

**Wild Church**  
**Sunday, September 18, 2022**  
**Paul Kane Park**

***As the Seasons Change***

**Welcome**

**Calling Us into a Circle of Silence**

Let us gather ourselves into silence. Listen to your breath. Listen to the wind. We are all connected through the breath of God. In Hebrew - the ruach - the wind is the breath of the Holy. Our own breath literally depends upon the breath of the trees.

You belong here. You are a welcome part of this ecosystem. All beings welcome us because they have not forgotten that we are related, that we come from the same dust and will return to that same dust.

Take another deep breath to acknowledge that our lives depend on all of life.

Friends, we are not only meeting in Nature. We are entering into a relationship with Nature. We are here to re-member ourselves back to where we belong. We are here to restore a loving and kindred relationship with the rest of the natural world, as spiritual practice.

**Acknowledging the Land**

**Prayer**

Loving Creator, we come as we are, knowing you accept us. We come as all we have ever been, knowing that we are still being created. We pray for hearts open to all we can become. Amen.

**Introducing the Theme**

As we look around, we see evidence of the seasons changing. The leaves have changed their colours. Some are dropping from the trees. The trees are once again showing us how lovely it can be to let things go. The day is shortening as the night is

lengthening. The slant of the sun gives everything a new perspective. Some of us are excited to see change. Some of us are lamenting summer's passing. Some are curious to see Nature's artistry painting a changed landscape, a new world. Some are comforted at the thought of gathering around the hearth in the quiet curve of evening. Some feel harassed at having to go to work in the dark. Wherever we are in this season of change, however we feel about what is happening around us, we notice, and in the noticing we can heal and grow.

## **Readings**

**Psalm 46:1-10a**

***"In Praise of the Earth"*** a poem by John O'Donohue from ***To Bless the Space Between Us***

## **Sermon/Conversation**

We will explore the word in three parts. First, we will hear an invitation to wander in this natural setting. Then we will wander solo for about 20 minutes. Finally we will gather again to share our experiences.

Part 1: Having gathered here and having listened to some readings, we are now invited to engage with Nature in this setting. As you prepare to wander about, listening for the wisdom of the natural world, listen first to your body. This is the place to begin. In order to wander, you need first to listen to where you are feeling drawn. This is heart listening. You are not listening with your head or your ears. Listen for what your heart is saying to you. Open up your imagination and invite your intuition to guide you. When you leave this circle, you may have an idea of where you want to wander. On your way, you may feel a nudge to stop. Life is like that. Listen to the tug or nudge if it occurs. When you come to the place to which you are called, stop. Ask for permission to be there. Acknowledge, with gratitude the beings there to greet you. Listen to what they have to teach you. When you hear the tingshaw chime, pause and thank this place, these beings for your time with them - and return to our circle here.

Part 2: Solo Wandering - allow 20 minutes. At the end of 20 minutes, ring the tingshaw.

### Part 3: Witnessing

When all are reassembled in the circle, invite the offering of insights, impressions, commitments - whatever people want to share.

**Prayer** - gather the sharing into a prayer.

Following the prayer, mention that Wild Church will gather in a spot in Nature each month on the third Sunday afternoon. Get feedback about start time.

### **Blessing as We Prepare to Depart**

The blessing we will share as we go today comes from a song by John Slade:

*God on the outside, endlessly spacious  
Ageless, audacious, fecund and wild, I am  
Laid low and humbled, awed by the Splendour  
Let me remember: I am the Universe's child.*

*God on the inside, and in all places  
Forever gracious, love without end  
Witness inside me, see all that I see  
Silently guide me  
Your love includes me and transcends.*

*God is the love that never ends.*

All depart in peace.