

Going Deeper: CLERGY SPIRITUAL LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

CLASS OF 2026

AUGUST 2025-SEPTEMBER 2026



SHALEM INSTITUTE FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

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"I believe a new church is slowly emerging as this fresh attention to life in the Spirit becomes front and center in a congregation's life."
~ Tilden Edwards, *Embracing the Call to Spiritual Depth: Gifts for Contemplative Living*



For clergy of all denominations, congregational expectations can often be overwhelming. Balance is hard to find, burnout is all too common, and clergy can feel especially isolated and torn in many different directions. With too much to do and the desire to do everything perfectly, a life that should be centered in God and committed to spiritual practice is all too quickly overtaken by stress and time management issues.

Shalem's clergy program was created to address these challenges and provides an opportunity for clergy of all denominations to focus intentionally on the inner work that can foster a transformation of heart and an openness to what is being invited, for themselves and their communities. In the face of administrative and cultural pressures, clergy are invited to "center down," as Howard Thurman describes, and listen for the Spirit's guidance in challenging times.

The description of "clergy spiritual life and leadership" points to the two focal points of the program: the nurture of a transformation of the spiritual heart and the opportunity to embody a Spirit-led practice of ministry. In this way, we discover that how we listen shapes how we live.

The program's structure of peer and lay listening groups creates a way to journey together and discern next steps that is very different from task force and committee work. The two retreats offer a space for refreshment and renewal, with plenty of time for prayer, worship, contemplative practice and the sharing of joys and challenges.

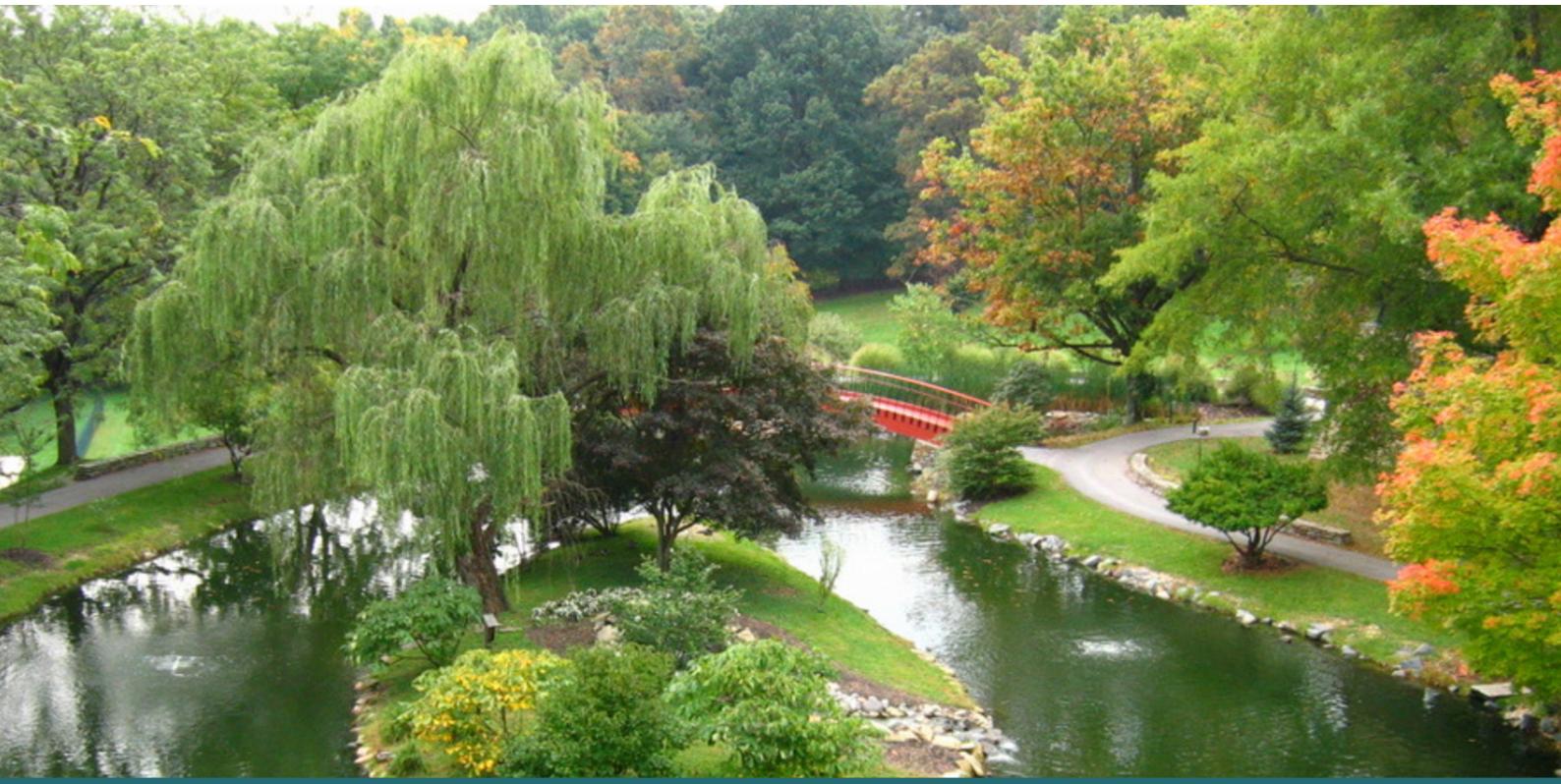
Living open to the Spirit in personal and community life can provide the foundation needed for authentic vision and action. Both the structure and content of *Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life and Leadership* offer a contemplative orientation that encourages an immediate openness to God's grace and freedom to embrace a new way of being, both personally and collectively.

"Shalem introduced me to the orientation and practice of contemplative spirituality, which has been life-giving. The Going Deeper program created space for God to breathe new life into dry bones through the movement of the Spirit."

-John Nurnberger

General Program Information

The residencies are scheduled at Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, Marriottsville, MD, which is handicap accessible. Meals offer healthy options and take dietary restrictions into consideration.



Program Timeline

August 2025 – September 2026

Early Bird (Discounted) Application

Deadline: April 15, 2025

Regular Application Deadline:

May 15, 2025

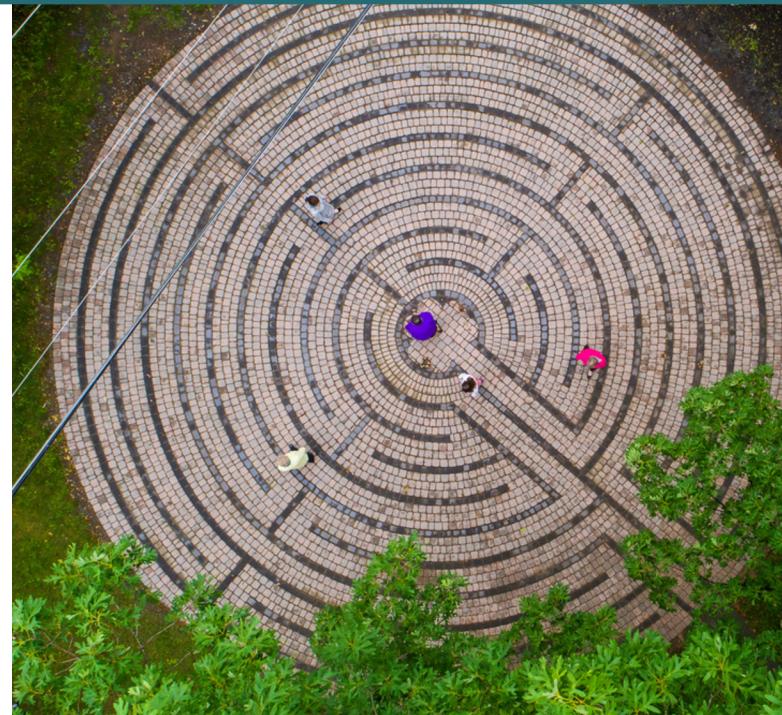
1st Residency: August 12 – 16, 2025

At-Home Work: August, 2025–August 2026

2-day Zoom Gathering: January 22-23, 2026

2nd Residency: August 4-8, 2026

Final Project Due: October 1, 2026



"I thought that my circumstances and ministry setting had to change before I could have fuller communion with God. In the program, I discovered I didn't have to wait for life to be different. It was already different deep within me, where God dwells...."

-Amy Larson, IA

Who Would Benefit from *Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life and Leadership?*

Shalem's *Going Deeper* Program is for Clergy who

- Lead congregations or faith communities;
- Practice as health care chaplains, school and university chaplains;
- Come from all denominations;
- Are in transition to a new faith community or to a new chapter of life;
- Yearn for a deeper spiritual life from which to live and minister;
- Seek an opportunity to rest and reflect with supportive colleagues;
- Want to learn new ways of leading a faith community, addressing issues of the day, dealing with conflict, caring for people, conducting meetings, leading worship, reaching out to the community with compassion and courage, and connecting with God's creation;
- Desire to grow in awareness of any restrictive behaviors in order to bring more of a God-created self to all relationships;
- Yearn for a life-giving prayer practice that undergirds all that is;
- Desire to reconnect with an original call to ministry on a deeper level of consciousness;
- Want love of God, self and neighbor, in all of its dimensions, to be the very heart of life and ministry.

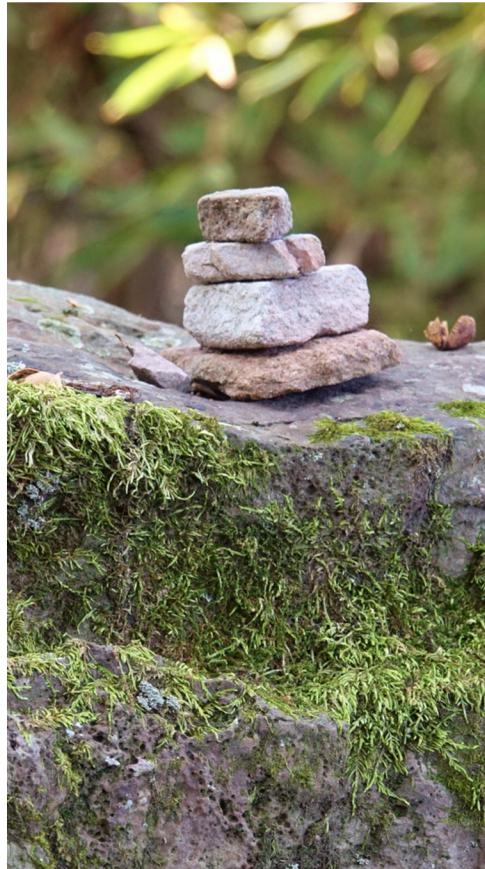
Members of clergy support groups who are already meeting regularly are welcome to attend this program together.



"In my first residency, I knew I was in the right place... We were hungry for true spiritual community, where we could share our hunger with others and our deep desire to be spiritually-grounded leaders."

-Al Keeney, NY

Program Components



At-Home Activities

These components of the program include:

- Readings focused on contemplative presence and spiritually-grounded leadership;
- Personal spiritual practice supported, if possible, by a spiritual director or spiritual direction group and, where helpful, keeping a spiritual journal;
- Periodic reflections, deep listening and caring support with a peer group of participants;
- A visit to an innovative, risk-taking church of your choosing;
- Creation of a listening group of laity from your congregation for spiritual deepening and mutual support;
- At least two days of solitary retreat time;
- A final integration paper that allows you to look back with God over your experience throughout the program in order to learn what has been of value to integrate into your life and leadership.

Retreats

The retreats offer a spacious, prayer-filled, collegial atmosphere where you will have an opportunity to deepen your appreciation of the many ways God's Spirit is seeking to be alive in you and your life and leadership. Drawing from each participant's wealth of experience, staff will be probing with you the nature and practice of spiritual life and leadership in your congregation/community. Emphasis will be on an open, immediate presence to the Spirit, through all your explorations in the program and in your leadership. Both retreats will be held at Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, Marriottsville, MD.



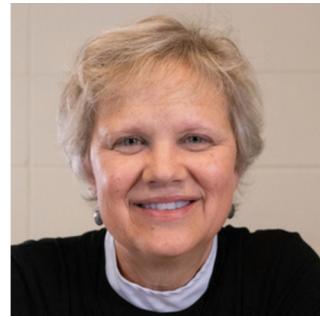
Retreat elements include:

- Fellowship and stimulus of other contemplatively-minded clergy;
- Rest, renewal and guided silent retreat;
- Presentations with individual and small group reflection on various themes central to discovering how to live and lead from the spiritual heart, such as:
 - *Nurturing Spirit-led leadership in yourself and your faith community*
 - *Personal and congregational ways for discernment based on deep listening*
 - *Experiencing new and ancient practices of contemplative prayer*
 - *Dealing with conflict and anger from a contemplative heart that holds compassion and courage in equal measure*
 - *Listening for the Spirit's shaping of the future of the church*
 - *Collegiality with spiritually-motivated congregants and other clergy*
 - *Touching the Holy across faith lines*
 - *Engaging social action with a contemplative heart*
 - *Presence to God in worship*
 - *Discernment as spiritually grounded decision-making;*
- Inspiration drawn from the lives of past and present spiritual leaders;
- Honest spiritual community and the beginnings of a network of mutual support and practical learning.

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Kathie Nycklemoe

Kathie, Co-Director with husband Peter of the *Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life and Leadership* program, is a 2002 graduate of Shalem's Group Leaders Program, ordained pastor for 29 years, spiritual director for 19 years and clergy coach for 9 years. Kathie currently serves as one of the pastors of St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Bloomington, MN. Kathie and Peter have 3 adult children, and a soon to be daughter-in-law.



Peter Nycklemoe

Peter is a co-director of the *Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life and Leadership* program with his wife, Kathie. Peter has served as a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) for over 35 years. He currently serves as Senior Pastor for Central Lutheran Church in downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is a graduate of the *Going Deeper: Clergy Spiritual Life and Leadership* program. He is grateful for a contemplative life and fly fishing. Peter and his wife, Kathie, have three adult children and a soon-to-be daughter-in-law. They make their home in St. Paul, Minnesota.



See www.shalem.org for a full list of staff members.

Total cost of the program

(includes start-up materials, program staff and administration and residency fees)

Early Bird Price (by 4/15/25)	Regular Price (After 4/15/25)
\$7,140	\$7,510

The program fees shown here cover about 75-80% of the total costs. The balance is funded by gifts from donors, and as a result, their prayers as well as their financial support accompany you in this program.

Tuition Assistance:

Tuition assistance is available so don't let money be an obstacle if you are called to this program.

We ask that you prayerfully consider the amount you are able to pay and the amount you are requesting. We also encourage you to look for sources of funding from your spiritual communities. If you wish to be considered for reduced tuition, please submit a completed Tuition Assistance Form at the time of your application.

For more information about tuition assistance, contact ArDonna at ardonna@shalem.org.



"It is just so exciting to see Clergy walk together, have bonds of fellowship and friendship, and also really experience what it means to live in true contemplative community."

-Kendrick Curry, DC