

# **The Center for Spiritual Formation**

## **The Ministry of Spiritual Direction**

**Year 1**

### **Defining Spiritual Direction**

with Rev. Laura Baber

Saturday, September 13, 2025

*Why do people seek Spiritual Direction and how is it distinct from other ministries?*

During this session, the class will seek to define what spiritual direction is, and is not. The class will explore why people come for spiritual direction and the complementary relationship between spiritual direction and other soul care and well-being ministries, such as counseling, pastoral care, and healing prayer; identifying similarities and distinguishing differences.

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#### **In Preparation for the Class Session**

1. Listen to one of the following podcasts:

"What is spiritual direction?" an interview with Laura Baber from the Better Together Podcast:

<https://thebettertogetherpodcastwithcallieandrosariorozpicardo.buzzsprout.com/1777344/10054583-all-about-spiritual-direction>

Life with God - What, Why, How of Spiritual Direction - Renovare

<https://renovare.org/podcasts/lifewithgod/what-why-how-of-spiritual-direction>

Dr. Alison Cook, podcast episode 63

Spiritual Direction: The Power of Listening - How to Attune to Yourself and Others.

<https://www.dralisoncook.com/podcasts/spiritual-direction-the-power-of-listening-how-to-attune-to-yourself-and-to-others>

2. Please read the following two articles as preparation. Notice what stirs your curiosity and bring those noticings to this first session. You may also search the internet for other articles or podcasts on spiritual direction, as you have time.

- The Renovare institute has a wonderful article by Richard Foster on their web site. What Is Spiritual Direction by Richard Foster:  
<https://renovare.org/articles/what-is-spiritual-direction>
- The Spiritual Directors International Website has numerous articles exploring frequently asked questions about the work of spiritual direction and companionship. This is an interfaith organization. Take a look at some of their descriptions on "What Is Spiritual Direction / Companionship?"  
<https://www.sdicompanions.org/about/what-is-spiritual-direction-and-companionship/>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The following books are recommended for those of you who are avid readers and want to dive deeper during your MSD journey.

Please note these books are NOT REQUIRED to be read. They are being provided as a supplemental resource for those who are interested.

Sharon Garlough Brown, (2017) Sensible Shoes, InterVarsity Press, Downer's Grove, IL. (This delightful novel is the first in a 4 part series. The story line chronicling the lives of a group of women who begin meeting with a spiritual director and how that experience impacts their lives. The author weaves spiritual practices throughout the novel in an easily accessed format.)

John O'Donohue, (1997) Anam Cara, Harper Collins, New York, NY.

Kenneth Leech, (1980) Soul Friend, Harper & Row, San Francisco, CA.

Gary Moon and David Benner, Editors, (2004) Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL.

Rorneau, Robert, (1998) Spiritual Direction A Path to Spiritual Maturity, Crossroads Publishing, New York.

Therese Talor-Stinson, (2023) Walking the Way of Harriet Tubman, Public Mystic and Freedom Fighter, Broadleaf Books, Minneapolis, MN.

*Note: The underground railroad conductor is an apt metaphor for the work of a spiritual director as we guide people through darkness and into liberation. This book invites a reflection on Harriet Tubman's life as translated into spiritual practices for today's journey.*