

Wild Church
Sunday, February 19, 2023

Light: Everything Else Follows

Emily Murphy Park, Edmonton

Welcome and Introductions
Announcements

Calling Us Into a Circle of Silence

Let us gather ourselves into silence. (*pause*). Listen to your breath. Listen to the air around you. We are all connected through the breath of God. In Hebrew, the ruach (*pronounced roo-ah*) - the wind of the Holy. Our own breath literally depends upon the breath of the trees. We breathe in oxygen that the trees breathe out. The trees breathe the carbon dioxide that we exhale.

You belong here. You are a welcomed part of this ecosystem. All beings welcome us because they have not forgotten that we are all related, that we come from the same dust, and that we will return to the same dust. Take another breath (*pause so people can take a deep breath*). Acknowledge that our life depends 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 being, knowing that we are still being created. We pray for hearts open to all we can be. Amen.

Introduction to the Theme

Here we are, a few days before the beginning of the season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 22. Have you noticed how the amount of daylight is beginning to increase more dramatically. Between February 21 and April 21 we gain more hours and minutes of daylight than at any other time during the year. (In Edmonton we gain about four hours of daylight during this period.) Wow! and Hallelujah! we say.

Light, we crave it. We need light to survive. In the first story of Creation in Genesis, chapter one, we read how light is the first thing God created. In the beginning, light. Everything else follows. Light infuses life with the source of all that is. Nature lingers in light's beauty, breathing life into its decay. Light comes into our waiting and flows through our being. Light shines through words of a soul waiting for its voice to be heard. Gaze into the window of your soul. Let the light carry you there. Find your way to be when you have done all you can do.

Readings

- Genesis 1:1-5

- "Fire" by Judy Brown

What makes a fire burn is space between the logs,
a breathing space.

Too much of a good thing, too many logs, packed in too tight
can douse the flames - almost as surely as a pail of water would.

So, building fires requires attention
to the spaces in between,
as much as to the wood.

When we are able to build open spaces in the same way we have
learned to pile the logs, then we can come to see how it is fuel - and
absence of fuel, together, that make fire possible.

We only need to lay a log lightly from time to time.

A fire grows simply because the space is there, with openings in which
the flame that knows just how it wants to burn can find its way.

- "A Light Left On" by May Sarton as found in *Good Poems* (selected and introduced by Garrison Keillor)

Sermon/Conversation

Part One: Wandering and Listening

This is a time in our gathering when we are invited to wander solo in Nature, listening for the wisdom of the natural world - allowing this wisdom to inform what we have heard in the theme reflection and the readings. This is heart listening. You are not listening with your head or your ears. Listen to what your heart is saying to you as you interact with the beings that share this place. Wander for 20 minutes, then return to the circle with the gifts you have received during this special time.

Part Two: Witnessing

When we are reassembled in the circle, invite participants to share insights.

Blessing

"For Light" by John O'Donohue from *To Bless the Space Between Us*

Linger if you can to share hot drink and conversation.