

Worship Sharing 12-6-22

“How Do I Know It’s a Leading?”

Ruth Hyde Paine, Michener lecture 1992

**Ruth begins the lecture recounting personal experiences of being led and concludes:**

“So my experience has convinced me that Heaven can reach through to us sometimes. I believe leadings are possible. Friends Meeting assists me in strengthening this belief.

I have some doubts and feelings of caution about leadings also.

There is a part of me that is very suspicious of concluding that I know what God wants me to do. Looking at the history of the race, some very terrible things have been done and are still being done in God’s name. So, I am very cautious about concluding that I actually know what Heaven wanting me to do.

I prefer to be not quite sure, to doubt my leadings and proceed tentatively, knowing that I may be off track.”

**She then speaks of her discernment:**

“It’s possible to measure a leading by what surrounds it. So I ask some queries, testing a possible leading:

- Does the urge feel like something initiated outside myself?
- When I pray about it does clear direction or counsel come through?
- Does my leading fit with good mental health?
- Do I have unconscious motivations that may bemasquerading as a leading, but are not sound?
- Does it feel satisfying, is there joy in it?”

“Sometimes a leading only becomes clear when I have failed to follow it.”

Queries

How do these quotes speak to your experience of leadings?

**Ruth also poses some queries:**

“What are your fears about seeking leadings and following them?

Are there areas of your life where you ask for guidance and other areas where you don’t?