



Cherry Hill Seminary

Report to Covenant of the Goddess, August 2020

Cherry Hill Seminary is grateful for the ongoing support of Covenant of the Goddess members, making possible year-round distance education for leadership, ministry and personal growth, including open short courses called Insights, the Community Ministry Certificate and graduate degrees, and print lessons for incarcerated Pagans. Key activities in the past year:

- *Paganism and Its Discontents: Enduring Problems of Racialized Identity* will be released by Cambridge Scholars Publishing this fall. The volume includes the papers presented at the eponymous conference held in March 2019 and a preface by Helen Berger, about the rise of racism and nationalism in some forms of Paganism.
- Our full board of directors held a retreat and conducted strategic planning in Columbia, South Carolina, in November 2019. An anonymous donor underwrote this event, which resulted in vital planning for the future, as well as new mission, vision, and values statements.
- During the board retreat we held a graduation for Karen Andersen, minister of Unitarian Church of New Bedford, Massachusetts, Zoomed live during a special Sunday service and celebration with her congregation. Just weeks later we held a graduation in Charlotte, North Carolina, for Wes Isley, where we once more used Zoom to connect board members and department chairs who were remote.
- Several more individuals have received their Community Ministry Certificate. No degree is required, and at this time Sacred Well Congregation will accept the CMC in lieu of its education as part of an application to become clergy. We would like for other Pagan organizations to use the CMC for training their members. Those holding this certification may add the letters "CMC" to their formal signature and are authorized to commission a CMC clergy stole. At this time a total of nine individuals around the country hold their CMC, and fourteen continue to work through the program.
- Again, in the past year we have seen positive, if modest growth. Since Cherry Hill Seminary is a distance education program, and our staff all work from home offices, we did not experience disruption because of pandemic concerns. We have not yet seen a decrease in students because of the coronavirus; time will tell whether job losses may impact us negatively.
- We lost our new librarian just weeks after he came on board, because he had accepted a new job which insisted that even volunteering for Cherry Hill Seminary was a conflict of interest. While we've not yet announced a new search, we do welcome applications from qualified candidates.
- Near the end of 2019 Dr. Erika Patterson of Rock Hill, South Carolina, joined us as Dean of Students, and Tracie Mooneyham of New Kent, Virginia, became our Marketing Coordinator. Just this summer, Liz Watkin of Asheville, North Carolina, has taken on the job of Newsletter Coordinator.
- In September 2019 we awarded an honorary Master of Divinity degree to Aline O'Brien (M. Macha NightMare) in recognition of her many years of service to Cherry Hill Seminary.
- The seminary is considering a proposal to offer a certificate in spiritual direction (also called spiritual coaching or accompaniment) which may be launched in 2021.
- We receive regular requests for information and assistance from prison chaplains, college religion instructors, interfaith leaders and others, from around the country.

For more information, contact us at CHS@cherryhillseminary.org or visit www.cherryhillseminary.org

P.O. Box 212804, Columbia, S.C. 29221

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