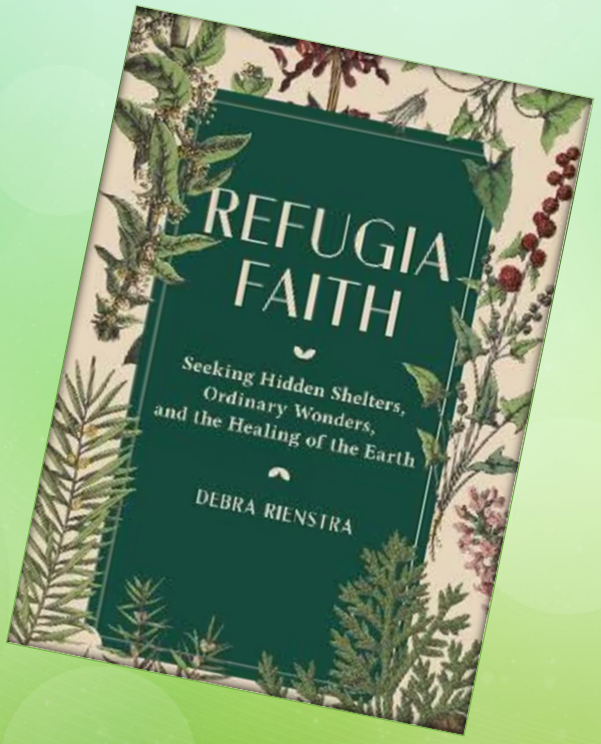
My Refuge and Strength



To Be Co-Creators

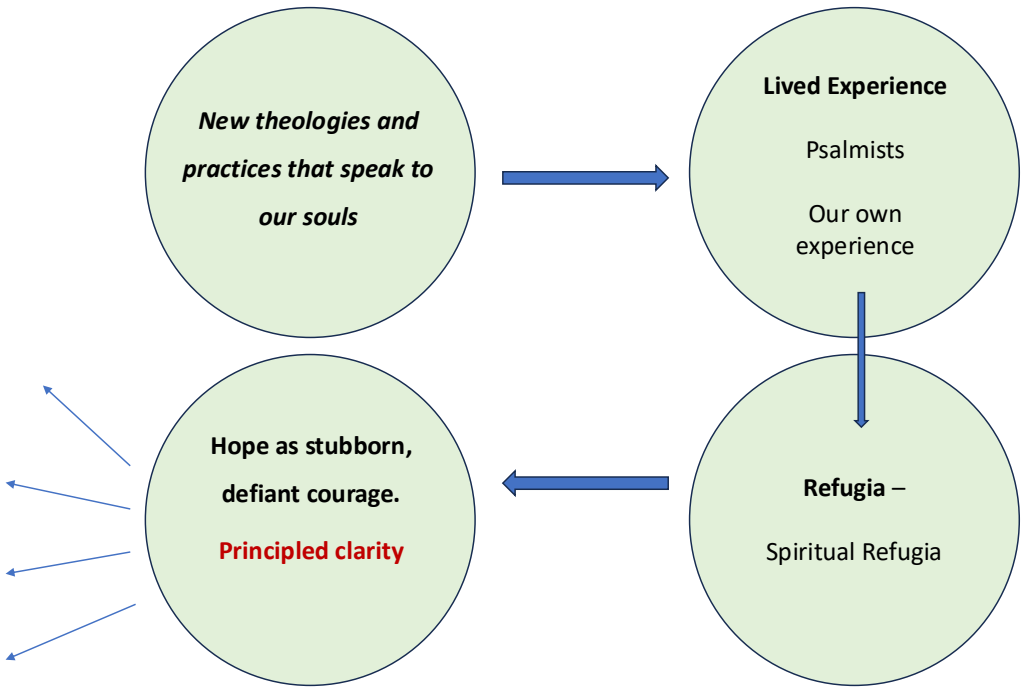
The study of sacred teachings—oral and written—binds religious traditions and their adherents into a diversified and unified whole. For the contemporary interspiritual or nontraditional seeker, our inheritance is both a challenge and a gift. Truly, there has been no other period in history where humanity has had access to the collective storehouse of wisdom. At the same time, these riches ask us to be co-creators, drawing upon an inner depth to birth new theologies and practices that speak to our souls.

Beverly Lanzetta, A New Silence: Spiritual Practices and Formation for the Monk Within, p.101.

The need to restart is the foundation for building another experience that is different from the one we are currently stuck in.

I am convinced that the best path to the conceptual is to wander through the specifics of human lived experience.

Lived Refuge: Gratitude, Resentment, Resilience – Vinh Nguyen, Preface p.XViii



God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1

“But then I will win her back once again.
I will lead her into the desert
and speak tenderly to her there.
Hosea 2:14

The Israelite exile in Babylonia

Massada escape from the romans

Desert Fathers and Mothers refuge in Egypt and Syria

Jesus 40 days in Judaen Hills

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1

10 “Be still and know that I am God.
I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the earth!”
11 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.
Psalm 46:10-11

Psalms has 45 references to "refuge".

RSV Examples

Blessed are all who take **refuge** in him. (Ps.5:11)

O Lord my God, in thee do I take **refuge.** (Ps.7:1)

In the Lord I take **refuge** (Ps.11:1)

The Lord is his **refuge**. (Ps.14:6)

Preserve me, O God, for in thee I take **refuge**. (Ps.16:1)

Wondrously show thy steadfast love, to those who seek **refuge** (Ps.17:7)

God, my rock, in whom I take **refuge**, (Ps.18:2)

A shield for all those who take **refuge** in him. (Ps.18:30)

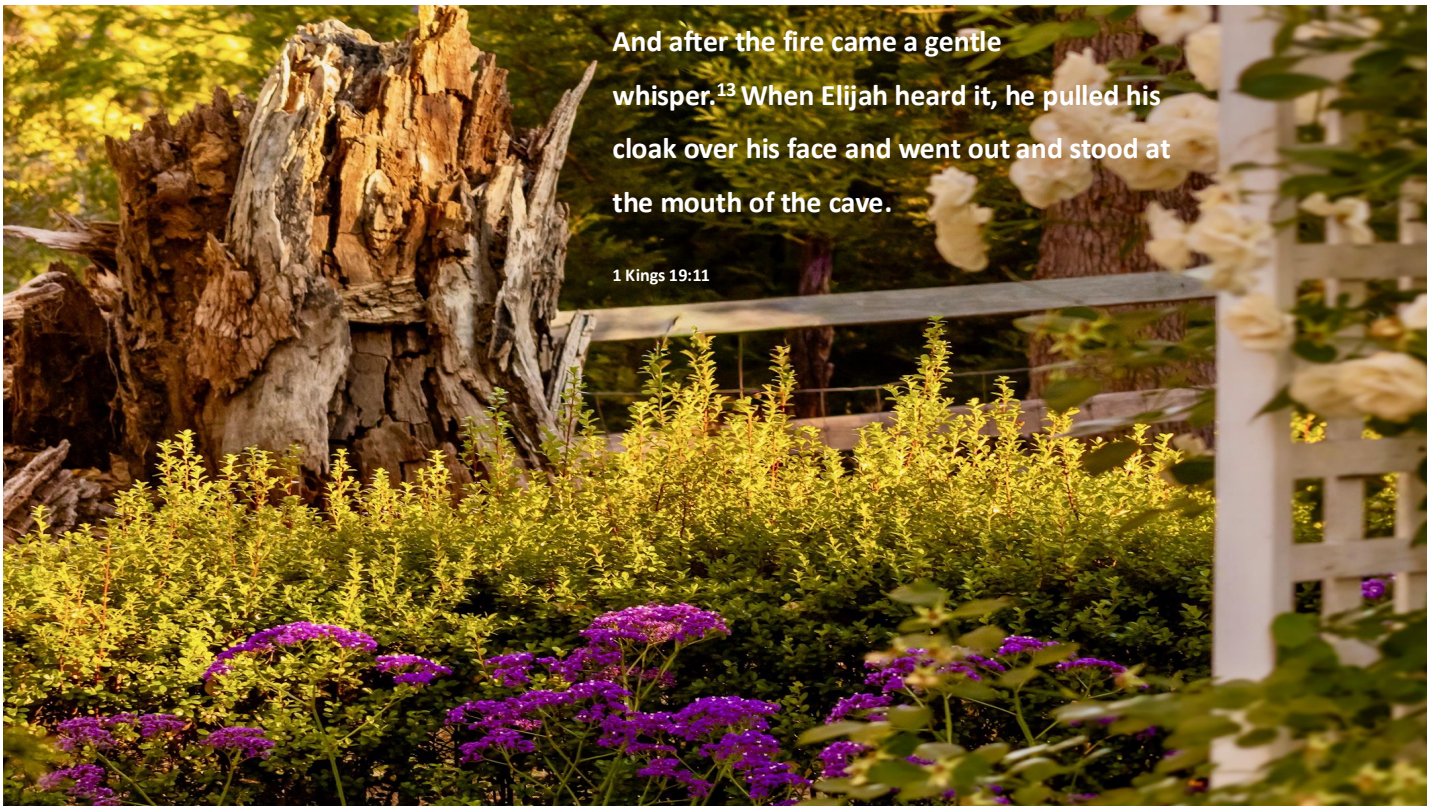
Oh guard my life, and deliver me; let me not be put to shame, for I take **refuge** in thee. (Ps.25:20)

He is the saving **refuge** of his anointed. (Pd.28:8)

In thee, O Lord, do I seek **refuge** (Ps.31:1)

Be thou a rock of **refuge** for me, a strong fortress to save me! (Ps.31:2)

thou art my **refuge**. (Ps.31:4)



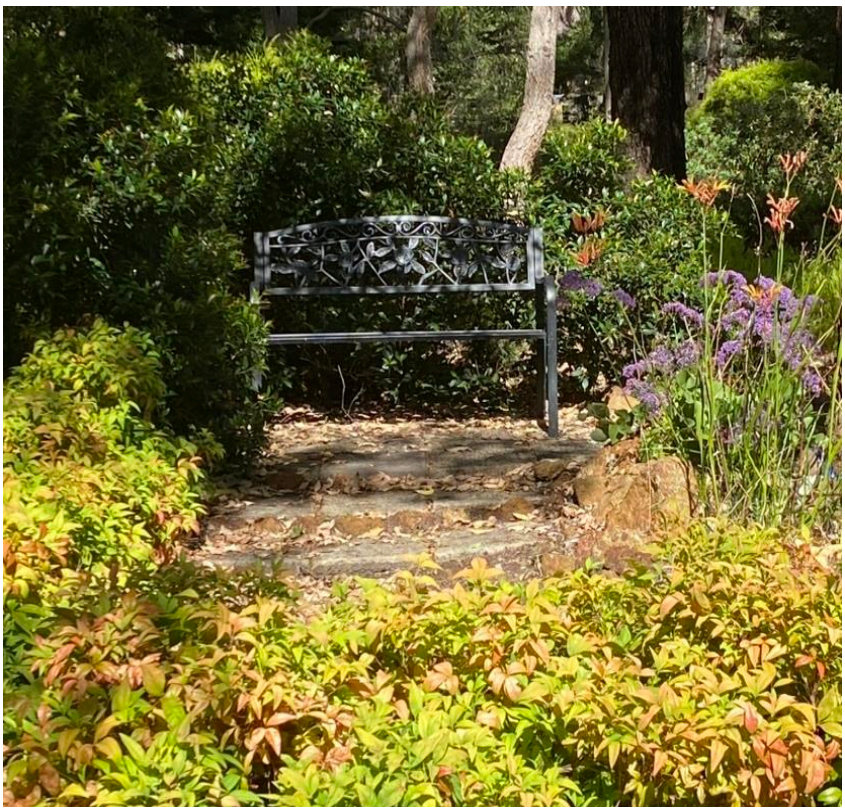
refugia - an area of relatively unaltered climate that is inhabited by plants and animals during a period of continental climatic change and remains as a centre of relict forms from which a new dispersion and speciation may take place after climatic readjustment

(Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

refugia - an area of relatively unaltered climate that is inhabited by plants and animals during a period of continental climatic change and remains as a centre of relict forms from which a new dispersion and speciation may take place after climatic readjustment

(Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

relict : a thing which has survived from an earlier period or in a primitive form.



"A refugia *faith,* similarly, regards our dire conditions honestly . . . longing gives us the courage to face the difficult preparations necessary for a renewed world, however painful and disorienting they may be. . .
and may require us to change our thinking and habits in ways that feel disruptive."

Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.223

Is there HOPE?

Are we hiding Apathy and Fear behind Hope?

Lazy hope / Lazy cynicism?

Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.223

"Here's the paradox of hope: that as we move beyond empty optimism and choose to live the lives we believe in, hope becomes transformed into something else entirely. It becomes stubborn, defiant courage.

It becomes principled clarity."

Kathleen Dean Moore, *Great Tide Rising,* p.114

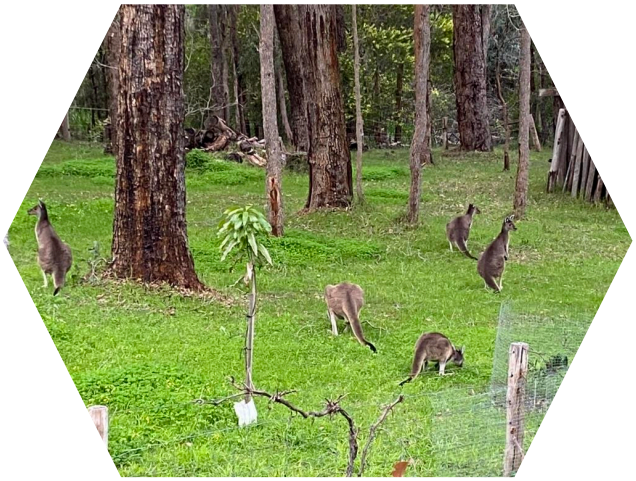
"Here's the paradox of hope: that as we move beyond empty optimism and choose to live the lives we believe in, hope becomes transformed into something else entirely. It becomes stubborn, defiant courage.

It becomes principled clarity."

Kathleen Dean Moore, *Great Tide Rising,* p.114

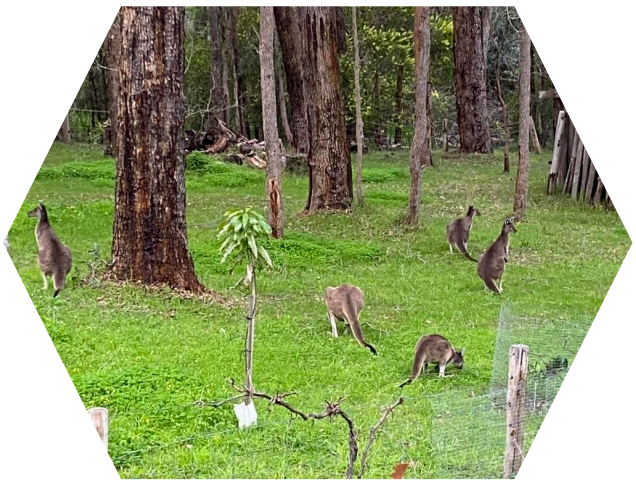
“We will need plenty of spiritual refugia as people adjust to a changing world. For some, refugia reorientation means a steep learning curve and new habits of attentiveness and involvement. It requires putting indifference aside and carrying a piece of this age’s grief, shouldering my share of the challenge and finding a new kind of courage for an unknown future.”

Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.219-220



“We will need plenty of spiritual refugia as people adjust to a changing world. For some, refugia reorientation means a steep learning curve and new habits of attentiveness and involvement. It requires putting indifference aside and carrying a piece of this age’s grief, shouldering my share of the challenge and finding a new kind of courage for an unknown future.”

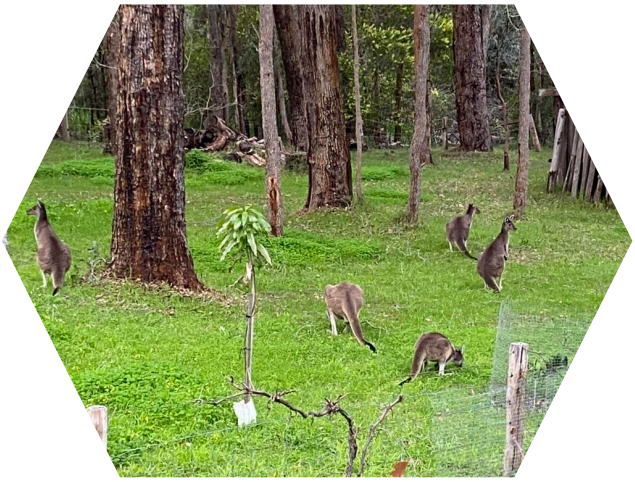
Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.219-220



"How can Christians commit to becoming people offering spiritual refugia?
Rather that walling ourselves off in enclaves of superior holiness, we would offer a variety of hospitable spaces for people on their pilgrim way.

Rather than seeking cultural dominance , we would model spaces that seek to restore human relationships with each other and the whole community of Creation, trusting that God loves to work from the hidden and humble."

Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.219-220



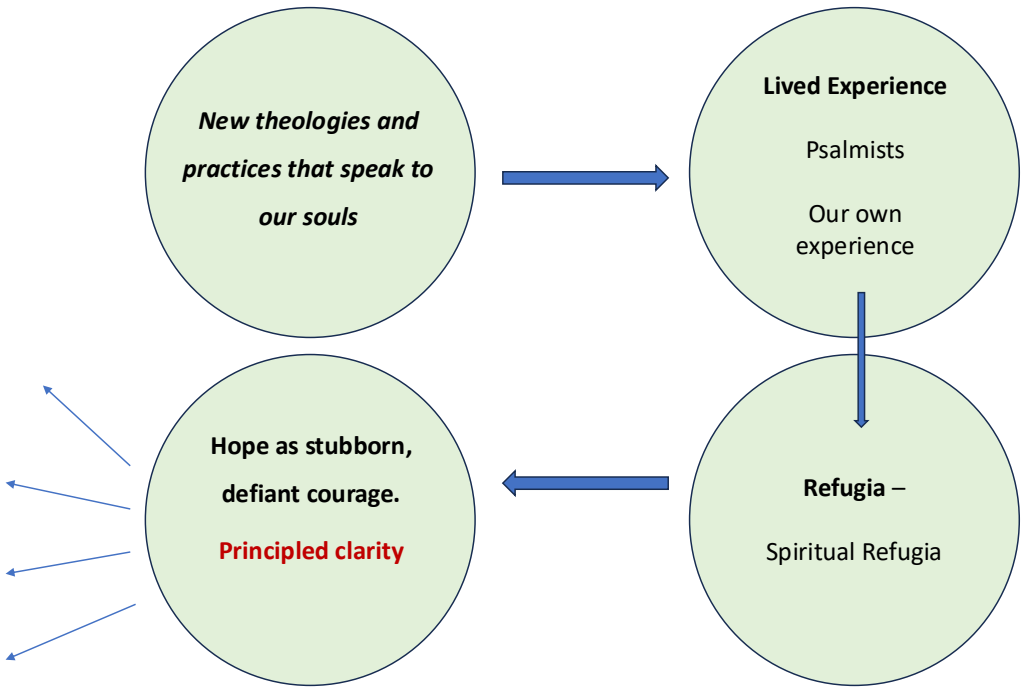
"A refugia *faith,* similarly, regards our dire conditions honestly . . . longing gives us the courage to face the difficult preparations necessary for a renewed world, however painful and disorienting they may be. . .
and may require us to change our thinking and habits in ways that feel disruptive."

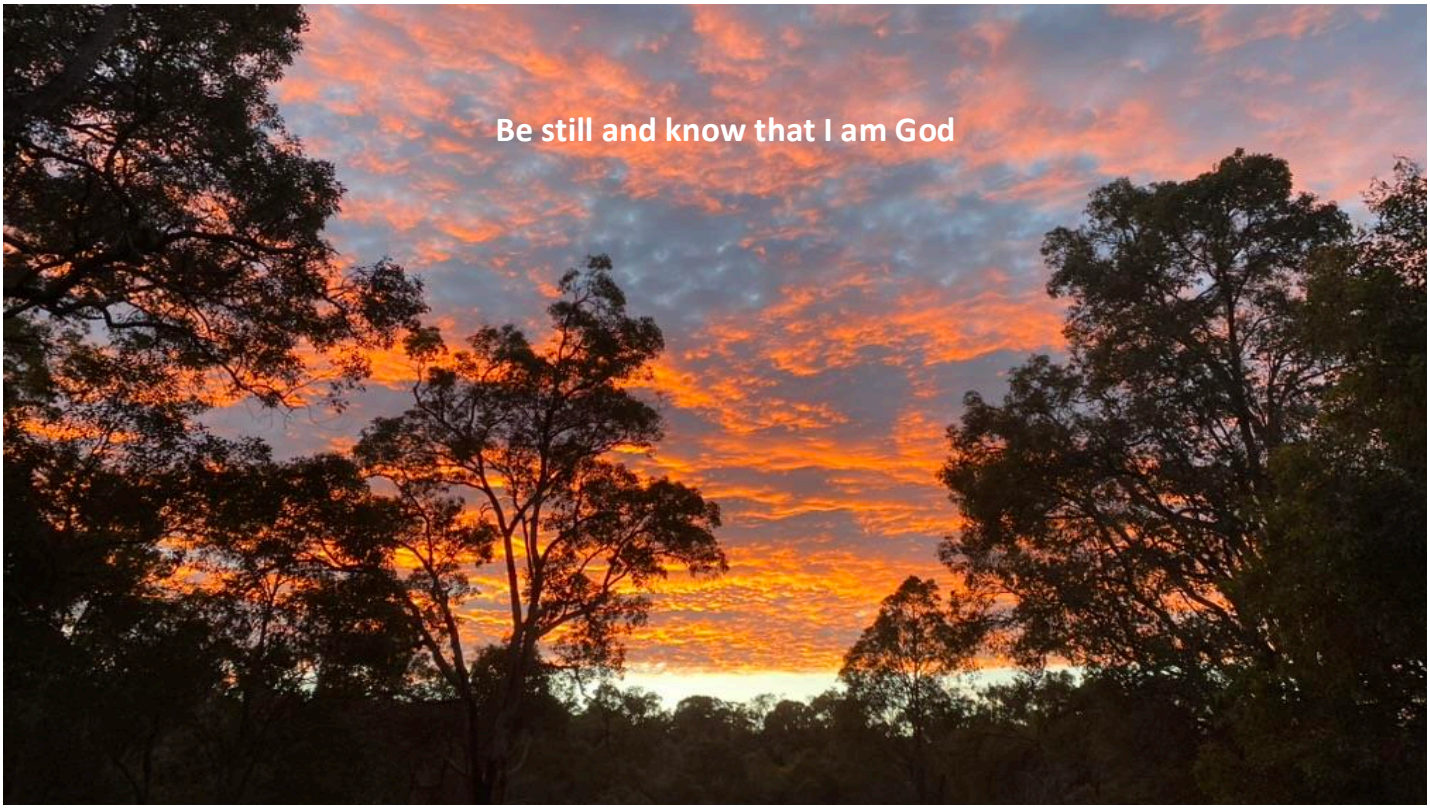
Debra Rienstra, *Refugia Faith,* p.223

My spiritual refuge?

- **Stay grounded in my own lived experience of faith**
- **Be courageous in the face of disruption or opposition**
- **Accept disorientation as a way to the new**
- **Be determined to *live out of* my inner refuge of faith – going courageously into the fractured world in love and compassion for all**

Be still and know that I am God.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.
Psalm 46:10-11


New theologies and practices that speak to our souls
Lived Experience
Psalmists
Our own experience
Refugia –
Spiritual Refugia
Hope as stubborn, defiant courage.
Principled clarity


Be still and know that I am God