



PREFACE

These times must embrace the reinvention of ritual if we are to reshape humanity and disconnect from a larger story of original sin and separation.

~ Mathew Fox, *Reinvention of Work*

Rituals are powerful. Integral to the human journey, they pass on the stories, values, and beliefs that shape families, religions, nations, and cultures. They shaped me to stand to sing the national anthem, wear a cross on my necklace, or red and white on Canada Day. Prescribed gestures, actions, melodies, symbols, and words are all part of living a ritual life. Rituals are powerful until they aren't.

The reinvention of ritual, according to Wisdom Teacher, Matthew Fox, is essential. Likewise, Thomas Berry, a Cultural Historian, taught that we cannot achieve a new era of ecological consciousness and sustainability without ritual forms that identify us with our cosmic origins and consecrate all Earth.

Ritual is powerful! It's a bold claim and a radical thought at a time when many have evacuated the Church and disconnected from a message of original sin and separation. We forget the shift in history powered by the Nazi swastika and salute, "Heil Hitler." Remember too the global culture born out of the cross, Lord's Prayer and Holy Eucharist. Ritual is a word to be taken seriously.

As a clergy presiding at Sunday worship, marriage or baptism, I often longed for additional rites relevant to a generation conscious of space travel and environmental crisis. In the story of our still-unfolding, evolving Universe that deepens my own faith, I searched for language, wisdom, and symbols free of dualism. I began writing holiday and holy-day ceremonies celebrating the promise of humanity's purpose-full place in a vast cosmic communion. Now it is time to publish a collection of Evolutionary Rituals and Practices to aid the emergence of Berry's Ecozoic era.

Evolutionary Rituals are dances. The dance partners may surprise you; they are tradition and evolution, spirituality and science. A cultural ceremony like New Year's is celebrated by incorporating the cosmic story of how a supernova exploded and seeded the elements that birthed planets, Earth and life; existence is always in the context of Cosmos' ongoing genesis. Holiday, holy-day, and eco-anxious-day rituals offer and inspire faith in the cosmic pattern of breakdown and breakthrough. They reveal our everyday reality as a sacred Dance.

Becoming the Change is a recipe book; six chapters offer personal and group practices to acknowledge the breadth of our life experience. **New Beginning** rituals teach and celebrate the OneUniverse Story; **Threshold Moments** provide rites of passage for everything from baby namings to end-of-life celebrations. **Eco-Anxious Day** ceremonies and meditations acknowledge both the losses and fears of climate change and the infinite potential of the evolutionary process. There are liturgies, prayers and more for **Evolutionary Churches**. Plantings, Walks, Altar-building, and Chants for the Seasons. **Everyday Personal Practices** support our personal evolution.

These ritual scripts and ceremonial ideas are for folks awakening to the planetary crisis, open to the latest Science, and growing in One-Earth, One Universe consciousness. Shared with individuals, families, spiritual, environmental, social, education, and religious groups, Evolutionary Rituals brought forth The Questions of an age in transition that begin each chapter.

As is the way of this interconnected Universe, I was led to a collaboration through a Deep Time Leadership program with astronomer and educator, Stephan Martin. His cosmic commentaries greatly and beautifully enrich the introduction to each ritual.

~ Carol Kilby and Stephan Martin