

Based on the book "An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor  
Week One Reading - Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2

### Week One Discussion Questions

*"The day of spiritual awakening was the day I saw - and knew I saw  
- all things in God and God in all things."* -Mechtild of Magdeburg

1. *An Altar in the World* begins with a vivid recollection of Taylor's relationship with creation—with her explanation of how she finds "altars" everywhere in her world. Where have you encountered God in the world? Describe the situation, the physical attributes of your sacred place, and explain the emotions, if any, the experience evoked in you?
2. On page 6 Taylor writes, *"The problem is, many of the people in need of saving are in churches, and at least part of what they need saving from is the idea that God sees the world the same way they do. What if the gravel of the parking lot looks as promising to God as the floorboards of a church?"* Do you think God is more present in some places than in other places? If so, what do you think accounts for the difference? How do you relate to this Unity affirmation, "Wherever we are, God is"?
3. "Human beings may separate things into as many piles as we wish - separating spirit from flesh, sacred from secular, church from world. But we should not be surprised when God does not recognize the distinctions we make between the two." (P. 15)  
How do we confine God to a particular space in our lives?
4. "Reverence for creation comes fairly easy for most people. Reverence for other people presents more of a challenge, especially if those people's lives happen to impinge upon our own." (P. 27) How do you define "reverence"? How do you maintain a sense of reverence toward all creation (including all people)?
5. On Sunday, October 2nd, Rev. Darlene discussed the concept of "Three Faces of God".  
*"In our quest to define and know God, we have struggled to reconcile all the ways in which we can encounter, experience and express God."* Discuss how you relate to each "face" of God.  
God Beyond us - Infinite. We reflect About God. Is your God big enough?  
God Beside - Intimate. We relate To God. Is your God the sacred beloved?  
God Being us - I AM. We identify As God. Do you see yourself as being God / God-Being?

## **Notes:**

### **Week One Practices**

- How will you implement a daily practice to "see and reverence God in all things"?
- Please take one day this week to reflect and see God as the Infinite. Journal your observations.
- Please take one day this week to reflect and see God as the Intimate (Beloved, Presence and Source of comfort.) Journal your observations.
- Please take one day this week to reflect and see God as you - the Indwelling "I AM". Journal your observations.

Reading for week 2 - Chapters 3 and 4

"An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor