



*I heard a bird
sing in the dark
of December*

- Oliver Herford



Gifts of Hope: An Advent Meditative Arts Retreat

December 9-10, 2022 (optional extension to December 11)

Come sit by the hearth at the Retreat House, a sacred space where we can encourage each other in this Advent season as we ponder, nurture, and create gifts of hope.

Rolling Ridge comprises 1600 acres of protected land nestled between the Appalachian Trail and the Shenandoah River. In winter, the animals of the woods hunker down, conserving energy and sustaining themselves on stored resources. The ground seems cold and hard and yet underneath the soil seeds lay waiting to emerge. We, too, need to store up resources – gifts of hope – to see us through darkness, and cold, hard times as we wait for the coming of Light.

We will offer invitations to explore origami, watercolor, felting, and other media as meditative practices and opportunities to create gifts. An unhurried approach will leave time for walking in the woods, journaling, resting, and staying in the present moment. Woven throughout the retreat will be quiet meditations, music, praying the hours, and gently holding the space open to the sacred.

This retreat will begin with supper on Friday evening and end with a campfire after supper Saturday evening. Retreatants have the option to stay over Saturday night and spend the day Sunday continuing their own personal retreat time.

For more information and to register please visit the website at www.rollingridge.net/gifts-hope/

Joel Blunk is an ordained Presbyterian minister, a musician, spiritual director, and rites of passage guide. An associate pastor in central Pennsylvania for over 20 years, Joel recently served as co-pastoral director of Richmond Hill, an intentional Christian community in Richmond, VA devoted to prayer, hospitality, racial justice, and spiritual development. He and Kristen now live at Rolling Ridge.

Linda DeGraf is an artist, quilter, gardener for wildlife, sacred circle dancer, and retired teacher. She has led and co-hosted numerous retreats on meditative arts, blessed unrest, and nurturing children of the earth. She was on the Rolling Ridge Conservancy board for over seven years and lives at Rolling Ridge in an earth-friendly home that she and her husband Scot built.