

WHY THE PROCESS?

There are times when we feel uncertain or even “stuck” about what our next step in life might be. Perhaps we’re not clear about the gifts we bring to any given situation. At these times, it can be helpful to have others surround us in a spirit of prayer and discernment about how and to what God might be calling us.

The Gifts & Call Ministry Team would like to help if you are experiencing such a time in your life. Guided by the conviction that God understands our lives to be full of possibilities and reveals those to us if we listen, our ministry team offers its services as a resource on your journey.

In summary, the goals of the process are to:

- discover, name, and affirm your gifts and talents;
- point toward vocational situations where you might best use your gifts and find satisfaction;
- inspire you to think beyond the current obvious possibilities.

After completion of the process, you will be provided with a typed copy of the notes taken by the facilitators, including the list of “vocational wishes.” Your facilitators will follow up to help you further process the experience.

*“Now there are varieties of gifts,
but the same Spirit;
and there are varieties of services,
but the same Lord;
and there are varieties of activities,
but it is the same God who
activates all of them in everyone.”*

I Corinthians 12:4-6

FACILITATORS

Experienced facilitators from the Gifts & Call Ministry Team will:

- guide you in preparing for participation in the discernment process;
- lead the four-hour process;
- offer to follow-up with you to discuss the advice offered during the process and potential next steps.

Contact any member of the ministry team (see back page) to learn more and discuss whether the Gifts & Call Discernment Process is right for you.

GETTING READY

Once you decide to participate in the process, you will begin creating a list of all your life’s “accomplishments”—big and small, personal and professional—from childhood to the present. For purposes of this process, you will measure your accomplishments by the deep sense of joy and energy they have given you, rather than by anyone else’s measure of success or significance.

When you are satisfied that you have captured all your accomplishments, you will narrow the list to your top ten choices. Once again, your top ten list should be defined by those accomplishments that you value most—by those that, upon reflection, give you a sense of deep joy and energy.

GATHERING A CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

As you develop your accomplishments list, we will help you identify several individuals to invite into your discernment process. Your circle should include people you trust and who know you well. They will need to commit to joining you on an agreed-upon date—typically a Saturday morning—and participating in the four-hour discernment process. While it may feel like asking a lot, our experience has shown that people are usually honored to be invited to participate in the process.

THE DISCERNMENT PROCESS

After opening in prayer, your facilitator will invite you to share your top ten accomplishments. As you tell the stories behind the accomplishments, the group will begin identifying your gifts and skills.

After a careful process of prioritizing your gifts and skills, the facilitator will invite your friends to formulate “vocational wishes” for you—imagined opportunities for which they feel you are best suited based upon the information you share during the process. You will have a chance to identify the opportunities that feel most right to you from among those suggested, and to speak a bit about why.

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you,
says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not
for harm, to give you a future with hope.”*

Jeremiah 29:11

IS THE PROCESS RIGHT FOR ME?

"I had been struggling for several years with the direction I wanted to take professionally, after being home with our children for many years. Through the process, I was able to define and reconnect with actions I had taken in my life that had given me the greatest joy. The clarity that came with that discovery process led me to a teaching position that I'm convinced is exactly where I am meant to be. What a gift!"

--Jane Shanny, participant

"Extremely affirming. I left the process with even more questions, which has led me to consider even more possibilities. The greatest gift is that the members of my discernment team were wonderfully insightful and continue to be supportive and encouraging."

--Ann Finnie, participant

"By clearly identifying my personal strengths and values, the process helped develop a stronger sense of who I am, and enabled me to move forward with confidence and clarity."

--Drew Morgan, participant & college student



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Please contact any member of the ministry team
for additional information.

BACKGROUND

The Gifts & Call Discernment Process is based on the research and theory of Bernard Haldane, a person of deep faith and founder of a nationwide executive placement firm.

Haldane's significant insight was to see people's joy-filled and energy-giving accomplishments as a clue to the particular gifts or strengths they will want to bring to any future endeavor. Haldane discovered that the gifts and talents most important to happiness are often taken for granted—and thus overlooked—when we are exploring new vocational options.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR GIFTS *Listening for Your Call*

GIFTS & CALL DISCERNMENT PROCESS

GIFTS & CALL MINISTRY TEAM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
NORWELL