



Photo by Earna Rae Volk

Summer Solstice

JUNE 21, 2023

6:30PM EASTERN

“May the sun bring you new energy by day, may the moon softly restore you by night, may the rain wash away your worries, may the breeze blow new strength into your being, may you walk gently through the world and know it's beauty all the days of your life.” Apache Blessing

Preparation: Prepare a bouquet of fresh flowers, an arrangement of vegetables or a bright candle. Consider including some fresh herbs. Allow your senses to enable you feel the connection and belonging of Earth's ongoing gifts.

LEADER: Welcome to this gathering to honor the Summer Solstice. We will have several readings from Rev. Edward Hays throughout our ritual. But first we want to acknowledge that today is National Indigenous Peoples Day in Canada. This is an opportunity for us to reflect on the spiritual teachings of native peoples based in their deep love and respect for Mother Earth as we celebrate the sun's longest day in the Northern Hemisphere. May we continue to grow in understanding of the wisdom of the indigenous, and to work to repair the damage our culture has done to them and to Mother Earth.



ColourWeaving Prayer by David Yeo Poulton, UK

Let's take a moment of silence to reflect on the significance of this day.

READER 1: In the northern hemisphere the season of summer begins on or about June 21 and extends to about September 23. The intense rays of the sun reach the northernmost tip of our planet on the June summer solstice. And because the northern half of our planet tilts fully toward the sun, the hours of sunlight are the longest on this day and the hours of darkness the shortest. From our vantage point, it appears that the sun stops at the peak of its northward journey. For several days it lingers at this point and then slowly appears to move southward.



Sunlight through trees by Thandiwe Dale-

life..... the power that is in us if we would join our solitudes in the communion of struggle. (from *Beginners*, by Denise Levertov)

READER 2: Our ancient ancestors, who lived in harmony with the sun and the moon, knew within their bones the sacredness of such times. The eve of June 21 or midsummer's eve was a night of magic and feasting. Deep within our bodies the memories of those sun feasts are still alive. We are children of the sun, the daystar that makes all life possible as we travel in the icy darkness of frozen space. It is only fitting that we celebrate this turning point of our planet...

READER 3: We have only begun to love the earth. We have only begun to know to imagine the fulness of

READER 4: Now I invite you to relax, breathe deeply and allow your body and mind to slow down. Gradually sink into a quiet place of ease and comfort, as I read this Chinook blessing...

“We call upon the land which grows our food, the nurturing soil, the fertile fields, the abundant gardens and orchards, the flowers of a thousand colors, and we ask that they teach us the way of humble acceptance, respectful usage, and gratitude to the Divine Giver of all life.” (Chinook Blessing Litany, Solstice Celebration 2019)

After a few moments of silence...



Photo by Robin Marlow

READER 5: It was believed that on midsummer's eve, the wall separating the worlds of the spirits and humans became as thin as tissue paper. The spirits of field and forest, of

river and stream - all the inhabitants of that world – were free to pass back and forth between those walls and play among humans. It was a festival of fire, celebrating the full force of the sun-star. It was a time for feasting, a summer Christmas for play and pretending.

Summertime allows us opportunities for celebrations outside – ideal for a fire feast. Whether you celebrate the solstice alone or with family or friends, you are in communion with all peoples, ancient and modern, who are touched by the magic of the feast and who gratefully honor the blazing gift of the sun.

READER 6: God of all creation, Great Spirit who cares for life on Mother Earth...

RESPONSE (all): *Help us to see the light of Truth and Spirit,*

READER 6: May we recognize the harm done to Mother Earth and her inhabitants, and have the willingness to amend our wrongs.

RESPONSE: *Help us to see the light of Truth and Spirit,*

READER 6: May we live more simply and humbly, caring gently for Earth's gifts.

RESPONSE: *Help us to see the light of Truth and Spirit,*

READER 6: May we know that we are all one with creation, with all beings on Earth, with each other.

RESPONSE: *Help us to see the light of truth and the brightness of Spirit, and to know the healing power of love.*

CLOSING

ALL TOGETHER

O majestic one,

Help us to create a world where all will be one; where we can enjoy each other in a community of love with actions of justice and peace, and where we can come together to cherish all of life's beauty. We ask this in your name. Amen.

(MUSIC: MARIA VISSE)

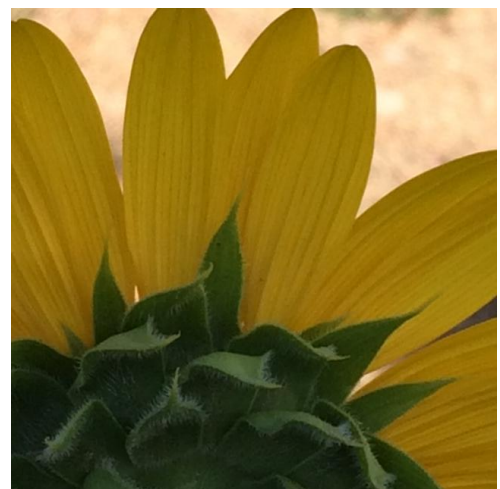


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