

What is it?

Tending the Soul is a program designed to train individuals in Spiritual Direction and Congregational Formation. “We define Christian spiritual direction as help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God’s personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship.”—William A. Barry & William J. Connolly

The two-year training program offers learning and formational experiences in classroom and small group settings. The training includes home-based reading and reflection, experiential learning, and attention to the practice of spiritual disciplines. Participants will receive guidance in discerning their sense of giftedness and call to one-on-one spiritual direction and congregational direction and formation.

Where and When?

All six training retreats will be held at Casowasco Camp and Retreat Center in Moravia, NY (campsandretreats.org). Attendance is required at all six retreats. Retreats will be held on:

- October 23-26, 2017
- February 23-26, 2018
- May 18-21, 2018
- October 22-25, 2018
- February 22-25, 2019
- May 17-20, 2019

Spiritual Autobiography

Application Questions

1. List your contact information: name, address, phone number, email address.
2. Respond to the following:
 - Describe your earliest religious/spiritual experiences.
 - Who or what are the persons, books, and experiences which have influenced your life and faith journey?
 - Explain how your experience and understanding of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit has developed and grown. Who or what is the Divine for you now?
 - Describe how your relationship with God and your walk of discipleship is nurtured and fed?
 - What experience do you have offering or receiving spiritual direction or companioning?
 - What draws you to the ministry of spiritual direction or tending to the ministry of spiritual formation within the congregation?
 - Describe the ways in which you are presently in ministry (lay or clergy setting).

Recommendations

For laity: Please provide a recommendation from your pastor and a recommendation from one other person who knows of your readiness, maturity, and interest in spiritual direction.

For clergy: Please provide two recommendations from those who know of your readiness, maturity, and interest in spiritual direction. One recommendation should be from someone in a church you have served and one should be from another clergy

Tending the Soul

Spiritual Direction &
Congregational Formation
2017-2019



A two-year training program
for lay and clergy

Who Can Apply?

Both lay and clergy persons from the Upper New York Conference as well as other United Methodist conferences are welcome to apply. There are no specific educational requirements, but those who apply should have an active, growing spiritual life, a deep love for all of God's people, an ability to embrace diversity, and strength in deep, purposeful listening. Participants should also be grounded in their own understanding of Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit, and be able to allow space for others to come to their own relationship with the Divine. Spiritual direction with a trained director is required of all who enroll in the program. Applicants are expected to commit themselves to participation in all retreats, home-based work, and personal spiritual formation.

What Does It Cost?

The cost of the program is \$2400. A deposit of \$100 is due upon acceptance to the program. The first payment of \$700 is due October 1, 2017. The remaining two payments of \$800 each are due May 1, 2018 and February 1, 2019. Tuition covers six training retreats with Rev. Wendy J. Miller, food, and lodging. Books and other incidental costs are not included. Upper New York Conference clergy can access their Ministerial Education Funds to pay for tuition costs. Other individuals may apply for scholarship funds through UNYAC Vital Congregations by contacting Aaron Bouwens:

AaronBouwens@unyumc.org,
(315) 424-7878, x2014.

What Topics Will We Study?

- Topics for the six training retreats and home study will include:
- Introduction to spiritual guidance and a biblical and historical overview
- The journey of the soul and tending across the stages of spiritual formation within individuals and congregations
- Companionship of the soul of the individual and congregations during times of grief, loss, and impasse
- The discipline of discernment and listening within spiritual direction and the life and ministry of the congregation
- Tending the soul of the congregation and weaving spiritual practices into the spheres of ministry within the congregation
- Spiritual direction and tending the soul of the congregation and nurturing persons and the church as a healing presence in an anxious world

Rev. Wendy J. Miller

Instruction will be offered by the Rev. Wendy J. Miller, Professor Emeritus of Spiritual Formation at Eastern Mennonite Seminary and adjunct professor of spiritual formation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. The author of several books on spiritual direction and formation, Rev. Miller trained in spiritual direction at General Theological Seminary in New York. Her rich spiritual life and love of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit is apparent in all that she does.

How to Apply

To apply, please write a spiritual autobiography following the guidance questions included on the back of this brochure. The questions are designed to help you in your own discernment and sense of readiness for training in personal spiritual formation and companionship of others.

Send your spiritual autobiography, along with two recommendations to:

Nancy E. Dibelius
Program Director
198 Truesdale Hill Road
Lake George, NY 12845

Or send them via email to:

nancy.dibelius@gmail.com

Applications are due by:

August 1, 2017

Upon acceptance to the program, a non-refundable deposit of \$100 is due. The first payment of \$700 is due by October 1, 2017. All checks should be made payable to Upper New York Annual Conference.

For more information please contact

Nancy Dibelius:

nancy.dibelius@gmail.com
(518) 369-9147

12 CEU credits can be earned by successful completion of the program.