

A PARTNER FOR YOUR JOURNEY

One of the priorities of the Metro D.C. Synod is to empower and equip healthy leaders. That process begins with a year of intentional discernment before entering the candidacy process to become a rostered minister in the ELCA.

As a partner in this process, the Metro D.C. Synod Candidacy Committee has developed an intentional process for anyone experiencing the stirrings of the Spirit who would like to engage an intentional journey of discernment.

WE PROVIDE:

- purposeful spaces to ask hard questions
- informal and structured wrestling time
- committed resources to ponder what God is calling you to next

FROM THE BISHOP

While the path of discernment will look different for each person, we recognize how a process can help shape and guide the journey.

Regardless of where the discernment path takes you, we pray this process will help you grow in your faith and your articulation of your call.

Peace on the journey,

Bishop Leila Ortiz, the Metro DC Synod Staff,
and the Metro DC Candidacy Committee

THE METROPOLITAN
WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD'S
GUIDE TO AN INTENTIONAL
YEAR OF DISCERNMENT

Learn More at: www.Metrodcelca.org/discernment

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TO BE
COMFORTABLY

Uncomfortable



JOIN A DISCERNMENT GROUP

While it may feel unsettling to engage a time of discernment, there are others who are also experiencing the stirring of the Spirit and need intentional time, space, and accountability partners to discern what is next.

We have created virtual discernment groups of 6-8 people who meet once a month for six months to listen intently to the invitations God is offering.

BY JOINING A DISCERNMENT GROUP, YOU WILL:

- Journey with fellow travelers in the discernment process
- Walk with your own discernment partner, typically your own pastor or another designated person
- Develop faith practices and a regular prayer life
- Explore the meaning of an internal and external call to ministry within the ELCA
- Ask hard questions and wrestle with the discomfort of liminal spaces
- Deepen your relationships with God, yourself, and others

READ & STUDY

As you travel through the discernment process, we recommend you spend time studying the teachings of others, using a daily devotional and reflecting on how you hear Christ speaking in your life.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

- 1 STUDY SCRIPTURE**
Invest in (and read!) a good NRSV study Bible – the Lutheran Study Bible is a great option.
- 2 USE A DAILY DEVOTIONAL**
Set time aside for daily reading, prayer, and reflection paying attention to how you hear the Spirit moving in your life and the world around you.
- 3 READING AND REFLECTION**
Read one book each month, journaling about the insights you glean. A full list of recommended books is available at metrodcelca.org/discernment.

CONVERSATION & OBSERVATION

Visiting other faith communities and having intentional conversations about how to live your baptismal call in your daily vocation can be helpful in the discernment process.

THEREFORE, WE ASK THAT YOU:

- 1 VISIT 3 ELCA CONGREGATIONS/FAITH COMMUNITIES**
 - Reflect on your visit
 - Seek churches you have not visited
 - Visit churches different from your own
- 2 HAVE CONVERSATION WITH PEOPLE LIVING THEIR BAPTISMAL VOWS**
- 3 VISIT AT LEAST ONE PASTOR, ONE DEACON, AND ONE LAY LEADER**

Please reference the Reflection guides available at metrodcelca.org/discernment