



P. O. Box 50
Commack NY 11725
April 2, 1974



Theos

Phoenix

To The Members of the Pagan Ecumenical Council:

I have been given a copy of the minutes of your meeting of February 23rd, 1974. It is unfortunate (for me) that there are so many miles between New York and California, as I certainly would have made it a point to attend & be part of your efforts. However, the minutes of the meeting are most informative and are the next best thing.

Phoenix and I both endorse the purpose and function of the Pagan Ecumenical Council and support fully its existence and goals. Moreover, we both add a collective "Aye" to the matters discussed at your February meeting as outlined in the minutes.

While we do not have anything as formidable as the PEC here in the New York City area, our coven hosts regular meetings of leaders of local Gardnerian covens; meetings which are usually attended by invited leaders of other Wiccan and neo-Pagan groups. At our next meeting (date not set, we had one this past Saturday), we will read the minutes of your meeting for the benefit of these people who all share your desire for advancing Paganism.

Please keep us informed of your activities and do not hesitate to call upon Phoenix or I in your good work.

Blessed Be,

Theos ✱

Theos, High Priestess
Long Island Gardnerian Coven

AGENDA FOR MEETING
PAGAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL #2
Scheduled June 1 and 2, 1974 C. E.

This is the second of a continuing series of meetings and social gatherings to be held in California, with the intent of advancing the cause of the various neo-Pagan groups in this area.

A formal meeting will be held to cover the items in the agenda included below, with copies of the minutes and other results and actions to be mailed out to all attendees. Other agenda items may be added as they arise.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: At Caerdderwen, 5833 McAndrew Drive, Oakland, California, telephone 415-339-8362; starting about 4:00 PM, 1 June.

MEETING NOTES: The Autocrat of this Council Meeting will be Ed Fitch, with the Scribe to be appointed. Caerdderwen is large, and there is much space for visitors: anyone staying for the weekend should, of course, bring sleeping bags. Anyone desiring to arrive on Friday will be quite welcome. For those arriving by air, planes can be met if Gwydion or Alison have advance notice.

All should bring suitable drink and food for the "pot luck" and party which will follow the Saturday meeting. Collections will be taken when needed to replenish food and drink.

On Saturday we can spend the morning and afternoon arriving and getting to know each other informally. The official meeting will begin about four with a break for pot-luck dinner around six. The meeting will resume at eight with it finishing at (hopefully) about ten. The party will begin immediately afterwards and continue until sometime Sunday morning. There will be a quasi-formal meeting Sunday afternoon if there are any further points to be resolved.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION:

There will be no attempt to hold to a prearranged agenda, as we feel that too much organization would be restrictive: during the February meeting everything was covered in depth and quite spontaneously, and additional valuable points brought in, without adhering to the preset agenda. Thus, all which follows is listed merely to give "seed ideas" to the attendees.

1. Schedules and events for Pagan outings and vacations to areas of particular importance in the next few months. Included will be the Solstice Festival at Coeden Brith over the weekend of 22-23 June. Also, a camping expedition to Mount Shasta has been suggested. The Coeden Brith Solstice Festival may well turn into a continuation of this Pagan Ecumenical Council meeting.

2. Tentative setting of dates and locations, as well as various events and displays, for one or more "Pagan Arts Faires" in North or South California during the next few months. There will be discussion of just how extensive these Earth Religion Arts Fairs should be, and thoughts and ideas will be solicited from all.
3. Reasons and background information and theory will be given relating to the building of stone circles and/or wood-henges, the locations and how they should be chosen, means for activating them, etc. Progress thus far on such constructions will be reviewed.
4. A review of pending books, cinema, newspaper, video, and other media presentations of particular importance to Pagans, with emphasis on those currently in progress and those which should be helped or hindered by our people. There will be discussion on organizing and incorporating small firms by our own members for publishing and/or disseminating our own materials.
5. Discussion of means that Pagans should take to counter the unfortunate effects engendered by the recent motion picture "The Exorcist", and ways of handling any other further films which might be harmful.
6. A review of actions taken thus far on having Margot Adler's noted program on Paganism replayed on the Pacifica stations, and similar news media approaches.

(Any additions or changes to the above should be addressed to the Council Seneschal (typist, mailing-clerk, and messenger), Ed Fitch, 330 Myrtle, Redlands, California 92373.)

Corrections of previous minutes: Item 4 referred to the Pagan Revival church which was continued by Caradoc ap Cador. It is now defunct with no plans for resuscitation in the future. Item 16 is in error in that Alison did not volunteer to work up ideas for the projected Earth Religion Arts Fair; she does feel, however, that the project has great promise. And our apologies to Lady Moria for getting her name wrong!. The tendency to mention the contributions of the male members' contributions over those of the women in the last minutes was unintentional and will most definitely be rectified in the future!

ATTENDEES

The names listed below are not all of those who attended and in many cases have been altered for those who wish their identities kept secure. Anyone wishing to contact a particular attendee should do so through Harold Moss, Ed Fitch, Fred Adams, Gwydion, or Taliesin.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
Harold Moss	P.O. Box 7091, Burbank, California 91510
Ed Fitch	330 Myrtle, Redlands, California 92373
LeVesque	4148 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Lawndale, California 90260
Don Harrison	213 N. Pass Street, Burbank, California 91510
Gwydion	P.O. Box 13037, Oakland, California 94661
Joe Bloggs	Blue River, Oregon 97413
Moira	2272 Bonita Avenue, LaVerne, California 91750
C. Taliesin Edwards	452 Hanover, Oakland, California 94606
Yarlen Stickles	390 Holt, Pomona, California 91766
Bill Mohs	5542 N. Harker Avenue, Temple City, California 91780
Apollonia	1532 Las Lunas, Pasadena, California 91763
Fred & Svetlana Adams	370 Glenullen, Pasadena, California 91105
Joe Wilson	P.O. Box 620, Tujunga, California 91042
W. Holman Keith	Cortez Hotel #204, 375 Columbia Avenue, Los Angeles, Ca.
COER Coordinator	4445 36th Street, San Diego, California

Additionally, there were approximately 30 others in attendance who desired anonymity.

Minutes of Meeting
PAGAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL #1
23 February 1974 C. E.

This was the first of a projected series of meetings and social gatherings to be held in California, with the intent of advancing the cause of the various neo-Pagan groups in this area.

The meeting was held at the home of Harold Moss, Church of the Eternal Source. Ed Fitch of Pagan Way acted as "Autocrat" and "Scribe". Although there was a very strong attempt to stay within the prearranged Agenda of Items, the matters of discussion varied widely; the end result was that most items were covered quite well, though not necessarily in the order intended. What follows summarizes the major items of discussion and brings out the particularly noteworthy points made by various members.

The meeting began with a delineation of the rules for discussion: to wit, that the only speaker recognized would be the one who held the Speaker's Staff, passed to the person to speak by the Autocrat or some other. This was deemed necessary due to the large number of individuals and groups present at the meeting. Hourly recesses for smoking, comparing notes, etc. would be held, and there would be an effort to finish the meeting in three hours.

1. Everyone at the Council in turn introduced himself or herself, giving Pagan affiliations and background.
2. It was decided by the Wicca present that in the Minutes of the meeting and in all formal documents to follow, to minimize possible inter-group conflict, no mention of particular sect or branch of Witchcraft would be made for those attending.
3. A discussion was held of the planning behind the Billy Graham evangelistic "crusades", starting with an overall briefing by Joe Wilson. It was noted that Graham's agents contact all churches who have expressed an interest within a given locale, regardless of denomination. This is accomplished well in advance of the crusade, and cooperation is solicited...and almost always received... of all. Special training and indoctrination classes are held for local volunteer workers; they are made familiar with the outline and texts of the sermons to be given, and the specific passages in the Bible that are to be read. (These texts are all marked and key-indexed or "tagged" by each volunteer worker.) Graham's sermons invariably are built around direct readings from the Bible, with generalized re-summarization following each, along with appropriate moralizing. There is a good amount of emotional priming and "building up the team spirit" at these volunteer training sessions. During the meetings these volunteers are strategically placed, seemingly at random within the crowd, each wears a small identifying button or emblem on his or her lapel, and each carries a Bible. When at the climax of the sermon Rev. Graham asks for those who wish to make a "decision for Christ" to come forward, these volunteers all rise and begin slowly

moving towards the front, seeming to be a large initial number of converts... but actually acting as a sort of "Pump priming" action to get others to come forward. As others join, these volunteers check the lapels of those about them: anyone without the small identifying button or emblem is quietly approached and his or her name and address obtained, plus some low-key talking about the Decision just made. Afterwards, the names and addresses are used by the various churches for personal follow-up action, home visits, invitations, etc.

While of course neo-Pagans will not subscribe to the principles espoused by Dr. Graham and his colleagues, nonetheless the close cooperation and fine organization involved in all of his "crusades" are effective and very useful to all the churches involved. It was pointed out that this sort of spirit and this sort of organization could be very useful indeed for Pagans, even if we never plan an evangelical movement.

4. Gwydion explained to all the "Sunday Pagan" church started in the San Francisco area by Isaac Bonewits and now continued by Cariadoc ap Aptom. It occupies an excellent former tabernacle (Mormon) and regular weekly services are held which are open to the public. Attendance has been small, but has been slowly growing. Gwydion pointed out that this was an excellent "test run" of public Paganism, whose strengths and weaknesses would be most instructive. The main strong point is of course that a number of people have come in contact with Craft and Pagan groups through this church. It was handicapped at first by a lack of formal rituals (most were extemporaneous) and by discussions or "sermons" that went over the heads of the attendees. A "common touch" or a personal approach seems best. Publicity was another problem area, and newspaper and TV interviews ranged in their effect from good to terrible: any such future group should pick its reporters and TV interviewers carefully. Such a public approach should not be centered solely on one person (not an "ego trip") but should bring in many others, should have a fixed schedule and pre-set rituals.

5. Harold Moss pointed out that the Church of the Eternal Source comes close to having an evangelical approach, though there never has been any intention of going for the "crusade" technique. Public appearances are made and regular information packets are mailed to inquirers. There is a fixed plan for personally following-up inquiries with individual letters. This was suggested as a useful approach to follow. He also noted that Church of All Worlds in St. Louis has a vigorous evangelical procedure, involving public meetings, slide shows, lectures, exchange rituals with Christian congregations, and participation in a community spiritual center with the Hare Krishnas and other groups. Additionally, they publish small tracts for distribution.

6. Taliesin Edwards pointed out that for future Public Relations activities an implicit or explicit definition of terms is important. Witchcraft and certain Pagan branches must be delineated as basically European Wicca oriented, as distinct from the Egyptian inspiration of the Church of the Eternal Source. Ferferia must be noted as stemming from Minoan and Pre-Classical Greek sources, its own unique development somewhat parallel to Wicca and other Pagan branches. And all of our forms of Paganism should be made quite distinct from Hinduism, Buddhism, and other non-Christian religions.

7. Fred Adams of Ferferia briefed the group on the yearly cycle of Ferferian rites which is being filmed, and which now is nearing completion. Present planning is to use this film as a documentary on Earth Religion or as an art film.

8. Various members of the Council had heard a rumor that the Federal Communications Commission had a rule to the effect that any program on radio or TV that dealt with occultism must treat it in a critical manner. The Coordinator for Council of Earth Religions from San Diego, who has worked in TV programming regularly, informed the group that this is not the case: the impression is one that has been given by individual reporters and in some cases by individual stations, or by the sponsors. He himself has produced shows quite favorable to Paganism and to the occult.

9 Ed Fitch noted Margot Adler's highly successful recent radio program on Paganism, which among other things featured readings from Tony Kelly's "Pagan Musings" and interspersed singing of music from Gwydion's "Songs of the Old Religion". This was aired in the New York area. Members of the Council suggested that arrangements be made with Pacifica stations in various locales to have the program replayed. Copies of the tape are in the possession of Gwydion and Margot Adler. Joe Wilson took this as an action item for action within the Los Angeles area.

10. Gwydion stated that he had some reservations on the use of television as a medium for putting forth a Pagan point of view...that this is especially sensitive since so much depends on subtle nuances of the reporter/interviewer. TV has considerable impact and can be most effective...but it is tricky. He had reservations that favorable programs on Paganism of any variety or on Witchcraft might stir up a "backlash" from hard-core Christian groups. The COER San Diego Coordinator stated that in his experience the impact was as stated, but that he had never encountered any noticeable backlash.

11. Whether or not to have some sort of Pagan Evangelical Movement was discussed. The COER San Diego Coordinator commented that "Anyone who thinks we're immediately ready for an evangelical movement is naive...but anyone thinking we will not ultimately get there is also naive." It was pointed out that the Buddhists never have had need for evangelicism, or for money. Also, there might be considerable danger in an unauthorized movement, stated Bill Mohs.

The overall consensus of opinion was that no evangelical movement is proper or needed at this time, and that the very nature of neo-Paganism quite likely is against such an approach. We all prefer to work on a close person-to-person level, we do not recruit followers...thus the evangelical method is not necessary and possibly would be harmful.

12. Harold Moss noted that Tim Zell of the Church of All Worlds is compiling a book on Pagans, written by the Pagans themselves. Each section would be written by those in authority or those who had originated the material for their own particular branch including manifestoes, contact addresses, and some basic rites. He urged that everyone give Tim a maximum amount of aid in this project.

13. There was discussion as to whether the words "Witch" and "Pagan" should be eliminated from our terminology, since they have some less-than-favorable historical connotations. All agreed that this was indeed the case, but also agreed that no really effective alternate titles are available. Ed Fitch noted that Hollywood had built up a considerable mystique around the term "Pagan" over the last half century by usually presenting "Pagan" settings as exotic, mysterious, grand, and sensuous; perhaps this would be to our advantage.

However, there was no overall agreement, and this oldest of topics in Craft/Pagan circles was dropped by mutual assent.

14. It was remarked that money, or the lack of it, has been a severely limiting factor to all of our movements. Harold Moss pointed out that Church of the Eternal Source has had no great difficulty in getting enough cash for operating expenses: they put out periodic pleas for donations and have a note in their mailing literature that donations would be appreciated. This normally suffices. Ed Fitch stated that since the initial Pagan Way information-and-ritual package as well as most ads for PW suggest a one-dollar donation to cover the costs of printing and mailing, the Pagan Way mailing centers have over the last three or four years found that one letter in three will contain such a donation. This has been sufficient for keeping Pagan Way as a self-sustaining arrangement. Both Moss and Fitch suggested that others might try variations of these donation techniques.

15. Joe Bloggs stated that he was interested in organizing a group to begin building an accurate stone-henge or pyramid in Southern California. He asked that anyone interested in such a project contact him through Joe Wilson, P. O. Box 620, Tujunga, California 91042.

16. Dan of Feraferia suggested that instead of a Pagan Evangelical Movement, which most seemed to view unfavorably, why not have an EARTH RELIGION ARTS FAIR? This would be something much along the lines of the highly popular Renaissance Pleasure Faires held in both North and South California. He pointed out that most of the people in our various movements are artistically talented, and that having a "Pagan Faire" would be an excellent way to attract earnest people by having a convention to display our various paintings, sculptures, robes, ceremonial artifacts, our poetry, our rich trove of Pagan music, various performing arts, and possibly some rituals. Additionally there would be many discussion and panel groups (much like at a science-fiction convention) and a maximum opportunity to make person-to-person contacts with the sort of people whom we would like and who would like us. Everyone agreed that this was a superb idea, and one which should be of paramount importance at the next Council meeting. Ed Fitch of Pagan Way and Alison of Nemeton agreed to draw up some tentative plans and ideas for submission to all members of the Council, to be sent to all prior to the next meeting.

17. There was discussion concerning a "Pagan Locator Service". It was noted by several present that our various groups are even now doing this sort of thing, and have for some time. The Church of the Eternal Source, Church of All Worlds, Nemeton, and Pagan Way have been directing inquirers as each could best manage. Gwydion commented that the Nemeton Directory would probably be an example of a well-run locator service. Ads for Nemeton (and hence its directory) are placed in a number of nationally known publications to reach those who might be "searching". Nemeton has thirteen Secretariats located regionally about the

nation, which give personal answers to all inquirers. A particularly important point is that further contacts are always given.

18. The matter of a pan-Pagan Outer Court was discussed. Gwydion and the San Diego COER Coordinator both stated that such rites would have to come "from the earth". Gwydion suggested that the basic Pagan Way rituals are a very good starting point, and that the various groups ought to take these ceremonies and "personalize" them to suit their own individual needs.

19. The matter of Pagan outings and trips was only briefly discussed due to a lack of time. Summer festival outings at Coeden Bryth were suggested by Alison and Ed Fitch mentioned that he plans a journey to Mount Shasta this summer. The matter of outings was deferred until the next meeting.

20. Joe Wilson read the press release to be mailed out on this Council meeting.

21. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in June. Tentatively it was decided to have a preliminary meeting in the Los Angeles area and the main meeting, with as many attendees as possible from the South, to be held in Oakland shortly thereafter, sponsored by Alison of Nemeton. It was agreed that the Agenda Committee would consist of members of each Tradition represented. As before, a copy of the projected agenda would be sent to all members.

22. Taliesin stated that there is an item of American Indian tradition that is common to us all at meetings such as this...that of the Elders of the Tribe. We all are individualists and we all have divergent viewpoints. The only possible "decisions" must be the unanimous ones; that is, we must focus on areas where we agree. Moira commented that we can never resolve our various differences... we must do things in common, remembering that our differences provide us with increasing richness. Doc added that by all gathering together periodically we can each bring something to our meetings and share them with the others. Taliesin added further that our differences are joyous ones...we have many areas of agreement. We are creating and growing. Alison summarized in saying that we are all pulling together, learning to relate, and learning to listen one to the other. Evangelism is not the way, and unanimity is not really important on all points. Our focus should be...and at this Council has been...on listening rather than on talking. We are off to a really good start...let's keep it up!

On these harmonious notes Council #1 was ended.