



THE WAY OF LOVE

Practices for Jesus-Centered Life

<p>TURN: Pause, listen and choose to follow Jesus</p> <p>As Jesus was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. – Mark 2:14</p>	<p>Like the disciples, we are called by Jesus to follow the Way of Love. With God's help, we can turn from the powers of sin, hatred, fear, injustice, and oppression toward the way of truth, love, hope, justice, and freedom. In turning, we reorient our lives to Jesus Christ, falling in love again, again, and again.</p>
<p>For Reflection and Discernment</p>	<p>"Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?" – Baptismal vows, <i>Episcopal Book of Common Prayer</i>, p. 302</p>

The Way of Love – What does it mean for me?

Elmwood Jail – EfM Handout- August 2018

<p>1. What practices help you to turn again and again to Jesus Christ and the Way of Love? <i>Examples:</i> Reading scripture, spending time with other Christians.</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>2. How will (or do) you incorporate these practices into your rhythm of life? <i>Examples:</i> Pray every night before bed, join a Bible study group</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>3. Who will be your companion as you turn toward Jesus Christ? <i>Examples:</i> My EfM study partner, or cellmate</p>	<p>3-1. 3-2.</p>
<p>LEARN: Reflect on Scripture each day, especially on Jesus’ life and teachings.</p> <p>Jesus begins his ministry: “When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.” - Luke 4:16-17</p>	<p>By reading and reflecting on Scripture, especially the life and teachings of Jesus, we draw near to God and God’s word dwells in us. When we open our minds and hearts to Scripture, we learn to see God’s story and God’s activity in everyday life.</p>
<p>For Reflection and Discernment</p>	<p>Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life.... – Collect 28, <i>Episcopal Book of Common Prayer</i>, p. 236</p>
<p>1. What ways of reflecting on Scripture are most life giving for you? <i>Examples:</i> Lectio Divina, Gospel Contemplation (using your imagination)</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>2. When will (or do) you set aside time to read and reflect on Scripture in your day? <i>Examples:</i> Each morning, 1 to 2 hours before bed</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>3. With whom will you share reading and reflecting on Scripture? <i>Examples:</i> My EfM classmates, my cellmate, my family and friends by way of phone or letter</p>	<p>3-1. 3-2.</p>
<p>PRAY: Dwell intentionally with God daily</p> <p>He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished,</p>	<p>Jesus teaches us to come before God with humble hearts, boldly offering our thanksgivings and concerns to God or simply listening for God’s voice</p>

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<p>one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” – Luke 11:1</p>	<p>in our lives and in the world. Whether in thought, word or deed, individually or corporately, when we pray we invite and dwell in God’s loving presence.</p>
<p>For Reflection and Discernment</p>	<p>“Lord, in your mercy Hear our prayer.” – Prayers of the People, Episcopal <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>, p. 388</p>
<p>1. What intentional prayer practices center you in God’s presence, so you can hear, speak, or simply dwell with God? <i>Examples:</i> The Daily Examen, Centering Prayer, saying grace before meals</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>2. How will (or do) you incorporate intentional prayer into your daily life? <i>Examples:</i> Pray before I eat, pray with a friend, pray for strength and wisdom</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>3. With whom will you share in the commitment to pray? <i>Examples:</i> A Trustee, my Chaplain or Pastor</p>	<p>3-1. 3-2.</p>
<p>WORSHIP: Gather in community weekly to thank, praise, and dwell with God</p> <p><i>When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. – Luke 24:30-31</i></p>	<p>When we worship, we gather with others before God. We hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, give thanks, confess, and offer the brokenness of the world to God. As we break bread, our eyes are opened to the presence of Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are made one body, the body of Christ sent forth to live the Way of Love.</p>
<p>For Reflection and Discernment</p>	<p>“O Almighty God, <i>who pourest</i> out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to <i>thee</i>, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship <i>thee</i> in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. <i>Amen.</i>” – Before Worship, <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>, p. 833</p>
<p>1. What group worship practices move you to encounter God and knit you into the body of Christ? <i>Examples:</i> Singing a hymn, taking the Eucharist (Communion)</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>2. How will (or do) you commit to regularly worship? <i>Examples:</i> Each Sunday, use the BCP together to celebrate the Daily Office</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>3. With whom will you share the commitment to worship this week?</p>	<p>3-1.</p>
<p>More on Episcopal Church “Way of Love” - https://www.episcopalchurch.org/explore-way-love</p>	

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Examples: My EfM mentors, my Pastor or Chaplain or Priest

3-2.

BLESS:

Share faith and unselfishly give and serve

“Freely you have received; freely give.” – Matthew 10:8

Jesus called his disciples to give, forgive, teach, and heal in his name. We are empowered by the Spirit to bless everyone we meet, practicing generosity and compassion and proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ with hopeful words and selfless actions. We can share our stories of blessing and invite others to the Way of Love.

For Reflection and Discernment

“Celebrant: Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
People: I will, with God’s help.”
– Baptismal vows, *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 305

1. What are the ways the Spirit is calling you to bless others?

Examples: Reach out to someone who can be hard to love, find a way to help someone, even if it’s a small thing...to you - lend him a book, give him a bar of soap

Your ideas and answers:

1-1.

1-2.

2. How will (or does) blessing others – through sharing your resources, faith, and story – become part of your daily life?

Examples: Be specific when you write goals: “Its August, I am going to bless 8 people this month, next month (September) I am going to bless 9 people.”

2-1.

2-2.

3. Who will join you in committing to the practice of blessing others?

Examples: My family, my Christian (or non-Christian) friends

3-1.

3-2.

GO:

Cross boundaries, listen deeply and live like Jesus

“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.’”

– John 20:21

As Jesus went to the highways and byways, he sends us beyond our circles and comfort, to witness to the love, justice, and truth of God with our lips and with our lives. We go to listen with humility and to join God in healing a hurting world. We go to become Beloved Community, a people reconciled in love with God and one another.

For Reflection and Discernment

“Leader: Send them into the world in witness to your love. People: Lord, hear out prayer.” – Baptismal vows, *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 306

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<p>1. To what new places or communities is the Spirit sending you to witness to the love, justice, and truth of God? <i>Examples:</i> In-dorm programs, in transit from court</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>2. How will you build into your life a commitment to cross boundaries, listen carefully, and take part in healing and reconciling what is broken in this world? <i>Examples:</i> commit to recognizing your own efforts – journal, learn about and then act on Stephen Ministry</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>3. With whom will you share in the commitment to go forth as a reconciler and healer? <i>Examples:</i> My dorm, EfM classmates, my cellmate, my family and friends by way of phone/letter</p>	<p>3-1. 3-2.</p>
<p>REST: Receive the gift of God’s grace, peace, and restoration</p> <p>“On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.” – Luke 23:56</p>	<p>From the beginning of creation, God has established the sacred pattern of going and returning, labor and rest. Especially today, God invites us to dedicate time for restoration and wholeness - within our bodies, minds, and souls, and within our communities and institutions. By resting we place our trust in God, the primary actor who brings all things to their fullness.</p>
<p>For Reflection and Discernment</p>	<p>“O God of peace, <i>who hast</i> taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength...” – Prayer for Quiet Confidence, <i>Book of Common Prayer</i>, p. 832</p>
<p>What practices restore your body, mind, and soul? <i>Examples:</i> Centering Prayer, finger labyrinth, sports</p>	<p>Your ideas and answers: 1-1. 1-2.</p>
<p>How will you observe rest and renewal on a regular basis? <i>Examples:</i> Observe the Sabbath, dedicate a part of each day to prayer and practices that restore you</p>	<p>2-1. 2-2.</p>
<p>With whom will you commit to create and maintain a regular practice of rest? <i>Examples:</i> My friends, my EfM group</p>	<p>3-1. 3-2.</p>

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Helpful Terms for Understanding

The Way of Love

Jesus Movement: The ongoing community of people centered on Jesus who follow him into loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God, with each other and with the earth.

Beloved Community: A community dedicated to the dream of dignity and abundant life for all, where people see themselves and others as beloved children of God, and “where the good of all is the quest of the ongoing community of people centered on Jesus who follow him into loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God, with each other and with the earth. It is the body within which we grow to love God, love our neighbors, love ourselves and love creation.

Rule of Life (*from the Society of St. John the Evangelist and the Virginia Theological Seminary Center for the Ministry of Teaching*):

- The idea of a “Rule of Life” comes from the Latin word *regula* and suggests a way to regulate or regularize our lives to stay on an intentional path. A “Rule of Life” is not just a set of rules to live by; rather, it is a gentle framework to guide and support us on our way.
- A “Rule of Life” allows us to live with intention and purpose in the present moment. It helps us clarify our most important values, relationships, dreams and work.
- A “Rule of Life” is meant to be simple, realistic, flexible and achievable. It is a purposeful tool to help us grow into a more meaningful life with God.