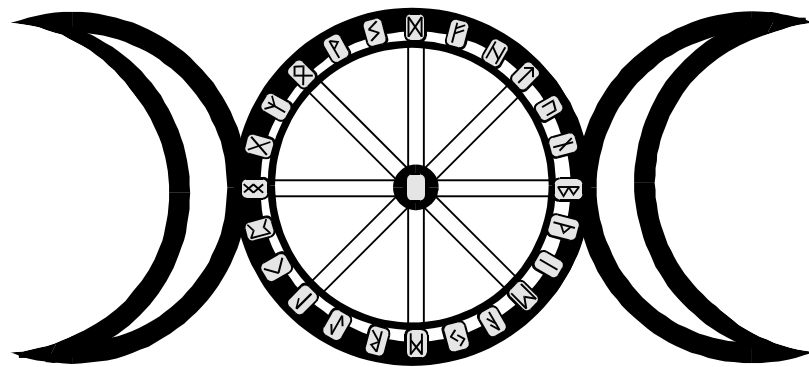


SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY  
AND PRACTICE  
OF  
WICCA IN THE U.S. MILITARY



*David L. Oringderff, Ph.D.*  
*Ronald W. Schaefer, Lt Col USAF*

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# Table of Contents

<b>TITLE PAGE, First Edition, Oct 2001</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>PART I:</b>	
<b>SPRITUAL PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS AND PRACTICES COMMON TO MOST WICCAN GROUPS AND TRADITIONS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>WHAT IS WICCA?</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>NEO-PAGANISM AND WICCA</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN WICCA</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>MODERN MAN AND THE “OLDE RELIGION”</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>WICCA OR WITCHCRAFT?</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>THE MAJOR TRADITIONS OF WICCA</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>WHAT IS MAGIC?</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>ELEMENTS COMMON TO TRADITIONAL CRAFT WICCA (TCW) AND OTHER WICCAN TRADITIONS</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>TRADITIONAL WICCAN HOLIDAYS</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>rites of passage</b> .....	<b>16</b>
HANDFASTING .....	17
HANDPARTING .....	17
WICCANING .....	17
WELCOMING .....	18
INITIATORY RITES .....	18
CROSSING—REQUIEM .....	18
<b>MOON RITES (ESBATS)</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS OF WICCA</b> .....	<b>19</b>
THE CHARGE OF THE GODDESS .....	21
THE WICCAN REDE—THE CENTRAL LAW OF WICCA .....	22
THE LAW OF THREES (LAW OF RETURNS) .....	23
MODERN CRAFT LAWS .....	24
<b>PRACTICES COMMON TO MOST WICCAN GROUPS AND TRADITIONS</b> .....	<b>25</b>
SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES .....	25
SPIRITUAL VALUES .....	26
CONCEPTUALIZING THE DIVINE .....	26
NATURE .....	26
THE CIRCLE .....	26
FIVE ELEMENTS OF NATURE .....	26
CEREMONIAL TOOLS IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE .....	29
TYPES OF CEREMONIAL TOOLS .....	30
<b>SABBATS AND THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR: SACRED CYCLE OF SUN AND SEASONS</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>PART II:</b>	
<b>THE US MILITARY AND ALTERNATIVE RELIGIONS</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>THE LAW OF THE LAND AND WICCA</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>THE MILITARY CULTURE AND RELIGIONS</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTING POLICY</b> .....	<b>42</b>
TITLE: DODD 1300.17, ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES WITHIN THE MILITARY SERVICES, FEBRUARY 3, 1988, ASD(FM&P), THRU CH 1, OCTOBER 17, 1988 .....	42
<b>ACCOMODATING DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUPS</b> .....	<b>46</b>
SPECIFIC REGULATIONS: .....	47
<b>ESTABLISHING A DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUP</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>BECOMING A DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUP LEADER</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR DFGLs</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DFGL CANDIDATES</b> .....	<b>50</b>

STRUCTURING YOUR GROUP .....	51
WHEN WILL THE GROUP MEET? .....	51
WHERE WILL THE GROUP MEET? .....	51
HOW WILL THE GROUP BE FINANCED? .....	52
WHAT IS THE GROUP FOCUS? .....	53
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MILITARY GROUPS .....	53
<b>DFGL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>	<b>55</b>
EMISSARY OF THE SPONSORING CHURCH TO SPONSORING CHAPLIANS .....	55
RESPONSIBILITY TO THE GROUP .....	55
ETHICAL STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOR .....	56
KEEPING TRACK .....	56
Continuity Folders .....	56
Supplies, Consumables, and Government Supplied Equipment .....	58
Schedules of Events .....	59
Figure 1--Chapel Facilities Request .....	60
Figure 2--Chapel Appropriated Fund Request .....	61
Figure 3--Chapel Publicity Request .....	62
Figure 4--Sample Event Schedule .....	63
<b>APPENDIX I: EXCERPTS FROM US ARMY CHAPLAINS HANDBOOK .....</b>	<b>64</b>
GARDNERIAN WICCA .....	67
WICCA .....	70
<b>APPENDIX II: DOCUMENTS APPLICABLE TO MILITARY MINISTRIES .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>MANIFESTO OF THE WICCA: THE NINE PRINCIPLES .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>82</b>
PRINCIPLES OF WICCA .....	82
PHOENIX FROM THE FLAME .....	83
SPIRAL DANCE: A REBIRTH OF THE ANCIENT RELIGION OF THE GREAT GODDESS .....	84
CIRCLES, GROVES, AND SANCTUARIES: SACRED SPACES OF TODAY'S PAGANS .....	85
ANCIENT WAYS: RECLAIMING PAGAN TRADITIONS .....	86
DRAWING DOWN THE MOON: WITCHES, DRUIDS, GODDESS-WORSHIPPERS, AND OTHER	
PAGANS IN AMERICA TODAY. ....	86
LIVING WICCA: A FURTHER GUIDE FOR THE SOLITARY PRACTITIONER .....	87
BUCKLAND'S COMPLETE BOOK OF WITCHCRAFT .....	88
BOOK OF SHADOWS .....	89
WICCA: THE OLD RELIGION FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM .....	90
<b>SUGGESTED READING LIST .....</b>	<b>92</b>
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED: .....	92
RECOMMENDED: .....	92
NOT RECOMMENDED LIST: .....	93
<b>ORGANIZATIONS: .....</b>	<b>94</b>
WEB SITES OF INTEREST: .....	94
NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS AND PERIODICALS: .....	94
<b>ABOUT THE AUTHORS .....</b>	<b>95</b>

# Spiritual Philosophy and Practice of Wicca in the U.S. Military

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## INTRODUCTION

***This is an unofficial publication.***

This pamphlet was prepared as an introduction to the Wiccan religion for those service members who are exploring Wicca as a spiritual path. It may also serve as a source of information about Wicca for commanders, supervisors, and chaplains who may have questions and concerns about specific aspects of the religion. It is hoped that this information may help facilitate the efforts of military chaplains to accommodate the spiritual needs of Wiccans in military service. The material presented here reflects the perspectives of the authors and their Tradition. It does not necessarily reflect the views of all Wiccans or all Wiccan Traditions. No single person, group, or organization can claim to be the final authority or spokesperson for the Wiccan community. This material does not claim to be the official view or carry the official endorsement of any US Government agency, the Department of Defense or any military service. This pamphlet is presented as an overview and a point of departure for further study and exploration. To enhance utility this document is written in two parts. Part one covers the spiritual philosophy, ethics and common traditional beliefs and practices of the Wiccan faith. Part two covers the military philosophy concerning support of Distinctive Faith Groups in general and Wiccan groups in particular. There is a review and summary of regulations as well as procedures for Distinctive Faith Group Leaders (DFGLs) to be recognized and how they interact with service Chaplains. Part two also contains tips for DFGLs in the conduct of their ministries to their Wiccan congregations. Questions concerning Theology and practice and/or military support of Wiccan DFGLs may be directed to either author.

# PART I

## SPRITUAL PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS AND PRACTICES COMMON TO MOST WICCAN GROUPS AND TRADITIONS

## WHAT IS WICCA?

Wicca is a Neo-Pagan, earth based, mystery **religion**. There is special meaning in each and every one of these words. The Latin roots of the word “Wicca” mean “wise ones”, or wisdom. The Germanic and Saxon roots mean to bend, change or alter. The infinitive verb form of the root means “to wicker.” So the name of the religion implies creating change in our lives, and in the universe by wise people.

Neo-Pagan means a new form of an ancient religion. Wicca is (often) an eclectic religion based on Celtic Shamanism and borrowing occasionally from many pagan faiths. Unlike other pagan religions of the world (Hindu, Buddhism, Native American Shamanism, Taoism, Shinto etc.) who can trace their lineage and practices back thousands of years, what we practice in Wicca today is a reconstruction of tradition. It is based on historical documents, word of mouth and the somewhat intact practices of “heritage” Witches such as the Strega of Tuscany, and a few European Covens who claim to be heritage Witches. The history of Celtic Shamanism dates back in central Europe and the British Isles more than 35,000 years. The religion saw its popular revival in the early to mid part of this century in Europe by Gerald Gardner, allegedly initiated into a surviving “Heritage Coven” in southern England. He borrowed heavily from other traditions, including the Golden Dawn and the Masonic Lodge, and enlisted the help of Aleister Crowley and Doreen Valiente to help write ritual and mythos. Gardner’s protégé, Raymond Buckland brought the practice to the United States in 1961. He taught and practiced the “Gardnerian” tradition of his mentor until founding his own tradition Seax-Wicca (Saxon Witchcraft) in the late sixties. Today there are many traditions borrowing from Native American shamanism, Hindu, (and others) with many incorporating Qabbalistic practices, Chakras etc., into their belief systems. The common defining theme is the Earth based mystery aspect. Wiccans see the Divine Reality as at once a unity of masculine and feminine entities that define a transcendental Divinity and also as polar masculine and feminine aspects that define all things and all phenomena and can be experienced immanently. In other words the God/Goddess is both outside us and within us, and is an energy force that connects all things. We see ourselves as a necessary part of the God/Goddess...and so we see ourselves, in part, as Gods and Goddesses. The practice of seeing the Earth as the Goddess manifest and all its creatures as part of the God/Goddess is the theme that drives the term “Earth based.” We call it a mystery religion because we have learned to see our Gods in the Lunar Cycles and in the Wheel of Life that are the natural cycles of the year. To better understand difficult concepts, and to fix them in our minds and hearts, and for the phenomena to have personal meaning, we have developed the many myths and legends that we tell defining the behavior of our God/Goddess in prose and poetry. Wiccans believe in reincarnation and see death as a necessary transformation for the spirit to be renewed and resurrected into a new life where the spirit continues to develop and learn. Many believe the spirit learns more with each incarnation until earth reincarnations are no longer required, and the spirit then resides in a higher level of existence. Wiccans practice witchcraft (magic) as a form of focused prayer. Since all things are connected we believe we can channel energy and thought patterns to effect change in the material world to get things we need in our secular lives, to improve the state of the universe and to experience the Divine Reality. We do this by altering our state of consciousness so our Higher Self, which operates at the Cosmic level can manipulate thought into the material change we consciously seek. The key to learning witchcraft is to learn to communicate (via

various techniques) with the Higher Self (also referred to as Cosmic Consciousness or Spiritual Consciousness).

## NEO-PAGANISM AND WICCA

Neo-pagan religions are modern reconstructions of what their adherents believe to be the ancient, pre-Christian Neolithic religions practiced in Classical and tribal Europe, and the Near and Middle East. However, Neo-pagan religions are distinct from religions such as Lukumi, Santeria, Native American and African tribal religions in that Neo-pagan religions have no clear lines of demarcation back to their original sources. It should be noted that some groups or individuals reject the term "Neo-pagan" and refer to themselves simply as "Pagans." This is largely a matter of semantics. Most Neo-pagan religions have far less in the way of definitive texts and archaeological evidence on which to base their religious practice than do some of the more contemporary, organized world religions. In this context, "contemporary" refers to those religious movements that have evolved and gained prominence in the last four thousand years. As those religions have grown, they have inevitably gone through many permutations over time, at least with regard to their more public and exoteric aspects. For instance, it is readily apparent that Judaism as practiced today is different from what Moses practiced in the wilderness, though modern Judaism appears to embody the intent and essential beliefs of the ancient Hebrews. Similarly, the external forms of Christianity as practiced today are different from those of Christianity as practiced by the church at Jerusalem in the first century. While some remote, indigenous tribal religions have, on the other hand, survived as fairly cohesive practices despite the onslaught of Western civilization, virtually none of the hundreds (perhaps thousands) of localized tribal religions of pre-Christian Europe survived completely intact. However, vestiges of the Old Religions survive in myth, folklore, superstition, legend, and even our calendars. The precise forms and practices of our ancestors, however, have been lost or convoluted through centuries of oppression, persecution, and the simple vicissitudes of time. While we may believe essentially the same way our ancient ancestors believed, few of us are under any illusion that we do exactly the same things in exactly the same manner as they were done in ancient times.

The last several decades have witnessed dramatic increases in the numbers of people seeking spirituality outside of traditional organized religions. They are experiencing a phenomenon described by C. G. Jung in his book entitled *Modern Man in Search of His Soul*. Specifically, many thousands of people today are seeking alternatives to what they perceive to be the dogmatic and rigid orthodoxy of religions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, principally because they find these religions to be lacking in their ability to foster a tangible, personal connection to a sense of divinity inherent in the earth itself. Those closest to their roots are returning to the tribal religions of Africa, Australia, and the Americas, or to the Eastern spiritual paths of Asia. Others, who have difficulty finding clearly defined spiritual heritage, are turning to the various branches of Neo-paganism.

Neo-paganism acknowledges and reveres the old religions of distant antiquity and attempts to bring those ancient forms of spirituality into the modern world. Even if these reconstructed or reinterpreted religious movements cannot be fully authenticated as continuous traditions with direct links to ancient times, they nevertheless serve as sources of genuine spiritual and



existential fulfillment to their adherents. A familiar chant often heard at Wiccan and Pagan gatherings embodies this attitude:

**We are an old people,  
We are a new people,  
We are the same people,  
Stronger, wiser than before**

There is, then, no demonstrable reason to reject the validity and legitimacy of Neo-paganism out of hand, or to dismiss its multi-faceted spirituality as frivolous. However, further debate over the antiquity or modernity of Neo-Paganism would take this discussion well beyond the scope of this pamphlet and would be better left to scholars and antiquarians.

We (i.e. the authors) view Wicca in particular as a faith that is rooted in the Old Religions, re-created and re-structured for contemporary times, and looking with penetrating gaze toward the future. It is an old religion. It is a new religion. It is a living religion.

Wicca is probably the largest and most diverse of all of the Neo-pagan religions. No accurate figures are available, but some estimates place the number of people in the world who claim to be Wiccan at well over two million. There are probably as many "traditions" within Wicca as there are denominations within Christianity. The tenets, practices, and politics vary as much among the Wiccan traditions as they do among the Christian denominations. Wiccans can be liberal or conservative, vegetarian or omnivore, a career military member or a conscientious objector, a prison warden or a prison inmate. What sets Wicca apart from most other religions of the world is that Wiccans have no evangelical mandate. Wiccans generally regard religion and spirituality as an individual endeavor, and they make no effort to recruit or convert other people to their belief system(s). Intrinsic in this attitude is a shared sense of openness, respect, and tolerance for each other's varied beliefs and practices, as well as for those of practitioners of other religions.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN WICCA**

Wicca, as practiced today, is a modern interpretation of ancient tribal religions of Northern Europe, with few reservations about drawing on source material of other times and other cultures. Modern Wicca or "Witchcraft" owes much to the writings of Margaret Murray, a cultural anthropologist, who authored *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* and *The God of the Witches* earlier this century. These books promoted the concept that some of the "witches," who were victims of the so-called "Burning Times" (circa 1450-1792), represented remnants of an earlier religion that was practiced in Europe before the takeover of Christianity. Dr. Murray posited that there was a single, unified witch cult with branches throughout Europe. Although this theory has been examined by other researchers and rather convincingly refuted, it is important to note that Wiccans around the world have utilized her work as a springboard for synthesizing modern forms of Pagan spirituality from remnants of old traditions. A century and a half before, scholars in France and Germany independently examined evidence from a number of "witch trials" and also concluded that the "witchcraft" as identified by the Inquisition in all probability actually contained the residual elements of old agrarian religions. While Murray may not be literally correct regarding the presence of a

unified, pan-European witch cult, there is ample evidence of scattered groups in pre-Christian times who shared similarities of beliefs, practices, and deities.

Dr. Gerald B. Gardner, a retired British civil servant, is recognized alternatively either as the originator of Wicca (Wicca) in total, or as the principle orchestrator of its "revival." To this day, this issue remains a source of contention among various "authorities." Gardner, according to his own account, was initiated into an "old Coven" in the New Forest area in Southern England in 1939. In 1949, he published a novel entitled *High Magic's Aid*. This book purported to be a reasonably accurate account of Witchcraft in fictionalized form. In 1951, the last remaining laws against witchcraft were repealed in England. In 1954, Gardner wrote *Witchcraft Today* in which he allegedly made public some of the "secret" beliefs and practices of the "Old Religion." His last work published in 1959 was *The Meaning of Witchcraft*, which he presented as a "factual" history of Wicca in Northern Europe. This book included many rituals and symbols of "Witchcraft" as Gardner defined it at that time. With regard to his description of the actual rituals and practices of Wicca, he was honest enough to admit that he was compelled to "fill in the blanks" of much of what had been lost of the Old Religion over the ages. He drew elements and concepts from ceremonial magic, the Golden Dawn, Freemasonry, and Eastern Religions and philosophy. Gardner and one of his close associates, Doreen Valiente, formulated much of the material in the older Gardnerian "books of shadows". After Gardner initiated the public movement, Wicca evolved in several (and sometimes apparently contradictory) directions. Dr. Raymond Buckland and his wife brought "organized" Wicca to the United States in 1963. They trained and initiated dozens of people in the Gardnerian Tradition. Buckland was heavily criticized for training too many people too quickly and subsequently leaving them to their own devices. Some of Buckland's initiates "canonized" the Book of Shadows and held so closely to the letter of the law that their practices are hardly recognizable to the "Old School" Gardnerians in Europe. Others interpreted Buckland's and Gardner's ideas more liberally, and from them other traditions evolved, notably the original American versions of the Faërie and later the Elven Traditions. Buckland himself modified Gardnerian practice to suit his own convictions, and he later founded other traditions of his own. Nonetheless, it was Buckland who was the primary catalyst for the growth and development of Wicca in the United States.

Another key player in the "revival" appeared in the early 1960s. Alexander Sanders, and his then wife Maxine, founded the "Alexandrian" tradition. Sanders first claimed to have been initiated by his grandmother into a "family tradition," but later dropped the claim. The Alexandrian Tradition uses the Gardnerian as the basic foundation and incorporated more theatrics and ceremonial magic. The Alexandrian Tradition remains smaller than the Gardnerian Tradition. Alexandrian Wicca was strong in Europe, particularly on the Continent, but it did not take root in the US until the mid to late 1960s. Like the Gardnerian Tradition before it, Alexandrian Wicca evolved in innovative ways with many discernible changes. This rapid evolution in several branches of Wicca contributed in part to a unique phenomenon that sets Wicca apart from many other religions.

Wicca has no system of dogma or infallible doctrines, no "absolute" orthodoxy, and no national or international hierarchical structure per se. There is no pope, prophet, or prelate who categorically speaks for all traditions. Individual practitioners and covens are largely autonomous and answer to no organization or authority other than themselves.

## MODERN MAN AND THE “OLDE RELIGION”

The last twenty years have witnessed an explosive growth worldwide of men and women from all walks of life embracing Neo-paganism as a way to fill their spiritual needs.

First we have to acknowledge the role of psychology in defining religion. Since man first became aware of his “awareness”, that is, his sentience, he has sought to explain his role in the universe and to define his relationship with the Divine Reality. Men of old felt their Divinity as a result of observing the Cycles of Life. They could literally see where they fit. They constructed myths to help put into words the things they intuitively felt. They felt their God/Goddesses in their lives; they felt them in a way that modern man is only now beginning to feel them--after a conscious decision to turn away from revealed religions. The clergy, and politicians beginning at the time of the fall of the Greco-Roman empires used this same psychology of religion, (mans need to define his place in the universe) to construct or at least perpetuate a religion of control, conquest and exploitation. After the seeming failure of the Old Gods in the Roman and Greek empires, the governing powers embraced a very patriarchal religion, and gave legitimacy by Monarchy, man started a long and harmful path splitting men from women and taking man away from nature and the land. This has caused extinction of some species, degradation in the natural environment and a general decline in the quality of life contemporary man experiences despite so called technological advances. It is only after learning more about human nature and the psyche through the modern science of psychology, that mankind is beginning to realize what happened. We are coming to realize the need to turn back to the Old Gods, or at least to embrace similar social concepts and life styles to live a more healthy life and heal the scarred planet.

Margo Adler offers perhaps the best insight into the rationale behind this in her critically acclaimed book *“Drawing Down the Moon”*. Her work is a fairly holistic look at the neo-pagan movement, with a focus on Wicca. She summarizes the results of her research explaining the various aspects of this phenomenon and the multi-faceted diversity of neo-pagans, as follows:

Asked: “Why is this phenomenon occurring?”... “Why are you involved”? Responses were: (paraphrasing)

1. **Beauty, vision and imagination:** Many saw paganism as speaking to part of a general visionary quest--steeped in poetry, art, drama, music, science fiction and fantasy—citing religion as a human need for beauty--paganism met those visionary needs.
2. **Intellectual satisfaction:** Regardless of formal educational level, nearly all are avid readers and possessed of a fairly strong intellect. They loved reading ancient texts stimulating those visual and sanguine feelings of religion—the immanence of paganism’s Gods we often speak of.
3. **Growth:** Most pagans saw their spiritual path as a winding path full of evolution, change and increase through introspection, study and experiential participation.
4. **Feminism:** The Neo-Pagan movement provided many women a new sense of self worth and empowerment. It revered their past contributions to the great societies and encouraged them to seek leadership and to experience their religion from a participatory rather than passive, secondary role.

5. **Environmental Response:** Many stated Neo-paganism was a response to a world in crisis. Most pagan traditions revere nature. Many felt a revival of animism was needed to counter the forces destroying the natural world.
6. **Freedom:** Many said they had become pagans because they could live as they chose without the medieval notions of sin and guilt. It was a "religion without the middleman." Others wanted to participate in ritual rather than observe them from the sidelines. Paganism is polytheistic and tolerant of other paths...the Constitution of the United States and the concept of the rights of the individual and responsibilities to the greater community make our country ripe for the growth of paganism.

Overall she states the nature of paganism, new age thinking in our society, and the permissiveness of our constitution make the modern day west a lucrative breeding ground for an explosive "*and much needed*" growth of paganism. .

## **WICCA OR WITCHCRAFT?**

Prior to any discussion of the various traditions of Wicca, one source of significant confusion and contention warrants some clarification. The terms "Wicca" and "witchcraft" have often been assumed to refer to the same thing, though in actuality they do not. Witches and witchcraft were in existence long before recorded history. We find references to them in the Greek Classics, in the Bible, and in the myth and folklore of every civilization. Witchcraft is simply the application of the magical arts to work weal or woe. Witches are those individuals (female or male) who employ witchcraft and may or may not utilize it as part of a specific religious practice. "Wicca" is a term brought into popular usage by G. B. Gardner some fifty years ago. Its etymological derivation is thought to be from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "to bend" or another similar word meaning "wise one," depending upon the source consulted. Wicca is an organized system of religious beliefs and practices that incorporate magic (witchcraft). Wicca, then, is a proper subset of witchcraft, and many Wiccans commonly refer to themselves as Witches (with a capital "w"), and refer to Wicca as simply "the Craft." Given the sheer multiplicity of traditions that currently incorporate the word "Wicca" as part of their name, it is simply not feasible for any one of them to assume exclusive rights to the term. Although it was Gardner who first coined the term, Wicca has grown so diverse that its definition has grown arguably more complex. But that is often the case with any religion as it evolves over time, as noted above with regard to the various Christian Denominations as well as the sects of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Moreover, Wicca has benefited in this regard from modern technology and a highly mobile world population. Wiccan traditions, in their current and varied forms, have developed rapidly -- in a matter of decades as opposed to centuries.

## THE MAJOR TRADITIONS OF WICCA

Vivianne Crowley (1994, pg 102) points out that the various traditions of Wicca, “although different, share sufficiently similar deities, forms of worship, language, symbolism and philosophy to make them recognizable as one religion.” Using this as a broad working definition, Dr. Crowley cites four main branches of the Craft: Traditional, Hereditary, Gardnerian and Alexandrian. To that, we will add a fifth: Eclectic.

- **Traditional:** “different and separate localized traditions which have brought in outsiders, some of whom subsequently transplanted the tradition to other countries many thousands of miles away from the original source.”

- **Hereditary:** “similar to traditional but are passed down through the bloodline or sometimes through marriage.”

- **Gardnerian**

- and **Alexandrian:** “derived largely from one particular tradition, based in the New Forest area of the South of England; although this has been cross fertilized by contact with other traditions.” These, together with their variants, which include Danann, Whitecroft (European version), and some segments of the American Elven traditions, form the core of what we call “Traditional Craft Wicca” or TCW.

- **Eclectic:** these are essentially American variants, although there are some eclectic traditions in Europe. Some were begun by people who had been initiated into one of the “British Traditions” as they were known at the time. For a variety of reasons, the organizers of these traditions felt compelled to reorganize or reform the traditions through which they were brought into the Craft. A similar phenomenon takes place in virtually all religions as they begin to take root in a popular base. Some of these Eclectic traditions were formed by people with little or no formal “coven” training. Perhaps they could not find a traditional coven, perhaps they chose not to. As more and more material became openly available, more and more interest was generated in Wicca and Witchcraft. People began to read and explore on their own, and incorporated whatever they felt particularly drawn to in their own unique practice of Wicca. Many of what are called “Eclectic” traditions incorporates elements of Santeria, African or Native American tribal religions, or Hinduism and other Eastern philosophies into their practice of Wicca. Some of these Eclectic traditions draw so heavily on these other elements that they no longer appear to share “similar deities, forms of worship, language, symbolism and philosophy to make them recognizable as one religion.” Nevertheless, they continue to identify themselves as Wiccan.

## WHAT IS MAGIC?

Magic is the manifestation of our desire in the mundane world by the manipulation of forces using the Higher Self or Super Conscious. It can alternately be defined as changing ones state of consciousness at will to facilitate the same. As all things are energy forms and interrelated, it is possible to manipulate these energies in concert with the universe through the will working in the higher plane. We are then able to manifest things in the mundane world or to experience The Divine reality while still in the higher plane causing spiritual enlightenment within ourselves back in the mundane existence. Most practitioners feel there are two types of magic, High Magic and Practical Magic. High Magic is work or ritual (meditation, ceremony, spell casting, trances, scrying etc.) whose purpose is to experience the Divine Reality. Practical Magic can use the same techniques to manifest change in our mundane world--health, wealth, love, fertility, binding, banishment, etc. Intent usually defines the type of magic. Some equate Ceremonial Magic as always aligned with High Magic. Others assert there can be a degree of High Ceremony used to either experience the Divine Reality or to put some "kick" into the desire for practical results. There is possibly a third category of "Spirit Magic", the summoning of spirit entities for the purpose of consultation, command to execute a task or to seek answers to the Divine Mysteries. While many would label this highly *Ceremonial* Magic--as High Magic, (and in fact it does require detailed knowledge of Qabalistic practices--"The Keys of Solomon"-- and strict adherence to technical execution) one could use the technique to perform Practical Magic or High Magic based on the practitioner's intended purpose. Thus this "Spirit Magic" could be considered a subset of either. Simply put, Magic is a form of focused prayer used by Wiccans to achieve our needs and desires.

## ELEMENTS COMMON TO TRADITIONAL CRAFT WICCA (TCW) and OTHER WICCAN TRADITIONS

Traditional Craft Wicca (TCW), the Tradition in which the authors currently practice, and most other Wiccan traditions contain several key elements which may also be found in other spiritual, religious, and social contexts. These are:

1. **Ceremonial or High Magic**, which derived basically from Renaissance/Neo-Platonic magic. This includes the use of the magic or ritual circle, the assigning of correspondences to directions and elements, and the utilization of complex divinatory systems. Ceremonial magic may or may not contain religious elements. Astrological horoscopes have little or nothing to do with the spiritual practice of either the astrologer or the person for whom the horoscope was prepared. The alchemist would often end his work with "in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." While this probably made little difference in transmuting lead to gold, it was certainly insurance against the Inquisitor's stake. The mediaeval and Renaissance sorcerer or sorceress would "summon, stir, and call" upon demons or angels depending on intent, which usually depended upon who paid the fee.
2. **Shamanistic techniques**, including, but not limited to, active or passive meditation, visual imagery, controlled breathing, drumming, dancing, chanting, sensory deprivation, or sensory overload. Shamanistic techniques are designed to shift the focus of consciousness from

ordinary to non-ordinary perceptual states. Shamanism, as such, is not a religion, though it has sometimes been referred to as the world's oldest religion.

Shamanistic techniques, however, are integral parts of many religions around the world. The word "shaman" itself comes from a Siberian dialect, but has been universally used by anthropologists and the general public to include tribal practices by "medicine people" and "witch doctors" all over the world. While many techniques are often similar, the religions of the various shamans are not. For instance, the Sami tribal religion of the Norwegian steppes is vastly different from the tribal religions found in Africa, the Americas, and Asia.

**3. Folk Magic**, which derived from folklore and country ways, the old "witchcraft" in its purest sense. Much of this survives in our present society as superstitions and cultural idiosyncrasies. Folk magic includes herbalism, charms, spells, and other forms of sympathetic magic. Folk magic, as with ceremonial magic and shamanistic techniques, may or may not have a specific religious content, or it may have a combination of religious content from diverse traditions. Examples of this can be found as recently as the 1950s. The story is told of a very old woman in rural Oklahoma who taught her grandson how to plant corn to insure a prosperous harvest. The old woman was part Cherokee and was the widow of a Primitive Baptist preacher to whom she had been married for over sixty years. She instructed her grandson on how to watch the moon for the proper season and how to prepare the soil for planting. She then instructed him to drop four seeds into each planting hole, reciting as he did: "one for the sun, one for the crow, one for the earth, and one to grow." The soil was then raked over the seeds by hand while asking God's blessing on the crop.

**4. Nature Religions:** As with other earth-based religions, Wicca practices its rites in harmony with nature. Religious festivals and worship are celebrated with the changing seasons of the year and in conjunction with lunar phases. In practice, this means an interest in--and respect for--all of Gaia's children: trees, animals, and stones. All of life and all of creation, manifest and unmanifest, is revered as sacred.

## TRADITIONAL WICCAN HOLIDAYS

Modern Wiccans traditionally celebrate eight holidays based on the summer and winter solstice, the spring and vernal equinox, and the so-called "Cross-Quarter Days." The Cross-Quarter Days are roughly midway between each solstice and equinox. Some groups add a ninth holiday, usually in November, at which they venerate ancestors and heroes of the tradition. The name, by which the holiday is known, as well as the general theme of celebration, may vary widely from tradition to tradition. The following chart is presented by way of comparison:

Approximate Dates (Gregorian)	Kith & Public Rites	Kindred Rites
13-26 December	Rite of Midwinter Christmas St. John the Evangelist	Mutternacht * Yule Mother Night Secret of the Unhewn Stone
1-2 February	Rite of Awakening Candlemas St. Brigit	Erweckung * Imbolc Stirrings
19-22 March	Rite of Spring Easter St. Edward	Sommerzukunft * Vernal Equinox Summer Findings
31 April - 2 May	Rite of Exultation May Day St. Sophia	Walpurgisnacht * Beltane Lady Day
19-23 June	Rite of Midsummer St. John the Baptist	Sonnenwende * Litha Midsummer
30 July - 2 August	Rite of Thanksgiving First Harvest St. Oswald	Erntezeit * Lughnassadh Lammas
19-24 September	Rite of Autumn Harvest Home Michaelmas	Winterzukunft * Mabon Winter Findings
31 October - 2 November	Rite of Remembrance All Hallow's All Saints Day	Urahnennacht * Samhain Ancestor Night
11 November	Martinmas	Einherjährest Feast of the Fallen Warriors

**Note:** The above chart reflects the celebrations and practices of the Sacred Well Congregation and should not be construed to be any "universal" statement reflecting all Wiccan groups. For more details concerning the various holidays, see the section "Philosophy, Ethics and Practices."

## rites of passage

Many religions place heavy emphasis on celebrating and ritualizing important transitions and rites of passages during the lifetime of an individual. In most cases, Wicca is no exception. Wiccan traditions uniquely observe rites of passage in ways that incorporate profound symbolism embodying the ways in which an individual deepens her or his relationship and connection with the earth, with their community, and with the divinity within themselves.



**Note:** Not all Wiccans celebrate rites of passage, but the following are typical for most traditions within Traditional Craft Wiccan (TCW) and many other groups. They may also be known by different names in different groups.

### ***Handfasting***•

Handfasting is the Wiccan marriage ceremony. Traditionally, a Handfasting was for a specified period of time, usually a year and a day, and was not legally binding. In most countries, a civil marriage is required for a union to be recognized by law; any religious ceremony is optional. In the United States, however, an ordained minister of any religious faith may perform a legally binding wedding, and no civil ceremony is required. There is a growing number of legally ordained Wiccan ministers worldwide, and more and more Handfastings are being performed as legal marriage ceremonies. If a Handfasting is performed in this context, then any change in marital status must be handled as a legal civil process. Specific ceremonies vary from group to group and coven to coven, but the participants usually write or have significant input into the content. Of note in many Handfastings, participants may opt to promise themselves to each other pragmatically for “*so long as Love shall last*”, vice the lofty standard of “*til death do us part*”.

### ***Handparting***•

A Handparting ritual dissolves the Handfasting. Traditionally, at the end of the specified period, a couple decided whether or not they wanted to continue the union formed at the Handfasting. If they chose to remain in the relationship, then another Handfasting was performed, again for a specified period of time. The second Handfasting was usually for five, seven, or nine years or “for this and coming lifetimes.” If they chose not to renew the relationship, then a Handparting was performed with the intent to allow the couple to separate amicably in love and harmony. If the Handfasting was legally binding, the Handparting is usually not performed until after the marriage is dissolved through civil process.

### ***Wiccaning***•

Many couples now feel free to openly bring up their children in the Wiccan religion. Wiccaning is the ritual of blessing for a newborn. The ceremonies again vary widely from group to group, but are usually developed by collaboration between the parents, High Priestess, and High Priest of the coven or group. While Wiccaning can be compared to a Christian “Baptism” there is a significant difference in philosophy. The parents introduce the child to the “Mighty Forces” and to the God and Goddess, asking for blessings and protection for the child. In some cases, parents entreat the Gods to give it talents and intellect, however the Wiccaning in no way binds the child to the Gods as in the Christian concept of Baptism. Remember it is a basic tenet of Wicca that its members must freely choose the Wiccan path. During the ceremony the Godparents chosen may be presented to the spiritual forces as well. As Wiccaning is a blessing and welcoming of the child into the greater family, it is appropriate for all blood relatives, extended family and close friends--who will impact the child’s life, to be welcomed in the Circle regardless of their religious beliefs.

**Welcoming (Sometimes called Heralding or Hailing)** This ritual welcomes a child into the extended family of the coven or group, and usually takes place around the age of 13. Many traditions have a standard ritual for this, but it may vary from group to group. In many cases this is the event in which the celebrant officially chooses his/her path and makes a dedication or affirmation to The Craft. In most cases this signals an official beginning of training toward initiation into the group.

### ***Initiatory Rites***•

For covens that practice initiatory rites, these are the keystone rituals. They vary from tradition to tradition and always occur in a closed setting. Furthermore, most TCW groups regard "initiation" in its literal sense. It is a milestone that marks the beginning of a life-long process. Initiation is not a goal or an end in itself. See Vivianne Crowley's exposition cited in the "Annotated Bibliography" section.

### ***Crossing--Requiem***

- These are Wiccan funeral rites. They range from very simple to very elaborate ceremonies depending on the tradition or group and the wishes of the deceased. With a background belief in reincarnation, the Wiccan religion does not fear a hell or some vague eternal damnation for anyone passing beyond the veil. Wiccans believe those who pass over have done so because they have completed all the lessons they were meant to learn in this lifetime and are now enjoying a repose until they are reborn to new lessons in a new life—a process that will go on until they have grown so completely in karmic balance as to pass over and become one with the cosmos (“to enter the Kingdom of God”). Because we view death as a completion of one cycle and the beginning of another, it is a time for celebration rather than mourning—a Wiccan does not escape from punishment for being good, rather one rests then is reborn. While there are loved ones left behind who cannot help but feel sorrow for their loss, A Wiccan funerary rite is usually not complete without a big party to follow the service—a party with food, wine, music and friendships; people who gather to share memories of the one who has crossed over and help those who grieve move on with new loves and friendships. As in all rites of passage, participation in the ritual is open to all loved ones regardless of religious preference.

## **MOON RITES (ESBATS)**

Sabbats and Rites of Passage are festivals and celebrations that are generally open to family, friends, and often the public as well. Moon Rites, or Esbats, are "working" religious and magical rites and are usually restricted to the coven or a very small and intimate group. They generally take place in the evening or late night hours in an outdoor, natural setting where feasible, though indoor celebrations are frequent and preferable where the use of outdoor space is not a realistic option or where weather prevents. Some groups celebrate both open and closed Moon Rites. Moon Rites are held as close as possible to the Full Moon. Some groups celebrate Dark or New Moon rituals in addition to Full Moon rituals. Generally, work leave is not required for these celebrations, as they take place after a normal duty day, though some personnel may conceivably request an accommodation to leave a bit earlier from work in order to be on time for the rite. However, in cases where irregular shift work is required, Wiccan personnel may sometimes request leave for an Esbat taking place during their night shift. This may cause some conflict if they are in a critical duty position or section. If possible, however, they should be granted the same consideration as members of

other religious groups requesting leave for celebration of religious holidays. It is primarily at Esbats where some traditions advocate the practice of ritual nudity, which they call being "skyclad". This practice stems largely from the idea that direct connection between the energy of the human body and that of the earth is most intense when the restrictions of clothing are not present. It also comes from a line in the "Charge of the Goddess" by Doreen Valiente, one of Gerald Gardner's students, which states that "Ye shall be free from all slavery, and as a sign that you be truly free, ye shall be naked in your rites." Wiccans often emphasize that they wish to avoid and overcome the perception of nudity as shameful, instead upholding the sanctity and beauty of the human body. Not all Wiccan groups prefer skyclad worship; some use robes of varying colors or materials, depending upon circumstances, traditions, weather, and climate. It is important for both chaplains and Wiccan practitioners alike to participate in the understanding that it is not feasible under current regulations and emphases to have chapel space or military facilities available for skyclad practice. Reasonable alternatives should be actively sought.

## **SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS OF WICCA**

There is no Bible in Wicca per se, but there is a well-defined standard of ethics and code of conduct transcending most traditions. "**The Charge of the Goddess**", a poem often attributed to the Hereditary Witches of Tuscany (the "Strega") and modified by English poet Doreen Valiente comes closest to "commandments" for Wiccans for living and worship. It is said to be the only "revelation" given to mankind from the Goddess on the nature of the universe and the relationship of mankind to the Divine associated with Wicca. "**The Wiccan Rede**" is the ultimate Golden Rule Wiccans live by, and "**The Law of Threes**" speaks to atonement and responsibility for actions and conduct during incarnate lifetimes. Wiccans perceive the Divine reality on many levels each deemed valuable and appropriate based on the situation at hand. The Wiccan God is a complex collage of monotheistic, bi-theistic, polytheistic and pantheistic God force.

Wiccans perceive the transcendental God as the ONE GOD above gender and existing before all things. More immanently but still at the higher level they perceive the transcendental God as a balance of polar energies--simultaneously Male, the active or "projective" phenomena and Female, the passive or "receptive" phenomena. Wiccans experience the divine reality more immanently, at the bi-theistic level, by witnessing the polar forces in action through the changes of the seasons, the life cycles of animate beings and phases of the Moon. In keeping with the active/passive concept, anything that is born, grows, ages, dies and is reborn is an active process and attributed to be Male. Seasonal change and the cycles of living things are said to be Male cycles and tied to the solar cycle of the sun. The Earth (and the Greater Cosmos), however--the stage upon which this cycle is played out, never dies. Sometimes resting passively, sometimes waxing and waning through volcanism and erosion, (and the birth and death of stars) it is the creative and containment aspect of the Goddess, or the feminine. The God must die to move into "Summerland" (afterlife) where he rules and rests and is thus able to be reborn, through the Goddess, anew in the secular world. All humans, male or female are subject to this male cycle of life--circular annually, but a spiral spiritually. With each reincarnation the spirit grows until achieving karmic balance and then moves to another plane. This progression of souls is thought to be a spiral process that drives change in the universe. The cycles of the Moon represent the passive and creative forces of things and are said to be Feminine. We see in the phases of

the moon that the Goddess is always present—she never dies. She merely changes shape to show her various aspects...nor does she die to move between “Summerland” and the secular world in her juxtaposition with The God--she merely changes shape. Hers are those circular, cyclic or rhythmic pulsing movements, tides of ebb and flow—“containment” in the form of the womb and the chaos of the universe. She contains all matter, all things manifest and so is the tapestry on which the whole of the universe is woven.

Wiccans often take the immanent nature of divinity one step further, to the polytheistic level by calling on a particular God or Goddess from a pantheon in mythology to aid in a mundane task or spiritual quest seeking to benefit from the particular aspect of Divinity that specific God(dess) represents. For instance a vintner might visualize Bacchus in his prayer to help his vineyard produce a good wine harvest. He is not really asking a Roman demigod for help, rather he is focusing his prayers on that aspect of the Divine that makes the plants grow. At the pantheistic level we note everyone has within his/her psyche certain mythologies, experiences and images that hold meaning for them and help visualize various aspects of the Divine. In Wicca, all Gods have potential value and all spiritual paths are sacred. Wiccans recognize there is a “Divine spark” in all things manifest and unmanifest--from stones to trees to fields of magnetism and energy waves, and as such all are part of the Divine. Other faiths sometimes mistake this proclivity to break the Divine into experiential concepts, or to use icons or images in ritual as “idolatry”. This is a misperception, as Wiccans no more “worship” nature itself or the mask of the Greenman as a God, than Christians “worship” their saints or the Virgin Mary. These visions merely iconize various aspects of the Divine so as to place the transcendental God above all Gods within reach of the human mind.

**Note:** We have discussed the bi-theistic aspect of Godhead in Wicca as polarities that are male and female, complementary forces at once in opposition and balance...but NOT as good and evil as in the concept of Christ and Satan. This brings us to the final overarching concept of Divinity in Wicca...THERE IS NO SATAN...no single deity of evil, nor is there original sin or vicarious atonement. There is no sacrifice required by our Gods save that we willingly make of our time and resources to help others and/or for our spiritual growth. In Wicca evil results from forces out of balance, or needs and hungers not met, and a breakdown of self-discipline. Evil is the failing of man unleashed into the collective unconscious, or the evil fed into the field of morphic resonance by those who see divinity as a conflict between the “all good” and “all evil” forces...that concept brought to the followers of the God of Abraham by Zoroaster from Persia in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. This concept was adopted wholesale by “Peoples of The Book” after orthodox Christians routed the Gnostics and Mohamed became the prophet of Islam.

Finally, Wiccans see the entire universe as a beneficent living being with all things connected--all crucial and sacred. Our Gods implore us to celebrate love, laughter, art, sexuality, dance, music, food, song, birth and death as necessary and beautiful parts of the Eternal Great Dance.

## THE CHARGE OF THE GODDESS

As mentioned above, there is in actuality no “revealed” dogma to Wiccans from their Gods, rather we draw on the stories and mysteries we’re taught, history and life’s lessons-- those things we can experience to feel connectivity with the Divine. Wicca is said to be a “pragmatic” religion, that is Gods, spiritual philosophy and ritual only have meaning for Wiccans in so far as they work and produce spiritual feelings. That said there is one key soliloquy alleged to be handed down from the Goddess herself to the Witches of Tuscany, but in actuality was probably written by those practitioners, translated by author George Leland and modified by British poet Doreen Valiente. It is nonetheless a beautiful poem and is nearly a perfect encapsulation for Wiccan spiritual philosophy as is available. It describes the relationship of man and our Goddess and is the foundation from which we derive the **Wiccan Rede** and **The Law of Three**. It is simultaneously the Wiccan “commandments”, the Golden Rule and our Lords prayer all in one elegant treatment.

In certain ritual, it is believed the Goddess herself, through the High Priestess recites this to the congregation...

***"Whenever ye have need of anything, once in the month, and better it be when the moon is full, then shall ye assemble in some secret place and adore the spirit of me, who am Queen of all the witcheries. There shall ye assemble, ye who are fain to learn all sorcery, yet have not won its deepest secrets; to these will I teach things that are yet unknown. And ye shall be free from slavery; and as a sign that ye be really free, ye shall be naked in your rites; and ye shall dance, sing, feast, make music and love, all in my praise. For mine is the ecstasy of the spirit, and mine also is joy on earth; for my law is love unto all beings. Keep pure your highest ideal; strive ever towards it; let naught stop you or turn you aside.***

***For mine is the secret door which opens upon the Land of Youth, and mine is the cup of the wine of life, and the Cauldron of Cerridwen, which is the Holy Grail of immortality. I am the Gracious Goddess, who gives the gift of joy unto the heart of man. Upon earth, I give the knowledge of the spirit eternal; and beyond death, I give peace and freedom and reunion with those who have gone before. Nor do I demand aught in sacrifice; for behold, I am the Mother of all living, and my love is poured out upon the earth."***

***"I who am the beauty of the green earth, and the white Moon among the stars, and the mystery of the waters, and the desire of the heart of man, call unto thy soul. Arise, and come unto me. For I am the soul of nature, who gives life to the universe. From me all things proceed, and unto me all things must return; and before my face, beloved of Gods and of men, let thine innermost divine self be enfolded in the rapture of the infinite. Let my worship be within the heart that rejoiceth; for behold, all acts of love and pleasure are my rituals. And therefore***

***let there be beauty and strength, power and compassion,  
honour and humility, mirth and reverence within you.  
And thou who thinkest to seek for me, know thy seeking and yearning  
shall avail thee not unless thou knowest the mystery;  
that if that which thou seekest thee findest not within thee,  
thou wilt never find it without thee. For behold, I have been  
with thee from the beginning; and I am that which is attained  
at the end of desire."***

From this we learn the Goddess is the creatrix of the universe, the intiatrix--the grantor of magical power, love, joy and truth. She teaches us to reverence all things (Harm none, reverence all--The Wiccan Rede), to be true to ourselves (Highest ideals--The law of Three), to worship faithfully and joyously, and in the very same fashion the prophet Jesus Christ counseled in the Gnostic Gospel's Book of Thomas, to *"look within for the Kingdom of God"*.

### **THE WICCAN REDE-The Central Law of Wicca "An it Harm None, Do as Ye Will"...**

Seemingly straightforward at first, on closer examination we see there are many connotations of this many faceted "REDE". It does not mean "if it feels good--do, it", rather it is the highest order of "golden rule" and at the same time a charge of the highest level of personal responsibility.

It means we should exercise extreme caution in thought, word and deed--in all our actions in the mundane world and in the execution of magic. Since every action causes change in another place, time or phenomena there can be no truly harmless act. Therefore all actions must be conducted with understanding and love in harmony with the universal forces in an attempt to cause the greater good--with minimal collateral impact. One should also be mindful not to hurt yourself as well.

Do as ye will...means do as you must--to survive, to heal, to improve, to create. In some cases you are forced to choose a course of action that causes the least harm, since it is not always possible to cause no harm. In the case of military service one is moved to protect loved ones, a way of life or minimize tyranny. In this case the warrior serves the greater good and takes no pleasure in doing harm. In nature animals kill to eat as we must sometimes do and it is the innate right of all creatures to engage in self-defense. In some cases you may be compelled to do something you dread but know you must do...or sacrifice of yourself toward the right cause or the greater good.

The Wiccan Rede is a poem that is the embodiment of what many Wiccans use as a rule and guide in their faith and practice. There are several versions of this poem. The one that follows was probably written by Doreen Valiente and is certainly one of the most beautiful renditions.

***"Bide ye Wiccan laws ye must in perfect love and perfect trust  
Live and let live, fairly take and fairly give  
Form the circle thrice about to keep unwanted spirits out***

*To bind ye spell every time, let ye spell be spake in rhyme  
Soft of eye, light of touch, speak ye little, listen much  
When the Lady's moon is new, kiss your hand to her times two  
When the moon rides at her peak, then ye heart's desire seek  
Heed the North wind's mighty gale, lock the door and trim the sail  
When the wind comes from the South, love will kiss thee on the mouth  
When the wind blows from the West, departed souls may have no rest  
When the wind blows from the East, expect the new and set the feast  
Nine woods in ye cauldron go, burn them fast and burn them slow  
Elder be ye Lady's tree, burn it not or cursed ye'll be  
When the wheel begins to turn, soon ye Beltaine fire'll burn  
When the wheel hath turned a Yule, light a log the Horned One rules  
Heed ye flower, bush and tree, by the Lady blessed be  
Where the rippling waters flow, cast a stone and truth ye'll know  
When ye have and hold a need, harken not to others greed  
With a fool no season spend, nor be counted as his friend  
Merry meet and merry part, bright the cheeks and warm the heart  
Mind ye threefold law ye should, three times bad and three times good  
When misfortune is anow, wear the star upon thy brow  
True in love ye must ever be, lest thy love be false to thee  
In these eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill,*

*An ye harm none, do what ye will.*

## THE LAW OF THREE (LAW OF RETURNS)

Virtually all religions have some concept of cosmic or divine justice; virtually all societies have and underlying belief or principle of compensation. In religion, it can be some variation of the concept of Karma, the Scales of Horus, or the Great White Throne of judgment. That translates to the physical level in social, cultural and judicial customs. Ecclesiastes 11:1 enjoins the reader to “cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” In due season it will return to you. In moderns metaphors we speak of “paying dues” and “earning keep”.

In Wicca, we see it as, very simply getting back what you put out. The Rule of Three implies gain or interest. While some groups take a very literal and absolute interpretation (as many Christians take all literal and absolute interpretation of their bible), we tend to take a relative and poetic (though just as material) interpretation. “What ye send forth comes back to thee, So ever mind the Rule of Three.” If you contribute a hundred dollars to a needy family in your community, it does not necessarily mean you will return home and find a three hundred dollar check in your mailbox from an anonymous benefactor. But rest assured you will be rewarded proportionately. If you slap somebody on the street, it does not necessarily mean you will turn the corner and get slapped three times. But you will pay for your action—again, proportionately. And again the reciprocal return may or may not be immediate. It may come within a few hours, a few days or it may take years. But it will come in due season, generally just when you need it (or in the case of adverse return, just when you **don't** need it) the most. This is why Witches are loath to use magic for revenge, to hurt someone or to bind their will—that is to make them do something against their will or their nature.

*“So ever mind the Law of Three”*

## MODERN CRAFT LAWS

Many traditions still keep to the 164 “Craft Laws” or “Ordains” (The Book of Shadows” by Lady Sheba lists these). These “ancient Laws” were written in 20th century and are probably more a romantic notion than actually being the “ancient and sacred” laws they are often portrayed to be. In fact, they were written by Gerald Gardner. He began writing what he called the “Ardanes” shortly after he established his first “public” coven. They were written in archaic language to give them the flavor of antiquity. Gardner modified and added to these “Laws” over the years to suit his own views and purposes. Additionally, the “Ardanes” reflect the very patriarchal worldview common at the time that they were written, and many contemporary women find some of them highly offensive. Most Traditional Craft covens retain them in their Coven Book of Shadows purely as an historical artifact. Most traditions adhere to more modern “Covenants of Sacred Law” –there are many variations, these are adapted from the Temple of Danaan.

1. Love is the Law and Love is the Bond.
2. Honor, Love and Trust are the Sacred Virtues of the wise, within the Circle and without.
3. Whatever action you take will return to you threefold.
4. An it harm none, live according to Will.
5. The wise shall revere each living thing, for all life is Sacred.



6. The wise shall give due reverence to the Old Ones and obey their Will.
7. The Wise shall observe the Sacred Days in Holy rite.
8. The Sacred Knowledge may not be revealed to the unworthy.
9. None may enter the Circle without purification, and then only with the sanction of the presiding Priestess and Priest.
10. All due respect shall be given to the Priest and Priestess who serve as representatives of the Old Ones.
11. As the Wise are to the Old ones, so shall be their Sacredness.
12. All are equal within and without the Circle according to ability and knowledge.
13. Judge not the path of Brother or Sister, for all paths are Sacred

## **PRACTICES COMMON TO MOST WICCAN GROUPS AND TRADITIONS**

**Selena Fox, High Priestess, Circle Sanctuary (used by permission)**

Portions of this section were contributed by Selena Fox, High Priestess and Senior Minister of Circle Sanctuary. Reverend Fox is an internationally recognized Elder and voice in the Pagan community. She facilitates networking of Pagans and like-minded individuals through the publication of a quarterly magazine known as Circle Network News (soon to be Circle Magazine) and the organization of the annual Pagan Spirit Gathering, a national gathering of individuals who practice varied forms of nature spirituality. With her life mate, Dr. Dennis Carpenter, she owns and operates a large nature preserve known as Circle Sanctuary. She has presented scholarly papers and participated in panel discussions at national and international conferences on inter-faith dialogue. She has appeared on numerous television and radio shows as a guest to speak about the practice of Wicca. She is a practicing transpersonal psychotherapist.

The topics that follow elaborate on the philosophy, ethics and practices common to most Wiccan Groups and Traditions. There are, of course, variations among groups, but the following information is generally consistent across Traditions.

**Material added as editorial notes and expanding Rev Fox's remarks are enclosed in <brackets>. The introduction to the holidays and brief summary of each Sabbat holiday was contributed by the authors as a way to enhance understanding the meaning of each particular holiday and to demonstrate how they are all linked together in the overall annual celebration of Wiccan Holy Days.**

### ***Spiritual Principles***

- Honor the Divine, understanding it as immanent and transcendent, and as multifaceted and as a united and interconnected whole.
- Live life with consideration of others as well as oneself, endeavoring to be of service and to do no harm.
- Celebrate and attune to Nature and Nature's rhythms as central to Divine understanding and worship.

## ***Spiritual Values***

- Cultivate virtues, including integrity, honesty, responsibility, balance, perseverance, responsibility, empathy, kindness, compassion, knowledge, service, freedom.
- Cultivate balance and moderation, such as balancing intellect and intuition in cognitive processing; work and rest in daily life; time with others and time alone.
- Cultivate good communication and healthy relationships with family, friends, community, and the greater Circle of Life.

## ***Conceptualizing The Divine***

"The Divine" is a term often used to refer to what is known in other religions as "God" (Christianity, Judaism), "Allah" (Islam), "Tao" (Confucianism), and "Great Spirit" (Native American religions). Since The Divine is viewed as both immanent (indwelling) and transcendent (beyond the limits of humanness), spiritual philosophy is Pantheistic. In that The Divine is viewed as a Great Unity, spiritual philosophy has a monotheistic dimension. In that The Divine is also viewed as multifaceted, spiritual philosophy also is Polytheistic. The Divine is honored as both Mother Goddess and Father God, as well as Their Unity. In addition, The Goddess and The God have many sacred forms or aspects. The Divine also is acknowledged as manifest through the Five Elements of Nature (Earth, Air, Fire, Water, and Spirit). As with most other Nature religions, spiritual philosophy also is Animistic, in that The Divine takes the form of a spiritual dimension not only within living humans, but within ancestors, animals, plants, places, and all things.

## ***Nature***

Attunement to and communion with Nature are central to spiritual philosophy and practice. Humans are viewed as part of Nature, not as dominators or as owners of Nature.

## ***The Circle***

The predominant ritual and social space form is the circle. As in ancient times, the circle represents many concepts, including wholeness, balance, the cycles of Nature, continuity, partnership, and interconnectedness. The circle is used by individuals in personal rituals as well as by large and small groups for group rituals and festivals. The circle form facilitates shared experience and encourages participation.

## ***Five Elements of Nature***

The Five Elements of Nature form a standard framework of spiritual symbology, teachings, and practice. Each Element, and its associated direction, is acknowledged in rituals. Associated imagery often is used in the creation of invocations, meditations, chants, and other ritual components.

### **I. Earth**

#### **direction: North**

- natural forms: soil, rocks, stones, sand, skin, fur, bones, food, the ground, minerals, plant roots <**forests, fields, dales**>.
- dimension: physical, physiological

- human realm: physical body, home/habitat, clothing and other possessions
- healing: physical health; nutrition, rest, massage and other body work therapies
- tools: salt, plate, pentacle disc, rock, plant, coins, drum, wooden dish, platter
- colors: green, brown, black
- animals: deer, cow **<Black Bull in some traditions>**, food creatures
- elemental form: gnome
- tarot suit: pentacles, diamonds
- season: winter
- daily phase: midnight
- lunar phase: dark moon
- life phase: death & rebirth, ancestors
- focus: being
- powers: strength, security, prosperity, manifestation, stillness

## **II. Air**

### **direction: East**

- natural forms: winds, breath, clouds, atmosphere
- dimension: mental, cognitive
- human realm: thinking, thoughts, intellect, analysis, knowledge, documentation, archives, records
- healing: mental health; counseling, psychoanalysis, breathing, cognitive therapies
- tools: incense burner, incense, feather, bells, athame, journal, words, books
- colors: yellow, golden radiance
- animals: hawk, eagle, other birds
- elemental form: sylph
- tarot suit: swords, spades
- season: spring
- daily phase: dawn
- lunar phase: waxing moon
- life phase: youth, young adulthood
- focus: thinking
- powers: communication, wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, swiftness

## **III. Fire**

### **direction: South**

- natural forms: lightning, fire, solar power, electricity, energy sources
- dimension: action, behavioral
- human realm: career, will power, creative endeavors, hobbies, occupation, projects
- healing: activity health; exercise, work, play, doing and movement therapies
- tools: candle, lamp, bonfire, wand, staff, rod, sword, rattle
- colors: red, orange
- animals: lion, dragon, <snake>, phoenix, unicorn, four-legged predators
- elemental form: salamander
- tarot suit: wands
- season: summer
- daily phase: noon/midday
- lunar phase: full moon

- life phase: adulthood
- focus: doing
- powers: will power, creativity, discipline, action, assertiveness

#### **IV. Water**

##### **direction: West**

- natural forms: oceans, lakes, rivers, rain, <wells>, springs, other waters, body fluids
- dimension: feeling, emotional
- human realm: feelings, intuitions, dreams, relationships
- healing: emotional health; friendship, empathy, music and art therapies
- tools: water, chalice, cup, liquids, mirror, basin, bowl
- colors: blues, aqua
- animals: water creatures **<particularly salmon, dolphins and whales>**
- elemental form: undine
- tarot suit: cups, hearts
- season: fall
- daily phase: sunset, twilight
- lunar phase: waning moon
- life phase: old age, late adulthood
- focus: feeling
- powers: intuition, understanding, compassion, relationships

#### **V. Spirit**

##### **direction: Center**

- natural forms: cycles, interconnectedness, community
- dimension: spiritual, soul
- human realm: synthesis, spiritual life, self-actualization
- healing: spiritual; ritual, meditation, auric work, shamanic therapies
- tools: crystal, amulet, mandala, cauldron, vestments, star, altar, web of interconnection, circle
- colors: white radiance, blackness of womb & outer space, rainbow
- animals: all creatures in community in ecosphere
- elemental form: animistic force in all Nature; personal/tribal totem
- tarot suit: major arcana
- season: wheel of the year
- daily phase: cycle of the day & night
- lunar phase: moon cycle
- life phase: cycle of the soul
- focus: integrating, balance of female and male, planet and heavens, all compass points, other elements
- powers: balance, wholeness, integration, truth, divinity

## ***Ceremonial Tools in Spiritual Practice***

Ceremonial tools are used to aid group and personal spiritual practice. The type, size, and form of ceremonial tools used depends on a variety of factors, including:

- (1) type of ritual, meditation, or other sacred activity,
- (2) number of participants,
- (3) time of day and year, and
- (4) setting.

For both group and for individual rituals it is customary to have the following:

### **Altar**

- usually a small table covered with a cloth; used to hold ceremonial objects.
- often is placed in the center or at a quarter point of the sacred Circle (ceremonial area)

### **Symbol(s) of the Divine**

- may take the form of an icon, such as a sacred painting, framed drawing, or sculpture.
- may also take the form of one to three white pillar candles on the altar.

### **Symbol of Earth**

- usually a pentacle, platter or dish containing salt, soil, corn meal, or herbs.
- sometimes a second platter is used to hold bread, fruit, cakes, or other ritual food.

### **Symbol of Air**

- usually an incense burner with burning incense (stick, powder, or gum resin form).
- may also be represented by an athame or feather by some practitioners.

### **Symbol of Fire**

- usually in the form of a lamp or special candle.
- may also be in the form of a wand.

### **Symbol of Water**

- usually in the form of a chalice or bowl containing water.
- sometimes a second chalice is used to hold juice, tea, or other ritual beverage.

### **Symbol of Spirit**

- varies; usually a personal or group symbol of spiritual wisdom
- may take the form of a divination meditation tools (Tarot, Runes, I Ching, other).
- may also take the form of a piece of sacred jewelry (such as pentagram), which is worn.

### **Symbol(s) of the Circle and its Directions**

- often takes the form of four lit candles placed at the quarter points of the circle, or on the altar, and when this is the case, candles usually are green (North), yellow (East), red (South), and blue (West). A white or purple candle representing the Divine unity of the sacred Circle may be in the center.
- in addition or instead, quarter points of the sacred Circle may each be marked with a stone, banner, or other symbol.
- sometimes the sacred Circle itself is marked with a cord, flowers, corn meal, stones, or other sacred objects.

### **Symbol(s) of the Season**

- varies with time of year and environment.
- examples: evergreen boughs for Yule; flowers for Spring Equinox.

### **Spiritual Writings**

- transcript or outline of the ritual/meditation/spiritual activity often contained within a personal or group spiritual journal/workbook.
- also present may be songbooks, anthologies of prayers and proverbs, other texts.

### **Special Ceremonial Tools and other Ritual Items**

- varies with focus and type of ritual.
- examples: wedding rings; photos of deceased at funerals

### ***Types of Ceremonial Tools***

Sampling of some, but not all, used in individual and group spiritual practice

**Altar:** small table for holding ceremonial tools; often covered with an altar cloth.  
**<Altars can range from quite simple to very ornate; often altars used outdoors in a relatively permanent space are constructed of stone>.**

**Amulet:** sacred object consecrated and used for blessing, protection, healing.

**Athame:** sacred blade used for inscribing symbols but not cutting; a tool of Air.  
**<usually a double-edged dagger or knife; composition is commonly tempered steel; some traditions prohibit steel and require that Athames be made of a non-ferrous metal, usually silver or pewter; some practitioners prefer to craft their Athames from flint or other stone>.**

**Bell:** clear tone is rung in rituals to bless, invoke, and signal.

**Boline <also called a Curfane, or White Hilted Knife>:** sacred blade, usually with white handle, used for cutting herbs, food, candle wax, etc.

**Book of Shadows:** personal journal, workbook, and collection of rituals, meditations, chants, etc. <In addition to the personal Book of Shadows, Covens usually have a Coven Book of Shadows that new initiates are charged to copy and maintain "by thine own hand.">

**Broom <or Besom>:** used for handfastings (Wiccan weddings), for purification; symbol of hearth and home.

**Candle:** made of wax and burned in rituals for a variety of purposes; a tool of Fire and Spirit.

**Candleholder:** used to secure candles and sometimes also to catch wax drippings.

**Cauldron:** often made of iron; can contain earth, incense, fire, water, or other substances used in rituals.

**Chalice:** cup, used for asperging, libations, drinking, and/or other purposes; a tool of Water.

**Censer:** incense burner, sometimes with covering and/or suspended from chains.

**Cord:** length of rope, ribbon, or cloth used as ritual belt, to mark a circle, for handfastings, and other purposes.

**Cornucopia:** horn shaped basket used for offerings and to symbolize abundance.

**Drum:** used for sacred rhythm making for chanting, dancing, inner journeying, and other ritual purposes.

**Feather:** used with incense for consecration, a tool of Air.

**Herbs:** used in dried or fresh form as offerings, decorations, and other purposes.

**Icon:** painting, illustration, photograph, sculpture, or other rendering of the sacred

**I Ching:** ancient sacred book of Nature wisdom, & 50 yarrow stalks or three coins for divination meditation.

**Keppen Rod:** forked wand; sometimes used to hold and bless rings in handfasting/wedding rites.

**Mirror:** silver or black mirror or scrying glass sometimes used in divination meditations.

**Pentacle:** five pointed star in a circle; in platter form, a tool of Earth; in jewelry form, Wiccan symbol.

**Pentagram:** interlaced five pointed star; used as a sacred gesture; also may adorn jewelry, garb, and/or books.

**Poppet:** herb filled cloth soft sculpture usually used for healing.

**Quartz Crystal:** faceted stone used for healing, meditation, and other sacred purposes; a tool of Spirit.

**Rattle:** rhythm instrument used for healing, invocations, and other ritual purposes, a tool of Spirit.

**Robe:** ceremonial garment sometimes worn in rituals, celebrations, and on other spiritual occasions.

**Runes:** carved symbols on wood or ceramic used in divination meditations.

**Salt:** table salt or sea salt used for purification and protection, a tool of Earth.

**Sickle:** curved sacred blade used in harvesting herbs; symbol of harvest.  
**<Many practitioners have a small sickle made of silver or gold.>**

**Smudge Stick:** dried herbs on stalks bundled together and lit for use as incense.

**Spirit Bag:** spiritual growth amulet containing dried sacred herbs and a precious stone.

**Staff:** wooden branch or pole used for circle casting, directing energy, Morris dancing, and sometimes for ritual walks.

**Sword:** large ceremonial blade used in circle casting and other work but not for cutting; a tool of Fire & Air.

**Tarot:** sacred cards with spiritual imagery used in divination meditation.

**Wand:** usually made of wood; may be used in circle casting, etc.; a tool of Fire or Spirit.

**Other Tools:** This is not a complete list, but a sampling of the tools most often used.



## SABBATS AND THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR: *Sacred Cycle of Sun and Seasons*

From ancient times when pagans were hunter-gatherers and through a long period of agrarian development, mankind observed the cycles of the Sun throughout the year, the Lunar phases during the month and observed the effects of these cycles on all living things. Back then man was very much in tune with nature--his very survival dependant on such observances. He reaped, sowed, hunted and husbanded by these cycles. His attunement and respect for these cycles not only resulted in his survival but led to a very immanent connection with the Divine that modern man is only beginning to recover in this new millennium. There are eight Sabbats, or sacred festival celebrations, in the spiritual calendar, known as "**The Wheel of the Year**". These consist of the Solstices and Equinoxes (the Minor Sabbats) and the midpoints between, which are also known as the Cross Quarters and as the Celtic Fire Festivals (the Major Sabbats). The Sabbats occur approximately forty days apart and are a system of promises and polarities. Each minor Sabbat is the promise of the Greater Sabbat and there are essentially four polarities, two promises, three seasons of birth and three seasons of death (or rebirth into the otherworld). The Wheel reflects the Wicca view of time and machinations of the universe and one could begin the annual journey on the Wheel at any point.

- 1.) **Imbolc**—The Divine spark from the otherworld impregnates this world
- 2.) **Ostara** (vernal equinox)—pregnancy of the Goddess confirmed, promise of birth of the God into this world
- 3.) **Beltain**: actual birth of the God into this world
- 4.) **Litha** (summer solstice)—God commits himself to the Land (promises the Goddess, his wife to sacrifice himself so her children may be reborn)
- 5.) **Lughnasadh**—God sacrificed, physical death in this world—the divine spark enters the otherworld
- 6.) **Mabon** (autumnal equinox)—“ghost of the dead God” seeks to take the Goddess to the other world, has to be shown the way
- 7.) **Samhain** —God has finally made it to the otherworld
- 8.) **Yule** (winter solstice)--promise and commitment by the Goddess that the God of the other world will impregnate her so a new God of this world will be born to rule the harvest and rebirth of man and beasts

This cycle contains three birth stages; Imbolc-Osatra-Beltain and three death stages; Lughnasadh-Mabon-Samhain. There are Four promises or commitments (the minor Sabbats). The two "main" commitments, true renewals of the Divine covenants are Litha (by the God) and Yule (by the Goddess). Whereas the God dies at Lughnasadh, His "spirit" still roams this world at Mabon, and it is only from Samhain on that He is truly "gone" and absent from this world. This total absence lasts until Imbolc. This period between Samhain and Imbolc is the "dark" period when the Lord of Misrule leads a "caretaker" government in some traditions. Each Sabbat is a "transition" on the Solar Wheel, and each transition" can be seen as a "death-and-rebirth". At Yule, the northern hemisphere starts "climbing" again and at Litha it begins once again the descent. So Yule can be seen as the "birth of the "waxing" sun and beginning of the "rule" of the Oak or summer King and Litha as the "birth" of the "waning" sun and beginning of the "rule" of the Holly or winter King.

Because of secular calendar reconfigurations in recent centuries, dates of the Cross Quarter festivals may vary by several days. Some groups prefer to celebrate on what has become the traditional date across most Wiccan traditions; others try to celebrate at the actual midpoint between each Solstice and Equinox as was done in ancient times. <See the preceding table for general dates, agricultural and popular observances, and other common names>.

## **Samhain**

This is the Sabbat of Death and rest. The final harvest has been made. The land and creatures prepare for the sleep of winter. The God, Lord of the Wild Hunt returned from Death at Mabon to claim The Goddess as Queen of the otherworld, now escorts The Goddess with him to the under world to rule in the land of summer. For a time the veil between this world and the other world is thin and we can visit our forefathers and learn from them. The Dark Lord, the initiator has completed the heroic quest and rules in the land of rest—magic command—to be Silent. There, the Dark Lord then enters the Magician phase of man. Here he teaches the Goddess the Mysteries. At the end of this phase he becomes the Old Dragon, the ultimate magician destined for the collective consciousness—magic command—To Teach; also called: Halloween, All Hallows Eve, All Saints & All Souls Days, and Days of the Dead

- dates: October 31, early November
- colors: black, orange, and indigo
- special tools: votive candles, magic mirror, cauldron, pumpkins, and divination special tools
- theme: death & transformation; Wiccan New Year
- ritual focus: honoring ancestors, releasing old, foreseeing future, understanding death and rebirth
- customs: jack o' lanterns, spirit plate, ancestor altar, divination, and costumes

## **Winter Solstice (Yule)**

It is at Yule that we renew our covenant with the Goddess (covenant between the Goddess and the Wiccans as Her “hidden children” and between the Goddess and Nature in a broader sense). The Goddess commits Herself to getting impregnated by the God of the otherworld (at Imbolc) so as to bring forth new life into this world (at Beltain). In nature, we see the Yuletide how life has withdrawn deep underground.

Cosmic background: Winter (Saturn in Capricorn; element--Earth)

- also called: Yule, Jul, Saturnalia, Christmas, solar/secular New Year
- dates: around December 21
- colors: red, green, and white
- special tools: mistletoe, evergreen wreath, lights, gifts, holly, Yule log, and Yule tree
- theme: regeneration & renewal
- ritual focus: personal renewal, world peace, honoring family & friends
- customs: wreaths, evergreens, lights, gift-giving, singing, feasting, and resolutions

## **Candlemas (Imbolc)**

IMBOLC: (meaning "in the belly") This is the Sabbat of the quickening Earth. The seed lies in the ground, fertile and ready to spring forth. The Goddess has fulfilled her promise to become pregnant with the God. The Old Dragon, the Old God (or philosopher as in the myth of Diana and Lucifer) has released the goddess from the underworld to go bring rebirth and fertility to the world. The Old God achieves Divinity and moves into the collective consciousness—Magic command—To Teach--while the new Sun Child, child of promise is growing inside the Goddess, destined to be the lover of the Goddess and father of the Sun. The Child/Lover phase of Man—Magical command--To Know. Cosmic background: Uranus in Aquarius; element -- Air

- also called: Imbolc, Oimeic, Brigid's Day; merged with Lupercalia/Valentines Day
- dates: February 2, early February
- colors: white, and red
- special tools: candles, seeds, Brigid wheel, and milk
- theme: conception, initiation, and inspiration
- ritual focus: creative inspiration, purification, initiation, candle work, house & temple blessings
- customs: lighting candles, seeking omens of Spring, cleaning house, welcoming Brigid

## **Spring Equinox (Ostara)**

OSTARA: As Yule was the promise of the impregnation of Imbolc, Ostara is the promise of the new explosion of life at Beltain. At Ostara the Easter-eggs of folklore stress the fertility aspect. Though in western Europe at this time of the year, spring is more a concept than a reality, we feel that the time when everything will be in bloom once more cannot be far off, the air is full of promises. In the case of a human pregnancy this would be the point where the mother can feel the baby kicking in her womb. Cosmic Background: Spring (Mars in Aries; element--Fire)

- also called: Ostara, or Oestre, Easter, St. Patrick's Day
- dates: around March 21
- colors: green, and yellow
- special tools: eggs, basket, and green clothes
- theme: birthing, sprouting, or greening
- ritual focus: breakthrough, new growth, new projects, or seed blessings
- customs: wearing green, egg games, new clothes, and egg baskets

## **Beltane**

This is the Sabbat of rebirth. The God is physically born into this world, grows up quickly and becomes the lover of The Young Goddess -- the Green Man of fertility. The season of Love and fertility for humans and earthly things, the seed is sprouting forth from the earth and life is returning to the land. The fertility of the God And Goddess is that of new ideas and undertakings and waxing of the machinations of the universe. The shape-shifter Goddess, who was the partner of the Old God in the otherworld , will be the young maiden lover of the new God, her son who rescues her. In doing so the young God vanquishes the Old God who proceeds into the collective unconscious driving change and giving energy to the universe.

The Young God rules over the animals and the forest making plants and animals fertile, and He Shepherds the newborn creatures. This is not an appropriate time for handfastings of mortals, as theirs would be overshadowed by the power of the love of the Gods as The Oak King is in his prime. He enters The “Warrior” phase of man—Magical command --To Will. Cosmic background: Venus in Taurus; element -- Earth

- also called: May Eve, May Day, Walpurgis Night
- colors: rainbow spectrum, blue, green, pastels, or all colors
- special tools: Maypole & ribbons, flower crowns, fires, bowers, and fields
- theme: youthful play, exuberance, and pleasure
- ritual focus: love, romance, fertility, garden and crop blessings, or creativity endeavors
- customs: dancing Maypole, jumping fire, mating, flower baskets, and flower crowns

### **Summer Solstice (Litha)**

LITHA, just like its opposite, Yule, is a time of renewal of the Divine covenant. This time is especially the celebration of the commitment between the two lovers, the Goddess of the Land and the Young God. The Lovemaking of Beltane takes a more serious tone as the God has to commit himself to the Goddess. He has to marry her and through Her he is also wed to the Land and Her children. He has to assume responsibility for the fertility of the land, which will inevitably lead to His sacrifice of Lughnasadh. Litha is the most appropriate time for handfastings. Cosmic background: Summer (Luna in Cancer; element--Water)

- also called: Midsummer, Litha, St. John's Day
- dates: around June 21
- colors: yellow, gold, or rainbow colors
- special tools: bonfires, Sun wheel, and Earth circles of stone
- theme: partnership
- ritual focus: community, career, relationships, Nature Spirit communion, and planetary wellness
- customs: bonfires, processions, all night vigils, singing, feasting, or celebrating with others

### **Lammas (Lughnasadh)**

Lughnasadh: This is the Sabbat of Sacrifice and a celebration of the first harvest—wheat and grains. The God has become the responsible Husband of the Goddess and sacrifices himself as he had promised at Litha so that life of Her children, the land and its creatures may continue. This is a conception just as its polar counterpart of Imbolc, both ensuing from a commitment on the preceding “minor” Sabbat. This is a conception in the other world—the physical death of the God has created a fetus to be born in the otherworld at Samhain. There is “blood on the corn” and after the harvest the world will take on a barren appearance as the heat of the God bakes the land in the last days of summer. The God has passed the zenith of his strength and rule and begins to make way for the next cycle. The “flesh” of the dead God will be plowed under to impregnate the land for the next cycle—the sperm plowed under in the womb of the Great Mother. The Holly King begins his rule over the waning time. He enters The Husband/King Phase of man—Magical command—To Dare. Cosmic background: Sol in Leo; element--Fire.

- dates: August 2, early August

- colors: orange, yellow, brown, and green
- special tools: sacred loaf of bread, harvested herbs, and bonfires
- theme: fruitfulness, or reaping prosperity
- ritual focus: prosperity, generosity, or continued success
- customs: offering of first fruits/grains, games, and country fairs

## Fall Equinox (Mabon)

At Mabon, though the “body” of the God died at Lughnasadh his “spirit” still roams the earth. In some traditions he is seeking to take the Crone Goddess into the otherworld with him. We have to send this “spirit” on its way, so that he can be born at Samhain in the otherworld. We have to banish him to guarantee that he arrives in time in the otherworld. Mabon, the “minor” Sabbat again holds the promise of the coming “major” Sabbat just as it holds the memory of the previous. It is at Samhain that the God, whose memory still lingers on in the late summer days of Mabon will definitely be lost to this world. Note the sacrificial God (common to nearly all known religions) dies in three phases as in many myths (African, Celtic myths and the threefold death in “The way of Merlin”). That is the physical death (Lughnasadh), the wandering spirit (Mabon) and finally lost to this world at Samhain.

Cosmic background: Autumn (Venus in Libra; element--Light)

- also called: Michaelmas
- dates: around September 21
- colors: orange, red, brown, purple, and blue
- special tools: cornucopia, corn, or harvested crops
- theme: appreciation & harvest
- ritual focus: thanksgiving, harvest, or introspection
- customs: offerings to land, preparing for cold weather, and bringing in harvest

## SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

From the material presented thus far, it should be evident that many popularly held conceptions of Wicca and Paganism are patently false. It is important to note that human sacrifice is not a practice found in the Wiccan context. Animal sacrifice, while common in religions such as Santeria or Palo, is also not a practice endorsed by Wicca. Wiccans generally respect the right of practitioners of religions which employ this practice to worship as they see fit, but they feel that for themselves effective magic does not need to entail the killing of animals. Wicca is, quite simply, based on reverence and respect for all life, guided by the principle of "harm none." The underlying moral concept of this principle is similar to the Christian concept of reaping what one sows. In Wicca, this concept is referred to as the "Three-fold Law" which holds that any action, positive or negative, will return in some way upon the doer three-fold or three times. This concept of three is interpreted literally or symbolically by Wiccans depending upon the tradition. It should also be evident that worship of Satan, or a Christian conception of a Devil who is the source of ultimate evil, is most assuredly **not** an element of Wiccan traditions. This misconception persists without a reasonable basis primarily among conservative religious groups. Historically, it seems likely that a figure with cloven hoofs and horns, resembling the Horned God of the Woods found in many early Pagan traditions (a deity known at various times by names such as Pan, Cernunnos, Cerne, and later Herne the Hunter), came to be associated with the Devil, or

Satan of Christian traditions. This "demonization" of the Horned God is not surprising, as efforts by the early Church to discourage worship of the old deities may have contributed to a tendency to view them in a negative light. Indeed, it is not historically uncommon for newcomers to a given region to view the gods of Indigenous inhabitants as demons or evil entities. Whether the newcomers are invaders, immigrants, or missionaries, it does not seem to alter their perception of the indigenous culture.

Other, broader-based misconceptions are the notions that Wiccan and Pagan rites universally include the use of controlled or illegal substances, indiscriminate sexual promiscuity, and blatantly malefic magic. It is true that many people naively come to the Craft expecting to find pot parties, sex orgies, or some magical spell to turn an ex-lover into a toad. When they discover that discipline, dedication, and hard work are required to effectively practice the Craft, they usually become disillusioned quite early on. Most will then seek less demanding ways in which to gratify their needs. Those who persist long enough to work through the window dressing usually find a deep and rewarding spiritual practice that is more internally than externally focused.

# PART II

## THE US MILITARY AND ALTERNATIVE RELIGIONS

## THE LAW OF THE LAND and WICCA

The free exercise of religion is a Constitutional right for all United States citizens. Individuals who serve in the nation's Armed Forces, likewise, are extended this right. The Armed Forces Chaplaincy, which does not serve as an expressed religious entity within the context of the Armed Forces, was established by Congress to serve the religious needs of those serving in the nation's Armed Forces. Thus, it is the responsibility of the Armed Forces Chaplaincy to protect, provide for, and ensure that the free exercise of religion is observed inviolate for all members of the United States Armed Forces.

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads: *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances* (emphasis added). This law [sic] prohibits the establishment of a state church and establishes the free exercise of religion for all United States citizens. Thus, all citizens are protected by the government to pursue their religious beliefs, customs, and traditions without fear of reprisals or sanctions by the government.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 elucidates the First Amendment with regard to religion: *To be a bona fide religious belief entitled to protection under either the First Amendment or Title VII, a belief must be sincerely held, and within the believer's own scheme of things religious.* (USCA Const. Amend 1: Civil Rights Act 1964 701 et. seq., 717 as amended 42 USCA 2000-16)

Based upon the above legislation, and specifically pertaining to the Wicca religion, the District Court of Virginia declared in 1985 (Dettmer v. Landon, 617 F Sup 592) that: **Wicca is clearly a religion** for First Amendment purposes. . . *Members of the Church sincerely adhere to a fairly complex set of doctrines relating to the spiritual aspect of their lives, and in doing so they have 'ultimate concerns' in much the same way as followers of more accepted religions. Their ceremonies and leadership structure, their rather elaborate set of articulated doctrine, their belief in the concept of another world, and their broad concern for improving the quality of life for others gives them at least some facial similarity other more widely recognized religions.*" Judge J. Butzner of the Fourth Circuit Federal Appeals confirmed the decision (Dettmer v. Landon, 799 F.2d. 929) in 1986 saying: **"We agree with the District Court that the Doctrine taught by the Church of Wicca is a religion."** \*

## THE MILITARY CULTURE AND RELIGION

Although this and the following section address areas specific to Service members, the material should also be of interest to a broader population, particularly the section citing Department of Defense Policy regarding religious pluralism. To most people who have never experienced life in the military, mere mention of the word conjures up images of staunch conservatism, mindless robots, regimentation, blind obedience to orders, and social stagnation. Few realize that the US Military has been the avant-garde of every wave of social change and progress evident during the latter half of this century. The US Military recognized and accepted social and cultural diversity in its ranks long before those issues became "politically correct" and well before liberal causes were zealously embraced by the general



American public. The US armed services implemented policies and change to insure social equities years before the first Civil Rights Act was passed by Congress. The military services were already fully integrated in the mid-Fifties when "Whites" and "Coloreds" signs were still posted on drinking fountains and lavatory doors. By the early 1970s, the Women's Army Corps had ceased to exist, and female soldiers were transitioned into all Branches of the Army except the Combat Arms. Desert Storm saw women pilots flying combat support missions. The notion that the military is autocratic and repressive in regards to personal liberties and freedoms is another commonly held but grossly distorted myth. True, the military by its very nature demands of its members significant discipline and self-sacrifice, conditions which have been voluntarily accepted since the Draft was abolished in the 1970s. However, no individual is told when, how, or to whom to pray, or what to think, or what religious dogma he or she must believe. Service personnel are often afforded many opportunities to visit exotic and far-away places where the military and the civilian population are not granted those basic human rights. Consequently, military members tend to experience an enhanced sense of appreciation and respect for personal liberties. Despite the apparent rigidity of the military structure, no military service or command should knowingly infringe upon the right of an individual member to practice any legitimate religion he or she may choose, so long as it does not interfere with his or her ability to carry out the assigned mission. Chaplains, regardless of their personal religious denomination or particular faith, have always been present in the ranks of the military services, and they have always endeavored to be responsive to the needs of all the troops. Given the social, cultural, and ethnic diversity of the military population, our military chaplains have been required to look beyond their own seminaries and learn enough about other religions to serve all military personnel in times of need. The military is committed to the idea that the choice of religion is an individual's inalienable right. This is not propaganda; it is merely the statement of an observable and easily verifiable fact by the authors, who have nearly five decades of military service between them.

This is not to say that there have not been or do not continue to be difficulties which arise between some chaplains, commanders, and military supervisors on the one hand and service members who choose to practice non-mainstream religions on the other. Usually, however, these problems are confined to relatively minor misunderstandings of each other's positions and perspectives, or they may simply be due to crossed communications. It has been our experience that the majority of military chaplains are conscientious and supportive of all minority faith groups once they understand the needs and practices of that particular group. When reading the following section, it is important to note that efforts by military chaplains to accommodate the spiritual needs of Wiccans can best be facilitated by flexibility and readiness to compromise on the part of Wiccan practitioners or groups as well. For instance, in cases where the use of blades or open flames is contraindicated by regulations or safety conditions associated with specific spaces on military bases, acceptable substitutes should be discussed. Tools are, after all, a symbolic representation of the inner state of the practitioner, and a disciplined Wiccan should be able to be flexible and adaptable in spiritual practice when necessary.

Military personnel who work with or supervise Wiccans in their command structure should primarily be aware of the general dates of religious holidays, which are common to many different Pagan and Wiccan traditions. As emphasized above, names of holidays may vary, and different traditions may celebrate all or some of them. The time frame and dates of

seasonal celebrations are nearly universal in Neo-Paganism. It is possible that for one or more of these Sabbats, Wiccan individuals in military service will request one or more days of leave to celebrate them, when such a request does not interfere with the mission of the military branch or service for which they work.

The Department of Defense establishes general policy for the military services through DoD Directives. Each service and subordinate command then issues regulations and instructions implementing that policy. Interpretation and implementation may vary widely from service to service and command to command. The service member is encouraged to meet with his or her servicing chaplain for local guidelines. What follows is the DoD Directive for Accommodation of Religious Practices within the Military Services, and a citation of the appropriate regulation or instruction for each military service. This section concludes with excerpts from the US Army Chaplains' Handbook that provides information on selected religious faith groups.

## **IMPLEMENTING POLICY**

The “supreme law of the land” concerning the right to practice one’s faith is implemented by the military services through the Chaplains corps. Presidential powers are delegated through a series of executive orders to the department of defense down to the service chiefs, service chaplains and finally to the respective installation chaplains who are responsible for executing DOD policy, local programs and ministering to servicemen. DODD 1300.17 below summarizes this process.

### ***TITLE: DODD 1300.17, Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services, February 3, 1988, ASD(FM&P), thru Ch 1, October 17, 1988***

References:

- (a) DoD Directive 1300.17, subject as above, June 18, 1985 (hereby canceled)
- (b) Public Law 98-525, section 554(d), DoD Authorization Act, 1985, October 19, 1984
- (c) Public Law 100-180, section 508, DoD Authorization Act, 1988-89, December 4, 1987
- (d) Title 10, United States Code, chapter 47, Uniform Code of Military Justice

#### **A. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE**

This Directive reissues reference (a) and, pursuant to references (b) and (c), prescribes policy, procedures, and responsibilities for the accommodation of religious practices in the Military Services.

#### **B. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE**

1. This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments (including their National Guard and Reserve components), the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (OJCS), and DoD Field Activities.
2. The policies and procedures prescribed herein apply solely to the accommodation of religious practices in the Military Services and in no other context.

#### **C. POLICY**

1. A basic principle of our nation is free exercise of religion. The Department of Defense places a high value on the rights of members of the Armed Forces to observe the tenets of their respective religions. It is DoD policy that commanders should approve requests for

accommodation of religious practices when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards or discipline.

2. The following goals are to be used by the Military Departments in the development of guidance on the exercise of command discretion concerning the accommodation of religious practices. Nothing in these goals or in the implementing rules of the Military Departments (except when expressly provided therein) shall be interpreted as requiring a specific form of accommodation in individual circumstances.

a. Worship services, holy days, and Sabbath observance should be accommodated, except when precluded by military necessity.

b. The Military Departments should include religious belief as one factor for consideration when granting separate rations, and permit commanders to authorize individuals to provide their own supplemental food rations in a field or "at sea" environment to accommodate their religious beliefs.

c. The Military Departments should consider religious beliefs as a factor for waiver of immunizations, subject to medical risks to the unit and military requirements, such as alert status and deployment potential.

d. The Military Departments should include relevant materials on religious traditions, practices, and policies in the curricula for command, judge advocate, chaplain, and similar courses and orientations.

e. The Military Departments should develop a statement advising of DoD policy on individual religious practices and military requirements to applicants for commissioning, enlistment, and reenlistment.

f. Religious items or articles not visible or otherwise apparent may be worn with the uniform, provided they shall not interfere with the performance of the member's military duties, as discussed in subparagraph C.2.g.(5), below, or interfere with the proper wearing of any authorized article of the uniform.

g. Under Public Law 100-180, section 508 (reference (c)), members of the Armed Forces may wear visible items of religious apparel while in uniform, except under circumstances in which an item is not neat and conservative or its wearing shall interfere with the performance of the member's military duties.

(1) Under this Directive, "religious apparel" is defined as articles of clothing worn as part of the doctrinal or traditional observance of the religious faith practiced by the member. Hair and grooming practices required or observed by religious groups are not included within the meaning of religious apparel. Jewelry bearing religious inscriptions or otherwise indicating religious affiliation or belief is subject to existing Service uniform regulations just as jewelry that is not of a religious nature.

(2) In the context of the wearing of a military uniform, "neat and conservative" items of religious apparel are those that:

(a) Are discreet, tidy, and not dissonant or showy in style, size, design, brightness, or color.

(b) Do not replace or interfere with the proper wearing of any authorized article of the uniform.

(c) Are not temporarily or permanently affixed or appended to any authorized article of the uniform.

(3) The standards in subparagraph C.2.g.(2), above, are intended to serve as a basis for determining a member's entitlement under Public Law 100- 180, section 508 (reference (c)), to wear religious apparel with the uniform. For example, unless prohibited by subparagraph C.2.g.(6), below, a Jewish yarmulke may be worn with the uniform whenever a military cap, hat, or other headgear is not prescribed. A yarmulke may also be worn underneath military

headgear as long as it does not interfere with the proper wearing, functioning, or appearance of the prescribed headgear.

(4) Exceptions to the standards in subparagraph C.2.g.(2), above, and other special accommodations for members of particular religious groups may be granted by the Military Departments under section D., below.

(5) Whether an item of religious apparel interferes with the performance of the member's military duties depends on the characteristics of the item, the circumstances of its intended wear, and the particular nature of the member's duties. Factors in determining if an item of religious apparel interferes with military duties include, but are not limited to, whether the item may:

(a) Impair the safe and effective operation of weapons, military equipment, or machinery.

(b) Pose a health or safety hazard to the wearer or others.

(c) Interfere with the wearing or proper functioning of special or protective clothing or equipment (e.g., helmets, flack jackets, flight suits, camouflaged uniforms, gas masks, wet suits, and crash and rescue equipment).

(d) Otherwise impair the accomplishment of the military mission.

(6) A complete prohibition on the wearing of any visible items of religious apparel may be appropriate under unique circumstances in which the member's duties, the military mission, or the maintenance of discipline require absolute uniformity. For example, members may be prohibited from wearing visible religious apparel while wearing historical or ceremonial uniforms; participating in review formations, parades, honor or color guards, and similar ceremonial details and functions.

(7) The authority to approve the wearing of an item of religious apparel with the uniform, under the guidelines of this paragraph, shall be exercised at the command level specified by each Military Department. Denials of requests to wear religious apparel shall be subject to review at the Service Headquarters level. Final review shall occur within 30 days following the date of initial denial for cases arising in the United States, and within 60 days for all other cases. Exceptions to these deadlines shall be limited to exigent circumstances, such as extended deployment. Service members shall be obliged to comply with orders prohibiting the wearing of questionable items of religious apparel pending review of such orders under regulations issued by the Secretaries of the Military Departments.

h. Notwithstanding paragraphs C.2.f. and g., above, chaplains may wear any required religious apparel or accouterments with the uniform while conducting worship services and during the performance of rites and rituals distinct to their faith groups.

#### D. PROCEDURES

1. Under rules prescribed by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, military commanders should consider the following factors along with any other factors deemed appropriate in determining whether to grant a request for accommodation of religious practices addressed in section C., above:

**a. The importance of military requirements in terms of individual and unit readiness, health and safety, discipline, morale, and cohesion.**

**b. The religious importance of the accommodation to the requester.**

**c. The cumulative impact of repeated accommodations of a similar nature.**

**d. Alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation.**

**e. Previous treatment of the same or similar requests, including treatment of similar requests made for other than religious reasons.**

2. The factors in subsection D.1, above, are intended to promote standard procedure for resolving difficult questions involving accommodation of religious practices. In view of the

different mission requirements of each command, individual consideration of specific requests for accommodation is necessary; With the exception of requests involving the wearing of visible items of religious apparel with the uniform, denials of which must be reviewed at the Service Headquarters level, the appropriate level of command for resolution of these issues shall be determined by each of the Military Departments, based on its particular requirements and circumstances.

3. When requests for accommodation are not in the best interest of the unit and continued tension between the unit's requirements and the individual's religious beliefs is apparent, administrative actions should be considered. These actions may include, but are not limited to, assignment, reassignment, reclassification, or separation. Nothing in this Directive precludes action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (reference (d)) in appropriate circumstances.

#### E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) shall be responsible for the administration of this Directive and may modify or supplement this Directive, as appropriate.

2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall be responsible for issuance of appropriate implementing documents and administration of the rules thereunder within their respective Departments.

#### F. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective immediately. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall forward two copies of implementing documents to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) within 45 days of the issuance of this Directive or any subsequent change.

William I. Taft, IV Deputy Secretary of Defense

## ACCOMMODATING DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUPS

As we have seen it is DOD policy for services to make every effort to accommodate the religious needs of all service members whenever feasible to do so. Air Force Chaplain MGen William J. Dendinger sums up service policy best in his 1998 position paper to the Armed Forces Chaplains Board and USAF chaplains stating:

“Chaplains must respect the right of military members in matters of religion or spiritual belief. They are not required to support all requests for religious accommodation. Instead the chaplain has a duty to assist the commander in making a well reasoned, just and lawful decision on the question of religious accommodation. In doing this, consideration must be given to:

1. Legality—are the practices legal in accordance with secular law?
2. Community norms –does this practice in the Chapel constitute licentiousness?
3. The effect on order, discipline, and morale of the base.

By acknowledging all member’s right to believe as they please, two important premises are established vis-à-vis religious accommodation:

1. Chaplains are not asked to assess the veracity and sincerity of religious claims. Chaplains are, instead, clearly instructed to let everyone believe as they please
2. The criteria for determining whether to accommodate rests not in the domain of belief, but are defined by the effect such beliefs/practices have regarding, legality, community norms, and the order, discipline and morale of the base.

US Army policy regarding the role of chaplains to accommodate a wide variety of religious practices in accordance with DOD directives mirrors that of the USAF. Army Regulation 165-1, Chapter 1, section II, paragraph 1-4, c states:

The First amendment to the U.S. constitution prohibits the enactment of any law “respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. In striking a balance between the “establishment” and “free exercise” clauses, the Army Chaplaincy, in providing religious services and ministries to the command, is an instrument of the U.S. government to ensure that soldier’s religious “free exercise” rights are protected. At the same time, chaplains are trained to avoid even the appearance of any establishment of religion.”

In the same regulation, Chapter 3, paragraph “a” states:

- a. The Army recognizes that religion is constitutionally protected and does not favor one form of religious expression over another. Accordingly, **all religious denominations are viewed as distinctive faith groups and all soldiers are entitled to chaplain services support.**

There are over 1200 pages of documents regulating the ministries within the Armed forces those most applicable and useful are listed below. See Appendix II for a complete list of all regulations that potentially impact religious practice on military installations:

**SPECIFIC REGULATIONS:**

**ARMY**

AR 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army

DAM 600-75, Accommodating Religious Practices

**AIR FORCE**

AFI 52-1, Chaplain Service

AFI 52-101, Chaplain Service Responsibilities and Procedures

**NAVY AND MARINES**

OPNAVINST 1730.1B, Religious Ministries in the Navy

SECNAVINST 1730.8, Accommodation of Religious Practices

**US COAST GUARD**

COMDTINST M1730-4B, Religious Ministries within the Coast Guard

The above documents are usually available through your chaplain or the Installation resource library.

What does this all mean to the practitioner of a Distinctive Faith within the Armed Forces? — All these regulations are tools designed to ensure the services make every effort to accommodate a service member's rights to freely practice the religion of choice, free from harassment and prejudice so long as that practice does not endanger the mission, good order, and discipline.

## **ESTABLISHING A DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUP**

Normally the key factors in deciding to seek official support from the installation chaplain are the group has grown to a size no longer accommodated by a member's living room, and the members have established the commitment to meet regularly. Once a group of service members have determined there is a need and desire to establish a group on a military installation to accommodate their worship needs there is a fairly well defined process whereby the installation recognizes a "lay leader" and renders official support to a group. While the various service regulations concerning military ministries vary in the level of detail articulating the process to recognize and support groups they all have several things in common. They are:

1. There must be a clearly defined need with no program in place to meet the group's need.
2. There must be a properly qualified person to minister to the group—this can be a contract minister from off post or a recognized lay minister, deacon or priest from within the membership of the group.
3. The group must be military members, and their dependants, government employees and their dependants and in some special circumstances, (usually in remote or overseas locations) the employees of government contractors with support privileges established in their contract. The installation commander enjoys wide latitude to determine who may use base facilities for worship ceremonies.
4. Accommodating the group will not undermine good order, discipline, and morale of the installation. The amount of support will usually be proportionate to the group size and need.

U.S. Army regulation 165-1, Chapter 3. Paragraph 3-3, c states: "When facilities are shared, scheduling priority will be given to worship services conducted by chaplains and services that minister to the largest number of soldiers and family members. The Installation Staff Chaplain will supervise all worship services held on a military installation."

Concerning the Chaplains "supervisory responsibilities" just mentioned, the regulation goes on to say in chapter 4, paragraph 4-4, b: "Each chaplain will minister to the personnel of the unit and facilitate the free exercise rights of personnel regardless of religious affiliation of either the chaplain of the unit member."

In fact, this is the same philosophy shared by all services concerning use of facilities and chaplains' involvement — that is, the concept of fairness and proportionality is applied to supporting distinctive faith groups.

## **BECOMING A DISTINCTIVE FAITH GROUP LEADER (DFGL)**

The first step in establishing a group on a military installation once the need to do so has been determined is to find a responsible individual who can credibly minister to the needs of the group. This means someone willing and able to run the group administratively and has credibility in the faith represented. The procedures for becoming a DFGL vary from service to service in the degree of detail. Essentially all require the candidate to be officially sponsored (emissary letter, certifying form or certificate) by a federally recognized "Church" organization (IRS Title 501,3, c), and be recognized as one of high character capable of administering the group. The service articulating procedures in the greatest level of detail is the U.S. Army. For the purpose of our discussion we will use the U.S. Army model realizing if you conform to



their procedure you fulfill the requirements for recognition as a DFGL for all other services. U.S. Army regulation 165-1, chapter 5, section 5-5 articulates these procedures:

a. Distinctive faith group leaders may provide ministry on an exception to policy basis when military chaplains are not available to meet the faith group coverage requirements of soldiers and their families.

b. Distinctive Faith group leaders—

1. Are normally volunteers.
2. Do not function as military chaplains.
3. Must be sponsored and supervised by an assigned chaplain.
4. May receive offerings at services they conduct with the funds handled IAW chapter 14 of this regulation (ed. note: this procedure varies service to service — consult specific regs).
5. Will receive no payment for their services, travel or other expenses from APF(unless under contract). Military members will not be paid. However, if these leaders are nonmilitary full-time ordained clergy, they may be contracted. Pay rates will not exceed the contract price for civilian clergy contracted with APF.
6. Will not perform collective Protestant services

c. Distinctive faith group leaders seeking to provide religious services in chapel of unit facilities must submit an application (to be resubmitted for approval upon change of sponsoring Chaplain) to the local installation chaplain for approval. The prospective leader must—

1. Be approved by a religious organization recognized by the AFCB\* or recognized as a tax-exempt religious organization by the Internal Revenue service (IRS). In the latter case the perspective DFGL shall submit a letter of approval by an authorized leader of the distinctive faith group with a full description of the group. This will include its origin, the length of time it has existed, and the number of members of its parent faith group.
2. Establish the need for the requested distinctive group service.
3. Provide a list of those persons requesting the service. (ed. note: under the privacy act most chaplains will either keep this information in a secure location or will only ask for “number” of members vice names and or personal information).
4. Provide and explanation of why the service cannot be conducted by the installation chaplain.
5. Provide reasons why the local chaplain-led services cannot meet the specific theological/denominational requirements of the group.
6. Establish with the installation chaplain that the proposed distinctive faith group leader is qualified for the position.

d. DFGLs will not conduct services before approval by MACOM/ATARC/USARC MSC staff chaplain (ed. note: in all services the installation commander retains authority to accommodate DFG services but the chaplain acts as advisor and coordinates with major command headquarters).

\* At the time of this writing this requirement is being removed from the regulation as it is deemed to violate the prohibition against establishing a religion, and is more aimed at Ecclesiastical certifying organizations than DFGLs. The requirements for establishing an Ecclesiastical certifying organization recognized by the AFCB will not change. Organizations desiring to certify Armed Forces Chaplains will still have to submit DOD form 2741 along with all supporting documents for recognition. Organizations will certify on DOD form 2088 their

candidates meet the AFCB requirements for armed forces chaplains. Currently there are two federally recognized Wiccan Churches seeking ecclesiastical certifying authority, The Sacred Well Congregation and The Circle Sanctuary. Both have candidates for service chaplains. The requirement for the sponsoring organization to be a federally recognized organization by the IRS is expected to remain in effect. This discussion is presented for clarification purposes but is generally beyond the scope of this document.

## **BASIC QUALIFICATONS FOR DFGLs**

Each sponsoring organization has their own unique requirements for a DFGL candidate must meet to receive sponsorship. Those listed below are patterned after the authors' parent organization (Sacred Well Congregation) and represent requirements typically placed on DFGL candidates as the minimum to receive sponsorship:

1. Be a member of the sponsoring congregation.
2. Be at least 21 years old.
3. Be a high school graduate or have earned a GED.
4. Complete a prescribed course of distance and/or resident instruction under the supervision of an Ordained Officer who will certify completion of the course and make appropriate recommendation.
5. Be recommended to and approved by the International Executive Council — i.e. the sponsoring Organizational Church Elders.
6. Submit the application with all processing fees and appropriate annual membership fees/donations to the sponsoring organization (i.e. be a member in good standing of the parent organization).

The applicant will be advised when he/she has been approved for sponsorship as a DFGL and the sponsoring organization will tender all paper work required by service and installation regulations for the DFGL to receive support from the installation commander and chaplains.

## **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DFGL CANDIDATES**

Wicca does not go out and seek recruits. People come to the religion, we do not take the religion to the people. Before you begin to formally organize a group, there are several questions that you need to answer with brutal honesty:

- 1. Is there a need in this area for a study group or open circle?**
- 2. Is the interest in Traditional Craft Wicca, or is it in some eclectic or New Age or trendy pursuit?**
- 3. Do I want to take the responsibility to lead this group?**
- 4. Am I the most qualified to lead this group?**

If the interest is in TCW, and all of the other questions are answered in the affirmative, then it is safe to proceed. Bear in mind, question number 4 is relative. You are establishing your qualifications by pursuing this activity. Then there are several other questions that should be considered before actually announcing the group.

- 1. How will the group be structured?**
- 2. How often will it meet?**

3. Where will it meet?
4. How will it be financed?
5. Is the group merely for study and social activity, or will it assume a more coven-like structure?

## **STRUCTURING YOUR GROUP**

You (and hopefully your partner) will be the leaders of the group, and that should be clear to all concerned from the beginning. The newer the group, the more heterogeneous the group, and the younger the group, the more initial structure will be needed. You will have legitimate (leadership) power by virtue of the fact that you have an appointment from your sponsoring organization to lead your group. You will have expert power by virtue of the fact that you have completed the requirements to be a DFGL. Your goal will be to cultivate referent power. Again, the larger the group, the more demanding the responsibilities of leadership. The preferred leadership style should be **authoritative**. If you adopt an authoritarian leadership style, your group will self-destruct. If you adopt a democratic committee leadership style, your group will flounder and stagnate. If you try to organize a "consensus" or a "leaderless" group you are setting yourself up for failure. In any group, regardless of purpose, there must be a leader. If a bunch of people get together and form a "group" without a leader, by natural process or default, a leader will emerge. With this will come resentment from those who think they are more qualified than the leader, but failed to take the initiative. With this will come general resentment from the group in that it was supposed to be "leaderless". There will inevitably be bickering, backbiting and conflict. This is especially true in groups where the people do not know each other well before coming together, and in groups where the chronological (or emotional) ages of the members are relatively young. Again, establish clear leadership at the very beginning. One or two people can effectively manage a small group. A larger group requires more resources. As we have mentioned earlier, an open group is much more difficult than a closed group. You should immediately begin to identify members with skills and potential, and look two to three years down the road to pass off leadership responsibilities to them. This, of course, will require a process — the same process you went through to be participating in this program.

## **WHEN WILL THE GROUP MEET?**

This is entirely up to you as the leader. Considerations are the availability of meeting facilities, what you want to accomplish with your group and other Logistics (works schedules, baby sitters, etc.). Usually three to four hours twice a month is a good schedule to start with. Less frequently, and you lose continuity from one meeting to the next. More frequently and you run the risk of forcing socialization and may exacerbate any latent personality conflicts. Again, this is your call.

## **WHERE WILL THE GROUP MEET?**

Usually groups start very small and can be accommodated in someone's living room, or a rented room in a restaurant, coffee shop or bookstore. If your group is primarily made up of military members and family members, then you have other considerations to address. This is especially true if the group outgrows the living room and needs more space to meet. Then you will need to seek formal recognition and accommodation from your local chaplain. Bear

in mind, the military is not obligated to provide accommodation to civilians, or to small groups that can be accommodated in a living room. Each service has its own regulations, usually with local supplements. You will have to be intimately familiar with your particular regulations and policies and develop a good working relationship with your chaplain. More will be said on this in the sections that follow. In the beginning, you should have a place that is consistently available. From the outset, you should be looking for other suitable venues that will accommodate your group as it grows.

## **HOW WILL THE GROUP BE FINANCED?**

The group or Circle should be supported by *voluntary* donations. We do not demand "tithes" or coerce "offerings." The reality is, however, that no group can survive without financial support. The more spiritually and/or emotionally invested people are in the group, the more they are willing to contribute to the group, both in terms of time and money. When people perceive that they are getting something out of your group, they will be willing to put something into it. Even in very small groups there will be costs involved. The larger the group, of course, the more expenses are involved. The generally accepted rule is that Wiccans do not charge for providing training. This is not a commercial endeavor, and you should not personally profit from leading a group. That being said, it is not right to expect you as the leader to bear the costs of the training. Books, photocopies, candles, incense and the like are not free. But if the members are really interested, they will be willing to contribute to the costs of the services you are providing. This is true even in open circles where there is little or no training going on. People should not expect you to furnish all of the supplies and then provide them a feast afterwards. There are also hidden costs that you may initially overlook — postage, administrative reproduction, long-distance telephone calls and the like. Leading a group can become a financial burden on the leaders if proper plans are not made from the outset.

How do you fairly plan for and implement financial support for a not-for-profit group? We encourage nominal individual donations. The key is to keep the cost to the individual member as low as possible and to distribute the expense as fairly as possible across the group. If your group must rent meeting space, then everyone, including you, should contribute a proportional amount. If your group likes to have "pot-luck" socials after meetings, then a volunteer really should coordinate this. Otherwise, you will have the same people bringing the main course every time, and the same people bringing incidentals every time. This will eventually and legitimately lead to some resentment; a roast, cheesecake or bottle of wine is more expensive than a loaf of bread or a pack of napkins. At any given time, of course, some members will be able to contribute more than others. But it is the job of your designated coordinator to keep things as fair as possible. And then there are the costs of flowers, candles, oils, incense, etc., used in rituals and celebrations, and books and other materials used in any training that your group may provide. One possible solution is to have a fixed nominal donation from each member on an annual or semi-annual basis. Each year each member provides a sum to the group leaders who use the funds to provide all necessary supplies and expenses for the year. Any money that is left over at the end of the year is used for a brief holiday or party for the group. A similar system could be used for small but less formally organized groups. Larger groups tend to have a more transient participation in that people tend to come to some events and not to others. For groups without official military accommodation, it is not unreasonable to ask for a small donation per event attended, with

the money collected being used to cover the actual costs of the event, and any residual funds being held in reserve for future events. For groups with official military accommodation, all money donated or collected must be accounted for through the supporting chaplain's office. Each service is different, and local regulations vary. Leaders of groups with official military accommodation must be aware of and comply with relevant policy and procedures to retain their accommodation status.

## WHAT IS THE GROUP FOCUS?

Is the group merely for study and social activity, or will it assume a more coven-like structure? This question need not be answered immediately, but it should be a consideration from the outset. Under strong, competent leadership, a small group will often form a bond and naturally evolve into a coven-like structure. This coven-like structure can, and often does, form the inner core for a larger group or open circle.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MILITARY GROUPS

All Ecclesiastical Officers and military members in a leadership position whether or not involved in military congregations, should be familiar with this section. General questions regarding military groups are sure to come up, and you should know about this function to provide some guidance, and direct people to the appropriate Officer or committee. Specific policy, guidance and support for military groups are routinely handled by your sponsoring organization. The Sacred Well Congregation is an organization that has developed a solid infrastructure to support Wiccans in the military — this has become one of their major functions. If your sponsoring organization is not familiar with the process to sponsor groups in the military you may wish to contact them at the address or phone numbers provided at the end of this document. There are few other Wiccan or pagan groups that are qualified to provide this support, and of those, few are willing to take the responsibility. Misconceptions abound concerning how the military accommodates distinctive faith groups (formerly called "minority faith groups"). Misconceptions lead to misunderstandings, and misunderstandings lead to conflicts. There are some very basic points that should be clarified.

- a. Military chaplains are required to accommodate distinctive faith groups provided that a demonstrated need exists and regulations, policies and procedures are followed. They are *not* required to provide for religious accommodation of non-service members, their families, or non-DoD civilians.
  
- b. Leaders of distinctive faith groups are required to demonstrate the need for the accommodation and follow all applicable regulations, policies and procedures. These include local health and safety regulations, dress codes, and the same administrative regulations that apply to any other distinctive faith group that is receiving accommodation through the chaplain's office. On the surface, this seems very simple and straightforward. The vast majority of military chaplains that we have dealt with have gone out of their way, even to the point of liberally interpreting policy, to insure that our groups receive the accommodation and support they need. We have, on very rare occasion, encountered a chaplain that was reluctant to provide accommodation until every detail of the regulation and policy were met and approved. That is, of course, the prerogative of the individual chaplain, and ***does not constitute religious discrimination***. Usually this is a result of a simple lack of

understanding, but more often it is due to an initial adversarial relationship with the individual chaplain. In the first case, usually a telephone call or e-mail to your sponsoring organization or to the IEC of the Sacred Well Congregations can resolve the issue in a timely manner. The IEC and the Military have outstanding working relationships with the DoD Armed Forces Chaplains Board and the respective service Chief of Chaplains offices. The second case is much more problematic. Bridges once burned are often difficult to rebuild. However, once the relationship and the accommodation is established, and so long as it operates in compliance with policies and procedures, the military will stand firm in its support of us, or any other distinctive faith group. The key point to bear in mind, in all cases, is that the approach of the Sacred Well Congregation is one of **advocacy** not **activism**. This approach works very well, as our record will attest. Essentially, it is a common sense approach. Any officer who is considering establishment of a group or circle on a military installation, especially if formal accommodation is the eventual intent, should do the following:

**1. Contact the Sacred Well Military Advocacy Committee (MAC),** or the equivalent in your organization. The Director of Military Affairs and this committee can save you a lot of time, hard work and frustration.

**2. Establish a good working relationship with your supporting chaplain.**

The chaplain is there to help you, and in most cases he or she will be eager to do so. Don't get off on the wrong foot. Storming into someone's office, jumping up and down on desks, demanding rights and issuing ultimatums is not a good way to get started. The chaplain is aware of your rights; you don't need to enlighten him (or her). The chaplain is also aware of his or her own responsibilities to provide pastoral supervision and care, and the latitude he or she has in doing so. Bluntly, the chaplain could really care less about your contacting the Witches Anti-Defamation League or the American Civil Liberties Union. And, just like any other human being, when issued a threat or an ultimatum, is not likely to respond in the manner you desire. Most and hopefully all of you who are reading this will think that this scenario is so absurd that it should not even be mentioned here. So begin by establishing a good relationship with the person who will ultimately be responsible for your accommodation. Make an appointment; be punctual, appropriately attired, and prepared to articulate your current and future needs. Courtesy and respect goes a long way in establishing good rapport and a mutually beneficial relationship — of any sort.

**3. Establish a good working relationship with the Military Advocacy Committee (MAC).**

These Officers have been down this road before. They can help you in ways that may not even be apparent at first. They are your first point of contact in any issue, concern or problem relating to military groups under the sponsorship or support of the Sacred Well Congregation.

## **DFGL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **EMISSARY OF SPONSORING CHURCH TO SPONSORING CHAPLAINS**

One of the most important roles of the DFGL is to interact professionally with the sponsoring chaplain. He or she must be an honorable and credible representative of the sponsoring organization and of their congregation. Toward that end the DFGL must know the rules of his sponsoring church and abide by them implicitly. He should teach and instruct the chaplains in the beliefs of his faith, its laws, and limitations. Likewise he/she must abide by all military organizational rules concerning the use of facilities, allowable practices, standards of behavior and conduct expected on his installation. The DFGL is responsible for the conduct and welfare of his congregation and ensuring they understand and abide by all applicable guidelines set forth by both military and civilian sponsoring organizations. The DFGL is responsible for interacting with chaplains, caring for the needs and ministering to the group, maintaining proper ethical standards and behavior of the congregational members, scheduling events, maintaining continuity folders and inventories of congregational and government provided supplies and equipment. In short a DFGL is an instrument of the government facilitating the worship of his congregational members — he or she becomes a lay minister with all the roles and responsibilities of any other chaplain.

One of the first things you will be asked to do after you become recognized as a DFGL is to formally request the support you need for your group. Figure 1 is an example of a request for facilities use, figure 2 is a request for appropriated funds and may also be used to establish an offertory account, and figure 3 is an example form for media support. Each service, and in most cases each installation has their own forms — these are presented for demonstration purposes. You may also expect to receive a briefing on your rights and limitations in practice and facility use. In some cases the chaplain and/or installation commander may require DFGLs to sign a letter of agreement and maintain it in a continuity folder indicating you understand and consent to abide by all applicable regulations. In most cases in so doing you are accepting responsibility for the conduct of your members as well.

### **RESPONSIBILITY TO THE GROUP**

On becoming a DFGL you will be the defacto lay “minister”. You should expect members to look to you for guidance on the events schedule, to coordinate administrative requirements, lead services and generally mentor and counsel as any chaplain might be expected to do. You may even be added to the chaplain’s casualty notification list to minister to a Wiccan member who has need of a priest as the result of serious illness or fatality. It is your responsibility to continue to learn and progress in your spiritual knowledge to better serve your congregation and to encourage and assist them with their spiritual growth as well. You will be obliged to support dependants, minors and authorized civilian members of your group. You will often have to act as an arbitrator in situations where a member’s supervisor acts to suppress his/her rights or opportunity to worship, attend functions, maintain religious implements in quarters, etc. You may be called on to brief or explain members’ needs to commanders etc. — in short you will be the congregational representative to all concerned with your groups spiritual activities.

## **ETHICAL STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOR**

As we've already mentioned, DFGLs should conduct themselves as any other trusted officer of the government or agent of the chaplain's corps. If you or members of your congregation violate civil law or commit acts punishable under the UCMJ you will not be able to hide behind the curtain of religious practices. Obviously, Wiccans on military installations are not allowed to use mind-altering drugs, worship "skyclad", perform the Great Rite "in true", protest government or base policies in an illegal fashion etc. While Wicca celebrates sexuality, we all know this does not sanction adulterous activities nor behavior contrary to military regulations. DFGLs sometimes run the risk of becoming elevated in the eyes of certain congregational members. For this reason DFGLs should be ever mindful not to take advantage of their position nor to even give the appearance of doing so. In dealing with minors you should require they be accompanied to events by parents or guardians or have written permission from parents allowing their participation. Meet with parents before taking minors into the group and NEVER take a minor into your military group without the knowledge and consent of the parents or guardian. Whenever possible it is a good idea to separate youth and adult groups due to the nature discussions may take. If you are unable to separate the groups, be mindful of your audience and keep the discussion appropriate.

## **KEEPING TRACK**

One of the additional duties of the DFGL is to show accountability for resources and document facility use. To do this the DFGL will normally keep a continuity folder, record attendance, maintain an inventory of government provided supplies and equipment, track the use of consumables (candles incense) and provide a schedule of planned events to the chaplain. In most cases the sponsoring organization will also require the schedule and attendance in order to maintain their status as a federally recognized tax-exempt organization and to track the activities of the groups they sponsor.

### **Continuity Folders**

As a DFGL you should keep a continuity book with at least (but not limited to) the following items:

1. Emissary appointment Certificate.
2. Organizational Letter to Chaplains.
3. Local Appointment letter from installation commander.
4. Any Letters of Agreement between the Circle and installation commander.
5. A list of supplies and "Support Requirements for Chaplains".
6. Spiritual Philosophy and Practice of Wicca in the U.S. Military
7. Any literature, articles etc., you feel of use to your supporting Chaplains and/or commanders.
8. Schedule of Planned Events.
9. Record of Attendance.
10. Offertory funds data--if you collect funds you must account for them.
11. Inventory of government provided articles.
12. Points of contact.



## Supplies, Consumables and Government Supplied Equipment

The following list should provide some guidelines to DFGLs and their supporting Chaplains concerning consumables and government supplied items. DoD policy provides for the *reasonable* (italics added) accommodation of Distinctive Faith Groups consistent with military mission, good order, and discipline. When we go to chaplains requesting support, we should have a clear picture of what is needed for our particular group, and what will be needed to sustain it. Many of our groups were and are self-sufficient with the exception of a secure meeting place. Moderate to large groups, however, can be a financial burden for the DFGL. Groups that are just getting started are usually equipped by tools and items made or donated by members of the group itself. However, especially if the group is relatively young (in terms of experience and time in the Craft), they may not have such assets at their disposal. Therefore they may need a little additional help from the military in the beginning. Bear in mind, however, that any durable property purchased by the government belongs to the government, not to the group. It must be accounted for just like an M-16 or a Hummer. That means property books, hand receipts and inventories as an additional responsibility for the DFGL. There have been many questions from DFGLs and supporting Chaplains alike regarding support requirements for officially recognized groups. This list is intended as basic guidance, recognizing that every group and every Service has its own unique support requirements.

### ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

A secure meeting place where our services and activities can be conducted with safety and dignity. While our services are public, we should be afforded the same consideration as a group meeting in regular chapel service.

### ESSENTIAL DURABLE ITEMS FOR RITUAL AND ACTIVITIES

- 1 Table suitable for a main altar
- 1 container for salt
- 1 chalice or container for water
- 1 chalice for wine
- 1 pentacle
- 1 plate for cakes
- 1 censer or other appropriate device for incense
- 1 candle snuffer
- 2 Athames (usually personal property of the officiating priestess and priest)
- 2 Wands (usually personal property of the officiating priestess and priest)
- 1 Cauldron (size and material appropriate to group)
- 4 Tables suitable for quarter altars
- Resource Library of *quality* reference materials (See the Bibliography and Reference section of this publication for suggestions).

## **ESSENTIAL EXPENDABLE ITEMS FOR RITUAL AND ACTIVITIES**

incense appropriate for rite  
oil appropriate for rite  
matches or lighter  
appropriate to rite: altar cloths (main and quarter altars), additional votives or tapers,  
and simple altar decorations (wreaths, flowers, corn dollies, etc.)  
cakes or bread  
wine, ale, mead, or non-alcoholic beverage  
water  
salt  
1 large white pillar candle & holder (main altar)  
1 large black pillar candle & holder (main altar)  
1 smaller altar candle; (main altar, may be a pillar or votive with holder)  
1 medium yellow pillar candle & holder (East altar)  
1 medium red pillar candle & holder (South altar)  
1 medium blue pillar candle & holder (West altar)  
1 medium green pillar candle & holder (North altar)

**DESIRABLE OR USEFUL ITEMS** (durable and expendable subject to availability of resources and needs of the group)

Bell  
Besom  
Scourge  
Staffs  
Drums, rattles and musical instruments  
Recorded music appropriate for ritual  
Goddess/God representations (altar)  
Statuary  
Tapestry  
Art & Posters  
Parchment  
Herbs  
Cords  
Bags

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and is intended for guidelines and recommendations. The above materials should be sufficient to properly perform any rite or ritual. Each group must determine its own needs and requirements. Some groups can make-do with less; others have a much larger inventory of material than the above list reflects.

### **Schedule of Events**

In many cases the chaplain and/or the sponsoring organization will request the DFGL provide a schedule of events. The Chaplain will use the document to support facility requirements, de-conflict events and ensure facilities use is optimized. The sponsoring organization will typically use these figures to track the activities of the groups they sponsor and to support their federal recognition as a “church” organization. Figure 4 shows a typical event schedule.

<b>BASE CHAPEL FACILITY REQUEST</b>			
<b>TODAY'S DATE:</b>			
<b>DATE REQUESTED:</b>		<b>TIMES REQUESTED:</b>	
		<b>BEGIN:</b>	<b>END:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>ONE-TIME</b>	<b>FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE:</b>	<b>END DATE:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>RECURRING</b>			
<b>NAME OF EVENT:</b>			
<b>FACILITY REQUESTED</b>	CHAPEL		Maximum Occupancy: 230
	ANNEX , ROOM 1		Maximum Occupancy: 10
	ANNEX, ROOM 2		Maximum Occupancy: 15
	ANNEX, ROOM 3		Maximum Occupancy: 15
	ANNEX, ROOM 4		Maximum Occupancy: 20
	ANNEX , ROOM 8		Maximum Occupancy: 60
<b>SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:</b>			
<b>PRINTED NAME OF REQUESTOR:</b>		<b>UNIT/OFFICE:</b>	<b>RANK:</b>
			<b>PHONE:</b>
<b>SIGNATURE OF REQUESTOR:</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>SIGNATURE OF SPONSORING CHAPLAIN:</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>SIGNATURE OF APPROVING OFFICIAL: (NCOIC or Wing Chaplain)</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>SIGNATURE OF FACILITY MANAGER:</b>		<b>DATE ENTERED INTO COMPUTER:</b>	

**FIGURE 1**

# CHAPEL APPROPRIATED FUND REQUEST

Please, fill out completely. Incomplete forms will not be processed.

<b>Requestor:</b> (Name) Duty Phone: Home Phone:		<b>Activity:</b>		
<b>Today's Date:</b>		<b>Date Needed:</b> (5 business days minimum)		
<b>Vendor Name:</b> Web Address: Phone: Fax: E-mail:		<b>Justification For Item:</b>		
<b>Type of Transaction Required:</b>	IMPAC Card			
<b>Mode of Acquisition:</b>	Web Address	Fax	E-mail Address	Pick-up from Vendor

## Purchase Information

Item Number	Description	Quantity	Price	Total

	<b>Shipping Grand Total</b>
--	---------------------------------

Title	Signature	Date
<b>Requestor</b>		
<b>NCOIC of Resources</b>		
<b>NCOIC of Chapel</b>		
<b>Wing Chaplain</b>		

### Appropriated Fund Manager Use Only

Date Received:	Date Processed/Ordered:	Cardholder Ordered	Delivery Date	Amount:
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**FIGURE 2**

# Chapel Publicity Request

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name/Phone of requester:  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Complete this form and place in sponsoring chaplain's box by the following suspense:***

**Protestant Bulletin:** Close of business Friday, 1week before the weekend you want publicity to be run

**Catholic Bulletin:** Close of business Friday, 1week before the weekend you want publicity to be run

**AFKN, CATV, BASE PAPER:** 14 days prior to the date publicity is to be run

Where do you want publicity to be run? (Check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ Protestant Bulletin

\_\_\_\_ Catholic Bulletin

\_\_\_\_ Base Newspaper (Primarily for Special Events)

\_\_\_\_ AFKN (Special Events)

\_\_\_\_ CATV (Recurring Events)

Nature/Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time/Place of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Publicity to be run: \_\_\_\_\_

**Announcement/Article** (Type or Print legibly here, or attach to this form)

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Name of sponsoring organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Point of Contact name and phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Coordination Routing: (Initials)**

Sponsoring Chaplain: \_\_\_\_\_

Sr Protestant/Sr Catholic Chaplain: \_\_\_\_\_

NCOIC, Base Chapel: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrative Support Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ (For Production)

## FIGURE 3

The Open Circle

Event Schedule and Attendance

Event Recap 01 Jan--30 Jun 2001 & Plan for 01 Aug--31 Dec 01

Date	Event	Attendance	location	Leader	Remarks	Offering
20 Jan 01	Open Circle	16	Chapel Annex	Ron/Robert	Divination Techniques	0
03 Feb 01	Imbolc Sabbat	16	Chapel Annex	R/Dav/M/Rob		Pot Luck
14 Feb 01	Open Circle	0	N/A		Weather Cancelled	0
03 Mar 01	Open Circle	6	Chapel Annex	Ron	Magic Stones/Healing	0
17 Mar 01	Open Circle	4	Chapel Annex	Marci	Candle/Incense making	0
24 Mar 01	Ostara Sabbat	8	Hyatt Park, Seoul	Ron/Marci		Pot Luck
14 Apr 01	Open Circle	8	Annex	Ron/Marci	Grounding/Energy raising	0
28 Apr 01	Open Circle	10	annex	Ron	Witches Qabala	0
05 May 01	Beltain Sabbat	13	Phoenix Hotel Terrace	Ron/Marci		R/M-BBQ
19 May 01	Open Circle	4	Annex	Ron	Symbols/Corres/Mythos	0
02 Jun 01	Open Circle	7	Annex	Ron	Business plus above	0
16 Jun 01	Open Circle	6	Annex	David	Male Mysteries	0
30 Jun 01	Litha Sabbat	20 RSVP	Phoenix Hotel Terrace	Dav/Laurie/R		Pot Luck
13 Events		118				0
07 Jul 01	Open Circle		Annex	Laurie	TBD	2.00 ea
21 Jul 01	Open Circle		Annex	Laurie	TBD	2.00 ea
04 Aug 01	Lughnassadh Sabbat		Phoenix Hotel Terrace	Laurie		Pot Luck
15 Sep 01	Open Circle		Chapel Annex	Laurie	TBD	2.00 ea
22 Sep 01	Mabon Sabbat		Phoenix Hotel Terrace	Laurie		Pot luck
06 Oct 01	Open Circle		Annex	Laurie	TBD	2.00 ea
20 Oct 01	Open Circle		Annex	Laurie	TBD	2.00 ea
03 Nov 01	Samhain Sabbat		Phoenix Hotel Terrace	Laurie	TBD	Pot Luck
17 Nov 01	Feast of Falln Warriors		Osan NCO Club	Laurie	Social--Prayer Dinner	Pay as Go

FIGURE 4

## APPENDIX I

### EXCERPTS FROM: "RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS AND PRACTICES OF CERTAIN SELECTED GROUPS A HANDBOOK FOR CHAPLAINS"

#### DISCLAIMER:

We will list only the sections pertinent to the Wiccan Religion: these sections were compiled from a variety of sources and ***do not necessarily represent the view of the Wiccan Religion held by either the authors or the Sacred Well Congregation***. These two entries are presented for informational purposes only. They cannot in any way be considered universally authoritative, and no effort has been made by the authors of this pamphlet to correct factual or typographical errors or discrepancies in the presented material.

**NOTE:** the Sacred Well Congregation has been advised by the Department of Defense Armed Forces Chaplains Board that this document will not be revised, and the current volume will be obsolete by the time this pamphlet is published. The reason for this is that many of the diverse groups cited here strongly objected to being placed in an official document with other groups whom they considered objectionable. It has not yet been determined what, if any, policy guidance will be provided in the future.

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THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF AMERICAN RELIGION

J. Gordon Melton

Project Director

James R. Lewis

Senior Research Associate

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310-2700

Nothing herein shall be construed to reflect the official position, policy or endorsement of the Department of the Army, or of the Chief of Army Chaplains regarding the organization, beliefs, or doctrine of the religious groups described in this manual. It contains information on these selected religious groups provided by the groups themselves. Errors or changes may be reported through official channels to the Chief of Army Chaplains.

#### PURPOSE

This Handbook has been prepared for the Office of Chaplains, Department of the Army, in order to provide information useful for chaplains on the beliefs and practices of certain "religious" groups. Specifically, the purposes of this Handbook are three:

To facilitate the provision of religious activities which serve the needs of persons of certain faiths not otherwise represented by military chaplains and others; To define the specific requirements and practices in such a way as to enable commanders at all levels to make



effective personnel decisions in those instances when religious beliefs and practices are claimed to be in conflict with military directives and practices; and To provide the specific information about each group in a form which has maximum utility for military purposes, yet is approved as normative or at least acceptable by the leaders of those various groups under study. The Handbook is written as a guide for chaplains and, where appropriate, for commanders. Although it accurately reflects the positions of each group in general, chaplains are urged to consider the religious needs of each member individually.

The specific purposes of the Handbook also serve to limit the amount of information provided on each group. Thus, while the information provided is accurate (in most instances approved by authorities from the individual groups themselves), it is by no means comprehensive. Lay persons, particularly, are cautioned that the Handbook is not a guide to religion, and that consideration of the implications of adopting a particular faith or belief system is best accomplished under the careful guidance of a chaplain or other religious leader.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE HANDBOOK**

This Handbook is a thorough revision of the first edition of *Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Selected Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains*. It was originally published in 1979, and a supplement was issued in 1980. The development of this new edition of the Handbook was accomplished in a series of steps, the first of which was the selection of the groups to be included. Beginning with the list of groups in the original edition, those, which had dissolved, were eliminated. From the possible 1,500 groups to be included, additional groups were chosen on the basis of the same criteria as the original selection, i.e., after answering three specific questions:

Given the size of the group and the nature of assignments of Army Chaplains, is it likely that members of the group will be found on military installations where no chaplain of that particular faith or of a related faith is stationed? Is the group known to the Office of the Chief of Chaplains as one about which questions have been previously raised by existing chaplains or commanders? Is the nature of the group such that questions about it may be raised by chaplains or commanders in the near future? While the answers to these questions may well encompass many groups not covered in the Handbook, selection of the groups included represents an attempt to incorporate the largest possible percentage of such groups that might be addressed in a single Handbook.

The material presented in the Handbook was obtained through an extensive research effort. Pertinent literature was identified and surveyed, various coordinating bodies related to military chaplains were consulted, and open-ended interviews were conducted with active members of the various groups. Based on this research, draft descriptions of each group were developed and prepared for validation.

The process of validating the information included a review of the draft descriptions with officials of the groups. Where possible, approval of the final draft version was obtained from a church or group official. The final description was then completed, based on the information received from these officials in response to the final draft descriptions.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK**

The Handbook includes 51 different group descriptions, divided into seven categories. The categories are:

- Christian Heritage Groups
- Indian Heritage Groups
- Islamic Heritage Groups
- Japanese Heritage Groups
- Jewish Groups
- Sikh/Sant Mat Groups
- Other Groups

Each section has a brief introductory segment which provides general comments on the category. The 51 different groups are then divided according to the most appropriate category.

**The two sections of this document that are specific to Wicca:**

**GARDNERIAN WICCA**

ADDRESS: c/o Lady Rhiannon

Box 6896

New York, NY 10150

OTHER NAMES BY WHICH KNOWN: Witchcraft; Paganism; Neo-Paganism

LEADERSHIP: No formal leader

MEMBERSHIP: Not reported.

HISTORICAL ORIGIN: Witchcraft or Wicca is a reconstruction of the Old Religion, the tribal worship of ancient peoples based in magic, herbology, healing, and the worship (primarily) of the Mother Goddess and (secondarily) her consort, the Horned God. Witches believe they have existed throughout known history in many parts of the world. The term "witch," more properly "wicca," comes from the Anglo Saxon word for "wise." Wicca's marked revival in the 14th Century is due largely to the work of such scholars as Margaret A. Murray, who traced the existence of the Old Pagan Religion in pre-historic Europe. At the forefront of this revival was Gerald Gardner, the famous witch of the Isle of Man. After years in the East, Gardner returned to England in the 1930s, located a Wicca group, and was initiated by "Old Dorothy" Clutterbuck. He participated in the "Operation Cone of Power" during World War II, in which English witches joined their magical energies with the prayers of all other religious groups to turn back Hitler's invasion of England. In 1949, he published *High Magic's Aid*, a novel about Medieval Wicca based on his growing knowledge of 14th Century Witchcraft. After repeal of the last anti-Witchcraft law in Britain in 1951, Gardner became publicly prominent. He opened a Museum of Witchcraft on the Isle of Man, and in 1954 published *Witchcraft Today* in which he attacked the idea that Wicca was the worship of Satan and declared himself a witch, devoted to the Mother Goddess. As a result, many witches associated with him and other people contacted him to join the Craft. Those who associated with Gardner, who shared his views of Wicca, and who started to use the rituals he used have come to be called "Gardnerians." Gardnerian witchcraft was brought to the U.S. by Lady Rowena and her High Priest Robot from England in 1962. Raised in the Church of England, they began to read books on the Craft and eventually to correspond with Gardner. They traveled to the Isle of Man a number of times and were fully initiated, then began to form covens in the United States.

**BASIC BELIEFS:** Gardnerians worship the Mother Goddess and also the Horned God, symbols of the basic male/female polarity of all nature. They seek the balance within themselves, and with their environment. Worship is often done in pairs, masculine and feminine, and the power which is produced by magical ritual is directed by the High Priestess for its desired purpose. While devotion to the Wiccan deities is the main coven activity, magic, the control and use of natural cosmic forces which emanate from the human mind and body, is the secondary activity of the coven. It is done for healing and for aiding members in various endeavors. Most Witches believe in reincarnation; i.e., that the soul or spirit of the individual will progress through a number of subsequent Earthly lives as it evolves. Retribution for acts in this life will be returned threefold, good or evil, in this life. A reincarnated spirit starts afresh. Contrary to popular media representations, the Wiccan neither worships nor believes in "the Devil," "Satan," or any other similar entities. They point

out that "Satan" is a belief associated with the Judaeo-Christian Tradition, while the Wiccan beliefs are based upon a pagan mythos which predates the Judaeo-Christian era. One book used by Gardnerian Wicca is authoritative: The book of Shadows, or book of ritual. In the Gardnerian tradition, these are hand copied from High Priestess to High Priestess. Each High Priestess then shares the information with her coven. They are part of the traditional teachings of the Craft, and are available only to initiates. From coven to coven, the rituals vary slightly. The Gardnerian tradition is an evolved and evolving tradition. Hence, each coven will start with the materials passed on to its High Priestess, and then experiment with new emphases, magical formulas and rituals. The books of Janet and Stewart Farrar (Eight Sabbats for Witches, The Witches' Way, The Witches' Goddess, and The Witches' God) are the best currently available sources on Traditional Wicca. For eclectic Wicca, the best source is Star hawk's The Spiral Dance. Margot Adler's Drawing Down the Moon is a useful survey of the larger neo-Pagan movement.

**PRACTICES AND BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS:** Gardnerian Witches live by the Wiccan Rede: "An Ye Harm None, Do As Ye Will." Within this general concept is the Law of Retribution, by which witches can expect to receive threefold return on their actions.

Social forces generally do not yet allow witches to publicly declare their religious faith without fear of reprisals such as loss of job, ridicule, etc. Rituals, many teachings, and even acknowledgement of affiliation with the Craft are generally not discussed with non-initiates. Ritual instruments are generally hidden and protected.

Eight sabbats, or festivals, important for witches to gather and attune themselves to natural rhythms and forces as the seasons change, are followed: February Eve (January 31), Spring Equinox (March 21), Beltane or May Eve (April 30), Summer Solstice or Midsummer (June 22), Lammas (July 31), Autumn Equinox (September 21), Samhain (October 31) and Yule or Winter Solstice (December 21).

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:** Each coven is autonomous, headed by a High Priestess and her High Priest. Covens vary in size from approximately 8 to 14 members. The High Priestess heads the coven. The High Priestess who trained her is recognized as a Queen to whom she can turn for counsel and advice, thus maintaining a lineage of High Priestesses throughout Gardnerian Wicca. Members pass through three initiations, each of which is normally at least a year and a day apart.

**ROLE OF MINISTERS:** The High Priestess and her High Priest are responsible for coven activities, serving both as leaders in the rituals and as teachers for coven members. A High Priestess, or a woman she has delegated, can cast a circle.

**WORSHIP:** Wiccans usually worship as a group. Individual worship is possible, but not generally practiced. Worship takes place in a private location in which a circle can be drawn according to prescribed ritual formulas. Covens meet either weekly or bi-weekly (at the full and new moon), always in the evening. Worship in some (but not all) groups occurs in the nude.

Minimum items for worship include an athame (ritual knife), a bowl of water, acenser with incense, salt, an altar and 6 candles in candlesticks. A sword and pentacle (talisman) are optional. All tools must be ritually consecrated by a High Priestess.

**DIETARY LAWS OR RESTRICTIONS:** None

**FUNERAL AND BURIAL REQUIREMENTS:** None. Recognition of the death of a coven member takes place in the coven, apart from the "body" of the deceased. Ritual tools or material found among the remains of the deceased should be immediately returned to members of the coven. It is not necessary for a priest or priestess to be present at the time of death.

**MEDICAL TREATMENT:** No restrictions, but Wiccans may want coreligionists to do healing rituals in the hospital in tandem with medical treatment. So members of patient's Circle should be permitted ICU visits as though they were immediate family.

**OTHER:** With respect to attitude toward service in the armed forces, members include the full range from career military personnel to conscientious objectors. Wicca is open toward other faiths, recognizing that the Principles of the Great Mother appears in a great many faiths under various names and symbolisms. Because of the persecutions of past years, Wiccans take a guarded relation to groups that claim to possess "The Truth" or to be the "Only Way." Wicca is only one path among many, and is not for everyone. Members are encouraged to learn about all faiths, and are permitted to attend services of other faiths, should they desire to do so.

**GENERAL SOURCE BOOKS:**

Margot Adler. Drawing Down the Moon. Boston: Beacon Press, 2nd, ed., 1986. 595pp.

Janet and Stewart Farrar. Eight Sabbats for Witches. London: Robert Hale, 1981. 192pp.

The Witches' Way. London: Robert Hale, 1984. 349pp.

The Witches' Goddess. Custer, WA: Phoenix Publishing, 1987. 319pp.

The Witches' God. Custer, WA: Phoenix, 1989. 278pp.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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(212) 942-5780

## **WICCA**

**ADDRESS:** No central address. Wiccan worship groups, called covens, are essentially autonomous. Many, but far from all, have affiliated with:

Covenant of the Goddess

P.O. Box 1226

Berkeley, CA 94704

**OTHER NAMES BY WHICH KNOWN:** Witchcraft; Goddess worshipers; Neo-Paganism, Paganism, Norse (or any other ethnic designation) Paganism, Earth Religion, Old Religion, Druidism, Shamanism. Note: All of these groups have some basic similarities and many surface differences of expression with Wicca.

**LEADERSHIP:** No central leadership. The Covenant of the Goddess annually elects a First Officer and there is a constitutional limit of two consecutive terms, but in practice officers have almost always served for one year only. In 1991, there are two co-First Officers, Phoenix White Birch and Brandy Williams.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Because of the complete autonomy of covens, this cannot be determined. There are an estimated of 50,000 Wiccans in the United States.

**HISTORICAL ORIGIN:** Wicca is a reconstruction of the Nature worship of tribal Europe, strongly influenced by the living Nature worship traditions of tribal peoples in other parts of the world. The works of such early twentieth century writers as Margaret Murray, Robert Graves and Gerald B. Gardner began the renewal of interest in the Old Religion. After the repeal of the anti Witchcraft laws in Britain in 1951, Gardner publicly declared himself a Witch and began to gather a group of students and worshipers. In 1962, two of his students Raymond and Rosemary Buckland (religious names: Lady Rowen and Robat), emigrated to the United States and began teaching Gardnerian Witchcraft here. At the same time, other groups of people became interested through reading books by Gardner and others. Many covens were spontaneously formed, using rituals created from a combination of research and individual inspiration. These self-created Covens are today regarded as just as valid as those who can trace a "lineage" of teaching back to England. In 1975, a very diverse group of covens who wanted to secure the legal protections and benefits of church status formed Covenant of the Goddess (CoG), which is incorporated in the State of California and recognized by the Internal Revenue Service. CoG does not represent all, or even a majority of Wiccans. A coven or an individual need not be affiliated with CoG in order to validly practice the religion. But CoG is the largest single public Wiccan organization, and it is cross Traditional (i.e. non-denominational).

**BASIC BELIEFS:** Wiccans worship the Sacred as immanent in Nature, often personified as Mother Earth and Father Sky. As polytheists, they may use any other names for Deity. Individuals will often choose Goddesses or Gods from any of the world's pantheons whose stories are particularly inspiring and use those Deities as a focus for personal devotions. Similarly, covens will use particular Deity names as a group focus, and these are often held secret by the groups. It is very important to be aware that Wiccans do not in any way worship or believe in "Satan," "the Devil," or any similar entities. They point out that "Satan" is a

symbol of rebellion against and inversion of the Christian and Jewish traditions. Wiccans do not revile the Bible. They simply regard it as one among many of the world's mythic systems, less applicable than some to their core values, but still deserving just as much respect as any of the others.

Most Wiccan groups also practice magic, by which they mean the direction and use of "psychic energy," those natural but invisible forces which surround all living things. Some members spell the word "magick," to distinguish it from sleight of hand entertainments. Wiccans employ such means as dance, chant, creative visualization and hypnosis to focus and direct psychic energy for the purpose of healing, protecting and aiding members in various endeavors. Such assistance is also extended to non-members upon request. Many, but not all, Wiccans believe in reincarnation. Some take this as a literal description of what happens to people when they die. For others, it is a symbolic model that helps them deal with the cycles and changes within this life. Neither reincarnation nor any other literal belief can be used as a test of an individual's validity as a member of the Old Religion. Most groups have a handwritten collection of rituals and lore, known as a Book of Shadows. Part of the religious education of a new member will be to hand copy this book for him or herself. Over the years, as inspiration provides, new material will be added. Normally, access to these books is limited to initiated members of the religion.

**PRACTICES AND BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS:** The core ethical statement of Wicca, called the "Wiccan Rede" states "an it harm none, do what you will." The Rede fulfills the same function as does the "Golden Rule" for Jews and Christians; all other ethical teachings are considered to be elaborations and applications of the Rede. It is a statement of situational ethics, emphasizing at once the individual's responsibility to avoid harm to others and the widest range of personal autonomy in "victimless" activities. Wicca has been described as having a "high-choice" ethic.

Because of the basic Nature orientation of the religion, many Wiccans will regard all living things as Sacred, and to show a special concern for ecological issues. For this reason, individual conscience will lead some to take a pacifist position. Some are vegetarians. Others will feel that, as Nature's Way includes self-defense, they should participate in wars that they conscientiously consider to be just. The religion does not dictate either position, but requires each member to thoughtfully and meditatively examine her or his own conscience and to live by it. Social forces generally do not yet allow Witches to publicly declare their religious faith without fear of reprisals such as loss of job, child-custody challenges, ridicule, etc. Prejudice against Wiccans is the result of public confusion between Witchcraft and Satanism. Wiccans in the military, especially those who may be posted in countries perceived to be particularly intolerant, will often have their dog tags read "No Religious Preference." Concealment is a traditional Wiccan defense against persecution, so nondenominational dog tags should not contravene a member's request for religious services. Wiccans celebrate eight festivals, called "Sabbats," as a means of attunement to the seasonal rhythms of Nature. These are: January 31 (Called Oimelec, Brig it, or February Eve), March 21 (Ostara or Spring Equinox), April 30 (Bulletin or May Eve), June 22 (Midsummer, Litha or Summer Solstice), July 31 (Lunacy or Lammas), September 21 (Hanest, Mabon or Autumn Equinox), October 31 (Samhain, Sowyn or Hallows) and December 21 (Yule or Winter Solstice.) Some groups find

meetings within a few days of those dates to be acceptable; others require the precise date. In addition, most groups will meet for worship at each Full Moon, and many will also meet on the New Moon. Meetings for religious study will often be scheduled at any time convenient to the members, and rituals can be scheduled whenever there is a need (i.e. for a healing). Ritual jewelry is particularly important to many Wiccans. In addition to being a symbol of religious dedication, these talismans are often blessed by the coven back home and felt to carry the coven's protective and healing energy.

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:** Most Wiccans meet with a coven, a small group of people. Each coven is autonomous. Most are headed by a High Priestess, often with the assistance of a High Priest. Some are headed by a High Priestess or High Priest without a partner, and some regard themselves as a gathering of equals. Covens can be of mixed gender, or all female or male, depending on the preferences of the members. Every initiate is considered to be a priestess or a priest. Most covens are small. Thirteen is the traditional maximum number of members, although not an absolute limit. At that size, covens form a close bond, so Wiccans in the military are likely to maintain a strong affiliation with their covens back home. There are many distinct "Traditions" of Wicca, just as there are many denominations within Christianity. The spectrum of Wiccan practice can be described as ranging from "traditional" to "eclectic," with Traditions, covens and individuals fitting anywhere within that range. A typical difference would be that more traditional groups would tend to follow a set liturgy, whereas eclectic groups would emphasize immediate inspiration in worship. These distinctions are not particularly important to the military chaplain, since it is unlikely that enough members of any one Tradition would be at the same base. Worship circles at military facilities are likely to be ad-hoc cross-Traditional groups, working out compromise styles of worship for themselves and constantly adapting them to a changing membership.

Therefore, the lack of strict adherence to the patterns of any one Tradition is not an indicator of invalidity. While many Wiccans meet in a coven, there are also a number of solitaires. These are individuals who choose to practice their faith alone. They may have been initiated in a coven or self initiated. They will join with the other Wiccans to celebrate the festivals or to attend the various regional events organized by the larger community.

**ROLE OF MINISTERS:** Within a traditional coven, the High Priestess, usually assisted by her High Priest, serves both as leader in the rituals and as teacher and counselor for coven members and unaffiliated Pagans. Eclectic covens tend to share leadership more equally.

**WORSHIP:** Wiccans usually worship in groups. Individuals who are currently not affiliated with a coven, or are away from their home coven, may choose to worship privately or any form ad-hoc groups to mark religious occasions. Non-participating observers are not generally welcome at Wiccan rituals. Some, but not all, Wiccan covens worship in the nude ("skyclad") as a sign of attunement with Nature. Most, but not all, Wiccan covens bless and share a cup of wine as part of the ritual. Almost all Wiccans use an individual ritual knife (an "athame") to focus and direct personal energy. Covens often also have ritual swords to direct the energy of the group. These tools, like all other ritual tools, are highly personal and should never leave the possession of the owner. Other commonly used ritual tools include a bowl of



water, a bowl of salt, a censer with incense, a disk with symbols engraved on it (a "pentacle"), statues or art work representing the Goddess and God, and candles. Most groups will bless and share bread or cookies along with the wine. All of these items are used in individual, private worship as well as in congregated rituals.

**DIETARY LAWS OR RESTRICTIONS:** None

**FUNERAL AND BURIAL REQUIREMENTS:** None. Recognition of the death of a member takes place within the coven, apart from the body of the deceased. Ritual tools, materials, or writings found among the effects of the deceased should be returned to their home coven (typically a member will designate a person to whom ritual materials should be sent). It is desirable for a Wiccan priest or priestess to be present at the time of death, but not strictly necessary. If not possible, the best assistance would be to make the member as comfortable as possible, listen to whatever they have to say, honor any possible requests, and otherwise leave them as quiet and private as possible.

**MEDICAL TREATMENT:** No medical restrictions. Wiccans generally believe in the efficacy of spiritual or psychic healing when done in tandem with standard medical treatment. Therefore, at the request of the patient, other Wiccan personnel should be allowed visiting privileges as though they were immediate family, including access to Intensive Care Units. Most Wiccans believe that healing energy can be sent from great distances, so, if possible, in the case of any serious medical condition, the member's home coven should be notified.

**OTHER:** With respect to attitude toward military service, Wiccans range from career military personnel to conscientious objectors. Wiccans do not proselytize and generally resent those who do. They believe that no one Path to the Sacred is right for all people, and see their own religious pattern as only one among many that are equally worthy. Wiccans respect all religions that foster honor and compassion in their adherents, and expect the same respect. Members are encouraged to learn about all faiths, and are permitted to attend the services of other religions, should they desire to do so.

**GENERAL SOURCE BOOKS:**

The best general survey of the Wiccan and neo-Pagan movement is:

Adler, Margot. *Drawing Down the Moon*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986. 595pp

For more specific information about eclectic Wicca, see:

Starhawk. *The Spiral Dance*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

For more specific information about traditional Wicca, see:

Farrar, Janet, and Stewart Farrar. *Eight Sabbats for Witches*. London: Robert Hale, 1981. 192pp.

*The Witches' Way*. London: Robert Hale, 1984. 349pp.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Pagan Military Newsletter c/o Terri Morgan, Editor 829 Lynnhaven Parkway  
114-198 Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Because of the autonomy of each coven and the wide variance of specific ritual practices, the best contact person would be the High Priestess or other leader of the member's home coven.

Full electronic text of this document is available at <http://www.cgsc.army.mil/CHAP/>

## APPENDIX II

### DOCUMENTS APPLICABLE TO MILITARY MINISTRIES

#### GENERAL

The Constitution of the United States of America Available from Cornell

Freedom of Information Act

Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996

U.S. Supreme Court, GOLDMAN v. WEINBERGER, 475 U.S. 503 (1986)

Chap-Lines of Interest

Chap-Line 8-98 Subject: Halloween

Joint Chiefs of Staff Documents

Joint Pub 1-05 Aug. 3, 1993\* "Religious Ministry Support for Joint Operations" Online version dated 1996 35pp

#### DOD AND AFCB DOCUMENTS

Department of Defense Documents

DoD, Human Goals Charter July 24, 1998

Religious Requirements and Practices of Certain Selected Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains (1993) - (ONLINE EDITION - 1998)

Wiccan Religious Background Paper Issued to the Chief Chaplains of the Armed services in May, 1998 by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board

DOD Directive 1300.17 Feb. 3, 1988 "Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services" 5pp

DOD Directive 1304.19, September 18, 1993 "Appointment of Chaplains for the Military Services" 4pp

DOD Instruction 1330.7 April 26, 1974 "Visits of Civilian Religious Leaders to Military Installations In Overseas Areas" 3pp

DOD Directive 5120.8 March 20, 1995 " Armed Forces Chaplains Board Charter" 15pp

DOD Directive 5410.18 March 20, 1995 \*"Community Relations, July 3, 1974"; 12pp

DOD Form 2088 Jan, 1997 "Certificate of Ecclesiastical Endorsement" 1p

DOD Form 2741 Aug, 1998 "Ecclesiastical Endorsing Organization Verification/Recertification "; 2p

Faith Group Segment - Complete list of faith group codes used within the DoD

#### AIR FORCE DOCUMENTS

Religious Accommodation Position Paper\*

AFI 36-1201 25 July 1994\* "Discrimination Complaints" 9pp

AFI 36-1203 1 May 1996\* "Administrative Grievance System" 7pp

AFI 36-3103 1 May 1997\* "Identification Tags" 3pp

AFI 36-2706 Dec. 1 1996\* "Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program" 31pp

AFI 52-1 7 Sept. 1995\* "Chaplain Service" 5pp

AFI 52-101 May 19 1997\* "Chaplain Service Responsibilities and Procedures" 4pp

AFPD 36-12 27 Sept. 1993\* "Dispute Resolution" 4pp

AFPD 36-27 3 Sept. 1993\* "Social Actions" 7pp

AFPD 90-3 6 Dec 1993\* "Inspector General - Complaints Program" 7pp>

AFH 52-103 1 Sept. 1995\* "Chaplains Service Readiness Handbook"; 77pp  
AFPAM 36-2705\* "Discrimination and Sexual Harassment"; 35pp

### **COAST GUARD DOCUMENTS (DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION)**

COMDTINST M1730-4B\* Aug. 30, 1994 "Religious Ministries within the Coast Guard" Has information on becoming Lay Leader 21pp

### **NAVY DOCUMENTS**

OPNAVINST 1730.1C Nov. 1995\* "Religious Ministries in the Navy" 13pp

SECNAVINST 1730.3G Dec 1988\* "Employment of auxiliary chaplains, contract chaplains and clergy for occasional ministries"; 4pp

SECNAVINST 1730.6 Jun. 1974\* "Visits of Civilian Religious Leaders to Military Installations in Overseas Areas"; 3pp

SECNAVINST 1730.7A Sep 1993\* "Religious Ministries Within the Dept. of the Navy" 14pp

SECNAVINST 1730.8A 31 Dec 1997\* "Accommodation of Religious Practices"; 4pp

SECNAVINST 1730.8A 1p

NAVL 2" "Memorandum for Major Claimant Staff Chaplains: A letter from the Navy Chief of Chaplains to all Commands, enforcing SECNAVINST 1730.8." Copy of a Fax. A Must Have. 1p

NAVD 1 "How to write Standard Naval Letters." 4pp

### **ARMY DOCUMENTS**

AR 165-1 27 February 1998\* "Chaplain Activities in the United States Army" 84pp

AR 600-20 30 Mar. 1988\* "Army Command Policy" 206pp

Army Chief of Chaplains Information Letter August 1999

DAM 600-75 22 Sept. 1993\* "Accommodating Religious Practices " 36pp

### **MARINE DOCUMENTS**

MCO 1730.6D Sep. 29 1997 "Command Religious Programs In The Marine Corps"

MCO 7010.17A Jun. 27 1991 "Religious Offering Fund"

MCO 1510.102 Feb. 2 1995 "Individual Training Standards (Its) System For Chaplains Assigned To The Marine Corps"

MCO 1510.109 Sep. 6 1996 "Individual Training Standards (Its) System For Religious Program Specialists Assigned To The Marine Corps"

## **Manifesto of the Wicca: *The Nine Principles.*** **By Arghuicha.**

**Aim 1:** To re-awaken the Old Gods. To build a religion and a spirituality based on those elements of pre-Christian religions that are eternal and a source of inspiration in today's world; and on ancient as well as current techniques which may further our work with and understanding of Nature, WoMan and the Universe.

We can call this the '***tradition principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 2:** To promote a tolerant society with true freedom of religion, where everyone's path is sacred and where any WoMan, anywhere, may live and worship as they feel fit, and respect others' similar right

We can call this the '***freedom principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 3:** To restore the Covenant between the Goddess and Her children, the bond between all lifeforms of Gaia. To build a religion in which respect and care for Nature are central. Humans, plants, animals and megaliths are all Gaia's children and the Sacred Landscape is Her body

We can call this the '***ecological principle***' of Wicca..

**Aim 4:** To build an ethical system where guilt and punishment are replaced by the reparation of harm as central paradigm, and 'sin' is replaced by responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. Causing harm means to cause harm to self, other humans, plants, animals, minerals and ultimately the Sacred Landscape itself.

We can call this the '***ethical principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 5:** To restore the central place of the polar principle of the God and the Goddess. To build Wicca in such a way, that the male and female aspects of the divine are equally important and equally worthy of worship.

We can call this the '***bi-polar principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 6:** To build a religion where the different levels of the divine are recognized: the pantheistic, the polytheistic, the bitheistic and the monotheistic in harmony. In which the polytheistic deities worshiped need not be from a single historic pantheon.

We can call this the '***multi-level principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 7:** To build Wicca as an a-dogmatic experiential religion. The final interpretation of the personal religious and mystical experience is with the individual and not with a hierarchically organized clergy.

We can call this the '***adogmatic principle***' of Wicca.

**Aim 8:** Reclaiming both, the Masculine and Feminine aspects of the divine, in the sense that the Divine is in its essence a creation process, and that, in our human reality, this process is best seen as the unification, yet individuality, of each of these two aspects.

We call this the '**sexual principle**' of Wicca.

**Aim 9:** To build Wicca into a religion where not only priests and priestesses have their place but also those who share our religion but do not feel a personal vocation for the priesthood. To work together for: social responsibility, harmony and benevolence within our religion and without.

We call this the '**nation principle**' of Wicca

## **Remarks on the Nine Principles: A Treatise by Arghuicha**

On Aim 1:

This aim is compatible with all three 'versions' on the origin of Modern Wicca:

Version 1: Many hold that Wicca is a new religion started by Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, Alex and Maxine Sanders.

Version 2: Gardner and Sanders based their Wicca reconstruction experiment on our medieval European esoteric heritage and Wicca can be traced back to the Middle Ages and even before.

Version 3: There is enough evidence of customs and country traditions having survived through folklore and family tradition that Wicca can be considered as the modern counterpart of the ancestral pagan traditions of pre-Christian times.

All three versions are compatible and all may be part of the truth.

Often Wicca is considered as an exclusive 'European' pre-Christian religion. In our view this is not correct. Though of course MOST is European, we only have to remember the names of the Goddess in the Charge: "Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hekate, Demeter, Kali, Inanna" to know there's no need for restriction to the purely 'European'.

The qualification 'those elements' excludes those characteristics of our ancestor's religion which we would find uninspiring or even abhorrent today, like headhunting or setting people afire in wicker cages.

On Aim 2:

This aim has a number of social implications. It simultaneously recognizes that: Wicca is not a conversion religion. No missionaries.

Wicca does want to be recognized in our society as a religion not a cult. The fact that both Gardner and Sanders 'liked' publicity on a personal level does not diminish their accomplishments in achieving such recognition.

On Aim 3:

Wicca is both a mystery and a nature religion. It may well be our greatest challenge in these times to build and structure our religion in such a way that we, the dominant species on this planet, become once more worthy of living amongst those with whom we share this beautiful Goddess.

On Aim 4:

This aim too has a number of social implications. It simultaneously recognizes that:

- The individual should bear responsibility for its actions and for repairing harm caused by them.
- The state should protect its members from harm caused by other beings, be they human, or forces of nature; and this protection and where possible insistence on reparation should be its prime purpose rather than meting out punishment.

On Aim 5:

From these aims follows a general restoration of the value of the Feminine:

- Of the Goddess: the feminine aspect of the divine.
- Of Woman: including the role of the priestess and the place of woman in society.
- Of Nature: the Earth as Great Mother.
- Of the female elements Water and Earth: feelings, emotions, physical and material.
- Of a healthy sexuality and the body.

On Aim 6:

Though most of us consider our roots as primarily Celtic and Germanic, the history of Europe and North America, usually called 'the Western hemisphere' has undergone significant influence from all four quarters. Western esoteric tradition was partly molded by the Hellenistic civilization and the Roman empire, by christianity, by the Moorish kingdoms of Spain and in our own time by shamanistic techniques from Siberian, African, North European and Amerindian cultures.

On Aim 7:

To quote Fred Lamond: "Our HPS and HP and the authors of books on Wicca are teachers of techniques to find the inner truth, but never teachers of the truth itself." The initiatory degrees are a series of landmarks in a personal evolution and growth process often linked to a hierarchy of responsibility by the willingness to share knowledge, wisdom and experience.

On Aim 8:

From the re-evaluation of the role and importance of the Female follows that it becomes now possible to better see and develop the true role of the Male. The potent symbolism of the Horned God of which the Greek concept of Pan was an example becomes a new source of inspiration. Also the symbolism of the God who is married to the Land and the symbolism of Death and Rebirth.

These themes are developed in harmony with the three aspects of the divine Female: the unvanquished Maiden, the nurturing Mother and the wise Crone.



On Aim 9:

From the fact that we have moved closer to realizing at least part of Aim 2, it becomes possible to reclaim the role of the priest(ess) in a community. To quote Fred's quotation of Gardner: "In Pre-Burning times the witches were the priests and healers of farming villages. It is only the witch hunts which turned us into a priesthood without a congregation!" Although many of us may prefer to celebrate our rituals among the priesthood, we must hope that at least some will provide for the religious needs of the laity and the social needs and welfare of their greater communities.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

In this section we present a brief treatment of what we consider to be some of the most significant works on Wicca and Neo-paganism. Our selection of these particular books was based on scholarship, authenticity, and utility. Some of the books, such as ***Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft***, Crowley's ***Wicca: the Old Religion***, Starhawk's ***Spiral Dance***, and Adler's ***Drawing Down the Moon*** are among the earliest publicly available resources on the subject. Others are more recent but provide fresh insights and perspectives. As you read through the various books, you will find some differing accounts and opinions, but in the Wiccan religion, there is no single or "absolute" authority. Nevertheless, all of the books cited here are well worth the reading and study for the serious practitioner.

### ***Principles of Wicca***

Vivianne Crowley

London: Thorsons (1997).

Reviewed by Taniquetil.

Dr. Crowley presents a readable and concise introduction to the fundamental concepts of the Wiccan religion. The publisher's review cites this book as "The only introduction you will ever need." Unlike her earlier works, which were written expressly for Wiccans and Pagans, this book is aimed at a larger population. Anyone who is curious, who needs reliable information, or who is just beginning to explore the Wiccan path will find this book invaluable. It is also a very good primer for practitioners who are teaching neophytes. The book explores Wicca, past and present, presents an overview of the general cosmology, and provides practical and useful exercises at the end of each chapter. Particularly helpful in the understanding and teaching of the fundamentals of magic is her discussion of the concept of morphic resonance.

... Repetition is important for other reasons. There are traditional words that are used in Wiccan ritual, but we are not bound by these. We can write our own, or we can make them up spontaneously as we go along. Different groups and different individuals have different preferences. However, *morphic resonance* is an important concept for understanding how ritual works. *Morphic resonance* is a term coined by biologist Rupert Sheldrake (1990) to explain the phenomenon that every species appears to have a collective or group memory which each individual of the species can access. This is not only true for biological species, but for groups of crystals, molecules and cells. Once a substance has crystallized a certain way, or a species has made an evolutionary leap, every member of the same substance or species is likely to experience the same sort of changes. This explains a well-known scientific fact: when something has been done once in the world, it can be done more easily a second time, and even more easily as time goes on... *Morphic resonance* is a similar idea to what Carl Jung called the *collective unconscious*, the group mind of humanity. The collective unconscious is the level at which we lose partly our individual separateness and merge our minds with those of others. Plants called rhizomes appear to be separate, but deep beneath the soil is a common root. At the everyday

conscious level, human beings appear separate, but there is a deeper level in which we are all connected. It is via this deeper level of ourselves that clairvoyance, telepathy and precognition occur. In some people the door between the conscious and unconscious mind is permanently open. They are constantly aware of all sorts of unseen thoughts and energies around them. Others can open and close that door at will. In some of us, the door only opens when there is great danger or emotion. Thus people who are never normally clairvoyant may have strong premonitions if a loved one is in danger, particularly when there is a deep connection such as between parent and child. The knowledge hidden within the collective unconscious is available to all of us. What has been done once by a human being can more easily be done by others elsewhere. This means, of course, that we can communicate information between our own species in ways that are not yet understandable by science. It confirms telepathy. It also means that the sum of the total of human knowledge is where Witches have always said it was--- within us.

### ***Phoenix from the Flame***

Vivianne Crowley

London: Thorsons (1994).

Reviewed by Taniquetil.

In this 1994 compendium of pagan spirituality in the Western world, Dr. Crowley reviews the concepts and history of paganism and how the various traditions have evolved into their current forms. Again, as with most of her work, she approaches the material from a psychological as well as a spiritual perspective. She explores in depth the Way of the Celts, the Norse and German traditions, traditions of North-East Europe, and Wicca as a syncretistic contemporary tradition. Her treatment of The Way of the Goddess and the God is particularly insightful. She discusses the necessity of the return of the Goddess to restore the balance that has been stifled by pervasive patriarchy over the last four millennia; then she cautions against the danger of over-correction.

All extremes in religious, political and spiritual thought produce an equal and opposite reaction. The dominance of our spiritual life by a sterile maleness returned many to the worship of the Great Goddess. An imbalance in our outer society towards valuing only male activity and the male sex brought forth feminism and encouraged many, both men and women, to develop the feminine within themselves. This was of great value to men, because it returned them to a part of themselves that had been suppressed and repressed by Western society. This was male caring, creativity and joyfulness. This, however, is only one side of the lost male, which Pagan religion has needed to recover. The male is also hunter and warrior. This is not random violence or killing for the sake of it, but the use of male strength which is needed by Nature; the strength which protects, nurtures and guards the weak, and which prevents the powerful from oppressing the powerless. Having come to terms with the Goddess, many men now wish to come to terms with their own male energy. They are searching for the God. In the 1980s we had the concept of The New Man. He changed nappies, wept buckets at the movies, and was never angry. He harbored a permanent guilt complex because his organ dangled, and hers did not, and he took upon himself the

sins of the male world. It was man who had persecuted women, burned them at the stake, had unleashed the dogs of war. If his ancestors had done it, then he too had done it. He was guilty by birth. Many caring men emerged from this phase frustrated that by seeking to minimize their maleness, they had not found themselves. Men had found their inner feminine. They may have rejected the stereotypical male role in which they had been brought up to play, and chosen other careers and other patterns of life; but there was still something missing. In rejecting the Judaeo-Christian God, all masculine deity had been abolished...To play their role in society, men must come to an understanding of how to use their male energy for greater good. The aim of the Pagan religion is not to produce men who think they are women, but men in touch with their maleness. For this, worship of God as well as Goddess is necessary...In our modern era, both men and women have suffered from false images of what they should be. (pg 124-25)...

On Paganism as a way of life as opposed to a Sunday morning religion:

Paganism may not have a complex set of commandments, but social ethics are strongly emphasized in many Pagan traditions. ...It was also important to help weaker members of society because to fail to provide for the needy was to fail in honor. The attitudes of hospitality and generosity were encouraged in Pagan society were important for the well being of the community, but they were also important for the spiritual evolution of the giver. Attachment to material possessions binds us to the world of the transient. These things are to be experienced and enjoyed, but they are not to be clung to; for in the end, all passes, all changes. Paganism teaches:

That in the darkest time,  
There is hope of another day;  
That in the time of suffering,  
We shall know release;  
That all beauty is transient,  
And though we honor it while it flowers,  
Yet do we give greater honor to that which endures and abides:  
Love, Honor, Wisdom, Truth, Courage and Compassion.

***Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess***

Starhawk

San Francisco: Harper (1989, 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition, revised).

Reviewed by SilverDrake Fey.

High Priestess of the longstanding coven called Reclaiming and cultural icon of Dianic Witches and feminists since the early 1970s, Starhawk has had a tremendous impact on the contemporary evolution of Pagan and Goddess spirituality, especially in the United States. She is also a well traveled lecturer who has made several appearances at conferences held by the Association of Humanistic Psychology and similar organizations. This book has repeatedly proven to be a valuable guide for those who are exploring Paganism, Wicca, or Goddess Spirituality for the first time. It is also a resource repeatedly consulted by long-time practitioners of Paganism for insights and for continued spiritual growth in this context. The

book focuses on the symbolic, psychological, and spiritual implications of the "return of the Great Goddess" in contemporary society. It also provides an articulate and intelligent explanation of the nature of magic and ritual. Finally, ***Spiral Dance*** outlines a philosophical, political, and ideological critique of "power over," a concept which has traditionally fueled what she regards as typically patriarchal and hierarchical societies and power structures. While the military certainly falls within such a definition, it is possible for military Wiccans to derive much of value from this book for personal practice without jeopardizing their ability to accomplish their mission within the military context. Starhawk points out the ways in which our relationship with the earth and its flora and fauna has suffered as a consequence of attitudes which endorse exploitation and domination. In their place she advocates a way of living which emphasizes consensual validity, nonviolence, and "power from within." In this approach individuals rely on each other's strengths, compensate for each other's weaknesses, and share responsibility and power equally. It is a way which emphasizes reverence and respect for each other as well as for the earth and all of its inhabitants of the animal and plant kingdom. In her emphasis on balance, Starhawk points out that each of us has within our psyches polar attributes which consist of qualities typically viewed by society as masculine and feminine. She departs from the idea that literal gender differences are required for effective magical work to attain balance, asserting that we may effectively utilize the polar relationship between opposite qualities within ourselves. Therefore, we can do effective magic alone, or with other individuals of the same gender. We need not always seek out magical partners of the opposite gender. This is an idea which empowers virtually anyone to be able to have confidence in his or her ability to work effective magic and connect with the Higher Self in ritual. She describes the importance of circles and spirals in magical work, as a symbolic analog for attunement to the cycles and seasons of nature as well as for spiritual evolution. Starhawk's book also serves as an important guide and source of advice for individuals seeking groups with whom to study and work, as well as for those who ultimately opt to become "solitary practitioners" who work alone. It is not uncommon for individuals setting out on the path of Wicca to feel confused and overwhelmed by the complexity of information now available, and this book helps the practitioner to "gel" personal ideals and values, making it easier to find a matching context.

***Circles, Groves, and Sanctuaries: Sacred Spaces of Today's Pagans***

Pauline and Dan Campanelli

St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn (1994).

Reviewed by SilverDrake Fey.

This book is an excellent resource for both Wiccans and non-Wiccans alike, as it provides a candid and personal look at the private sacred spaces of Pagan individuals and groups throughout the world. It is a rare opportunity for those outside of this context to view, through photographic and textual evidence, just what exactly the shrines, altars, ceremonial tools, and sacred spaces of contemporary Pagans, actually look like. It also takes a look at how trees and stones may act as centerpieces of Pagan ritual and meditation. This book makes it possible for the reader to piece together the ideals, beliefs, and values which lie behind the external trappings of Paganism. Featured prominently are the authors of the book themselves in their private spaces, as well as Circle Sanctuary and Selena Fox, who is one of the contributors to this pamphlet. The book also describes how a military member

managed to practice his own Pagan spirituality amid the fury of Desert Storm. This book may serve as an excellent and easy introduction to Paganism and Wicca through the eyes of the camera and the words of practitioners themselves. It is appealing to those who dislike dry, scholarly, and encyclopedic descriptions and wish to get a more pragmatic and "handsome" look at this religious phenomenon, which is arguably one of the fastest growing spiritual contexts in the world today. It may also be of interest to chaplains who would like to better understand how circles, altars, and ceremonial tools in Wicca are utilized.

***Ancient Ways: Reclaiming Pagan Traditions***

Pauline and Dan Campanelli,  
St. Paul, Minnesota, Llewellyn (1991).  
Reviewed by SilverDrake Fey

This book is a clearly articulated description of traditions, customs, legends, and cultural factors associated with Neo-paganism. It is written in a forthright manner that allows practitioner and interested party alike to understand the sources of many Pagan traditions. It also provides easy-to-follow directions on how to implement and practice Pagan customs on a regular basis and throughout the year. In this respect it is an excellent adjunct to their book ***Wheel of the Year***. It is a valuable book for newcomers to Paganism as a means of gaining practical advice about how to think about setting up the external trappings of their own unique practice of their spiritual tradition in ways which are consistent with both the ancient and modern spirit of that tradition. Perhaps more importantly, it provides "hands-on," practical advice on how to live a magical life in harmony with the cycles nature on literally any budget. For those seeking to gain a better understanding of Paganism from the outside, this book enables the reader to comprehend how these practices serve as a source of continuing spiritual growth and fulfillment to the practitioners of Paganism.

***Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and other Pagans in America Today.***

Margot Adler.  
USA imprint: Penguin Books  
1997, revised and expanded edition.  
Reviewed by SilverDrake Fey.

A woman who is a National Public Radio News Correspondent, a practicing Wiccan priestess, and the granddaughter of the famous psychoanalyst Alfred Adler, wrote this book. Perhaps more than any other publication, this book has had an explosive impact on the growth of Paganism and Goddess/Earth-centered spirituality, especially in the United States. The first edition was written in the late 1970s and it has been updated twice since. It is essentially a survey of traditions that typically identify themselves as Neo-pagan or Pagan, through many hours of interviews with Pagan individuals and members and leaders of groups throughout the United States. Margot Adler, who became a Wiccan in the course of her research, admits that she encountered many responses that shattered her own biases and preconceptions about Paganism and what it actually is. She even vehemently disagreed with the viewpoints and perspectives of some she spoke with, and she concluded that

identifying a list of values common to all Pagan individuals and groups is nearly impossible. She did determine that most Pagans would agree that Paganism is about an attitude of reverence for the divinity which is immanent and inherent in the earth and all on it, rather than advocating and worshiping a divine entity which is utterly transcendent from and outside of all of nature. Many she spoke to felt that Christianity in particular unfortunately gave rise to a tendency to espouse an attitude of exploitation and dominance over the earth, rather than one of stewardship over the earth and its creatures. Despite the fact that the earliest edition of this book was written two decades ago, in its current edition it still provides the most comprehensive understanding of Paganism and Pagan groups/traditions available without complete, participatory immersion in the cultural context of Paganism. It also considers in an in-depth manner, issues that remain at the center of controversy and discussion within the Pagan community today. It offers a frank discussion of the role of ceremonial tools and practices in Paganism. It explains the role and purpose of ritual nudity, or worshipping "skyclad," as well as the reasons that some groups advocate such practice in specific contexts and others do not. It explains the development and impact of the "Charge of the Goddess" and its role as a mainstay of Wiccan ritual. The importance of this book for those outside of Paganism who are actively seeking to gain a better understanding of this spiritual context is that the book actively seeks to address the concerns, misunderstandings, and misconceptions of "outsiders." It also provides candid statements from those within the context about what they wish others who are not Pagan would understand and be able to accept about them. Principal among these are the emphasis in Paganism on not proselytizing or making converts, as well as the wish to be treated in the same manner by those of other religions.

### ***Living Wicca: A Further Guide for the Solitary Practitioner***

Scott Cunningham

St. Paul: Llewellyn Publications (1995).

Reviewed by SilverDrake Fey.

Published posthumously in 1995 after the death of the author in 1993, this book expands upon and re-introduces concepts outlined in his earlier book ***Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner***. Mr. Cunningham's ***Guide*** was hailed as a long-awaited boon to Wiccans who were not affiliated with any tradition or group but were struggling to form a practice on their own. The first book enabled individuals to connect with and form their own traditions, ideologies, and to practice with self-confidence and authority. This follow-up book gives further concrete and useful advice about how to act as your own teacher, design sophisticated and meaningful personal rituals, create and enrich a personal book of shadows to serve as a ritual and ethical guide in present and future magical endeavors, deepen your relationship with the Goddess and God, teach others in a public way about what you do, perform a powerful and deeply meaningful self-initiation, delve deeply into "mysteries" of Wicca which enhance self-knowledge and strengthen the connection to the Higher Self, pray more effectively, and live daily life as a deeply spiritual path. This book is ideal in helping those who may wish (for many possible reasons) to avoid practicing with others to be able to foster and maintain the self-discipline and inspiration necessary for working alone. It is also helpful for those outside of the contexts of Paganism or Wicca to gain a better understanding

of the issues and challenges faced by solitary practitioners of Wicca, whose needs may be different even from those affiliated with groups or traditions. Such individuals often find excellent support through attending large national gatherings, which may require several days of leave time if it does not interfere with the military mission.

The following is a quote from the book:

...once we've learned the basics of Wiccan beliefs and practices, living our religion is, logically, the next step. How we allow it to affect our lives is completely up to us... I've written this book as a guide not only to Wiccan practice, but to Wiccan life. Still, its contents are merely ideas and suggestions. Each of us has to find the perfect path. May the Goddess and God assist you in this quest.

Scott Cunningham, originally initiated in the Gardnerian Tradition, practiced Wicca for over twenty years before his death at the young age of 37. He is credited with over thirty works of fiction and non-fiction.

### ***Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft***

Raymond Buckland

St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn (1997)

Reviewed by Taniquetil.

As mentioned earlier, Dr. Buckland's efforts probably provided the greatest single synergist to the development of the contemporary Wiccan movement in the United States. The ***Complete Book of Witchcraft***, now in its 24<sup>th</sup> printing, makes a significant contribution to the body of reliable Craft literature. The volume is arranged in workbook format to allow the reader to progress through various stages and aspects of study at his or her own pace. Dr. Buckland begins with a brief introduction, then presents thirteen somewhat general lessons. One of the best reviews of this work comes from Ed Fitch, himself a practitioner and Elder in the Craft. Rather than paraphrase, we will provide unedited quotes from Mr. Fitch's review.

Ray's workbook takes a holistic approach to the vast body of knowledge that Witches work with, so that information on religion and ritual practices is interwoven in such diverse topics as healing, herbal lore, dream interpretation, sex magick the power of colors, runic alphabets, magickal tools, meditation, divination, amulets and talismans, magickal properties of gemstones, candle magick and so on. In sharing this material, the author reflects a new era of openness. In the past, Craft secrets of this nature were highly guarded, and publication of them would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. The lessons in this workbook are practical and ethical. Ray emphasizes that Witchcraft entails "acceptance of personal and social responsibility," and that "it is an acknowledgement of a holistic universe and a means toward raising consciousness.



***Book of Shadows.***

Phyllis Currott

New York: Broadway Books (1998).

Reviewed by Taniquetil.

Ms Currott is a very successful Manhattan attorney who has been involved with the Craft for over two decades, as an initiate, practitioner and High Priestess. Like many, she found the way (and the inner strength) to dance the delicate dance of living as a part of our materialistic society and yet living apart from it. She never hid her association with the Craft, but never put it on public display, either. With all of the trendy literature and media hyperbole of late, she felt it was time to bring some things back into perspective. This book is written in a novelized style that makes for both enjoyable and insightful reading. It is her personal chronicle of her journey along the path, her personal experiences, triumphs and tragedies—her personal transformation. The book also contains an abundance of practical and useful material, chants and rituals. Here are some particularly striking passages.

There was one thing I suddenly knew with absolute certainty: magic is not something that you just do or make. It is something the universe does with you. It is our relationship to the divine. There is nothing more magical than the presence of the sacred in one's life. It changes everything. It is extraordinary, it is gorgeous and it defies the limitations within which we lead our daily lives. Magic is the art of living a creative life that is graced with divine presence. It isn't something one does *to* the universe; it's what a living universe does *with* us once we have awakened to its divinity. It is the sacred dance we share. It is joyous, it is erotic, it is ecstatic, and when it happens roses bloom in December snow, butterflies fill the trees in Costa Rica, and lovers find each other across a river of time. I thought about the last several years and my longing for love. Most people know intuitively that when you fall in love, the world is full of magic. What they don't know is that when you discover the universe if full of magic, you fall in love with the world. (pg 89)

These were the unnatural, man made consequences of a cultural shift that began thousands of years ago, away from the sacred earth to a distant sky god. The religious beliefs of a culture define its values. Its cosmology has tremendous impact on social and economic institutions, culture, history, the status of women, sexuality and countless other facets of daily life. We have become disconnected from the divine, from the feminine, from the earth, and from each other, living in a millennial alienation from the sacred. God was separated from man, man was separated from woman, and all were separated from the earth. For too many centuries, each has existed in painful separation from the others, and the world we have created expresses this terrible alienation. It also expresses our longing for reunion. (pg 126)

In circle, and in my daily practices, I learned how the Old Religion of the Great Mother Goddess honors and expresses a connection to the earth, the moon, the sun and stars, and the animals and plants that share the planet with us. Its rituals reinforce and give expression to the constant awareness of sacred relationship to all that is and to the divine as it is embodied in all that exists. Perhaps here in the scorched wasteland

beneath the burning warrior sun, deep within our culture's shadow, I had finally come to a source of insight, to a wellspring where the sacred flowed in healing waters. (pg 126)

The alchemy of spiritual transformation remained protected and hidden by country clans and urban magical orders who secretly practiced Western mysticism. The Masons arose from this magical and intellectual lineage and it was their revolutionary brotherhood that founded the United States. They believed in the brotherhood of man, the existence of a divinity, and the immortality of the soul. Many of the treasured secret rituals of the Masons reflected those of the Goddesses at Eleusis and Delphi, and the most overt symbols of those beliefs decorate our flag, dollar bills and seals of high office. So often these days, as right-wing politicians and conservative Christians appropriate history for their own exclusionary political ends, they assert that we were founded as a Christian country. In fact, we were founded by magicians as an astounding political experiment, reflecting their equally insurgent, and ancient, spirituality. (pg 126)

I used to think Witches cast spells over people. Now I understand that true Witches work only to gain power over themselves. They work to accomplish self-mastery-- to achieve healing, wisdom, compassion and freedom, and to liberate themselves from the constraints that the world, or their upbringing, have trapped them in. Magic is a part of this process of self-awareness and liberation. To do sacred magic, we must come to know ourselves. And to see ourselves as we truly are, we must have a mirror. Among their many spiritual arts, Witches had long used a variety of mirrors to see into the deepest parts of their own souls, and those of others. They also looked into the heart of the universe. (pg 147).

### ***Wicca: the Old Religion for the New Millennium***

Vivianne Crowley

London: Thorsons (1996)

Reviewed by Taniquetil.

The 1996 edition is the revised and updated version of Dr. Crowley's consummate work first published over a decade ago. This is an expository work that contains a wealth of ritual, rites and poetry and synthesizes it all into a practical framework. Dr. Crowley has sometimes been criticized for "psychologizing" Wicca; William James and C.G. Jung were the targets of similar criticisms in that they were often accused of "psychologizing" religion. There is, however, a very thin and permeable line between psychological reality and genuinely moving religious experience. Dr. Crowley brings insight and understanding to this paradox through her treatment of Wicca from this perspective. In discussing the rationale and realities of magic, she expands upon some concepts of Cade, Jung, and Le Shan on alternate realities. She examines four primary concepts: sensory reality, mythic reality, trans-psychic reality and unitive reality. She then looks at the types, purposes and symbolism of initiations from the perspective of personal growth and wholeness. From there she moves into a discussion of the interrelationships of the Goddess and God as collective and as personal divine

experiences. She discusses the Sabbats as a journey through the year and a journey through life. Finally, she explores the Third Initiation as the gateway to the self. The following are a few passages that exemplify the scope and depth of this book.

The Sabbats are a journey. The Spring Equinox celebrates the mating of the Goddess and the God. Beltane celebrates the coming of Summer and the marriage of the Goddess and God. Midsummer is the celebration of the Sun, the Lord of Life, and the coming of the God into his maturity and kingship. Lammas celebrates the harvest, the sacrifice of the God, which is necessary to fertilize the land, and his death which liberates him to the challenge of conquering a new kingdom--- that of the Underworld. The Autumn Equinox celebrates the return of the God from the Underworld as the conquering hero who comes to reclaim his Queen and take her with him to his Underworld kingdom. Samhain is the feast of the dead, and the worlds of matter and spirit draw close to one another and the dead may pass to and fro through the veils. Yule celebrates the birth of the Sun God and at Imbolc the God releases the Goddess from the Underworld so that she may re-emerge into the world as a virgin once more. Annual cycle, or lifetime round? It operates on both levels. The developing God, although linking with the Goddess on the annual fertility cycle, is also progressing around the circle on a lifetime quest. Jung calls myth that which is not objectively true but is psychologically true: *the bridge to all that is best in humanity*. It is the inner reality that our ancestors portrayed in ritual. The method of portrayal was to use allegories found in Nature; for it was in part through observation of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth in Nature that human beings understood that this, too was their own fate-- to be born, to die and to live again. The experience portrayed by the seasonal rituals is that of transcendence-- a sense of the enduring Self which though part of the Wheel of Life and Death is yet beyond it. Again, in addition to the scholarly treatment of principles and concepts, this book contains vast amounts of material suitable for ritual, worship, and meditation. Much of this was previously unpublished material written by Dr. Crowley and her husband, Chris, who is also a transpersonal psychologist. One of the most striking examples is a poem she wrote in 1969. This poem is the header for Chapter 9.

The Pipes of Pan  
In caverns deep the Old Gods sleep;  
But the trees still know their Lord,  
And it's the Pipes of Pan which call the tune,  
In the twilight in the wood.  
The leaves they dance to the Goat God's tune,  
And they whisper his name to the winds,  
And the oak tree dreams of a God with horns,  
And knows no other king.

## SUGGESTED READING LIST

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*Recommended not for content but to better understand the misogyny, historical distortions, and hideous falsehoods perpetrated about witchcraft during the Middle Ages. The motives and agenda of the translator also raise serious questions about the validity of this work*

### **Not Recommended List**

The following books **are not recommended** because, despite the fact they are found in New Age and Occult sections of most bookstores, they have nothing to do with Wicca.

Simon (ed.). (1980). *Necronomicon*. New York: Avon.

LeVey, A.S. (1969). *The Satanic Bible*. New York: Avon.

LeVey, A.S. (1972). *The Satanic Rituals*. New York: Avon.

LeVey, A.S. (1989). *The Satanic Witch*. New York. Feral House.

LeVey, A.S. (1992). *The Devil's Notebook*. New York. Feral House.

LeVey, A.S. (1998). *Satan Speaks*. New York. Feral House.

## **ORGANIZATIONS:**

Sacred Well Congregation of Texas  
PO Box 58  
Converse, Texas 78109

Greencraft België vzw  
Sint Hubertusstraat 115  
2060 Berchem  
Belgium

Circle Sanctuary  
PO Box 219  
Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin 53572

Temple of Danann  
PO Box 765  
Hanover, Indiana 47243

Wicca Study Group  
BM Deosil  
London WC1N 3XX  
England

Nordic Pagan Federation  
(Norsk Paginisk Forbund)  
PO Box 1814, Nordenes  
5024 Bergen  
Norway

## ***WEB SITES of interest:***

The Sacred Well Congregation: <http://www.sacredwell.org>  
Greencraft v.z.w.: <http://www.greencraft.be/>  
Circle Sanctuary: <http://www.circlesanctuary.org>  
Witch's Voice: <http://www.witchvox.com>  
Military Pagan Network <http://www.milpagan.org>  
Ontario Center for Religious Tolerance: <http://www.religioustolerance.org>

## ***National Publications and Periodicals:***

Circle Magazine: available by subscription through Circle Sanctuary

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

### **David L. Oringderff, Ph.D.**

Executive Director, Sacred Well Congregation

Dr. Oringderff is a graduate of Dallas Baptist University, and holds an M.A. in Counseling Psychology from Bowie State University (Maryland) and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the Union Institute School of Professional Psychology in Cincinnati, Ohio. Dr. Oringderff is an ordained minister and Wiccan Priest and has studied comparative religions for over thirty years. In 1995 he retired from the US Army as a Major in the Military Intelligence Corps. He is currently a consultant and trainer in organizational systems, forensics, profiling, and psychodiagnostics. Dr. Oringderff holds a Texas Peace Officer license with Advanced Certification, a Police Instructor license, and a Forensic and Investigative Hypnotist license. He has developed a number of in-service training programs for law enforcement and mental health professionals, notably courses on Cult Investigations, Cultural Diversity, and Special Investigative Topics. He serves as a consultant for many inter-faith organizations, including the Armed Forces Chaplains Board.

### **Ronald W. Schaefer, Lt Col USAF**

Director of Military Affairs, Sacred Well Congregation

Lt Col Schaefer is a 1978 Graduate of Texas A&M University and holds a Masters of Aeronautical Technology from Arizona State University. He is a combat veteran fighter pilot with world wide tactical experience. He has been an instructor and educator both in the military and in the civil sector for over 20 years. He has traveled extensively in Europe, Asia, Central America and the Middle East, immersing himself in the religious beliefs of those countries. An avid student of comparative religion he has read and studied extensively on the subject and is pursuing a PhD in International Affairs with a focus on regional studies, specifically cultures and religion. Col Schaefer has been a pagan spiritualist all his adult life officially dedicating himself Wicca several years ago. He is a graduate of the Sacred Well Deaconry Training program and has led two overseas military Circles. He is the author of numerous articles and pamphlets on Wicca and is active in promoting religious pluralism in the military. He has given numerous lectures on the various aspects of Wicca to a wide range of groups and is routinely consulted by military leaders on matters concerning Wiccans on military installations.

**"I disagree with what you say, but defend to the death your right to say it"—Voltaire**

**"Anyone who takes the sure road is as good as dead." --- Carl Jung**

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