

## Eco Contemplative Liturgy, Sunday 28th September 2025, 9.45 am



### ***Gathering***

Welcome everyone, those who are here in the Southwood Garden and those joining us on zoom. Let us take a minute to become fully alert to where we are .. and to the present moment... quiescing of the restless clamour of our thoughts ... noticing the gentle rise and fall of our breaths .... the cool air passing through the back of our throat as we inhale and the warmed air leaving our body as we exhale... and now gradually expanding our attention to how our bodies are sensing all that is around us, the sounds and scents, sights and and movements, the myriad life forms with whom we share our earthly home.

We will take a few moments silence between each reading.

### ***Introduction.***

We are in the astronomical season of the autumn equinox, when the tilt of the Earth in its rotational orbit comes into alignment with the Sun. Equinox marks the moment (this year on the evening of Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September) when the midday sun crosses the equator and the earth's axis is tilted neither toward nor away from the sun, resulting in an almost equal amount of daylight and darkness at all latitudes. This period of balance between light and darkness reflects the cycles of renewal and rebirth of nature. Since ancient times and across traditions and cultures, the equinox has been honoured as an auspicious time to tap into the wisdom of the Earth, the light of the Sun, and to our own profound connection with the Source of all life and with the entire Cosmos.

### ***Prayer***

Oh God, as we move into autumn, may we honour the gifts of all you have brought to fruition. As the sun's path lowers in the sky and the days grow shorter, may we welcome the quieter darker times as opportunities to reflect on the balance and seasons of our own lives. As the trees shed their leaves and draw their sap down to their roots, may we ponder what we too might let go of, and how we may more deeply connect with the earth that sustains us. Amen

### ***Reading from Ecclesiastes, 3***

To everything there is a season,  
and a time for every purpose under heaven:  
a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to break down and a time to build,

a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together,  
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,  
a time to search and a time to count as lost,  
a time to keep and a time to discard,  
a time to tear and a time to mend,  
a time to speak and a time to be silent.

### ***Garden meditation***

We are now have 15 minutes to be silent in the garden or, if you are online, somewhere you feel you can connect with nature. Simply walk or sit until something draws your attention. Gaze, as if at a beloved. If thoughts arise, acknowledge them and let them go, like passing clouds. Simply keep coming back to what drew your attention and stay with it, for its own sake only.

### ***Regathering.***

If you would like to, please share any particular response you have had.

### ***Reading, drawn from the daily readings of the Centre for Action and Contemplation***

As each part of creation is differentiated, unique and fruitful, each is also incomplete without the whole; everything exists in interdependent relationships. The celestial regulates the balance of the terrestrial. The night invites rest as it brings refreshing coolness. The day provides light and warmth for new life to flourish. The moon regulates the waters. The sun regulates the seasons. The seasons regulate the cycles of life.. Everything is in harmony, in balance with each other and with the Creator. Creation is community.

### ***Reading. Postscript by Seamus Heaney***

And some time make the time to drive out west  
Into County Clare, along the Flaggy Shore,  
In September or October, when the wind  
And the light are working off each other  
So that the ocean on one side is wild  
With foam and glitter, and inland among stones  
The surface of a slate-grey lake is lit  
By the earthed lightning of a flock of swans,  
Their feathers roughed and ruffling, white on white,  
Their fully-grown headstrong-looking heads  
Tucked or cresting or busy underwater.  
Useless to think you'll park and capture it  
More thoroughly. You are neither here nor there,  
A hurry through which known and strange things pass  
As big soft buffetings come at the car sideways  
And catch the heart off guard and blow it open.

### ***Prayer***

Oh God, the source, sustainer, home and eternal end of all that is and has its being, may all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. May we learn to walk gently through the world all the days of our life, our hearts ready to be blown open by its beauty. Help us become a community where our vulnerabilities and our gifts are recognised and shared. Amen.