

**Wild Church  
Sunday, April 21, 2024**

**Earth and Our “Geobiographies”**

**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**

Creator of Heaven and Earth, we see the beauty of your Spirit here today. Your compassionate creativity gives life to all things and it brings humility and courage to our hearts. Creator, awaken us. Inspire us. Pull us into your vision. 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**

Tomorrow is Earth Day. It is appropriate for us, therefore, to focus on the great gifts and deep mysteries of our Earth home - our Blue Planet - as we gather for Wild Church today.

Art therapist, Peter London, describes landscapes that have personal significance as “geobiographies”, the inner contours of the landscape of our souls. Listen to his explanation of this concept (*Read quote from his Drawing Closer to Nature: Making Art in Dialogue with the Natural World (Boston, Shambala, 2003) p. 202*)

Just as Earth has multiple terrains, so does the soul. As we become familiar with the outer landscape dimensions of Earth, the inner landscape of our souls is revealed.

Recognizing which territories enliven our souls and which ones challenge us, opens us more deeply to those aspects of our inner selves, and shines light on who we really are.

Here are some questions to ponder as you wander today:

1. What aspects of the landscape invigorate and inspire you?
2. What aspects challenge you?
3. Are you a river person, an ocean person, a lake person; or are you a mountain person or a forest person or a desert person, or perhaps, a grasslands or savannah person?
4. How is this identity manifest in the way you live and the decisions you make?

## **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 Earth” by Christine Valters Paintner from water, wind, earth & fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements, p136*