

# **A Celebration of Winter Solstice**

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*There is a tendency to want to hurry from autumn to spring, to avoid the long dark days that winter brings. Many people do not like constant days bereft of light and months filled with colder temperatures. They struggle with the bleakness of land and the emptiness of trees. Their eyes and hearts seek color. Their spirits tire of tasting the endless gray skies. There is great rejoicing in the thought that light and warmth will soon be filling more and more of each new day.*

*But winter darkness has a positive side to it. As we gather to celebrate the turn from winter to spring, we are invited to recognize and honor the beauty in the often unwanted season of winter. Let us invite our hearts to be glad for the courage winter proclaims. Let us be grateful for the wisdom winter brings in teaching us about the need for withdrawal as an essential part of renewal. Let us also encourage our spirits as Earth prepares to come forth from this time of withdrawal into a season filled with light.*

*The winter solstice celebrates the return of hope to our land as our planet experiences the first slow turn toward greater daylight. Soon we will welcome the return of the sun and the coming of springtime. As we do so, let us remember and embrace the positive, enriching aspects of winter's darkness and stillness.*