

Listen! Tuning In to the Voice of God

An Invitation to a Year-Long, Congregational Practice of Discernment

“Discernment about what God desires does not follow a formula. It flows out of a relationship and personal history with God.” ~Jeannette Bakke

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” ~Galatians 5:22-23

“. . . as far as we are concerned, we should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short life.” ~St. Ignatius of Loyola

For Your Reflection:

What choices have I made that opened me to grow in the fruits of the Spirit, and what choices have I made that blocked such growth?

Where is the Spirit calling you to live as a beloved child of God rather than as a child of the world’s expectations?

What might you need to give up or let go so that you can grow in your ability to discern God’s will?

Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition:

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Creating the Conditions for Discernment:

Before your regular practice of Examen*, take a few moments to set these intentions:

1. Holy Relationship - Have a living relationship with God
You are growing in love for God and receiving love as God's beloved child. You are opening yourself to God's grace as you seek to know and connect with God more.
2. Holy Indifference - Want God's will more than your own
You are aware of your own desires and agendas, yet you care enough about what God intends to lay aside your own desires, preferences, biases, allowing yourself to listen to God openly.
3. Holy Obedience - Commit to acting on what you discern as God's will
You are ready to trust and follow where God is leading you, even if it's uncomfortable, defies logic, goes against what other expect.

*described in last week's handout, now on www.princetonumc.org

*"Make me know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths."
~Psalm 25:4*

Book suggestion: *Discernment* by Henri Nouwen