

Spiritual Gifts Assessment at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church

Finding Your Spiritual Gifts

A **spiritual gift** is a significant ability given to each believer by the Holy Spirit, who thus equips and moves members of the church to serve in special ways for Christ and his kingdom. God bestows natural talents to all people, and he also bestows spiritual gifts to believers. Both talents and gifts can be used for the glory of God, but spiritual gifts are somewhat unique by their powerful nature and in their dedication to the service of the Lord. They are used for ministry to others in the church (to help members of the body of Christ) and for building up of the church (to extend the church's witness and ministry into the world).

Spiritual gifts should be discovered, developed, and used freely and willingly. We were given these gifts by God's grace, and our use of them should be just as gracious. The object is not to use the gifts to preserve Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, but to further the life of Jesus Christ in this place. Members of the congregation are encouraged to discover, develop, and use their gifts and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to find their ministry and help the church be more intentional in its ministry. Gifts are given to carry out the work of Jesus in the world, they can help us become clearer channels of God's love, and they can help us find surer steps in our pilgrimage as followers of Christ.

Understanding your Spiritual Gifts:

Which gifts have you truly been blessed with? Discovering the answer to that question requires the following:

Prayer:

Seek the Holy Spirit's guidance while evaluating your gifts.

Study:

Become familiar with the scripture references, definitions, and how each gift functions within the Body of Christ. This will provide you with a solid foundation from which to further evaluate your gifts.

Self-Examination:

Explore your feelings about each of the spiritual gifts in your cluster. Examples of how each gift may be utilized in the church are provided below. As you read these examples, ask yourself how you feel about the types of ministry activity identified for the gifts in your cluster. You may expect to feel fulfilled through the use of your gifts.

Track Your Results:

As you use your spiritual gifts, pay close attention to the results produced through your efforts. You can expect to experience positive results from the use of your gifts.

Listen For Affirmation:

As you use your spiritual gifts, listen for affirmation from other Christians. They will recognize and confirm your spiritual gifts, through genuine expressions of approval and thankfulness for a job well done!

Putting Your Gifts To Use:

All Christians are to work together, supporting one another. However, our gifts make us better prepared and equipped to perform in some areas of ministry over others. A person who is working within a ministry area they are gifted for, will be more effective in that ministry than one they not gifted for.

What types of Ministry will you be most effective in?:

What types of ministry will you be most effective in? A brief list of ministry examples follows. These examples have been provided merely as thought starters and should not be considered an exhaustive list. Use them as a starting point in exploring the possibilities for putting your gifts to use within your congregation and in your community.

Administration:

Congregation Council, Finance Staff, Sunday School Superintendent, Vacation Bible School Coordinator, Business Manager

Artistry:

Banner Making, Drama Club/Clown Ministry/Puppetry, Film/Photography Work, Crafts/Handicrafts, Decorating Team, Set/Props Design Team

Discernment:

Congregation Council, Long Range Planning Team, Social Ministry Team, Peer Counseling, Support Group Facilitator

Evangelism:

Prospective Member Visitation, Evangelism Team, Advertising and Marketing, New Member Sponsor, Community Visitation

Exhortation:

Mutual Ministry Team, Hospital/Home/Institution Visitation, Telecare Ministry, Peer Counseling, Small Group Leader

Faith:

Congregational President, Stewardship Team, Long Range Planning Team, Teacher/Bible study leader

Giving:

Capital Campaign Steering Team, Stewardship Team, Volunteer Coordination, Giving Personal Testimony

Hospitality:

Greeter/Usher, New Member Sponsor, In-Home Bible Study Host, Visitor Welcome/Information Center, Banquet Server, Fellowship Hour Host/Server

Intercession:

Prayer Chain, Prayer Partner, Prayer Families/Prayer Circles

Knowledge:

Parish Resource-Library Coordinator, Nominating Team, Long Range Planning Team, Congregation Council

Leadership:

Sunday School Superintendent, Committee Chairperson (all types), Fellowship Activity Coordinator, Vacation Bible School Coordinator, Congregational President, Speaker-Special Events

Mercy:

Home/Hospital/Institution Visitation, Transportation to Worship/Bible Study, Social Ministry Team, Support Group Leader, Telecare Minister

Music-Instrumental:

Band Leader/Member, Choir Pianist, Special Event Music, Substitute Organist, Vacation Bible School-Music Program

Music-Vocal:

Church Choir, Vocal Ensemble, Sunday School Song Leader, Vacation Bible School Song Leader

Pastoring (Shepherding):

Adult In-Home Bible Study Leader, New Member Sponsor, Young-Adult Counselor, Small Group Leader, Telecare Minister

Service (Helps):

Computer Programmer/Data Entry, Newsletter Collation, P.A./Sound System Technician, Tape Recording Worship Services, Child Care, Building/Grounds Upkeep, Kitchen Cleaning Team, Providing Transportation

Skilled Crafts:

Building Maintenance/Upkeep, Electrical/Masonry/Plumbing/Roofing, Mechanical Repair/Maintenance, Audio/Visual Operator and Repair, Computer Maintenance, Web-Page Developer

Teaching:

Adult Bible Class Teacher, Sunday School Teacher, Teen Bible Class Teacher, Vacation Bible School Teacher, Conference/Seminar Leader

Wisdom:

Long Range Planning Team, Congregation Council, Peer Counselor, Support Group Leader, Mutual Ministry Team

Writing:

Newsletter Article Writer, Newsletter Editor, Public Relations/Publicity Committee, Letter Writing

Scripture References:

The Apostle Paul addresses the presence of spiritual gifts in three main sections of scripture: Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. Peter also verifies their existence in I Peter 4:10. Through these sections of scripture, we learn that all Christians have been given at least one spiritual gift. The purpose of spiritual gifts is twofold: (1) to unify Christians in their faith and (2) to produce growth within the church, both numerical and spiritual. These gifts are to be used out of love for one another, and in service to one another.

We do not choose which gifts we will receive. God bestows them upon us through the work of the Holy Spirit. Not all of the gifts identified in scripture are used in this inventory. The spectacular gifts (speaking in tongues, healing and miracles, prophecy, bold proclamation of God) and some of the non-spectacular gifts (martyrdom, celibacy) have not been included. Although these gifts exist, they are not commonly utilized in the mainstream of parish life. Since the objectives of spiritual gift deployment are to unify and produce growth through service, in today's church climate, only the service related gifts have been included.

Administration: the gift that enables a believer to formulate, direct, and carry out plans necessary to fulfill a purpose. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Acts 14:23.

Artistry: the gift that gives the believer the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. Biblical References: Exodus 31:1-11, Psalm 149:3a.

Discernment: the gift that motivates a believer to seek God's will and purpose and apply that understanding to individual and congregational situations. Biblical References: John 16:6-15, Romans 9:1, I Corinthians 2:9-16.

Evangelism: the gift that moves believers to reach nonbelievers in such a way that they are baptized and become active members of the Christian community. Biblical References: Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11-16, Acts 2:36-40.

Exhortation: the gift that moves the believer to reach out with Christian love and presence to people in personal conflict or facing a spiritual void. Biblical References: John 14:1, II Timothy 1:16-18, III John 5-8.

Faith: the gift that gives a believer the eyes to see the Spirit at work and the ability to trust the Spirit's leading without indication of where it all might lead. Biblical References: Genesis 12:1-4a, Mark 5:25-34, I Thessalonians 1:8-10.

Giving: the gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure). Biblical References: II Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21:1-4.

Hospitality: the gift that causes a believer to joyfully welcome and receive guests and those in need of food and lodging. Biblical References: Romans 12:13, Romans 16:23a, Luke 10:38.

Intercession: the gift that enables a believer to pray with the certainty that prayer is heard and when requests are made, answers will come. Biblical References: Matthew 6:6-15, Luke 11:1-10, Ephesians 6:18.

Knowledge: the gift that drives a person to learn, analyze and uncover new insights with regard to the Bible and faith. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:8; I Corinthians 14:6, Romans 12:2.

Leadership: the gift that gives a believer the confidence to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task. Biblical References: Romans 12:8, John 21:15-17, II Timothy 4:1-5.

Mercy: the gift that motivates a believer to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then act to meet that need. Biblical References: Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:34-36.

Music--Vocal: the gift that gives a believer the capability and opportunity to present personal witness and inspiration to others through singing. Biblical References: Psalm 96:1-9, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:1-2.

Music--Instrumental: the gift that inspires a believer to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument. Biblical References: Psalm 33:1-5, Psalm 150, I Samuel 16:14-23.

Pastoring (Shepherding): the gift that gives a believer the confidence, capability and compassion to provide spiritual leadership and direction for individuals or groups of believers. Biblical References: I Timothy 4:12-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, II Timothy 4:1-2.

Service (Helps): the gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled. Biblical References: Luke 23:50-54, Romans 16:1-16, Philippians 2:19-23.

Skilled Craft: the gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church. Biblical References: Exodus 30:1-6, Exodus 31:3-5, Ezekiel 27:4-11.

Teaching: the gift that enables a believer to communicate a personal understanding of the Bible and faith in such a way that it becomes clear and understood by others. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Matthew 5:1-12, Acts 18:24-48.

Wisdom: the gift that allows the believer to sort through opinions, facts and thoughts in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers. Biblical References: I Corinthians 2:6-13, James 3:13-18, II Chronicles 1:7-11.

Writing: the gift that gives a believer the ability to express truth in a written form; a form that can edify, instruct and strengthen the community of believers. Biblical References: I John 2:1-6, 12-14, I Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 3.