

## **Wild Church is a response to the ecological crisis- but what does this mean?**

Last week prayer service for Amazon on fire, this week awareness on climate change  
Estimated that every 24 hours 150 species of plant, insect, bird, mammal go extinct  
This is greater than anything the world has experienced since the vanishing of the dinosaurs nearly 65m years ago.

How does our faith respond to these things- to this moment in history?  
How do we begin to live into a theology that sees ourselves as Master Gardeners; as God's hands on Earth to cultivate and care for all of Creation.

I think that we begin by doing what the little girl did..  
She spent time outside. She looked up and noticed the clouds. She watched how the coyote moved. She was forever changed when she looked into the eyes of a fellow creature- why is that, what did she discover by making that connection?

We heard in our scripture reading that 'wisdom enters the souls of holy people and makes them God's friends.' Isla: you have a pet bunny- do you like your bunny? How do you care for her?

Just like Isla loves her bunny, we are called to fall back in love with the red-eyed tree frog (losing home), the black rhino and the hawksbill turtle, which are facing critical extinction. By loving that which God has created, out of the same breathe of life in which we were created, we liberate ourselves- we free ourselves from the isolation and loneliness of a culture of consumption that places primary value on man-made things. Instead, we become God's subjects; a part of a living breathing eco-system; a community of friends; each bearing witness (in their own way) to holiness. Value.

### **Tom will read our Wilderness Wisdom Reading / Job 12.7-10 by Elizabeth Johnson**

"Ask the animals and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will teach you; ask the plants of the earth and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who does not know that the hand of the Creator has done this? In that hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of every human being." // On the face of it, this seems a simple thing to do: consult the creatures of the earth and listen to the wisdom they impart. The effort to approach other species with concentrated attention to their story in all its struggle and delight creates an important shift in perspective. It entails stepping outside the usual theological conversation with its presumption of human superiority in order to place a different 'other' at the center of attention. The focus shifts to those who have been silenced, so that their voices are heard and we see (and feel) that each has an intrinsic value in their own right. The deep affection shown to us by the animals in our lives, becomes an indivisible part of who we are. For love does not diminish the more we are in its presence, it only grows stronger and more radiant.

### **C) Sharing our Animal Friends**

Let's get to know our friends! Go around circle and share: your name, who is this friend, when did you meet, what have they been in your life or taught you?

### **D) Introduction to Film**

Biologists have classified about 1.7 million species of plants and animals currently alive on this planet not including all the little bugs and bacteria. But, this number is diminishing rapidly. We're currently experiencing the worst rate of extinction since the loss of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. Unlike past mass extinctions, caused by natural events and shifts, the current crisis is almost entirely caused by *us* — humans. In fact, 99 percent of currently threatened species are at risk from human activities, primarily those driving habitat loss. What's clear is that many thousands of species are at risk of

disappearing forever in the coming decades. So, here at Wild Church we believe it is time to fall back in love with them. Because it will be through our love that we will be better at living into a lifestyle that gives them a chance to live. FILM.

**Now, let's go out now for 10 mins and REDISCOVER something new with fresh eyes:**

A little bug- what is it doing, where is it going?

The sound of the lake or smell of the moss.

We will come back to circle and share our reflections.