

Courage to Lead Retreat:

<http://alturl.com/jp92a>

Five Oaks, Paris, Ontario

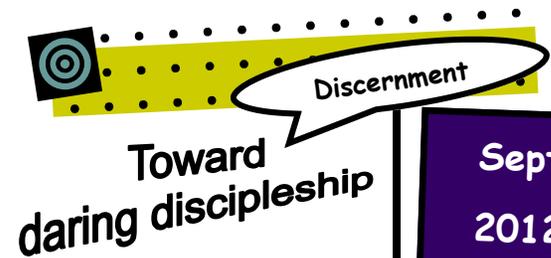
Oct 22-24

with Mardi Tindal and Fred Monteith

Includes 'Clearness Committee discernment process'



**Grant us, O God,
a discerning heart and
mind,
that we may seek and find
your Will for us.**



**Sept
2012**

Parker J. Palmer has created a retreat-based approach to renewing personal identity, professional integrity and vocational vitality. *Participants seeking personal and professional renewal expand their capacity to listen and be present, improve their ability to build trustworthy relationships, and find the courage to live authentically asking the questions: "How can I maintain a strong connection between who I am and what I do?" "What practices will help me align my soul and my role?" "When pulled in so many directions that I feel dis-membered, how can I re-member myself and stay connected to the heart of my vocation?"*

Among other things this process includes participating in the Clearness Committee discernment process.



web HINT:

For long URL addresses, go to the online publication <http://www.hamconf.org/TowardDD.html> and cut and paste the link rather than attempting to type it in.

1 Kings Chapter 3 selected verses

Solomon loved the Lord ... At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, 'Ask what I should give you.' And Solomon said, 'You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David...And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people... Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?'

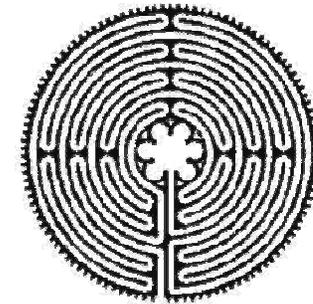
... God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right...I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

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**Discernment
Tools**

Lorna MacQueen
Hamilton Conference Minister- Faith Formation for Discipleship
The United Church of Canada

**Discernment
Tools**



Discernment:
A newly fashionable
old word-
-But how do we go
about it?
Here are a few tools for
those seeking processes
for groups or
individuals .

I delight to do
your will,
O my God;
Your law is
within my
heart...
... may all who
seek you rejoice
and be glad in
you;
may those who
love your
salvation say
continually,
"Great is the
Lord!"

Ps 40 selected vs
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Grant us, O God, a discerning heart...

Spiral Model of Theological Reflection

Centre for Christian Studies

(creative commons usage)

<http://www.ccsnline.ca/Resources/ideas/spiral.html>

or <http://alturl.com/z83yq>

The Spiral Model begins with a concrete experience explored through emotions and senses associated with that experience. What are the patterns, ideas, and connections arising from this experience and what course of action emerges? **A synopsis of the process:**

1. Concrete Experience Described:

Meaningful, impactful (+ or -), an "aha" (insight) etc.

2. Reflective Observation: EXPLORE EMOTIONS AND SENSES

Feelings/behaviour/leadership:

- * What did I see and hear? *How I saw/see others?
- * How do I perceive others see themselves?
- * What are the tensions?
- * How does this experience affirm my prior assumptions/ideas/skills/experience /knowledge?
- * How does it unsettle and challenge my prior assumptions/beliefs/experiences/skills/knowledge?

3. Abstract Conceptualization: NAMING IDEAS, PATTERNS AND CONNECTIONS

- * What does this experience mean/say to me? personally/professionally
- * Explore: readings, research biblical connections, stories, images, theological reflections, social analysis, questions, ministry implications...

4. Active Experimentation: HOW CAN I ACT?

- * In what situations can I test this understanding/insight / awareness?
- * Are there follow-up actions I need to take in terms of relationships (e.g. addressing conflict)?
- * How would I adapt/modify my future behaviour/actions?
- * What blocks and supports are there to action?
- * What alternative strategies are there for action?
- * What are the implications (for all) in not taking action?
- * What reading/research/resources can I discover for more depth and understanding?
- * What skills/knowledge/values do I need to acquire?



Quaker Group Discernment Practice

Good News Associates Leadership Institute for Group Discernment

May 20-23, 2013 - Tilikum Retreat Center, Newberg, OR, USA
<http://goodnewsassoc.org/leadershipinstitute/>

There is a growing hunger across the Christian community to find ways to listen to God and be faithful to God's Leadings. Christian leaders are catching a vision that group discernment is an integral congregational skill for the empowered work of the church....But where does a leader start? And how does the leader help the congregation gain these skills?

Quakers (Friends) have been utilizing group discernment as the basis of decision making for over 350 years.... Their perspective and practice of listening to God in community are a gift to the broader Christian community..

GOOD NEWS Associates is a non-profit ministry that has been instrumental in promoting collaborative workshops and writing on group discernment.

The Institute is a three and a half day experience to empower church leaders in group discernment. It will integrate theological, spiritual and practical organizational processes.

Other Quaker Resources:

- Discover thyself: Discernment for Youth
<http://www.discoverthyself.org/discernment/>
- A Quaker Process: <http://www.quaker.org.uk/spiritual-discernment>
- Centre for Courage and Renewal group discernment process:
<http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/writings/clearness-committee>

From: <http://goodnewsassoc.org/leadershipinstitute/publications/>

- *"Meeting for Worship in Which business is Conducted - Quaker Decision Making Process as Spiritual Discernment"*
Paul Anderson
- *"Discernment-Corporate and Individual Perspectives"* B. Bishop
- *"Discernment-Corporate and Individual Considerations"*
Chuck Conniry
- *"Voting Not to Vote" - Toward Consensus in the WCC"* Eden Grace

A Method of Group Decision Making

ignationspirituality.com (<http://alturl.com/momf4>)

Central to this method is the isolation of pros from cons, and the uninhibited expression of arguments, both pro and con, by each participant. Each is expected to disclose how he or she thinks (judges) the situation to be. An inclination "pro" will not hold up if it rests on inaccurate data. Is it true or false? is a question of intelligence or understanding.

Each participant is also to disclose how he or she feels about each side of the issue. Is it good or bad? is very much a question of feeling.

*To discern or decide well a person must be **ready to move** in any direction that God wants, therefore radically free; **open to sharing** all that God has given him or her, therefore radically generous; **willing to suffer** if God's will requires it, therefore radically patient; **questing for union** with God in prayer, therefore radically spiritual.*



Discerning Direction for a Particular Issue

N. Graham Standish

<http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=2174>

Creating "Breadlike Boards" Charles M. Olson

<http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=2876>

Board Retreat Helps Church Chart Path for Growth

<http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=5884>

The Synagogue Leadership Agenda: Redesigning Boards to Unleash Congregational Energy

Robert Leventhal

<http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=2282>

