



## Welcome to Abiding in the Vine: Spiritual Autobiography in Community

Please take a couple of sheets of paper and spend about five minutes writing about your baptism.

### Opening Worship

Psalm 139 Domine, probasti

- 1 Lord, you have searched me out and known me; \*  
you know my sitting down and my rising up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.
- 2 You trace my journeys and my resting places \*  
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \*  
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

### A Reading

Consider now the deeds that God has done for you: and give thanks to God with full voice. Tobit 13:6

### *Collect*

Loving God, you call us to be your stories in the world. We come before you to be touched by your story. Open our lips to share our stories with one another and to bring comfort, inspiration, joy, and laughter to each other. Amen

### Introductions

- Name
- Where You're From
- One Other Fact about Yourself that You'd Like to Share



## Our Baptism Stories

- What was it like to write about your baptism?
- Did you have any difficulty?
- Did anything surprise you?
- Did you find yourself correcting spelling and grammar as you wrote?

## Why Spiritual Autobiography

It can be used for several purposes:

- Our own personal reflection
- Discernment of God's call both individually and in community
- Preparing to share our stories with others

Sharing our spiritual autobiographies:

- Is a gift that helps us know that we are not alone in God's world
- Forms communities that support and challenge us
- Builds trust and understanding within a group

74th General Convention (2003)

Resolution A083: Articulate Faith Story

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 74th General Convention call every Episcopalian to be able to articulate his or her faith story; and urge dioceses and congregations to create opportunities for these stories to be told.

## Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography

Your spiritual autobiography can only be of value if you are honest, talking about what actually happened. Don't write to inspire. Write to learn. In this way, you may uncover the greatest gift of a spiritual autobiography—a stronger faith!

- Your thoughts and feelings are what matter most.
- Never hesitate to write because you feel you cannot spell or do not understand grammar and punctuation.
- The work you do on your spiritual autobiography is for your eyes only. This allows you to be free, without concern about how others will interpret either the context or expression.



## Memorable Events

- Choose one Decade
- Look at the Events
- Write down Events from your own life
- Choose one an Events and write about it

## Sharing Our Stories

### Guidelines

- You decide what you want to share with others
- Speak with “I” statements
- Speak honestly
- Listen actively when others take their turn
- Maintain confidentiality within the group

## Spiritual Mentors

- Choose a Cross.
  - Write the names of Spiritual Mentors on the back
  - Take a sheet of paper, pick one of the people you listed, and do a cluster
  - Take another sheet of paper and write about this person based on the cluster
- OR
- Pick another person and do a cluster about him or her

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## What Have You Learned?

Handouts Available on [www.naeced.org](http://www.naeced.org)

- An Outline of the Presentation
- Memorable Events Timeline
- Clustering Description
- Cross Shapes
- Annotated Bibliography

## Closing Prayer

Eternal God, by your power we are created and by your love we are redeemed; guide and strengthen us by your Spirit, that we may give ourselves to your service and live this day in love to one another and to you. Amen.

## Benediction

The way is long, let us go together.

The way is difficult, let us help each other.

The way is joyful, let us share it.

The way is Christ's, for Christ is the Way, let us follow.

The way is open before us, let us go: with the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.