



Landscapes of the Soul

Session 1: Introduction and Deserts - The Place of Breakthrough

PARTICIPANT PAGE #1

Paths to Explore

1. What did you hear in the Audio Recording that stood out for you?
2. In what ways have you experienced land as “fifth gospel” revealing something of Jesus, God or the Spirit to you? How do you read the “Book of Nature?”
3. What “thin places” have you visited - faraway or in your own backyard? What makes a “thin place?”
4. What compels a desert journey? (In your own life or in the life of a faith community.)
5. Janice says: “The desert is not a dry and barren landscape but a thin place of breakthrough.” What do you think about this? Are there gifts the desert offered to you? To your faith community?
6. Read: **Deuteronomy 32:10-14**. Invite the participants to notice what they feel as they listen to the images. As you reflect on a desert time in your life, what sustained you and gave you hope? Often we only notice what sustained us after we pass through the desert and are safe on the other side. In the midst of a desert time, what practices help you keep on keeping on?

Spiritual Practice: The Practice of Silence

Group Practice:

“In times of too few choices and times of too many choices, we are called to wait, to look, to listen, and in this stillness comes a way.” (Janice MacLean) The desert invites quiet waiting. As a group, take five minutes (more or less!) to be in silence. You might want to enter into silence by inviting people to get comfortable in their chair, close their eyes if that is comfortable, and pay attention to their breath. Say: There is nothing you need to do. This is a time to rest and listen. [TIME OF SILENCE] At the end of the silence you might wish to consider: What gifts or struggles come in the silence?

Take it Outside: Go outside and practice attending to silence in the landscape around you. What do you hear as you are quiet? What do you notice about how you listen?