

SOLSTICE: Celebrate the Coming of Light and a Rebirth of the World

We are connected, every one of us, even if sometimes it does not feel that way as injustice and the noise of oppression remain in our world. Yet, since the dawn of human existence, we have gathered to share and celebrate the renewal and cycle of life.

Monday, December 21st is Winter Solstice. It is the shortest day of the year, and the longest night, but it is also the day that ushers in the light. As we head toward the Spring Equinox, days will begin to get longer again. Solstice is a celebration of light, rebirth and new beginnings.

Societies have celebrated Solstices (winter and summer) throughout history. Historians believe when Christianity appeared, Christmas was placed near Solstice celebrations in order to influence pagans to convert.

Indigenous peoples everywhere observe the Winter Solstice. It is the day that the sun is the furthest from the equator. Their spiritual foundation lies in the natural world of connection and Solstice is a time to honor and acknowledge the natural patterns of our universe and existence. It is part of the interconnected cycle of life, death and renewal.

This cycle includes respect for all faiths and spiritual beliefs held by a person in this miracle of life. How do people celebrate? There are many ways to honour Solstice. It is a time to reflect on the year that has passed, set forth some intentions for the coming year, express gratitude to the earth and sky for giving us life and sustaining us. It can be expressed by making a fire (literally or symbolically), burning candles, nourishing our bodies and our spirit, preparing feasts with loved ones, and giving gifts.

People who do not follow organized religion can also find in this observance a way to recreate a ritual that is founded on an earth-based spirituality. Modern day pagans prefer

to make food and gifts, rather than buy them. They like to decorate their homes with a tree, wreaths and Yule colours of green white and red. Those who connect with the Goddess form of spirituality align themselves with the solstice and equinox planetary processions as a reminder of their place and the mystery of what characterizes the universe.



Solstice is an opportunity to gain perspective. The role of fire is to invite awakening. While we worry about the state of the world, it provides us with a chance to see the big picture, to understand that our planet supports diversity in many ways, and that we must nurture and protect our earth mother from further destruction. It is a time to craft intentions for the new year that nurture our loved ones, our communities, our planet and all our relations, while lifting the veil of greed and oppression that robs humanity of our potential.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Bleakney'.

Dave Bleakney
2nd National Vice-President

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