



TOUCH POINT

Thank you – Touchpoint for August 30, 2023

Grace and Peace to you from the mystery in whom we live and move, and have our being.

This Wednesday marks the end of my time as Faith Mentor at Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center. It has been almost 7 years since Richard Andersen invited me to come to the Center and begin a Wednesday afternoon contemplative service. It has been an incredible time of growth and deepening of my faith life. I have had the privilege of being able to spend time immersed in scripture, prayer, and reading some of the great theological minds of our era. It is a gift so few people get an opportunity to experience. I have had the honor of working for Richard Andersen and Eric Simonson, two bosses who never acted like bosses, and who were more friends and supporters than anything else. I have met many amazing people who have come through this place. The Wednesday Respite groups, both those on Zoom and those in person, have been a blessing to me and have opened my eyes to new ways of experiencing and describing my faith journey. I have been so blessed by this place and the people here. Words cannot convey the impact all of you and this place have had on my life.

I will deeply miss you all.

Spirit in the Desert is a unique place. It is a place open to all who seek to love their neighbor as themselves. It is a place where hospitality is practiced, and is an integral part for all who come here for healing, renewal, and transformation. I have seen lives changed in this place... Not just through the programs that are offered, but also through the incredibly dedicated staff... Who understand themselves and their gifts as essential to the ministry of this place.

In a world where denominational identity is waning. Where church attendance is falling. And where religious systems are being questioned... Spirit in the Desert is a place where people can come and explore their spiritual journey, quest, and path in ways that are unique to their own experience... Surrounded by a gracious and welcoming staff and community.

Henry Rojas is the perfect person to step in to the role of Spiritual Director here. His extensive experience, his passion for the gospel, and his compassion for people is a combination that is unmatched in people I have known. He has been a faith mentor to me these past 7 years. I am grateful for his friendship and excited about the leadership he will bring to this place. Spirit in the Desert is about to be blessed in ways it never has been before.

Spirit in the Desert is a place to unplug from the hecticness of the world, and plug into the creator and source of the world. It is a place to ground oneself in the Ground of Being, and be re-membered to the ONE who lives in us and in whom we live and move and have our being.

It is a place where one can become centered, all the while rediscovering one's connectedness to all.

Thank you Spirit in the Desert, for helping me experience the divine Mystery in the depths of my being, as well as seeing the Mystery's presence in the natural world and those around me.

God's peace,

Jim

Opening Songs

Be Still

(The London Fox Taize Choir, Remember Me)

Be Still, know that I am God

Bible Passage

(A passage takes us from one place to another)

Sharing Our Touchpoints from the Last Few Years

(Where God's story touches our life story)

The Meal

Lord's Prayer

(Robert Stone, Salisbury Cathedral Boys Choristers, Salisbury Cathedral Lay Vicars, David Halls)

Benediction

God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again

(Discovery Singers)

God be with you till we meet again;

By his counsels guide, uphold you;

With his sheep securely fold you.

God be with you till we meet again. Amen