

Meeting 4 —Soul Care (Up to 90 minutes)



**women
thriving
in ministry**

AN INITIATIVE OF ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Gathering Time—5 minutes

- As people join the meeting, welcome them and create a place of hospitality. When all have arrived, open your time in prayer.

Conversation Starter—5 minutes

- If you could have a day off (truly off—no “catch up” work), where would you go and what would you do?

Sharing—Soul Care—55-60 minutes

Homework: As much as you are able to, take a ½ day for a soul-care check-in. You’ll spend some time in an Examen, a longer version of how we ended our last meeting. Your Examen is focused around 3 questions and 1 action:

- How am I doing, Lord?
 - Where have I sensed God’s presence in this season?
 - Where have I sensed God’s absence in this season?
 - What themes, questions, gratitude, and confessions have emerged?
- How is it with my soul, Lord?
 - What deepens my life with God?
 - What destroys my life with God?
 - Does my spiritual practice or rule of life invite fruitfulness?
- What does faithfulness look like in the season ahead, Lord?
 - In my body, mind, and spirit?
 - In my relationships, home, and resources?
 - Is there anything specific that God is calling me to within these areas?
- Action: Identify 1-3 intentions that come out of this reflection.

To the Mentor: Please share these questions with your mentees and ask them to spend some time in prayerful reflection prior to your meeting. We hope that you can do the same. Mentees will share some of their reflections in 3 rounds of 3 minutes each in a Holy Listening Exercise. View the instructions on the document “Wholly, Holy Listening.” Keep this in mind: Feel free to use silence before and after sharing rounds. For the first round, you’ll ask mentees to share about their experience or one (or more) of their intentions following their reflection. Let them know in advance that there will be no cross talking while people are sharing and to lean into good listening. Use a timer. While deeper guidance is on the document, here is what the three rounds will include:

- The first round is for sharing what has come up for them in their reflection

- The second round is for going deeper in what has come up for them OR for sharing a question that they want to ask about someone else's sharing
- The third round is for sharing another reflection OR a gratitude for the sharing time

The final two elements of the handout include closing in prayer. We encourage inviting that during the Closing Prayer section below.

Inviting Responses—5-10 minutes

We're coming up on the end of the year and this time may be busier than normal because of Advent. Invite your group to consider whether you will meet during December or not. If so, is someone (including the Mentor) willing to identify the agenda for that meeting? It could be a time of workshopping Christmas worship plans, fellowship/sharing time or could include a virtual Christmas "party." If schedules are tight, give yourselves a break with a month "off."

- Confirm your next meeting time.
- Is there anything that you've wanted to say that you've not said yet?
- In a word or phrase, what are you thinking or feeling about the state of your soul?

Closing Prayer—10 minutes

Remind mentees of the Group Commitments, one being prayer for one another. Are there any updates or new prayer concerns within this group? Share them now. Ask each person to pray for another person. (Agree upon those people prior to praying.)

Wholly, Holy LISTENING

The Art of Deep, Spiritual Listening

Adapted by Ann Starrette from a program on The Spiritual exercises of Saint Ignatius

A format for creating space and opening hearts to hear the wisdom of the Holy Spirit

SHARING: 3 minutes each (adjust time depending on number of people and time available)

FIRST ROUND: Leader begins sharing (based on the topic provided) — followed by others. Leader will keep time allowing each person 3 minutes per round as others listen without interruption.

SECOND ROUND: When all have shared, leader opens the floor again for 3 minutes to elaborate on what they have shared or comment/ask a question on another person's sharing as others listen without interruption.

THIRD ROUND: One last time, the floor is open for 3 minutes each sharing one grace received from the time together and any sense of God's invitation moving forward.

Leader invites circle members to pray a short prayer for the person on their right (either aloud or silently) — or the leader invites people to partner up and pray for each other (again, either aloud or silently).

Leader closes the Holy Listening circle, inviting all to recommit to confidentiality and accountability as we move back into the world.