Art as an Act of Hospitality

1 Peter 4:9-10 tells us that hospitality is a spiritual gift to be shared with loved ones and strangers alike. In fact, the Greek word translated as “hospitality” is actually a combination of two words—philos, meaning "affection" and zenos, meaning "stranger." Philoxenia – hospitality – is a sacred duty, signifying affection toward strangers. How then can the artist practice this hospitality through their art?

Whether through story, painting, song, film, poetry, sculpture, or other creative expressions of the heart of God, the Christian artist’s task is to communicate Truth and the Goodness of God in such a way that it translates to the hearts and souls of the hungry. In this session, we will consider what it means to approach art as an act of hospitality – to touch lives in an intimate, personal way and to create art that becomes a sanctuary for those whom God sends your way.

**Natalie Meeks**, co-leader of the ELF Artists Network, is the Vice President of Strategic Partnerships for Bridge Builders International, which ministers to artists in multiple countries. As a free-lance writer, she has penned articles about ministries all over the world. She is a lover of the classics (secular and spiritual) and enjoys reading and writing poetry. Her Christian faith and confidence in the Scriptures inform her understanding of, communication with, and ministry to artists of all kinds. She and her husband of 18 years reside in Greenville, South Carolina. They have six children, including an adopted son from Latvia. Natalie’s hobbies include reading, reading, and reading.

1. **What Is Hospitality?**
	1. Symbolism and cultural hospitality
	2. Radical nature of biblical hospitality – 1 Peter 4:9-10; Deuteronomy 10:19
2. **Creating Space**
	1. Inquisitive and relational spaces
	2. Ambiguity and ethnodoxology – 1 Corinthians 9:22
	3. Submission – C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*
3. **The Invitation**
	1. Empathy – “My own eyes are not enough for me; I will see through those of others. I am never more myself than when I do.” – C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*
	2. Reconciliation and the washing/naming of wounds – Acts 16:33
	3. Hope and identity