




1

Invoking the Holy Spirit



L: Holy Spirit, in creation you moved upon the waters, calling to the deep, coaxing up the mountains and carving their valleys;

C: Move within us this day, calling us to faith and forgiving us when we stray that we may be stirred by your love.

L: Holy Spirit, as you moved across the desert, you brought your children out of bondage into freedom with both the law and the lamb;

C: Guide us this day through your holy words, that our eyes would be opened and our hearts transformed.

L: Holy Spirit, you sang in a stable, and you cried from a hill, for you know what it took for God to become one with us and for Jesus to redeem us.

C: Shape our minds and wills to be conformed to the life of Jesus, our Savior.

L: Holy Spirit, you call to us from tomorrow, offering hope to those in captivity and giving visions to men and women;

C: Help us to see clearly the plans that God has for all of creation and the lives of his beloved children that we may work with God to bring in the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen

2



*Communal Discernment:
What is It?*

- ❖ Seeking the will of God – TOGETHER
- ❖ Asking for the Spirit's guidance in decision making, wrestling with faith and practices
- ❖ Reminds us that we are in ministry *with* God and not alone
- ❖ Is complementary to tools and rules used in congregations

3



*Communal Discernment:
Characteristics*

- ❖ Prayer . . . Times of Silence
- ❖ Humble surrender of control
- ❖ Rooted in scripture
- ❖ Careful listening to the members of the body
- ❖ God's movement is not predictable, but the Spirit *is* faithful and wise and loving

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*Communal Discernment:
Theological Principles*

- ❖ Jesus Christ is the head of the body - the Church
- ❖ Deeply dependent upon the Holy Spirit
- ❖ Unity of Christ' Body
- ❖ Community made in Covenant
- ❖ Waiting Upon the Lord

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*Communal Discernment:
When to Use?*

What would be occasions where discerning the Spirit would be helpful?

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*Communal Discernment:
Step by Step*

PRAYING
LISTENING
CHOOSING

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*Communal Discernment:
Praying*

Gathering in Christ
Building Community
Affirm a Covenant
Clarify the Issue/Ministry

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*Communal Discernment:
Listening*

Letting the Holy Spirit take the wheel

- Let Go
- Listen to scripture
- Share ("Tables of 8")
- Assess options

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*Communal Discernment:
Choosing*

Going Forth with and from a decision

- Choose the direction
- Rest with the decision
- Make the decision formal

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Pentecost Prayer



O God, on this day you open the hearts of your faithful people by sending into us your Holy Spirit.

Direct us by the light of that Spirit, that we may have a right judgment in all things and rejoice at all times in your peace, through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

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Source & Resources



The main points in this presentation come from the document, "**Guidelines for Communal Discernment**" by Victoria G. Curtis of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. You can download a free copy here:
<https://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsnews/discernment-guidelines.pdf>

ELCA Task Force Report on Communal Discernment:
http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/06h_Communal_Discernment_Task%20Force_20130715e.pdf



Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church – Danny Morris, Chuck Olsen; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

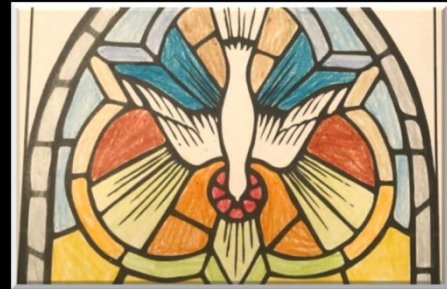
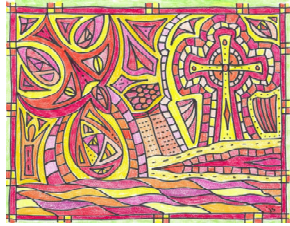
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Affirmation of Faith in the Holy Spirit

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the **Holy Spirit** has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.



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