

## Questions for Reflection

- What associations do I have with darkness?
- What connections do I have with light?
- Where is darkness lingering in my life this season?  
What is being birthed in that darkness?
- Where do I feel light beginning to seep into my life  
in this season? What is it drawing me towards?
- How am I being asked to still myself and pay  
attention?
- How can I practice welcoming the light?
- How does my body feel when the glow of natural  
light from the sun or a fire touches it? How does  
my body feel when it is in darkness?
- What can I learn from winter solstice about light  
and darkness? What might solstice teach me  
about this year?

• Pamphlet designed & compiled by J.Lammiman

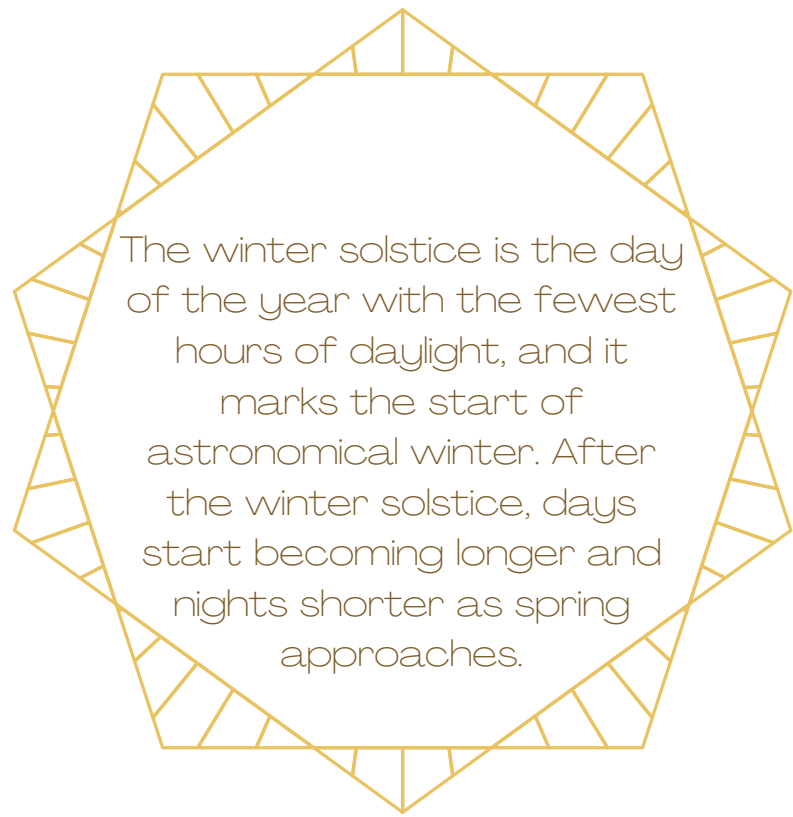


### Winter Solstice Reflection

On this, the longest night of the year, we are warmed by the certain knowledge that tomorrow will welcome more light than today. As it has for eons—for billions of years—the coming of light brings life. May we be awed by the great miracles of light and life, and faithfully nurture the mystery and magic of wonder.

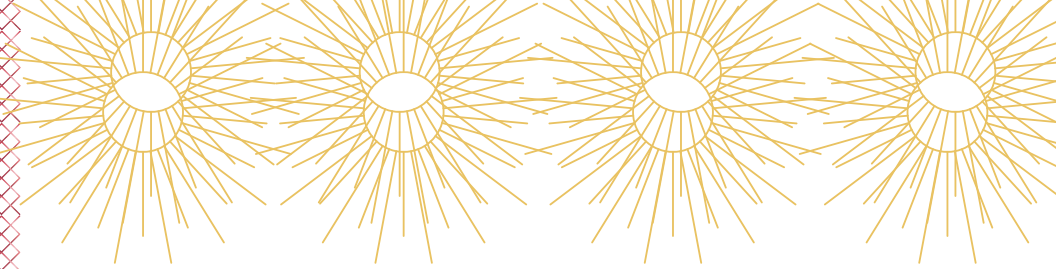
Gregory Jones





The winter solstice is the day of the year with the fewest hours of daylight, and it marks the start of astronomical winter. After the winter solstice, days start becoming longer and nights shorter as spring approaches.

- The word solstice is derived from the Latin sol ("sun") and sistere ("to stand still"), because at the solstices, the Sun's declination appears to "stand still"; that is, the seasonal movement of the Sun's daily path (as seen from Earth) pauses at a northern or southern limit before reversing direction.
- The Winter Solstice is caused by the earth's tilt on its axis and its orbit around the sun.
- Humans may have observed the winter solstice as early as Neolithic period—the last part of the Stone Age, beginning about 10,200 BC.
- Solstice has historically been viewed as a time of death and rebirth.
- Rituals in Germanic, Scandinavian, Druid and many other cultures held celebrations and rituals to herald the return of the sun and the hope of new life.



## Solstice Candle Ritual

*cont.3*

We are grateful for the ways that you impart hope and joy into our lives, reminding us of, if not easier times, at least moments of connection, growth, and fertility.

We thank you for your warmth and illumination. As the light comes back into our hemisphere and we welcome longer days, we call into our world .....

(Reflect on or share something about the light that you are longing for or a hope for your human or more than human community that you are calling into the world...)

As you re-animate our lives with the effervescent light of another year's journey around the sun, We call into our lives...

(Reflect on or share something that you would like to call into your life this year..)

We welcome you, light. We bear witness to your return in gratitude as we call you back into our lives and the world. So may it be.

Ritual Words: Jodi Lammiman





## Solstice Candle Ritual

*cont. 2*

As we call in the light, darkness, we release you back into the earth's depths. And we thank you for your wisdom.

Longer Days. Shorter nights. The flickering warmth of candlelight. The heated glow of a campfire. The pale, pure light of a winter morning. The blazing sunlight warming our skin on a hot summer day. Light, we are grateful for you, and we welcome your return. Thank you for your presence. We often take you for granted in the long, searing days of summer, and we long for your presence in the depths of cold, harsh winters.

On a year such as this, every glimmer of sunlight is welcome. We are grateful for the way you warm our bodies and our hearts, reminding us of the feel of sweat from a long hike on a summer day, the pungent smell of earth when it's been toasted in the autumnal sun, the translucent quality of light on a winter's day...



## Ways to Honour Solstice

- **Build a Yule altar to honor the return of the sun.**
  - An altar is a structure that can be made with natural found items. It can be made to remember or commemorate an event. The purpose of the Yule altar is to honor the return of the sun, so one of the most important items is a candle that symbolizes the sun. Fill the altar with symbols of winter like pinecones, evergreen boughs of fir and cedar.
- **Give Back to Nature.**
  - The winter solstice is a time to celebrate the natural world. Take some time during the day to scatter seeds for local birds and wildlife to give back to your home's original community.
- **Light candles.**
  - Being the shortest day means the solstice is also the longest night of the year, and one of the original traditions was rooted in candlelight—both for the needed light, and to celebrate the return of the sun in the coming months. Using a tabletop or a bucket to place candles in, places unlit candles either in a circle or a varied pattern, depending on your preference. In the centre place a candle that symbolizes the sun (ideally in yellow or gold) in the center. Light the sun candle first, and then the rest of your candles, and you can recite a ritual (like the following one) while doing it, too.

- From "Ways to Honour Solstice" Nena Farrell  
<https://www.sunset.com/lifestyle/wellness/winter-solstice-rituals-nature>





# Solstice Candle Ritual

*can be done with others or as a personal reflection*

Thank you darkness for leading us deeper into mystery, depth and silence. Your guidance has taught us that life is uncertain, that some entities like fire, starlight, and crickets hold more beauty, resonance and meaning in darkness, and that to enter you is to move into deeper channels of knowing and being in the world. Darkness much like sorrow, anger or pain, you often deter us. Life feels easier if we avoid you, but like sorrow, anger and pain, you have much to teach us. You remind us that life is a gift and on this year, in the midst of our collective sorrow, upheaval, and chaos, you have given us the gift of presence. In the midst of our collective night, we have been reminded that our health and the world's health cannot be separated. Thank you for reminding us that we are interdependent beings

Thank you for the night. Thank you for darkness, for the pale beauty of the moon. For luminous reflections on snow packed evening walks. For blankets, and dens, and deep rest.

*(Take a moment and think about what the darkness has meant for you this year.)*



*continued 1*

On a year that has felt suspended between normalcy and whatever might come next, with life hanging in the balance, darkness has perhaps felt more near to us than usual..

And, we are mindful that darkness has much to teach us, we thank you for bringing our attention this year to where darkness has cocooned us in beauty, depth and meaning....

*(Reflect on or journal about something you see as beautiful about darkness, write a letter to darkness or..if you are doing this with others, share aloud...)*

On this year, as our lives have hung suspended, waiting for change, we think of humans, plants, animals and ecosystems around the world that feel this uncertainty on a daily basis. And we think of where we have been blind in darkness. Thank you for bringing our attention this year to where darkness has revealed injustice, sorrow and despair. We are also reminded that all new things waiting to be birthed must gestate in darkness. Darkness, we release our sorrows into your keeping, and ask our heartbreaks and the places we have seen or experienced injustice be composted and transformed into medicine for the healing of ourselves and the world..

*(Reflect on or share something that you would like to release back into the previous year....)*