



Corporate Spiritual Discernment

Conversation that
Listens for God

Eastern Avenue Christian
Reformed Church with
Church Innovations

Sunday, March 6, 2022



Our Time Together

4:00 Welcome & Prayer, Deep listening to the Scriptures and to one another: *Dwelling in the Word*



4:30 Why we do Discernment
When we do Discernment
The steps in the Process

5:00 Introducing 3 Metaphors and Today's Question

5:15 Move into Small Groups

5:20 Try it Out: Small Groups Practice CSD

6:00 Reflection: What is our Sense of the Meeting?

6:25 Closing Prayer





Corporate Spiritual Discernment

conversation that listens for God



What is Spiritual Discernment? How can our church practice it?

Spiritual Discernment is making time and space to listen to how God is calling us.

- Many people do spiritual discernment in their personal prayer life.
- Congregations do it collectively as they consider what God might be calling them to be within God's mission.

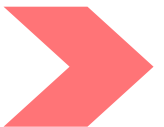


Corporate Spiritual Discernment (CSD) is a simple 90 minute meeting format which:

- helps people carve out time when they intentionally listen deeply to God's word.
- listen to one another as they seek to understand what God is calling them to be and do together.

Several Ways to practice CSD:

- A group deliberates several issues their congregation might be facing, and follow the steps of CSD using their new topic as the "question of the day."
- This group invites others in the church to a CSD meeting to discern a single major issue. The leaders help the participants to discern as a large group what God might be up to in their local church and how God might be calling them.
- A continuing group such as a church council or committee can practice CSD routinely as a way to run their meetings.





Our Discernment Meeting



Prayer for the Holy Spirit's Presence as our group discerns together

Dwelling in the Word: Philippians 1:27; 2:5-11

27 Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel,



5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name

that is above every name 10 so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



How do we Dwell in the Word?



- Listen to the passage.
- Sit in silence awhile.
- Find a reasonably friendly looking stranger & listen that person into free speech, telling you where they got caught in the passage, or what question they would ask a Bible Scholar about it.
- Trade roles with the person you listened to, allowing them to listen you into free speech.
- Share with the group what you heard your partner say.



Our Discernment Meeting

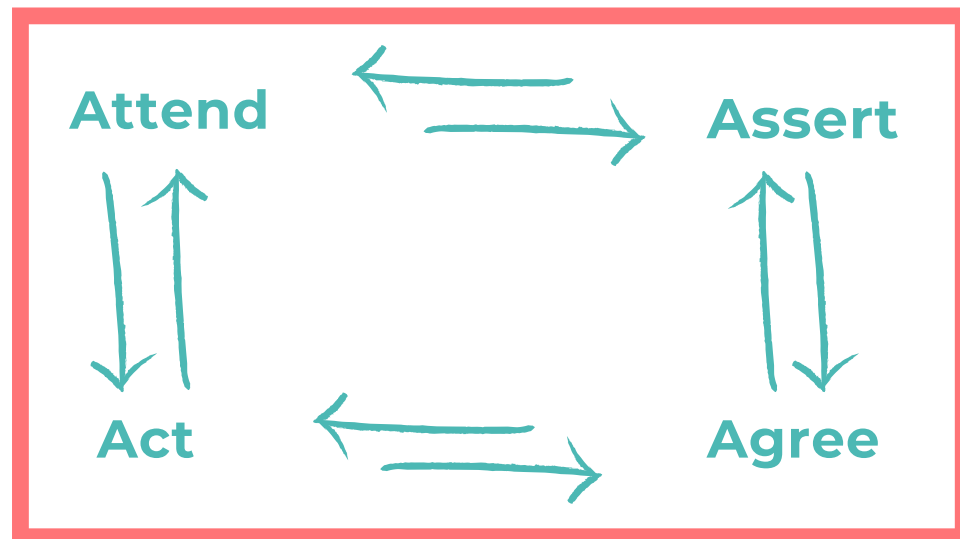
Ground Rules

Attend: To listen to someone in and beyond words.

Assert: To speak honestly, without apology or domination.

Agree: To make a communal or personal decision, to come to terms with an issue.

Act: To live out our faith in the world; action will be the fruit of this conversation.





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**Imagine a thriving Christian
community on the corner of
Eastern and Logan.
What does it look like?**



“



Brainstorm our Question through Metaphor

Gather with your assigned discussion group and fill up your flip chart with how our question is seen through the following:

TRADITION

From Nostalgia to Frontiers

Consider: the scriptures, the confessions, music, art, worship and prayer, our faith founders.



SOCIETY AND CULTURE

From Programs to Relationships

Consider: what we see/hear in the news, in our neighborhoods, at the office and in our schools, in multi-generational contexts?

EXPERIENCE OF THE FAITHFUL

From Performance to Vulnerability

Consider: Our individual and communal experiences.

How do we Brainstorm?

- Spend 5 minutes on each category.
- Don't explain your idea.
- Don't say no to anyone else's idea or go into discussion any any topic or idea.
- Make as long a list as you can for each category.

➤ Then...

Re-read the Philippians Passage; let it sit a moment.



Begin a Floated Conversation



How do we float a conversation?

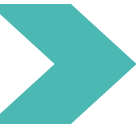
This kind of conversation is our goal: Listening deeply to one another and listening deeply for the Holy Spirit's voice among us.

God acted in Jesus' story; we hear it in this passage

What is God up to for us in our question?



Full Group Report Back & Wrap Up



**Returning to the fellowship room,
we will Seek a Sense of the Meeting
together.**

Please complete the attached Feedback Form BEFORE leaving today!
Additional feedback can be given to members of the Vision Team
via email, phone or personal conversation ANYTIME!



Feedback Form



1. Name the helpful things you learned/ remembered today

2. Name some things that were obstacles to your learning and participation.

3. Tell how you would like to cultivate habits of Corporate Spiritual Discernment in our congregation, and anything you might need to help do that as we continue to partner with Church Innovations.

Your name (optional):