

Lughnasa — At the Crossroads

August 1, 2016 by [Liz Fisher](#)



May we have an auspicious harvest after an empowering and enriching season of conversations which bring together the best from our heritage. [\[Read more...\]](#)

Lughnasa — At the Crossroads

August 1, 2016 by [Liz Fisher](#)

175 likes / 228 shares

Several significant timing cycles gives this August 1st unique significance. Traditionally it is the First Harvest Festival Day, Lughnasa, a cross-quarter celebration of the yearly cycle of the Sun in Celtic pagan traditions. For many Pagans, Lughnasa is the first of three harvest celebrations, the other two being the Fall Equinox and then Samhain.



Today is also a dark moon in the monthly lunar cycle, the days before a New Moon, this month on August 2nd. It is also a Monday which historically was thought to be a day ruled by the moon. Though there is no moon visible, for those who interpret moon cycles psychologically, this is a powerful time of preparation for the coming waxing cycle. New Moons are times of fresh beginnings which introduce a period of growth leading through the Full Moon phase. Having a New Moon so close to a harvest holiday energizes this time frame.

This harvest cycle has special significance as a metaphor for the political season in the United States. During July both political conventions nominated their candidates. Let's say this represents our first harvest in this process of choosing political leadership. It is a crossroads because the choices lead in distinctly different directions.

The moon is often identified with female power which provides another tie-in to this crossroads election that introduces the first female candidate for president in the history of the United States nominated by a major political party. Keep this in mind as we move through the harvest season. The other two harvest cycles in the Pagan wheel will continue determining what the governance in this country will look like at the end of the season. They will also be made up of a series of moon cycles that will affect the emotional ebbs and flows of the discourse.

The definition of morality is central to this political cycle. But, how do we who honor the spiritual guidance of nature fit into this conversation? I readily acknowledge that our visibility is almost non-existent in political discourse. After all, do you ever hear Paganism or Earth-centered Spirituality mentioned as an important option? No, and yet, our values and priorities are becoming increasingly embraced by mainstream traditions. It seems, rather, that our actions and advocacy contribute profoundly to what lots of folks are coming to believe is truly moral.

Many of us find ourselves drawn to interfaith social justice coalitions. We support Rev. Peter Morales, President of the UUA, when he says: Don't Give into the Politics of Hate. [Read his blog published in the Huffington Post](#) in which he introduces *The Higher Ground Moral Declaration* which begins:

Dear Candidates for President, Senate, and Governors: Will You Advance a Moral Agenda?

It is a clear definition of pressing social concerns and an empathetic statement of the core values of progressive and liberal faith perspectives consistent with the U.S. Constitution. It states:

“We believe in a moral agenda that stands against systemic racism, classism, poverty, xenophobia, and any attempt to promote hate towards any members of the human family.”

Rev. William Barber, one of the originators of the Declaration, invites all people of conscience to sign. I have signed it because I want to stand with others who support these values.

[Click Here to Sign the Moral Declaration](#)

Rev. Barber made two important speeches recently that are worth a look.

[UUA General Assembly, June 2016](#)

[Democratic National Convention](#)



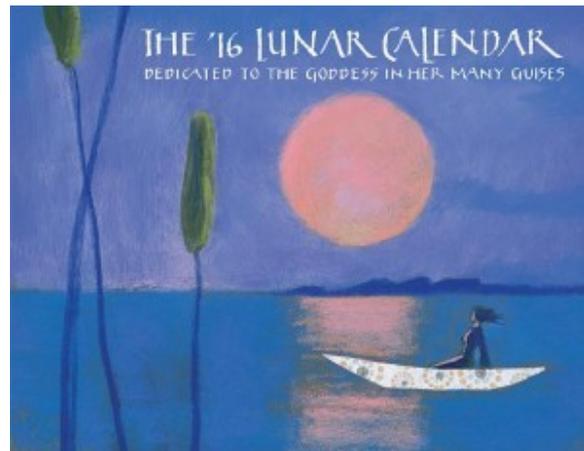
Another association for this time period is the Goddess Hecate (Hekate), Guardian of the Crossroads and the Dark Moon. Hecate's yearly celebration occurs on August 13 which makes this dark moon an appropriate time to appeal to her. [In my series of blogs on Honoring the Dark](#). I provided a radical departure from the common negative usage of the word dark, postulating that the way we define and use dark has a lot to do with our current racial and sexual prejudices. I continue to believe it is relevant to today's difficult social dilemmas. In those blogs, I also explore what Hecate means to me.



Full equality for women fits Hecate's perspective. She is a special guardian of independent women. I am confident this election catches Hecate's attention and She will be offering Her protection. She watched over Persephone when she descended into the underworld and made sure she reunited with her mother Demeter, the Grain Goddess, when she ascended. I see parallels in this mythology with our current point in time. So while we are remembering the First Harvest, and we are preparing for the next moon cycle, let us praise Hecate.

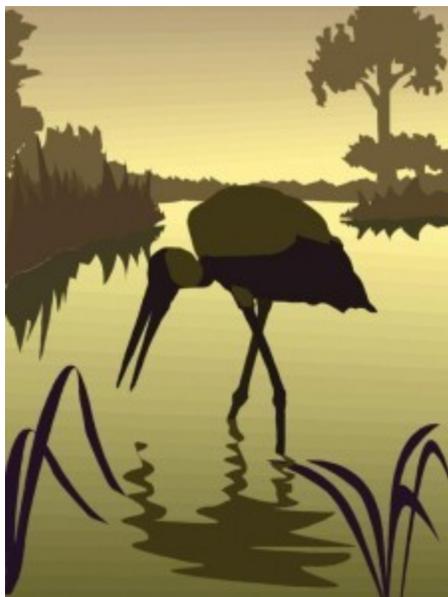
I observe these turning points by engaging in simple personal rituals. I find they guide me to focus my emotions on what I desire so that I can better coordinate my intentions and my actions. This can be as simple as a few drumbeats signifying the heartbeat of the earth, rattle shakes to alert the spirits and a short chant. Calling the directions acknowledges form in both time and space. Visual images that relate to some aspect of the holiday or cycle add to my ability to connect with the present moment. While grounding myself, I express gratitude for what has been accomplished in the previous cycles, let go of the losses, and envision possible directions for the future.

From the beautiful resource on lunation cycles, *The 2016 Lunar Calendar: Dedicated to the Goddess in Her Many Guises* here are some useful associations for this lunation. (To access information about this impressive production, click [The Lunar Calendar](#).)



This is the 9th Lunation of the year which runs from August 2 – 31.

In the Lunar Calendar of Trees, the Hazel tree symbolizes concentrated wisdom. Her bird is the crane; she heals through time and patience.



May we have an auspicious harvest after an empowering and enriching season of conversations which bring together the best from our heritage. May we be strong enough to acknowledge and address the injustices and misconceptions. May we succeed in focusing on a better future, one that brings us equality. And, may we achieve unity that confirms personal spiritual freedom while protecting the common good and the natural world.

Comments

[Pegi Eyers](#) • [a day ago](#)

Thank you so much Elizabeth Fisher for this wonderful essay!! I especially love how you connect the sacred wheel and the timelessness of ancient traditions and Divine Feminine Deity with the timely events of today. We need all the help we can get!!



[Elizabeth Fisher](#) [Pegi Eyers](#) • [a minute ago](#)

Thanks Pegi for your feedback. Much appreciated. This connection is what makes my spirituality mean so much to me. Help is there for us! Let's continue to draw on Her!