

Susan Swann's  
Spiritual Listening Group

**Summary :**

Human souls naturally have a hunger, a thirst for God, for the love that extends beyond all boundaries of space and time, any boundary we can imagine. As the Psalmist said,

If I take the wings of the morning,  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast. (Ps. 139:9-10.)

We've all had moments when we know we've glimpsed a connection to the infinity of love beyond the world we know, and those moments make us hunger for more. God made us this way – we long to love God as God longs to love us, and *does* love us. As we learn to see God's Spirit working in ourselves, in others, and in the world, we find our place in that infinite love and align ourselves with God's will.

(I'm also attaching a photo for use with this part – Word doesn't want to let me embed it into the text for some reason....)

**Longer description:**

*Seeking the Spirit* is an intentional community, meeting twice per month on alternate Tuesday evenings, in person or by Zoom as Covid, Minnesota weather and the group's preference may dictate. We will primarily be using the practices of the examen and spiritual listening to grow into discernment of the movement of the Holy Spirit.

For the purposes of this group, we'll look at the Holy Spirit as what Richard Rohr sometimes describes as "the Flow" – God in movement. In the Trinity of Lover/Beloved/Love, which is my own current path to understanding, the Holy Spirit is Love, flowing between the Creator and the Beloved and back again – and the Beloved includes all of Creation, us included.

The examen is a periodic prayerful examination of one's day, or week, or something that's just happened, to discern where God has been at work. There are many, many ways to "do" the examen, and no "right" or "wrong" way; in our first session, we'll discuss the concept in detail, and look at several representative methods. Participants will be free to find the method (or methods) that works for them, and this will be a completely shame-free zone – those of us with ADD are well aware of how hard it can be to keep to a schedule when life happens!

Spiritual listening, as we'll approach it in this community, strongly resembles the examen turned outward. We will learn to listen to others in the community with the same ear we lend ourselves in the examen, listening for the signs of the Spirit at work. (Confidentiality will be strictly maintained at all times, and Safe Church guidelines followed.)

And gradually, as we accustom ourselves to listening in this way, we begin to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in everything and everyone around us, and to know – in both head and heart – what our place is in that work, so that we may be “doers of the Word, and not hearers only.”

As a basic framework for our time together, we’ll use “The Art of Listening in a Healing Way,” by James E. Miller (Willowgreen Press, \$7.95 on Amazon – if the price is an issue for anyone, let me know at [suin1916@icloud.com](mailto:suin1916@icloud.com), and I’ll try to have some copies available before our first session.)