

“A religion, old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the Universe as revealed by contemporary science might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths. Sooner or later such a religion will emerge.”

Carl Sagan

*Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space*



---

Humanistic Pagans seek to integrate ritual and meditative practices with a mythic worldview based on the most current and compelling scientific evidence.



For more information

email:

**[humanisticpaganism@gmail.com](mailto:humanisticpaganism@gmail.com)**

or visit:

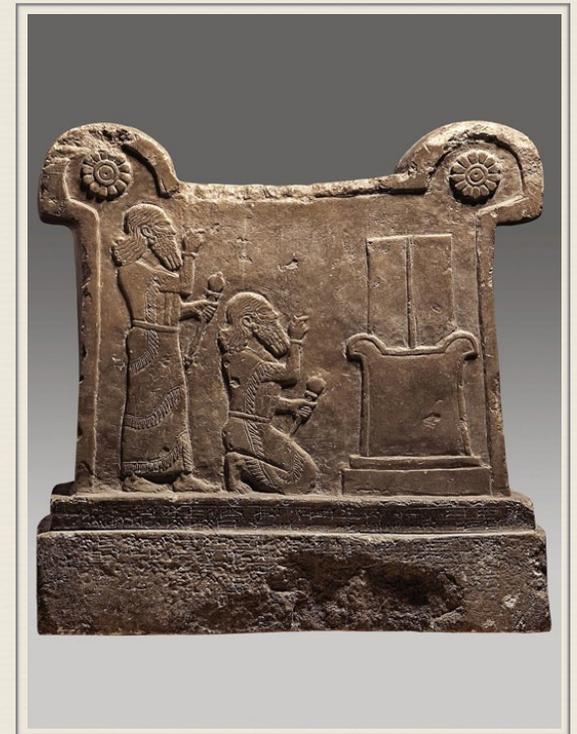
**[humanisticpaganism.com](http://humanisticpaganism.com)**

“Gaia Altarpiece” © Elsie Russell

---

# HUMANISTIC PAGANISM

---



Paganism  
without  
gods?





## Why do ritual?

Through ritual, Humanistic Pagans seek to express their sense of wonder and reverence at the universe and to connect on a deeper level with the process of life. Ritual helps to transform our understanding of the natural world into a religious experience. Ritual is known to have many psychological and social benefits which are not affected by the absence of belief in supernatural beings. Ritual enables us to cultivate certain subjective states of mind which are personally healing and socially and environmentally integrative. This is especially important in our time of widespread spiritual alienation and ecological desecration. Ritual can give rise to experiences which help motivate socially and environmentally responsible behavior.



## Religion without deities?

Most Humanistic Pagans are atheistic or non-theistic. Some Humanistic Pagans eschew the use of theistic language, but others do not. Some Humanistic Pagans have found that the use of "god language" in a ritual context can be more productive of certain kinds of religious experience. Such language is laden with emotional resonance and has unique potential to evoke powerful emotions, imbuing its object with a sense of sacredness and moral power. Because anthropomorphic language stimulates the parts of the brain associated with sociality and relationship, using theistic language, like "Goddess," may open us to a kind of religious experience than would not have been possible with more objective or abstract language like "Nature."



## What is the role of myth?

Like many ancient pagan philosophers, Humanistic Pagans understand ancient pagan myths as allegories about nature. Humanistic Pagans experience a profound and abiding sense of wonder and reverence in response to the evolution of the universe and biological life described by contemporary science. This sense of wonder, both at what we know and what we don't know, deserves to be called "spiritual" or "religious". Many Humanistic Pagans find that this sense of wonder is best expressed in narrative or story. In a ritual context, Humanistic Pagans may draw upon myths from ancient pagan cultures, but rather than taking these myths as literal fact, Humanistic Pagans give them new meaning within the context of the Epic of Evolution.