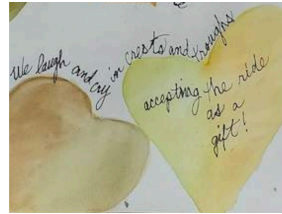




**HONORING THE
FEMININE DIVINE**
IN OUR OWN
DEEP BEINGS,
IN EACH OTHER,
AND IN THE
WORLD

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS



**COCO NEWS, SEASONAL
REFLECTIONS, EVENT
ANNOUNCEMENTS,
ORIGINAL ART**

SHE SPEAKS



Photo by Shauna Ireland. Owl from a raptor event in Greensboro, NC.

From The Editor

Dear Ones,

When my husband was still alive, we lived in the house where he grew up. In the backyard was a large deodar cedar tree – the tallest tree in the neighborhood. Ravens had lived in that tree for as long as Eddie could remember, and he had had “conversations” with them for as long as they’d been there.

Or at least he liked to think so. We would have coffee in the backyard, and I would listen to Eddie and his raven in a call-and-response cacophony that may or not may not have had any meaning. His relationship to these birds led me to associate Eddie with ravens, and I thought of him whenever I saw them.

Not long after Eddie passed away, I was on a walk with a couple of friends. A raven flew in and landed about a foot away from my face on a fence. The iridescent black beast looked me straight in the eyes and jabbered at me for quite a long time. Its eye contact felt deep and steady, and I had an uncanny sense of Eddie's presence. The raven evolved from that moment into a sign for me, and ravens have shown up at other poignant times. I believe now from the evidence that he sometimes sends his greetings to me through the ravens.

Within a year of Eddie's crossing, I went for a walk with a friend who had also lost his partner recently. We shared stories of signs we had received from our beloveds from the other side. When I told him about my raven encounter, he said he had had a similar encounter with a vulture shortly after his partner died and has grown to associate vultures with his partner's presence. We meandered through the woods a bit further and rested together on the bank of a small river. After a moment of quiet, I looked up into the tree just above us. There were two birds sitting silently side by side together on one branch. A raven and a vulture. Just one of each. Not feeding, not seeking. Just sitting quietly, gazing our way.

Ravens and vultures are often harbingers of death in pop culture. They feast on death. Maybe it's just coincidence or unconscious longing that drives us to believe in these signs. But these stories are common, and many have experienced an embodied knowing that they have connected to someone, something, on the other side.

Signs are just one way that people have connected to the Great Mystery throughout history. A myriad of other techniques for divination – the art of gathering information through means of reading signs, patterns, events, and symbols with the aid of a supernatural or

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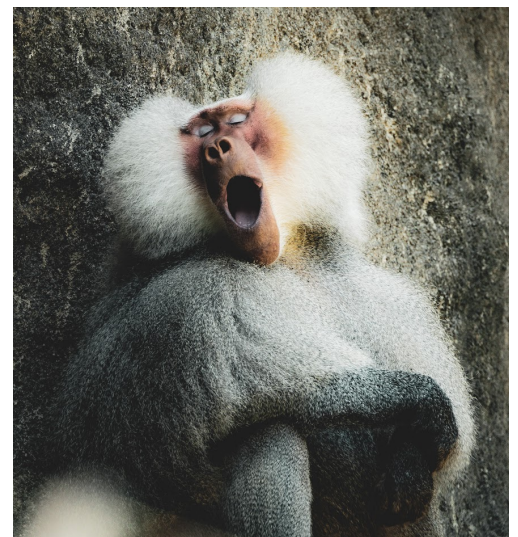


Photo by Shauna Ireland.

otherworldly force – have been documented since early civilization. Divination has been used to attempt to see the future, determine the will of Gods, speak to the deceased, obtain secret or hidden knowledge, ascertain the weather, and the list goes on.

In this edition of *She Speaks*, we celebrate Samhain, which is of course the time of year when the veil between worlds – worlds of life and death, the physical realm and the spirit realm, heaven and earth, individual consciousness and infinite consciousness, woman and Goddess – is thinnest and most permeable and divination practices can be most powerful. Read on for a how-to guide to divination, fascinating and obscure divination practices that you may have never heard of, and inspiration for preparing yourself to encounter the Divine, however She may appear to you.

In Service,
Iris Padgett

MAY 12-16, 2027

Still, She Calls

***SAVE THE DATE
FOR OUR NEXT
EVENTS***

OCT 6-10, 2027

Women of Story and Lore

New Members

Welcome to our
newest UUWS

members! We're glad you've chosen our organization as a way to connect with other women and the Divine Feminine. Thank you for joining our organization, and we hope to see you at an event soon!

**Kira Vekat
Glen Burnie, MD**

**Bex Mackelprang
Statesboro, GA**

**Casey Stocker
Statesboro, GA**

**Marcy Moreland
Cantonment, FL**

**Anna Martin
Swannanoa, NC**

**Catherine Quiring
Pensacola, FL**

**Jan Humphrey
Greenville, SC**

**Andrea Pixley
Norman, OK**

Intuition

-by Catherine Quiring

The world of the third eye
and prophecy
and unveiling
are becoming a part of my daily being.
Like wispy haze solidifying into transparent,
luminous shapes and forms.
It feels like I am in another world, and yet
right here, in the world I have always
been.
I am more real.
I am more solid.
And so is this connection and awareness.

Intuition is not a gift I have,
something that makes me special.
It is my eyes, my ears, my taste, my touch, my
connection. It is a sense.
It is not something that makes me more
enlightened. It is a part of my humanity.
It is more like getting glasses so you can see
more sharply.
Slowing down so you can feel the warmth of
the sun on your skin.
Being ready.
And awake.



Photo by Shauna Ireland.

From the Fall Event *Waters of the Spirit...*



“I want to thank Victoria Fredrick for stepping in at the last minute to fill in for a cancelled workshop. Victoria said she could gather up some craft items from home and come up with something to keep everyone busy...but my goodness! She had tables full of cool stuff and the workshop ended up being called "Pocket Altars." There were little boxes and tons of things to decorate and fill them with. I chose to actually make a funky little diorama with a Halloween theme that I just love! We are blessed with such wonderful women in UUWomenspirit who are always ready to step up when needed. Thanks again, Victoria, for creating a fun workshop!”

-Judy Padgett

News from the CoCo

The Coordinating Council, or CoCo, is the governing body of UUWomenspirit. The current members are Victoria Fredrick (Marketing and Outreach Coordinator), Shauna Ireland (Volunteer Coordinator), Christine Grewcock (Registrar), Gail Stephenson (Membership Coordinator and Treasurer), Rev. Maggie Lovins (Program Resource Liaison), and Raven Stephenson (Scribe and Keeper of the Sacred Text).

Our fall event, *Waters of the Spirit*, once again filled me with gratitude for this community. Despite being inundated by many challenges — including a COVID outbreak — the planning committee adapted beautifully (talk about going with the flow!) and created an experience that truly filled our cups. Many thanks to everyone who helped us adapt and who held our sisterhood with such care throughout.

We were delighted to affirm Donna Carson as Registrar at our membership meeting. Her term will begin in January, and in the meantime she and Christine will be working closely together. There is plenty of gratitude to go around here: to Christine for four years of service as Registrar — something wrong with your room? Any special requests? Did you forget to order merchandise? How about changing your workshops? — and to Donna for stepping into such a critical role. Thank you both.

In related news, Katie Bloedau has agreed to step in as Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. Since we weren't able to affirm her at the membership meeting, we'll be scheduling an online meeting in the near future. We're grateful for her willingness to step forward.

We mentioned in the Lammas newsletter that we are working on a new logo and branding package. We'll have more to share very soon. We'll also be refreshing our marketing materials and website in the coming weeks, so stay tuned.

It's hard to believe that our community is now nearly 40 years strong. We have truly built something remarkable together, and all of us are part of that story. This kind of longevity in a community like ours is something very special. Many of us have grown within this sisterhood in ways we could not have done on our own, and I feel enormous gratitude for everyone who has made that possible.

As we enter the season of Samhain, I find myself thinking about the sisters who helped bring us here and are no longer with us. Some have passed over; others have moved on in their lives to different places and communities. All of them have been part of our story. As the seasons turn, let's make some space to remember them and honor what they helped create.

And, speaking of turning 40, a shout-out to both our Spring and Fall planning committees, who are helping us shape a year-long celebration of our vibrancy, our care, our community, and our love for one another.

With gratitude,

Victoria Fredrick, on behalf of The Coordinating Council



Treasurer/Membership/Mountain Liaison Report

Happy Samhain! I am writing to invite you to consider donating to the general fund of Unitarian Universalist Womenspirit. Why, you ask? Where does that money go? Good questions.

UUWomenspirit is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our sources of non-event income are dues, donations, and 10% commissions from Brigid's Bazaar. Expenses include insurance, technology, meetings, gifts, bank processing fees, incidental purchases, and CoCo support role credits toward events. We also have the expense of brand development this year.

Event income comes from program fees, merchandise sales, and special funding when available. Expenses include registration materials, social hour food and supplies, worship supplies, the cost of merchandise sold, logo artwork, special Mountain services or equipment usage, bank processing fees, and Planning Committee, Chaplain, Track, and Workshop Facilitator credits toward attending events.

We do not aim to make a profit from events. We aim to break even or come close. This is determined by how many attendees we have compared with the expenses incurred by the Planning Committee.

Scholarships are funded by donations and the proceeds of silent auctions and other special auctions or raffles. Scholarship money is accounted for separately from other UUWS funds. At this point, we are doing really well with our general scholarship fund.

What we really need at this point are donations to our general fund, to help cover the annual expenses that come with running our organization, and to our Young Women's Scholarship Fund.

Bright Blessings from the Treasurer.



Photo by Penny Featherstone.

You don't need to be a gifted psychic to explore and hone your skill at the craft of divination. If you experiment with a few methods, you'll likely find that there are some that come more naturally to you than others, some that speak to you more. Divination is a practice: the more you practice, the more accurate and powerful your readings can become. And the more you will know yourself.

Every practice of divination, no matter what kind, begins with a thorough preparation. Without the right prep, your readings will not make as much sense, be as clear, or carry as much meaning. Some would argue that this is the most important part of the process. As with any ritual, preparation involves cleansing, grounding, calling in your guides, and clarifying your intentions.

Take care to practice in a space that is free from clutter, noise, too much decay, or distraction. Similarly, prepare your body, mind, and spirit for the process. This could mean actually bathing, wearing ritual clothing, smoke clearing, burning incense, anointing yourself, stretching, meditating. Clear your mind and breathe deeply for a little while. Allow the heart to be open to any message. Be prepared to receive whatever comes to you with equanimity and self-compassion. Your subconscious mind will respond better if you take these steps.

Grounding helps you center your energy, attention, and focus. Visualization works well for grounding. Imagine yourself growing roots or connecting to the center of the Earth.

It is vital for you to be specific about what information you are seeking. The more specific, the better. Spend time to really understand and grok what you want to know. Write it down.

Whether it's the directions, the elements, the God and/or Goddess, the ancestors, deities, the Holy Trinity, angels, fairies, the universe, or any other spirit guide that calls to you, take a moment to ask them for their help. Ask for any information given to be for your own highest good and the highest good of all that is.

Pre-made divination tools often come with their own guide books. For example, most of us know the Tarot decks follow a roughly universal symbology, although each deck will have its own variation of the meaning of each card. There are many books written on how to interpret symbols, not only symbols from the Tarot, but also symbols in tea leaves and on runes as well as numbers, the positions of stars and planets, or what happens in dreams.

But just because there are trends toward assigning a "universal" meaning to symbols does not mean that that meaning will resonate with you - and that's okay. In fact, you can even create your own symbols with their own meanings. What matters is that you understand what a symbol means *to you*. Play with the intersection between your own interpretation of messages and the collective agreement about what they mean. Go with your gut when you receive a message. One way you can get to know symbols is to pick one to focus on for a few days or a week. Research it. Write about it. Look for it in your day to day life. Pay attention to how and when it shows up.

Thank your guides. Thank your own intuition. Take notes from your reading so you can remember the knowledge you gained and add to the bank of cumulative knowledge you are growing about divination.

A Few Methods of Divination

There are a few that we've all heard of and most of us have probably played with. Then there are some that are incredibly obscure. John Michael Greer, who wrote *The New Encyclopedia of the Occult*, claims that divination has been used in every culture in the world throughout human history. The list of varieties of divination on Wikipedia is long, and there are too many to cover in this newsletter alone. The scope of ways that humans have divined information over the years points to one thing: you can likely use just about anything for divination. Here are some common ones:

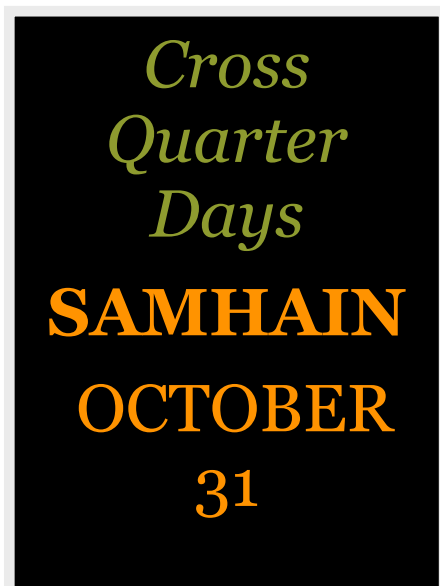
- **Cartomancy:** Using card decks—such as Tarot, Lenormand, or standard playing cards—to interpret symbols and patterns for insight into life events.
- **Astrology:** Mapping the movements and alignment of celestial bodies (planets, stars, and zodiac signs) to understand human personality and destiny.
- **Scrying:** Gazing into a reflective surface—like a crystal ball, mirror, or bowl of water—to trigger intuitive visions or trances.
- **Runecasting:** Drawing or tossing inscribed ancient alphabets, such as Norse runes or Celtic Ogham, to receive guidance.
- **Pendulums:** Suspending a weighted crystal, metal, or wooden point from a chain to ask yes-or-no energy questions based on its swing direction.
- **Tasseography (Tasseomancy):** Interpreting the shapes and patterns left by tea leaves or coffee grounds at the bottom of a cup.
- **Bibliomancy:** Opening a book (frequently a sacred text or poetry collection) to a random page and reading a passage for guidance.
- **Palmistry (Chiromancy):** Reading the lines, mounts, and shapes of the human palm to analyze personality and potential life paths.
- **Numerology:** Calculating the mystical or spiritual significance of numbers derived from birth dates or names.
- **Oneiromancy:** divination by dreams.



Photo by Shauna Ireland.

And here is a sample of some interesting, amusing, macabre, and not-so-common divination methods:

- **Ailuromancy:** divination by observing behavior, movements, or cries of cats, usually to predict the weather.
- **Chresmomancy:** divination by means of listening to the ravings, incoherent speech, or ecstatic utterances of those who are mentally ill.
- **Cledonomancy:** divination by interpreting overheard words, accidental remarks, or chance comments.
- **Biblomancy:** divination by books opened at random.
- **Hepatomancy:** an ancient practice of divination by inspecting the liver of a sacrificed animal.
- **Libanomancy:** divination by smoke of incense.
- **Pyromancy:** divination by fire, flames, and smoke.
- **Rahbdomancy:** divination by rods, sticks or wands.
- **Scapulimancy:** divination by bones.
- **Tyromancy:** divination by reading the holes, mold growth, cracks, and textures of cheese.
- **Oomancy:** divination through the use of the shapes of egg whites dropped into a glass or bowl of warm water.
- **Necromancy:** divination by communication with the deceased, commonly through a ouija board.
- **Extispicy:** by the appearance of the entrails of animals.
- **Geomancy:** Interpreting random markings, dots, or patterns drawn in sand, dirt, or paper.



"When Shall We Three Meet Again?" Photo submitted by Toni Stephenson. Cindy Weiner, Aislin Anderson, and Toni Stephenson in Salem, MA.



A Ritual of Samhain

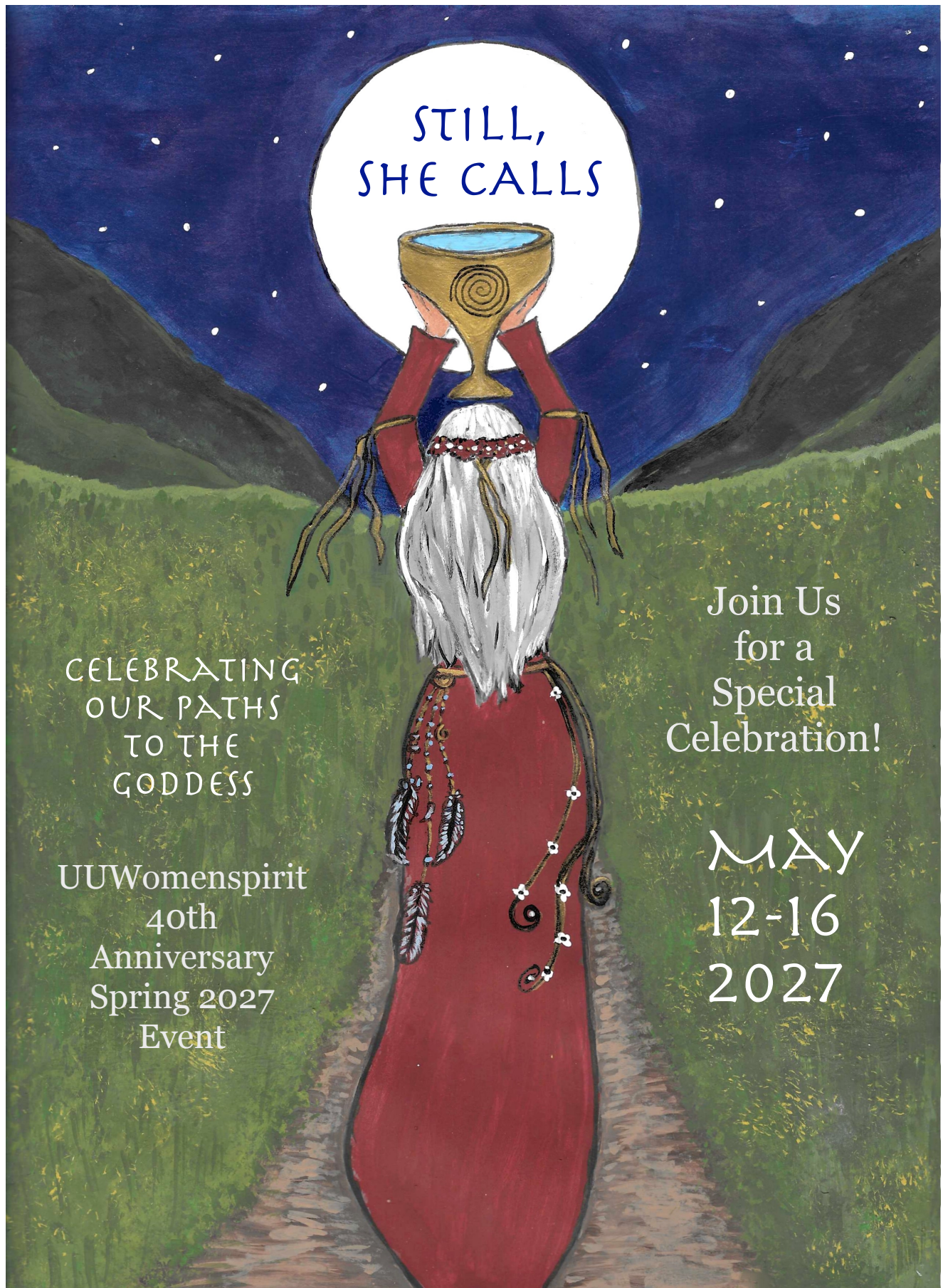
By Molly Remer

Wake to first frost,
the air chilled,
the plants gilded with silver.
Watch your breath
make smoky clouds
in the morning sunshine
and notice tiny stars sparkling
across the boards of the deck.
Pause to remember your ancestors.
Speak their names
into the quiet morning
and expectant trees.
Consider what you have been
neglecting,
what needs time and tending.
Re-collect your attention
and your focus.
Allow yourself a pause

for memory,
for gratitude,
for love.
Allow yourself to begin to heal
from old patterns
and tired ways.
Feel droplets
from the quickly melting frost
splash your hair,
your face,
your eyelids,
your open hands.
smile to receive
this unexpected baptism of
renewal,
a blessing as you dedicate yourself
to allowing life
to change.



Photo submitted by Penny Featherstone. Sisters embrace and watch the sun set on Meditation Rock at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center in Highlands, NC.



**By the Earth that is Her body,
By the Air that is Her breath,
By the Fire of Her bright spirit,
And by the living Waters of Her womb...
The Goddess has called to us for millenia...
And She Calls to us Still.**



You are invited to come to The Mountain to celebrate 40 years of our special organization. We were all called to the Goddess, the Feminine Divine and this gathering of women at different times and for different reasons. Come to remember, to reunite with sisters and to rededicate yourself to the magic that is UUWomenspirit!

Here is a sample of what is in store for you.....

 The beautiful Lydia Ruyle Goddess banners and movie night with the documentary *"Herstory: The Visionary Life of Lydia Ruyle and the banners of the Divine Feminine."*

 Memory Lane: An area dedicated to photos of our sisters who have passed on, our sisters we miss, other photos from past events and mementos of past events. Please bring photos and items to share in the display.

 Wonderful Tracks and Workshops, both iconic and new, including a Croning workshop, for those ready for their official entry into the awesomeness of "Cronehood."

 Sacred Circle gatherings for remembering our paths to the Goddess with singing, chanting, dancing and special activities.

 Get dressed up (like we have historically on Saturday nights) for a procession and the Goddess Ball! Dance and move to celebrate the Crones, and also the Maidens, Mothers, Warriors, and Sovereign Women! We'll be making crowns/headdresses and dancing in the rest of the evening's activities: Cabaret and more dancing with drumming.

 The unveiling of the new 40-year quilt of t-shirt designs, being lovingly crafted by member Marilyn Grubbs.

*And more.....we're still planning!
Registration opens around the first of March.
Keep an eye out for the announcement.*

Spring 2027 Planning Committee

Event Coordinator, Tracks and Workshops – Judy Padgett

Worship – Alice Carnes

Worship – Magi King

Scribe – Lisa Sherman

Logo Designer, Decoration Creatrix, and Artist Extraordinaire – Andrea Johnson

Sales and Activities – Liz Kuemmerer



Original watercolor by Penny Featherstone.

STILL, SHE CALLS LOOKING FOR TRACK AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

She calls to all of you for **Track and Workshop proposals** for the Spring 2027 40th Anniversary event. For this event, we are looking for:

- Most loved workshops from the past.
- Facilitate or let us know if you'd like to see a topic presented again.
- Popular facilitators from our 40 year journey. Do you miss someone? Let us know.
- The workshop you've always been afraid to facilitate. Step outside your comfort zone and share your knowledge with us.
- Workshops that match our theme: a celebration of 40 years of connection to the Feminine Divine.
- Wonderful new topics that inspire and renew our relationship to the Goddess.

There are time slots available for 8 hour tracks, 6 hour workshops, and 3 hour workshops.

Go to the website, uuwomenspirit.org, click on **Volunteer**, click on **Workshop**, and fill out the form. It will automatically come to our Track and Workshop coordinator Andrea Johnson.

Remember that your cost for attending the event is reduced when you facilitate a track or workshop.

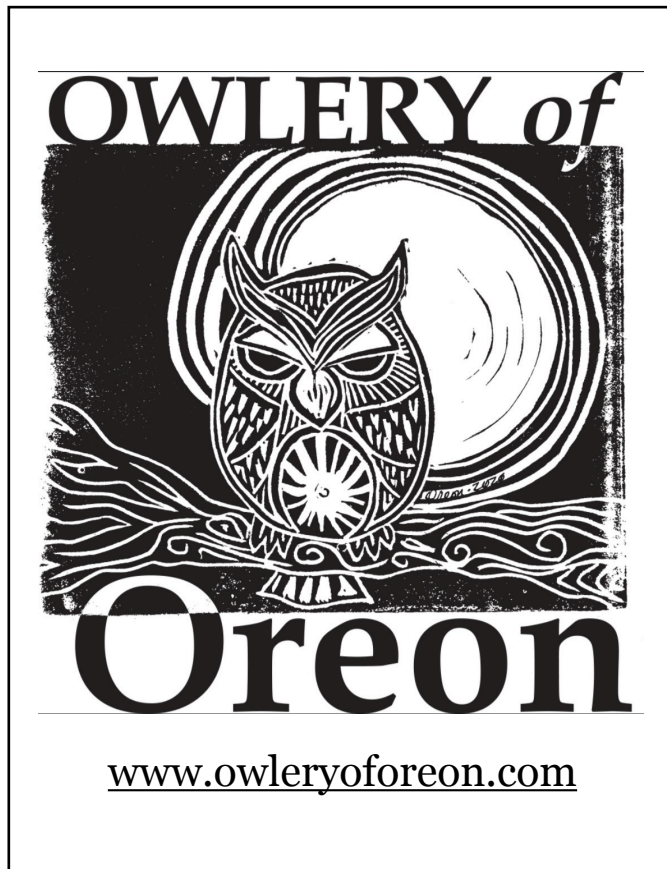
Thank you for helping to make this event complete with your offering.

SUBMIT TO SHE SPEAKS

Interested in contributing original poetry, prose, ads, photography, art, tribute, gratitude, healing support requests, rituals, news, announcements, or other original content?

Send your submissions to: newsletter@uuwomenspirit.org

Please include your full name and a brief, sentence-long bio with your original submissions - let's get to know each other even better! If you submit work by another, please attribute it accordingly. Send names when submitting photos with faces, please. Submissions should be no more than two pages or about 500-600 words.



Nina Brewer-Davis, PhD

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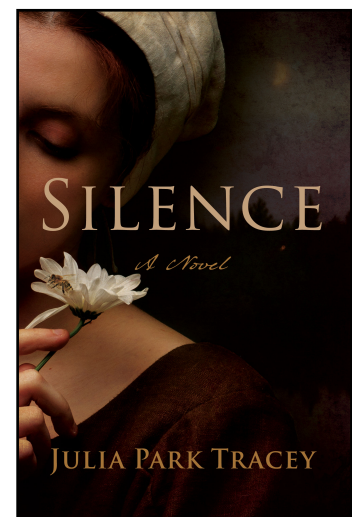


SILENCE

A Novel
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Julia Park
Tracey

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"After three grievous losses, Puritan woman Silence Marsh dares to question God aloud in the church, and that blasphemy lands her in trouble—she is silenced for a year by the powers that govern...A whiff of sulfur and witchcraft shadows this literary Puritan tale of loss and redemption."



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Gretchen Ohmann - CoConvener

Morgan Libby

End of Life Doula

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 Facebook: Anne Freels and Wingshuck

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Susan Baylies is designing new t-shirts and others things available at her online **Suzebilia** shops!

<https://snakeandsnake.com>

Sacred Wild

Soul reclamation, tarot,
mystical exploration,
intuitive coaching,
spiritual journeying,
& dreamwork



Catherine Quiring

Sacred Wild is the ground we hold together at the edge of mystery, the threshold where magic takes your hand and doesn't let go — dreamwork, tarot, ancestors, guides, all of it one long line reaching to reclaim all the parts of your soul, so you can be whole again.



Rain's Obsessive Stitchery

Rain Pope 615-238-7760

<http://rainsews.com> rain@rainsews.com

Hand-dyed yarn and clothing, embroidered items including towels, tarot bags, and UUWomenspirit logo items, chainmaille jewelry, and various other shiny things.



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Tarot

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diane@wisewomanwoods.com