

Wild Church
Sunday, November 16, 2025

Picnic Site #3, Emily Murphy Park, Edmonton

Eco Anxiety: Our Quest to Come Home
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

“Solastalgia is the darkness that floods the soul when one’s home ceases to be. The solution to homesickness might be to go home, but that option doesn’t exist if one has never left home in the first place, yet it is gone.” This is the sentence that begins Kevin Van Tigham’s recollection of the reality he and maybe all of us are experiencing in this age of mega industrial invasion, climate change and its accompanying devastation of our home as we have known it. Even as we humans don’t like change, we have from generation to generation, looked forward to the future with hope, believing that things would get better and better for future generations. That seems no longer to be true. Fewer young people choose to raise families, afraid of what lies ahead for themselves and their children

We seem increasingly beset with horrible problems that seem increasingly unresolvable: accelerating climate change, biodiversity loss and rapid extinctions, a legacy of colonialism that has filled the world with nation-states in constant conflict and frequently at war. Democracy feels threatened.

What do you do when you realize many of the things you love and your way of life causes great harm? What do you do when things you believed were certain are being proved wrong? With this realization comes a great burden of guilt and disillusionment.

And we do not feel at home at all. Like the prodigal son in the Gospel of Luke (Chapter 15) we realize we have spent our inheritance recklessly. We yearn to come home to the life source and we are afraid of being rejected.

I believe strongly that there is a way forward and a way to move beyond our collective guilt and grief but it will take brutal honesty and a hard look at all those things our culture demands that we not acknowledge; and a genuine struggle against leadership that manipulates us at every turn to prevent us from engaging a new path toward home.

The quest and the journey to joy and abundant good will require us to look at things with new eyes and to escape from the blindness of greed and the limited imagination that plagues human-centred thinking - an openness to receiving the knowledge of the ancestors and of those who would be our partners today. (recount dream workshop and the Indigenous understanding of imagination - and the calls from Noetic science to open ourselves to cosmic consciousness)

For your walk today, I invite you to let go of all your assumptions, to open every pore in your body, every aspect of your heart and mind to receive the wisdom, knowledge and loving kindness of the beings you meet along the way. Participate in cosmic imagination and consciousness.

Prayer

Eternal Spirit, Pain-Bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be. Father and Mother of us all, Loving God in whom is heaven; May the hallowing of your name echo through the universe! May the way of your justice be followed by all peoples of the world! May the commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on Earth. For you reign in the glory of the power of love and you call us, indeed you call us to come home. 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, be present to whatever seeks you receive. Let go. Be open. And come back to tell the tale.

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

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

Blessing *“In Praise of the Earth”* pp. 85-87, *To Bless the Space Between Us* by John O’Donohue