



PANEGYRIA

Connecting the Pagan communities through news, voice, and fellowship!



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GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary Launches in Africa:

A new era of Lineage-Rooted education and Clergy Training for Wiccans in Africa. This was announced 1 Feb. 2026 in Pretoria, South Africa by ATC- Africa. Page 4



Are you there, Gods? It's me, your vessel! by Ava Althea

Whether it's your first time attending Spring Mysteries, or you're new to witchcraft, you may have heard the term "invoking" before and wondered if it meant sitting around an Ouija board to summon an entity or if someone just spelled "invitation" wrong. Page 23



Getting Started with Water Bath Canning: A Beginner's Guide

Have you ever wondered how people keep fresh fruit, jams, pickles, and sauces for months without refrigeration? The secret is Water Bath Canning! It is a safe, traditional way to preserve high-acid foods. Even if you've never heard of it before, this guide will walk you step by step from "what is it?" to your first jar on the shelf. Page 7

Menhir NEWS!



Truth, Justice, and the American Way: A Message to the Pagan Community

Members of the Pagan Community, Rally Round! Menhir News is thundering ahead onto your screens, bringing truth and the ringing of freedom!

In times of uncertainty, a nation learns what it is made of. In times of pressure, a community discovers what it truly believes. Today, to the Pagan community across this wide land, this message is offered in a spirit of good faith and steady courage.

We are many traditions, many lineages, many ways of prayer and practice. Yet we share a common ground in our love for the planet. We live together, work together, raise families together, and build our lives under the same sky, on the same ground that we hold so dear.

And so we ask, what shall guide us now?

Truth, Not Rumor

Justice, Not Cruelty

The American Way, Not the Easy Way

“Teach the next generation that freedom of religion includes everyone, not just those who look like us.”

Truth is not a slogan; it is a discipline. Truth means we verify before we share. Truth means we refuse the easy thrill of scandal and the quick comfort of conspiracy. Truth means we do not mistake loudness for evidence, or outrage for insight.

A community that honors truth becomes difficult to manipulate, divide, and frighten.

Justice is not just cruelty or vengeance dressed up differently.

Justice means we protect the vulnerable, we correct what is wrong, and we do it without losing our humanity. Justice means we hold one another to standards that are fair, consistent, and worthy of the future we are creating.

In every town and city, in every circle and coven, in every hearth and gathering, justice begins with the choices made when no one is watching.

The American way is not perfection; it is the promise that people of different backgrounds can live side by side with dignity.

It means we are a melting pot, not a smelting pot. The point was never to let the cream rise and throw away the rest.

It is the stubborn insistence that conscience matters, that belief is not a crime, and that a person should be judged by their character and conduct.

For Pagans, the American Way is not an abstract idea. It is the practical foundation that allows us to gather, to teach, to publish, to serve, to celebrate, and to build institutions that endure. It is what encourages us to work together, no matter the way each of us sees Goddess/God

A strong community is not built only in festivals and fine speeches. It is built into ordinary actions, repeated until they become culture.

- Speak plainly, and keep your word.
- Disagree without dehumanizing.
- Correct misinformation, gently when you can, firmly when you must.
- Do the same when witnessing injustice and abuse.
- Support ethical leadership, and do not excuse abuse because the abuser is charismatic.
- Show up for your neighbors, Pagan and non Pagan alike.
- Teach the next generation that freedom of religion includes everyone, not just those who look like us.

There will always be voices that profit from panic, and personalities that grow powerful by turning neighbor against neighbor. The answer is not to succumb to the fear they push, or the panic they offer, or become harder, colder, or more cynical.

The answer is to become steadier.

Steady in truth.

Steady in justice.

Steady in the American way, the way that says we can be different and still belong to one another.

So let this be our shared resolve!

We will be the Keepers of the Balance.

We will be The Truth-tellers.

We will be The Just.

We will be The People, and we will live our values in public and in private.

And we will do it with the calm strength of a community that knows who it is, and refuses to be pushed into fear. Together.

When we choose truth, when we choose justice, when we choose the American way of conscience and community, we do more than protect ourselves.

We help keep the whole neighborhood free.



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PRESS RELEASE

GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary Launches: A New Era of Lineage-Rooted Education and Clergy Training for Wiccans in Africa

Pretoria, South Africa, 1 February 2026, The Aquarian Tabernacle Church of Wicca Africa (ATC Africa) is proud to announce the official opening of the **GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary**, a dedicated institution offering rigorous, lineage-rooted education in Wiccan theology, ritual practice, clergy leadership, and the living traditions of the Craft.

This launch marks a significant step forward in providing structured Clergy training and Wiccan theological education for seekers and aspiring clergy within the Wiccan communities of South Africa and the continent of Africa. As part of ATC Africa, now a legally recognized Non-Profit Organisation (NPO 323-407), Non-Profit Company (NPC 2025/238189/08), and registered church under South African law, the GK Loom Seminary builds on the foundation of religious legitimacy established in 2025, ensuring that Wiccan education aligns with both spiritual integrity and legal compliance.

The GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary offers a welcoming community for witches, seekers, and clergy in training. It emphasizes depth in Wiccan theology,



practical ritual skills, ethical leadership, preparing students to serve their communities with wisdom, responsibility, and reverence for the Earth.

Registration is now open for those called to deepen their path through formal study. The Seminary provides a structured curriculum that honours ancestral lineages while addressing the needs of modern practitioners, fostering spiritual growth and community service.

“This is more than an educational program, It is a sacred commitment to preserving and transmitting authentic Wiccan teachings, empowering our community to lead with integrity, and ensuring that future generations have access to high-quality Wiccan theological training within a supportive, legally recognized framework.”

The GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary supports the broader mission of ATC Africa to:

- Preserve and teach Wiccan traditions through in-depth study, workshops, and rites of passage.
- Celebrate the Wheel of the Year, Esbats, and open rituals with inclusive community participation.
- Provide Clergy care, spiritual counselling, and clergy preparation.
- Promote environmental stewardship, ethical living, and social responsibility as core spiritual values.
- Foster interfaith dialogue and outreach, including initiatives such as the Cauldron Closet.

With this launch, the seminary strengthens ATC Africa’s role as a beacon for Wiccans and Pagans across the continent, not only establishing a foundation for Wiccan in Africa but also advancing religious freedom, education, and community building in Africa’s diverse spiritual landscape.



About the GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary

The GK Loom Wiccan Theological Seminary is the educational arm of the Aquarian Tabernacle Church of Wicca Africa, dedicated to rigorous, lineage-based training in Wiccan theology and practice. It serves seekers and clergy alike, offering a path of deep learning grounded in tradition, community, and ethical service.

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Arch-Priestess / Chairperson

Aquarian Tabernacle Church of Wicca Africa

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For more information about registration and programs, visit the seminary

ATC Africa



The GK Loom Wiccan Seminary



Enrolment



Congratulations ATC Africa!

Water Bath CANNING

Getting Started with Water Bath Canning: A Beginner's Guide

Have you ever wondered how people keep fresh fruit, jams, pickles, and sauces for months without refrigeration? The secret is Water Bath Canning! It is a safe, traditional way to preserve high-acid foods. Even if you've never heard of it before, this guide will walk you step by step from "what is it?" to your first jar on the shelf.

"Fun fact: The 'Bath' in Water Bath Canning refers to the jars being submerged in boiling water!"

What Is Water Bath Canning?

Water Bath Canning is a method of preserving food in jars by boiling them to destroy bacteria, yeasts, and molds that could spoil your food. It's designed for high-acid foods, including: Fruits such as strawberries, apples, and peaches. Tomatoes, too, with added lemon juice or citric acid. This is advised for added acidity by the USDA. Pickles and relish. Jams, jellies, and salsas can also be water-bathed.

Unlike Pressure Canning, which is necessary for low-acid foods like vegetables, meats, and soups, Water Bath canning relies on acidity + heat to safely preserve the food in your jars.



Safety First!

Water Bath Canning is safe, but only when done correctly. Keep these rules in mind:

Use tested recipes: USDA, Ball, or NCHFP sources are your best bet.

Ensure proper acidity: add lemon juice or citric acid to borderline foods like tomatoes.

Sterilize jars and lids: wash jars with hot, soapy water is essential; keep jars warm until filling. Use new lids: one-time use ensures a proper seal.

Check seals: after cooling, lids should not flex when pressed.

Never improvise: with low-acid foods or add unapproved thickening ingredients.

Equipment You'll Need

Before you start, gather your tools:

- Essential: Water bath canner or large stockpot with a rack or dish cloth for the bottom of the pot.
- Mason jars: 1/4, 1/2, and pint jars or quarts. Regular mouth or wide mouth.
- Lids/Flats and Bands/Rings
- Jar Lifter
- Canning Funnel
- De-Bubble remover/headspace tool, chopstick, wooden spoon handle.
- NO metal utensils as they may scratch the inside of the glass jar.
- Towels or cooling racks
- Optional but helpful:
- Timer
- Ladle
- Large mixing bowls
- Paper Towels

“Can what you like to eat, not what everyone else is eating!”



STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE:

Step 1: Prepare Your Jars & Lids

Wash jars in hot, soapy water. Keep jars warm to prevent cracking when placed in boiling water. Usually, you leave jars in hot water in the canner. Use new lids; bands can be reused if clean.

Step 2: Prepare Your Food

Wash, peel, chop, or cook ingredients according to your recipe. Measure accurately and follow acidity instructions.

Step 3: Fill the Jars

Use a funnel to reduce spills and leave the rims cleaner. Leave recommended headspace, ¼–1 inch. This is based on the food product used. Remove air bubbles with a spatula. Wipe rims clean with a paper towel dabbed in vinegar or water, based on the food product.

Step 4: Apply Lids & Bands

Place a lid on the jar; screw the band fingertip-tight.

Step 5: Process in Boiling Water

Place jars in the canner with 1–2 inches of water above the jars. Bring water to a gentle, rolling boil. Process according to the recipe, which is based on food, jar size, and altitude.

Step 6: Cool & Check Seals

Remove jars carefully with a jar lifter. Place hot jars on a towel-lined counter to cool. Do not disturb for 12–24 hours. Visually check the lid to see if it is concave; if so, press the lid down to check the seal; it should not flex back up. If it does, the jar is not sealed. Re-process or place it in the refrigerator to eat later.

Step 7: Label & Store

Write the contents and date. Store in a cool, dark, dry place. Most water-bath canned foods are good for up to 18 months, but they can go longer as long as the seal is still intact.

Strawberry Jam Recipe

Sweet, fragrant, and easy to make, this strawberry jam is perfect for first-time water bath canners. Spread it on toast, swirl it into yogurt, or give it as a thoughtful homemade gift!

Ingredients:

- 4 cups crushed fresh strawberries
- 4 cups granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

Yield: ~4 pints

Process: 10 minutes (adjust for altitude)

Properly sealed jars can be stored for up to 12 months.

Instructions:

1. Wash and hull fresh strawberries, then crush them using a potato masher or food processor.
2. Combine crushed strawberries, sugar, and lemon juice in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Let sit 10–15 minutes to macerate; this helps release juices.
3. Bring the mixture to a rolling boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly to prevent burning. Boil hard for 1–2 minutes, stirring frequently, until the jam reaches your desired consistency.
4. Test by placing a small spoonful on a chilled plate; it should wrinkle slightly when pushed with a finger.
5. Remove from heat and skim any foam from the surface.
6. Ladle hot jam into hot, sterilized jars, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ inch headspace.
7. Wipe rims clean with a paper towel dabbed in water.
8. Place lids and screw bands fingertip-tight.
9. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes plus altitude based on where you live. (Altitude Chart is on the next page)
10. When processing time is up, take the canner lid off, leave jars in canner for 5-10 minutes. This will help the jars get accustomed to the air temp and prevent siphoning.
11. Remove jars to a towel covered counter top and let cool undisturbed 12–24 hours. (Setting hot jars on a cool countertop can cause the jars to break)

Check seals; lids should not flex.

Label jars with contents and date, then store in a cool, dark place.

Ingredient Tips-

Use fully ripe, fragrant strawberries for the best flavor. Macerating the berries before boiling helps extract more juice and improves consistency.

Storage Advice-

Properly sealed jars can be stored for up to 12 months. Once opened, refrigerate and use within 3–4 weeks.

Serving Suggestions-

Spread on toast, scones, or muffins. Use as a topping for ice cream or pancakes. Stir into yogurt or oatmeal for a burst of fresh flavor.

Notes-

If you prefer a smoother jam, use an immersion blender before filling jars. Make sure to follow the processing time exactly for safety.





Teresa Jacobs has been gardening since she was eight and canning since she was ten, learning the timeless skills that have been passed down through generations in her family. Over the years, she has transformed her passion into a mission: helping others gain confidence and joy in home canning through clear, practical guidance and her friendly, encouraging style.

Teresa Jacobs
Canning



The Wonderful World
of Water Bath Canning



Altitude Adjustment
CHART for HOME CANNING

The Wonderful World of Water Bath PLUS

Water Bath Canning
Adjust Processing Time

Altitude	Add
0-1,000 ft	No Change
1,001-3,000 ft	+5 Minutes
3,001-6,000 ft	+10 Minutes
6,001-8,000 ft	+15 Minutes
8,001-10,000 ft	+20 Minutes

High-Acid Foods Only (Jams, Pickles, Fruits)

Pressure Canning - Dial Gauge Canner
Adjust Pressure

Altitude	Pressure
0-2,000 ft	11 lbs
2,001-4,000 ft	12 lbs
4,001-6,000 ft	13 lbs
6,001-8,000 ft	14 lbs
8,001+ ft	15 lbs

Processing Time Stays the Same

Pressure Canning - Weighted Gauge Canner
Adjust Pressure

Altitude	Weight
0-1,000 ft	10 lbs
Above 1,000 ft	15 lbs

✓ Water Bath = Add Time
✓ Pressure Canning = Increase Pressure Only

As the creator of the PACKS Method, a step-by-step system designed for safety, simplicity, and success in Home Canning, Teresa has guided countless beginners and seasoned canners alike in preserving their garden's bounty and is currently developing practical canning resources to support home preservers at every canning level. Her approach emphasizes not just following recipes, but truly understanding the process so anyone can enjoy the confidence and satisfaction of safe, delicious, homemade preserves.

Teresa runs a vibrant online canning community, where her warmth, patience, and down-to-earth guidance make members feel supported and inspired. She delights in sharing tips, troubleshooting questions, and celebrating successes with her group, fostering a welcoming space where every level of canner can thrive.

Have a question for Teresa? Email them to: Editor@atcwicca.org

March DAYS

March gets its name from Mars, the Roman god of war. In the ancient times this was the time of year to resume military campaigns that had been interrupted by winter.

“In Scottish lore, the last three days of March are called the Borrowed Days, borrowed from April.”

MAR. 4: Celtic Feast of Rhiannon: Moon Goddess

MAR. 5: Navigium Isidis – Egyptian festival honoring Goddess Isis as Lady of the Moon and Ruler of the Sea

MAR. 9: Mother Goddess Day – all Mother Goddesses

MAR. 11: Great Night of Shiva

MAR. 14: Egyptian Festival of Au Set: Snake Goddess

MAR. 17: Roman Liberalia: Maenad Festival of Bacchus

MAR. 20: Iduna’s Day (Norse)– Spring Harvest Festival (Egyptian)– Alban Eilir (Celtic, Druid holiday)

MAR. 20 or 21: OSTARA SABBAT: Spring Equinox; The Goddess of Spring

MAR. 25: Lady Day – honoring the Crone as Grandmother

Reframing the RETROGRADE

At the time of this publication, Mercury will be Retrograde. This late-winter Mercury Retrograde occurs from February 26 through March 19, with Mercury stationing direct on the last day of Pisces season just before the Spring Equinox.

In general, when I tell people that Mercury is Retrograde, they respond with groans and sighs. "Oh no, not again!" or "Well, that explains why I have had all these problems!" I understand the despairing feelings toward the retrograde, but I also believe that with a little more understanding and a willingness to reframe the experience, we can benefit from and even learn to enjoy Mercury Retrograde.

What is a Mercury Retrograde?

A Mercury Retrograde is a period of about three weeks when Mercury appears to travel backwards through the part of the zodiac it has already moved through. This is, of course, an optical illusion. Planets do not actually reverse direction, but astrology relates to the apparent motion of the planets from our perspective here on Earth, which is also in motion. Sometimes this makes planets appear to slow down, stop, move backwards, and then resume forward motion.

It is similar to when you are driving and a car beside you slows down. As you pass it, there is a moment when it feels as though that car is moving backwards, even though it is not.

During Mercury Retrograde, we tend to notice that communication, trade, travel, and technology become more chaotic. Things do not go as smoothly as planned. Delays, mishaps, misunderstandings, and technical issues seem to pop up everywhere. But why? Is Mercury being mean to us, or deliberately making life more difficult?

"Well, that explains why I have had all these problems!"

When Mercury goes retrograde, its apparent movement brings it closer to the Sun, where it becomes invisible to us. The planet seems to disappear and then reappear a few weeks later on the other side of the Sun. For example, before this retrograde began on February 25, Mercury was visible as an Evening Star, setting in the west just after sunset. As the retrograde progresses, Mercury moves closer to the Sun and becomes invisible as it enters combustion, followed by an exact conjunction with the Sun known as cazimi. After passing to the other side, Mercury eventually gains distance from the Sun and becomes visible again, this time as a Morning Star, rising in the east just before sunrise.

Hermes and the Myth of the Retrograde

As the ancient Greeks observed this cycle, they connected it with the story of Hermes, the messenger god and psychopomp, who could travel between the world of the living and the Underworld. This myth offers a powerful way to reframe the Mercury Retrograde experience.

Hermes is the god of communication, travel, and commerce. Most of the time, he is here with us, blessing these human interactions and keeping things running smoothly. We often take these blessings for granted. A few times a year, however, Hermes must fulfill his role as psychopomp, guiding souls to the Underworld and carrying messages between realms. During this time, he steps away from his usual duties and passes them to Apollo.

Without Hermes actively overseeing communication, travel, and commerce, things naturally become messier. Apollo does his best, but we are required to take more responsibility for ourselves. Travel delays feel more frustrating when we have not planned ahead. A forgotten autopay suddenly causes an overdraft. A miscommunication reveals where assumptions were made instead of clarity.

Hermes is not punishing us. He is simply not here right now. Mercury Retrograde shows us how much we rely on his steady presence and where we need to be more mindful, prepared, and accountable.



**MERCURY
RETROGRADE**

Retrograde in Pisces: Feb. 26 - March 19

- Feb 11 - Pre-Shadow Begins, 08° Pisces
- Feb 26 - Retrograde Begins, 22° Pisces
- March 19 - Retrograde Ends, 08° Pisces
- April 9 - Post-Shadow Ends, 22° Pisces



Mercury as Teacher

Mercury Retrograde does not create problems. It reveals existing ones so they can be addressed. The planets act as teachers, and engaging with astrology opens us to their lessons. Mercury teaches us about the mind, thoughts, and communication.

Travel, commerce, and trade fall under Mercury's domain because they all involve movement and exchange. When we speak, we move thoughts from one mind to another. When we trade goods, we move resources between people. When we travel, we move our bodies from place to place. Technology supports all of this by assisting communication, trade, and movement.

Any good teacher knows there comes a time to step back and let the student practice. Like a parent letting go of the bicycle, Mercury Retrograde hands us the wheel and says, "I need to step away for a bit, but you've got this. If you've been paying attention, you'll do just fine. I'll be back soon."

It is easy to fall into a victim mindset during Mercury Retrograde, asking why everything seems to go wrong at once. A more rewarding approach is to see challenges as opportunities for learning. Travel delays may be reminders to slow down, pay attention, or take a different route. Communication issues may point to the need to listen more closely, ask better questions, or speak more clearly. Technology problems can remind us not to take our tools for granted and to care for them more intentionally.

Hermes will return, but in the meantime, we are learning how to manage these realms on our own.



Five Rules to Make the Most of Mercury Retrograde

1) Assume you do not have all the information.

Double and triple check details. Ask questions. Get curious. Even when you think you have everything covered, assume there is still a blind spot. This is why it is often wise to avoid major life decisions during a retrograde, as fully informed choices can be harder to make.

2) If a decision cannot wait, proceed with care.

You are allowed to move forward during a retrograde. Just take your time, check the facts, and review the details carefully. Things can still work out. Mercury Retrograde is not here to destroy your progress, but flexibility is required. Be prepared to adjust or let go if plans fall apart at the last minute.

3) Practice mindfulness.

Mindfulness is awareness of your thoughts. Many of us move through life only half-aware of the inner dialogue shaping our reality. Mercury teaches that thoughts create experience. When we are overly negative or critical, the world reflects that back to us. Mindfulness helps us observe our thoughts, change them when needed, and respond rather than react. This gives us greater control over our actions and emotional responses.

4) Be extra cautious with travel.

Watch your blind spots. Expect delays. Avoid rushing, speeding, or multitasking. Leave early, give yourself extra time, and have a backup plan if something goes wrong. Patience is essential.

5) Slow down, look within, and rest.

Mercury Retrograde is ideal for introspective journaling, therapy, and shadow work. With the psychopomp in the Underworld, it is also a meaningful time to honor ancestors and connect with the unseen. This period can even be associated with Hecate, Goddess of the Crossroads, as Mercury transitions between Evening Star and Morning Star.

When we stop resisting the retrograde and instead work with its lessons, Mercury Retrograde becomes less of a curse and more of an initiation. It is not about things going wrong, but about learning how to move through the world with greater awareness, intention, and skill.



Rev. Lilliana Blackstar is a practitioner and student of metaphysical and esoteric topics for over 20 years and finds great joy in sharing and discussing spiritual topics with others. As an Astrologer, Tarot Card Reader, and Reiki Master, Lilliana has discovered a passion for helping others. Lilliana has studied Evolutionary Astrology and especially loves teaching others through mentorship and Astrology Workshops.

A Graduate of Woolston-Steen Theological Seminary, Lilliana has earned a bachelor's degree in Wiccan Ministry and is also a Second Degree Priestess of the WISE Tradition of Wicca; currently serving as the Maiden of The Ever Green Hearth.

She serves on the Board of Directors of the Spiritual Professionals Association and regularly does volunteer work with the ATC. Lilliana has lived in the Pacific Northwest since 2014 and is also passionate about community, mental health, and teaching.

Hestia's Muse

Building the Hearth Fire with Heart
and Purpose
Astrological Guidance
for a Balanced Life



March FESTIVALS

March

PAGANICON MIDWEST CONFERENCE-
Plymouth, Minnesota, March 20-22, 2026

MAGICKAL MARKETPLACE AND PSYCHIC FAIRE-
Boxborough, Massachusetts March 27-29, 2026

April

SPRING MYSTERIES FESTIVAL-
Seattle, Washington April 2 - 5, 2026

This is only the beginning!
Click [here](#) to see the rest of the 2026 Festival Calendar blog



PANEGYRIA

Are we missing your FESTIVAL?

Please email us at editor@atcwicca.org

We will gladly add yours to our list!

Dying To KNOW



It's me, Diana, and I am back with another installment of "Dying to Know with Diana." I hope everyone is ready and excited for Ostara! I know I am. Winters can be especially harsh here in Nebraska and I often find myself energetically depleted and ready to be renewed by the end of February. I'm sure many people feel this way all over the world. At least that's what I tell myself to make myself feel better. Ha ha!

You're rambling again, Diana. What does this have to do with death?

My sweet summer child, everything has to do with death. Especially Ostara.

Ostara is a time of rebirth and renewal. Little chickens are hatched and baby animals are often born during this time. You will often see the beginning of greenery poking up through the ground. In my area, it often takes the form of tulips or grass. Snow may still make appearances here in the Midwest, but that doesn't stop the green from coming back. You cannot get in the way of Nature. Thusly, you cannot stop death.

Understandably, this leads to fear. There are times when acting out of fear can be productive. For example, it can motivate you to plan the distribution of your estate after your death, making

sure your loved ones have everything they need. However, it is the biggest reason our Western society has such a culture built upon death denial.

You cannot get in the way of Nature. Thusly, you cannot stop death.

We are scared to face death.

It is a valid fear. Crossing into the threshold into the unknown is scary. Aside from the occasional near-death experience or medical revival, we have little tangible evidence from the other side.

It's also unpleasant to see the death and decomposition process, so we hide it away in separate buildings with overwhelmingly floral scents. Then when we absolutely have to see the body, it has been so embalmed that it looks unnaturally *alive*.



How can we use the energy of Ostara to combat this fear of death?

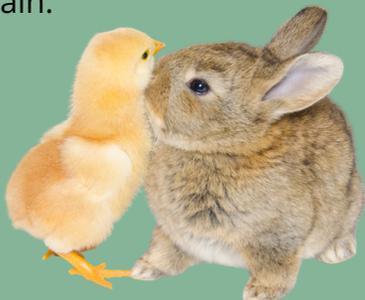
One suggestion I have is to meditate on the Wiccan concept of the Wheel of the Year. Notice how it goes through a cycle of rebirth to death to rebirth again. The grass grows. The leaves fall. The snow blows. It never stops. Your life does not stop at death.

It just begins again.

Death is a new beginning. New beginnings bring their own type of fear. They are much like death in that they lead to the unknown. These unknowns will keep coming to us. The whole of life and the whole of death is unknown.

The unknown is where wisdom lies.

That wisdom we learn in the Great Unknown is what will prepare us for what we will need in our next life. Our next life will grant us even more opportunities to learn and grow as people and as witches. Our next death will make us wiser. Then the cycle will begin again.



Remember, there is always hope.
Your partner in death,

Diana Rowan



Diana Rowan is a First Degree Wiccan priestess, specializing in funerary magic. She is a death doula born and raised in Nebraska. Diana holds a Bachelor's Degree from Woolston-Steen Theological Seminary (WSTS), is a member of the Spiritual Psychics Association (SPA), the National Home Funeral Alliance (NHFA), and The Order of the Good Death. You can reach her here: cornfedwitch@gmail.com

March SYMBOLISM

BIRTHSTONE:
Aquamarine
&
Bloodstone



Health
bravery
&
renewal

FLOWER:
Daffodil



In Medieval times, it was thought that if a daffodil drooped as you looked at it, it was an omen of death.

Pisces

February 19
thru
March 20



Symbol:
Two Fish

Motto:
"I believe."

Aries

March 21
thru
April 19



Symbol:
The Ram

Motto:
"I am!"

Wavebound WHISPERS



Welcome to March and everything Ostara and the Ocean. This month we will continue with the channeled message from the Ocean. There will also be a small ritual, and we will close out with the Charge of the Sea Goddess.

What do Ostara and the Ocean have in common? Hmm... Let's think. The Ice has melted. The coldness of the deep ocean has begun to warm. Ostara is the breath before the wave crests.

It's the moment the ocean shifts from winter's deep hush into movement again. The light lingers longer on the water. The tides feel a little more playful. Even the salt air carries promise and hope, something we thought that we lost in the winter months.

Spring doesn't rush in — it stirs like a gentle breeze.

Just like the calm of the sea before sunrise.

Ostara reminds us that balance isn't stillness... It's motion. It's the equal dance of light and dark, ebb and flow. Seeds are waking beneath the soil, just as new currents are waking beneath the surface.

If you listen closely, the ocean whispers at Ostara:

"Rise gently. Begin again. You are allowed to bloom in your own tide."

This is the ocean's way of encouraging us to never give up.



Message from the Ocean:

Little bloom of the turning tide,
I have been quiet through the long nights, holding your dreams in my depths.
Now the light returns, and I feel you stirring — just as I do.
Do not rush your rising.
Even my waves begin as whispers beneath the surface.
This is your season of gentle becoming.
Stretch toward the sun the way my tides stretch toward the moon.
Trust the balance. Trust the pull.
What was resting is waking from the deepest of slumbers.
What was hidden is arriving as the light burns brighter with a newfound energy.
What is meant for you is already flowing your way with enthusiasm long foretold.
Come stand at my shore.
Breathe in the salt.
Begin again.
Let me inspire you as I did before.
Let me wash over you and take away the old stagnant energies that keep you from reaching your full potential.



It's time to wake up, smell the salty ocean air, and seize the day. One thing that might help get you motivated is to write a list. Start writing yourself a daily or weekly to-do list; checking off something on the list will give you a sense of accomplishment. Also, get outside and connect with Mother Nature herself. Also, if you are close to a body of water, go to it and just listen. Put your feet in the water. Feel yourself becoming rejuvenated. Absorb these energies and let go of the stagnant ones that no longer serve you. To help with this, I leave you a simple short ritual that can in reality be done at any time. It would be a great morning wakeup ritual to begin the day week, or even the month! Just brush off the sleepies, and gather just a few ingredients that you may have lying around at home anyways (except for maybe some fresh flowers, which you can always just visualize them or use something to represent them.)

Saltwater & Spring Bloom Ostara Ritual

Theme: Renewal, balance, and gentle beginnings

Best time: Sunrise or early morning (but anytime works)

✿ You'll Need:

- A small bowl of water
- A pinch of sea salt
- Fresh spring flowers (or petals)
- A white, yellow, or pastel candle
- A quiet space



Step 1: Create Your Spring Sea

Fill your bowl with water and add a pinch of sea salt. As you stir it clockwise, say:

*"Waters of awakening, tides of new light,
Cleanse the old and bless what is rising."*

Place the flowers around or floating in the bowl.

Step 2: Light & Balance

Light your candle and reflect on this question:

What is beginning to bloom in my life?

Hold one flower in your hands and imagine it absorbing any lingering winter heaviness — doubts, stagnation, fears. Then gently dip your fingers into the salt water and touch your heart or forehead.



Step 3: Ocean's Blessing

Say: *"As the tide turns toward the sun,
So too do I turn toward growth.*

I rise gently. I bloom boldly.

I trust my becoming."

Let the candle burn for a few minutes in stillness.

Closing the Ritual

Return the salt water to the earth (outside if possible).

Leave the flowers as an offering or press the petals into a journal page as a reminder of your renewal.



I hope you enjoyed that short simple ritual. Before we close, is there something about the sea magic that you are dying to know? What kinds of ocean magic interest you? Do you want to know more about Sea Deities? Please feel free to e-mail me any comments, questions or suggestions of what you'd love to hear from the Sea. Now, I leave you with the Charge of the Sea Goddess.



Charge of the Sea Goddess

Listen to the words of the Sea Goddess, known by many names, Aphrodite, Amphitrite, Venus, Anuket, Isis, Juturna, Nerthus, Copacati, Mama cocha, Yemaya and all those as left unnamed. I hold your inspiration. Seek me out, for as the water flows, so flows your creativity. I am here in your time of need, for I have been with you since the beginning. I am the storm of emotion, for you will learn to handle me. I am the source of all emotions, from me comes your happiness, sadness and everything in between. Allow my compassion to pour upon you. I can drown you if you choose to ignore me. Let me into your life, and work with me so that you may learn the lessons that I offer. My waters run deep through the earth and sky. You cannot see me, but I am all around you in the water vapor of the air. Intuition, Empathy, Intention, Integrity, Harmony, Beauty, Balance. The possibilities are endless, just listen to your inner voice, for I am your inner voice. The voice of reason and removing limits. This is the path of water and it will lead you places you have dreamt about. Take comfort in my watery depths, for I will protect you. Flow with me and all will be well. What is a whirlpool, but flowing against the current, only to be pulled down unwillingly. These are the words from my heart. Heed them my children.

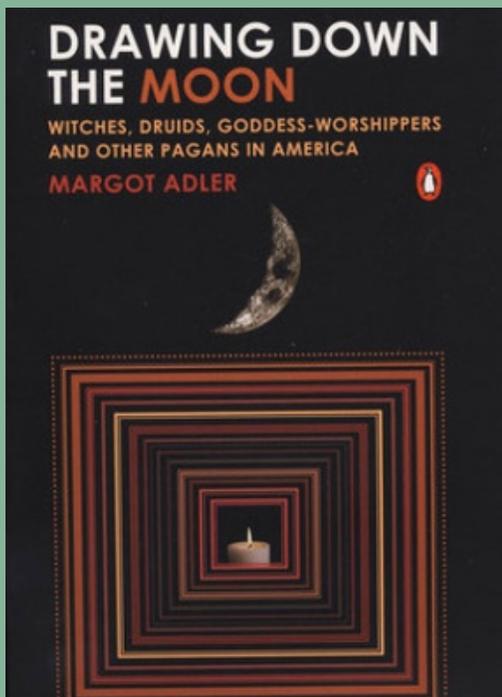


Silas the Sea Witch is very active all over the pagan world. He founded the Mystical Rainbow Tradition of Wicca (Incorporated in Michigan State as the Mystical Rainbow Church International, Inc) in 2023, where he has developed the 3-degree Clergy and non-clergy program. He is an active member of the Spiritual Professionals Association and also runs his own small business, "Silas the Sea Witch, LLC." You can find him on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook as **silastheseawitch**. You can support his small business by browsing his online POD store that has witchy/sea witch/astrology designs at <http://silastheseawitch.store> Additionally, if you are interested in a private reading with him or to find out more about what he does, feel free to visit his BuyMeACoffee at <http://silastheseawitch.com>, which also has a monthly subscription service.

Are you there, Gods? It's me, your priestess!

by Ava Althea

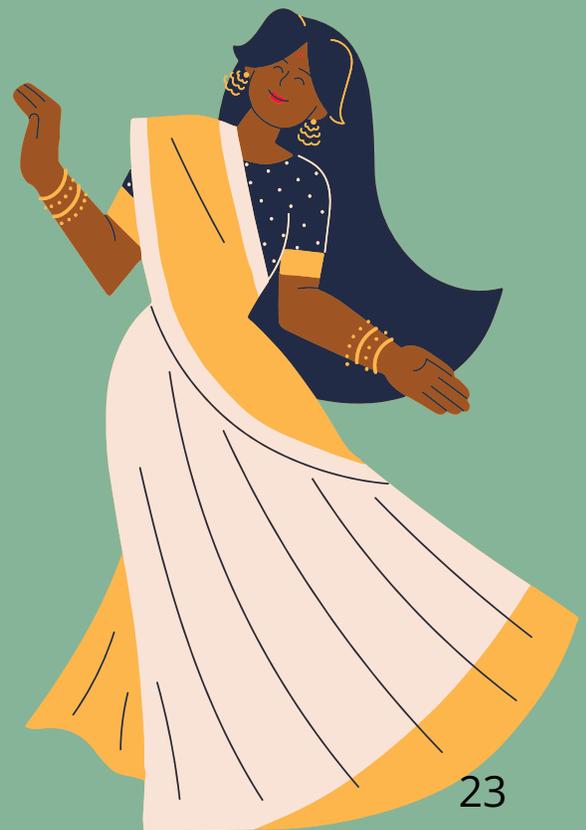
Whether it's your first time attending Spring Mysteries, or you're new to witchcraft, you may have heard the term "invoking" before and wondered if it meant sitting around a Ouija board to summon an entity or if someone just spelled "invitation" wrong. Well... you're not too far off on the latter! In Wicca, "invoking" means to "embody" a deity or power, which is a fancier word for "inviting" a deity or power to assume into someone so that they can carry that energy for a limited time. Some people mislabel this as a "voluntary possession", but I can assure you it is nothing like the horror movies, because when we invoke in Wicca, it is a conscious, consensual agreement between the person who is doing the work to appeal to the deity or power they are calling down, and that deity or power deciding to reciprocate. You become an "invoked person" that channels the energy.



Some could argue that the discussion around invocation in the witchcraft world started with the publication of Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*, wherein Adler discusses in detail the ritualistic measures practiced by witches to embody the power of the moon, or a goddess. But invocation in witchcraft has occurred long before those printed words from 1979. In fact, history and archeology point to the 23rd century BCE, where a priestess of Inanna wrote a poem to invoke the goddess. Her name is Enheduanna, and her texts are the earliest known first-person writings ever recorded (for more information, click [here](#)).

psst, there's a workshop on this very priestess and goddess at SMF this year!

In order to explain invoking in the modern-day, it requires a modern analogy. I like to describe invocation as being like a taxi or rideshare. You, the practitioner, are a physical vehicle for the gods, or whichever power you prefer working with. Just like how you would want a cab that is clean, smells nice, and has a driver that is respectful of your time and space, then that is how you should treat your body when thinking about how to prepare for invocation. You are literally delivering a deity and their messages to this earthly plane so it's important to make sure that your body, mind, and soul are prepared to carry them.



Once you have invoked, think of it as like the deity becoming the driver, and you are the passenger. While they may be “driving” most of the experience, you are still observing what is going on around you and you are able to stop or leave at any time. In a literal sense, invoking can also be seen as an active meditation or being in a controlled trance-like state. Your eyes are open, you’re still breathing, talking, interacting, and you notice things happening to you but at the same time you are detached from the physical and material plane and enjoying a “half-conscious” state. I personally have experienced this state through practicing Tai Chi. My instructor always has us start class meditating with our eyes open. She said that if we can meditate with our eyes open, then it gets easier to meditate while we are moving. When you achieve this state of being in your invocation practice, you become a invoked person that the deity expresses themselves through for a short-while.



The one important thing to remember when you are doing invocation work is this, “While deity will challenge you to grow, it will never push you to do something or shame you into action. It will inspire insights that are about soul growths and concepts that are much bigger than winning the lottery numbers. Therefore, it is important to always be sure that you are grounded and shielded. Establish some sort of safe space in which to channel until you are adept at it,” (Belladonna Laveau, *Awakening Spirit*). Basic witchcraft starts with establishing boundaries and protecting yourself. The more you work on that, the more you are able to discern messages from deity when you invoke and your relationship will grow deeper and stronger with the magic you make from it.

So whether you’re visiting a deity at their shrine at Spring Mysteries Festival, or part of a ritual that involves someone invoking, remember to respect the boundaries of the person who is doing the invocation. While they are invoked, consider humbling yourself and honor the deity that has come forward. You may also notice the invoked person behave or speak differently. Understand that when the invocation is finished, the person may not recall what was said or done (which is normal!) and do not be offended if they don’t remember saying something to you or interacting with you. Just because they are invoking a higher power, does not mean you are free to touch the person’s body or say or do whatever you want to them. Invoking is an act of ritual theatre and sacred space that holds divine mysteries waiting to manifest on this earthly plane.



Ava Althea

SPRING MYSTERIES FESTIVAL



Selena Fox



Amber K

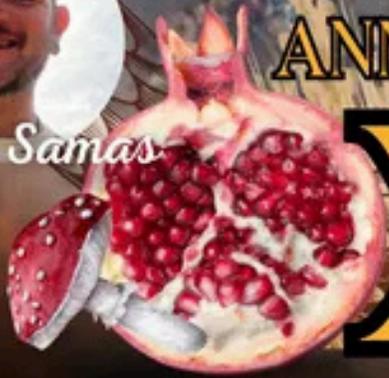


David Samas



Wendy Rule

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Thank You!

Dusty Dionne for Menhir News!

Diana Rowan for Dying to Know!

Venette Kruger for News from South Africa!

Silas The Sea Witch for Wavebound Whispers!

Ava Althea for Are you there, Gods? & editing!

Rev. Lilliana Blackstar for Reframing the Retrograde!

Teresa Jacobs for Getting Started with Water Bath Canning!

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