

Spiritual Gifts Exploration – January – Claiming our Gift

Let us begin the new year by exploring and claiming our spiritual gift(s). If you don't think you have a spiritual gift, consider Paul's words in Romans 12:5-6. "In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other. We have different gifts that are consistent with God's grace that has been given to us." In fact, I encourage you to read all of Romans 12. Throughout his writing (Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians), Paul emphasized that all who are saved by faith have been endowed with a gift of the Spirit. Ephesians 2:8-10 "You are saved by God's grace because of your faith. This salvation is God's gift. It's not something you possessed. It's not something you did that you can be proud of. Instead, we are God's accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to *do great things*. God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives." Paul often compared the church to the body, with many parts that must each work together carrying out their individual purpose in order that the whole may THRIVE.

Therefore, in order for Trinity UMC to THRIVE, we must each claim and our gift and use it for the good of the whole body. At this point, if you are still reading, you might be saying to yourself – I'm not gifted, I'm too old, I'm too young, I'm too busy, I'm not talented, I don't have the energy, I can't get out much, I'm shy, I don't know enough, I'm not good enough. Enough! God has given you a gift and the ability to use it at this stage of your life, whatever that might be. Gifts are not necessarily limited to the list that Paul gave in his letters (Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4:11-12): 1. Teaching; 2. Witness/evangelism; 3. Serving/helping; 4. Interpretation, 5. Speaking in tongues; 6. Leadership; 7. Wisdom/Understanding; 8. Pastoring; 9. Giving; 10. Preaching/prophecy; 11. Miracles; 12. Discerning true and false spirits; 13. Encouragement/exhortation,; 14. Knowledge; 15. Kindness/compassion; 16. Healing; 17. Faith; 18. Administration; 19. Apostleship.

In the list below, check 2 to 4 items that you think you are good at. No more, no less. Then match it with the spiritual gift above. (from *Each One a Minister* by William J. Carter)

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| _____ 1. Explaining things to people | _____ 2. Telling others about the faith |
| _____ 3. Tending to other people's needs | _____ 4. Helping people understand one another |
| _____ 5. Communicating in dramatic ways | _____ 6. Taking charge when needed |
| _____ 7. Understanding the meaning of things | _____ 8. Making people feel cared for |
| _____ 9. Giving graciously | _____ 10. Speaking before groups |
| _____ 11. Making unusual things happen | _____ 12. Identifying religious fraud |
| _____ 13. Encouraging and supporting others | _____ 14. Gathering and using information |
| _____ 15. Listening and/or acting sympathetically | _____ 16. Helping people become healthy |
| _____ 17. Maintaining calm in times of stress | _____ 18. Arranging meetings or programs |
| _____ 19. Leading beyond the local church | _____ 20. Singing, playing an instrument, art |

What gift or gifts of the Spirit did you discover? We each have been given one or more gifts by God. *Claiming our gift is the beginning of true ministry!* None of us can have all gifts that are necessary for the Church to THRIVE. Each of our gifts is needed for our Church to be successful What gift do you have to offer? Maybe your gift is not even on this list. Claim it! Next month we will explore more in-depth definitions for the gifts and the ways they might be used to make our church even better. You can do an online Spiritual Gifts self-assessment at

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/exploring-your-spiritual-gifts>

Please contact me or Pastor Kristie if you are interested in further discussion. Jane Whitaker, janewhitaker45@gmail.com, 865-603-8741.