



WELCOME LETTER

God's Dwelling Place: A Desert Interfaith Pilgrimage

Instructors: Wayne and Carol Mell

Start Date: 6/23/19

End Date: 6/29/19

Education & Retreat Center

Check-in begins at 3:00 pm at the Welcome Center on 6/23/19.

Opening Schedule:

- 4:45 Meet in front of Welcome Center for van ride up the Mesa
- 5:00 Gathering on the Mesa for Overview of G. R. Setting
- 5:30 - 6:30 Dinner in Dining Hall
- 7:00 Gather at Casa del Sol for opening ritual and introduction to Ohkay Owingeh Feast Day
- 8:30 Night Prayer

Dear Friends,

We want to welcome you to this revised version of the pilgrimage course originally titled "Guests in God's House." The original leadership team was forced to withdraw for medical reasons, and we will certainly want to hold them in prayer during our time together. Meanwhile, Carol and I have been asked to step in and guide the group through a week that will still be focused on the themes and site visits they originally planned, but with our own modifications and perspectives.

I myself, sometimes in partnership with Carol, have led a number of Ghost Ranch-based retreats and pilgrimages that included interfaith explorations and visits to the places we will experience in our week together. As you will note from our bios, Carol and I have lived and worked extensively among the various cultural groups and places in the Southwest, especially in northern New Mexico, and have a long and loving relationship with Ghost Ranch in general, and Casa del Sol in particular.

A detailed course schedule will be given when you arrive, but I've included the outline of the first evening above, to help you get oriented. Our first site visit, to the Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo Feast Day, begins first thing Monday morning, so we won't have much time together before jumping in feet first. The rest of the week should flow more gently, with several more field trips interspersed with ample free time, group reflection, prayer, and fun (we hope!).

We also want to assure you that we welcome you with whatever religious background or faith commitments you bring, including "none." The prayer liturgies of Casa del Sol, which we will use as a starting point, originate in a

Christian practice steeped in Celtic spirituality. That spirituality is deeply creation-centered and open to non-Christian ways of seeing and being. We will also seek ways to share and incorporate the spiritual gifts and practices you may wish to offer.

What to bring: Water bottle (also available for purchase at the Ranch Trading Post). Sturdy shoes and sun protection. Flashlight. Journal or notebook. Pieces of your own creative writing to share (if desired). Musical instruments. Camera and art supplies, if desired. Above all, mind/heart/spirit open to new encounters with land, people, and the Source from which we come.