



FAQ'S ABOUT OUR LTYL & INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

LISTEN TO YOUR LIFE: A SACRED VOICE IS CALLING *The Art of Opening to God in All of Life*

Listen to Your Life is an initiative for all seeking to live their life in the world as a response to the Spirit's gifts and call. The key to discerning the invitation of God to next steps is to listen deeply to the many ways the Spirit is already present in your daily life and across time in your particular 'life-story'. It will provide foundations for discovering anew who you are today and for growing in response to the call of God to offer yourself in life-giving service.

This program, which is offered annually, is the pre-requisite for our two-year Internship in the Art of Spiritual Direction, and serves as an excellent foundation for other Bread of Life programs like the Chrysalis training for facilitators of transformational arts, and Contemplative Dialogue.

Others, perhaps most, will sense a call to service in their home churches, communities, and workplaces in new and creative ways.

What is the theological stance that underlies both offerings? We believe that the Mystery we call God is fully present in any and all human experience and that our human vocation is to wake up individually and corporately to the truth and grace of that presence. We attend to that awakening to encourage our own and others' participation in the ongoing transformation of the world toward the intent of God's heart – a work in which all are invited to participate.

Grounded in Christian faith and practice, we draw on the rich resources of other traditions as a complement. We trust that a work of the Spirit in our time is to go so deeply into one's own faith tradition that we are touched by the one Spirit alive in each tradition for the good of all. We find that cultivation of a contemplative attitude and attention to the building of community are foundational elements within which the faithful life takes shape. For this reason we seek to express the following elements of practice in our times together:

- A combination of retreats and monthly Saturdays designed for the spaciousness needed to take "a long, loving look at the real."
- An integrative and holistic approach encompassing the whole human soul — body, mind, heart and spirit — evoking breadth and depth in life and experience of God.
- Practice of ongoing personal self-reflection and corporate contemplative dialogue.
- A participant-faculty ratio of no more than 6:1 to assure building of the essential experiential component of a 'holding community' needed for depth work.

What are you looking for in candidates? Given the focus of *listening to your life* for the call/invitation of the Spirit, we expect that participants will come with an exploratory spirit and the willingness to be surprised. Because the capacity to be self-reflective about one's 'sacred story' is a core component of our work, we prefer that candidates come with experience in an ongoing spiritual direction relationship. (Spiritual direction evokes a different kind of reflection than prayer partnerships,

study or prayer groups, or mutual faith-sharing relationships.) We also require that participants commit to monthly spiritual direction throughout the program and so ask candidates to begin or reengage spiritual direction right away.

For those desiring to enter the spiritual direction internship we seek growing maturity in life and faith; grounding in God through a specific faith tradition with openness to the Spirit that moves beyond one's tradition; the ability to be self-reflective; a desire and capacity to cultivate a contemplative attitude; participation in and accountability to a spiritual community; the ability to listen deeply and to maintain confidentiality; commitment to one's ongoing, emerging life in God coupled with a deep desire to encourage others in their relationship with God.

What level of commitment is required for participation in these programs? Participation in these programs requires a serious and sustained commitment to one's personal formation, including attendance at all planned meetings, regular time for prayer and reflection, assigned reading, monthly spiritual direction, and writing a monthly reflection paper. Generally we assume 15-20 hours/month for *Listen to Your Life* with a growing commitment to 20-30 hours/month in the internship years.

There's a question about "call" in the application form. What do you mean by that? Frederick Buechner says that "*The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.*" The notion of calling emerges from the understanding that every person is given gifts to exercise for the good of the whole. Call is confirmed in a 3-way partnership between God who gives the needed gift *and* the desire to use it, the person who says "Yes" to developing and expressing the gift, and the community who confirms the gift and invites the person to exercise it. Since we consider the spiritual journey to be both personal and communal, it is assumed that candidates participate in and are known by a spiritual community.

The required letter of recommendation from someone in leadership in your spiritual community is potential confirmation of this serious attention to call. We further believe that call is discerned over time. Once a person is accepted into the program, an ongoing, mutual discernment between the participant and the program staff about potential gifts and calling begins. For those interested in the Spiritual Direction Internship, this developing sense of call will be a key criterion for entry into the two-year follow-on program.

What's the process? Mail your application for *Listen to Your Life* with a letter of recommendation from a leader in your spiritual community and a non-refundable deposit of \$50 to Bread of Life, 650 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento CA 95815 (*Attention: Listen to Your Life*) for the program which begins the following fall. An ecumenical screening committee will review all submissions and contact you for a personal interview. **Process closes each June;** inquire about openings after June. Looking to apply to the Internship from an outside program? Contact Bread of Life for more information.

What does the program cost? The cost is \$2,050 for *Listen to Your Life* and includes an opening retreat (on a Friday-Sunday), plus 8 Saturday sessions from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. We meet on the second Saturday of the month with retreats spanning the second Saturday weekend. Presentations and modeling from a seasoned group of trainers with direct experience of a variety of spiritual formation practices immerse participants in their own personal formation as well as in foundational practice of the art of sacred listening. **Repeat participants are welcome** for \$1150/year. Ask for more information.

In the two-year Internship the annual fee expands to cover a second full weekend retreat and regular supervision. A small group mentor relationship in all years of these programs gives depth of personal feedback and practice. Costs for books and one's personal spiritual direction are not included.

We have limited scholarship assistance available and are willing to work with you to develop a payment plan. We encourage potential applicants to engage in conversation about their desire/call within their spiritual communities to seek financial and spiritual support.

OUR FACULTY

We have an ecumenical staff with years of experience as spiritual directors, supervisors, and trainers of spiritual directors. We maintain a ratio of 6:1 students to faculty for a quality experience. Depending on class size some mix of the following will assume leadership.



Sandra Lommasson is the founder and Executive Director of Bread of Life. Her ministry of retreat leadership, teaching and writing spans 30 years. She has served as a spiritual director to individuals, organizations, and communities since 1993 and a faculty member of formation programs for spiritual directors through Bread of Life and Mercy Center in Burlingame. Service to the community of colleagues included serving on the Council of Spiritual Directors International for 6 years. She received her formation through Mercy Center, Burlingame and is a contemplative Christian.

Jim Peterson is a spiritual director who is also engaged in retreat leadership, spiritual formation work in adult education settings, and supervision for spiritual directors. He received his formation as a spiritual director and supervisor from San Francisco Theological Seminary. A Presbyterian layperson, he has recently moved from a career in the social sciences as researcher and administrator, into working solely in the area of spiritual formation and direction.



Bill Kueppers, a Catholic layman, educator, retreat facilitator, and spiritual director, combines doctoral work in transpersonal psychology with a strong background in Christian spiritual theology and human development. For over 40 years he has consciously discerned his own life path leading to a focus on what he calls *radical authenticity*, researching and journeying with people on the sacred path of “coming home.” Bill was trained in spiritual direction both at Mercy Center and the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology. He co-facilitates Ignatian Spirituality Retreats for Homeless Men in Recovery.

Dave Olson finds he makes a significant step every 10 years or so that requires leaving a place, a position, or a set of spiritual values. The journey has carried him through many different expressions of the Christian faith, landing him at present in the Episcopal communion. Professional activities include engineer, pastor, teacher, counselor, seminar leader, consultant, pilgrimage organizer/ guide & spiritual director.



Susan Votaw experienced a renewed longing for God after retiring from 30+ years in education. It drew her back into formation, a degree in pastoral ministries and a pivotal 30 day retreat. The result? She “un-retired” to join a Catholic parish staff as liturgist and spirituality coordinator. She combines traditional practices with creative expression in group and individual spiritual direction and directs the Spiritual Exercises.