

# What We Offer to Inmates

*Mother Earth Ministries' mission is to provide accurate information about Wicca and other Neo-Pagan religions to interested inmates and prison staff, and to facilitate Pagan prisoners' study and practice of their religion.*

*Affiliated with the internationally recognized and respected Aquarian Tabernacle Church,*

*MEM is very much a local group, based in Tucson, Arizona.*

## **HOW DO WE PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION?**

We offer two brochures about Wicca: *An Introduction to Wicca* and *The Wheel of the Year*. We also offer introductory brochures about Asatru and Druidry. In addition, we have a single-page flyer of the current year's Sabbats and Esbats, and a variety of other flyers and brochures about various aspects of Neo-Paganism. These are available free to any inmate or prison official who requests them.

Enchantment Encumbered: the Study and Practice of Wicca in Restricted Environments, written by two of MEM's priestesses, is available through Amazon.com, through our website ([www.MotherEarthMinistries.org](http://www.MotherEarthMinistries.org)); and for \$16.95 plus \$3.50 shipping, by snail-mail from Black Rose Curiosities, 1800 North Stone Avenue, Suite 1102, Tucson, AZ, 85705. We hope to make it available through additional vendors soon.

Our writing priestess answers questions and discusses various aspects of Wicca in greater depth than our brochures. Scheduling sometimes keeps us from answering letters immediately, but we do respond to everyone who writes to MEM.

## **HOW DO WE FACILITATE PAGAN PRISONERS' STUDY AND PRACTICE?**

Our brochures can start inmates on their studies. Our visiting priestess (currently available only to Tucson units of Arizona's state prisons) can answer many questions in person, and our writing priestess can go into considerable depth on a variety of subjects.

Arizona inmates within 90 days of release may be able to contact Lord Don Davis by phone (through their chaplain's office) for pre-release counseling.

We help inmates modify conventional rites to accommodate prison rules. We help inmates hear and revere their goddesses and gods right through the prison walls, and in spite of any ignorance, prejudice and/or discrimination they may encounter.

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*(Photo by Canyondancer, February 2010)*

Lady Garr founded MEM in the year 2000, and is our President; she visits Tucson units of Arizona state prisons as requested. Lady O’Gaea (say it oh-jee-uh) is our Board Secretary and senior Writing Priestess. Lord Champion is our Treasurer. Lord Davis was formerly a visiting priest and now is our Director of Networking; he also manages our budding pre-release counseling program.

All of our Board members are fully ordained Wiccan clergy, and Lord Davis is cross-trained in Druidry. All have been active in Tucson’s Neo-Pagan community for many years. Lady O’Gaea is the author of several books about Wicca; she and Lady Garr wrote Enchantment Encumbered.



Left → right: Lord Champion, Lady Garr,  
Lady O’Gaea and Lord Davis

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What Tradition of Wicca does MEM teach?**

The exercises, spells, and rituals that appear in MEM literature are eclectic and designed to work in the restricted environment of prison, and do not represent a distinct or specific Tradition.

### **How can an inmate join MEM?**

S/he can’t! MEM is not a coven or Tradition. MEM is a small group of Pagan clergy who volunteer to minister, in person and by mail, to inmates who want practical guidance and/or spiritual advice.

### **Does MEM . . .**

**influence DOC policy?** No! We are available to answer questions about Neo-Pagan practices, but we are *not* policy-makers.

**have a catalog?** No. MEM does not sell or provide religious items or books – not even our own!

**have a newsletter?** We used to, but we don't now.

**advocate for inmates?** No; we are not allowed to do so. We don't do Internet research for inmates, either.

**offer a correspondence course?** No. We don't have the staff for it.

**match inmates with pen-pals?** No. Our writing priestess is not a pen-pal, either, nor can she contact other people for inmates.

**have info about *all* Pagan religions?** Unfortunately, no. We offer information about Asatru, Druidry, and – mainly -- Wicca.

**offer spiritual counseling?** Yes: in person in some Tucson facilities and by mail across the country.

**offer pre-release counseling?** In the Spring of 2010 Lord Davis is beginning to offer pre-release counseling to some Arizona inmates.

#### **BROCHURES AS OF THE SPRING OF 2010**

*An Introduction to Wicca* glosses the basics of the faith: ethics, theology, fundamental energy skills, the liturgical calendar, casting a Circle, altar gear, and correspondences.

*An Introduction to Druidry* takes a quick look at ancient and modern Druidry, its ethics, deities, and relationship to Wicca.

*An Introduction to Asatru* looks at ethics, deities, holy days, practice, altar gear, the Runes, and history.

*The Wheel of the Year* begins to explore the meaning of each Wiccan Sabbat

We have flyers to provide brief overviews about a variety of other topics:

Are Wiccans Vegetarian?

Witchcraft and Violence

Wiccan Traditions and Covens

The Wiccan Priest/esshood

The Left-hand Path

The Charge of the Goddess

Wicca's History Revisited

Tarot at a Glance

MEM Sheds Light on Neo-Paganism

Yule Songs

We are always working on more brochures, and we are happy to send one or two pamphlets at a time to inmates who request them. We do not charge for our literature, but we appreciate return envelopes and/or donations of stamps when they can be included.

Chaplains may request full sets of our literature if they are willing to make copies – of each brochure in its entirety, without changes, additions or deletions – for individual inmates upon request.

MEM is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible. Please let us know if you want a receipt for donations beyond those to cover the cost of sending brochures.

#### **WICCA? PAGANISM?**

Paganism is an umbrella term that covers a lot of religions, all of which are poly-theistic, but not all of which identify as “Neo-Pagan.” Wicca is one – and probably the best-known -- modern form of ancient religious tradition of stone-age European cultures.

Heavily-armed monotheism conquered Europe’s formal Pagan religions – but after suppression for about 600 years, the old perspectives came back, rearticulated in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries by the Romantic Movement. The Craft was re/created and Wicca’s modern structure developed in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has continued to grow since then.

Wicca is joyous and life-affirming. Our Goddess is all that is eternal and generative; that which is mortal, dying and reborn, we call God. The Goddess and God are partners, not opponents – so Wicca doesn’t see the world as full of opposites, either. We see life as deeply interconnected and complementary, not adversarial.

Wicca is one of several Neo-Pagan religions. These include (but aren’t limited to) Afro-Caribbean faiths, Norse Paganism, Native North and South American religions, and Polynesian traditions.

All Earth-reverencing religions are growing now; like many other people, prisoners are getting interested too. For many who can’t accept mainstream beliefs, Nature-based spirituality is appealing and MEM helps make some of it accessible behind bars.