

# SCHOOL *of the* SPIRIT

An invitation to  
participate in  
School of the Spirit



*A one-year experience of spiritual formation in community for clergy and  
ministry professionals who have a quest to . . .*

*Be the change our world needs.*

*School of the Spirit*, embarking on its ninth year, is a distinct one-year school of contemplative practices grounded in the basic spiritual practices of Jesus and the early church. The focus of this structure is *not on the latest fad but on centuries-old practices* that will renew our encounter with Christ, grounded in the vitality of a committed community to hold each participant's journey. Through the living process of placing ourselves before God to be schooled by the Holy Spirit, we trust God's grace to renew our minds (Romans 12:1-2) and revive our spirits. ~ Don Carroll

Developed by Jody Seymour and a core team of seasoned facilitators and practitioners, Jody states that "*School of the Spirit* is one of the finest renewal experiences I know of for ministers. It provides needed respite and a manageable pattern for spiritual growth. I hope you will consider this opportunity as you ponder how you will 'care for your soul.' I know first-hand how thirsty we ministers can get giving other people water. This is a great stop by the well."

~ Rev. Dr. Jody Seymour, former Sr. Pastor/Davidson United  
Methodist, Davidson NC

## Program Description

Over the course of the year, students read books and articles, view life-changing documentaries, monthly engage in and experiment with a variety of spiritual formation activities/practices, develop a spiritual community with a small group of co-learners, and experience 10 days of teaching and formational activities built around time-tested concepts. This robust curriculum helps the student become more open, receptive and responsive to God's transforming grace and work in us.

Because we know *real growth takes place slowly over time with others*, this twelve-month formational program is structured as a series of retreats. With each seasonal retreat, our intent is to create an environment of prayer, learning, and formation devoted to intentionally living our faith as a way of life —no matter our setting!

## All retreats follow a similar format

- There are times for learning, reflection, engagement, and silence.
- In between times, you will have “Monthly Practice” assignments to help you prepare and put into practice your learnings.
- To further enhance your inner-transformation, you are highly encouraged to reach out to one or more of your classmates via a monthly accountability relationship to nurture your covenant journey toward God.
- In large group, small group, and solitary times, this work is about being and becoming.
- Our aim is to provide a safe space that fosters listening to how God is calling, empowering, and leading you in your journey toward wholeness.

## Retreat Dates and Themes

May 7-8, 2018	<i>Longing for More</i>
July 30-31, 2018	<i>Leading from Within</i>
October 29-30, 2018	<i>Finding Grace at the Center</i>
January 28-29, 2019	<i>Cultivating Discernment</i>
April 1-2, 2019	<i>Honoring Rhythms of Work &amp; Rest</i>



Each retreat begins on Monday at 1:00 pm (except first retreat which begins at 10:00 am), until 8:00 pm and continues on Tuesday from 9:00 am until 3:15 pm.

## Retreat Location

In an effort to keep cost to a minimum, retreats are held at the Starrette Farm Retreat. The retreat house is located at 204 Pecan Tree Lane, Statesville NC, 28625. The private homestead (est. 1888) spans 50 acres of rolling woodland and walking trails. It is only five minutes from the intersection of I-40 and I-77 on Highway 64 East. The Farm is a “day apart” venue only. In a further effort to keep costs low, *lodging is on your own and not included in retreat cost.* Statesville reduced rate options (only ten minutes or less from retreat house) are provided upon request.

*View the Farm and spacious retreat house at [www.TheLydiaGroup.com](http://www.TheLydiaGroup.com).*



## Cost and Registration *(value is \$1500 per student)*

Generous financial support through a grant from the Western North Carolina Conference Leadership Development Team makes it possible to offer School of the Spirit for a

- \$50 non-refundable deposit that is due with your application and personal statement.
- \$350 payable upon acceptance. (NOTE: If you need a “payment plan,” speak with Ann Starrette, program director, or request support from your church or organization.

## Retreat Facilitators

- Jody Seymour, Senior Advisor
- Ann Starrette, Program Director
- Don Carroll, Spiritual Director
- Nicole Greer, Leadership Coach
- Roxanne Morgan, Creative Director



For more information about School of the Spirit and a detailed description of retreat leadership, please visit [www.SchooloftheSpirit.com](http://www.SchooloftheSpirit.com), or contact Ann Starrette at 704-488-5825 or [AStarrette@DavidsonUMC.org](mailto:AStarrette@DavidsonUMC.org).

### Applications are encouraged by February 1, 2018

- Limited to 24 clergy and ministry professionals.
- To apply, please submit the following application by snail mail or email - or
- **You may submit on-line** at <http://schoolofthespirit.com/who-should-apply/>
- We anticipate more applications than spaces available.
- Applicants will be notified of selection decisions by March 1, 2018. Accepted participants will receive a detailed agenda, reading and engagement list, directions to Starrette Farm, and more in the close weeks prior to our first retreat together.
- If you are reading this after the application due date, PLEASE contact Ann at [Starrette@mindspring.com](mailto:Starrette@mindspring.com) for availability. Often times, *life happens* and a spot opens up.

## School of the Spirit Application / Cohort 9

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_ District (if Methodist) \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Mailing Address (note home or church) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

• With what ministry / organization do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your role there. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**PERSONAL DISCERNMENT**

Because the program makes a significant financial investment in its participants, it is necessary for participants to discern if *School of the Spirit* is right for you at this time. Consider the following discernment questions before you apply:

- Are you able to attend all sessions?
- Do those you are responsible for (work, staff, members to whom you report) know of your interest in School of the Spirit? Is there anyone with whom you need to have a conversation before beginning? Any support staff/lay leadership you need to put in place should something arise? —*because it will!* What, if anything, would you need from them to participate fully and freely?
- Consider the same questions in regard to your family.
- Are there any current priorities you need to consider re-arranging, or special circumstances you need to consider to be able to fully participate?

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APPLICATION continued. *Take some time to prayerfully respond to the following questions:*

1. What draws you to participate in *School of the Spirit (SOS)* at this point in your life and ministry? How do you hope to benefit?
2. Briefly describe your prayer life and the spiritual practices you engage in regularly.
3. How do these practices address your spiritual needs (body, mind, emotions and spirit)? How do they sustain and enliven you?
4. What is your experience with the ancient spiritual practices of a) spiritual direction (group and/or individual), b) centering prayer, c) lectio divina?
5. When was the last time you were part of a spiritual retreat in which you were not a leader?
6. In your life/ministry at this time, what feeds your soul? What drains or discourages you?
7. What are the biggest blocks you experience to living a life of peace, joy and freedom?
8. Fast forward to the end of your *School of the Spirit* one-year experience. Briefly describe how you hope your life/ministry will be different due to the soul strengthening wisdom received.
9. How did you hear about *School of the Spirit*?

## **Please mail**

- Your non-refundable registration deposit of \$50 (check or money-order) made payable to Davidson UMC with “School of the Spirit” on the Memo line (your check is your receipt) / along with
- Your application (unless you registered on-line)
- TO: School of the Spirit, Ann Starrette, Program Director, P.O. Box 1288 Troutman, NC 28166

**Early Deadline for Registration is February 2, 2018**  
**You can learn more about School of the Spirit at**  
**[www.SchooloftheSpirit.com](http://www.SchooloftheSpirit.com)**