**Dr. Aileen van Ginkel**

**aileenvanginkel.com**

Aileen van Ginkel has been facilitating dialogue and collaboration for over 30 years. She undertook this work in the context of her roles at The Evangelical of Canada (EFC), particularly as she helped to form a variety of ministry networks and partnerships on the EFC platform.

In 2007, Aileen began researching answers to the question, how can Christian groups go beyond the usual exercises in strategic planning to include a greater reliance on prayer? How can they get a better sense that God is leading their efforts, instead of assuming that God will give an automatic blessing when they ask for it?

Aileen furthered her efforts through study and research in the Doctor of Ministry program at Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, from 2009 to 2012. She focused her research on interweaving strategic planning with communal discernment practices – ways in which Christians could come together in prayer, with a focus on Scripture, to discern God’s guiding presence especially in times of transition and change.

Aileen’s research involved a congregation, a Christian higher educational institution (not Tyndale) and a small non-profit organization. Since then, Aileen has facilitated communal discernment sessions within her EFC network and, independently, with two other higher educational institutions and three congregations.

The starting assumption in each case is that God has called us to participate in God’s mission for God’s purposes. God wants to reveal to us ways that will help us participate in that mission effectively – in fact, God is already actively laying the groundwork for us if we could only discern it together more clearly.

Aileen’s experience in facilitating communal discernment has deepened her conviction that as we listen together for the voice of Jesus, we gain clarity in direction, unity in purpose and assurance in God’s presence in turbulent times.

*Aileen is currently working part-time for the EFC and is also available to consult with churches and organizations that desire to develop a shared vision for ongoing ministry. For more information, see aileenvanginkel.com.*