

(Preview Syllabus for DM 9368)

Ministry of Spiritual Guidance

DM 9368

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Course Description

When we pray, "... Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" we are entering a spiritual realm and praying that this God-realm will show up here, among us in the earth of our lives. We are also confessing that there is a gap between how life is here in the kingdom of the world, and the realm of God in heaven. The ministry of spiritual guidance pays attention to:

- discerning the gap
- to how God comes to bridge and heal the division
- to the journey of how we respond to God's presence and work within and among us to bring us home to God, to our selves, to each other, and to creation
- and to how we learn to live and move with God individually, in the church, and in the world

Reading

NRSV Bible

Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction.
Margaret Guenther. Cowley Publications, 1992.

The Practice of Spiritual Direction.
William A. Barry & William J. Connolly. Harper & Row, 1982.

Discernment: Reading the Signs of Daily Life.
Henri Nouwen. HarperOne, 2013

When Leadership and Spiritual Direction Meet: Stories and Reflections

for Congregational Life.

Gil W. Stafford. Rowman and Littlefield, 2013

Five Books on Consideration: Advice to a Pope.

Read: "Book One" and "Book Two".

Bernard of Clairvaux. Tr. John D Anderson & Elizabeth T Kennan. Cistercian Publications: 1976.

Come with Me: Daily Living with a New Monastic Rule of Life.

Missional Wisdom Foundation, 2015.

Wendy J. Miller

Course Intentions:

In conversation with the texts, each other, with our storied experience, and with God through various practices of contemplative prayer, we will:

- recognize and live into the Great Story of God within and beyond Scripture
- become aware of how our own stories are held in the Great Story
- practice the ministry of story-listening as spiritual guidance
- contemplate and discover how our own gifts and leadership meet and move with spiritual direction within and beyond the congregation
- develop a personal rhythm and rule of life and prayer
- become aware of how we listen and respond outside the walls of the church and academia
- develop a design for the implementation and practice of the ministry of spiritual guidance within or beyond the church

Assignment

Prayerfully discern and formulate:

- a design for the emergence and practice

of the ministry of spiritual guidance within your own place of ministry.
(See handout for guidance)

- a biblical and spiritual theology which undergirds your understanding of spiritual guidance with individuals and community
- a guide-line for your development, emergence and practice of the ministry of spiritual guidance
- a list of the resources needed

Clarify

- your intent
- your own personal spiritual practices as you engage in this preparatory work
- your questions, needs, how you deal with the “unknown” and what is beyond your control
- what practice of the ministry of spiritual guidance will be experienced as you prepare and begin implementing this ministry

Requirements

- prepare to make in-class reports and presentations from your work
- draw from the class resources
- discern and practice your own rhythm and rule of life and prayer; complete a personal reflection of your experience (guide supplied)
- receive and give spiritual guidance within class sessions
- be prepared to present your design in printed form, using visuals, etc. which serve your intent
- include 2 pages which express your biblical, spiritual theological underpinning of spiritual formation and guidance
- be prepared to lead the class in a spiritually formative learning experience in which you practice the ministry of spiritual guidance as you lead
- Grade is based on:
 - Quality of your written project

Quality of your leadership of a spiritually formative experience in which you practice the ministry of spiritual guidance

Attendance

Engagement in class

Instructor

Wendy Miller is a contemplative story-listener and a transformative instructor. She has a deep love for the narratives which form the biblical mega-story, stories which offer a doorway for persons to engage with their own life and soul-story, and to encounter God within and behind their own storied experience.

She holds a B.A. in Religion and Philosophy from Iowa Wesleyan College, a Masters degree in Church Leadership with a concentration in pastoral care and counseling from Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) in Harrisonburg, VA, and an STM degree in Spiritual Theology and Spiritual Direction from General Theological Seminary in New York City. Her written works include: *Learning to Listen, A guide for Spiritual Friends*; *Invitation to Presence: a Guide for Spiritual Disciplines*; *Jesus, Our Spiritual Director: A Pilgrimage Through the Gospels*; and *Come with Me: Daily Living with a Monastic Missional Rule of Life*.

Named Professor Emeritus in Spiritual Formation at EMS after teaching spiritual formation, spiritual direction, and supervising training of spiritual directors for 19 years, Wendy continues to nurture the spiritual formation and training of lay persons and clergy in various United Methodist and Mennonite Conferences for the missional ministry of tending the soul of persons/congregation/ communities within and beyond the church. Since relocating in Dallas, Texas in 2013 she serves as Director of Spiritual Direction and Formation for the ministries of the Missional Wisdom Foundation. Wendy is also one of the instructors in the Perkins School of Theology Certificate in Spiritual Direction program. She is an ordained minister within the Virginia Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Her husband, Ed Miller, is an ordained minister in the Mennonite Church (now

retired), and serves as a spiritual director and small group supervisor for spiritual direction training programs. They have five adult children and eleven grandchildren, all of whom still enjoy meeting together for family week every other year, and on many other important family occasions – including occasional fun texting on Saturday afternoons.