

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 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; 1 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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| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Explaining things to people | <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Telling others about the faith |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Tending to other people's needs | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Helping people understand one another |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Communicating in dramatic ways | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Taking charge when needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Understanding the meaning of things | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Making people feel cared for |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Giving graciously | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Speaking before groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Making unusual things happen | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Identifying religious fraud |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Encouraging and supporting others | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Gathering and using information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Listening and/or acting sympathetically | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Helping people become healthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Maintaining calm in times of stress | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Arranging meetings or programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Leading beyond the local church | <input type="checkbox"/> 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://archive.elca.org/evangelizingchurch/assessments/spiritgifts.html>
Please contact me or Pastor Kristie if you are interested in further discussion. Jane Whitaker, janewhitaker45@gmail.com, 865-603-8741.