

HANDOUT: NEO-PAGANISM AND WICCA FACT SHEET

Emerged: Neo Paganism is based on what is assumed to be ancient, indigenous religions, but modern day Wicca is dated as beginning in 1959 and the current Neo-Paganism movement can be dated to the founding of the Church of All Worlds and Feri in 1967.

Adherents: estimated 1 million

Ranking: 19

Texts: Various, depending upon the branch.

Prophets: None

Clergy: Varies. Some are non-hierarchical; others have priests/priestesses or other leaders.

Symbols: Many, depending upon branch. Pentacle, Triple Goddess, Kabbalistic or Celtic Tree of Life; Wheel of the Year; Eye of Horus, Celtic Cross, the Green Man, the Ankh, and others.

Terms and Fundamental Precepts:

Magic or magick — the art/science of psychically control the energy of the universe toward a specific goal

Druidism — modern Neo-Pagan religion based upon the beliefs of the ancient Celts

Triple Goddess — the Goddess exists as Maiden, Mother, and Crone

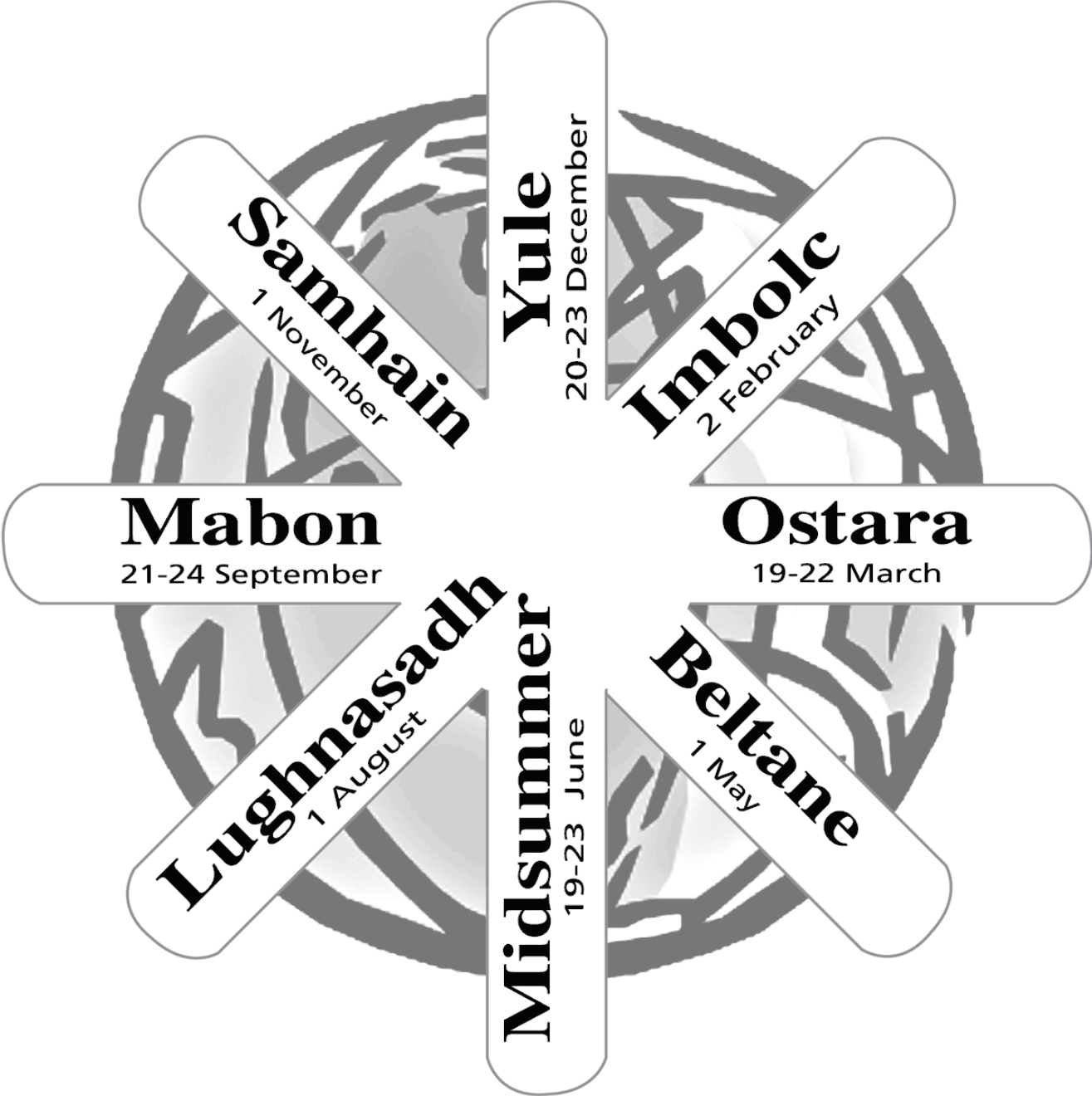
Polytheistic — worshipping more than one and/or goddess

Shared with Unitarian Universalism:

- Sixth Source
- Seventh Principle, and a determination to stay connected to and protect nature
- A belief that there are many paths to the divine
- A belief in gender equality

- In *Singing the Living Tradition*, Readings 446, 451, 517, 524, 663, and 703 and Hymns 57, 72, 73, 91, 155, 226, 235, 327, 337, and 387 are about the seasons, solstices, equinoxes, and other Pagan traditions.

HANDOUT: WHEEL OF THE YEAR



HANDOUT: INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS FACT SHEET

Emerged: As early as three million years ago in China, Japan, Australia, various regions in Africa, and Southeast Asia (Hinduism is explored in Workshop 4.)

Adherents: 420 million (not including Hinduism)

Ranking: Fifth, behind Christianity, Islam, Atheism/Agnosticism, and Hinduism

Prophets: There are legendary, mythical figures in each, but no prophets

Texts: None; oral tradition

Symbols: Vary by faith, but all are tied to the natural world: feathers, bones, stones, mountains

Imagery: Vary by faith, but all are tied to the natural world: animals, birth, fire, water, religious ceremonies

Terms and Fundamental Precepts:

Oral traditions. Indigenous religions begin in societies without written language.

Not patriarchal. Indigenous religions honor all life equally, and give homage to the creative force that brought them into being, which force they characterize as female.

Close to the earth. Indigenous religions recognize their interconnectedness with all of nature, live with the natural rhythms of nature.

Ideal is the source. Unlike some later religions which look ahead to the perfection of humanity, aboriginal religions see the time of creation as being perfect and their task to recreate that time of innocence and perfection. Humans have a lesser level of understanding than animals because they arrived later and are therefore farther from the source.

Spirits imbue all living things ...including all animals and plants. The reason the paper is never cut in traditional origami (Japanese paper folding) is to honor the spirit of the tree that gave its life for the paper.

Shared with Unitarian Universalism:

- Recognition of the interconnectedness of all life
- Value for the natural world
- Concept that the force that gives life is shared among living things
- Commitment to being nonsexist and valuing everyone's qualities and contributions.

In *Singing the Living Tradition* (Boston: UUA Publications, 1993), Readings 481, 495, 518, 520, 526, 551, 614, and 682 and Hymn 366 come from Native American traditions.