

BLESSED YULE!



A Message from Zehara

Dear Community,
As the Wheel turns once more and the longest night gives way to the growing light, we gather in spirit to celebrate Yule — the rebirth of the Sun and the promise of renewal. This sacred season reminds us that even in the darkest times, the light always returns. For those walking a difficult path, know that you are not forgotten. The warmth of our community and the blessings of the Divine reach across all boundaries. May this Yule bring you peace, hope, and strength for the year ahead. Keep your flame burning bright — within your heart, your spirit, and your magick.

With love and solidarity,

Zehara Nachash, MACJ
Founder, Pagans Behind Bars

While St. Nicholas rewards good children, Krampus carries chains, birch switches, and a basket to punish the naughty — a chilling reminder to walk the path of virtue. Rooted in pre-Christian pagan traditions, Krampus may have once been a nature spirit or deity associated with fertility and the harsh winter months. Today, Krampusnacht is celebrated across Europe and beyond with parades, masks, and roaring fires — honoring the balance between darkness and light, fear and festivity, discipline and joy.



Goddess of the Month Cailleach (Celtic)

The Cailleach, often called the Winter Hag or Veiled One, is an ancient goddess who reigns over the cold months in Scottish and Irish lore. She is the embodiment of the land's barren season — fierce, wise, and untamed — shaping mountains, stirring storms, and covering the earth in frost. Though she may seem harsh, her power is deeply sacred; she teaches that endings are not to be feared but embraced as part of nature's cycle. The Cailleach reminds us that rest, stillness, and death are not final, but fertile — the silent preparation for the renewal that follows when the light returns.

Krampus

Krampusnacht, or Krampus Night, is celebrated on the evening of December 5th, the eve of St. Nicholas Day. In Alpine folklore, Krampus is a fearsome, horned, half-goat, half-demon figure who serves as the dark counterpart to St. Nicholas. Covered in shaggy fur, with cloven hooves, curling horns, and a long, lolling tongue, Krampus embodies the primal spirit of winter's wildness.

Ancient Slavic Yule

In Slavic Pagan tradition, the Winter Solstice is celebrated as Kolyada, a joyous festival honoring the rebirth of the Sun and the victory of light over darkness. The name Kolyada is said to come from the old word for "wheel," symbolizing the ever-turning cycle of the seasons.

During Kolyada, families and villages once gathered around roaring bonfires, singing songs, feasting, and lighting candles to welcome the newborn Sun. People dressed in furs and masks — much like mummers or



Tarot Card of the Month: THE HERMIT

As the world lies quiet under winter's blanket, the Hermit steps forward as our guide for this season of introspection. Holding a lantern that glows with inner wisdom, he reminds us that solitude is not emptiness—it is sacred space for reflection and truth. The Hermit calls us to turn inward, to listen to the whispers of spirit, and to seek understanding within ourselves rather than through the noise of the outer world. This card teaches that the light we seek has always been within us. It is the same light reborn at Yule—the spark of divine wisdom that cannot be extinguished, no matter how long the night.

Affirmation:

“Within stillness, I find my truth. My inner light guides me through the darkness.”

Celebrating Yule Behind Bars

Even behind walls, the spirit of Yule shines bright. This sacred season reminds us that light always returns, no matter how long the night. As we honor the rebirth of the Sun, we also honor the light within ourselves — the strength, hope, and wisdom that cannot be taken away. Yule teaches that renewal begins in the heart, and even in solitude, we are part of the great turning of the Wheel. May this season bring peace, reflection, and the promise of brighter days ahead.



Spotlight: Faerie Wicca

Faerie Wicca is a radiant path of magick that bridges the human world with the enchanted realm of the Fae. Rooted in Celtic and pre-Celtic traditions, it honors the spirits of nature, the elements, and the ancient faerie races who dwell between the veils of seen and unseen. Practitioners of this path work in deep reverence with these beings — through offerings of milk, honey, and song — seeking harmony rather than control.

Faerie Wicca celebrates beauty, joy, and balance as sacred acts of devotion. Rituals often take place outdoors, aligning with moonlight, forest groves, and natural cycles where the boundary between worlds is thinnest. This tradition reminds us that magick is not only in spells, but in our connection to the living earth — the whisper of wind through trees, the glimmer of dewdrops at dawn, and the unseen laughter that echoes through the wild places.

To walk the Faerie path is to live with an open heart, to see the sacred in all things, and to remember that the Otherworld is never far — only a breath, a dream, or a moment of wonder away.

God of the Month The Oak King

At Yule, as the longest night fades and the Sun begins its return, the Oak King rises victorious. In Celtic and Wiccan lore, he is the bright twin of the Holly King, with whom he eternally battles for dominion over the seasons. While the Holly King rules the dark half of the year, the Oak King's triumph at Yule brings the light back to the world — a promise of renewal, warmth, and life reborn. The Oak King embodies growth, strength, endurance, and the sacred power of renewal.

He teaches that light and darkness are not enemies but partners in the eternal rhythm of the earth. As the Sun waxes stronger each day, he reminds us that hope is never lost — even in the darkest of times, the light is waiting to return.

Fortune of the Month

This month's fortune brings a message of renewal, strength, and awakening. Just as the Sun is reborn at Yule, so too is your inner light ready to rise again. You've endured the long nights of hardship and reflection — now comes the slow but certain return of warmth and hope. The Universe reminds you that every ending carries the seed of a new beginning. Even small acts of kindness, self-care, or forgiveness can spark transformation. Trust that your efforts, though unseen, are guiding you toward brighter days.

The Magick of Cinnamon

Cinnamon is a powerful and comforting spice long cherished in both kitchen and temple. In magick, it's known for its fiery energy — bringing warmth, protection, prosperity, and passion. Its sweet yet strong scent raises spiritual vibrations, making it perfect for spells of manifestation, healing, and courage. Sprinkle a pinch in your morning coffee to draw abundance, or write a wish on paper dusted with cinnamon to speed your intentions. Even in the simplest acts, this ancient spice reminds us that true magick often begins with warmth — from the heart outward.



The Yule Oracle — Paper-Runes Divination (Prison-Friendly)

What you need (all commonly allowed):

6–12 small slips of paper (or a folded sheet torn into pieces)

A pen or pencil

A small cup, or folded paper to draw from (optional)

A quiet minute

How to make it:

On each slip, write one short symbol-word. Pick 6–12 from this list or create your own:

LIGHT, SHADOW, TURNING, REST, BLESSING, TRIAL, GUIDE, DOOR, SEED, GIFT, LOSS, HOME.

Fold each slip so the writing is hidden. Place them in the cup or stack them face-down.

How to use it (solo):

Sit comfortably. Breathe three deep, slow breaths and set a simple intention (e.g., “Show me what I need to know this Yule”).

Shake the cup (or mix the slips with your hands). Draw one slip. Read the word aloud or silently. Pause and notice the first image, memory, or feeling that arises. Write one sentence about what that word means for you right now.

If you want more detail, draw a second slip and read it as context for the first (how to act, what to avoid, or what’s hidden). End with a one-line affirmation.

How to use it (quick 1-slip method):

Draw one slip, write a single-sentence guidance, and close with: “So mote it be.” Done.

Group variation (if allowed):

Pass the cup around; each person draws one slip and offers a one-sentence reflection. This creates shared ritual and community wisdom.

Simple interpretation guide (examples):

LIGHT — clarity, a breakthrough, or hope returning.

SHADOW — something to face; not a punishment but a lesson.

TURNING — change is near; be ready to shift course.

REST — recover, don’t force action now.

SEED — plant an intention quietly; growth will follow.

GIFT — unexpected help or inner resource arriving.

(Either keep these written or memorize a few — no need for long lists.)

Journaling prompts to pair with the draw:

“What does this word ask me to release?”

“What small action can I take today that honors this guidance?”

“Who in my life is represented by this word?”

Closing blessing (optional to say after a reading):

“By the light that returns at Yule, may I find what I need to heal, grow, and hold hope. Blessed be.”