

Wild Church
Sunday, March 17, 2024

Exploring the Elements: The Inspiration of Air

Fire Circle at Picnic Site #3
Emily Murphy Park, Edmonton

Announcements

Land Acknowledgment

Calling a Circle on Sacred Land

As Earth circles our star, the Sun, so too we gather in this sacred circle. Let us gather ourselves into silence (*pause*). Listen to your heart beat. Listen to the life blood coursing through your body. Take a deep breath in (*pause*). Let a long breath out (*pause*). Listen to the sounds around you. Feel the blessing of this moment.

You belong here. You are welcomed here. You are a part of this ecosystem. All beings welcome you, for they have not forgotten that we are all related, that we come from one dust and will return to that same dust. Take another long breath (*pause*).

As we gather here, in this sacred circle, 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.

Prayer

Breath of life, we feel the winds of your Spirit here today. Your breath gives life to all things and it brings humility and courage to our hearts. O wind, awaken us. Inspire us. Pull us into your vision for a world made whole. Amen.

Bringing Our Names into the Circle

Each person is invited to say aloud their names. Following the offering of each name, all in the circle will reply:

Warm greetings to you _____. We give thanks for your presence here.

Theme Reflection

Christine Valters Paintner, in her book *water, wind, earth and fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements* reminds us that of all the elements, the wind is invisible. Wind is the only one of the four elements that cannot be seen. It lacks colour, form or texture, but it makes everything else come alive “both literally, as in the breath of life, and figuratively, as in the buffeting of things by the wind’s power.” Wind, the movement of air, any meteorologist will tell you, is caused by changes in atmospheric pressure. We measure the wind by its effects on things. A gentle cooling breeze is welcomed on a warm summer afternoon, but even a small breeze can be biting when the temperature hovers at minus 20 degrees. Without the movement of air there would be no sound.

Metaphorically, wind, offers a variety of ways in which we can experience the Holy: breath of life, source of inspiration, awakener, directional guide, powerful force, and the current on which the soul soars.

1. Where in your life do you feel the winds of God?
2. Where in your life do you need to be energized, awakened or empowered?
3. How are you being inspired?

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is an ancient contemplative prayer practice used to allow Scripture to speak to our hearts and to help us discover the multiple ways the Holy dwells there. It means “sacred reading” and the practice can be extended beyond the reading of scripture to that other great book of revelation - Nature. Lectio invites us to enter into silence and stillness, to listen deeply to the stirring of the Holy in the sacred texts around us.

This is a time in our gathering when we wander solo in Nature, listening for and watching for; sensing in all aspects of our senses, the wisdom, the beauty, the mystery of the natural world, as we amble.

Wander for 20 minutes, then return to the circle with the gifts you have received during this special time. You will be invited to share these gifts in the circle if you wish.

(When all have returned to the circle, invite participants to share insights.)

Blessing

“Blessing of Wind” by Christine Valters Paintner from water, wind, earth & fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements, pp 42-43