

What Is Spiritual Guidance?



Simply put, spiritual guidance is a discernment process that offers safe space for deep listening to one's life. Accompanied by a trained or spiritually experienced person who asks insightful, open-ended questions, spiritual seekers are helped to find and follow their own spiritual path. People enter spiritual direction for many reasons; however, its ultimate purpose is to accompany seekers in their effort to create a stronger relationship with self, others and God.

The practice is as old as time. Across both the Hebrew and Christian faith, for example, we find people seeking spiritual counsel. The Queen of Sheba sought out the wisdom of

Solomon. The prophet Nathan counseled David. The gospels record stories of people like Nicodemus, the woman at the well and the disciples receiving guidance from Jesus. Early in the church's history, people sought guidance from desert hermits and later Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Francis de Sales and many others.

Why Seek Spiritual Guidance?

Spiritual guidance is about deepening our relationship with God by gaining insight into our own lives, struggles, relationships and challenges.

Listening is the highest form of hospitality, not to change people but offering them space where change can take place.

—Henri Nouwen

A spiritual guide is someone concerned with helping you to find and respond to God in the midst of transitions, uncertainty, and pain, as well as in all of life. She or he is someone specifically trained to help you listen deeply for the whispers and nudges of God.

More Questions?

How often do I meet with my spiritual guide? And how long is each session?

It's typical for people to meet with their spiritual guide once a month for 50-60 minute sessions. You and your spiritual guide will agree on the options in your first session.

What can I expect from a typical session?

Because this is your time, you determine how to use it. Some people begin a session with a time of silence and centering, followed by a prayer or simply an Amen to indicate their readiness to begin sharing whatever concern is on their mind and heart.

During the meeting time, you and your guide seek to be attentive to the working of the spirit. The guide acts as a facilitator, offering questions, challenges and encouragement as together you seek to hold space for the work of God's spirit. The guide's role is not to offer advice or find answers to your questions. Rather, she or he raises questions and helps *you* discern where God might be calling you.

Is it similar to therapy?

It's important to note there are distinctions between therapy, counseling and spiritual guidance. While it may be appropriate to discuss personal and relationship struggles in the context of spiritual guidance, a spiritual guide is *not* a psychotherapist, psychologist or necessarily a pastor or priest. Nor does a spiritual guide provide such services.

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves. . . Live the questions now.

Perhaps you will then, gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

Am I assured of confidentiality?

To ensure safe space for conversation, your spiritual director is bound by ethical principles to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of directees.

Do I meet with my guide in person?

ZOOM is available when meeting in person is not convenient.

Is spiritual guidance available for people of other faiths?

Yes, spiritual guidance is available for anyone seeking to discern their spiritual path.



About Beverly Zell

Beverly is a retired UCC minister. She is also a commissioned Spiritual Director and an active member of Spiritual Directors International. In addition, she facilitates programs in Writing as a Spiritual Practice as an affiliate of

Amherst Writers and Artists and is a trained facilitator in Restorative Circles, a community-based process for supporting those in conflict.

Beverly spends her summers in Holland, Michigan but lives in Vero Beach. She and her husband are active members at Community Church of Vero Beach.

You can make an appointment with Beverly by contacting the Community Church office at 772-562-3633.



About Lori Ferrell

Lori makes her home in Vero Beach with her husband and two teenage sons. They moved to Vero in 2014 after living in Southeast Asia for nearly 10 years. After

taking an intentional sabbatical year for rest, renewal and healing, Lori went on to complete a two year training program for becoming a Spiritual Director. She has been offering contemplative space to companion others on the spiritual journey since 2016.

Lori is also a certified yoga teacher (200 hr RYT) and values practicing an embodied spirituality. She has offered restorative yoga classes at the church as well as for individuals as a way of slowing down and resting.

If you are interested to meet with Lori for spiritual direction (companioning), you can reach her at sanctuaryvero@gmail.com with your questions or to schedule.



HOLY LISTENING
The Gift of Presence



The path is too deeply hidden to be traveled without company: finding our way involves clues that are subtle and sometimes misleading, requiring a kind of discernment that can only happen in dialogue.

—Parker Palmer