



SHE WORSHIPS ALMOST EVERY SUNDAY

She attends a Bible study.

Reading the daily devotion is part of her morning routine.

She taught Sunday School and sang in the choir.

She loves her congregation and the close friends she has there.

Yet, there is something missing. There is a nagging deep inside her that makes her think *there is something more* to her faith than what she has been doing.

She's Right. There IS!

Dear Faithful Friend in Christ,

Do you recognize:

- Those times when your soul feels FULL while listening to a powerful piece of music and you feel energized by the experience?
- The sense of AWE in those quiet, sacred times of life?
- The sense of WONDER sitting out on a starry night, contemplating the expanse of the universe and God—and your own small place in it?

These experiences are a small taste of the spiritual life. **Sometimes, they are how God invites you into a closer relationship!** They are ways you can move beyond just believing in God, and begin to “know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge” so that you might be filled with all the fullness of God” as the Apostle Paul described it in Ephesians 3:19.

With the help of a certified spiritual director and learning any number of ways to pray, you can tap into the *rich experience of loving God* and encounter God’s healing, *compassionate love for you*.

Drinking From the Well

. . . is a new ministry from Seeking the Spirit Within: The Nebraska Synod Institute for Spiritual Direction Formation.

The “something more” mentioned above? **Drinking From the Well** has been developed to help you access that “something more”! It is a unique opportunity to learn from spiritual directors from around the Nebraska Synod and grow in your experience of the Divine.

Consider these benefits when you participate in [Drinking From the Well](#):

- Discover how you are wired to connect with God:
 - Are you a thinking pray-er or a feeling pray-er?
 - How do you like to talk to God and how do you “hear” God?
 - Do you need to move while you pray or do you prefer to sit quietly?
- Experiment with a variety of classic prayer practices to discover which ones work best for you
- Meet with a certified spiritual director every month in a small spiritual direction group
- Get to know like-minded people in your vicinity who are on a similar spiritual journey
- Develop habits for deepening your inner spiritual life
- Honor the yearning in your soul for that “something more”!

Ted has been a life-long Christian and is active in the life of his congregation. He and his wife and their two young daughters attend worship regularly, they are active in Sunday School, he was on the congregational council, and he gives of his time and energy and resources. Yet, Ted admitted there was still something missing. He enjoyed what he was doing at church and he loved the relationships, but it wasn't enough. He was sure there was something more.

He made a commitment to an eight-month Faith Builders program in his congregation to learn how he was wired to connect with God. He got to experiment with a variety of ways to pray. Some of them worked for him, some didn't. But he knew which ones were which! Best of all, what used to be missing for Ted, isn't anymore.

Inspired by his newly energized spiritual life, Ted attended *One Life to Live*, a retreat by Lutheran Men in Mission. He is in a spiritual direction group and is now the leader of the men's group in his congregation, a group which meets twice a month to support each other and talk about how faith and life connect.

Verna's children are grown and have children of their own. Her husband has a chronic illness which leaves him mostly homebound and in pain. Verna is his primary caregiver. She has been active in her congregation her whole life. She quilts and sews, serves in the kitchen, sings in the choir and plays in the bell choir. The local Women of the ELCA chapter counts on her leadership, as do other community organizations.

Like Ted, Verna knew there was something else to the faith besides great friends and service to others. She recognized an emptiness, a vacant spot, in her soul. She yearned to fill it. She knew it had something to do with her faith, but she didn't know just what it was. Committing to an eight-month learning experience in her congregation, practicing the different types of prayers regularly, she recognized that what she had thought was a hole in her soul, was actually already filled by God. She just hadn't learned how to identify it.

Finding the prayer styles that fit her best, Verna's awareness of how the Holy Spirit is at work in her, gave her a new perspective on faith and life. She embraces hope as a powerful reality and has more peace in her life. Today, in addition to her daily faith practices, she is in a spiritual direction group at her church and co-leads another spiritual direction group there, helping others discover the power of faith.

Rev. Carm Aderman, one of the leaders of this course, has confessed that even as an ELCA pastor, she spent too many years of her ministry not really knowing how to pray. Of course, she knew how to do intercessory prayer, praying for the needs of others, but she didn't know how to connect with God in an intimate way. She felt called to ministry, was passionate about it, but knew she was missing out on something life-giving.

As she tells the story, “I studied theology, read the New Testament in Greek. I was active in the community and in synodical ministries. Yet, something was missing, something important, but I didn’t know how to talk about it or where to get any help to change my angst. Eventually, a few pieces started to come together as I explored the spiritual life. Then it really took off. Programs like [Drinking From the Well](#) didn’t exist back then. What a gift they are now!”

This Course is Led by a Synod and Leadership with Experience!

The Nebraska Synod is the envy of the other 64 synods in the ELCA. We are the only synod who has a two-year formation program to train and certify spiritual directors. A synod on the east coast has even asked for our help to create such a program in their synod.

The leadership team of [Drinking From the Well](#) is comprised of certified spiritual directors, some of them ordained. They all have experience as spiritual directors, and some have extensive experience leading retreats, spiritual direction groups. Some also lead Faith Builders or *Companions in Christ*, eight-month spirituality courses in their congregations.

Meet the leadership team (in alphabetical order):

The Rev. Carmala Aderman earned a Master’s in Spirituality and a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction from St. Catherine’s University. She is on the board and faculty of Seeking the Spirit Within, a supervisor of spiritual directors, a spiritual director with individuals, and a retreat leader. She has led eight years of Faith Builders at Luther Memorial in Omaha, several congregational retreats, and three spiritual direction groups.

Shirley Knight, a certified spiritual director, is a gifted retreat leader. She currently is a director for individuals, co-leads a spiritual direction group at Luther Memorial, created and teaches a mixed-media faith practice, and leads her congregation’s extended retreats each year.

Kathy Miller is a Sociology professor at Concordia University in Seward, NE and a certified spiritual director. She sees directees privately and has led Faith Builders groups at Faith Lutheran in Seward.

The Rev. Patrick Sipes lives in Byron as a certified spiritual director and a Transitional pastor. He is currently working toward a second Master’s degree through Creighton University’s Spirituality Program.

The Rev. Eric Spruth-Janssen was certified in the first class of Seeking the Spirit Within in 2010. He and his wife are pastors at St. James Lutheran in Humboldt, and he also serves at Mosaic. Eric sees people privately for spiritual direction.

Connie Stover, Deacon, is the **Director of Seeking the Spirit Within**. She has oversight of the students in the formation program who are training to become spiritual directors, supervises certified spiritual directors, leads congregational retreats, and leads the *Companions in Christ* faith formation program at First Lutheran in Kearney. Connie also does private direction with individuals.

The Rev. Ann Sundberg is the pastor at Immanuel Lutheran in Chadron and a certified spiritual director. She is leading Immanuel through the Transformation ministry and does individual spiritual direction with people in the Panhandle.

Are you ready to expand and deepen your faith? [Drinking From the Well](#) is open to you.

Registrations are now being accepted for the class beginning this September and going through April, 2018. The number of registrations is limited and is on a first come, first served basis, so it is important to act soon.

- ✓ You will get a warm-up email in August.
- ✓ From September through April, in the first part of each month, a synod-wide webinar will introduce an hour-long lesson on the spiritual life and a prayer practice, with additional time for Q&A.
- ✓ In the middle of the month, you get to meet with a small group led by a certified spiritual director for two hours somewhere in the general vicinity of your home. (The location, date, and time will be determined when we know who is participating.)

Your commitment is to

- ✓ Watch the webinar each month. The webinars will be recorded so you can watch them as often as you would like, on your own time. Have your computer or smart phone or tablet connected so you can access the webinars.
- ✓ Try the new prayer practices throughout each month and discover what the Holy Spirit is inviting you to.
- ✓ Attend the spiritual direction group in your area.

Cost: This eight-month course is only \$250! That's about \$10/hour for each webinar and spiritual direction experience, a fraction of the cost if you were to buy them separately on the open market. The primary book we will be using is *Creating a Life with God*, by Daniel Wolpert. It is currently selling for \$10.06 on Amazon.

How to register: Go online to the homepage of Seeking the Spirit Within. <https://nebraskasynod.org.presencehost.net/discernment/spiritualdirection/stsw.html> to access the link to the downloadable registration form.

Then, print, fill it out, and send the form along with a check for \$250.00 to the Nebraska Synod, 6757 Newport Ave., Suite 200, Omaha, NE 68152 with a note that it is for **Drinking From the Well.** Your registration will be complete when your payment is received by the Synod Office.

Have questions?

Contact Connie Stover at conniestover@nebraskasynod.org, Carm Aderman at carmala@icloud.com, or any of the people on the organizing team listed above.



The price will be increasing to \$285 by summertime, so register soon to get the best deal.