



Spiritual Director Formation Program 2019

Introduction

The program is by genesis a development of the Emmanuel Program first compiled in Tasmania and brought to NSW by Sr. Eleanor Dawson rsj. a founding member of CRD, now known as Conference of Spiritual Directors (CSD). The program is offered in the “Contemplative Approach”.

The Emmanuel program has been offered most recently in Woy Woy, 2010 – 2013 graduating 7 spiritual directors and in Newcastle 2011 – 2014 graduating 8 spiritual directors.

The following definition highlights the core characteristics of the Contemplative approach:-

“We define Christian Spiritual Direction as help given by one Christian to another which enables that person to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God, and to live out the consequences of the relationship. The *focus* of this type of Spiritual Direction is on experience, i.e., any experience of the mysterious Other whom we call God. Moreover, this experience is viewed, not as an isolated event, but as an expression of the ongoing personal relationship God has established with each one of us.” (William A. Barry & William J. Connelly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, 1992)

The Ethos of the program

- The program is modelled on the spiritual direction process as described by Barry and Connelly in their book ‘The Practice of Spiritual Direction’. The leaders hold a contemplative space for the participants to pay attention to God’s communication to them.
- The agenda for contemplation is the experiences offered to participants during the course and those in their own lives.
- The capacity to listen with an informed heart is a slow process needing time and space. Hence there is a major emphasis on contemplative listening. Opportunities are given to do this throughout the program.
- The importance of Supervision in developing a contemplative stance. Each session includes reflection and feedback in a group- supervision context.
- The group process is valued whereby meeting locally and monthly participants grow in their capacity to trust each other and deepen their own self-disclosure.
- The leaders model the contemplative stance by their ability to listen, guide and direct the group.
- Committed to a discernment process where participants take responsibility for their own discerning in an Adult Education context. It is assumed that participants come to the course with clearly articulated faith, have taken advantage of many opportunities to become theologically literate and have a disciplined spiritual life.
- Discernment of the Call to be a spiritual director is regularly tested to ensure that the call is real and current. A formal interview is held each year between the participant and the Formation team to discern together the state of the Call.

Key Concepts

- An understanding of God's desire to be in relationship with the human person and of that person's faith response to God present in their daily life;
- An understanding of religious experience in terms of the total human experience;
- A way of contemplative listening that is grounded in one's relationship with God;
- A way of living that values discernment and the recognition of the movement of God within one's life;
- An appreciation of the rich resources of the Christian contemplative tradition that can enhance and deepen one's spiritual life.
- A conviction that being in Spiritual Direction is a core catalyst for spiritual growth.

Standards for Formation.

The National body called Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD) www.spiritualdirection.org.au sets the standard for formation courses in Australia. The Emmanuel program is working towards being consistent with these standards and after consultation with AECSD will apply for accreditation in due course. The rest of this description of the course needs to be understood in relation to the AECSD standards. This program will feature:

- The integration of experience and theory in an adult learning environment; and comprise 200 hours of student contact including 50 hours of supervision. (cf AECSD website 5.2)

The Program - A four-year course in 2, two-year parts, meeting monthly February to November with a retreat weekend each November.

- First half of the monthly meeting includes a Centring time, reflecting on scripture or input on an identified Contemplative Learning Goal and sharing the experience with the group.
- Second half of meeting: Observing, participating and reflecting on presented spiritual direction experiences.
- There will be 2 main texts book 'The Practice of Spiritual Direction' by William A. Barry and William J. Connolly. The first 7 Chapters will form the basis of the homework reflections. 'Sacred is the Call' Edited by Suzanne M. Buckley.
- Shared meal between the 2 halves.

Years 1 & 2

The first 2 years of the formation program concentrates on developing an articulated understanding of Spiritual Direction, a contemplative approach to all of one's experience, developing a contemplative heart, greater self-understanding, identifying one's own feelings and the role of discernment. Learning mainly occurs by watching and reflecting.
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During the first year the leaders take the role of spiritual director and directee in realplay sessions (like a roleplay but using real experiences), followed by group supervision.
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During the 2nd year each participant in turn takes the part of directee. The rest of the group take the role of observer. The realplay is followed by a supervisory learning session.

Years 3 & 4 - Practicum

Year 3

Each session, after the centering time and introduction to the theme, triads will be formed. Each participant will take at least 6 turns over the year to be a director, directee and an observer in two real-plays each week. One before dinner and one after. Each real-play will be followed by a group supervisory session. One of the leaders will be present in each group as supervisor.

Part of the homework will include the writing of 6 verbatims (a recollected account of the conversation when playing the role of Director) over the year, 4 of which will be presented for group supervision and reflected on by appointed supervisor outside of group meetings.
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Year 4. Each participant, during the year:

Will have at least 6 spiritual direction sessions as director external to the program. Meet with allocated prospective directee's for initial information and discernment interview.
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Will have 6 individual supervision sessions with an appointed supervisor outside of group meetings.

Present 2 verbatims for group supervision during monthly meetings. These can be the same as those taken to individual supervision.
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Lead a Centering time at the beginning of a formation session.
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Assessment

Each session has a Contemplative Learning Goal. Written work after each session submitted as homework will be a means of assessment.
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Participation in group activities, preparing verbatims, supervision reports.
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Discerning with the facilitators the call to the ministry of Spiritual Direction.

On completing the program, participants will be able to:

Hold a contemplative attitude to themselves
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Adopt a contemplative stance to their directees.

Practice in an ethical and professional manner . (Definitions in AECSD website section 4)
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- Continuing from one year to the next is dependent primarily on a participant's ongoing discernment, supported and assisted by other participants and the ongoing conversations with the formators from year to year. In particular, an in depth conversation between participants and the formators, is held at the end of each year based on the assessment criteria. This ongoing discernment process is also supported by the participant's outside supervisor in the final year of the program.
- Importantly, a participant's ongoing discernment is not simply reducible to satisfactory fulfilment of the formal work-requirements of the program. For some participants it brings the affirmation of a call to the ministry of spiritual direction. For others, it can mean discerning not to be involved in the ministry of spiritual direction. The program provides a powerful opportunity for ongoing spiritual development whether or not a participant chooses to be involved in the ministry of spiritual direction at the completion of the program.

- Those who meet the practical and academic criteria, and in whom we discern the presence of a call, will be issued with a Certificate of Accreditation to that effect. They will be given a reference to Conference of Spiritual Directors (CSD) for membership if they so wish.
- Those who have participated and whom we have discerned are not called to this ministry will be issued with a Certificate indicating they have completed the Requirements of the Course.

Requirements:

- Ongoing Spiritual Direction with a trained director. (cf AECSD webpage 8.7)
- Commitment to personal prayer-life pattern and willingness to reflect on their experience.
- Be connected with a worshipping community of faith
- Attendance and participation at all sessions
- Commitment for 12 months (initially).
- A monthly written response to an article.
- Considered written reflection on each session.

Location:

The Adamstown Uniting Church (AUC) 228 Bruncker Rd. Adamstown NSW.

Email info@adamstownuca.org.au Phone 4957 1887. <https://adamstownuca.org.au>

The Church located in the centre of the greater Newcastle area in NSW has as its 3 areas of focus 'Faith, Justice and Creativity'. The face of its ministry is in the areas of Community Development, Music, The Arts and Justice Making. This expanding ministry is to include a new area of Spiritual Development where people have an opportunity to grow in faith. In 2019 this will include a Spiritual Director Formation Program preparing appropriate people for the ministry of Spiritual Direction.

Meeting Times:

On the first Monday of the month February to November 5.30 – 9.30pm

Retreat weekend. Third weekend of November, 9.30am – 4.30pm Location TBA.

Cost:

\$850 first year (or by regular instalments).

Further Information

Contact Malcom Drake Email malcomdrake@bigpond.com or Phone (02 49209878)

Applications:

The application form is attached

Closing Date: Friday 16th November 2018

Rev Malcolm Drake, Adamstown Uniting Church, PO Box 20 Adamstown 2289

Facilitators:

Rev. Malcolm Drake, M.Div B.A.(hons. Psychology); Grad. Dip. Counselling; Grad. Dip. Soc. Sci.; Associate Minister Adamstown Uniting Church; Certificate in Spiritual Direction (SCRD, '03); Spiritual Direction Supervision one week intensive, Campion Retreat Centre. Member of Conference of Spiritual Directors; Ministerial Professional Supervisor; Retired Psychologist (2013)

Rev. Nerida Drake, M.Div.; M.Theol; B.A., Dip. Ed., Associate Minister of Adamstown Uniting Church; Certificate in Spiritual Direction (SCRD, '03); Certificate in the Art and Practice of Supervision including Practicum, Canisius College (2013); Prescribed training to provide Professional Supervision for Uniting Church (2015); Member of Conference of Spiritual Directors.

Christine O'Connor rsj, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph Lochinvar; Primary school teacher for fifteen years; lived and worked at a house for people living with HIV/AIDS for ten years; Certificate in Spiritual Direction (SCRD, '02); Member of Conference of Spiritual Directors; Spiritual Director in Sydney, Newcastle and in the Kimberley region of WA where she lived for seven years.

Spiritual Direction Formation 2019 Application Form

Name:	
Address:	
Phone (s)	Age:
Email address:	
Faith Community:	
Current Occupation:	
Educational Background:	
Any formal or informal Courses attended:	

Referees:

Please list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of two people whom you would trust to know your work and potential as a spiritual director/guide. Ask these people to send us a letter of recommendation for you before the application deadline, using the following guideline.

“You have been asked to furnish a personal recommendation for an applicant for this course. The application process seeks to discern the readiness and suitability of applicants for the course. We ask you in this reference to tell us whatever you can about the applicant which will inform our discernment. We thank you for your willingness to assist in this important way.”

Referee 1

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Referee 2

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Personal Essay

As part of your application form, we ask you to prepare a personal essay telling us what you want us to know about yourself. Our task at the outset is to discern with you about your readiness and suitability for this course – so include in your essay everything you think will help us in our discerning.

In particular we want you to comment on these points which are requirements for all applicants. Please demonstrate for us how you understand for yourself

- your sense of call to the ministry of spiritual direction and evidence of your giftedness for this vocation;
- your capacity to listen empathically and enter sensitively into spiritual conversation;
- your life experience which enables you to respond with wisdom to a wide range of people;
- your openness to learning from your own and others' experience; as well as to learning from scripture and tradition, study, reflection, written and group work;
- your mature and committed Christian faith, an openness to struggle, a willingness to change in response to the call of God, and an openness to the whole community of faith;
- your love of and commitment to prayer;
- your experience of receiving direction and your current direction relationship.

Return your application by 16th November 2018, to Rev Malcom Drake
Adamstown Uniting Church PO Box 20 Adamstown 2289