



THE AWAKENED TRAVELER

A 7-week worship series
for widening our perspectives and
loving our neighbors

First Met
United Church

The Awakened Traveler A Summer 2022 Reflection Guide

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Introduction

Jesus said, “I am the Way”, the path through which we can come closer to God. Buddha talked about the path of enlightenment, which is focused on being mindful. In Taoism, the spiritual aim is becoming one with the unplanned rhythms of the all, called “the way” or “Tao”. Many of the world religions use this metaphor of journeying or “following the way” to describe the spiritual life. Victoria artist Maarten Schadelee created an art installation which depicted the collective human journey toward spirituality called “Doorways to Spirit”

https://www.maarnada.ca/doorways_to_sprit.html which was displayed in the First Met Sanctuary in 2007. This set of 16 hinged full-size doors set in a circle depicted many of the ways through which we can enter into the spiritual journey.



Pictured: Megumi Matsuo-Saunders and ICA Members

The Awakened Traveler worship series from June 19 to July 31 takes its inspiration from a webinar in which Rev. Dr. Tammy Gieselman of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (United Methodist Church) spoke

to Rick Steves about his faith as a Lutheran and his belief that mindful travel can be a spiritual act that elevates our awareness of our place in the global family. Rick Steves is well-known for his travel books and travel company. His philosophy, steeped in respect, humility, and love for the world as well as delight and growth through the

eye-opening eureka moments that adventure and exposure to new things can inspire, imbues the values of his travel company and how its tour guides lead people on adventures. This act of opening and discovering is a very important part of our spiritual journey; the survival and cooperation of the species to sustain the planet and safeguard all people depends on it.

Even for those who will never be able to venture beyond their immediate locales, there are so many ways to “travel” and learn about other cultures and religions. The main point of the series is not so much *where* or *how* you “travel”, but *that* the act of expanding our horizons and challenging our preconceived notions is essential to our journey of faith. This is the “traveler’s mindset” and it can also happen right at home.

The traveler’s mindset is a way of looking at the world that delights in discovery and difference. The mindful traveler approaches travel and encounters with other peoples, cultures and places with humility, respect and curiosity, taking time to go beyond the tourist experience of seeing sights and taking pictures to experiencing the religion, culture and everyday life of the places visited.

In this reflection guide, you will find three intertwined threads. The first is a focus on the themes of each Sunday’s worship from June 19 to July 31. The second is a series of activities that encourage you to “armchair travel” or to explore Victoria through books, movies or videos, food, festivals, music, walking tours, etc. You can engage with these activities on your own schedule throughout the summer, choosing from the weeks of the series as weather, commitments, mobility and interests allow. Note that there are more activities suggested than you can likely do; choose those activities that fit your schedule.

Finally, we encourage you to **journal** throughout the series. You don’t need anything special for this activity: just a notebook and a pen. Journaling has long been a practice of travelers. Journaling can be especially important as we seek to understand and process our reactions to our experiences. Each week, we will suggest some questions to consider in your journal.

Know this:

*At the moment of despair and unknowing,
Jesus appeared to the disciples on the road.
He is our constant companion
and invites us always to break open our lives and share,
traveling together toward the Kin-dom of Love.*

Week 1: Leaving Home



Whether you travel far away or simply begin to see our local surroundings as if for the first time, “pilgrimage” has long been a spiritual practice, and “journey” a deeply-felt metaphor for our spiritual lives. This seven-week worship series will encourage you to open yourselves more fully to the curiosity and wonder, reflection and transformation that travelers—not merely tourists—experience when they choose to immerse themselves in soul-widening adventures.

Some of us leave home voluntarily, expecting to return home. Others are in exile from their country. This is most recently evident in the Ukrainian refugees fleeing in the face of the Soviet invasion. They are only the latest group to leave homes, families and the familiarity of their lives behind. The story of Exodus is also one of exile. Canada has seen waves of refugees arrive from Vietnam, Syria, Afghanistan and other countries. Yet others leave for economic reasons; many of the settlers in Canada came for the prospect of a better life for their children.

No matter the reason for the travel, leaving home brings mixed emotions. There may be excitement, anticipation, apprehension, fear, and concern for friends and family left behind. For immigrants who left for Canada in the years before easy international travel, many did not expect to see their family members again.

*I call on you in my journeys
To make my path a holy one,
A safe one—
One both righteous and beautiful.
May I meet on my journey fellow pilgrims
To whom I listen with an open heart.*

*May I share with them a meal, a
conversation.
May I see them as fellow human beings,
Sharing the same joys and sorrows.
May I bless them in body and soul.*

*I pray for all who travel
Under burning sun or through driving
rain,
Through a teeming city or a barren
wilderness,
Over treacherous waters to unknown
shores.
May they find shelter along the way,
Food for the journey,
Compassion in the hearts of those they
meet,
And safe harbor at the road's end.*

*May the Creator shine grace onto all our paths.
May all our journeys lead us closer to God.
Amen.*

Adapted from the Traveler's Prayer,
<https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/usops-resources/the-travelers-prayer.pdf>



Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Before leaving home, travelers prepare for the journey, researching their destination, planning their route, packing their luggage and making sure that they have their passports and travel vaccinations. To prepare for the coming weeks' activities:

Watch:

Travel as a Spiritual Act: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJ3sL-RKnTM&t=3001s>

Read:

The Refugee Story Bank of Canada is a repository for stories by those who have sought refuge in Canada from violence, war, oppression, discrimination, and persecution. Readers can choose from a selection of stories from different individuals <https://www.refugeestorybank.ca/>

Melnyk, George and Christina Parker (editors.). *Finding Refuge in Canada: Narratives of Dislocation*. Athabasca University Press.

Journaling

1. *Imagine yourself in the doorway of your home, about to take a step into a journey into the unknown. What are you feeling? Anticipation? Anxiety? Excitement?*
2. *Imagine yourself as a refugee arriving in Canada, unable to understand the language, with few resources perhaps just one small suitcase and a few dollars, leaving behind family members who might be injured or killed in the next bombing. What might you be experiencing in this situation?*
3. *Do you feel drawn to new things or dread facing the unknown?*
4. *What is your relationship to the rest of the world? Curious? Familiar? Lost? Frightened?*
5. *Do you have childhood memories of attitudes about “local and global?” Were they positive? Did you get the opportunity to know more through travel? Were you exposed to education about other places?*

Week 2: PRIDE Week in Victoria



First Met has become an affirming congregation, but that does not mean the journey of becoming more inclusive and welcoming is over. PRIDE Week offers an opportunity to become more knowledgeable about LGBTQ2SA+ issues both locally and globally.

Constant Friend, because

People of every sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity have the right to live with dignity, without persecution or discrimination, we Remember in our prayers:

LGBTQ+ people of Chechnya, Uganda, Zambia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and elsewhere who have been murdered and tortured because of who they are. We remember them and the people who love them.

LGBTQ+ refugees from around the world seeking safety and sanctuary: we remember them and the people who welcome them.

Trans and gender-diverse people in Canada, the United States, Brazil, and elsewhere, who are targeted victims of hate crimes and assaults: we remember them and the people who love them.

LGBTQ+ people whose dignity and self-esteem have been eroded by hateful systems and structures: we remember them and seek to be people who love more fully.

Individually, we each uniquely reflect your glory and express your love, but anti-gay violence, homophobia, and transphobia have blocked many from recognizing your beauty in all people. All of creation suffers from the effects of such hate, fear, and violence.

Daily, may we dedicate ourselves to building bridges of love and hope where harmful divisions have been made, making equity and equality for all people our goal, while working continually for justice, so that Everyone can live fully in your love. Amen.

—a prayer by Alydia Smith for Pride month (<https://united-church.ca/prayers/pride-prayer>)

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Watch:

Abby Wambach: Commencement Address to Marymount Layola University Undergraduates: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSH8geuu2UQ>

Sarah McBride: "Tomorrow Will Be Different: Love, Loss, and the Fight for Trans Equality": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RC8n1EXANmQ>

Rohrer, Megan. *The Kid-Dom of God: Good News for Diverse Families: How a Transgender Pastor Created the Children's Books They Wish They Had As a Kid* (Epiphany Explorations 2017). Victoria, BC: First Metropolitan United Church, 28 January 2017. DVD 248.4 E64 2017 no.10

Rohrer, Megan. *Transfiguration: Sacred Stories Across the Gender Spectrum* (Epiphany Explorations 2016). Victoria, BC: First Metropolitan United Church, 23 January 2016. DVD 248.4 E64 2016 no.8

Read:

Rohrer, Megan and Daniel Tisdell. *Bible Stories: Reimagining Between the Lines*. N.P.: Wilgefortis, 2014(c). F R739b (Mountford Library)

Walker, Alice. *The Colour Purple*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982. (Available at the Greater Victoria Public Library as a book, e-book and DVD)

McBride, Sarah. *Tomorrow Will Be Different: Love, Loss, and the Fight for Trans Equality*. Crown Archetype, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2018

Al-Kadhi, Amrou. *Life as a Unicorn: A Journey from Shame to Pride and Everything in Between*. Fourth Estate, 2020. (available from the Greater Victoria Public Library)

Participate:

The Victoria PRIDE Festival takes place June 23 to July 2, 2022. For a list of the events, go to <https://victoriapridesociety.org/pride-2022/>

Journaling

1. *What attitudes and beliefs about LGBTQ2SA+ issues did you grow up with in your family, school and social groups?*
2. *How have your perspectives changed over time?*
3. *What has helped you shape your current views?*
4. *In what ways can you be an ally or supported for LGBTQ2SA+ folks in our community and more widely?*

Week 3: The Encounter

In one segment of the “Travel as a Spiritual Act” webinar, Rick Steves talks about the importance of going beyond the “photo-op” and finding out the explanation and meaning of the religious rituals his tour group observed. The example he gives is of a whirling dervish (a Muslim monastic) for whom the whirling is a prayer while in a meditative trance. By encountering and engaging with an individual or group, rather than merely observing and photographing, we gain that wider perspective that enriches our travels and our understanding.

A key to finding this richness is to slow down our travel, being open to conversation, curious about others and humble about our own knowledge and culture. Sometimes serendipity plays a part—you just happen to be in the right place at the right time. Still you need to be willing to change your plans to participate in this opportunity for engagement. These encounters often become treasured memories of a trip when the memory of a museum display or scenic view fades. I treasure the memory of visiting the Allan Sapp Gallery in North Battleford Saskatchewan when the artist dropped in and offered to show us around the gallery, explaining his work and the stories behind each painting, even taking down a drum from the wall to sing a song. Another is of the devotion shown by our cooking instructor in Kochi, India who attends her Catholic church each morning and for whom her cooking demonstrations are an expression of her faith and her love of all peoples.



*As you encounter others, especially those not in your immediate circles,
may you be aware that these very moments
are spiritual acts of expanding your horizon,
traveling beyond your preconceptions,
and embracing the infinite delight of this earth and its beings.*

*And may the Creator continue your unfolding,
the Christ accompany your deeper knowing,
the Spirit enliven your growing,
until one day we all gather in the Kin-dom of Love.*

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Even in our own city, many of us have routines that leave big pieces of the community unexplored. The walking tours below give us a chance to widen our understanding of our own community, its history and the people who inhabit, work and worship in it.

Explore:

“GPSmyCity: Walks in 1K+ Cities” App

- Victoria Introduction Walking Tour
- Architectural Jewels Walking Tour
- Best Museums and Art Galleries
- Victoria's Historical Churches Tour

City of Victoria Tours

- Mysterious Chinatown:
https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Community/Documents/MysteriousChinatown_e.pdf
- Rollicking Boomtown:
https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Community/Documents/RollickingBoomtown_e.pdf
- Law and Order:
https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Community/Documents/LawOrder_e.pdf
- Haunted Victoria:
https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Community/Documents/HauntedVictoria_e.pdf

Watch:

- Nomadland - **Hulu**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video
- Greenbook - Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video
- Under the Tuscan Sun - **Disney+**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video
- Lost in Translation - **STARZ**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video
- Lion - **STARZ**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video
- Slum Dog Millionaire - **Crave**, **STARZ**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video

Bold denotes a streaming service; if there are several, they are ordered by price to rent (some are the same price so they're just alphabetized instead)

Journaling:

- 1. Recall a time when you were in unfamiliar surroundings. Were you excited to meet someone new? Or did you have uncomfortable or fearful feelings about an encounter?*
- 2. When have you had a transformative experience as a result of a conversation, a meal or a chance encounter, here in Victoria or on your travels?*
- 3. Have you had an encounter with other religious practices? Do you know people who practice other faith traditions? What does your answer mean for your view of the world?*
- 4. Whether we like to admit it or not, people “not like us” or places “far from home” can bring up feelings of fear. How do you think this affects our world? Can you imagine being part of changing this? How?*

Week 4: The Lands We Arrived On: First Nations Awareness

We live on the unceded territory of the Lekungen-speaking peoples of the southern part of Vancouver Island. When English, French and Spanish ships arrived on the shores of what we now call Canada, they claimed the land on behalf of their respective monarchs, ignoring the fact that the land had already been settled by Indigenous people for millennia. As more and more settlers arrived, the Indigenous population felt the brunt of new diseases, displacement from their territories, removal of their children to residential school, the imposition of laws, religion and cultural values that did not respect their values and beliefs, and ongoing racism. We are still living with that legacy today. Most recently, unmarked graves have been identified on the grounds of many former residential schools operated by religious organizations including the United Church. The work of reconciliation is an ongoing process that may take decades but requires first that we, as settlers, learn the truth of the abuses of the past and intergenerational trauma it has inflicted.



*Creator, in love and through love, you have called all things into being.
We thank you for mother earth, our home.
We thank you for the heavens that watch over us and the starlight that warms
and guides us. We thank you for all the plants—for those that are medicine,
for those that nourish us, for those that express your delight through their
beauty and diversity. We thank you for all of our fellow creatures;
may we share this earth with them in respect, with reverence.
We thank you for soil, water, fire, air;
for forests, plains, and mountains, deserts and tundra and oceans.
And now, when so much of the world is threatened with destruction,
help us to walk in humility with gratitude among all these sacred gifts from
you.*

*We thank you for being a God of liberation,
for you are ever seeking to bring us into the joy of your salvation;
into a just, equitable, and holistic celebration of life.*

*We thank you for your compassion, which holds each and every one of us.
We thank you for coming to us as Jesus,
our teacher, brother, and friend—
for dying on the cross and breaking the power of death
in order to bring us back into harmony with you and all of Creation.*

*Creator, thank you for your truth and wisdom,
and for inviting us to travel the healing path with you;
we offer you our hearts and minds
so that we might embody your grace
and share your blessings with all who live upon the earth. Amen.*

*-(Opening Prayer from All God's Beloved Children, Worship Service for
Indigenous Day of Prayer 2022. United Church of Canada. Written by the
Reverend Jan Jorgensen who shares ministry with Robert Patton, a
Kanien'kehá:ka Congregational Designated Minister and Elder, and the people
of Kahnawake United Church.)*

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Read:

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding Sweetgrass*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2013(c). 305.597 K49 Mountford Library (also available as a book, e-book, and e-audiobook at the Greater Victoria Public Library)

King, Thomas. *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America*. [Toronto]: Anchor Canada, 2012(c). 970.00497 K53 (also available as a book, e-book and e-audiobook at the Greater Victoria Public Library)

King, Thomas, *Indians on Vacation*. Harper Collins, 2020. (Available as a book, e-book, and e-audiobook at the Greater Victoria Public Library)

Watch:

Doing the Work: A Q&A on what settlers need to know about the residential school system in Canada. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWsn4cAEprE>

Welcome to the KAIROS Blanket Exercise.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzXdi_RDkjc

The Blanket Exercise: Indigenous Perspectives.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyEgWwZHBBM>

Reconciliation: The Blanket Exercise.
<https://canadac3.ca/en/video/reconciliation-blanket-exercise/>

Participate:

Indigenous Tourism BC has information on the many indigenous tourism businesses in British Columbia that offer arts and cultural activities, outdoor adventures, wildlife and nature viewing, culinary and wellness activities, and accommodations. <https://www.indigenoussc.com/>

British Columbia Pow wows. The British Columbia Pow Wow Calendar has all the details you need to plan your next trip. Information includes a visitor's guide and powwow etiquette.
<https://calendar.powwows.com/events/categories/pow-wows/pow-wows-in-british-columbia/>

Journaling

- 1. How have I been involved in educating myself and my family about colonialism and residential schools?*
- 2. What things can I do further to learn about the First Nations in my area?*
- 3. What have I done and what more can I do to encourage action by municipal, provincial and federal governments?*

Week 5: The Reflection

When we begin to broaden our experience of lands and peoples in our travel, or in our own towns and cities, we may move through a personal crisis if the plurality of religious thought and practice has not come into close view in our lives before. And yet, if we continue to reflect and open, what feels so different may not be as far from us as we first imagined. The light we seek and the life-sustaining river that runs through the “Kin-dom” of God is full of common themes across religions: peaceful coexistence, food and shelter, love and compassion for those suffering and oppressed.

Being away from one’s home can teach people about themselves and their faith. Culture shock is resistance to adaptation to what is new and unfamiliar. However, unsettling it is, it is just a glimpse into the difficulty that new immigrants feel when coming to Canada for the first time.

As you move into the week, may you engage in reflective practices that help you deepen compassion for yourself and love of neighbour. Know this reflection as spiritual acts of expanding your horizon, traveling beyond your preconceptions, and embracing the infinite delight of this earth and its beings.



An Invocation of Metta/Compassion

As we take a moment out of our busy lives to learn, share and reflect on the insights, experiences and wisdom of others, we are reminded of how blessed we all are. In the current world around us there are many who suffer and face grave challenges. We stand in solidarity with them in compassion and by practicing loving kindness to ourselves and all those around us.

Taking a couple of stanzas from Metta or compassion meditation, let us engage in the power of prayer that connects us—irrespective of religion—with our beliefs and ideals, more deeply helping us to hold them in our minds as we go about our daily business, and helping us to develop a stronger sense of conviction. Let us pray the following in the name of all that is good.

May we all be well, happy and peaceful. May no harm come to us.

May we all also have patience, courage, understanding, and determination to meet and overcome inevitable difficulties, problems, and failures in life.

May our parents, our teachers and mentors, our friends and may all living beings across the world...be well, happy and peaceful. May no harm come to them,

May they also have patience, courage, understanding, and determination to meet and overcome inevitable difficulties, problems, and failures in life.

—Thilini Ariyachandra

Source: <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/buddhist-prayers>

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Read:

Mayle, Peter. *A Year in Provence*. Vintage; Illustrated edition 1991. (Available as a e-book and e-audiobook at the Greater Victoria Public Library)

Taseer, Aatish, *Stranger to History*. Graywolf Press; Reprint edition (November 13, 2012)

Prayers for Peace and Justice. <https://news-archive.hds.harvard.edu/news/prayers-peace-and-justice>

To mark the International Day of Peace, Harvard Divinity School has compiled a dozen prayers from various faith traditions and backgrounds. These prayers for peace were offered in Assisi, Italy, on the Day of Prayer for World Peace during the U.N. International Year of Peace, 1986. We remember the sacred words and prayers of the world's peoples throughout the ages as they longed and worked for peace.

Participate:

Visit some local grocery stores that specialize in the foods of a particular culture. You may find the items stocked unfamiliar, but for those who have immigrated to Canada, they are often a much-appreciated sense of 'home'. Talk to the store clerks or to other customers to find out what the items are and how they are used in cooking.

- Italian Food Imports, 1114 Blanshard
- Thanh Ky Grocery (Vietnamese, Asian) 561 Fisgard
- Tai Sang Grocery (Chinese, Asian), 1717 Government
- A Mart Korean Grocery, 652 Yates
- Filipino Mart, 2012 Douglas
- Fujiya Foods (Japanese) 3624 Shelbourne
- Stir it Up (Jamaican) 760 Yates
- Damascus Grocery (Syrian) 1395 Hillside
- Island African Grocery, 2714 Quadra
- B&V Market (Indian), 3198 Quadra
- Indian Grocery Victoria, 3388 Douglas

Food trucks are a good way to taste some of the street foods of another country. Here are a few to try:

- Songhees Food Truck (Indigenous), 1502 Admirals Rd
- Rolling Reef (Caribbean), 675 Belleville
- Sũlt Pierogi Bar (Ukrainian) 609 Yates

Journaling

When we travel or encounter new things, we take in so much information. It can be mind-boggling or even soul-jarring. It is important, then, to spend some time "exforming"-journaling as a way of getting out our thoughts and feelings, even if it is a stream of consciousness run-on kind of writing because we aren't sure how we feel.

1. Can you recall an experience that "decentered" you? Reminded you that not everyone lives with the same values, expectations, opportunities?

2. How did that make you feel? Does the diversity of the world's people and their ways of life and ways of spirituality give you a grateful feeling of abundance or a fearful feeling of chaos?

3. What happens to that when you remember the Creator who set it all in motion?

4. How can deeper reflection about our own hesitation to connect to the wider human family free us to explore more possibilities for a better world?

Week 6: Returning Home

Sometimes when we have traveled away from the familiar, we return and find the familiar holds more than we had noticed before. Our eyes, now trained to wonder and appreciate, behold the place we left afresh. Perhaps we have a new appreciation of some aspects of our home. Perhaps we also see things that we had not previously questioned that we now want to change. We contemplate what it means to return home. After stretching our spirits and our love to include more of the glorious creation and its peoples, we return to a home that will never be the same to us. We have returned with “guests”-memories of new friends and new perspectives. Perhaps we also return with new convictions to be more active and loving citizens of humanity right where we reside.



Holy One, it is always good to go home, to return to our roots and celebrate the joy and familiarity we feel there.

Wherever we go, we are still part of a larger family. We thank you for the things that are comfortable about home: our friends and family, our community, the stores where we shop, the church we attend, and the beauty of our province.

We also thank you for the ability to see our home with fresh eyes, reminding us that there are places beyond this community that share the values of peace, compassion, and community but respond in different ways from our own. We thank you for the new friends we made in our travels.

Where we saw oppression and hardship, may we find ways to take action here at home to ease that suffering and advocate for justice. May what we learned in our travels guide us in our own spiritual growth and renewal. Let the spirit of Christ reign in our hearts today, and make us glad. Amen.

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Read:

Bryson, Bill. *I'm a Stranger Here Myself: Notes on Returning to America after Twenty Years Away*. Crown; Reprint edition, 2000

Steves, Rick. *Travel as a Political Act*. Avalon Publishing, 2018. (Available from Greater Victoria Public Library as a book, e-audiobook and DAISY talking book)

Watch:

- The Way - **Prime Video**, Apple TV
- Into the Wild - Pic-a-flic, Google Play, Cineplex, Apple TV, Prime Video
- A Walk in the Woods - Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play
- The Motorcycle Diaries - Apple TV
- Wild - **Disney+**, **Crave**, **STARZ**, Pic-a-flic, Cineplex Store, Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video

Bold denotes a streaming service; if there are several, they are ordered by price to rent (some are the same price so they're just alphabetized instead)

Participate:

Best Walking Trails in Victoria. Explore the most popular walking trails near Victoria with hand-curated trail maps and driving directions as well as detailed reviews and photos from hikers, campers and nature lovers like you.

<https://www.alltrails.com/canada/british-columbia/victoria/walking>

Visit one of Victoria's Parks that you haven't previously visited:

- Finnerty Gardens: at the University of Victoria campus, close to the intersection of Cedar Hill Cross Road and Henderson Road.
- Playfair Park: 1198 Rock Street
- Hatley Park National Historical Site, 2005 Sooke Road
- Gorge Waterway Park, accessible from Gorge Road
- Mount Tolmie Park, 3492 Mayfair Dr, access from Cedar Hill Cross Road or Richmond Road
- Summit Park. The easiest ways to access the park are at the eastern end of Summit Avenue, off of Quadra Street or at the northern end of The Rise off of Cook Street.

<https://www.sidewalkingvictoria.com/blog/2018/02/26/summit-park>

More suggestions for parks to visit:

https://www.tripadvisor.ca/Attractions-g154945-Activities-c57-Victoria_Victoria_Capital_Regional_District_Vancouver_Island_British_Columbia.html

Walk a labyrinth. There are several outdoor labyrinths in Victoria. These include:

- Irving Park, 250 Menzies Street
- Christ Church Cathedral, 930 Burdett Street
- Cordova Bay United Church, 813 Claremont Avenue
- You could also make your own labyrinth at a local beach. There are numerous YouTube videos and webpages that give instructions on making the labyrinth, but here is one simple set of instructions:

<https://labyrinthos.net/layout.html>

- You can use a paper labyrinth and trace the path with your finger:
<https://www.relax4life.com/download-paper-finger-labyrinths/>



Journaling:

Returning home is not the end of the journey. Returning to “business as usual” too quickly can rob us of important moments of integrating what we have experienced into our hearts and knowing what implications it can have for our lives. A travel journal can remind us each time we pick it up that life is a journey, whether we leave home for extended periods of time or not.

- 1. Recall past experiences of travel. How were you shaped or changed by the experiences?*
- 2. What feels important to remember beyond this worship series that can enrich the journey of your life each day?*
- 3. Have you felt a shift in some attitude about the world?*
- 4. Is there something that is calling you because of this journey? Do you feel a new sense of purpose?*

Week 7: A Meal Before Departing

It is no accident that the word communion has two meanings: the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts and feelings, and the service of Christian worship at which bread and wine are consecrated and shared. In the ancient Greek world the rules of hospitality dictated that men would be expected to host visitors, providing them with food, a bath, friendship gifts, the promise of safety for the night, and safe escorted travel to their next destination. Similar customs requiring one to welcome a weary traveller prevailed in ancient Rome, China, India and among North American Indigenous peoples. The Talmud even says that welcoming guests is “greater than welcoming the Divine Presence [*Shekhinah*].” (source: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-hospitality/>).

North America has become a society in which meals are often eaten on the run. Rick Steves speaks of the horror of European friends, when he and his crew eat sandwiches in the trip from one location to another. This is considered almost sacrilegious in many countries where meals are to be enjoyed together with family, friends or strangers that one has just met. The actual eating of the meal is followed by conversation. (Note the semi-religious connotation!)



Many of us have never experienced the lack of nutritious food. However, food insecurity is a huge problem throughout our world and even in our own country. It has been exacerbated by the pandemic, by inflation and more recently, by the invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine is the world's largest producer of sunflower oil and, combined with Russia, it is responsible for more than half of global exports of sunflower oil. The region is also responsible for over a third (36%) of wheat exports (making it the world's largest exporter of wheat). (source: <https://www.economicsobservatory.com/how-is-the-war-in-ukraine-affecting-global-food-security>). This will make the work of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which is supported by the United Church of Canada and 14 other denominations, even more vital in the coming year.

*Creator God,
Bless farmers, fishers, gatherers, hunters, migrant workers...all agricultural workers here in Canada and around the world.
Bless those who transport, distribute, and prepare our food.
Bless those pouring their heart and soul into fostering and protecting clean water, healthy soil, and biodiversity.
Bless those advocating for safe, healthy, culturally appropriate food.
Bless those challenging systems that treat food as a commodity rather than a sacred right.
Bless those working hard to understand where their food comes from and to have a healthy relationship with it.
Bless those who share what they can so no one goes hungry.
Bless the breakfast programs, community kitchens, shared gardens, food banks, and agricultural training programs we support through Mission & Service.
Bless our church suppers, barbecues, luncheons, teas, and fellowship time.
Bless Our Place, Mustard Seed and Cool Aid who provide nutritious meals to those in our community who are food-insecure.
Bless the North Park Neighbourhood Food Hamper program and all the food pantries in Victoria.
Bless our home kitchens, our tables, and all who gather around them.
Bless us as we bow our heads in thanksgiving for your abundant grace.
Amen.*

(Source: World Food Day Service 2021, United Church of Canada)

Being an Awakened Traveler (activities)

Grow and Support:

- Grow some of your own food in pots on your balcony or in your garden. Grow an extra row to support local food banks or Our Place if you are able.
- Support local farmers and local farmers' markets.
- Reduce your own food waste by careful shopping, using tired vegetables in soups etc. For more tips, go to How to Reduce Food Waste, <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/327325>

Cook and Eat:

Try a new recipe, especially one from a cuisine that you have not previously tried. Many international recipes are available online through such sites as <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipes/86/world-cuisine/> or <https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/category/world/>

Eat a meal at a local restaurant that offers cuisine from another culture. Pick a restaurant that stretches the boundaries of what you have tried before.

Search using such phrases as “Victoria restaurants serving international foods” or “Victoria restaurants serving Asian foods”. If you have a printed telephone directory, you could check the Yellow Pages section for restaurants.

Read

Martin, Ralph C. *Food Security: From Excess to Enough*. Dundurn, 2019.
(Available from the Greater Victoria Public Library)

Journaling

1. *What are the traditions in your family and/or your cultural heritage regarding meals?*

2. *Meals have a deeper significance that simply taking in the calories needed to sustain life. What significance do they have to you?*

3. *How have your food habits changed as a result of environmental and financial concerns?*

4. *During the pandemic, we were only able to celebrate communion virtually. How did this change your experience of Communion?*

Closing Benediction for the Series

*As you step out of your door, and any other door,
may you be aware of your very movement as a spiritual act
of expanding your horizon, traveling beyond your preconceptions,
and embracing the infinite delight of this earth and its beings.*

*And may the Creator continue your unfolding,
the Christ accompany your deeper knowing,
the Spirit enliven your growing, until one day
we all gather in the Kin-dom of Love.*

Amen.

This reflection guide was adapted from “Quest: The Awakened Traveler” worship series (© www.worshipdesignstudio.com/quest), Dr. Marcia McFee, Worship Design Studio: Overview of Worship, Weeks 1 to 4, and Small Group Ideas.



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