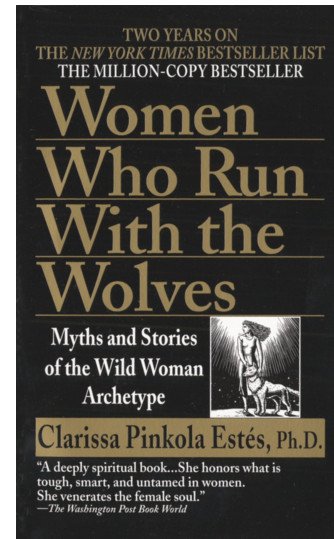
The cinnamon sticks commonly purchased in the grocery store are in fact the inner bark of a tree common in India and Sri Lanka. We think of it as a spice, but some of the most powerful medicinal herbs are also the most delicious foods! Cinnamon is a perfect example. We've used it for centuries in a variety of dishes, but did you know it also has antiseptic, antiviral, and antifungal properties? Cinnamon is commonly used as a digestive aid, to stabilize blood sugar, and to increase circulation. This warming spice is the perfect addition to any dish this season to increase vitality and clear congestion.



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.



Remembering Carol Christ

by Carole Eagleheart

The ocean waters surged, lifting me gently, then drawing back. Changing, always changing. And I thought of Carol Christ—how she loved the sea, how she embraced the power of a moving, changing life energy.

In May, 2001, several of us from UU Womenspirit traveled together on Carol's Goddess Pilgrimage to Crete. We sang, we danced, we laughed together in tavernas by the sea. And we explored the civilization of the Minoan people, who long ago lived in joyful harmony with the Goddess.

Since her death, many people have written about how Carol's writing helped free them from a patriarchal god and introduced them to the concept of the feminine divine. But for those of us who joined her on one of her pilgrimages, it was not her writing we remember but the powerful experiences she led us through.

We climbed hills, we descended into caves, we touched stones where 4,000 years ago the Minoan people lived and created art and honored the Goddess.

One of the most powerful experiences for me was a ritual at a tholos, a circular tomb which once held a domed roof but now is open to the sky. Not far across the sea was Egypt, where ancient people strived for permanence, building massive stone pyramids to house the dead. Their art was static, with figures frozen in stiff poses. But in the tholos in Crete there was a sense of movement and change, a sense that death is only part of a rhythmic cycle: life springs from the womb of the Mother, dances joyfully, and returns to the womb only to reemerge in a great circle of energy.

You can see it in the art of the Minoans. Not static figures, but dolphins leaping, flowers blooming and people dancing. There are no images of war or death in Minoan art, no bloodthirsty hunting scenes.

You can see it in the architecture of the Minoans as well. There are no fortifications to fight off others, and no walls separating the food storage areas from the people. There is a sense of peace and egalitarianism, and everywhere an honoring of the Goddess, an honoring of life energy.

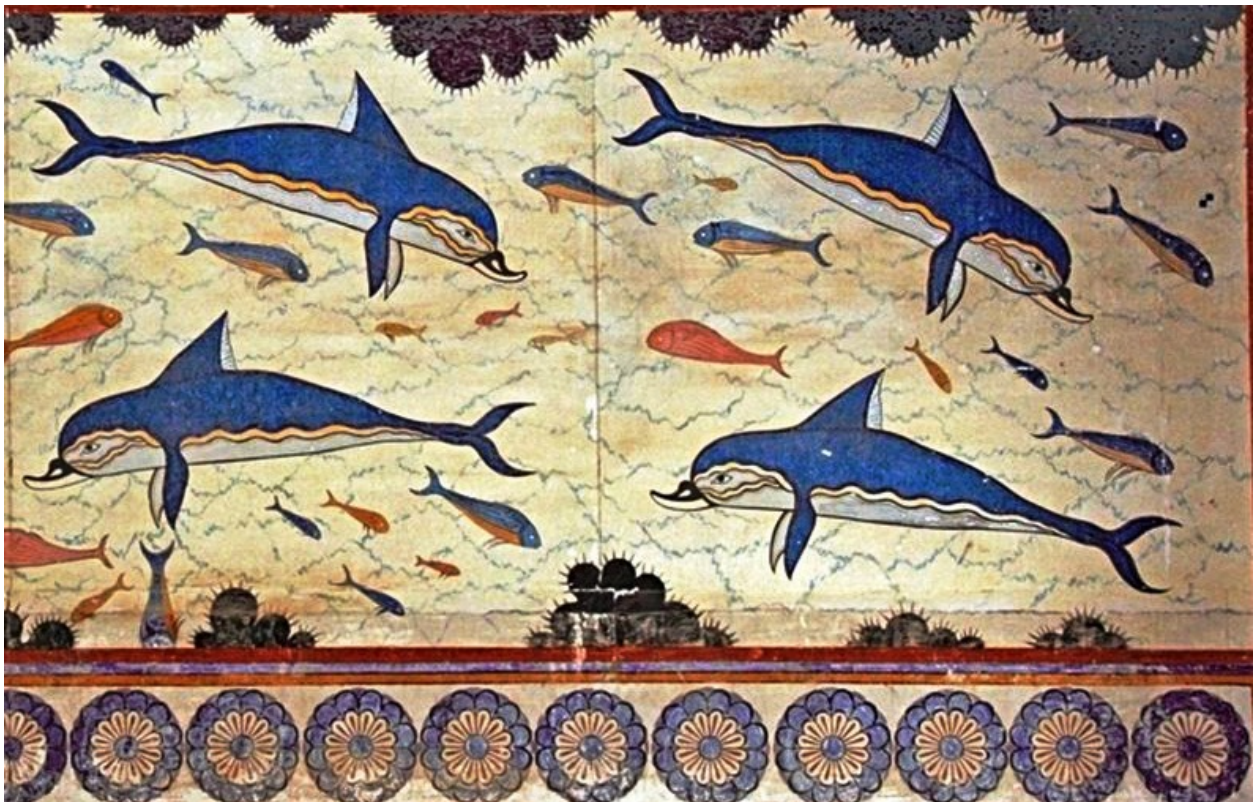
This is how I remember Carol Christ—showing us how people once lived in peace, moving with the rhythms of life. And sharing the glimmer of hope that we can move again into that kind of civilization.

She understood despair, and the tragedy of what humans do to each other. When she lived on the island of Lesbos she reached out to help the refugees who struggled in makeshift boats to reach the shore. As she washed the clothes of the little refugee children, she reflected on how far we are from the vision.

It is in our hands now, to carry on. To tell people the story of an ancient people who honored the Goddess. To keep alive the vision of peace. To live joyfully, moving with the rhythms of an ever-changing life energy.



Carole Eagleheart created a CD and songbook of music inspired by Carol Christ's Goddess Pilgrimage to Crete. They're titled *She Calls to Us: Songs to Celebrate the Goddess*. They are available through the UU Women and Religion website.





Arianna Bara Jewelry

www.ariannabara.com

arianna@ariannabara.com

Original sterling silver and gemstone jewelry featuring Australian Boulder Opal and fossils.

(919) 308-3700



Wingshuck Corn Shuck Dolls

Anne Freels

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

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

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.

dōTERRA

Nancy S Hagman M Ed, LMHC

Wellness Activist, doTERRA Essential Oils

Healing One Drop at a Time

[850-206-5638](tel:850-206-5638)



Two Witches in a Kitchen

Maggie Lovins

https://www.etsy.com/shop/TwoWitchesinaKitchen?ref=search_shop_redirect

Handmade, personalized items for you, your home & kitchen



Just Kidding Productions, LLC

Contact info:

Shauna Ireland

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).