HOLY GROUND

Ecumenical Spiritual Direction Training

SPIRIT DIR

Spiritual Direction Network

An online evening course with 3 in-person days

October 2026 to May 2027

COURSE PURPOSE

Holy Ground is an ecumenical spiritual direction training course for Christians who find themselves accompanying others on their spiritual journey. This may be in a formal capacity as a minister, pastoral assistant or mentor, or perhaps you have noticed that others turn to you as a listening ear.

This foundation course is ideal for all those who would like to train in the ministry of spiritual direction whether ordained or lay.

The course aims to:

- Explore the relationship of spiritual direction in the light of our own life experience and of the experience of being alongside others
- Develop skills, understanding and resources for accompanying and encouraging personal growth and fulfilment
- Nurture a growing competence and awareness of our own sense of vocation, in relation to the Christian tradition of spiritual direction

COURSE CONTENT

The course content includes:

- Experiences of different forms of Christian prayer, contemplation, and meditation
- Experiential sessions in which an aspect of the practice of spiritual direction will be explored, including reflecting on our own experience, the use of role-play, and directing and being directed in small working groups
- Theoretical sessions in which the background to spiritual direction will be explored, which will involve:
  - Biblical, theological and psychological perspectives
  - Themes within Christian spirituality and spiritual direction
  - Issues concerned with human personality and faith development
- Appraisals, which will take place mid-course and at the end of the year

A dedicated Zoom link for the teaching sessions, and a secure online Student Portal for course resources and materials will also be provided.

DATES & TIMES

The course will run over three terms, consisting of 25 sessions: 22 online evening sessions (Tuesdays 6.30pm to 9.30pm), and 3 in person days (Saturdays 10am to 4pm) at a venue in the Berks, Bucks or Oxon area.

Course dates:

Term 1 (2026)	Oct 6, 13, 20; Nov 3, 10, 17, 24, 28 (Sat); Dec 1;
Term 2 (2027)	Jan 9 (Sat), 12, 19, 26; Feb 2, 23; Mar 2, 9, 16;
Term 3 (2027)	Apr 13, 20, 27; May 4, 8 (Sat), 11, 18

STUDENT COMMITMENT

Participants are required to:

- Be receiving regular ongoing spiritual direction
- *C*omplete all assignments and recommended reading to assist reflection and learning
- Be open and willing to working with their own experience within the group context, and in one-to-one spiritual direction practice sessions
- Participate in self, peer and course evaluation to assist constructive development of self and others
- Attend all in-person days, unless in exceptional or unforeseen circumstances

A Certificate of Completion will be presented at the end of the year to all students who the tutors consider to be suited to the ministry and vocation of spiritual direction, and have attended at least 80% of the course, completed all assignments, and paid all fees.

In some instances, a Completion Certificate may be awarded after the course has ended, once a period of further assessment has taken place.

COURSE FEES

The course fees will be between £1,100 and £1,260 for the year, depending on numbers, payable in full prior to the course commencing, or in three instalments before each term.

A non-returnable deposit of £100 is required on acceptance on the course which will form part of the full fees.

Bursaries may be available from SpiDir Network, email: admin.spidircourse@gmail.com. There are other sources of funding to explore. See the section on Available Grants below.

AVAILABLE GRANTS

- Anglican clergy and LLMs may be eligible for CME grants, or their equivalent, to cover some of the costs
- The Society of Retreat Conductors:

  Apply at least 3 months prior to beginning of the course. Please state that the course is based principally on Ignatian spirituality.
  For further details and application form email redingtonkathy@hotmail.com
- The Women's Continuing Ministerial Education Trust:

  Applications are considered quarterly in February, May, July and October. For women in the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church ordained or accredited lay workers including Church Army and religious sisters.
  Email wcmet@churchofengland.org.
- The Retreat Association:

  Contact them to enquire about bursaries for spiritual direction training.
  Email www.retreats.org.uk.

COURSE TUTORS

Joanna Gallant, Tutor

Joanna was ordained in 2002 and served in a variety of parish and chaplaincy contexts. She is now Adviser for Spiritual Direction for Bristol Diocese. Joanna has an MA in Christian Spirituality from Heythrop College, and is passionate about the provision of excellent and accessible training for spiritual directors to accompany a greater diversity of people seeking spiritual accompaniment.

Joanna loves walking pilgrimages, enjoys the arts, and gathering with others around a table. She is an enthusiastic grandmother with her four grandsons.

Nick Gallant, Tutor

Nick is a spiritual director, supervisor and retreat leader, and was co-founder and Communications Director of Pelagos Spirituality & Retreat Centre where he ministered for 10 years. He studied at the London Centre for Spirituality where he learned to give the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises. Nick's passion is for helping others deepen their faith and realise their true potential in God.

As a former professional musician, Nick enjoys music and the arts, as well as pilgrimage, and is currently writing a collection of poetry inspired by themes in Christian spirituality.

Frauke Eicker, Assistant Tutor

Frauke works as a spiritual director, retreat leader and group facilitator and is the founder of The Oxford Well. She trained with the SpirDir Network, has an MA in Coaching from Oxford Brookes University and keeps her own faith rooted in the practices she has committed to as a member of the Order of the Mustardseed. Her passion is to see people thrive in their walk with God and to help them notice his fingerprints in all of life.

Frauke enjoys singing with her choir (Oxford Pro Musica Singers), cooking and hosting and getting absorbed with an upcycling or upholstery project.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Closing date & interviews

The closing date for applications and references is Tuesday 1 September 2026, after which applicants may then be invited for an informal online interview.

How to apply

Visit www.spidirnetwork.org.uk/holy-ground to download an application and reference form.
Please email your completed application and reference to: admin.spidircourse@gmail.com
All applications received and supported by a reference will be acknowledged as soon as conveniently possible.

Please note

If you require further information about the course or wish to join our waiting list, email: admin.spidircourse@gmail.com