

March 2 2025

Compassion: Responding to Suffering

Broken, wounded, violent, damaged, divisive—
these are some descriptions
given to the current global situation.

Our world desperately needs
the noble, essential quality of compassion
to be activated—
and will not heal without it.

Rupp, Joyce. Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life

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Prelude

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Land Acknowledgement



We acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded land of the Huron-Wendat, Anishaanabe and the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit peoples.

We honor the interconnectedness of all beings, including the cosmos, Earth, Indigenous Peoples, our ancestors, and all of creation.

We are grateful to all who came before us as caretakers of our planet.

We regret and apologize for any injustices we have caused; we are actively working to address and correct them.

We recognize, as stewards of the Earth, our responsibility to care for the land, gifts, and relationships that sustain us.

We commit to approaching every interaction with reverence, reciprocity, harmony, and compassion.

In healing ourselves we heal the world!

(Adapted from Charter of Compassion)

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Greeting

We gather today to worship and celebrate
That which is beyond any names and images;
That which is always More than we can think or
put into words or experience, yet that same 'God' is
present here, about us and within us.
Let us be aware that we gather on Sacred Ground.

Gathering Hymn: When the Wind of Winter Blows

When the wind of winter blows,
bringing times of solitude,
Fill the silent icy night,
be our heart compassion.

Refrain

Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.
Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.

Gathering Hymn: When the Wind of Winter Blows

When we shiver in despair,
when the chill of death comes near,
Hold us Spirit, calm our fears,
while the evening darkens.

Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.
Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.

Gathering Hymn: When the Wind of Winter Blows

When in days of fallen snow,
change confounds, or love burns low,
From the ashes may there rise
phoenix of our growing .

Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.
Holy Light, warm our night, warm the time of winter.

Gathering Prayer

The world now is too dangerous and too beautiful for anything but love.
May your eyes be so blessed you see God in everyone.
Your ears, so you hear the cry of the poor.
May your hands be so blessed
that everything you touch is a sacrament.
Your lips, so you speak nothing
but the truth with love.
May your feet be so blessed
you run to those who need you.
And may your heart be so opened,
so set on fire, that your love,
your love, changes everything.

Black Rock Prayer Book

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First Reading

South African archbishop Desmond Tutu often speaks and writes about the power that this belief can have on how we live:

We are fundamentally good.

When you come to think of it, that's who we are at our core. . . .

What difference does goodness make? Goodness changes everything. . . . Goodness changes how we see the world, the way we see others, and most importantly, the way we see ourselves.

The way we see ourselves matters. It affects how we treat people.

It affects the quality of life for each and all of us.

What is the quality of life on our planet? It is nothing more than the sum total of our daily interactions. Each kindness enhances the quality of life. Each cruelty diminishes it.

Rupp, Joyce. Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life

Acclamation

Glory to God throughout the Universe and peace to all who dwell on Earth. Glory to God throughout the Universe and peace to all who dwell on Earth.

We glory in your Light.
We glory in your Life.
We glory in your Love, O God.
Glory be to you.

Glory to God throughout the Universe and peace to all who dwell on Earth. Glory to God throughout the Universe and peace to all who dwell on Earth.

Hubble: Judy Schmidt

Second Reading

You have to be taught the way of peace, the way of love, the way of nonviolence. In the religious sense, in the moral sense, you can say that in the bosom of every human being, there is a spark of the divine. So you don't have a right as a human to abuse that spark of the divine in your fellow human being...

You try to appeal to the goodness of every human being and you don't give up.

You never give up on anyone.

Rupp, Joyce. Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life



Sermon

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Hymn of the Day Where Does Compassion Start?

Where does compassion start?

How does compassion grow?

Her seed is at the heart of every faith we know:
compassion honours others' place,
dethroning self with willing grace.

How does compassion thrive in worlds of greed and grief?

Her goodness stays alive
through those of strong belief:
compassion, luminous and clear,
outshining wastes of war and fear.

Hymn of the Day Where Does Compassion Start? p.2

Where is compassion's role in cultures, or in creeds?

At center, with the soul

who feels another's needs:

compassion brings the touch of friend,
a bandage that will bind and mend.

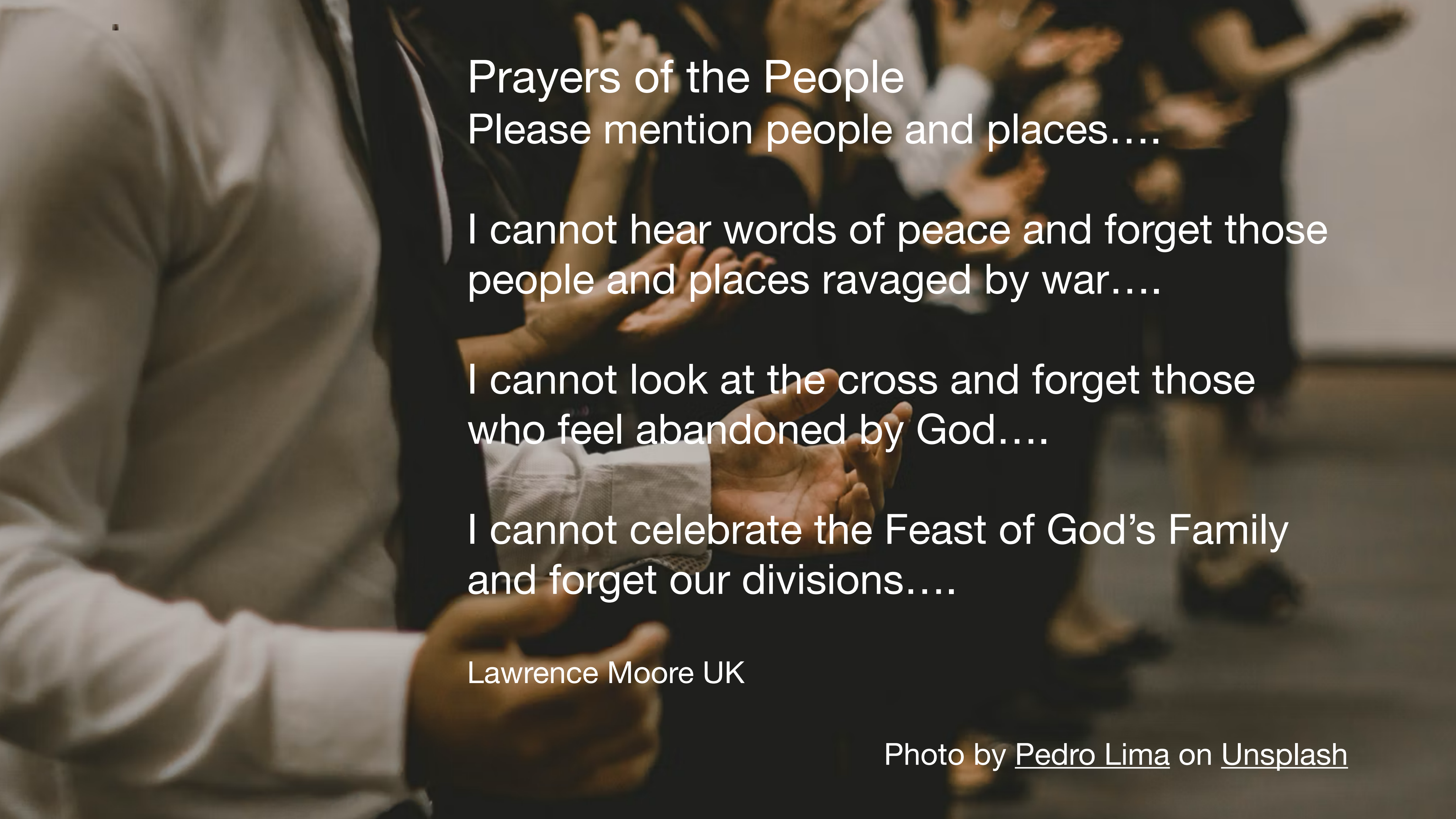
Dynamic is the power

that heals, restores and gives,

connecting at the core with everyone who lives,

transcending culture, colour, race,

compassion builds the house of peace.



Prayers of the People
Please mention people and places....

I cannot hear words of peace and forget those
people and places ravaged by war....

I cannot look at the cross and forget those
who feel abandoned by God....

I cannot celebrate the Feast of God's Family
and forget our divisions....

Lawrence Moore UK

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Sign of Peace

Living compassionately is rarely convenient and often downright challenging. It requires a willingness to pay the price for being aware of suffering and doing what is possible to diminish it.

Rupp, Joyce. Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life (p. 3). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Let us join together in the spirit of compassion and give one another a sign of peace.

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Thanksgiving Prayer

Eucharist of the Living Christ The Spirit of God be with you

And also with you.

Lift your hearts to God Who lives in us through Christ.

It is right to offer thanks and praise. In the blessed abundance of creation, we gather to celebrate the nourishing gift of life. We gather in the power of the Spirit whose breath inspires the primal waters, calling into being the variety and abundance we see around us. That same Spirit sustains and animates our every endeavour, inviting us to act in wisdom and in truth. In gratitude and joy we embrace our calling and we lift our voices to proclaim as one the ancient song of praise:

Holy Wholly One

Holy Wholly One

Holy Wholly One

All the universe is full of your Glory

All the universe is full of your Love



Photo by [youssef naddam](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Holy Wholly One p.2

Holy Wholly One
Holy Wholly One

Blessed is the One
who comes in your name
Ho-sanna, Hosanna in the highest.

Holy Wholly One
Holy Wholly One



Photo by [youssef naddam](#) on [Unsplash](#)

As a worshipping people, we gather in the power of the Spirit, refreshing wind, purifying fire and living breath for the variety and diversity of life.

As a Christian people we seek to live as Jesus taught us, wise and holy as Spirit-filled people, courageous and prophetic, ever obedient to the Spirit's call.


That same Spirit we now invoke, to liberate in these gifts of bread and wine, the nourishing power of the holy wisdom, of Jesus the Christ.

Gathering the beloved community around the table of nourishing hope, Jesus took the bread, and in grateful remembrance offered the bread to each and to all, uttering these words: Take this all of you; This bread is like my body which is broken and shared for all.

After the meal, Jesus took a cup, poured out in a spirit of solidarity and empowerment. Jesus gave thanks and shared the cup with his friends, saying: Take this, all of you and drink from it; This cup of wine is like my life-blood, the life of an everlasting covenant. In prophetic solidarity, it is poured out for you and for all. Sustain one another in the power of sacred memory.

We gather as a people of cherished memories in a creation infused with divine energy from the dawn of time. And we look forward in hope as the creative Spirit – amid the chaos and confusion of life – continues to liberate fresh possibility and enduring hope. That same Spirit we invoke upon all who are gathered here that our solidarity around the Eucharistic table may awaken in us a yearning for compassion, justice and generosity, so that all peoples can enjoy the gifts of God's abundant nourishment.

We unite our thoughts and prayers with all who yearn for new life, those who are living and enrich our lives with friendship and love; those who have died and continue to sustain us in the cosmic communion of life. In our daily lives may we be blessed with wisdom and courage, with vision and resolve, forever committed.

A photograph of a weathered stone cross standing in a field. The cross is made of rough-hewn stone and has a small wreath-like carving on its horizontal arm. In the background, there are trees and a hillside under a soft, warm light, possibly at sunset or sunrise. The right side of the image is overlaid with a dark blue gradient containing white text.

Nurtured by your Word, nourished by your food;
Called anew to be your people,
we proclaim the Living Christ:

*Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

Prayer from Iona

Alternative to the Prayer Attributed to Jesus

With grateful and humble hearts, we now pray:

*Most Compassionate Life-giver, may we honour and praise you;
may we work with you to establish your new order of justice,
peace and love.*

*Give us what we need for growth, and help us,
through forgiving others, to accept forgiveness.*

*Strengthen us in the time of testing, that we may resist all evil
for all the tenderness, strength and love are yours,
now and forever.*

Amen.

Communion Hymn: We Come to the Hungry Feast

We come to the hungry feast hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied the love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast hungry for a world released
from hungry folk of ev'ry kind, the poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

We come to the hungry feast hungry that the hunger cease,
and knowing, though we eat our fill, the hunger will stay with us;
still we come, we come to the hungry feast



Prayer After Communion

Indwelling Spirit,
we have shared bread and wine,
the symbols of compassion, service and unity.
Encourage us in our work together,
that we may grow in love
as we serve one another.
Amen

Sending Hymn: When Pain of the World Surrounds Us

When pain of the world surrounds us with darkness and despair,
When searching just confounds us with false hopes everywhere,
When lives are starved for meaning and destiny is bare,
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's healing flow through us.

We see with fear and trembling our aching world in need
Confessing to each other our wastefulness and greed.
May we with steadfast caring the hungry children feed.
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's healing flow through us.

Sending Hymn: When Pain of the World Surrounds Us

The church is a holy vessel the living waters fill,
To nourish all the people, God's purpose to fulfill.
May we with humble courage be open to God's will.
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's healing flow through us.

We praise you for our journey and your abundant grace,
Your saving word that guided a struggling human race.
O God, with all creation, your future we embrace.
We are called to follow Jesus and let God's healing flow through us.

Blessing and Dismissal

Send us forth with joy and confidence
in Your presence.

Lift up our eyes to see the needs
of all your people,
Fill our hearts with compassion,
our minds with determination
and our hearts with Your Loving Spirit.
Bless us to be a blessing in Your name.
Amen

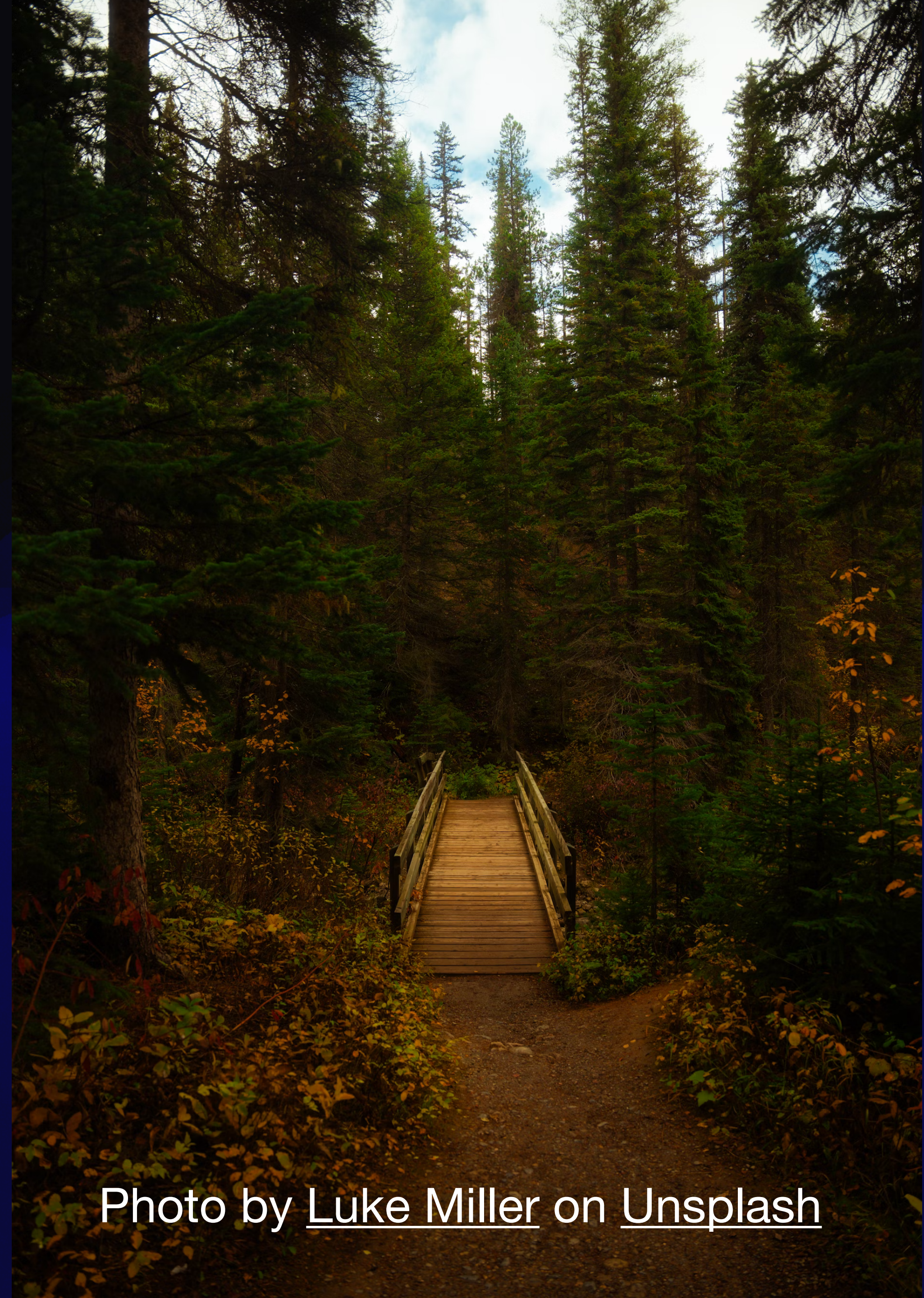


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Announcements.



Photo by [Jonny Gios](#) on [Unsplash](#)