

WINTER 2020

# KINDRED CONNECTIONS

Official Newsletter of Columbia Grove, ADF



## Letters from the Senior Druid: Virtual Spirituality

BY ARIN D'WULF

We've made it through another year, though the pretty general consensus has been that time was relative in 2020. I'm proud of growth I've seen in our Grove this year. When the first Covid-19 social distance orders were issued in March, our Grove came together and made a hasty last minute decision to postpone our Spring Equinox which had been scheduled for the following week. We didn't want to risk putting any of our members or attendees in that kind of risk. We threw around the idea of doing something virtually, but ultimately decided that the whole thing was much too last minute to put something together reliably.

But that was the only ritual we missed. For every ritual following, including one ritual that was outside of the 8 high days, we were there in our living rooms and offices and bedrooms, with our computers and cameras, bringing our rituals to the masses.

And we learned a lot!

We learned how to keep from being Zoom-bombed by trolling strangers - and fortunately no one has tried yet, knock on wood!

We learned that the location we rent doesn't have an ethernet connection, and doesn't like streaming live rituals on Zoom, when our meditation during midsummer cut out so badly that folks couldn't follow along.

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## Letters from the Senior Druid: Virtual Spirituality

BY ARIN D'WULF

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We learned to post copies of the ritual for when such things might happen, as well as for folks who need the aid. And we learned how to adapt our rituals to help folks come together, even when we're all separated by space and a pandemic. But that also gave us the opportunity to open our rituals to people from across the United States and even into Canada!



And everything that we have learned can help us going forward too, once things start to return to a time where we can come back together and celebrate in person once again. How we practice our spirituality together has had to change. For many it has been difficult. For some of us, it's been a matter of setting up a Grove space with Hallows on Animal Crossing: New Horizons, or other video games! But how we part the mists and connect with the Kindred remains the same. For as our ancestors have done in the past, so do we today, that our descendants may do so in the future. A living tradition, amidst it all.

It is the life of the  
crystal, the  
architect of the  
flake, the fire of the  
frost, the soul of  
the sunbeam. This  
crisp winter air is  
full of it.

~

**-John Burroughs**





## Salutations from the Chief Druid

BY AMBER ARANEAE

The calendar year is at an end and wow, what a year it has been! The Grove has faced many challenges since March but despite all that, our Grove is still growing and thriving. In the past year we have gained some amazing new Friends and Members and through all this isolation, some wonderful new ideas have sprouted into giant inspirational trees!

I am happy to give the annual report that Columbia Grove currently has:

**15 Core Members**

**23 Friends of Columbia**

**25 active ADF Druidry members affiliated with our grove.**

Another wonderful thing that happened this year was that a few members started a whole new special interest group: The Divination Guild! It's been great fun discussing all things divination with some truly knowledgeable members!

Unfortunately, our grove members have not been able to resume Druid rituals in Coffee Creek Corrections Facility due to COVID-19 restrictions but we did get to do an Imbolc rite! We hope to resume our religious services for these women as soon as it is safe to do so.

I want to send out a heartfelt thanks to our entire community. Thank you for supporting us as we navigate these difficult times. Thank you for your patience and love. Please stay healthy and I hope to see you soon!

**Columbia Grove's aim is to help fulfill the physical, spiritual, and intellectual needs of the Columbia-Willamette Pagan community. We hope to positively represent an Indo-European Polytheist religion through both public and private rituals, as well as through specific workshops and community projects. Our intent is to serve the greater good of the public and society as a whole through an adherence to meaningful social action. All pagans and pagan-friendly peoples are welcomed to join our rituals and they are Family Friendly as well. During our rituals we welcome the varied Gods and Goddesses of all our guests, their unique ancestors, and abundant spirits of nature.**

## 2020 Volunteer Totals!

Columbia Grove has a wonderful Nature Connection Guild that organizes events which focus on local nature-based community volunteer work.

Sadly, this was a short year as COVID-19 restrictions halted most of our events but here is what we achieved from January -March!

Columbia Grove Friends and Members volunteered with the following organizations:

**Friends of Trees:**

44 hours

**Columbia Slough Watershed:**

36 hours

**Leech Botanical Garden:**

12 hours

Total of:

**92 hours volunteered and  
183 native trees planted  
for 2020!!**



## Grove Announcements

Columbia Grove is proud to present our 2021 Leadership Election Results:

**Senior Druid: Arin D'Wulf**

**Chief Druid and Scribe: Amber Araneae**

**Pusewarden/Treasurer: Cynwise Watts**

Congratulations to the winners and a huge thanks to all of the members who voted in this year's election! 2021 is going to be great.



## 2021 Grove Calendar

### **Winter Cross Quarter (Imbolc)**

Irish Celtic: Sunday January 31st

### **Spring Equinox**

Slavic: Sunday March 21st

### **Spring Cross Quarter (Beltane)**

Gaulish Celtic: Sunday May 2nd

### **Summer Solstice**

Hellenic/Greek: Saturday June 26th

### **Summer Cross Quarter (Midsummer)**

Gaulish Celtic: Sunday August 1st

### **Fall Equinox**

Irish Celtic: Sunday September 26th

### **Fall Cross Quarter (Samhain)**

Norse: Saturday November 6th

### **Winter Solstice**

Slavic: Sunday December 19th



**Would you like to get involved with Columbia Grove, ADF?**

**We would LOVE to have you join us!**

Columbia Grove, ADF is always welcoming excited people with new ideas to help us grow and strengthen our community!

More info can be found on our website at: [www.columbiaadf.org](http://www.columbiaadf.org).

Or email us at: [ColumbiaADF@gmail.com](mailto:ColumbiaADF@gmail.com)



## Columbia Grove's Virtual Winter Solstice Ritual: A Review

On December 12th, 2020, at 7pm, 33 people joined together to celebrate the Winter Solstice and honor the winter Hag of Scottish renown - the Cailleach. This was our sixth virtual ritual performed by Columbia Grove, and we had the pleasure of welcoming participants from all over the country. We are thrilled that we were still able to celebrate the longest night with our Grove members, let alone welcome others who wished to recognize the holiday.

We honored a number of specific Godden for our solstice rite, revering Danu for Mother Earth, Scathach as the Warrior, Ceridwen for inspiration, and Columbia as our patroness. For this ritual, we invited Nicheven, the Witch Queen, to part the veils between worlds for us.

Our rite was a beautiful and restorative way to honor the long night and welcome the return of the light. The ritual was written and led by Spider (Amber) and Rook, with contributions from David, Claire, and Forest.

### **Our Omens/Messages from the rite were:**

#### **From the Ancestors: Luna**

Remember that life is like the cycle of the moon. No matter how hard or dark it seems, the moon will rise again. There is a Full Moon on Dec 29th right before we start 2021 so take that light into the new year!

#### **From the Nature Spirits: Vision**

We are all dealing with quarantine and isolation differently but generally speaking, we feel cut off from everything. The Nature Spirits remind us to open our eyes to the beauty around us. Nature is still there. Take inspiration and joy from the natural things when everything seems awful.

#### **From the Deities: Intuition**

When it comes to troubles and tribulations don't doubt yourself. Often times you already "know" the answers and it's important to follow your intuition. Don't doubt your abilities. It's really easy to do during these dark and lonely months, so don't let it lie dormant. Listen to it.



# Simargl

ART BY CLAIRE STEVENSON

Simargl is an Eastern Slavic deity who is mentioned in the pantheon of Prince Vladimir of Kiev, often depicted as a winged dog or lion. Not much is known for certain about Simargl. Some theories suggest he is another facet of the Simurgh from Iranian mythology; others suggest that the name Simargl is actually a scribal error, and may refer to multiple separate gods.





## A Prayer to Teeth

BY FOREST

I pray to the sharp edges, violence made manifest in a thousand points.

I pray to the canines, hungriest of the teeth, leading points that plunge deepest and hold tightest. May the canines guide me toward worthy pursuits and may I know when to hold fast and when to release.

I pray to the incisors, least hungry, those that sever the bite before too much is held. May the incisors grant me the courage to know my limits, and to sever ties appropriately and cleanly without leaving loose ends.

I pray to the molars, durable fortifications that gnash through the toughest fibers. Grant me the perseverance to chew through the tasks that don't yield easily. Grant me the ability to digest anything with enough endurance to process it first.

I pray to the teeth, the extensions of my will, my hard and fast points around which life yields. May I always know when and where to bite.



Winter either  
bites with its  
teeth or lashes  
with its tail.  
-Proverb



## Book review: Living Virtuously by DJ Mogh Bríghde

BY SAM THE OWL

I've been a Gaelic Polytheist for roughly a year now. I've only spoken to DJ a few times unfortunately, and reading their book was a lovely experience. I do well when things are laid out to me in a clear and concise manner; something this book has accomplished well. It's short, sweet, and to the point. It also nicely enough provides adequate real life examples, and address the difficulty of following the virtues when coming from a Christian background. Something that is very common in the community.

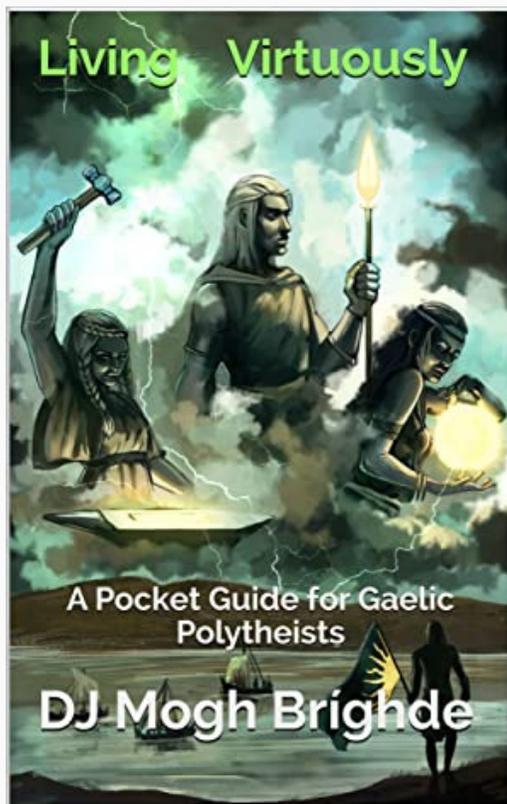


Image retrieved from:

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55534134-living-virtuously>



The color of  
springtime is flowers;  
the color of winter is  
in our imaginations.  
— Terri Guillemets



# Prayer to Tunnel Falls

BY AMBER ARANEAE

**\*In 2016 a large wildfire devastated many areas on the Oregon side of the Columbia Gorge. One area was the Eagle Creek trail in near Hood River. My favorite waterfall, Tunnel Falls, can only be accessed via this trail. 12 miles round trip. The Eagle Creek trail is closed indefinitely due to fire damage and land slides.**

**This is my prayer to the waterfall that calls to my heart.\***

I journey on.

There are no roads to where I want to go, your narrow path that winds around the canyon walls with incredible views of tree tops below my feet.

I journey on.

My cheeks flush from the trek as the elevation rises and falls like a turbulent ocean during a summer storm. I breathe your forest air deep into my labored lungs and exhale my troubles from a monotonous world.

I journey on.

I walk over your wet rocks and muddy soil. I remove my shoes and climb over the fallen trees spanning your river and I pause halfway across watching those wild waters flow beneath me. Nothing but the everlasting world around me matters anymore.

I journey on.

My breath is short, my muscles engaged, I'm awake. Your forest demands submission from my body but it releases so much more from my mind. My stress fades away and is replaced with the overwhelming knowledge that this is where I am meant to be.

I journey on.

I hear your roar before I see your face and slow my step as I approach you. I turn the corner and I stand before you. One world left behind and a new one before me. Your waters rush down from the wet slippery rock cascading hundreds of feet to crash into the pool below. All around you are blankets of moss.

I pause.

There are no cars. There are no boats. There is no busy world full of deadlines and responsibilities. There is only you and your voice speaking to the part of me that has always understood your language. The summoning of your water and the deep forest's call.

I listen.

I always listen.

I pray to you from my home today.

I pray to the waterfall that always beckons me to return. I don't know when I can take that journey to you again, to pause in your splendor, and listen to your voice, but I pray that your waters always run wild.

I raise a glass of water to you.

I drink to our time together.

Until we meet again.