

Celebrating the Circle

Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
<http://www.celebratethecircle.org>

Mabon/Samhain 2004

Volume 13, Issue 3

Inside...

Taking Stock

Eliza Osenbaugh-Stewart

Perhaps it was fate that I should join CTC when I did. This Mabon represented my eighth Sabbat, and first full turn of the wheel, as a member of this special group. Fitting then, that I should lead the ritual. Fitting too, that I found myself tending towards eastern traditions that I studied in my youth. Life really does come full circle.

I find myself now taking stock. Digesting what I have learned and clearing a path for new development. Many things seem clearer to me now in the twilight of the solar year. Suddenly I know exactly why I felt I was spinning my wheels in some places, and opening new doors in others. It is time for me to let go of what I no longer need, to "shave off" the unwanted. We all know that too much sun can blind you. But this rule doesn't only apply to the sun. Many things can blind you to your true path.

Hindus have a word for this, Maya. Maya is the illusion that is existence. It can take thousands or even millions of lifetimes to penetrate the veil that is Maya. Personally, I am happy just to see it thinning a little bit. It will continue to thin until Samhain, making this the perfect time to work with the veil. And that is where the Yantras come in. Each of you has in their possession a Yantra, either the Shiva Yantra, known as the Maya - Destroyer, or the Chamunda Yantra, known as Maya-Slayer.

Yantras are versatile tools, and books have been written on how to best use them. I describe here the two methods that I have tried.

Tratak

- Tratak will bring on a meditative state and is a great warm-up before a deep meditation or when you wish to calm yourself but don't want to do a whole meditation.
- Begin by gazing at the yantra. Try to take the whole image in at once. Then look at the detail. Even as you look carefully at each part your gaze should be fairly passive.
- When you feel your mind beginning to wander, close your eyes and visualize the yantra as best you can.
- After about a minute reopen your eyes and gaze at the yantra. Repeat as many times as you like.

Resonance Meditation

- Here the goal is become one with the deity or energy-form described by the yantra. In essence, to vibrate with it.

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CTC Schedule of Learning Circles and Rituals

November 6 - Pagan Picnic

Join CTC for a Pagan Picnic at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Hillsborough. The picnic will be from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. UUCH has a playground for children outside and a nursery inside. UUCH is located at 1710 Old NC 10 in Hillsborough.

November 7 - Aromatherapy & Herbalism in Healing Rituals

The medicinal practices of Aromatherapy and Herbalism are used by many pagan practitioners in their everyday lives for healing and health maintenance. This learning circle fo-

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Celebrate the Circle

CTC is an on-going interest group of the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. CTC holds regular learning circles on Sundays, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Room 7 of the Care Building. Rituals are held for the eight sabbats, gather at 5 p.m., ritual at 5:30 p.m. For more information on events, visit the website at www.celebratethecircle.org

CTC is a chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS). For more information on CUUPS, visit the website at www.cuups.org.

Celebrating the Circle is a quarterly publication of the CTC interest group. While it provides information on the activities of CTC, it also serves as a forum for members to express their views. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the CTC, its Steering Committee, CUUPS, or ERUUF and its administration.

Forward your articles, letters, rants, dates, poetry, artwork and responses to the editor, Amy Brann, at info@celebratethecircle.org. **Deadline for the Yule/Imbolc issue is Monday, January 10, 2005.**

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focus on incorporating these healing modalities into Healing Rituals. Come prepared for some hands-on healing magick. Facilitated by Tamia.

November 14 - A Universal Pantheon: The Destroyer

This series is an exploration of universal archetypes expressed as deity. Everything that begins must someday end. This series began with a creation myth, and it is only fitting that it end with destruction. A look at the darker side of deity. Facilitated by Eliza.

November 21 - Constructing a Book of Shadows I

Bring your own spiral bound or loose-leaf notebook to cover with decorative paper or fabric to create your own one-of-kind Book of Shadows, journal, or scrapbook. We will also make our own goose quill pens and practice our calligraphy. Facilitated by Rachel.

November 28 - Constructing a Book of Shadows II

We will discuss purposes of a Book of Shadows and what you might want to include in it. Participants will make up an outline or table of contents for their BOS as a starting point for making collection of useful information. Facilitated by Dick.



December 5 - Creating Personal Sabbat Altars: Yule & Imbolc

Decorating for the holidays is second nature in most households and many office buildings. Altars are natural extensions of that practice in our pagan tradition. Altars that change with the wheel of the year can be quietly incorporated into mundane settings - or celebrated flamboyantly in our private spaces. Bring your own ideas and altar objects with you to this circle for discussion and sharing of ideas for Yule and Imbolc altars. Facilitated by Tamia.

December 12 - Tarot Explorations: Minor Suites V

We continue our studies with the Six through Ten of Cups. Cups represent our heart and souls, our emotions. We will discuss the attributes of the Six through Ten and share our stories of the Tarot. Please bring your Tarot decks and stories to share! Facilitated by Lance.

December 19 - Yule

Facilitated by Lance and Dick.

December 26 - Consumption of Holiday Beverages

How do you spell PARTY? Bring goodies to consume and share as we continue celebrating the season of the solstice and the return of the sun. Facilitated by Dick.

January 2 - Administrivia

Let your voice be heard! What subjects would you like CTC to delve into? What do you desire to teach? The place to share what you want to see taught, what you want to teach, and how the circle is celebrated.

January 9 - Meeting the Goddess: Ereshkigal

Facilitated by Cynthia.

January 16 - Paganism in Flicks

There have been witches and wizards in movies long before Harry Potter. During this learning circle we will discuss Hollywood's treatment of paganism. Facilitated by Dick.

January 23 - Tarot Explorations: Minor Suites VI

We continue our studies with the Ace through Five of Wands. Wands represents enterprise, growth and development. We will discuss the attributes of the Ace through Five and share our stories of the Tarot. Please bring your Tarot decks and stories to share! Facilitated by Lance.

January 30 - NO LEARNING CIRCLE

We invite everyone to attend Winter Quest 05. Please visit www.carolinaspiritquest.org for more information.

February 6 - Imbolc

Facilitated by Lance.

February 13 - Creating Personal Sabbat Altars: Ostara & Beltane

Facilitated by Tamia.

February 20 - Tarot Explorations: Minor Suites VII

We continue our studies with the Six through Ten of Wands. Wands represents enterprise, growth and development. We will discuss the attributes of the Six through Ten and share our stories of the Tarot. Please bring your Tarot decks and stories to share! Facilitated by Lance.

February 27 - Chants

Facilitated by Cynthia.

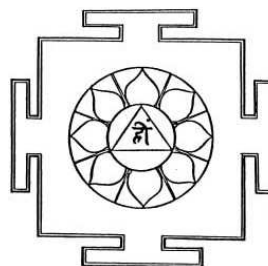
Learning Circle schedule is subject to change. For an up-to-date schedule, please visit www.celebratethecircle.org for the most accurate Learning Circle calendar.

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- Begin by focusing on the bindu, the invisible dot in the center. Stare at the bindu without straining or blinking much. I find it helps to feel as if you are looking at a magic eye picture.
- Hold this image until the edges of your vision begin to cloud. Ideally, the pattern should begin to pulsate, but this last step is difficult and I often lose concentration if I don't go ahead soon enough.
- Shift your focus to include the first layer outside of the bindu, but continue to keep your eyes trained on the bindu. As before, maintain this image until clouding or pulsation occurs.
- Continue on until the entire Yantra is within your range of vision.

Some Hindu Symbology

- Shatkona, a ring of six triangles, represents creation
- Upward triangle, fire, linga/phallus
- Downward triangle, water, yoni/vulva
- Circle, air
- Square, Earth
- Lotus Petal, supreme self, individuality



Happy Gazing!

Closing Ritual 2004 Central North Carolina Pagan Pride Day

Dick Merritt

For the fourth year, Celebrate the Circle was honored to present the Closing Ritual at the Central North Carolina Pagan Pride Day. This year, even with a very rainy morning, there were more 287 attendees at this Raleigh event.

This year is important politically. The planning group recognized that, along with our obligation to remain non-partisan. The following direction calls were used.

Let us honor the directions

- **North – Freedom of Assembly**
In the North, we call out our right to Freedom of Assembly. With this right we have the power to gather together in our chosen groups – as a community and as individuals. We honor this right by gathering today! Blessed Be!

- **East – Freedom of Speech**
In the East, we call out our right to Freedom of Speech. With this right we have the power to speak our opinions and advocate for our causes and beliefs. We honor this right by making our voices heard today! Blessed Be!

- **South – Freedom of Religion**
In the South, we call out our right to Freedom of Religion. With this right we have the

power to choose the deities, paths and circles we worship in. We honor this right by holding this ritual today! Blessed Be!

- **West – Freedom and Duty to Vote.**
In the West, we call out our right and duty to Vote our consciences. With this right we have the power to influence government and to preserve our freedoms. We will honor this right by going to the polls on November 2nd! Blessed Be!

In a meditation/homily, Lance Brown pointed out that “without our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms, we could not be here today.” And that “Our individual voices may be small, but as a community our combined voice is strong and resounding.”

Dick Merritt lead a spiral dance to “strengthen our community fighting for our rights and to support those individuals who are struggling to be public in their faith without fear of discrimination.” He asked the participants to “use the energy raised to strengthen our religious community and to send some energy to those who are afraid to be public in their faith.”

The planning group consisted of Lance, Tamia, Cynthia, Dick, Becky, and Amy.

Celebrating the Circle

Eno River
Unitarian
Universalist
Fellowship

Mabon/Samhain
2004

Volume 13
Issue 3

Celebrate the Circle
Eno River UU Fellowship
4907 Garrett Road
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The
Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

Samhain

Sunday, October 31, 2004, at 5 PM
Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

*Daylight flees,
Darkness comes.
A chill wind blows,
Parting the Veils,
Whispering the names
of our Beloved Dead,
And sharing a glimpse,
of the coming year.*

Join us Sunday, October 31st at 5:00 p.m.
in rooms 4 & 5 of the CARE building at
the Eno River UU Fellowship in Durham,
to celebrate Samhain.

We will honor our Beloved Dead and ex-
plore the portents of the coming year in
oracles and divination.

Please bring a dish to share for the post-
ritual feasting and an item to place on the
community altar (to be returned at end of
ritual).



Song of the Autumn Fairy

We hail the merry autumn days,
When leaves are turning red;
Because they're far more beautiful,
Than anyone had said.

We hail the merry harvest time,
The gayest of the year;
The time of rich, and bounteous crops,
Rejoicing of good cheer.

- C. Dickens