

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

What is spiritual direction? Spiritual direction is the work that an individual does with another person or group which helps that person experience, discern and trust what God/Jesus/Spirit is doing in her or his current life. The role of spiritual director is a prayerful listening presence and sounding board to the directee's experience of God in his or her life. The purpose of a spiritual director is not to tell the directee what to do but to help the directee see and trust the direction in which God is already guiding the person. From the candidacy manual of the ELCA:

Spiritual direction can draw from a variety of traditions and approaches, many of which are not specifically Lutheran... Normally spiritual direction occurs on a frequency mutually determined between the directee and the spiritual director and continues over a period of several months to several years. (p. 78)

Spiritual direction is highly recommended as a discernment tool for those in the ELCA candidacy process, and many rostered ministers continue to work with spiritual directors throughout their ministry.

What to look for in a spiritual director: When looking for a spiritual director, decide what you are looking for from that person: male or female, clergy, non-clergy, or what religious order and the type of personality that you best work with. Some spiritual directors specialize in a specific style of prayer or spirituality. Once you begin work with your spiritual director, if the match doesn't seem right for you, feel free to find someone with whom you can better connect. Spiritual direction is about *your* spiritual life work, not your director's!

Spiritual direction does not necessarily have to be done in person; phone, e-mail, or video conferencing may prove more appropriate, particularly if you do not live near your spiritual director.

We recommend that the following additional considerations be made when selecting a spiritual director:

- He or she has training in spiritual direction from a recognized program (e.g. Haden Institute);
- He or she is actively involved in his/her own ongoing spiritual direction;
- He or she is an active member of a faith community; and
- He or she recognizes spiritual direction as a helping relationship that obligates the spiritual director to take responsibility for maintaining the safety of the relationship (i.e., is committed to a code of professional ethics).

Finding your spiritual director: The short list on the next page may help your search. Any of these spiritual directors can also help find a director near you. Additional places to look might be other ELCA Synod offices, Episcopal dioceses, Catholic retreat centers and monasteries, seminaries, schools of theology, or Spiritual Directors International.

Finally, the following organizations can provide more information and resources for those considering spiritual direction:

The Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation. <http://shalem.org/>

The Academy for Spiritual Formation. <http://academy.upperroom.org/>

Spiritual Directors International. <http://www.sdiworld.org/>

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IN THE SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD

Spiritual Directors are also available as a resource to help you find a director

The Rev. Ann M. Bassett

Pastor, Peace Lutheran Church
762 Beechcroft Rd.
Spring Hill, TN 37174-2303
(615) 210-8162
annbassett@Peace-Lutheran-Springhill.org

Benedictine Sisters Retreat Center

Sister Elisabeth Meadows, OSB; Director
916 Convent Rd.
Cullman, AL 35055
(256) 734-8302
retreats@shmon.org

The Rev. Linnsay Buehler

St. Bede's Episcopal Church
Julian of Norwich Center
2601 Henderson Mill Rd. NE
Atlanta, GA 30345
(770) 938-9797, ext. 27

The Rev. Dr. Delmer L. Chilton

Interim Pastor, Holy Cross Lutheran Church
800 West Lake Dr.
Athens, GA 30606
(404) 556-6238
delmer.chilton@gmail.com

The Rev. P. Morgan Gordy

Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church
299 Haywood Ln
Nashville, TN 37211
(615) 833-0476
pmgordy@bellsouth.net

Ignatius House

Jesuit Retreat Center
6700 Riverside Drive, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30328
(404) 255-0503
www.ignatiushouse.org/spiritual-direction/

The Rev. Barbara A. Koch

Pastor, Mt. Zion-St. Luke Lutheran Church
401 N Randolph St.
Oglethorpe, GA 31068
(912) 677-7011 cell
guytoncook@yahoo.com

Deacon Lois C. Richardson

2232 Lakefront Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37922-6531
(865) 692-2285
rivers.bend@earthlink.net

The Rev. J. Mathias Steinhauer

Pastor, Faith Lutheran Church
1655 West Main Street
Lebanon, TN 37087-3138
(615) 449-5480
matt_steinhauer@bellsouth.net

The Rev. Craig N. Storlie

1622 Pine Circle
Lawrenceville, GA 30044
(678) 595-1933 cell
craigstorlie@bellsouth.net

Resources to Find Spiritual Directors

The Rev. Dr. Joy H. Blaylock

5512 Oakado Dr S
Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 786-8932
drjoyblaylock@aol.com

St. Columba Episcopal Conference & Retreat Center

Brad Thompson, Executive Director
4577 Billy Maher Road
Memphis, TN 38135
(901) 377-9284
brad@saintcolumbamemphis.org

School of Theology – University of the South

(multiple directors available)
355 Tennessee Ave
Sewanee, TN 37383-0001
(931) 598-1578