



# The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Waynesboro

## Exploring UU Paganism

By Sarah Fritts

When I joined my first UU church in the early 2000s, the UU Church of Annapolis, it was a revelation to me. I had never known a religious group to be so open to all sorts of spirituality. Not only did they have an active Buddhist meditation group, but they had an active CUUPS, or [Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans](#), chapter!

I couldn't resist exploring the opportunity to join a group dedicated to honoring the sacred feminine and the natural world. It was the first time I was a part of group centered around the matriarchal traditions of our ancestors, finding the divine in nature and the folk traditions so often overlooked in wider society.

We would start every meeting by going around the circle, naming our maternal ancestors for as far back as we could remember. A humbling experience for me, as I could only remember back to my grandmothers. We honored the turning of the seasons, and studied the archaeological evidence of ancient matriarchal societies. There was also a lot of fun, laughter, and crafts!

After we moved, I lost touch with those traditions. I consider myself mostly a Zen Buddhist these days, but living in the Valley now has reawakened my desire to explore sacredness of nature and the traditions honoring "our interdependent web of existence," as it says in our UU values.

It doesn't hurt, that as I get older, I gain new perspective on the three-part goddess of Maiden, Mother, Crone.

There is deep history in Appalachia of earth-centered spirituality, and I look forward to exploring it more as I reacquaint myself with the Pagan traditions. I count myself lucky to have as resources for my studies, Pyramid here in downtown Waynesboro and their sister store The Little Shoppe of Crystals in downtown Staunton.



As we move toward the winter solstice, also known as Yule, I look forward to trying to honor the longest night of the year in an earth-centered way and lighting a candle in the darkness. I am grateful to be part of a church and a religious community that encourages me to explore my spiritual path, and I welcome you to light a candle with me if you so choose!

### Intended Light

The light I chose  
To fill the darkness  
Never came.

But all the same,  
Through darkness waiting,  
The sun rose.

*Joe Good*