

TRINITY FNMI LENTEN TALKING CIRCLES Introduction

Climate change threatens the habitat for many species around the world and results in extirpations. Increases in the temperature continue to rise in spite of human efforts to reduce our carbon footprints upon our environment. Droughts contribute to the rise in the number of fires destroying homes for vegetation, animals, and birds as well as for people. Floods cover land upon which food grows feeding hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. Over the past two hundred and fifty years, resource exploitation and extraction have caused far too many environmental problems without solutions. Some of the refuse in the oceans are washing ashore while others form floating islands just below the surface. Beads of plastic from all over the world are brought by ocean currents and deposited in the fiords and inlets of Arctic islands. What will our grandchildren and great-grandchildren inherit?

For Lent 2023, the Trinity First Nations Metis and Inuit Committee in Aurora invite you to participate in developing a framework for the work of caring for this planet. Robin Wall Kimmerer wrote **BRAIDING SWEETGRASS: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants** published by Milkweed Editions in 2013. The Reverend Stephen Kern from St. Philip's-on-the-Hill Anglican Church in Unionville will be our ZOOM Facilitator. Since Nanockashee Jake Charles from the Chippewas of Georgina Island has a commitment to a community social event on Wednesday evenings, he is not able to join us but he will be available in April 2023 to have us join him in his sugar bush to celebrate maple sap being harvested once again. However, Matt Stevens from the Chippewas of Georgina Island will join us on March 1, 15, and 29 while Haudenosaunee Grandmother Mim Harder will join us on March 8 and 22. Matt Stevens is also the Cultural Coordinator for the Mississauga of Scugog Island First Nation. **Each Talking Circle begins at 7:30 and ends at 9 pm.**

It is my experience that each chapter selected in **BRAIDING SWEETGRASS** is best read on its own, allowing for time to process emotions and reflect on any action which might come to mind. Below are the selected chapters upon which exploration in each Talking Circle can be based.

March 1 PLANTING SWEETGRASS

Skywoman Falling

An Offering

Asters and Goldenrod

Learning the Grammar of Animacy

March 8 TEACHING SWEETGRASS

Maple Sugar Moon

A Mother's Work

Allegiance to Gratitude

March 15 PICKING SWEETGRASS

Epiphany in the Beans

Mishkos Kenomagwen: The Teaching of Grass

Maple Nation: A Citizenship Guide

The Honorable Harvest

March 22 BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

In the Footsteps of Nanabozho: Becoming Indigenous to Place

The Sound of Silverbells

Sitting in a Circle

Burning Cascade Head

Putting Down Roots

March 29 BURINING SWEETGRASS

Windigo Footprints

The Sacred and the Superfund

Shkitagen: People of the Seventh Fire

Defeating Windigo

Talking Circles provide participants with opportunities to develop our skills in deeply listening to each other as well as in speaking from our own experiences and about what we have learned. As such, we do not interrupt nor challenge the speaker but take our turn in speaking about what we are learning. Everyone in the circle has opportunity to speak. In this way, it does not matter whether we have been on the journey of learning about Indigenous perspectives for a long time or we are just starting on this journey.

To register for these Lenten Talking Circles, please contact the Reverend David Franks at 905-715-9997 or the Trinity Office Administrator Kelly Clarke at 905-727-6101, providing your email address. A ZOOM link will be sent to you each week along with a brief summary and some questions to guide our exploration about our responsibility to care for Mother Earth together.