



*A Little Book of Welcome*

*Fall 2016*

*Brought to you by Sacred Space 2016*

*All images in this booklet were created by artist Davia Campbell,  
2nd-year MATC.*

**Mount Rainier** written by Stephanie M. Johnson, 2nd-year MDiv

**Redwoods** written by Luke Winslow, 2nd-year MATC

**Symbiosis** written by Stephanie M. Johnson

**Givens** written by Luke Winslow

**Spider Season** written by Elsy Thayil-Blanchard, 2nd-year MDiv

**Nettles and Ferns** written by Luke Winslow

**Whale Songs** written by Stephanie M. Johnson

**Grey** written by Luke Winslow

*Sacred Space seeks to create and enter space to rest, wrestle,  
and play in relationship with God, ourselves, and each other.*

**Sacred Space**  
2016-2017

<b>September</b>	Fall Vespers
<b>October</b>	Ordinary Time Open Space Art On Our Walls
<b>November</b>	Thanksgiving Vespers
<b>December</b>	Christmas Party
<b>January</b>	Epiphany Open Space
<b>February</b>	Art On Our Walls
<b>March</b>	Lent Vespers
<b>April</b>	
<b>May</b>	
<b>June</b>	Pentecost Open Space

Dearest Seattle School Community,

Beginnings are wild, full to the brim with euphoric vibrancy, fraught with precarious possibility. To venture down the path of a new beginning is to step onto soil that is unknown and yet exploding with life in all of its infinite forms. This fertile ground that we tread upon, this dirt that swallows the soles of our shaky feet, grafts us into a family, a communion with enchantment, wonder, and each other. While we head into uncharted landscapes, we do so with a promise that we are not alone.

As we begin to take our first steps into this new school year, we want to simply say, welcome. Welcome to a new year of discovery, longing, sorrow, and joy. Welcome vulnerability, beauty, and grief. To turn the corner and step into a new year is to risk much and yet to walk such a path is to become acquainted with the God who resides in frailty, the God who lingers in the haunted chambers within us. You are not alone.

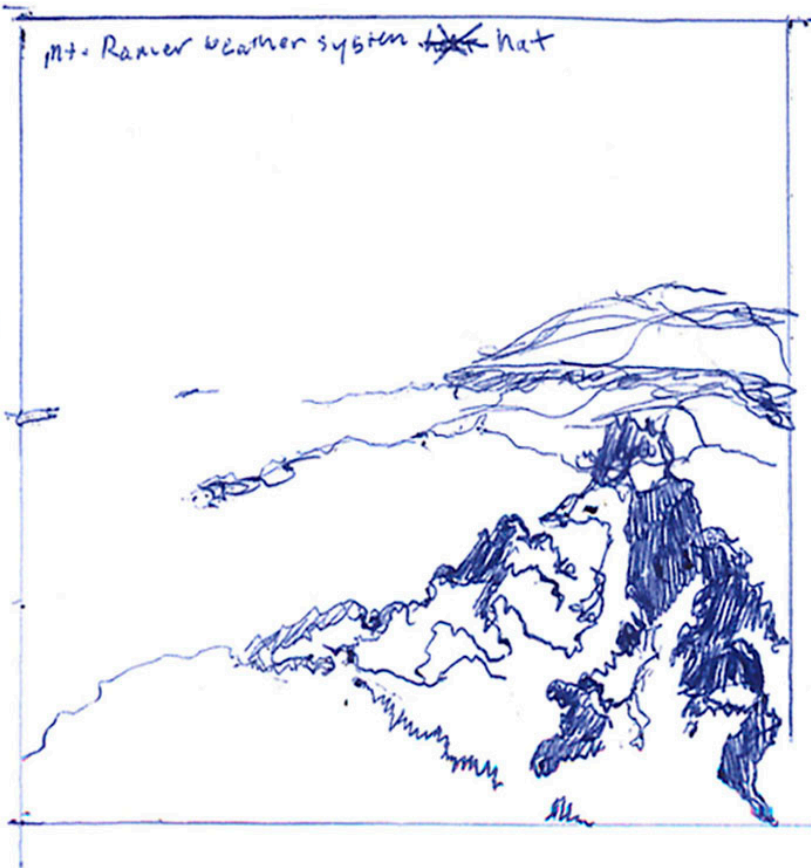
We hope that this book is a reminder of the open vistas before you, of a new world and a new creation that is bursting forth in the midst of blessing and heartache. We invite you to linger in these words and images. Think of them as threads tethering your very body to the Divine that is at work in the spacious terrains we will wander together. As we become deeply rooted together in this work, as we learn to make space for others, and come to be surprised by the love of God, may we see and hear anew. May we know the world that awaits us.

Love,  
Sacred Space

In out of the way places of the heart  
Where your thoughts never think to wander  
This beginning has been quietly forming  
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.  
For a long time it has watched your desire  
Feeling the emptiness grow inside you  
Noticing how you willed yourself on  
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.  
It watched you play with the seduction of  
safety  
And the grey promises that sameness  
whispered  
Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent  
Wondered would you always live like this.  
Then the delight, when your courage  
kindled,  
And out you stepped onto new ground,  
Your eyes young again with energy and  
dream  
A path of plenitude opening before you.  
Though your destination is not clear  
You can trust the promise of this opening;  
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning  
That is one with your life's desire.  
Awaken your spirit to adventure  
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk  
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm  
For your soul senses the world that awaits  
you.

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**John O'Donahue**  
For A New Beginning



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Mount Rainier

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Mount Rainier

That massive mountain floating in the southern sky? He is half a million years old. For now, he rests between eruptions, strong enough to bury towns beneath ash and meltwater. He stands three miles tall. On a clear day, you can see his summit a hundred miles away. Mount Rainier is ancient, not dormant. His glaciers are always in motion, surging centimeter by centimeter since the Pleistocene. His slopes are home to rainforest and arctic climates alike. August adorns him with wildflowers, and every month, new snow. His soil holds trees that first took root a millennium ago. He is big enough to beget his own weather system. Warm drafts rise from the east and west and cool at his crest. There, cumulonimbus clouds form. These clouds are unstable, a birthplace of lightning and thunder. Immovable, and changeable. Every year, he bears witness to meteor showers, sunrises, the birth of fawns; avalanches, hurricane-strength winds and two million human visitors.

come closer.  
come into this. come closer.  
you are quite the beauty. if no one has ever told you that  
before know that now.  
you are quite the beauty. there is joy in how your mouth  
dances with your teeth.  
your mouth is a sign of how sacred your life truly is. come  
into this.

true of heart come into this. you are true of heart.  
come closer. come closer.  
know that whatever God prays to He asked it to help Him  
make something of worth.  
He woke from His dreams scraped the soil from the spaces  
inside Himself made you and was happy.  
you make the Lord happy.  
come into this.  
come closer.

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**Anis Mojgani**  
*From "Closer"*

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## Symbiosis



From the heights of their branches, conifers and hardwoods turn sunlight into sugar, and send it down beneath the forest floor. There, in every handful of soil, lie miles of coiled fungi. They are white and hollow wisps, like hair with a sweet tooth.

Good love feeds both lovers, and a better love feeds the neighbors too. The roots soften for the tendrils to wrap themselves into place. Here the fungi mine for minerals that the tree spines need to stand strong and tall. Then, when the birch struggles, the fir offers its nutrients through a buried web.

I heard fungi are more closely related to animals than plants. The scientist said, "The whole forest has an intelligence beyond just one species...something like a nervous system." Since neither the fungi nor the tree are more valuable, since each is only different, in need and in purpose, they grow together.

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Old Growth

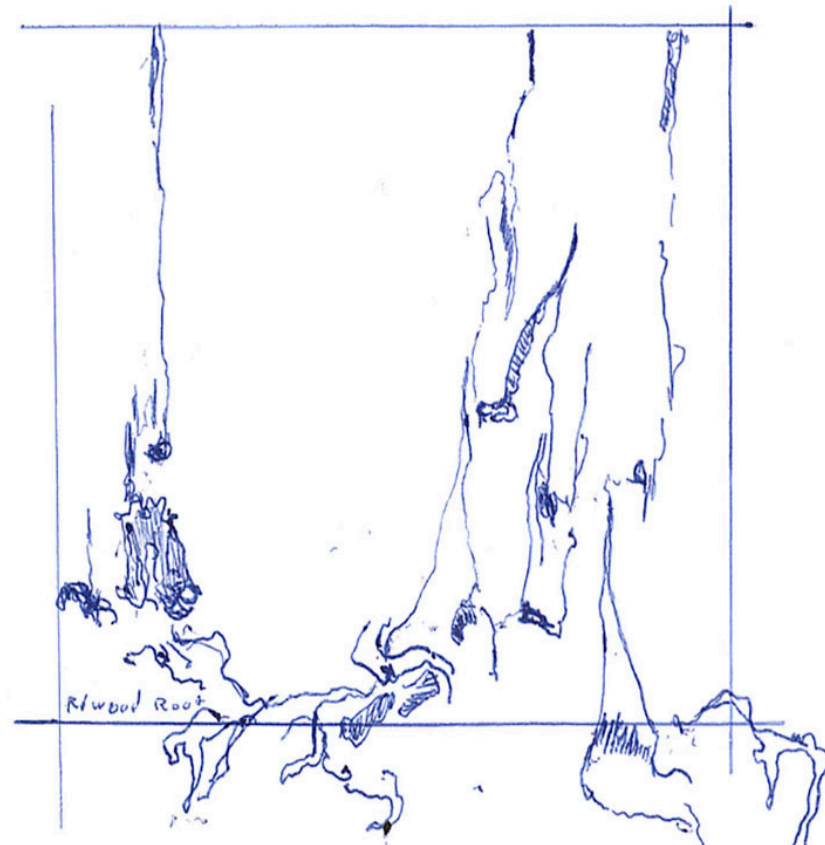
be softer with you.  
you are a breathing thing.

a memory to someone.  
a home to life.

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**Nayirrah Waheed**





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## Redwoods

The mature redwood tree needs  
Hundreds of gallons of water per day  
This is impossible, unless  
It spreads its roots up to 80 feet laterally  
Intertwining and entangling with other redwoods  
Gathering and sharing nutrients from all around  
Supporting and holding up its siblings  
Against storms and winds  
So that together  
No tree stands alone

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Redwood Root

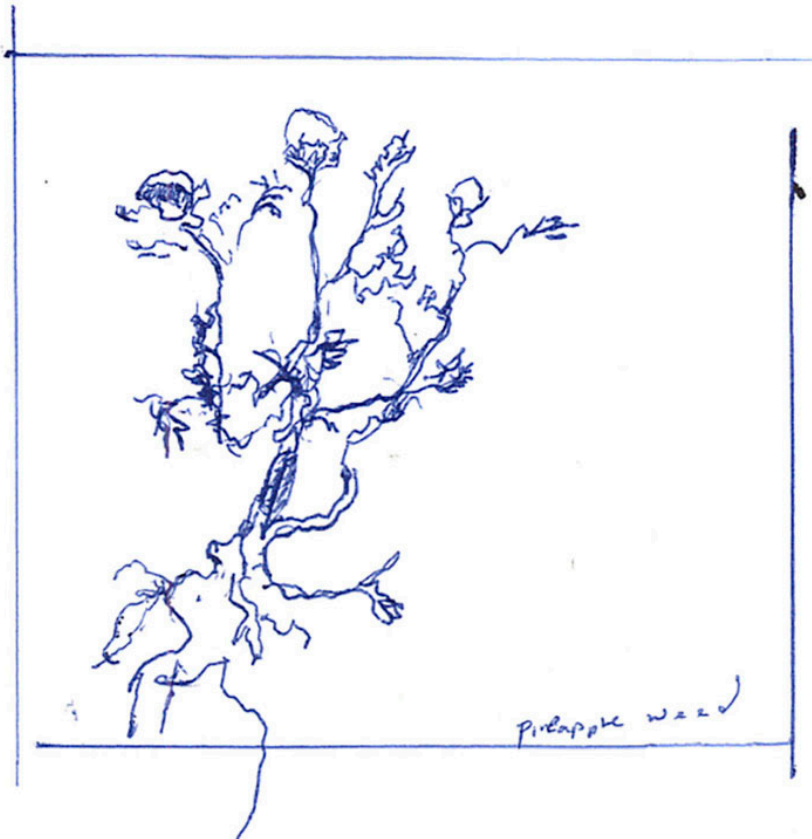
Through everyday actions on everyday issues, we are creating living economies, living democracies, and living cultures. Diversity, alliances, cooperation, and persistence are our strengths. Service, support, and solidarity are our means. Justice, human freedom, dignity,

and ecological survival are our ends. We are reclaiming a world precariously on the edge. We take action not with arrogance and certainty, but with humility and uncertainty. It is our giving that counts--not our success. But in selfless giving, we have victories. And through everyday actions, we reweave the web of life.

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**Vandana Shiva**

*Earth Democracy: Justice,  
Sustainability and Peace*



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Pineapple Weed

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Givens

There are places in this world  
Where you need not labor to earn sustenance  
You are invited to take and eat  
The world need not be a world of scarcity  
There is abundance  
That requires nothing of you  
But to enjoy and preserve  
Wild edible plants and clean watersheds  
May our bodies find rest  
In what has already been given us

Geese appear high over us,  
pass, and the sky closes.  
Abandon, as in love or sleep, holds  
them to their way,  
clear in the ancient faith:

what we need is here.  
And we pray, not  
for new earth or heaven, but to be  
quiet in heart, and in eye, clear.  
What we need is here.

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**Wendell Berry**  
*What We Need is Here*

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## Whale Songs

The songs whales sing together in Puget Sound are given from generation to generation, and creature to creature.

They vocalize uniquely and complexly, enough to liken to syntax and grammar.

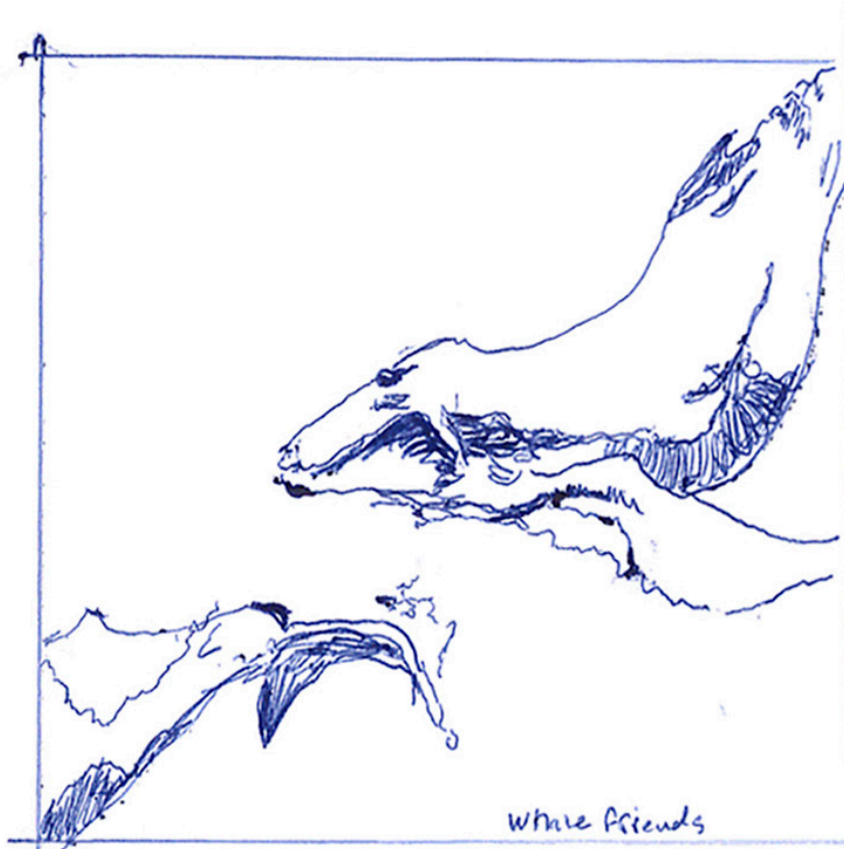
We could call them "persons":  
not humanlike, but personal;

each distinct carriers of self-sense over time. Feelers, relators, whose signifiers are socially learned and particular to their pod.

With sounds, they see each other's insides:  
the pregnant, the hungry, the sick.

Noise pollution drowns out their hearing and disrupts their search for food and direction.

"It's only due to our lack of knowledge," he said,  
"that humans remain this exclusive species."



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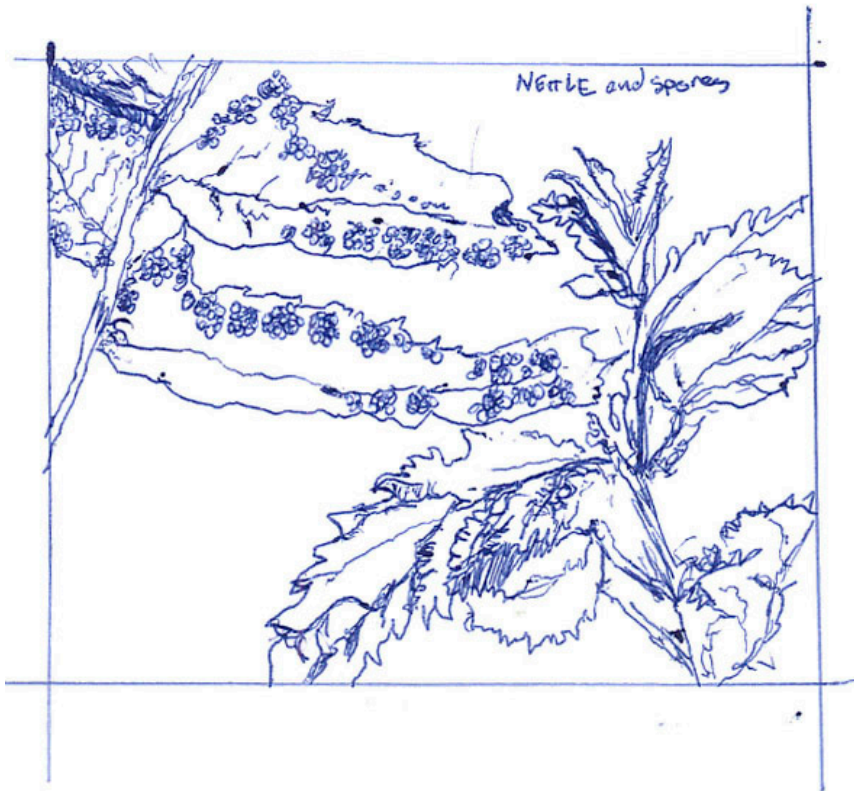
Whale Friends

'Ruach creates space. It sets in motion. It leads out of narrow places into wide vistas, thus conferring life.' To experience the ruach is to experience what is divine, not

only as a person, and not merely as a force, but also as space--the space of freedom in which the living being can unfold.

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**Jurgen Moltmann**  
*From The Spirit of Life:  
A Universal Affirmation*



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Nettles and Ferns

Urtica dioica—stinging nettle  
Don't touch this with your skin  
Tiny needle hairs that will hurt for minutes

But

Polystichum munitum—sword fern  
Find one if you get stung  
Tiny brown spores under the leaves  
That will relieve the stinging pain  
You find in this world  
There are things which hurt and things  
which heal

Know how to tell one from the other  
So that you may move through this space  
Able to carry both

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Nettles and Spores

Going down I saw the flower

that I hadn't seen going up.

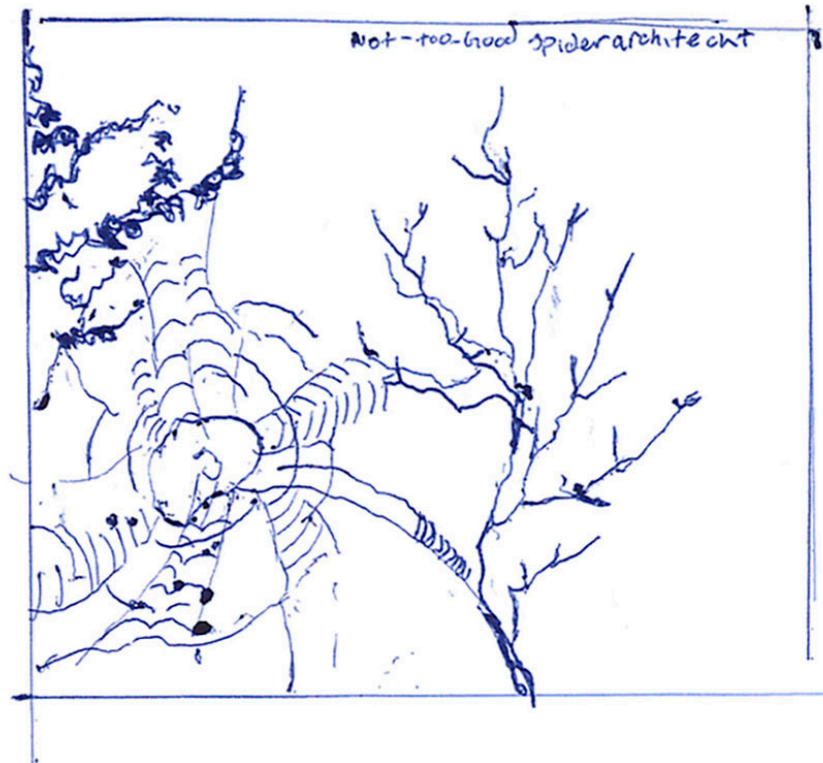
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**Ko Un**  
*From "Flowers of a  
Moment"*



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## Spider Season



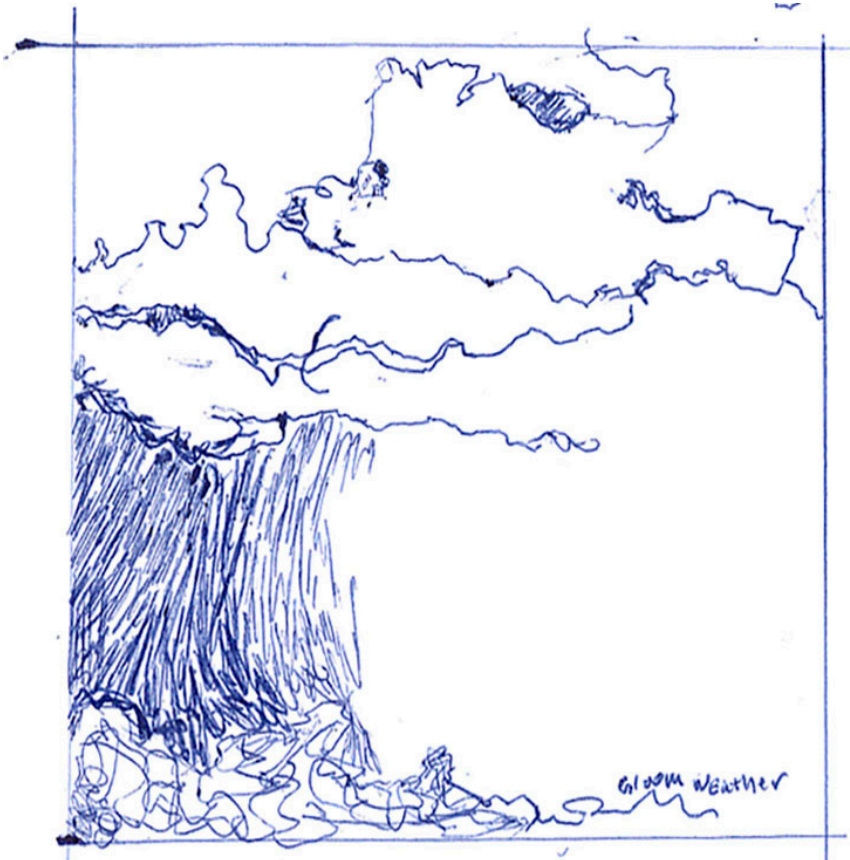
The European Cross Spider  
knows in her body  
the cost of weaving a home.  
Every morning  
empty-bellied  
she traverses her translucent orb  
to find a wriggling life in the center.  
Her bite is swift.  
With reverence  
she wraps the body in a silken casket  
and waits until she is ready  
to consume all that she has killed.  
It is a kind of grace  
to fill the spaciousness of belly  
with what was once in pain  
only to find the sweet distention of life.  
In the evening, drunk from the work of newness,  
this eight-legged wonder  
consumes the home she has outgrown  
and rebuilds.

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Spider

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.  
A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.  
Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house

empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.  
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.  
Be grateful for whatever comes.  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.



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Grey

The sun is not here to stay  
We live in the shadow of two mountain ranges  
Over which rain and fog cast down their nourishment  
for the earth  
But for most of the year, this means grey and gloom  
Perhaps a bit much for our liking  
So we stay inside  
Made to be around people or on our own  
Maybe a bit much for our liking  
And we know that the rain is good for this thirsty  
earth  
We learn to live with it  
That we may enjoy the beauty it brings  
Around us, and, hopefully, amidst and within us

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Grey Weather

“For you will go out with joy and be led forth with peace;  
the mountains and the hills will break forth

into shouts of joy before you,  
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.”

The Seattle School  
OF THEOLOGY & PSYCHOLOGY