

## BOOK REVIEWS



**Susan Freeman, *To Dwell in Your House: Vignettes and Spiritual Reflections on Caregiving at Home* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publishing, 2017), 148 pp.**

Susan Freeman, an ACPE certified educator, rabbi, and chaplain, invites you to take some time in the world of home care chaplaincy. Although her book is written for those venturing into home care chaplaincy, I would also recommend this work to pastors and medical team members, who often greet the chaplain with the question, “What do you do?” Susan Freeman answers this question in a vignette about Joseph and Adele, who simply ask her “So what is your product?” As a hospice chaplain for ten years, I reflected back on my own visits to identify my “product.” For me, this book clarifies the calling to serve as a chaplain and identifies the basic skills that one must continually hone to create change.

In *To Dwell in Your House*, Susan invites us to sit next to her and contemplate what a particular person and/or situation needs in order to promote the resilience needed to heal or the spiritual wholeness it takes to have a good death. Through vignettes, she introduces patients struggling to heal their bodies and souls after a physical challenge. Just when the reader feels they have grasped the issue being presented, be it struggling with loneliness, fear of change, loss of dignity, an unsafe environment, or any of the many spiritual issues that come up during the journey of life, Freeman turns the issues around by asking the reader about their own quest and struggle with these issues. Each vignette can serve as a daily devotional; they are followed by quotes from sacred writings that lead to a poetic reflection that can only be described as a “new psalm.” Freeman’s reflections

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are religiously inclusive; they are drawn from various spiritual traditions while emphasizing a compassionate narrative counseling approach that begins with listening. What do chaplains do? This is it.

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