

Why do people seek Spiritual Direction?

Sometimes, situations, events or attitudes from the past may be blocking an individual's openness to experiencing God's love.

The spiritual direction encounter allows one to gently and prayerfully explore these potential blocks, and discover an open path to new freedom.

The role of the spiritual director is like that of a midwife, who assists the other in the process of giving birth to that which is seeking expression in the other's life. The whole of the spiritual life is really that of giving birth to Christ in our lives.

Spiritual direction is *not* a situation of an expert and learner, or doctor and patient. The spiritual director is a resource, rather than an authority. It is not counseling, problem-solving, advice giving, tutoring in the faith, or theological debate.

What might you experience with Spiritual Direction?

- Every interaction with a spiritual director is unique, but you will begin only when you are ready. The process is gentle, informal, and unscripted. Your time spent with your spiritual director is completely about you and for you.
- Spiritual direction is not counseling or psychotherapy.
- You will be encouraged to take small, simple steps. You may be asked questions that invite you to stretch and grow.
- You will be offered the gift of hospitality in an open and safe physical and spiritual place.

Is Spiritual Direction right for you?

- Are you experiencing a new sense of God in your life?
- Are you feeling distant from God?
- Are you facing an important decision of discernment?
- Are you facing a change or transition in your life?
- Are you feeling fragmented, disjointed, out-of-touch, fearful, angry?
- Are you overly-involved in (or find yourself disinterested by) things that once brought joy?
- Is your faith and ministry feeling more burdensome than life-giving?

Contact us

and learn more about how you can take advantage of this opportunity to deepen your walk of faith.

Muskingum Valley Presbytery

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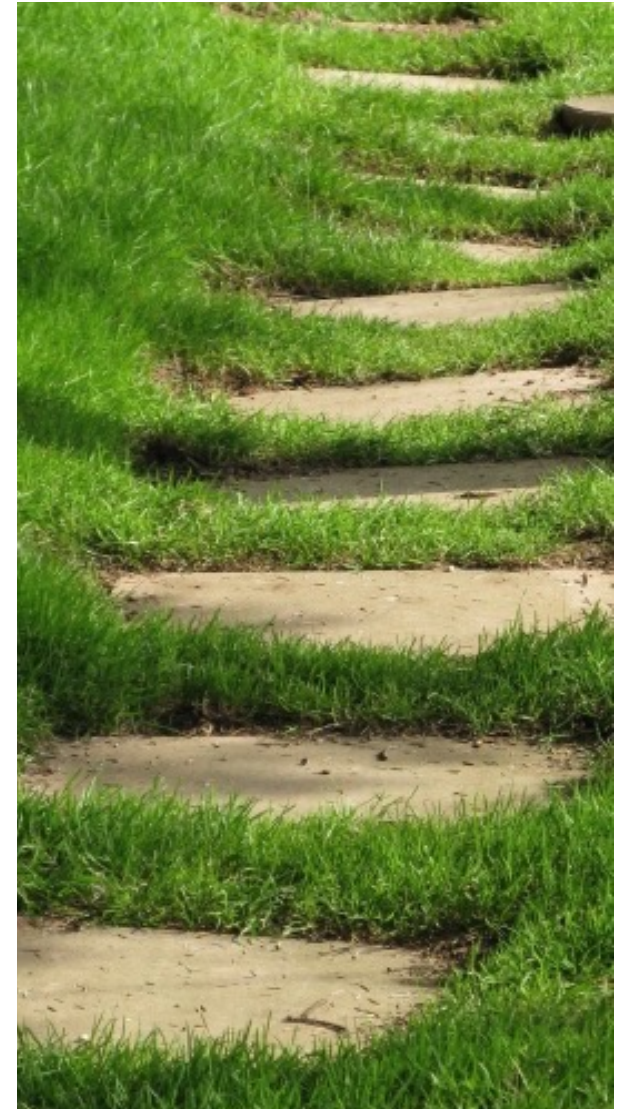


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Spiritual Direction at Muskingum Valley Presbytery

"Were not our hearts burning within us?..."

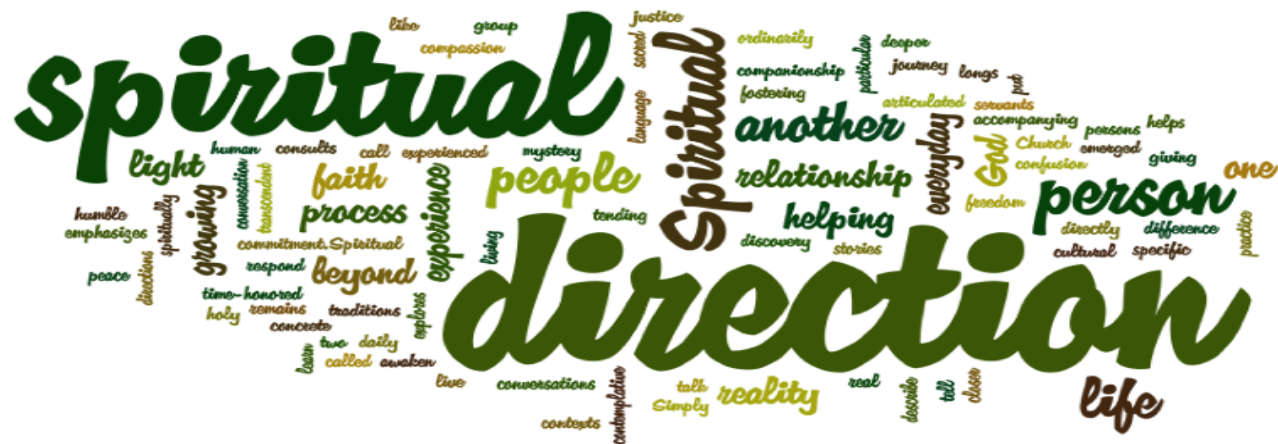
-Luke 24:32



What is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction is best summed up as the art of contemplative listening — listening with one's heart.

Individuals generally see a spiritual director about once a month for one hour, although weekly meetings for a predetermined time may also be an option. Through spiritual direction, we seek to experience God's love and deeply feel our own love for God in return.



Meet the Spiritual Directors in Muskingum Valley Presbytery

The Rev. Barbara Bartholomew earned her Certificate in the Art of Spiritual Direction from San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1998. She has led retreats, provided Spiritual Direction, and served on the Synod Spiritual Formation Resource Team. In her over 30 years of ministry, she has always nurtured spiritual development and formation. Barbara is a member of Muskingum Valley Presbytery currently serving as interim at an ELCA Lutheran church and as an associate pastor of visitation for a United Methodist Church. She is experienced with various types of prayer, Lectio Divina, the Examen and the Labyrinth. Barbara has made pilgrimages to both Taizé and Iona. Barbara can be reached at 330-714-7922 or bhbgreyhound@frontier.com

Pastor Rick Hastings earned his Certificate in Formational Prayer and Counseling in 2010 at Ashland Theological Seminary. Rick has led seminars on Formational Prayer, and his passion is helping individuals find healing and restoration by partnering with them in their life journey. In his 15+ years of ministry, spiritual growth and development has been an integral part of Rick's life. Rick is currently serving Muskingum Valley Presbytery as a member of Council's Mission Commission and is the Certified Ruling Elder for Pioneer and Barlow Presbyterian Churches as well as Spiritual Director for the Mid-Ohio Valley Emmaus Community. If God is calling you to a deeper relationship but you're not sure how to begin, contact Rick at 740-336-0111 or richard.hastings40@gmail.com

The Rev. James K. McCurdy, D.Min. is the pastor at First United Presbyterian Church in Alliance. He has been a member of Muskingum Valley Presbytery for 24 years and a Presbyterian pastor for 31 years. Raised Roman Catholic, Jim has been a member of seven other denominations. Jim has a D.Min in Christian Spirituality and has been a Benedictine oblate (under vows) for eight years before continuing on his own, with 10 years retreating at a Trappist monastery in Georgia. The spiritual disciplines and Rule of St. Benedict, Presbyterian writers, and various writers on prayer have greatly blessed his life, as well as the spiritual disciplines of twelve step programs. He cherishes his time in all spiritual traditions. Benedictine spirituality focuses on one's life in community. The discipline of sacred reading can help in making prayer a vital part of one's life. Both practices are over 1400 years old, and millions ascribe to their aid in their spiritual life. Jim can be reached at 330-465-5242 or mccurdy3@msn.com

The Rev. Bob Meyer, D.Min. is a graduate of San Francisco Theological Seminary (M.Div. 1982) and Louisville Presbyterian Seminary (D.Min. 1994). Having served churches in Colorado and Illinois, he has been the pastor of Wayne Presbyterian Church, Wooster since 1997. In 2014, he earned a certificate in spiritual direction from the Ignatian Spirituality Institute, John Carroll University, Cleveland. At its heart, "Ignatian spirituality" is a spirituality for everyday life. It insists that God is present in our world and active in our lives. It is a pathway to deeper prayer, good decisions guided by keen discernment, and an active life of service to others. Bob can be reached at 330-465-8898 or bobmeyer1952@aol.com



**Rev. James McCurdy,
D.Min**



Pastor Rick Hastings



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