

**Wild Church**  
**Sunday, November 17, 2024**

**Picnic Site #3, Emily Murphy Park, Edmonton**

**Offering Lament - Taking Responsibility**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Land Acknowledgment**

We gather in this place with gratitude for the wisdom and compassion of the first peoples who walked this land - those who have persisted in engaging with the Holy in the Great Conversation. When these wise ones speak of “All my relations”, they do not speak only of blood relatives. They do not even speak only of two-legged creatures, for to the Indigenous ones, the plants, the four-legged creatures, the fish and the birds are likewise treated with the reverence and respect of personhood.

With them, as members of Treaty Six, we are reminded of our Treaty responsibilities and of the call to be at one with all beings, holding reverence for place and for life.

Blessed be.

**Calling the Circle**

As Earth circles our star, the Sun, so we too gather in this sacred circle. Let us gather ourselves into silence (*pause*). Listen - listen so carefully that you hear the beating of your own heart. Listen to the life blood coursing through your body. Take a deep breath in (*pause*) and let a long breath out (*pause*). Feel the blessings of this place, this time, this Holy moment.

You belong here. You are welcomed here. You are 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.

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 a kindred relationship with all beings.**

## **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.

### ***Prayer***

Creator of Heaven and Earth, we sense the beauty of your presence here, even as we see great suffering and division in our world. We come humbly and in a spirit of lament for the reckless way we humans treat one another and our Earth Home. In our gathering today, remind us that we are yours and that you, even if we do, will not abandon all you have so gloriously and graciously, boldly and beautifully created. Crack open our hearts to both your blessing and to your call to us to be ambassadors of blessing. Amen.

### **Theme Reflection**

When we pay attention to the rhythms of the seasons and to all life around us, we learn a great deal about the ebb and flow of life and about what is important and what is not.

We are summoned to bring all of our intentions, all of our energy to focus on this time and this place, that we might touch holiness, even as we are touched by the awe and mystery of Creation.

We come humbly and in a spirit of lament for the reckless way we humans treat one another and our Earth home. We recognize and lament that the human quest for novelty, convenience, wealth and security has resulted in the loss of so many other beings in this wonder-filled Creation and that we have upset the balance of many ecosystems, at our peril and the peril of so many, many other beings who are as much a part of the world as we are.

We face the reality that humans are consuming our planet's gifts at a rate that requires 1.6 earths. We forget that Earth's gifts are not just for our taking. We have not remained faithful to the loving relationship with our Earth home to which God has called us. We have both a responsibility and opportunity to create change for the health and wellbeing of all life on this planet.

**Reading One:** “ *It is Hard to Have Hope*” by Wendell Berry from *Leavings: Poems*” pages 91-93

**Reading Two:** “*Blessing to Summon Rejoicing*” by Jan Richardson from *Circle of Grace* pages 45 & 4

## **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 stirrings of the Holy 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 sense, the wisdom, the beauty, and 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** “*Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light*” by Jan Richardson from *Circle of Grace*, pages 47&48