

Spiritual Directors



Jenna Pirani: Jenna attends Metagem Institute, a two-year formation program for training spiritual directors. She has a B.A. in French from Rhodes College and an M.A. from Washington University in St. Louis. She currently works at Randolph School. She is an Education for Ministry (EfM) graduate, is a member of Daughters of the King, attended Cursillo, and is looking forward to serving on staff at Cursillo this fall. She participated in the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program and enjoys Centering Prayer. When she is not working, she loves to read and exercise.



Jemalee Adams: Jemalee is attending Metagem Institute, which offers a two-year program for the formation of spiritual directors. She is a former elementary school teacher, has a degree in Biblical Studies, is an EfM graduate, attended Cursillo, and served on a Cursillo staff. Jemalee was active in The Order of St. Luke (healing ministry) for many years and trained others to teach The Bethel Bible Series (Lutheran based but ecumenical studies). She has also participated in the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program. Jemalee is a lifelong learner and seeker engaged in Centering Prayer and integrated spiritual practices.



Karen Price: Raised in Alabama by devoutly secular parents, Karen spent most of her life wandering in the spiritual wilderness. She finally found a home in the Episcopal

Church where she has been an active participant for over 10 years. She is a graduate of the EfM program, a member of the Daughters of the King, a Stephen Minister, a Lay Eucharistic Minister, a Eucharistic Visitor, and a student at Metagem Institute. Karen has found her passion in contemplative practices and the ministry of spiritual direction. Having spent most of her adult life outside the church, she understands the doubts and intellectual resistance to living a spiritual life. Karen is the Vice-President of a busy heating and air conditioning company and practices many creative arts, including poetry, knitting, crochet, and drawing.



Jeff Akamatsu: Jeff is an active lay minister with an interest in integrative health. He is trained in The Living Compass program as a Congregational Wellness Advocate. Jeff is also a Stephen Minister, an associate member of the Order of St. Luke (healing ministry), a former accredited EfM mentor (10 years at 3 churches), a vowed associate member of the Order of Julian of Norwich, and a Haden Institute certified Spiritual Director. Jeff retired from a career with the federal government in human resources and from the Army as a Colonel. He received an undergraduate degree from West Point and a master's in business from Boston University. He is a co-founder of Metagem Institute (<http://metageminstitute.org/>), a non-profit organization that teaches spiritual practices and trains spiritual directors.

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Exploring Spiritual Direction



A special offering from
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
and
Metagem Institute





Spiritual Directors' Schedules

Each Spiritual Director's dates at St. Stephen's are listed below. To set up an appointment, please email the director of your choice (see bios). If you like, you may enter into discernment on how best to continue the practice of spiritual direction beyond this offering at St. Stephen's. Note: Spiritual Directors usually charge a fee; these sessions are offered free of charge so that you may experientially learn more about the practice of spiritual direction.

Jenna Pirani:

Email: jennapirani@gmail.com
Saturdays - July 15; August 12; Sept 16

Jemalee Adams:

Email: jemalee@me.com
Tuesdays - July 18; August 15; Sept 12

Karen Price:

Email: kprice1112@gmail.com
Sundays - July 16; August 13; Sept 24

Jeff Akamatsu:

Email: jeff.akamatsu@icloud.com
Wednesdays - July 19; August 16; Sept 13

Questions and Answers about Spiritual Direction

What is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual Direction is a Christian spiritual practice; it may be called a "holy conversation" where one person (the directee) seeks out another (the director) for guidance and support in the life of faith.

Who should try Spiritual Direction?

The short answer: anyone! Spiritual direction is a tool that helps us grow closer to God by giving us the time to look at our personal stories—past, present, and future—in the light of God's activity in our lives. It is distinct from psychotherapy, life coaching, and pastoral care.

Why is St. Stephen's offering it?

Spiritual direction is a habit of faith that is alive and well throughout today's world, including our own diocese! By bringing spiritual direction to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, we hope to raise awareness of the great benefits spiritual direction offers us, as well as provide an easy way for interested persons to explore this ministry.

What will it be like?

After scheduling with one of the Spiritual Directors, you will meet at St. Stephen's in a room that will be set aside for your meeting which will last for most of one hour. Because this is a new practice for many of us, the directors are prepared to answer your questions about spiritual direction and—in the beginning—may helpfully guide your conversation. You may meet for spiritual direction one time per month.

How do I sign-up for Spiritual Direction?

The Spiritual Directors' email addresses are included in this brochure and can be linked to directly from our website. Please choose one to contact, and email her or him to set up an appointment. Each Spiritual Director will be on-site at the church on the specific dates listed in this brochure. The Spiritual Directors are qualified, are known to our diocese, and regularly see their own Spiritual Directors. It is perfectly fine for a woman to meet with a male director and a man to meet with a female director.

How can I learn more?

If you would like more information about spiritual direction, or if you have any questions about this offering at St. Stephen's, please contact the Rev. Mary Catherine Akamatsu (mary.c.akamatsu@metageminstitute.org). Also, two books on the practice of spiritual direction are on loan from Metagem Institute and available in the parish library:

*Holy Listening:
The Art of Spiritual Direction*
By Margaret Guenther

*Spiritual Direction Spiritual Companion:
Guide to Tending the Soul*
By Tilden Edwards

“To receive spiritual direction is to recognize that God does not solve our problems or answer all our questions, but leads us closer to the mystery of our existence where all questions cease.”

—Henri Nouwen