



# SEEDS

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GOOD NEWS *Associates*

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## The Way of the Spirit

by Christine Betz Hall

*“We serve in the new way of the Spirit”* —Romans 7:6 NIV



What do you want from a life of faith? Maybe you've attended worship for years, read books, gone to bible studies and retreats. You wonder, "Will it ever come together into some clear whole?" Or "I know I have gifts I'm meant to use for good, but it's not happening. What's holding me back?" Maybe you ask the first question this way, "What does God desire of my life? How can I do what I am called to do?"

With the author of the letter to Romans above, I follow a new *way of the Spirit*, an invitation to experience guidance in each moment about who I am and how I live. Good News Associates welcomed me in June to support a leading to begin a program by this same name, *Way of the Spirit*. I offer my gifts, education and vision to help deepen your faith commitment, to use your gifts for good, and do what you are called to do. Through the *Way of the Spirit* contemplative study program, God could empower you to grow into your unique gifts and serve your community with practical grace and joy.

### What is the *Way of the Spirit* program?

*Way of the Spirit* is a series of retreats weaving intellectual discovery, spiritual growth, and service. We live and learn as a gathered community at a retreat center for several days, three times over the course of a year. Single, private rooms support individual reflection and renewal. Men and women who participate come from diverse faith communities in western North America—Quakers from unprogrammed and Evangelical traditions, as well as other Christian denominations. As we build relationships across the spectrum of faith traditions, participants accompany each other into greater faithfulness.

The curriculum offers a substantial experience of theological exploration outside of graduate school or seminary. It is grounded in Christian and Quaker heritage. Core teachers and guest speakers from unprogrammed and Evangelical Quaker traditions offer presentations on prayer disciplines, scripture, Christian and Quaker history, spiritual discernment, models of service, and more. Study comes *alive* through individual reflection and small group contemplation. Between retreats our learning takes root as we connect with each other in a private online discussion forum, and meet with a local support committee.

### How does *Way of the Spirit* work?

The program empowers participants through humility, discernment, and community. First we focus on our inner life with God. Any self-searching requires humility, not an easy term in contemporary

circles. Early Quakers spoke of their spiritual awakenings as if God blasted a powerful searchlight through them. Inner weaknesses, secrets and laziness were revealed. How could I submit to such a Light? Because I know the enfolding Love that desires and generously offers so much *more* for me.

“More” unfolds as I hone a capacity for discernment. Dedicated attentiveness to thoughts, emotions, “consolations and desolations” improves awareness of divine nudges and grander calls. *Way of the Spirit* explores the dynamic relationship between the inner life of faith and rightly ordered activism, service or ministry. Quaker heritage offers powerful models for group discernment and accompaniment in ministry. With the support of a caring community, those who follow the *Way of the Spirit* encounter that inward Life and Power which transforms and lends us courage to act as God leads.

*“The Inner Light, the Inward Christ, is no mere doctrine, belonging peculiarly to a small religious fellowship, to be accepted as mere belief. It is the living Center of Reference for all Christian souls . . . the center and source of action, not the end point of thought . . . the locus of commitment, not a problem for debate.”*

—Thomas Kelley, *A Testament of Devotion*.

### Is *Way of the Spirit* for you?

- Do you wish to become more aware of and obedient to God’s calling in small daily ways or larger ministry?
- Do you desire to develop a capacity for silence, inward listening and expectant waiting on the Spirit?
- Are you willing to be changed, or transformed by the exercise of the Spirit?
- Are you prepared to be taught by the ongoing Judeo-Christian narrative?
- Can you listen to others respectfully? Are you open to exploring and translating the spiritual language of others so that communication flows freely?

If you felt inward affirmation as you read these queries, the *Way of the Spirit* may be a meaningful experience for you. Please consider attending this fall’s single weekend retreat. Or imagine participating in a year-long series to begin in spring 2012. [Sign the mailing list here to receive the latest news.](#)

### Upcoming stand-alone *Way of the Spirit* retreat

#### **Inner Fire: prayer to kindle, illuminate or renew your ministry or service**

November 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 2011, Friday, 5:30 p.m. — Sunday, 4:00 p.m.

Seabeck Retreat Center, on Hood Canal, WA

\$255-\$285 (+ \$25 after October 2nd)

**Facilitators:** Christine Betz Hall, Quaker spiritual director/guide, retreat leader & Good News Associate, in collaboration with **Nate Macy**, Quaker pastor & musician.

**Details online at** <http://goodnewsassoc.org/associates/christine-hall/retreats/>



A 20 year member of the Religious Society of Friends in the unprogrammed tradition, Christine Betz Hall holds a Masters Degree in Transforming Spirituality from Seattle University’s ecumenical School of Theology and Ministry. As an experienced spiritual director, educator and retreat leader, she is called to teach and nurture the spiritual lives of individuals, Quaker communities and the larger Society of Friends.

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