

May 2022



Discernment with the Spirit – What is it?

Our spiritual discernment process here at Salem UCC has officially begun, and here we go! Thirteen of us gathered on Wednesday evening after the community meal for an introduction to this process-with Spirit; thoughtful questions, meaningful discussion, and a good amount of laughter entailed through our evening together. Below is the content of one of the documents distributed there, and I thought I would share it here for everyone's review:

The process of Christian spiritual discernment uses some basic principles and guideposts, or touchstones, but it unfolds in each setting organically—Salem's process will look different than any other congregations. This, to me, is the excitement and joy of “doing discernment” together. Wonderful, but what will this process involve? And where do we start?

The word “discernment” actually has its roots in the Greek *diakrisis*, which means “to separate”, to “sift through”, to “sort out”, or “to distinguish.” In popular culture, the act of discerning is often used in relationship to someone’s ability to tell between an inexpensive wine and a premium blend or vintage, or between a well-made suit and one cheaply manufactured-- “He has a discerning palate; she has discerning taste.” But the process of spiritual discernment is still another thing.

Taking wisdom from beloved spiritual teacher Henri Nouwen, at the core of spiritual discernment is the understanding that God is present and speaking to us all the time: through people, events, visions, dreams, nature, scripture, experience, and reason, to name a few. Thus, the core question is “What is God trying to say to us?” As we grow in a spiritually maturing life, it is vital that we listen to God’s voice within and among us, to pay attention to God's caring, healing, guiding, directing, challenging, confronting, and correcting, so that we can act on this God-help that is pointing the way and showing the direction we need to follow.

Listening and discerning together will require a commitment of participation and engagement from all of us; intentional discernment is a process over some time, so an ongoing commitment is crucial. We will decide together timing and format of our discernment sessions; these will not be your typical “strategic planning” meetings! I like to keep things interesting and use various means, like lectio divina; art and images; brainstorming; and telling our Salem stories, etc., to do so. Questions for pondering may be something like: “Why are we church instead of something else? What grounds us in unity, regardless of our diversity? What is God calling us to be and do now? What is our foundational mission? What is the best use of our resources?

Again, in the words of Henri Nouwen from his book *Discernment*, “When Christian community provides sacred space and time for discernment, we will gradually...come to see ourselves, our neighbors, and our world in a new light. Discernment reveals new priorities, directions, and gifts from God. We come to realize that what previously seemed so important for our lives loses its power over us. To our surprise, we may even experience a strange inner freedom to follow a new

call or direction as previous concerns move into the background of our (collective) consciousness.”

Thus, I ask each of you to consider what your participation can be in this intentional discernment process over these months. I ask that you commit to as many discernment group gatherings and workshops as you can, that you open your mind and heart to a process that may be very new and unfamiliar and even a bit foreign and uncomfortable to you. I ask that you take the process and your engagement seriously, that you find the courage to share your insights and wisdom with others, as well as to receive with grace theirs. I ask that you hold this process and each other, as well as me, in the light of God's blessing in your daily prayer time. Prepare to have some fun together!

Each month, the schedule of Discernment Sessions will be listed in the Sunday worship bulletin announcements, and at times in a separate all-congregation email. Also, each month the church newsletter will include an article keeping us all informed about how our spiritual discernment process is going.

Salem UCC, you are at a new threshold, and I am delighted and honored to be here with you at this particular time in your life. The following blessing is by spiritual artist and poet Jan Richardson and was given to me years ago by my beautiful spiritual director at a time when I was at a major threshold in my vocational and personal life. As we begin to meet together in intentional discernment, conversation and listening, I hope it will feed your soul, spark your interest, and encourage you onward, as it always does me.

God of the threshold, this we pray:

*That what comes in
Enters by consent,
By invitation*

*That what passes through
Crosses over with grace,
With mercy*

*That what dwells within
Resides in delight,
In integrity*

*That what goes forth
Emerges for peace,
For blessing.*

*In the Promise of Christ,
Rev. Joanne*

A Word from Reverend Ward

Imagine this:

You and your friend are planning on getting together for lunch. You are both rather busy so one of you asks the other: “Have you got your calendar?” Out comes the smart phone or (in my case) the desk calendar provided by the United Church of Christ. After checking and cross checking, you arrive at a day and time when (now catch this phrase!) you are both *free!* Think about that for a moment—looking at a calendar to see when we are . . . free. Free to make a choice to be together, to catch up on one’s life, to be refreshed in one another’s company. We need our calendars to organize our individual lives. We need them to find moments amidst our obligations to be refreshed and renewed in one another’s company.

We have a church calendar of course that tells us when we’ll come together to do the work of the church, but we also have available to us a *liturgical* calendar that provides reference points for our spiritual life and growth. For example, I look to the liturgical calendar and see that we are in “Eastertide”. That tells me that Easter isn’t over! It tells me that just as Christ keeps appearing to his disciples, Christ gives Himself to us with a promise that when we gather to worship, to eat with one another, to serve with one another, He is with us.

You have formally entered now a practice of discernment with Rev. Joanne at Eastertide. What an appropriate time on the liturgical calendar! It’s a season when we can be alert to Christ’s presence among us. We learn from the Gospels that when Christ is present, we are free indeed—free to be honest with one another, free even to show one another our ‘wounds’, but most of all free in Christ’s presence to extend his peace to one another—it is, as Jesus says, a “peace that passes all understanding”.

*Easter peace to you all,
Pastor Richard*

Christian Education Ministry

Kudos to the Neumann/Berry family for presenting such an exciting worship skit on Palm Sunday! Participation of our families and youth in worship remains our current Christian Education focus. Stay tuned for upcoming surprises in May!

Our C.E. ministry team looks forward to the involvement and vision of our Interim Ministers in shaping future education opportunities for all ages at Salem. God’s new creation for our church is beginning!

*Christian Education Ministry
Polly Fumagalli, Beth Hansen, Chuck Wright*

Mission Moments

Kiva is the Mission for May. More than 1.7 billion people around the world are not able to access financial services. KIVA (founded in 2005) is a digital marketplace that provides loans as low as \$25.00 to people starting a business hoping to better their lives. Once their business is up and running, they repay the loan to help another individual. People all over the world including the US are helped by this program. The repayment average is 96%.

*Missions Ministry
June Seppa*



Thank you for your generous food, toiletry, and cleaning supply donations during March for Archway!

Building and Grounds

Upkeep of Salem's house and grounds continues with projects large and small! Over the past month we have placed a "No Dogs" sign on the backyard gate, repaired the handle on the accessible bathroom, and continued work on lighting the outside sign. We have been involved in learning, maintaining, and simplifying the Sanctuary tech equipment. We are working with Miro Subotic to prepare and plant Spring landscape work.

*Building and Grounds Ministry
Roger Neumann and Chuck Wright*



Sunflower had an Earth Day cleanup of Salem's backyard. Lots of leftover easter eggs were found!!

May Calendar

Bible Study – Join us via Zoom at 10 am on Tuesdays.

Worship Sundays, 9:30 am. Please pay attention to the COVID guidelines. We will also continue with online and by-phone options for services. Join us in person or online!

Romeo Coffee Club meets at Salem on May 4th and 18th at 9:00 am, join us for coffee and conversation!

May Mission – KIVA

Discernment – Meeting May 4th at 7:00 pm, and May 22nd at 11:00 am.

The Rocky Mountain Conference – Zoom meeting will be held on May 27th from 1:00 – 2:30 pm, with UCC General Minister and President, Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer. Lay leaders and Moderators are encouraged to attend. RSVP to debbarn25@gmail.com

Keeping in Touch

If you would like to reach out to our new ministry team, Rev. Ward can be reached at richardfward51@gmail.com and by cell at 720-982-6852. Reverend Ward will typically be online for Bible Study on Tuesdays, at Salem on alternate Wednesday mornings for the Romeos coffee club meetings, and on Sunday mornings for Worship.

Reverend Buchanan can be reached at parsonbrownjbb@yahoo.com or you can call her on her cell at 303-579-7307 (please no texts). She will be at Salem on Discernment session dates, and on Sundays when she is involved in leading worship.

Both ministers are available by appointment, so feel free to reach out and give them a call!

Deadlines, deadlines, deadlines!!

Please submit any announcements or additions to the bulletin to the church office by Wednesday of each week.

Deadline for June newsletter articles is May 25th.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

5th – Heidi Wilderman

7th – Pam Neumann

23rd – Jim Dean



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Administrative Assistant - Lisa Thomas

Discernment Minister - Joanne Buchanan

Pastor - Richard Ward

Financial Assistant - Ani Martinez

Music Director - Isabella Ashton

May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 9:30- Worship Communion 3-7- CTK</p>	<p>2 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>3 10-Bible Study Zoom 7-Cub Scouts</p>	<p>4 9-Men's Coffee Club 6-Community Meal 7-Discernment</p>	<p>5 <i>Heidi Wildermatz</i> 6- For the Voice Rehearsal</p>	<p>6 7-Dillon Tyree Concert</p>	<p>7 <i>Pamela Neumann</i> 9-Sundowner Party 6- For the Voice Concert</p>
<p>8 9:30- Worship 3-7- CTK</p>	<p>9 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>10 10-Bible Study Zoom 7-Cub Scouts</p>	<p>11 6-Community Meal 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>12 7pm-Child Care Providers</p>	<p>13 6-For the Voice Concert</p>	<p>14 3-Dillon Tyree Concert</p>
<p>15 9:30- Worship 3-7- CTK</p>	<p>16 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>17 10-Bible Study Zoom 7-Cub Scouts</p>	<p>18 9-Men's Coffee Club 6-Community Meal</p>	<p>19 7-Coin Club</p>	<p>20 6-For the Voice Concert</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 9:30- Worship 11:00-Discernment 3-7- CTK</p>	<p>23 <i>Jim Dean</i> 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>24 10-Bible Study Zoom 7-Cub Scouts</p>	<p>25 6-Community Meal</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 12:30 UCC Conference via Zoom</p>	<p>28 Dillon Tyree Concert 5 pm</p>
<p>29 9:30- Worship 3-7- CTK</p>	<p>30 7-Boy Scouts</p>	<p>31 10-Bible Study Zoom</p>				



June 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 9:30- Worship Communion 3-7-CKK	6 7-Boy Scouts	7 10-Bible Study Zoom	8 6-Community Meal	9 Craig Winklerman Afro Subotic	10	11
12 9:30- Worship 3-7-CKK	13 7-Boy Scouts	14 10-Bible Study Zoom	15 9-Men's Coffee Club 6-Community Meal	16	17	18
19 9:30- Worship 3-7-CKK	20 7-Boy Scouts	21 9-Twinkle Music 10-Bible Study Zoom	22 9-Twinkle Music 6-Community Meal	23	24 9-Twinkle Music	25 9-Twinkle Music
26 9:30- Worship 3-7-CKK	27 7-Boy Scouts	28 9-Twinkle Music 10-Bible Study Zoom	29 9-Men's Coffee Club 9-Twinkle Music 6-Community Meal	30 7-Coin Club	1 9-Twinkle Music	2 9-Twinkle Music

