Spiritual Direction Certification Program
Final Project Descriptions
2016-2018 Cohort
Danielle Thompson (Birmingham, AL)

- Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- “Group Spiritual Reflection with Ministers and Missioners”

This creative approach to spiritual direction involved an integrated method for Group Spiritual Reflection in a ministry setting. The process was used with Stephen Ministers (pastoral caregivers) and with members of a medical mission team. The intent of the group process was to encourage ministers and mission leaders—who are often, understandably, other-directed and focused on external actions and outcomes—to focus on understanding oneself in relationship to one’s ministry and those whom one serves; and to explore one’s own experience of spiritual growth and transformation in a caregiving or mission context rather than attending solely to the experiences of others. Additionally, this process encouraged reflection around theological themes in pastoral care and mission.
Elizabeth Young (Carrboro, NC)

- Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- “Use of Photography in Spiritual Direction”
- This creative approach involved nature walks with a directee while taking pictures. The nature walks were followed by preview sessions of the 4x6 photographs taken. This process was similar to preview sessions “critiquing” fine art photography, but in the context of spiritual direction the holy conversation was personal and about the directee’s relationship with the Divine.
Jemalee Adams (Huntsville, AL)

- Final Project Type: Spiritual Direction Offering within a Community
- Community: St. Thomas Episcopal Church Huntsville, AL
- This team project involved conducting a Spiritual Direction Program within a church community and included the following elements:
  - Promoting the program
  - Developing an informational brochure
  - Offering a short training on “What is Spiritual Direction?”
  - Offering spiritual direction in the church for one day/month for three months
Jenna Prirani (Huntsville, AL)

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Libby Potter (Huntsville, AL)

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Linda Lou Harison (Huntsville, AL)

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Pat Jonson (Huntsville, AL)

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Patricia Hrivnak (Madison, AL)

- Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- “Spiritual Companionship in Nursing Home Environment”
- Research for this reflection paper involved regularly visiting an individual with Parkinson’s Disease (PD) living in a nursing home. As a spiritual companion, the aim was to be with her, be present in and with the Holy Spirit, listen, observe, and speak in love. The environment and the directee’s cognitive processing provided challenges to “typical” spiritual companionship. The project involved researching PD, reflecting on the Spirit’s work, and staying engaged in less than ideal conditions for Holy Listening.
Mary Ann Allan (Florence, AL)

- Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- “Group Spiritual Reflection: From Spiritual Practices to a Rule of Life”
- This creative approach to group spiritual direction started with a spiritually mature group meeting weekly to reflect on their current spiritual practices. Metagem Institute’s Spirituality Type Practices Indicator (STPI) was used to help participants identify their natural inclinations toward certain types of practices and their growth potential with other types of practices. The aim of the process was to lead participants to formulate an intentional Rule of Life with the aid of group holy listening and/or one-on-one spiritual direction.
Bob Allan (Florence, AL)

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Karen Price (Madison, AL)

- Final Project Type: Spiritual Direction Offering within a Community
- Community: St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church Madison, AL
- This project involved conducting a Spiritual Direction Program within a church community and included the following elements:
  - Promoting the program
  - Developing an informational brochure
  - Offering a short training on “What is Spiritual Direction?”
  - Offering spiritual direction in the church for one day/month for three months
Final Project Type: Research Paper

“Seeing the Divine in Our Daily Experience”

This paper examines the present secular/scientific worldview of reality and the present spiritual/Christian worldview of reality and the expressed cutting or emergent edges of each worldview together with five (5) lenses that may help us see the Divine in our daily experience.
Susan Oakes (Birmingham, AL)

- Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- “Choosing the Path of Grateful Living Towards Death and Dying”

This research and reflection paper examines gratitude in the face of death and dying; it is not about the Pollyanna version of “choosing gratitude”, the sappy-happy kind often filled with annoying platitudes and attempts to comfort. Rather, it is about embracing gratitude in a much deeper, transformative sense through living a path of gratefulness. The grateful response means accepting the call to co-create our own lives and improve the world we live in.
Anne Kimzey (Montgomery, AL)

- Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- “I Wonder as I Wander: Living the Questions in Spiritual Direction”
- This paper examines the role questions play on our spiritual journey in promoting reflection, insight, and spiritual transformation. These include both the underlying questions we address at different stages in life and the practical ways a spiritual director can use inquiry to help the directee go deeper.