



This photograph is of Edith Lake in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness outside Phillipburg, Montana. That wilderness, and this lake in particular, have become Holy Ground for a group of us at University Congregational, United Church of Christ in Missoula, Mt. Each mid-July (excepting one when snow prevented us!) we have backpacked into "Lady Edith" as part of a "Contemplative Backpack" whereby we have shared in the wondrous intersection of contemplative spiritual practice along with the tonic of wilderness. This time, and this place, has become part of who we are and our encounter with Spirit and wild earth is a great and sustaining gift to share in community. The 'mantra' we have carried with us in recent years is "The wilderness will lead you to your heart where I will speak." (a saying paraphrasing Hosea 2:14) and we have been deeply spoken to in this pristine and precious wilderness. The preservation of wilderness is a high calling we are glad to receive and to extend onto others...

Peter Shober, Senior Pastor, University UCC, Missoula.