

**Wild Church**  
**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

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

**Reaching Beyond Our Obsession with 20/20 Vision**

**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 name. 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**

January, the first month of the year in our calendar - a time for New Year's Resolutions. New Year's resolutions - what do you think of the custom of making resolutions for the year ahead? Mainline culture seems obsessed with them. On the CBC Cross Canada New Year's Eve celebration this year, I was struck by the number of people interviewed who expressed resolutions for the coming year, many of them seemed rather banal. Most of them seemed obsessed with 20/20 Vision and a quest for perfection, as though one's life and oneself needed fixing to "meet the standard". Somehow, if we can just have perfect vision we will make the grade - always a judgment that says "not good enough yet". And most people complain with shame that they very soon drop the resolution, fail to keep their resolve and shrink into guilt.

This January let's do something different. Let's look to the horizon - and this afternoon I mean that quite literally. Look to the horizon. Look to any of the many horizons. David Whyte reminds us that "Horizons are everywhere; both inside and outside of what only feels like our sense of self." He says "The edge between what I think is me and what I think is you is as much a horizon as any line of mountains or that far dark line on the distant ocean."

Horizon is that line between what we think we know and what we do not know, between what we think we see and what we do not see; horizons mark the threshold between the world I inhabit and the one that seems to be waiting for me, between a world I may almost understand and a world I know I know nothing about. Horizons between the known and the unknown are everywhere around us. We often don't notice because we rarely look up. In fact, despite our obsession with 20/20 vision, we are dangerously myopic in our even greater obsession with the close up images on our computer and phone screens - "the physical horizons of the world lost to our gaze."

So today on your solo walk, I invite you to look up, to look out to the farthest horizon you can see. As you do, first become aware of how you feel. Then, letting go of any assumptions about what you already know, let the horizon

beckon you to the point where imagination takes over and grows in you. See what happens. Then come back to share your experience in our circle.

## **Prayer**

O God of great vision encourage us to look beyond the everyday, beyond what we think we already know or see or understand, to the place of mystery, the horizon between the world as we know it to the world as you see it. Challenge us to let go that your imagination may empower our thinking and our living. Amen.

## **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 this place. Today, as you wander, look up and look out to the farthest horizon you can see. As you do, first become aware of how you feel. Then, letting go of any assumptions about what you already know, let the horizon beckon you to the point where imagination takes over and grows in you. See what happens. Then come back to share your experience in our circle.

Wander for 20 minutes, then return to the circle. You will be invited to share your experience as you wish.

*(When all have returned to the circle, invite participants to share whatever they are moved to share.)*

**Blessing** “A Blessing for the New Year” pp. 10-11, *To Bless the Space Between Us* by John O’Donohue

*On the day when the weight deadens on your shoulders  
And you stumble  
May the clay dance to balance you.*

*And when your eyes freeze behind the grey window and the ghost of loss  
gets into you,*

*May a flock of colours - indigo, red, green, and azure blue  
Come to awaken in you a meadow of delight.*

*When the canvas frays in the curragh of thought  
And a stain of ocean blackens beneath you,  
May there come across the waters a path of yellow moonlight  
To bring you safely home.*

*May the nourishment of the Earth be yours,  
May the clarity of light be yours.  
May the fluency of the ocean be yours.  
May the protection of the ancestors be yours.*

*And so may a slow wind work these words of love around you,  
An invisible cloak to mind your life.*

With gratitude for David Whyte and his book *Consolations II: the Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Everyday Words*. Many Rivers Press, 2025