**Suggested Contemplative Practice** (adapted from Steven Chase)**:**

**Gratitude as Contemplative Awakening**

Fall is a time of gratitude for the harvest. It’s also a good time to feel grateful for other aspects of the natural world. Wander until you feel the tug of a certain spot. Let this place become a prayer for you. Once you find a spot, breathe simply and in rhythm for a time so that you can clear your consciousness of distraction. Then begin to *touch* objects or surfaces around you, saying a silent “thank you” to each, or letting it speak to you. Then begin doing the same for things you see: say a simple, silent “thank you.” Try doing the same with all of your senses: *smell, taste,* and *listen* with a simple “thank you.” As you continue following your breath, notice that all plants and animals are breathing in rhythm with you. Let your attention, your wonder, your gratitude, and your breathing all be a prayer.