



PAGAN Moonbeams

Vol. 4 Issue 3
January, 2011

Staff Notes

A little note to the readers' from our small staff.
Staff Members listed in chronological order.

Laura Shadley

Editor since: April 08

I love this time of the year. I love the silence. The past dies, making way for new growth.

Mandi Aumann

Writer & Admin. since: July 08

Down here in the South (US), it's the coldest it's been in a long time! I hope everyone's staying warm!

Raven

Editor since: Aug. 08

As the cold winter slowly settles here in the Northern Hemisphere, my heart is warmed by the recent re-birth of the Sun and the love and laughter shared with my close family and friends. It's a new year; take time to rejoice in that and meditate on all of the good things you'd like to see come to fruition.

Pandora

Writer & Editor since: December 08

Here in the U.S., as we really "dig" into the holiday seasons that draw us toward our family members, I'm always struck by how similar we are...even in all of our differences. I'm the youngest of four, and we've all gone different ways to get to the same destination: happiness and contentment. I wish you and all of yours the warmth and joy of celebrating each other's differences and reveling in them! Love & Light, Always.

Lionfirestone

Editor since: Sept. 08

I wish everyone a merry and magickal solstice. May the magick of winter fill your souls with warmth and good cheer. Blessings, Lionfirestone

A Few Words

With the cold weather at our feet it is a time to reflect. Be sure to include reflecting on your Pagan Path and choices you have made or will make in your life.

This issue is dedicated to aiding in your exploration of the many Pagan paths that people have chosen. Do not feel obligated to take one over the other, just become aware that there are many.

The information in this issue is simply for information purposes and it may be different in specific groups made up of the paths presented. Hopefully you will become more comfortable and knowledgeable with Paganism in a fun way!

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Issue Shorts

- Pandora's recipe box goes full-circle, offering much more than recipes for each age group.
- New resources are added:
 1. Simple shorts posted on different pages where room is available.
 2. Pagan Path Booklet made from information in past issues from the first year of publication for easy to find information with the rest of this issue.

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Wee Pagan

By: TristÅ

The Birds

"It is time to go", Said mom. "Grab your bag of goodies and let's get going."

Joyner grabbed his bag filled with small toys and headed out the door with his mother. His mother was going somewhere he couldn't go, so he was headed to her friend's house to stay, while she was gone.

After saying goodbye and settling in, Joyner was given his toys and told he could play for awhile because Darci, the lady he was sitting with, had to do her morning routine. Joyner settled in with his toys and tried not to bother Darci.

He saw her messing with her altar and it looked a lot different than the one that he had at home. She did not meditate the way his mother or father did, either. Joyner was wondering why she didn't know what she was doing.

He decided not to ask her because he would know that his mother would be upset. She always told him not to say anything to people but to ask her and she would tell him the truth. He was determined to ask his mother when she came to pick him up later.

When Darci was finished, she told him that she was going to eat some fresh vegetables. She offered to make some for him too, and he took her up on it. He loved the carrots she had; they were really fresh and the dip she used was amazing. It was so amazing he asked if she could tell his mom how to make it and she said she would. The rest of the day went well.

Joyner's mom came and got him not long after they ate vegetables, and he was full of questions.

"Mom, why did Darci have a stick in the middle of her altar?" asked Joyner first thing, "and, there was a bowl of water that she put some silver in. This is odd because it is nothing like our altar and what we do."

"Yes, dear," Mother said. "Everyone has different altars because everyone is different. People also have different paths."

They walked towards the car and continued talking. "What do you mean by 'paths', mom?"

"I mean you know how we are Wiccan?" Mother went on. "Darci is a Druid. We are both Pagans because we believe in both Gods and Goddess'. We just practice differently. Does that make it clearer, Joyner?"

"No," said Joyner quickly.

"Okay, when we get home I will explain it more clearly to you." As they got home mom pulled out her encyclopedia and found a page with a bird on it. "Come here, Joyner. Let me teach you something."

Joyner went over to his mother and looked at the book.

"Look at these birds; aren't they beautiful?" In an area in South Africa, there are famous birds that can be found everywhere. They come in different colors and sizes but are all the same bird. They are called weaver birds. These birds build large nests that have like apartments inside, for each individual bird and their babies to live. Sometimes one nest can cover an entire tree.

"The birds that live in these nests are all the same kind, however different colors and sizes. They all live together without fighting, and get along, for the most part. They work hard on keeping the nests together and fix things whenever something gets messed up.

"We are like these birds because we all look different; different hair, eyes, and height, we are all people. We all have different religions too; some believe in the God being a higher power, some with the Goddess, and some with both equally. Yes we are all Pagans; however we believe differently, and most of those beliefs have their own name: Wiccan, Druid, Austru, Witch, etc... but we all believe in a God and Goddess."

"Does this make more sense now?" asked Mom.

"Yes, it does." Replied Joyner who finally understood about Pagan paths.

Wee Pagan

By: TristÅ

Altar Memory

A great way to get introduced to the different paths within Paganism is to play a physical-type game of memory. Use a board, altar, or any other item you want to call your altar for playing purposes. Layout different kinds of items to prepare your fake 'altar' with and tell your mentor or adult what path they go with. Make your items from flashcards or draw and cut them out of cardboard. You can prepare a particular paths' altar or simply make a pretty altar using different things that are usually a part of one path to make an eclectic altar of your choice. Just get familiar with the different things that come from different paths. For certain paths that do not use altars, you can use important things specific to that path. Some ideas for you to get started are:

Branch = Druid

Wand = Wicca / Witchcraft

Eagle Feather = Native American

Small Round Mirror = Toltec

Cows Horn = Astaru

Religio Romana = Oil Lamp

Moon Shell = Stregheria

Sistrum or Rattle = Egyptian Paganism

* To move this game to advance mode make enough flashcards or cardboard cut-outs to complete different altars and flashcards with the names of the paths that are covered. Pull out or say a certain path and make a complete altar for it.

Dress-Up

There is really no age cut-off to the wonderful game of dress-up. Collect or make things from different paths, pantheon's God's & Goddess', or even time periods where different paths reigned. This is a great way to become familiar with the different paths and will also make things go more smoothly in the Pagan world as you get more and more involved.

Paper Paths

Make the old-fashioned paper dolls with the joining hands. Decorate each one in a different path's dress. Those of you who are older can write the names of different paths on each doll to hang or place near your altar. As you learn about them, color them in.

The Circle Game

Cut a circle of paper and sit around in a circle, with the paper in the middle. Follow the directions below to understand how paths work. This can be done with two or more people.

1. First state that everyone in the circle belongs to a club called the circle club. Give magick wands to each person (cut from paper or just a stick for fun) and let them know they have them because they are in the circle club. Have everyone point their wands together and say "We are members of the circle club" then pull their wands back and sit them in their laps. Say aloud "We are all members of the circle club".
2. Use your scissors and cut a piece off of the circle for each person and lay the circle back in place on the floor. Have each person tap their portion of the circle with their magick wand and give it a name of their favorite color any color, except black (I hear by announce you are now the color of "..."). Allow time for each person to color their section the color they wanted then lay it back down in a circle in front of them. Have everyone point their wands together and say "We are members of the circle club" then pull their wands back and sit them in their laps. Say aloud "We are all members of the circle club".
3. Next each player will tap their portion of the circle with their wand and name a God or Goddess that they like the most or one they have made up (I hereby announce you are now the God or Goddess named ("...")). When done, allow each player to use the black crayon and draw it on their portion of the circle as they tell about it. Next, have everyone point their wands together and say "We are members of the circle club" then pull their wands back and sit them in their laps. Say aloud "We are all members of the circle club".

This is a simple game that has a lot of potential and can be changed, as needed. The circle club can become "I am a Pagan", the color can change to path, and God or Goddess can change to pantheon. The more you play this game the more you will understand how being in different paths works within the Pagan realm.

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Beanie Tries to Grow Up To Soon

As everyone has been enjoying their Winter holidays, Bubba still had something to look forward to: the arrival of his cousin, Beanie! Even though she was already seven, Beanie was always so much fun to have around! She took time to play and hang out with her younger cousins, like Bubba, and was grown up enough to do things by herself, too!

As his cousin was set to arrive on a Friday night, Bubba knew that meant that his best friend would get to meet one of his coolest cousins. Bubba and Minnie *always* hung out together on Saturdays, if not every day! He was excited to know that this Saturday would be an extra special one.

Upon Minnie's arrival at his home, Bubba promptly grabbed her hand and started leading her past other family members and through his home. He didn't even give her a chance to take off her winter things, let alone say much more than, "Hi." Wheezing, due to their sudden sprint through the house, Minnie didn't pay much attention to their destination, once they got there. She simply gave Bubba a strange look, as she removed her hat, mittens and scarf.

"Wh- what was all *that* about???" she asked, as she began to unbutton her coat.

"I want you to meet somebody: my cousin! She's really tons of fun! Minnie, this is..." Bubba's voice trailed off; as he realized that his cousin was nowhere to be seen.

"Bubba, this is an empty room. Well, empty of living people, anyway. I'll be right back; I need to hang up my coat and other Winter things," she answered the question before he could actually ask. Friends were always so good that way.

Before she returned to the room that Bubba had ushered her to, Minnie peeked into all the right rooms to say hello to Bubba's family members. Minnie's mother had always told her to be polite, and treat her friends' families as if they were her own. Minnie was pretty sure that did *not* include fighting, though, even though she did argue with her own siblings, every now and then.

She also made sure to give a pat and an ear-scratch to their families' familiars, Osiris (the cat) and Annubis (their dog). Bubba's mother called Osirus a "Singapore". This was funny because Minnie had never heard Osirus sing, but she always heard him purr; well, she heard it right after he snuck up on you, and suddenly curled up in your lap! And Bubba's daddy—Bubba called him "Pops"—called Annubis a "Boxer", even though Minnie thought he was the sweetest dog, with big floppy ears, that she'd ever met. She'd never seen him wear big padded gloves, and she certainly never saw him hit *anybody*! He gave slobbery kisses, that was for sure, but he was never mean. Never ever! Minnie just supposed that grownups could be as imaginative as kids were supposed to be. Maybe they just didn't grow out of it, all the way....

After all of her greetings, Minnie returned to where she'd left Bubba waiting. Fortunately, a little Fairy of a girl was entertaining him, so he wasn't being impatient. The little Fairy noticed Minnie first, and stopped as if she was frozen in place. Shocked, Bubba turned around to see Minnie had returned. He introduced his cousin and his best friend to each other.

"This is your cousin?" Minnie asked, amazed.

"Yes, this is Beanie. And Beanie, this is Minnie. She's my bestest friend!"

"Bubba, you didn't tell me that you were related to Fae people!" Minnie almost squealed.

"Well, I'm Fairy-folk," Beanie began, "but my little brother is a Dragon. A water Dragon, actually. And my mom? Well, she's a Wiccan High Priestess."

"Wow! He's really a Dragon?????" Minnie was immediately drawn into Beanie's world, in her mind. "Wait. What's your mom? I don't know what that is."

Fortunately, because they were related, Bubba already knew the answer; he never tired of hearing it, though. He let his cousin explain to Minnie that Wicca was her family's religion, and that her mother was the girl leader in the group. There was also a

Pandora's Recipe Box

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Beanie Tries to Grow Up To Soon

boy leader, called a High Priest, too. They lead a group, of usually thirteen people, in rituals and such. They celebrated some glorious-sounding holidays, throughout the year, in addition to the phases of the moon, too.

Minnie already knew about the phases of the Moon (even though Mama called it Lady Luna, or "the Lady" for short), and the Sun God, as her mother had taught Minnie's whole family about Hedge Witchery. As Beanie began to explain these holidays, when Minnie questioned her, Minnie began to realize that they celebrated similar holiday, maybe even the same ones. It's just that Minnie's family used different names for some of them. Minnie thought that Bubba's family called holidays by the same names as her family, but found out that they simply knew many different names for the holidays! How wonderful to know that her family's way and this new "Wiccan" way were so very similar, even with all of their little differences!

When Minnie had peeked in to say hello to Bubba's mother, she learned that they were going to be doing crafts for their next holiday, Candlemas. She shared this information with her best friend and his cousin. Beanie told Minnie that her family called it Imbolg. Either way, it was a festival of lights and candles! The children would be making candle luminaries.

Excited, they all made their way down to the family kitchen, also known as the hearth. As the children settled into their chairs, by a table protected with newspapers, Minnie started chattering about the wonderful new religious ways she's just learned about from Beanie, whose mom was a lady leader in a coven, which meant they were a group. Bubba's mother immediately started to clarify some of the details in Minnie's story, so the younger children could understand it better. She told them that a coven is a very organized group of people, both boys and girls, who get together to celebrate rites of passage, perform pretty detailed rituals, and such. They tend to use a similar or even the same book to work from, so that everything works together, perfectly. Then, she said that not all Pagans practice the same way. Bubba's mother explained that she was a Solitary Kitchen Witch, but wouldn't explain more until later. (Minnie thought this strange, as Bubba's mother was *never* alone....) They had lanterns and luminaries to make!

There were simple paper sacks on the table. Beanie called them paper bags. *Wow, another thing that's the same, but different!* Minnie thought. The children were to decorate them, and make sure there was a very solid outline of the picture that they'd like the adult to "poke" through the paper, to let the candle-light glow through. Bubba, Minnie and Beanie got straight to work with the paint, glitter, feathers, and markers. They each made a few bags, and wanted to see what a finished one looked like. As they turned around, they saw the bag that Bubba's mother had made. There were little holes along the solid lines of her picture!

They expected to see Auntie MK, as Beanie called her, but Bubba's mother was nowhere to be seen. Realizing they needed to be patient, Minnie and Bubba went back to creating more luminaries. Beanie, it seemed, did not feel the same way. As she was older than the little kids, she felt that she could handle more responsibility. So, she began looking for something sharp enough to begin poking the holes. She found a beautifully shiny pair of scissors, in one of the drawers.

"*SCORE!*" Beanie thought, as she took the scissors back to the table to begin her grownup work.

The other two, however, did *not* think this was a good idea. They told Beanie as much, but she told them that since she was older, nearly 8, she was old enough to do the poking of the bags. And if they were that worried, she would only poke her own bags to make them into luminaries. Knowing this couldn't be good, but not knowing what to do, Minnie and Bubba worked on, in silence. They couldn't have been more right.

Auntie MK (Bubba's mother) walked into the kitchen, just as disaster struck. Beanie tried to push too hard, with the scissors that she'd opened too far. She didn't realize that grasping the inside of the scissors was dangerous, until she found out the hard way. Reacting quickly, Auntie MK grabbed a towel, before Beanie's mouth could even begin to let loose the word, "OWWWWWWWWWWW!!"

"Bubba, put those on the counter and give them a shove so nobody can reach them!" she ordered as she tended to her niece's wounds. Bubba moved quickly, knowing that his mother was often "short" when things needed being done quickly. Even though he knew his mother never actually shrank, that's what *she* called it, so he did exactly as he was told. It was never a good idea to not listen when she was being "short" with you, because that could lead to your own short stay in Time Out! Without having to be asked, he also brought his mother her KW First Aid kit that she'd made and kept close, in case any accidents happened in the kitchen. Usually, though, if somebody cut themselves in the kitchen, it was with a knife. Bubba wondered if there were any magical cures for scissor cuts.

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By: Pandora

Beanie Tries to Grow Up To Soon

As his mother calmed Beanie, and tended to her wounds, she asked what had happened, and why in the world Beanie was using those scissors. When Beanie told her she chose those scissors, only after she realized she wouldn't need to use a huge knife, Auntie MK suddenly got very serious.

“BEAN! Honey, you *know* better. Those knives are kept very sharp for cutting through food. Those scissors are, too, because they're made to cut apart your food, before it can be cooked. Kitchen shears are not for crafting, dear ones. I make all of my magick in the kitchen, so I keep all of my tools in high-working order. This kitchen is *my* altar, and I ask you to respect my altar and my tools, please.

Just like on your mom's altar. OK?”

“Yes, Ma'am” they all responded. Minnie and Bubba knew that, even though she was looking at Beanie, his mother was talking to all three of them.

“Thank you. Now, Beanie, I know you're older than many of your siblings and cousins, but you really should have waited for me, or another adult, to do the poking,” she explained.

As Beanie's aunt finished cleaning her wounds and applying the salve that she'd created in that very kitchen, Beanie's mom walked into the room. Seeing her sister, in her natural element of Kitchen Wytchery, she didn't ask why she'd heard no commotion. She simply asked what she missed.

“Beanie was bad,” Bubba answered, matter-of-factly.

“Beanie was not bad, young man. She was simply displaying how independent she can be. And that it's not *always* a good thing, too. She didn't want to wait for us to do the poking, sis,” Bubba's mother answered.

“Beanie, honey, what did you use???” her mother asked, with concern.

“Kitchen shears that I thought were scissors. I was happy I found them, so I didn't have to use a knife!” Beanie answered.

“Listen here, Bean Sprout,” her Auntie MK began. “*We* don't even use those kinds of things to make the luminaries. Honey, they're just too dangerous, as you now know, first hand. Besides, would you use your mother's athame for that? Yeah, I didn't think so. It's the same thing. You use *your* tools as you see fit, but you don't do that with someone else's, ok? Besides, even if it's not a magickal tool, you don't just pull things out of someone else's drawers. It's really, very impolite.”

Beanie's mother chimed in that she agreed. Minnie reminded herself that this woman was a Wiccan High Priestess. And promptly asked where her group was!

“Where are all of my people???” she began. Upon reading her sister's lips, the High Priestess explained that the coven members didn't spend every moment together, then promptly redirected everyone's attention to the luminaries that needed finishing. She explained that since the baby was taking a nap, they all needed to work quickly, and sent Bubba to fetch his father.

“Aunt Bridget, it's Anubis that plays fetch, not daddy!” he giggled.

“Just go get him, you,” she laughed.

When Bubba and his father entered the room, the grownups got straight to work. They used very sharp PENCILS to poke the holes in their luminaries! With three adults working on this project, they made short work of the luminaries. Next, they set the children to putting rocks or sand in the bottom of the bags, to anchor them. Then a small tea light or votive candle was put inside. The children helped place the luminaries along the walkway to the house, and an adult carefully lit each candle.

“*The bags glow so beautifully, no matter what you call your celebration,*” Minnie thought, as she thought of all of the different religions and belief systems (that's what her Mama called them) that she'd learned about: Wicca, Solitary Kitchen Witchery, Hedge Witchery (That's what Minnie's Mama practiced, even though Minnie thought she was a real Pro!). They all had their differences, but they all ended their path with the same intent. How wonderful!

Faith Focus: Asatru Kindred

In **Ancient times** the Asatru people survived as an extended family of the Ancient Norse. Like so many Pagan religions, the bond between church and state forced the religion to go into hiding, and separation occurred. Today the Asatru asserts itself and must learn from the past. To regain their freedom they are working hard to reestablish their ancestral tribes. The Kindreds is a vital part of the success and survival as an indigenous people.

Asatru Rituals

The Blot: (pronounced bloats) This is their most common religious ritual; it is a sacrifice to the Gods. In olden days, as with almost all ancient religions, an animal was consecrated to the deities and then slaughtered. This was not seen as a bribe or as a method of capturing the power of the dying animal. It is simply the way in which the ancient Norse shared their bounty with a gift to the Gods. Currently, the animal sacrifice has been replaced by the offer of beer, juice, or mead. Afterwards, those present are either sprinkled with the liquid or drink it in sequence.

The Sumbel: This is a ritual drinking celebration, in which a horn filled with a drink is passed around the group. Each person delivers a greeting; a toast to the Gods, ancient heroes, or one's ancestors; or a story, song, or poem. He or she then drinks from the horn.

Profession or Adoption: This is the making of a commitment to Asatru to the exclusion of other faiths, by solemnly giving an oath of allegiance and kinship to the Gods of Asgard, the Aesir and Vanir. It is a simple ceremony usually done in the presence of a Gothi or Gythis and the rest of the Kindred, Hearth, or Garth. It is taken on an oath ring or some other sacred object.

Origins

Humanity is literally descended from the Gods. Three brothers, Odin, Vili, and Ve created people from two trees and gave them the names Ask and Embla. One deity, Rig, visited the earth and established the social classes

The local religious communities are called Kindreds, Hearths, and Garths.

Male priest and called Gothi, priestesses are called Gythia.

Nine Noble Virtues of Asatru

Truth
Honor
Courage
Self-reliance
Discipline
Industriousness
Fidelity
Hospitality
Perseverance

The family is greatly valued and honored. They reject any form of discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, language, nationality, race, sexual orientation, or other divisive criteria.

Asatru is a polytheistic religion. There are three races of deities in the Norse pantheon. They are all regarded as living entities who are involved in human life.

Match the race with the type of deities they represent

The Aesir

These represent the fertility of the earth and forces of nature. They are associated with the clan but not part of it.

The Vanir

These are the giants who are in constant state of war with the Aesir. They represent chaos and destruction. At the battle of Ragnarok, many of the Gods will die, the world will come to an end and be reborn.

The Jotnar

These are the Gods of the tribe or clan, representing Kingship, order, craft, etc.

Faith Focus: Celtic Reconstructionist

Overview

Celtic Reconstructionists are people who want to learn from the works of the ancient Celts. Most are usually aware of the various ancient Celtic areas and the races of people but generally choose an area or group to study intensely. It is believed that a person is 'drawn to' or 'called' to the religion and they are not selective of who joins as long as they educate themselves and stay dedicated. Heredity also is not a determining factor in becoming a Celtic Reconstructionist.

There are no ranks or outlines of do's and don'ts; the belief is truly a free one for each person. Celtic Reconstructionists do not consider themselves a religion, per say, but more like a group of people with a common interest. They do show respect to God/Goddess, hold rituals, have altars and display many other pagan actions.

Celtic Reconstructionists do not re-enact anything or try to live their life as it was in the ancient times, but do use lessons from that time to intertwine with the present and make it a better place. A lot of study and dedication goes into being a Celtic Reconstructionist, which results in only the most dedicated being able to truly call themselves a

The Path's of a CR

The ancient Celts had many castes and careers within their world. Today's CR do a similar task by picking their path, some even pick more than one. They will pursue during their daily life and in their religious activities as well.

A CR warrior, for example, could practice martial arts to get more in touch with their inner-selves and to obtain better control of themselves. This same person might pursue a job such as a police officer or join the military. Basically they would be a warrior in all aspects of life from personal, spiritual, and family to professional.

Vocabulary Shorts

Draw a line from the word to its Celtic Reconstructionist meaning.

AOS SÍ (people of peace)

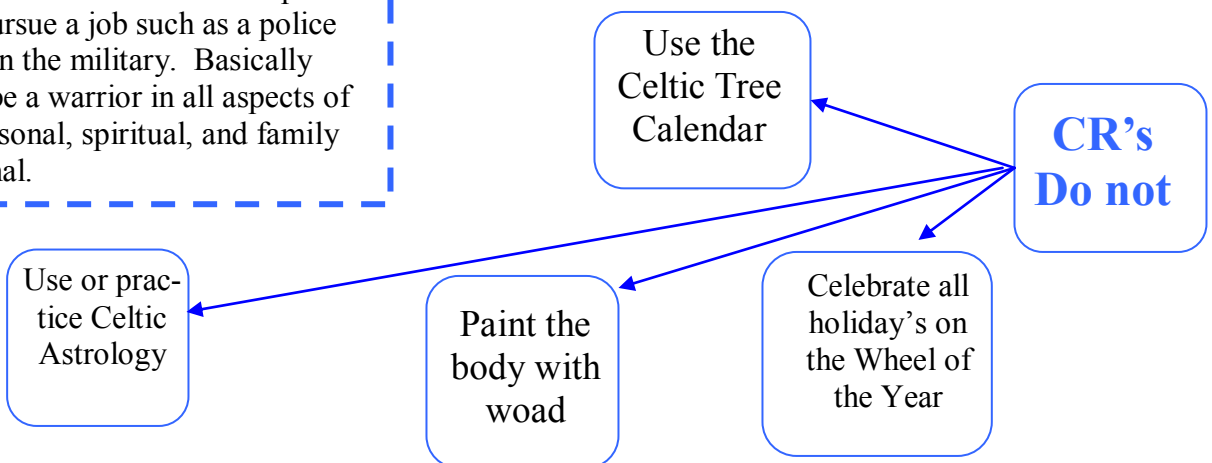
Sprites and Deities that aren't worshipped or invited to share our space

Outsiders

All beloved dead whether related or not

Ancestors

Otherworldly beings who over the years have been called Fairies



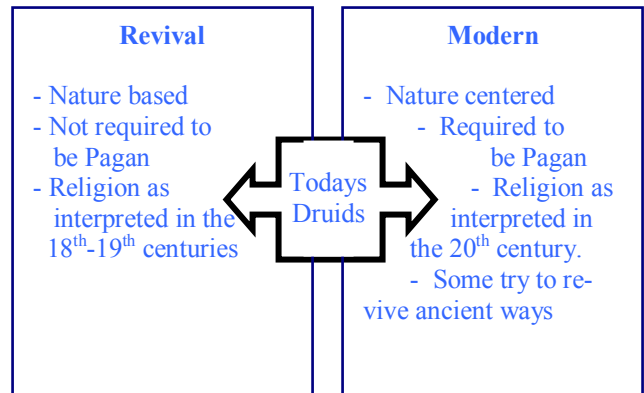
Faith Focus: **Druidism**

Overview

Originates from the ancient Celtic religion. Took on the name Druid because the druid caste had the most educated and faithful followers during that time.

Believers are very connected to nature and the local gods that belong to it. The religion itself has grown tremendously in the last 20 years. Very popular in Europe.

[Look up the word 'caste' in the dictionary!](#)



Cuchulain

[Ireland's Mightest Warrior who changed into a scary beast when he fought](#)

A great king of Ireland who reigned for 40 years, and came from the land of the giants across the sea. He was named Lug, and had a child with the wife of the king of Ulster, by way of magic. The wife and child lived with Lug for a little while, then returned to the land of Ulster. The baby boy, Setana, was raised as a child to Sualtam, the king of Ulster. Setana ran away when he was 7 to live with his uncle, King Conchobar, where he was taught by Ulster's 7 greatest warriors and poets. He learned so well, that, by the time he was 12, he was stronger than most men.

His favorite game was Hurley, and he played it often with his friends. One day, while playing, the king's men passed by on their way to a feast for the kingdom's greatest warriors at Culan's home. They invited Setana to join them and he said he would once his game was over. The king and his men went on to the feast and forgot to tell Culan that Setana would be coming. Culan let out his most ferocious dogs to protect his land during the feast. When the game of Hurley was over Setana found his way to Culan's hall and ran into some very mean dogs. Being the strong warrior that he was, Setana fought the dogs. The men of the feast rose up, at the sound of the dogs, remembering then to tell Culan how they forgot to tell him the boy was coming and that Setana must have encountered the dogs. When the men finally got to the site of the encounter, the dogs were dead. Culan was so sad that his land could not be protected that Setana offered to stay and act as his dog until puppies could be raised to take over the job. This is how Setana got the name Cuchulain (dog of Culan).

There are many other stories of Cuchulain in Celtic mythology that are often told to Druid children.

Faith Focus: Heathen

The title 'Heathen' is used for both pre Christian people of North Europe and a modern day group of religious people. The Heathens of today are a group of very serious and liberal people. Heathens do not have a rank system or large group that they must belong to, however, they do form hearths or kindreds (small groups) to socialize and celebrate with.

Heathens do not really bother with the thought of afterlife or reincarnation (feelings on these are mixed within the Heathen realm); they are more into the world of today and now. They practice self-control, and honesty, to a fault. Heathens are very careful to mean what they say and agree totally with the things that they say.

Each individual picks his or her own group of Gods, Goddesses, local and tribal Gods, and people who they have been close to that passed on in life to show honor for. These individuals, Gods and Goddess' are considered separate from the living and living world of today.

Festivals are held for important times in the year, although they don't necessarily follow the Wheel of the Year. Magic and divination (in the form of runes) are not considered a major part of the religion and not used during the Heathen festivals. The celebrations that Heathens have differ from most Pagan religious celebrations do because they do not cast a circle or call the corners.

It is a regular practice to offer food and drink, not only at a festival, but as a part of everyday life. Heathens do have a strong belief in Elves, Brownies, Dwarfs, Etins (giants), Housewits, and Landwits. Heathens make a special point of be-friending these hidden folk and the ones they live with in order to keep peace and happiness with them.

Defining Heathen Words

Draw a line matching the definition of the Heathen celebration with it's definition.

Blot	Festival named after a Goddess and celebrated In the spring.
Symbel	Festival starting on Yule And celebrated for 12 Days
Winter Nights	A rite that centers around Food and drink and Can be in or out of doors
Yule	Celebrated in October or November
Eostre Festival	Celebrated as a rite of Passage where drinking Is the main focus as a Drinking horn is passed Among everyone.

Heathen Ethics

- Wyrd connects everything in the universe as a web so things you do today will totally effect what happens in the future, in some form or fashion
- Frith makes the bond between family and friends tight. It is important that all stays that way and is sometimes done with gifts or hospitality.
- Your word does make you, so it is important to always honor it. It is equally important that you only say what you can honor.



Days of the Week

Most of the week were named after the God/Goddesses that heathen's worship:

Tuesday after Tiw (Tyr)
Wednesday after Woden (Odin)
Thursday after Thunor (Thor)
Friday after Frige (Frigg)

Faith Focus: Hinduism

Hinduism is a religion that has been around since 4000 BCE and the third largest religion of today. It is one of the few religions where there is no founder or teacher, but, instead, a collaboration of many different people and contributions. The actual name 'Hinduism' is used for this religion by people in North America. Other names that are used for this religion is Sanatana Dharma and Vaidika Dharma. The religion, itself is also a very controversial religion to this day. The religion itself could, if you dig deep enough, be classified as a Pagan and a monotheistic religion, however, the general populous consider it to be Pagan. The Hindu religion has a strong belief in reincarnation until one reaches enlightenment. To reach enlightenment you have to pass Samsara, by earning higher level rebirths through positive karma.

The people following Hinduism are very peaceful, serious people. Hindus are not necessarily passive people; they do believe in self defense as well as organized fighting (military) however, with both, there are a set of rules they must follow which make sure they do things fairly and with only skill. They live by guidelines and are careful not to cross them. Meditation and/or Yoga is heavily practiced. There are many different kinds of religious activities used by Hindus: daily devotions, public rituals, and puju (a ceremonial dinner for a diety).

Main Worship Branches of Hinduism

Vaishnavaism—The view that Vishnu is the main diety.

Shivaism—The view that Shiva is the main diety.

Rural Hinduism—The view that local village or nature diety is the main one.

Hindu Moral Code

Hindu moral codes are a written collection of books called DHARMA SUTRAS.

Hindu moral codes are the integral part of Hinduism and they come under the big umbrella called DHARMA. It is difficult to translate the word DHARMA.

Some of the codes are:

AHIMSA (NON-KILLING)
SATHYA (TRUTH)
DHARMA (DUTY)
KARUNA (COMPASSION)
VIRYA (FORTITUDE)
DAMA (SELF-RESTRAINT)
SAUCHA (PURITY)

The sacred texts of the Hinduism religion could very well be the oldest written religious text ever found. Take a look at the many texts this religion has honored for many decades:

- Veda's (Rig Vega, Sama Vega, Yajur Vega, Atharva Vega)
- Ramayana
- Mahabharata
- Brahmanas
- Sutrus
- Puranas
- Aranyakas

Check into these readings on your own. Pick a page and read half of it. When done write what you learned from them.

The Hindus organize their lives and certain activities around **The Four Folds of Hinduism**

Goals of pravritti / those of the world are:

1. Dharma (righteousness in their religious life)
2. Artha (prosper materialisticly)
3. Kama (gratification of the senses)

Goal of Nivritti / those who renounce the world:

1. Moksa (Liberation from Samsara)

There is a saying within the religion that promotes religious tolerance:
Ekam sataha vipraha bahudha vadanti
Translated: The truth is one, but different Sages call it by different names

Faith Focus: Romuva

Romuva is one of the oldest Pagan religions and has no roots or connection with any other Pagan religion. There is no person accredited to starting Romuva, which has its roots and is still alive today in Lithuania. Romuva is grounded in traditional Lithuanian culture and myths which are passed down verbally; there is no written scripture for members to follow. Romuvas can be found in many places in the world today; most attend a summer camp which is held each year where traditional Lithuanian culture is shown and taught.

The Fire Ritual

The fire ritual is the largest and most important celebration in the Romuva religion. Fire rituals are held during special ceremonies and celebrations, other than scheduled holidays. Follow along how the fire ritual is done below.

1. The altar (aukuras) is set up in the middle of a sacred place, usually outdoors, sometimes in a temple
2. As everyone gathers for the event, they wash their hands and feet.
3. A group of people sing Daina's (traditional spiritual hymns), while the fire is lit and the ritual progresses.
4. Leaders make offerings of food, drink, and flowers to the fire and dainas are sung.

Starting at age 7, all Romuva followers must pray 5 times each day, and must wash afterwards.

It is very important to always be clean!

Romuva Basics

- Today's religion is a name for the basic daily life of those of the past
- The religion is seen and passed through use of song, dance, plays, and other creative expressions
- Seek out Spiritual Awakenings; remember these are spiritual experiences that are different for each person
- Seek inner peace for yourself, your family, and those around you using the methods found within the religion
- Everything is sacred; life (all nature) and deities, and can be found everywhere around us
- Tolerate all religions around you and do not treat those who follow them differently.

Romuva Religion Symbol

Draw a line from the box to the part of the symbol it talks about.

Reads
ROMVUE
Which
means
sanctuary



Represent the ritual offering fire

Represent the 3 tiers

- The Living / Present
- The Dead / Past
- The Coming World / Future

Romuva Holidays & Celebrations

- New life by baby naming ceremony
- 3-day wedding festival
- Funeral Celebrations
- Winter Solstice/New Years (Dec 25)
- Midwinter (end Jan)
- Winter Leaving (Mar 1)
- Spring Solstice
- First Fruits Sow
- First Grain Sow
- Summer Solstice
- Rye Harvest Concludes (late Summer)
- Winter Rye Planting Concludes
- The Dead (month of Oct)
- Winter Solstice Eve

Faith Focus: Wicca/Witchcraft

Overview:

Witchcraft dates as far back as the Paleolithic times, and surfaces in multiple Pagan religions. The timeline it follows is long and brutal, and has come great distances over the last few hundred years. The historic witch played many roles throughout history such as an advisor, a healer, and astrologer, a midwife, and a caregiver to all living things. Though the Wiccan religion did not find its proper title and place until the 1900's, its roots run deep.

Important Wicca/Witchcraft History Happenings:

Pope Gregory I was a major force in Christianizing Europe	ACLU has come to the legal aid of Wicth-Wiccan students should be allowed to wear pentacle to school	King James I Witchcraft Act	Wicca was reaffirmed as a religion deserving First Amendment protection	English Parliament repealed its surviving laws against Witchcraft
Poland last execution for Witchcraft	Raymond Buckland brought Wicca to the USA	Pope Innocent VIII wrote a PaPal Bull about Witches	The first Goddess Statues were found	Salem, Massachusettes burning time

**** Make a timeline showing the correct order of these events on your own paper.**

Charge of the Goddess

by DragonFire

Once a month, when the moon is full, you and your family should gather together if you are in need of something. You can dance, sing, eat and laugh. I am the happiness you feel and I am happy seeing you, and those you love, happy.

Everything you do, do it out of love. Do not do anything to hurt another person.

Keep learning new things all your life. Believe in your dreams. Don't let anyone tell you that what you think or dream is wrong.

I am the spirit inside you. Your spirit will live forever. When you die, I will bring you together with your loved ones that have joined me. I will always love you and give you what you need in your life. You do not need to give me back anything. Take what you need from me. You can always see me in the beauty of the earth. I am in the air, water and land.

When you need strength call upon me. I am within you.

I was with you at the beginning of your life and I'll be there at the end.

So speaks the Goddess.

Spelling / Vocabulary Box

Akashic records
altar
amulet
waning
athame

bane
Balefire
Book of Shadows
bolline
waxing

charms
coven
deosil
elements
familiar

magick
magic circle
pentacle
talisman
widdershins

Young Pagans

By: Mandi Aumann

The Roads We Travel

When I was a kid, we went on this awesome road trip. We drove all over the Eastern states – from Illinois, through Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, into Canada (to see Niagara Falls), down to New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, then back to Illinois. We did it all in 10 days!

We couldn't have done it if it wasn't for the busy highways that connect all the major cities in our country. Everyone takes the highways. But there are a lot of other roads that connect cities and smaller towns, too.

One of the things I love about being a Pagan is that sometimes we can take the highways. We can celebrate our holidays the same way as others and with others. But we can take the slower roads, too. Sometimes we can even build our own roads. We can make up our own celebrations for certain holidays, or we can make up our own rituals for magick.

We all travel down roads in our lives. Sometimes they're fast and easy – like the highways. Sometimes they're slower and little bumpy – like the other roads. The important thing is that we get where we want to go in the end.

Plotting Your Course



See if your parents have a road atlas – if not, see if you can find one at the library. Look at the state you live in and trace the highways with your finger. Now, find a smaller road – it's usually a red or black line. Trace that for awhile and see where it takes you.

Your family may be getting ready to celebrate a moon phase, soon. See what you can do to make this celebration extra special. What does the moon time mean to you? What do you usually do to celebrate? What can you do to change things, a little?

Write your ideas down and bring them to your parents. Ask them if you can include them in your celebration. If you don't celebrate as a family, ask your parents if you can do this for your own celebration. The most important thing is to have fun!

Pandora's Recipe Box

By: Pandora

Something new inside Pandora's box...

Alas, I have no recipes, this month, to go with stories. Too much going on in my head, and around me to be able to concentrate much. All I knew for sure is that I wanted to write about CUPPYCAKES!

That word just kept resounding in my head, and I knew I wanted to use a good friend's recipe for Black Forest Cuppycakes; I even got her happy permission to do it! Then the Muses left me in search of someone who needed more help, I suppose.

So, I was lost for a story about cuppycakes, or cupcakes to those people who call themselves grownups. I prefer to have the occasional moment to remember there is still a child in each of us! Calling them Cuppycakes is one of those ways. I just keep in mind how calling them cuppycakes, let alone *eating them*, brings a moment of light and lightheartedness.

I hope you enjoy Polly's Cuppycakes. Below, you will find her exact directions, as emailed to me!

Black Forest Cuppycakes

Chocolate fudge cake mix, prepare as directed. Once cool, use syringe to inject cherry jello (made using "speed set" method) into cake (cup cakes, cake, however you choose to mold it). Let set for couple hours (preferably overnight).

8 oz .tub of Cool Whip (during season: French Vanilla) blended into well mixed cup of sour cream and cup of powdered sugar (if not using French Vanilla Cool Whip, add vanilla to taste). Be sure to only blend in the Cool Whip, play with it to much and it goes runny. LOL!!!!

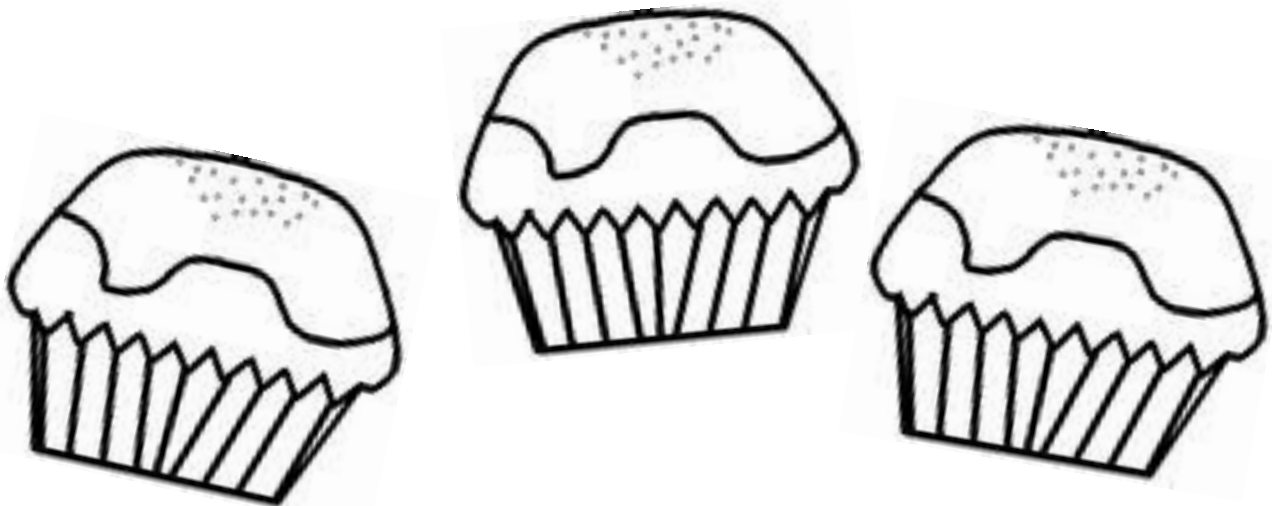
(She's not kidding, here, folks. I found out the hard way! It was like water.)

Frost cake (note, frosting is white....cake is brown and cherry red :)) or use piping bag and tip to frost cuppycakes. Drizzle with melted dark chocolate.

Garnish (cake) with well dried cherries.

If done as a cake, smoothly frosted, chocolate drizzled and cherry garnished, has high end deli appearance and OMG taste :)

Cuppycakes are a hit too, WAY less "diva" about them but I was told once "These are sin wrapped in paper"



Herbal Focus

By: Lionfirestone

- Licorice is a botanical, a shrub native to southern Europe and Asia, the roots of which have two primary desirable qualities: first, some varieties of licorice root are fifty times sweeter than sugar and may be chewed or eaten as a sweet and making it a useful component of candies and flavorings; second, licorice has been for thousands of years sought after for its reputed medicinal qualities. Licorice grows wild in southern central Europe and Asia. It is used for its roots and its rhizomes (underground stems). Glycyrrhizic acid is extracted from the root and used as a flavoring in food, tobacco, alcohol, and cosmetics.

- Licorice Root has been used as a laxative; to adjust blood sugar, reduce pain from ulcer and arthritis. Do not use if you have hypertension, hypokalemia edema, cirrhosis of the liver, cholestatic liver disorder, and diabetes. We did get a message that chewing liquorice root has been most helpful in giving up smoking as it gives the hands something to do and has the shape/texture of a cigarette. Also it tastes like tobacco (because cigarettes are flavored with licorice).

- Used for generations in China, ancient Greece and the Britis Isles, Licorice is cultivated around the world. The sweet taste of its yellow root prompted its use in the manufacture of candies. It contains vitamin E, B-complex, biotin, niacin, pantothenic acid, lecithin, manganese and other trace elements. Although Licorice has been used as a flavoring for hundreds of years, many people don't know that it also has very beneficial medicinal qualities. Licorice root has gained a reputation for strengthening the body during times of stress. Since the 14th century, Licorice has been used to soothe coughs, colds and bronchitis. It can be made into a licorice extract, concentrate or infusion, It is still used for these reasons today and it is one of the ingredients found in many European cough preparations. Research has shown that Licorice helps treat and relieve the pains that accompany certain types of ulcers. Although common practice in Europe, its use in treating ulcers is not as prevalent in North America. However, with more and more researchers gaining positive results with its use as an ulcer treatment, Licorice may soon become more popular in North America. Finally, Licorice also has anti-inflammatory properties and may therefore help relieve the discomforts that accompany arthritic conditions.

Enjoy the bookmark below.

Herb Focus: Licorice



Parts Used: The root from 3-4 year old plant.

Location: Native of South-east Europe and South-west Asia, as far as Persia

Healing Properties: Licorice is commonly used as a sweetening/flavoring agent to counteract the unpleasant taste of many drugs or added as filler in capsules. In the United Kingdom licorice (syn. licorice) is used as an emulsifier to create foam in drinks and alcoholic beverages. Licorice root can be chewed or made into tea. It is frequently found in cough preparations and candies, often combined with anise seed. Consumption of licorice is believed to aid in healing stomach ulcers. Tea made from licorice and other anti-spasmodic herbs is often taken for menstrual cramps

Magickal Attributes: Protection, ruled by the planet Mercury. Licorice is one of the few herbs with little lore available, yet it has a history of use that dates back to the third century BCE.

Latin Name: Glycyrrhiza glabra

- Used as a demulcent and emollient, as well as a laxative.

- Licorice may reduce immune hyper-activation caused by the shock to the nervous system during kundalini awakening.

Studies have found licorice has remarkable rejuvenating effects on the cells of the digestive system, liver and to treat the gastrointestinal and urinary tracts with its soothing and coating action. Licorice root is anticancer, antiarthritic, antitoxic, anti-inflammatory, antibiotic, and of coarse antioxidant.

Mineral Focus

By: Lionfirestone

- The brassy-yellow metallic colour of Pyrite has in many cases lead to people mistaking it for Gold, hence the common nickname 'Fool's Gold'. Pyrite is quite easy to distinguish from Gold; it is much lighter, but harder and cannot be scratched with a fingernail or pocket knife.
 - Pyrite was very often used for scrying. The Mayans, Aztecs and Incas, at one time, all were known to polish large slabs of Pyrite to a mirror-like finish which they used for this very purpose. Native Americans believed they could look into one's very soul when peering into a polished piece of Pyrite. Their shamans used it as "a stone of power," and their medicine men used it in certain healing rituals. Pyrite has also been labeled the "Healer's Stone".
 - These metallic crystals are often used to attract money and good fortune. It is also widely used to protect against infections and viral attacks, and to help one attain a more ideal state of health.
 - Edgar Cayce recommended that "to carry a piece of Carbon Steel in one's pocket (preferably a groin pocket) would inhibit one from catching a cold or infection". Carbon Steel is a mixture of Iron and Carbon, to which Pyrite is similar and claims the same health benefit.
 - The ancient Greeks used polished Pyrite in various types of jewelry and amulets. During the Victorian Age in England, jewelry made with Pyrite was extremely popular.
 - Cleanse and recharge Pyrite under the rays of the Sun.
 - The uses of pyrite are declining. The main uses today are the production of sulfur dioxide for the paper industry and sulfuric acid for the chemical industry. Other sources of these substances are replacing what was once produced from pyrite. It is rarely mined for its iron content because the associated sulfur contaminates the iron to render it brittle and useless for most applications.
 - Pyrite was mined for its sulfur content during World War II
- Pyrite brings the energy of the Sun into the physical. It increases physical stamina, stimulates the intellect and helps to transform thought into intelligent action. It is a wonderful stone for use in wealth magick or in trying to manifest needed energies. An excellent shield-stone, pyrite removes negativity from the aura.

Enjoy the bookmark below.

Mineral Focus: Pyrite



Color: Yellowish –brown to pale brass yellow. Crystals are opaque.

Chakra: Solar Plexus and Third Eye

Healing Properties: Wearing pyrite or keeping it on your person will help prevent colds and infections.

Magickal Properties: Pyrite is used for defense and protection, physic development, increases physical stamina. Shields against others' negativity. Sparks creative thinking.

Tenacity: Brittle

Lustre: Metallic

- It is so common in the earth's crust that it is found in almost every possible environment; hence it has a vast number of forms and varieties.
- The name Pyrite comes from the Greek word "pyr" meaning "fire," and was named such because it was found that sparks would fly from it if struck against another mineral (best if Iron or Steel).
- Nodules of Pyrite have been found in prehistoric burial mounds

Middle Magick

By: Pandora

Divination: Many Pathways to an Answer

While some of you may be deeply familiar with methods of divination, others may only have a cursory knowledge of the subject, and still others may simply be left wondering. While I can't, and *won't*, teach you everything there is to know about any and all of these methods, I do plan on helping you to gain the insight into many of them. It is completely impossible to list all of the many varied pathways of divination, as some remain secret and sacrosanct, and still others I have yet to research!

You know me....*always* looking things up! My favorite way to research is always in books and tomes, whether in my personal library or the occasion that presents itself to me that allows me the good fortune of a friend, and usually a witch, that is willing to let me peruse his or her library. Better yet, are the occasions that present me with that friend who trusts me enough to peruse a Book of Shadows or Grimoire? But, we will discuss our Books on another day. That, I do promise!

Today is a day to look into tomorrow. Interestingly enough, divination occasionally tries to guide us to the answer we are seeking by having us look upon the past. It depends on your skill, the level of that skill, and your knowledge. But, as with anything truly magickal or non-magickal attribute in our lives, not everything works for everyone. That, as much as any other reason you might find, is why there are so many methods to choose from! I do not pretend to know everything about each of the methods I will list, nor do I fool myself into believing that I know all of the methods.

Just like you, my dear friend, I am still learning and evolving. I will list the methods, below, as well as some information about each one. If there are further questions in your mind, about any particular method, please feel free to email me at Pagan Moonbeams; also remember, that the information that you research on your own, as well as the knowledge you glean from your sources will also take you far. With magick, it is best to use your own work, whenever possible.

The first method that comes to mind is **Tarot**. Tarot is based off of what was originally a French card game. There are many different decks to choose from, all containing the Major and Minor Arcanas. Which deck you choose is entirely up to you, and completely personal. Many people choose to have more than one deck; different decks for different occasions. Think of the minor Arcanas as similar to the suits in a deck of regular playing cards, if you will. With Tarot cards, the person receiving the reading (occasionally, it is the same person *doing* the reading) has a question or requests guidance in a particular area of his or her life (the reader does not always know the question, beforehand); sometimes, though, this is not the case and the reader gives a broader outline—and sometimes a less 'fluffy' answer than the reader would typically desire—that is usually not aimed at any particular area of the subject's life. It is simply the reading that the Fates, in my opinion, have decided needs to be presented.

There are many different spreads that can be used: the differing ways to lay out your cards to read. They vary from a single card, to using nearly the whole deck. Sometimes the *reading* will tell you when you've pulled enough cards; you may have started out with a plan to only pull a set number of cards, but the answer still seems unclear. That is when you continue. Many decks offer the option of coming with a book, to help you familiarize yourself with that deck as well as the art of Tarot. I highly suggest it. They also give example of layouts that you can use, as well as some of the instances that you might use them.

The next method I will mention is the **Pendulum**. Often, it is a gemstone of one sort or another, suspended on the end of a chain. I have seen them made of wood and metal, as well; I've even seen multiple stones used and twine used to suspend them. As with choices in Tarot decks, the choices in types and styles of Pendulums are almost endless. Some people will choose to use a Pendulum with a divining sheet or cloth, with pre-determined answers: yes, no, maybe, etc. Others, myself being one of them, simply ask the crystal yes/no questions. Regardless of which of those two methods you choose, it is always a good idea to ask the spirits if they are willing to help you. If you see a response—*without moving your own hand*—then you have gotten a response. The next thing to ask the crystal or other type of pendulum is to have it show you a “no” answer. Thank it, once it has. If it is unclear, tell it so. Once you have received your response, ask it to show you a “yes” answer. Again, thank it/the spirits. Proceed with your questions, noting each answer you receive. When you are finished, thank the crystal, and bid it a good day or good night.

Middle Magick

By: Pandora

Divination: Many Pathways to an Answer (continued)

Next, we have **Scrying**. There are a few different types, most notably water and flame. Do not forget Crystal Scrying: gazing into a crystal ball! It *is* a form of divination. There are also Scrying Mirrors. While the type of scrying varies amongst more than the forms I have mentioned here, the concept remains. As I, myself, am still learning to harness these techniques, I can only give you a cursory outline.

You gaze *through* the surface of your divination tool, as though your eyes are out of focus. In truth, they are, as you are not focusing on the here-and-now. You may feel or see nothing, the first few times, or even only on occasion. Any images you see should be noted, without looking away, if possible. You may get a feeling or perhaps even hear something while looking “beyond”.

You may have heard of **I Ching coins**. They are a method of using specific coins, with variations of lines and dashes, to divine an answer. Other than luck in carrying one or two on your person, I'm afraid that I know next to nothing about this form. However, I would be remiss if I didn't at least mention it. It is similar to Runes, which I will discuss next, in that you hold a question in your mind, and focus on it as you draw out a specific number of coins from a pouch. The order in which you draw them may, or may not, matter; it depends on the situation.

Runes are Nordic in nature, if you use the most common kind. There are other variations, but the Futhork is the most common. It is believed that Runes were a magick only known to women. But, the God Odin proved his worth in attaining the knowledge by hanging upside down from the Nordic Tree of Life, Yggdrasil, for many days and nights. Upon the completion of that task, he was rewarded with the knowledge of the Runes, and this is how humans came to have the knowledge. There are 26 Runes in a set, each one representing a letter or sound (“Ch” or “th”) as well as a tree. As Mother Nature—as well as your own mother, I am sure—has her own way of answering things, the answers you get from the Runes are not as distinct as you might find with Tarot, for instance. That is not to say that it is inferior, just that it is definitely the answer of a Mother who wants you to do some further research on your own!

Tasseography or **Tasseomancy**, put simply, is reading tea leaves. Not so simply is that it involves drinking loose tea, instead of tea bags. Fortunately, drinking loose tea is becoming more common amongst “average” people, thus making it easier to manage. The main difference is that when reading tea leaves, you don't really strain the loose tea, but simply let it settle into the bottom of your cup. It won't hurt you to drink a few of those tea leaves, but try not to drink *too* many, or you won't have as clear a picture. After your last gulp of tea, look into the bottom of your cup. Note any images you see. Think about what that image means to you, as well as any information it may portend.

Well, gang, I fear I've barely even scratched the surface when it comes to types of divination, let alone how to do them. Everyone's experience is unique, just as you and your magick are. You may hear the voices of your guides, as you “look” for the answer in cards, coins, flame, etc. If you write while you work, which *I do highly suggest*, you may find that the handwriting is not your own. Or, you may see nothing different in it. Either way, keep a separate journal for your divinations. You may find a set of hand-made runes work better than pre-fabricated runes on tumbled stones. You may discover that a regular set of playing cards works better for you than a deck of Tarot cards, as it does for a good friend of mine! The signs are all around us; it's simply a matter of finding the right tools to be our Magical Glasses, if you will.

Until next time, Love & Light to you all, my dears!

Great Backyard Bird Count

It is almost time for the Great Backyard Bird Count 2011. Sign up and get familiar with the birds in your area at the main website: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

Pagan Teen

By: TristÅ

Branches

It is one thing to know that there are many walks of the Pagan which consists of different paths. It takes more knowledge to understand the branches within the individual paths. As you grow within Paganism, these will become more evident; however, you will probably never know all there is to know in this area. Many great educators and highly educated people are, themselves, still learning.

It becomes complicated understanding, for instance, that the information you know on herbs could be rooted back to the Green Witch. The celebrating of God-months can be found deep into the belief of the Italian witch. You may have thought these were just Witchcraft practices, which they are from that path, but simply different branches of it.

As you learn to develop your Pagan roots, you will understand the different paths because they are much more 'in stone' so to speak. Once you choose your path, only then should you worry with the branches within it. Do not feel that you need to know them to be wise or tailored within the path you choose; there are those who have walked for years and still aren't.

The main point is to be aware that they are there and not limit yourself to only one way of understanding. The colors of a Pagan path and branches are more than imagined; thus the base of a religion.

Finding a Path

Although it may seem important, at first, finding your own path is not that important. What is important is that you understand the basics of Paganism. No matter what path you pick, you will need to learn these things within; knowing them first will get you ahead of your own path, anyway.

There are many people that never choose a path or teeter between two or three actual paths. Many adults that have been Pagans for a long time have even changed between a few paths as they walk their personal journey. There are also many that consider themselves to be eclectic because they choose a few things from different paths that fit their own beliefs.

To find your own identity, be sure to stay true to what you believe. Never find yourself struggling to believe something that doesn't fit well with you; it should all flow together easily. Once you find something that fits you, stay with it as long as you feel it; if you begin to feel differently, search again for what fits. You may end up not fitting anywhere, fitting within two or more different things, or fitting within just the basic Paganism. It is just important that you are true to yourself and what you believe.



Cult Problems

Unfortunately there are cults out there waiting for people and they sometimes target teens. These can be in any faith so don't feel that they are Pagan exclusive. Education of the religion or path will be your best way to notice these, however there are a few things put together by Isaac Bonewits to help notice when you are faced with them.

A survey: <http://www.neopagan.net/ABCDEF.html>

You may want to print it just in case for some reason in the future it disappears. I have one in the back of my correspondence journal so I always have it for reference.

Pagan Teen

By: Raven

EVERYONE HAS A PATH: A LESSON IN UNDERSTANDING

-an excerpt from Growing up a Witch

“Hey, Mom! How come some people wear beanie caps?” asked Leah, upon walking through the door from school.

“Beanie caps? What do you mean, Leah?” Her mom came around the corner followed by Leah’s older sister, Sierra, looking quizzically at her little sister.

“Beanie cap, Leah?” Sierra began, raising her left eyebrow higher than the right. “You mean like a skull cap?”

Leah paused briefly. “Yeah, I guess so. Yeah sure.”

“Leah, honey, WHO did you see wearing this ‘beanie cap’ and where?”

“There’s a boy at school, Ben. His dad wears one. Oh, and his grandpa. Him too,” said Leah.

“Yarmulke.” That was Sierra’s one word answer to her sister.

“Yama – wha?” asked Leah.

“Yarmulke, dear. It’s what the ‘beanie cap’ you saw your school mate’s father and grandfather wearing. It’s a traditional cap worn by Jewish men.”

Sierra could tell by the quizzical look on her little sister’s face that this was going to take awhile.

“Mom, at some point, when you’re done with Leah, maybe later tonight, can we talk ‘witchy stuff’ please?” Sierra asked her mother in an upbeat tone as she could. Her mother nodded as she put her arm around Leah’s shoulders walking her down the hall to the bookshelves in their mother’s office. Sierra knew that Leah was going to continue with the 20 questions as religions outside of their family’s practice were a mystery. Sierra remembered all of the questions she had at that same age, so while exasperated at the non-stop nature of her sister, she knew there was no one better (at least in her opinion) than mom to give the answers.

One of the things that Sierra cherished about her mother, apart from her mom just being her mom and not afraid to be that way, was that she was able to be very open, honest and accepting of another person’s faith. What was it mom said? It doesn’t matter WHAT you believe, but just THAT you believe. Yeah, that was it. Sierra smiled to herself, happy that she was able to remember that phrase.

Later that evening, sometime after dinner, the family was gathered around watching one of their mother’s favorite movies from her childhood, *The Sound of Music*. Seeing the nuns, the questions started to bubble in Leah’s mind. Who were they and WHAT were those weird things on her head. She didn’t even need to speak a word; her face said it all.

“Habit.” That was the only word that came out of their mom’s mouth. Mom always seemed to know what was going to come out of someone’s mouth before it was asked and could answer accordingly. Yet for some reason, it still surprised Sierra and she had been witnessing that for 14 years.

“A habit?” Leah responded slowly. “Wait, mom, is that like when you say to me ‘Leah, stop chewing your nails. It’s a bad habit.’ Like that?”

Sierra laughed so hard she snorted the soda she had been drinking back up through her nose. She had never heard anything quite like that before. Their mother and father laughed a bit as well. Leah, being a typical seven year-old, didn’t see what was so funny about her question. She glared at her older sister who was still laughing even through the string of “OWs” that kept coming out of Sierra’s mouth.

“Sis,” Sierra was going to attempt to explain. “We’re not laughing AT you. It’s just I’ve never heard it asked like that before and it just struck me as funny. The word ‘HABIT’ has two different meanings. The first is like always

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*-an excerpt from Growing up a Witch
(continued)*

biting your nails; you do it over and over again, that's a habit. The other habit that Mom means is something that someone working in a religious order wears. It's spelled the same, just doesn't mean the same."

Leah nodded in total understanding, smiled and went back to watching the movie. She couldn't believe Sierra actually knew something. Maybe there was more to being a teenager than just being insolent.

"Very good, Sierra. I guess my answering all those questions for you years ago really paid off. You really did listen to me." The girls' mom was quite impressed at her eldest child. It made her proud to know that she could impart her knowledge on the children so they could be more understanding of another person's religious beliefs.

With the movie having ended, mom and dad put the little ones to bed. Sierra assisted as she knew this would free up mom faster. She loved talking with her mom as she always gave sound advice, and she really needed it this time. Her mom, having not forgotten Sierra's request to talk wrapped her daughter in a big squeeze hug and whisked her away to the "witch room." Her mom began by opening her "magick box" and taking out the incense, her favorite runes, the cloth she always used when she did her readings and a book (Sierra could only assume it was the one her mother wrote all of her readings, when she did them for herself or the kids).

"Mom, it's not THAT type of 'witchy thing' I need to talk to you about. I don't need a reading. It's about school. You see, there is this girl who I've become friends with..."

Her mother listened intently to her as Sierra went on to explain that this girl that she'd befriended confided in her that she, too, was a witch and was having some difficulty with a spell. Sierra wanted to help her friend, but her friend specifically stated she was trying to hex someone. Regardless of this girl's reason, which Sierra didn't want to discuss anyhow, Sierra felt uncomfortable with being asked that.

"... And then she asked me, 'What kind of a witch ARE you? You won't hex another person?' Mom, I don't get it. She didn't get the Rule of Three, or Karma, or ANYTHING when I tried to explain it. Am I nuts or is this girl 'off, a bit? Witches don't do that, right?" Sierra looked at her mom hoping, above all hope, that she was right.

"It's not that simple, and not everything is black or white," her mother began. Sierra's mom then went on to explain that while it was almost a safe bet to say that all Wiccans are Witches, it can not be said that all Witches are Wiccan. Hmm. That was not the answer that Sierra was expecting. Her mother went on to explain about Paganism being like Christianity; it was the point at the top of an umbrella and all of the many points around the bottom of the umbrella part were different Pagan paths. Her mom even drew an umbrella and wrote the word Pagan at the top and then wrote different paths where the bottom points would be so Sierra would have a really good visual. Druid, Asatru, Wicca, Witch were just a few that her mother had on there. After taking time to absorb it, it started to click in Sierra's brain and made sense.

"Remember, my sister and I are both witches, Sierra, but only I use the term Wiccan. Your aunt says Pagan. Our paths vary to a degree, but we share the same holidays, customs and celebrations. We have worked magick together, and it has been some very potent stuff. Your aunt will also not hesitate to hex someone or something, either. She'll tell you about it, too! Actually, I think it would do you good to let her teach you some things. Life and magick are full of opportunities to learn from your peers, your elders and many resources. Never think there comes a point where you just stop learning. You should always try to learn more."

Sierra's mom just dropped what seemed like the mother load of information right in Sierra's lap. Whoa. She had totally forgotten all about her Aunt Pandora, that for some reason, never seemed to understand that Sierra's mom's name was not Sally. I mean, this was her sister. How could she not know her own sister's name? Then again, oddly enough, her mom always called Sierra's aunt Jillybean whenever they got together. Maybe they were codenames, but for what? Whatever it was, Sierra shook the thought from her mind and got back to the topic.

"So, Auntie Pandora hexes people and you don't because you are a Witch who happens to also be Wiccan and she's a plain old Witch?"

Pagan Teen

By: Raven

EVERYONE HAS A PATH: A LESSON IN UNDERSTANDING

*-an excerpt from Growing up a Witch
(continued)*

"There is nothing plain OR old about my sister, Sierra." Her mother then winked at her. "Though it seems you have that correct. There's more to it, but that's good for now," her mom replied.

"But YOU don't hex people. Why, oh why, do you want me to go to my aunt's to learn how to hex?" Sierra was perplexed and felt the inner struggle and teen angst beginning to set in.

Her mother just smiled and explained that there was more to it than that. She, then, opened the book she had taken from her box and Sierra realized she was looking at her mother's mirror book. This was basically her mother's magick diary and her mom was sharing it with her. Oh, praise the Goddess! Sierra felt greatly honored because she knew this was her mother's private journal and decided to tuck away the exasperated teenager that was trying to burst through and she would just be Sierra, teen daughter to an awesome witchy mom. LOL! Her mom opened to a particular section and asked Sierra to read it to herself. Theban Script; the Witch's Alphabet. Ugh. Why did her mom always write in Theban script? Wait. She had little brothers and sisters with prying eyes. Never mind. Sierra took a deep breath and began, slowly (really slowly), reading. She realized that what she was reading was the workings from a hex or a curse. She wasn't sure which, but knew it was not the standard working of her mother.

Did her mom really do that? Well, it wouldn't be in the book if she hadn't, was Sierra's best guess. This brought up another question to her mind, but she would save that for a different time. She felt better though, knowing she didn't need to stop being friends with this girl at her school.

"So what's a Druid and do they really wear those long brown cloaks where you can't see their faces and all you hear is chanting? What about Asatru? And what's a Reclaiming Witch, by the way?" Sierra suddenly exploded with so many questions. She was even beginning to feel dizzy, from all of the asking.

"Come with me." That was all her mom said before taking her off to the office that Leah had just been in earlier. Her mother pointed at the bookshelves and told her that the answers were there, in those books. GAH! How was she ever going to research everything she wanted to know about the different kinds of Pagans that were out there, by herself? Sierra was about to let out a guttural scream and she even had her hands poised above her head to help emphasize the scream that had not yet been released from her mouth. Just then, her mom put a small pamphlet in her hand.

"Start here. This is a pamphlet outlining basics of some of the various paths in Paganism. The magazine that I write for published this, years ago. I found it helpful and saved it for you kids. This should clear up some of your questions. No doubt there will be more, but I want you to have a starting point." Once again, Sierra thought she had the coolest mom ever.

"Thanks, mom! This is awesome," Sierra quipped. Just before she darted out of the office to go sit in her favorite reading chair, Sierra hugged her mom.

"Sierra, just remember, while I will guide you the best that I can, it's your choice. Your faith is your choice. You could wake up tomorrow and tell me you want to be a Roman Catholic, a Druid, or any other religion and I would be okay with that. I want you to be comfortable with your faith."

"Thanks, but I think I'll just stay Sierra."

Her mother smiled at her. Her daughter was so much the same free-spirit that she was and loved to see that shine through.

"And Sierra, no reading tonight. You have school in the morning." Her mother used her gently, but firm, voice. As much as she wanted to say 'Okay' and really go read under the small reading light attached to her bed, she knew mom had had a long enough day with the barrage of faith based questions from her and Leah, so she was going to bed.

Off she went, pamphlet in hand, knowing that while she and her friend might have different ritual customs and the like, she was happy that they both shared a faith.

Pagan Resources

There are many Pagan resources for kids, however, they seem to be hard to find. Below is a small list of the ones we found for you to check out. If you know of others or want your own listed here feel free to email us!

PaganMoonbeams@yahoo.com



Grey School
of
Wizardry



Meagan Stories



ANCIENT LIGHT
Challenge for the mind, fun for the hands, joy for the soul

Mystical Evening

By: TristÅ

Take the time, each month, to have a mystical evening with your family, focusing on our monthly theme. Make this the time that Paganism and modern day meet within your own realm. Involve all members of the family, allowing them to help and gain knowledge, both, with this one day. To get you started on ideas, take a look at some listed below.

Preparing Your Cupcakes

You can prepare the cupcakes, or the last part of them, for this month during the dinner itself. As you are doing the different stages, be sure to include the different age groups and give some lessons with them as well. Some ideas are:

- direction of stirring (mentioned in past issue)
- Drizzling could discuss differences in how each one looks even though they are the same and compare it to the Pagan paths
- Cherries could explain that it is the heart or soul that adds greatness to each individual.

You can use your own ideas and lessons, anything will help them remember as they are doing it and repeating with each cupcake they work with.

Teen Divination

In this issue we discussed some of the types of divination, so elaborate on this with your teen. Pull your teen to the side and work on divination with them. Talk about what it is and how it works. Ask them if they have any questions about it. Do a small reading for them so they can get an idea of how it works if you do divination. If they are working on it allow them to do a reading on you. Ask them questions as to how they are doing things or why they do it that way. Be sure not to correct them too much, allow them room to be themselves and do it their way as long as they have the main concept right. Remember there is not one way to do things, everything is versatile.



Menu

Make this a mis-matched meal that contains different kinds of cuisine. You could use it for a base to help with the different paths lesson. This could be great discussion during and after the meal. Be sure to tell them that usually there aren't this many different cuisines on one pallet, just like there aren't many get-to-gethers where there are many different paths unless they are Pagan ones.

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Teen Walk

Take the time to take a small walk with your teen during the evening, even if it is around the house. Ask them if they have thought of their own path and talk a little about your's, and if you have friends let them know what path they follow. This will give them an idea of what paths there are and who to seek if interested in them.

Get familiar with the tools of the trade and ask them which tools call to them. As they name them, let them know the path that uses that particular tool. If you have any of them on-hand, allow them to hold your's, and talk about how and what it is used for. If you don't, then make plans to go to a new age store to look at the different tools available and allow them to browse and ask you and the store keep questions about them.

Most importantly, make sure they are comfortable talking to you about the different paths. If they are thinking about not going in your, direction be strong and easy going; no need to start off on the wrong foot. Let them know that you will support them no matter which direction they choose to go, now and in the future.

The most important part of this walk should be the closeness that the two of you share. The purpose is to leave that door open for them to come to you, at any time. Make it clear that they are not expected to make a decision on any time limit, to just go with what feels good and right to them. Enjoy this advanced talk with your teen and I hope it opens up plans for more in the future.

Path Rituals

Take the time to introduce your children to the concept of different paths during the dinner. Do a simple opening and closing to your dinner in the form of rituals. Make each ritual from a different path. Make the ritual go slow and explain each step of it in an age appropriate level so they truly understand the concept. Let your children know which path you are using and that it is a typical one. If doing a path that you follow, let them know that it is your's. Make sure they understand that there are many paths within the Pagan realm and these are only a few of them.



To The Parent

By: TristÅ

Teaching Different Paths

Many people are in hopes that their children, or the ones they are mentoring, will follow the path of the teacher. This is true in most instances, but not all. With this line of thinking you would only need to teach what you know well to the children. This idea could be no further than America is from China.

Too many people, especially adults, only learn about one path; the one that they have chosen to follow. It is very important that we are familiar with at least three to five different paths within the Pagan realm and even a few that don't fall in it. This will make us stronger in our path and more prepared for raising our children.

As kids grow they will have questions about the world around them and if we, as parents, aren't prepared to answer them, they will seek other avenues to get their questions answered. This could lead to false information, losing the child to a religion that doesn't suit them, and many other bad situations. Please remember that cults tend to look for kids that feel they are 'out of place' in religion and life.

This is not to say that they are to learn every little bit that there is to know about the other religion, just the basics. Becoming familiar with the major overall belief, pantheon, a few tools, and some basic information would suffice.

If you aren't familiar with other paths then now is the time; remember it is never too late for learning. Be sure to use reliable sources and talk to those in that path and ask specific questions. I am sure they will be more than happy to share their world with you. If using literature be sure to lean towards prominent authors for that path. You can read reviews and/or talk to someone that you feel properly follows it.

The bottom line is to educate yourself and educate your children. This will make you more respected from the child's point of view as well as at peace with yourself. Remember only having love and knowledge for your own path will inevitably stir up discrimination.



To The Parent

By: Raven

Know Your Path and the World's Religions

Parents, the Pagan path is varied everywhere, and whether your child walks the same path as you, or chooses differently, their faith choice should be supported and respected by you. Also, if you don't know about another path, research it. Be knowledgeable in a few different paths and religions so that you may speak freely to your child. Don't restrict that to just knowledge of Pagan religions, Christian religions, etc. Expand your horizons, so that you may help expand your child's as well.

Before gaining knowledge of other religions, however, make sure you know your own. Being uneducated in your own faith will serve no good purpose to you or anyone around you. When your child comes to you to ask, "Why do we do this?" or "Why do we say that?" you should have an answer beyond "Because that's how it's done." Growing up Roman Catholic, my mother sent me to my religious education classes, but I could never wrap my arms around the whole of the religion. I would ask my mother questions about our faith and why we practiced a certain way, did certain things, said things a particular way and the response was always the same, "Because this is how we do it. This is how I always did it." No, that is not what turned me off to that particular religion, but it wasn't a comfortable feeling not knowing the "whys" behind my mom's faith.

My father didn't force a particular religion upon us. As my parents divorced when I was very young, I would find myself at his home every other weekend with my brothers and sister. He didn't always take us to Catholic mass, as my mother would have wished. We went to whatever church covered under the large umbrella called Christianity. There was always a distinct difference between all of them; however, I also found how very similar they all are to each other as well. As a child, that was amazing because many of the people claiming a particular type of religion under Christianity would claim that their religion was better than another Christian faith, but could never back up with why.

The term Pagan is like this. Ten people in a room could call themselves Pagan, but not all ten of them would practice the same. There would be major similarities in the way they hold ritual, the holidays that are celebrated, and even some of their values, but in the end, they are all different. Even ten witches in the same room aren't guaranteed to practice the same way unless part of the same group or coven. You will, in my opinion, find more Pagans to be tolerant of other religions and with more of an open mind. That is just from experience.

Back to the subject at hand. Children should be taught of other religions. In schools and daycares holidays like Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa are taught with the basis for each, but you won't find the Winter Solstice mentioned; not unless you, as the parent of a Pagan child, contact the teacher and offer to come in and explain it or send your child in with a book or activities and such. So, as due diligence to your child, make sure you can educate yourself and him or her about the different world religions. To do so teaches respect, tolerance and acceptance. It will also lessen the fear that can lie in what is unknown or strange. Children are naturally full of curiosity as it is, so helping quench that by giving them as much information as you are comfortable with them knowing will be better both for you and your children.

In no way am I trying to tell you that you and your child should know everything about all religions, but to start out with a few and see where that takes you. One of the easiest ways to do that is as the holiday celebrations pass. You may find that in the first year you teach nothing but Pagan celebrations and the way they are venerated by different groups. That may spark some great conversation as well. The next year you may look at the celebrations of the Jewish, Christian, or Muslim. Another way to do things is just on a month-to-month basis. For example, in December Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, the Winter Solstice/Yule and Christmas are all celebrated. One major similarity is they are all celebrations of light. You can then break each one down.

I'm sure by now you get my point. Don't feel you need to be an expert either. It's okay to learn as you are helping your child learn. The important thing is that you learn it, understand it, so then you can speak about it without giving your child an answer that would completely leave them feeling as if the conversation could go no further. It's fine to not know the answer but decide to look it up together. Whatever path you and your child may walk, is up to your own personal beliefs. Being knowledgeable about what's out there will only help you all on your faith journey.