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Identity and Origins

Session 1

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Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To feel at ease with the course and with each other.
- To become fully aware of our responsibilities as adult learners.
- To consider influences on our faith journey so far.

Scripture in Summary:
- Jesus is introduced very briefly here with no birth narrative. This is about Jesus identity and origins, but it actually tells us very little about him and what led him to this point?
- If we look at verses 1-8 we see the prophecies of John the Baptist alert us that something amazing is about to happen.
- All the anticipation of verses 1-8 suddenly comes to a climax, and we’re bang into the action.
- John’s important role as the warm-up act is over – now the spotlight is on Jesus.
- Mark’s Gospel is the shortest of the four and the writer uses the word immediately over 40 times! The other Gospels give us lots more detail than Mark who seems to fly through the story of Jesus life.
- In this session we will consider: what experiences shaped Jesus life and what experiences have shaped ours?

Tasks for Session 2:

- Complete your significant events timeline and consider how it might be useful to you in reflecting on your discipleship journey.

- Complete the Learning Styles Questionnaire for the next session.

- Meet with your Course Accompanier.
Session 1
Identity and Origins

Course Aims: To help us...
• reflect on the journey of calling and discipleship
• explore how our calling relates to our Church's expression of God's Kingdom
• sustain a life that continually seeks and honours God by developing some key discipleship practices

Course process
• Reflective practice
• Learning logs
• Course accompanier
• Creating group contract
Mark 1.9

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

Identity and Origins of Jesus

From your knowledge of the Gospels, what do you think were the formative experiences in Jesus’ life that helped make him the person he was at the time of his baptism?

Identity and Origins of you

What life experiences have shaped you in your journey of discipleship?

Begin to write down the significant life-events in your spiritual journey - a timeline, a map, a diary. Include highs and lows.
Group Ground Rules (suggested)

- Taking personal responsibility for what we say or don't say
- Willingness to participate
- Confidentiality with personal material
- Mobile phones off or silent
- Punctuality and commitment to each two hour session
- Non-judging respect for each person
- Constructive speaking and attentive listening
- Allowing silence
- Valuing the differences among us, e.g. theology, worship, personality, experiences
- Being encouraging
- Finishing on time
- Completing the Learning Log and preparation exercises
- Any others?
Example Group Guidelines

Don’t arrive late!

Allow silence

Encourage

• Instruction

• Personal Development

• Exploring

• Caring

Enjoy being among other Christians

Consider: ‘What would Jesus do?’

Enjoy each other’s company

Sense of humour

Encourage others

Relax

Sense of humour

Consideration

Ring of trust

Friendship

Value the difference in people - theology etc

Keeping to time

Encourage

Space

Accept constructive Criticism

Be willing to participate

Confidentiality

Openness and honesty

Sharing

Listening without interruption

Be respectful of each other
Course Accompanier Guidelines

Purpose of participants having a Course Accompanier
To provide three opportunities for participants to explore areas of the course relevant to their personal journey of discipleship with someone they trust.

What is the role of the Course Accompanier?
For the participant to share their understanding about:

- Their experience of the course.
- What is being learned, or unlearned.
- What particular areas of discipleship might be explored.

Each participant is invited to discuss different aspects of discipleship with a view to self-awareness, knowledge about the course material or the Christian journey. Course accompanying is not counselling, advice giving, teaching, course evaluation or spiritual direction, although each of these might be present in a limited fashion. It is an exploratory partnership of peers on the Christian journey.

The Course Accompanier has access to the course materials via the Deepening Discipleship website: www.canterburydiocese.org/deepeningdiscipleship

The course of the conversation
Set agreed boundaries with each other about:

- Time for meeting – about 1 hour per meeting.
- Confidentiality – what does this mean for each of you?
- Whether or not the contents of the meeting can be referred to outside the set times without consent.
- The participant and accompanier taking personal responsibility for what they share with the other – e.g. share only what you are comfortable with sharing.
- How you will decide what to speak together about.

Concluding the conversation
Conclude with an informal summary, verbal or written, of what has been discussed, its potential value and proposed actions. The participant is to take responsibility for further action or study. If agreed, set a further meeting within the course framework. We recommend meetings after Sessions 1, 4 & 8.
### Identifying your Learning Style

Here is a quiz to help you find out what your learning styles is.

There is no time limit, but it will probably take you about 10-15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you are. There are no right or wrong answers. Tick the boxes next to the statements that you agree the most with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I like to be absolutely correct about things</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I quite like taking risks</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I prefer solving problems step-by-step rather than guessing</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I prefer simple straightforward things to something complex</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I often do things ‘just because I like it’ rather than thinking about them first</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I don’t often take things for granted, I like to check things for myself</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The most important thing about what you learn is if it works in practice</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I’m always looking for something new to do</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>When I hear a new idea I immediately start thinking how I can work it out</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am keen on fixed routines and timetables</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I take great care to work things out, I don’t like jumping to conclusions</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I make decisions very carefully, I look at all the possibilities first</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I don’t like ‘loose-ends’, I prefer to fit into a kind of pattern</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I get straight to the point in discussions</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I like the challenge of new and direct things</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I prefer thinking things through before coming to a conclusion</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I don’t find it easy to think of wild ideas off the top of my head</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I love lots of information – the more I have to sift through the better</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I prefer jumping in and doing things, than planning in advance</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I tend to judge other people’s ideas on how well they will work in practice</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>You can’t make a decision just because it feels right … you have to think about all the facts</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I’m fussy about how I do things – a bit of a perfectionist</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>I usually come up with lots of unusual ideas in discussions</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>In discussion I only put forward ideas that I know will work</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I look at problems from as many angles as possible… before starting to solve them</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Usually I talk more than I listen</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Quite often I work out more practical ways of doing things</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>I believe that careful, logical thinking is the key to getting things done</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>If I’m writing a formal letter, I try out several drafts first</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>I like to consider all my options before making up my mind</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>I don’t like creative ideas. They aren’t very practical</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>It’s best to look before you leap</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### How did you score?
Add up the number of ticks for each of the categories, i.e. one star, two star, three star and four star.

* Represents **ACTIVIST** responses  
** Represents **REFLECTOR** responses  
*** Represents **THEORIST** responses  
**** Represents **PRAGMATIST** responses

The category with the highest number of ticks is the way you prefer to learn. If you have high scores in two categories, you are probably happy with both these ways of learning. If your score is fairly evenly spread, you are probably happy learning in several different ways.

This exercise is designed to help students think more carefully about their own preferred ways of learning. Psychologists have analysed the way we learn into four broad types. Don’t worry if you don’t fit neatly into any one type. Lots of people have a mix of two or three styles.

**ACTIVIST – Do It**
You are open minded and enthusiastic about new things. You’ll try anything once your days are filled with activities. You tackle problems by brainstorming. Once an excitement has died down you are looking for the next. You are outgoing and like to be the centre of attention.

**REFLECTOR – Think It**
You like to stand back and think before you act. You’re a people’s person and enjoy watching and listening to others. You’re quiet and thoughtful and like harmony. You like to have a good feel for a subject before talking about it. You look the big picture and you’re very ordered, calm and thorough.

**THEORIST – Test It**
You are analytical and love detail. You take a logical, structured approach to everything that you do. You’re hardworking and a perfectionist. You enjoy theories and concepts and are quick at pulling together odd bits of information into rational arguments. You don’t like uncertainty and you don’t like anyone being flippant about serious things.
PRAGMATIST – Try It
You love ideas and ways of doing things. You’re keen to see if theories work in practice. You get impatient if people talk too much rather than getting on with things. You are very practical and down-to-earth. You see problems as a challenge. You’re sure there’s always a better way of doing things. If something works, it must be good.

Guidelines as to which ways of learning suit different people.

ACTIVISTS

Probably enjoy:
- Active sessions
- Project work
- Group activities and brainstorming
- Trips and visits
- Role plays

May want help with:
- Listening to lectures
- Background reading on a subject
- Writing up projects
- Analysing research

REFLECTORS

Probably enjoy:
- Thinking about what you’ve learnt before discussing it
- Listening to experts
- Trips and visits
- Gathering views and opinions
- Background reading
- Doing and using your own research

May want help with:
- Seeing the big picture before you’ve got the details
- Role play
- Presenting ideas to a group

THEORIST

Probably enjoy:
- Lectures with lots of theory
- Background reading
- Writing up notes
- Research
- Analytical exercises
May want help with:
- Group discussion – especially taking about feelings and emotions
- Presenting ideas to the group

**PRAGMATIST**

Probably enjoy:
- Examples relating theory to real life
- Role play
- Trips and visits
- Presenting ideas
- Practical group work
- Writing up projects
- Using research findings

May want help with:
- Group discussion
- Listening to theory
- Background reading

Some Questions on Learning Styles

1. **What kind of learner are you? (Note you may choose more than one)**

2. **What kind of learning activities do you enjoy?**

3. **What kind of activities do you struggle with / enjoy less?**

4. **What help do you need to help you succeed in your studies?**

(Taken from Identify your learning style)
Recommended Reading List

(Different books for different people – look for something that connects with you.)

**Book of silence: A Journey in Search of the Pleasures and Powers of Silence.**
Sara Maitland, Granta, 2009.

**Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth.**

**Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life.**


**Finding Happiness: Monastic Steps for Fulfilling Life.**

**Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps for Everyday Life.**

**God Hunger: Discovering the Mystic in all of Us.** John Kirvan, Sorin, 1999.

**God of Surprises.** Gerard Hughes, DLT, 2008.


**Landmarks: Exploration of Ignatian Spirituality.** Margaret Silf, DLT, 2008.


**Naked Spirituality: A Life with God in Twelve Simple Words.**

**Prayer in the Cave of the heart: The Universal Call of Contemplation.**

**Reading with God: Lectio Divina.** David Foster, Continuum, 2005.

**Risk-Shaped Discipleship: On Going Deeper into the Life of God.**


**Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit.** Henri Nouwen, SPCK, 2011.


Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Most challenging?

Best things?

Where does this learning take me?

Where is God in what I've experienced?

What more do I want to know?

Other?
Alternative Learning Log

May be the learning log on the previous page doesn’t suit your learning style. Use this blank page to keep track of what you are learning in whatever way works best for you.
Belovedness and Listening

Session 2

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Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To explore our status as beloved children of God.
- To think about where we find love and affirmation in our lives.
- To consider how we listen to God, in the context of our own ways of learning.

Scripture in Summary:

- All three of the Trinity are present here: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Love and relationship are at the heart of who God is.
- God tells Jesus he is loved and in doing so reveals his love for humanity.
- Humanity is drawn into the relationship between God and Jesus, firstly because Jesus is human and secondly in the active role of John.
- We see, in the rest of the New Testament, that Jesus includes us in this belovedness (e.g. John 1: 12-13 and Romans 8: 14-17). We are loved as he is. This is a challenge to us... to let ourselves ‘be loved’.
- God tells Jesus he is loved right at the beginning, before he has done anything!
- In being baptised Jesus has listened to God and has been obedient. Jesus listens to God and hears how he is loved.
- In this session we will consider:
  - Do we feel loved (like Jesus) before we have done anything?
  - Where do we find love and affirmation in our lives?
  - How do we listen to God and hear how much he loves us?

Tasks for Session 3:

- Read the passages about the biblical character assigned to your group. As you read, ask yourself ‘How did this character receive their call and how did they work it out?’. Make some notes to bring to next week’s discussion:
  - Abram: Genesis 12–25
  - Joseph: Genesis 37, 39–48, 50
  - Moses: Exodus 1–14, 18-19, 32–34
  - Ruth: Whole book
  - David: 1 Samuel 16–21, 23–27; 2 Sam 11–12, 24
  - Esther: Whole book

- Read The Fivefold Foundation for Ministry and complete the questionnaire, which can also be done online at http://fivefoldsurvey.com/.

- If you have not yet met with your course accompanier, please do so soon.
Session 2
Belovedness and Listening

Mark 1.9-11
In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Belovedness
God tells Jesus he is loved and that he is pleased with him. In life we often look for this kind of affirmation – to be loved and told we’re doing well. Aside from our relationship with God:
• Where do we find love and affirmation?
• Where does our sense of self-worth come from?
Cycle of Grace (belovedness)

- Acceptance
- Achievement
- Sustenance
- Significance

Cycle of Works (Conditional)

- Acceptance
- Achievement
- Sustenance
- Significance

Belovedness

Questions for individual reflection.

- In what direction does the Cycle of Grace and Works turn for you?
- What would you need to do to live more fully in the Cycle of Grace?
**Listening: Hearing God**

- What do we know about the way Jesus listened to the Father throughout his life and heard how much he was loved?
- What helps you to listen to God and ‘hear’ what he has to say to you?

**Silence and Listening**

- How did you find that?
- How does silence help us listen to God and one another?
- How can you make space for silence in the pattern of your life?

**Learning Style**

- How might what you have learned about yourself be useful to you in your discipleship journey?
- Are your preferred learning styles similar at home and at work contexts?
- What opportunities are there in the local or wider church for learning through your preferred style?
- What new thing might you try out to help you in your spiritual journey?
The Fivefold Foundation for Ministry
(Taken from the Passionate Church, Mike Breen and Watt Kallested, 2005, Ch 16)

Let us look in more detail at each of the five roles as we see them Ephesians 4. Then we will help you to know what your base and your phase ministries are and how best to utilize them.

**APOSTLE**
From the Greek apostolos meaning "one who is sent out," Apostles are visionary and pioneering, always pushing into new territory. They like to establish new churches or ministries. They come up with new, innovative means to do kingdom work.

- Biblical examples — the Twelve, Paul, Priscilla, and Aquilia.
- Jesus’ example – Jesus was the one sent by God (John 3:16).
- Apostles enjoy dreaming, doing new and challenging tasks, change,
- Secular examples – entrepreneurs, explorers

**Prophet**
One who hears and listens to God (prophetes); the prophet foretells and tells forth revelation from God. Often they are able to stand back from circumstances to get a clear picture of what is happening and therefore see creative solutions and develop a vision for situations others don’t see. They understand the times and what people should do.

- Biblical examples—Anna and Simeon- in Luke 2 as they prophesy over the infant Jesus. Agabus in Acts 11:28 and 21:10 when he predicts a famine and prophesies about Paul. Philip’s daughters in Acts 21:9 were all known as prophetesses.
- Jesus’ example—Every word spoken from the mouth of Jesus was revelation from God. He often foretold events such as Peter’s denial and the details of his own death. He, himself, is the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy concerning the Messiah such as found in Isaiah, 53.
- Prophets enjoy being alone with God, waiting, listening,
- Secular examples—people who speak out their perceptions. They’re often creative types, musicians, and artists.
**EVANGELIST**

One who brings good news and shares the message readily *(evanggelistes).* Evangelists love spending time with non-Christians and often remind other Christians that there are non-Christians still out there in the world. They are not necessarily all like Billy Graham; they may be “people Gatherers.” Evangelists know the Word and can make it relevant to non-Christians,

- Biblical example—Philip in Acts 8:12. The people believed Philip when he preached.
- Jesus’ example—Jesus embodied the Good News. He was the Good News, We can see Jesus as evangelist in John 3 with the Samaritan woman at the well
- Evangelists enjoy discussion and sharing their point of view.
- Wherever they go, they seem to draw others into discussion about Jesus. They are passionate about sharing the Gospel. They are not timid about their faith and seem to easily share with others regularly.
- Secular examples—salesmen, politicians, public relations reps.

**PASTOR**

One who shepherds God’s people *(paimen)*, who cares for others with a tender heart. One who sees needs, provides comfort, and encourages others. Pastors spend most of their time with other Christians. They can easily empathize with others and exhibit lots of patience with those in need.

- Biblical example—Barnabas in Acts 15:36-41. Barnabas clearly demonstrates a pastoral heart in his defence of Mark.
- Jesus’ examples—In John 10, Jesus refers to himself as the Good Shepherd who has
come to lead his people.

- Pastors enjoy one-on-one chats and showing hospitality. They get burdened by others' problems and have a knack for speaking the truth in love. They are good listeners and are easy to talk to and share inner feelings with.
- Secular examples—counsellors, social workers, nurses, and anyone in the care-giving professions.

**TEACHER**

One who holds forth the truth and is excited by it (*didaskalos*). The teacher looks for ways to explain, enlighten, and apply truth.

- Jesus' example—He was often referred to as Teacher or Rabbi. His "students" often remarked that his teaching was different because he taught with authority.
- Teachers enjoy reading and studying the bible and helping others to understand it.
- Secular examples—lecturers, trainers, school teachers.

**BASE AND PHASE**

Each of us has a base ministry that represents one of the fivefold ministries in Ephesians. We believe that God gives each of us this ministry and it is ours for life. Hence we call this our "base ministry." But there are also particular periods when God leads us to discover and
understand the other ministries for a brief time. This is what we call our “phase ministries.” We all have our base and at least one phase ministry at any given time.

For example the Lord may call you to go on a short-term mission trip evangelist) or teach an Alpha course (teacher), but these may not necessarily be the ministries that you feel most comfortable with. Your base ministry will be the one that refreshes you, the one you are most passionate about. The Lord, however, will mature you by taking you through each of the other ministries in phases. It has been the experience of many that the Lord will make your base ministry more rounded as you experience phases in the other areas. What God seems to be doing by allowing you time in the phase ministries is to strengthen your base ministry.

To give another example, the Lord may give you a vision and grace for initiating a new ministry within your church that requires you to be more apostolic. Your base ministry, however, is as a teacher. You are invigorated by the new challenge and stretched as you trust the Lord to see you through, but eventually the stress of operating outside of your base will cause you to want to return to the area you really love and are energized by doing.

A warning: It is easy to fall into the trap effecting as though you need to excel in all five ministries all the time. But this only leads to burnout and a failure to focus properly on your base ministry. Worse still, you will not be making room for others around you to explore their base ministries.

What happens when grace for your phase ministry has been used up and it’s time to return to your base? Generally- you will know you have run out of grace. Energy and enthusiasm dry up. You see less blessings and less fruit from your efforts, even though you are working at the same intensity level. Eventually you will experience less peace about what you are doing. This naturally leads you to less joy at the task. Your thoughts turn to doing what you really love and what comes naturally for you. Going back to your base ministry is the only thing that gives you a sense of peace.

We are not all called to be pastors, but we are all called to care. We are not all called to be teachers, but we are all called to hold out the Truth. We are all responsible for learning how to listen for God’s voice, something that comes more naturally for the prophet. We are all called to share the Good News with others, but this takes all those who are not called to be evangelists out of their comfort zones. And we are not all apostolic but most all learn to walk out into what God calls us to do. We are the body of Christ, which means that together, we represent the ministry of Jesus who was the embodiment of all five ministries in Ephesians 4. He is the perfect presentation of the ministry of the Spirit. By experiencing all five areas of ministry, whether as a base or a phase, we grow more into the likeness and character of our Master.
Five Fold Ministries Questionnaire

Read through the statements and decide as honestly as you can whether they apply to you often, sometimes or rarely and tick the appropriate box. Do not linger on each item as your first thought is likely to represent the most accurate response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I remember names or at least where I first met someone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have expressed my feelings about God as pictures or analogies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My ability to present scripture clearly and accurately has been commented on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I can be counted on to contribute original ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I find myself talking about my faith to the people I meet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I get frustrated when I feel I’m not experiencing ‘new’ things as a Christian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>When I communicate Biblical truths to others I see resulting changes in knowledge, attitudes, values or conduct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I share what knowledge I have with others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I have an urge to share thoughts with people that I felt when I prayed and I have been told they meant something or were relevant to the person’s current situation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I get upset at other people’s difficulties and problems even if I haven’t experienced them myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I have a strong sense of what God wants to say to people in response to a particular situation</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>I enjoy studying the Scripture and find that I get fresh insights that people find interesting and helpful</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>When reading the Bible I am more able to grasp the wider picture than the specific details</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>I like to share what I believe</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>I have been successful in developing Christian discipline in others</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>I’ll try things out if it will encourage others to do the same</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I am quick to help when help is needed and often do things which I see need to be done without even being asked</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>I have been able to spot a ‘person of peace’ who is ready to receive a word from God and received a positive response</td>
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<td>I have a clear vision and others have said that they feel confident to go along with me</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>I try explaining things in different ways if people are finding a concept difficult to grasp or understand</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>I think before I speak</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>I really fear that people that I know won’t be saved</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>I like to be clear and decisive when speaking about what I believe God has said to me</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>I am by no means an expert on Scripture but I can grasp the point of a passage quite quickly</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>I get frustrated and even depressed by the lack of faith or understanding of others around me</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>People often say that the things I say often help them to try new things for God</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>I am interested in living and working overseas or among people from a different culture</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>I am good at listening and taking in what people say</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>I have contrived situations so that non-christians are prompted to ask spiritual questions</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>I have helped fellow believers by guiding them to relevant portions of the Bible</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>I get excited when I discover new understanding, insights and applications of God’s work</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>I have reminded people of the foundations of their faith</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Despite not enjoying the nitty-gritty details of leadership, I still often end up leading things</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>People have told me that I have helped them be restored to the Christian community</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>I feel that I know exactly what God wants me to do ministry at a specific point in time</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>I dig out information and passages to explain a concept</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>I mix easily with a wide variety of people without having to try and be one of them</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>I have a deep concern to encourage people towards spiritual growth and achievement</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>I try to think of different ways of expressing the truth of the gospel</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Friends ask me to help clarify a situation or scripture</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>I am quite persuasive when encouraging people to examine their spiritual motives</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>I empathize with those who are hurting or broken and can support them through their pain to wholeness</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>When in a group, I am the one others look to for vision and direction</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>I enjoy being with non-believers because of my desire to win them to Christ</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>I will see a job through to the end so that no-one has to pick up the pieces after me</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>My prayers surprise me with their clarity and unexpected direction</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>People comment that they remember what I tell them about God</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>I expect opportunities for witnessing to arise rather that react in surprise when they occur</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>I desire the gift of healing in greater measure (That the Lord would heal others through me)</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>The things I say in a spiritual context make people feel uncomfortable</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>I have enjoyed relating to a certain group of people over a period of time, sharing personally in their successes and failures</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>People have told me that I have helped them learn biblical truth in a meaningful way</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>I have lead someone to a decision for salvation through faith in Christ</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>God has enabled me to reveal specific things which have happened or meant something at a later date</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>There have been times when I felt sure I knew God’s specific will for the future growth of his work, even if others have not been so sure</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>People have told me that I have communicated timely words or pictures which must have come directly from the Lord</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>People call on me to help those who are less fortunate</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>I get great satisfaction from studying the Bible and and sharing my insights with others</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Others have suggested that I am a person of unusual vision</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>Non-Christians have noted that they feel comfortable when they are around me and that I have a positive effect on them towards developing a faith in Christ</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>I am willing to challenge or confront people in order to help them mature</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>I regularly need to get space alone or long periods of time out to reflect, pray and think</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>I have just suddenly known something about someone</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>I enjoy taking notes when someone is speaking and pay close attention to the details of what they are saying</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>I am faithful in providing support, care and nurture for others over long periods of time, even when others have stopped</td>
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<td>66</td>
<td>I enjoy mentoring individuals</td>
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<td>67</td>
<td>I enjoy relating stories and sharing my experiences</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>I enjoy coming up with new and original ideas, dreaming big and thinking about visions for the future</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>I find non-christians ask me questions about my faith in Christ, and my church involvement</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>I can accurately assess a person based on first impressions and know instinctively when something is not quite right</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>I like to provide a safe and comfortable environment where people can feel they are welcome, that they belong, are listened to and cared for</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>I would like to start a church or new ministry in an area that is not catered for at present</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>I have a heart to share my faith and to pray for those in my work and neighbourhood who do not attend church</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>When I hear about situations of need I feel burdened to pray</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>I like to help churches, organisations, groups and leaders become more efficient and often find myself thinking about how things function.</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>I enjoy spending time studying Scripture and prefer to do so systematically</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>I look for opportunities to socialize and build relationships with non-christians</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>People come to me to ask me my opinions on particular parts of the Bible or to answer their queries</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>I find that people trust me and come to me regularly, wanting to chat and looking for my advice, prayers and help</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>I can clarify goals, develop strategies, and use resources effectively to accomplish tasks</td>
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</table>

Now transfer your answers to the score sheet and add up your totals.
Five Fold Ministry Score Sheet

- Place a tick against each item number for which you have answered ‘often’ or ‘sometimes’ (the ‘rarely’ answers are not counted but you may wish to use the shaded column for ‘rarely’ so as to keep tabs on which answers you have transferred from the question sheet).
- Note that some questions occur more than once in the columns below.
- Finally, add up the number of ‘often’ ticks, double the answer and add to the number of ticks for ‘sometimes’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
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Total of items marked ‘often’
Multiply by 2
Total of items marked ‘sometimes’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastor</th>
<th>Prophet</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Evangelist</th>
<th>Apostle</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
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</table>

Taken from Life Skills, Five Fold Ministry
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Theme: Sum it up

Most challenging?
Best things?
Where does this learning take me?
Where is God in what I’ve experienced?

What more do I want to know?
Other?
Alternative Learning Log

May be the learning log on the previous page doesn’t suit your learning style. Use this blank page to keep track of what you are learning in whatever way works best for you.
Calling and Gifting
Session 3

return to table of contents
Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To examine a variety of callings from the Bible.
- To remember who has influenced us and modelled discipleship to us.
- To consider our own calling.
- To explore what our own gifts for ministry are.

Scripture in Summary:

- Jesus primary calling was as God’s precious son – and this is our primary calling, too - we are God’s precious sons and daughters.
- If we can fully believe this then anything is possible and God will reveal the next steps of our particular calling.
- Jesus’ calling involved suffering and temptation but, because he knew he was loved by God, he used the experience to deepen his relationship with God and hear his call more clearly.
- We, too, can use all kinds of circumstances, that we wouldn’t necessarily see as positive, to deepen our relationship with God and hear his call more clearly.
- In this session we will consider:
  - How the OT characters we have looked at are called in the same way as Jesus, by primarily being loved by God and then asked to step out of their comfort zone
  - Does our own experience of calling fit into this pattern?
  - God gives us everything we need to carry out our calling. What gifts has he given each of us?

Tasks for Session 4:

- Use the first ‘What am I for?’ questionnaire to explore the strengths, gifts and experiences that might clarify your calling as a disciple of Jesus.
- Give the other questionnaires to 2 or 3 others whom you trust to compare their responses with yours.
- In the light of this, consider how you hope to develop your base and phase ministry gifts and write your thoughts in your Learning Log.
Session 3
Calling and Gifting

Mark 1.11-12
And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’ And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

OT Characters and Calling
HOW...
• were they called?
• did they respond?
• were they used?

WHAT...
• was the context?
• were they called to do?
Your Calling as a Disciple

- Can you think of a time that you experienced God’s call? It might be that you didn’t realise at the time but now looking back you realise God was calling you.
- How did you hear the calling? For example, inner conviction, circumstances, scripture, prayers, advice, ‘chance’ etc.
- What connections are there between your experience of calling and the Biblical examples of calling we heard?

In what ways does God’s call impact:

- Your work? Your relationships?
  Your leisure?
- The ‘ministry’ you exercise?
- The balance of your life

Fivefold Gifts for Ministry

- Were you surprised by your results or not? Why?
- How do you think you express this ‘ministry’ in your day to day discipleship? (Think of the less obvious ways as well as the obvious).
- How does this relate to your hopes for life and ministry?
- How has God equipped you (what gifts has he given you) to enable you to carry out this ministry?
DEEPENING
Discipleship

Personal Response...

What is your response to this exploration of calling? Does it...
...inspire you?
...make you feel insignificant?
...fill you with wonder?
...

Heroes of Faith

• Who do you remember as having an influence on you in the past?
• Who is a ‘discipleship role model’ for you now?
What am I for?

Name:

1. What are my main strengths or gifts?

2. In what practical ways have they been expressed?

3. How do you think they could be developed and used?
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Most challenging?

Best things?

Where is God in what I’ve experienced?

Where does this learning take me?

What more do I want to know?

Theme: Sum it up

Other?
Alternative Learning Log

May be the learning log on the previous page doesn’t suit your learning style. Use this blank page to keep track of what you are learning in whatever way works best for you.
Testing and Trusting

Session 4

return to table of contents
Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To consider how hard times may accompany calling.
- To envisage some of the temptations or ‘demons’ facing us in our following of Jesus.
- To evaluate our own discipleship needs and what support we will need to fulfil our calling.

Scripture in Summary:

- We hear how loved Jesus is by God and then: the Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the desert. Our understanding that we are loved by God has immediate consequences for us in God’s mission
- Jesus was driven, forced, compelled to go; he had no choice. Sometimes our wilderness experiences may feel like that, but that does not mean that the Spirit is not profoundly involved.
- Some translations use ‘desert’, others ‘wilderness’, but just think of an abandoned, deserted, lonely or desolate place. It’s here that spiritual formation can take place, as both Moses and Paul found.
- ‘Tempted’ here literally means ‘tested’. It’s in the desert that you find out how strong and true your bond with God is and where the vulnerable points are. When you know that, you know what to work on.
- The Angels are present as well as Satan. Let’s take comfort from that. But we know from the other Gospels that Jesus’ real strength in the wilderness was being able to listen for God’s Word to him for that moment.
- In this session we will consider:
  - How ‘wilderness experiences’ have been a part of our journeys of faith.
  - What particular temptations we face in our discipleship
  - How we, like Jesus, can hear God’s Word in our lives and ways God equips us to face challenges.

Tasks for Session 5:

- Discuss with your Course Accompanier what support mechanisms you need to encourage you in your discipleship.
- Use the Rule of Life Map or Chart to record what you already do to nurture and sustain your faith. Please be honest – no-one will see this except those with whom you choose to share it.
DEEPENING Discipleship

Session 4
Testing and Trusting

Mark 1.12-13
And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Wilderness times
• What testing, dark and difficult times have you experienced? Are they on your timelines?
• How might your wilderness experiences relate to your journey with God?
• Add your reflections to your timeline now.
Temptation and Doubt

- Where do your main areas of temptation lie?
- How might doubt be different to temptation?
- How are temptations and doubts important to your growth as a disciple?
- How has God equipped you to face temptations and doubts?
- What spiritual practices could help you deal with doubt and temptation?

Lectio Divina


- What does this passage say to me?
- What questions does this passage ask of me?
- What does this passage say to my community? (e.g. family, leadership team, church, local community, world)
Facing Your demons  
(Christopher Jamison, 2007)

- Mind:
  - Vainglory (reputation)
  - Pride (inward)

- Body:
  - Gluttony (food & drink)
  - Lust (sex)
  - Avarice (things)

- Heart:
  - Anger (resentment)
  - Sadness (despair)
  - Acedia (spiritual laziness)

Optional Exercise

The Bible

- What place do you give to Bible reading or study in your discipleship?
- What steps could you take to engage more with God through his Word?
LECTIO DIVINA (Sacred Reading)

David Foster OSB
The traditional pattern to lectio divina has four stages: lectio – meditatio – oratio – contemplatio. The pattern implied a process by which the person took the words of scripture from his ears or eyes into his mind (reading or lectio), repeated them to himself and chewed them over (meditatio) and as they began to be digested, he responded to them in prayer (oratio), which initiated a movement of prayer beyond the words to God himself who had spoken with these words, a freer spontaneous moment of adoration (contemplatio).


Christopher Jamieson OSB
First of all, the text is seen as a gift to be received, not a problem to be dissected. The first task to which the tradition invites the modern reader is: avoid imposing your questions and let the text question you. Humility is the key to this wisdom. The Australian monk Fr Michael Casey sums this up well. ‘Lectio divina is not only a means of discovering something about God; it also helps us to understand our hidden selves...our most authentic level of being is mirrored in the scriptures’. Let the text come to you.

Secondly, the lectio tradition teaches us that in order to receive what a text has to offer we must read slowly...as an antidote to speed reading we need to foster slow reading. Michael Casey again: ‘repetition is the soul of genuine lectio. It is a right brain activity; we do not grasp the entire content immediately but in a circular manner. We read and advance, then we go back and read again. With each repetition, something new may strike us’.

Finally, lectio is a way of prayer. Before reading, pray that God will speak to you through this text. During reading, allow the reading to evolve into meditation and then into prayer and finally contemplation. When the reading is concluded, keep some phrase in mind and repeat it throughout the day so that prayerful reading becomes prayerful living.

**Rule of Life Chart**

Use the second chart to help you record what you already do to keep your faith alive and live for God. See the example below:

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Rule of Life Map – What nurtures and sustains your Spiritual Life?
List both the qualities you nurture and the disciplines you practice...

- Me as a disciple of Christ
- Gratitude
- Personal Qualities
- Worship / Prayer
  - Worship Music
  - The Eucharist
- Sustaining Relationships
  - Sian and Rachel
- Recreation / Health
  - Gym membership
  - Visiting Art Galleries
- Learning / Scripture
  - Counselling Course
  - Bible Reading
- Work / Ministry
  - Messy Church Team
  - Car / Train Journeys
- Wider Networks
  - Cursillo
Rule of Life Map – What nurtures and sustains your Spiritual Life?
List both the qualities you nurture and the disciplines you practice...
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Most challenging?
Best things?
Theme: Sum it up
What more do I want to know?
Where does this learning take me?
Where is God in what I’ve experienced?
Other?
Alternative Learning Log

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Discipleship and Life
Session 5

return to table of contents
Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To understand discipleship (being like Jesus) is our response to being loved and called by God
- Through our Rules of Life think about how we can deepen our discipleship in our whole lives
- To consider our gifts and how we use them and be open to hearing our calling afresh

Scripture in Summary:

- As we have read, Jesus’ response to God’s declaration of love was an immediate compulsion to follow him to the desert. Here is the same word ‘immediately’: Jesus immediately calls them, they hear the call and immediately feel the same compulsion to follow and become disciples.
- Knowing we are loved by Jesus is always the first most important step in discipleship – without knowing this our calling will be a huge burden.
- Here, we see that the response to knowing God’s love and hearing God’s call is always discipleship.
- The young men have relationships, responsibilities, skills and securities of the family fishing business; they have safety, comfort, and certainty. Jesus calls them to leave it all for a new thing. And they do. Are we open to hearing God’s call to follow and not to let whatever gives us security, significance and comfort get in the way of it?
- In this session we will consider:
  o What does being loved by Jesus and called by Jesus mean for our lives?
  o How can we try and be more like Jesus in our whole lives (i.e. not just on a Sunday and outwardly as well as inwardly)? How can things like Rules of Life help us with this?
  o What new thing are we hearing God calling us towards?

Task for Session 6:

- Create a new Rule of Life. Use the Developing a Rule of Life hand-out and the Rule of Life Development Map or Chart as possible resources. Or you may prefer to design your own format for your Rule as a list, diagram, drawing, or even as a written prayer. Make sure you take into account your own unique character and personal circumstances. It should be stretching but achievable.

- Don’t be afraid to try something new or let something go that doesn’t work for you.

- Begin to put your Rule into practice and adjust it as you go.
Session 5  
Discipleship and Life

Mark 1.16-18
As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Mark 1.19-20
As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.
Dust

- What does it mean to you that God believes in you?
- Jesus did not choose the best of the best; what does this tell us about who Jesus chooses?
- What is it about Jesus that makes you want to follow him?
- What do you hope will be the result of following Jesus?

DEEPENING
Discipleship

Rule of Life

- How did you find this exercise of putting together a Rule of Life.
- Was it easy or hard?
- Would anybody like to share some of the things on your Rule of Life?

DEEPENING
Discipleship

Discipleship and Life

- How do the responses from others on your ‘what am I for’ questionnaires make you feel? Are there any surprises?
- What similarities and differences are there between the questionnaire you filled out and the ones other people filled out?
- How do the answers to these questionnaires fit with your Fivefold Ministry Questionnaire from session 2?
Discipleship and Life

• From all your questionnaires (the one you filled out and the ones other people filled out) make a list of your ‘gifts’. Are there things on your Rule of Life which support and develop these gifts?
• What on your Rule of Life makes your ‘heart sing’ the most? (Where do you find the most joy?).
• In what ways is the whole of your life a ministry of service to God?

The Benedictine Disciplines

• Obedient listening
• Conversion of life
• Stability

Optional Exercise

What practices might help to...
• develop a posture of attentive listening? (Obedient Listening)
• constantly reshape our understanding and attitudes? (Conversion of Life)
• strengthen us to be faithful within our social context? (Stability)
Developing a Rule of Life for Living Life Intentionally

What is a Rule of Life? Why have a Rule of Life?

A spiritual Rule of Life is the checklist of practices we intentionally undertake to maintain and deepen our relationship with the Ground of All Being, the God who made us. In Shakespeare's English, the term "rule" was not a synonym for "regulation." Instead, its more common meaning was a straight-edge, for drawing lines and taking measure. In that sense, a "Rule of Life" is a tool that equips us to maintain appropriate boundaries and to measure our progress.

Having a Rule of Life encourages us to set attainable goals for our spiritual growth, and then to work steadily over time to achieve them. It calls for us to create an intentional pattern for our everyday life that opens us to perceiving God's presence and activity. It makes the common holy, by calling us to remember - much as we remember Christ in the bread and wine of Eucharist. It calls our attention to the sacramental nature of the everyday - those myriad "outward and visible signs" of God's grace in action. It creates a structure for being mindful - of God, of the gift of life, of God's grace, and of our own mortality.

Creating a Rule of Life means becoming aware of how we are spending our time each day, and of how we might spend it better. Becoming aware of the "gap" between those two creates momentum for change. That energy can help us find the ways to nurture our relationship with God on a daily basis. A growing intimacy with God is the reward of practicing a Rule of Life.

A Rule of Life is not meant to be a demanding test or a stressful exercise. Instead, the daily repetition of simple practices that focus our hearts on God does far more to nurture deep, meaningful spiritual growth than the occasional mountain-top experience. A Rule of Life is not meant as a private practice. Even if the Rule is an individual one, it is lived out in community with others, and it is through reflection with others that we discern our growth.

A Rule of Life is just one tool in a whole toolbox we can assemble for our journey into a deeper relationship with God. Our own Rule and those other tools - an inventory of our gifts, a knowledge of Scripture and church history, an awareness of our shortcomings, clarity about what brings us joy - all are sharpened with use over time. The listening heart, equipped with such tools, will be shaped into a more Christ-like pattern.

What does it look like?

Living a Rule of Life does not mean living an unblemished life. It does mean being intentional about taking on particular practices that draw us toward a life patterned on Christ.
There are many time-tested practices that might be incorporated into the pattern that forms a Rule of Life: reading and meditating on Scripture; praying regularly; participating in the sacraments, especially Eucharist and reconciliation; exercising sacrificial self-giving; observing periods of silence; and practicing hospitality. In addition to behaviours, attitudes can be brought under a Rule of Life: response to authority; acceptance of the "other"; rejection of grumbling or cynicism; forgiveness; respect for others.

It is essential that we adopt a Rule that fits us – not simply a comfortable Rule, but also one that stretches us toward God. Some choose to follow a Rule formulated by and for a community; others choose to shape their own. The practices of the Rule should be natural, intentional, and should be lived out in a rhythm that fits our ordinary lives.

Since the middle of the 20th century, the growing concern for authentic practice and for relating spirituality to daily life has led to a reclamation of the concept of a Rule of Life. Individuals, parishes, lay organizations, and even secular programs for personal development have seized on the creation of a Rule of Life as a strategy for fostering intentional change and growth.

Those who choose to follow a Rule of Life often establish a relationship with a spiritual director, a trusted mentor. Such a person is usually consulted on a regular basis, offering both encouragement and accountability in living into the Rule.

**Balancing Life by the Rule**

The point of a rule of life, for communities or individuals, is that life should be lived in balance, with God as the focal point. Living a rule of life helps me to keep striving for balance - to be conscious of what I do and why - and it reminds me to be open to God in all aspects of my daily life. We are one piece of something much larger. Perhaps this sounds a lot like a New Year’s resolution to you.

New Year’s resolutions, however, are largely built on a negative image of ourselves. We decide that we are too heavy, too lazy, too unattractive, and we decide we’re going to fix that. We drop the resolutions quickly, for the most part, because they continually remind us that we’re just not good enough. A rule of life, however, grows from the positive aspects of our life. We discern it in conversation with God, make God the focus of our rule (rather than our own negative images of ourselves) and we move in the directions in which we feel called. A rule of life is a response to being loved by God in the first place, and feeling moved to become what God calls us to be in this world.

Most balanced rules address the same basic categories: seeking God; prayer; work; study; spiritual community and worship; care of our bodies; reaching out to others; and hospitality. Over the last five years I have tried to discern what God calls me to do in these areas. For instance, what kind of prayer does God call me to? How
should I care for my body in a way that honours it as a gift from God? How can I be the arms and legs and voice of God for others in this world who need my help? These are the kinds of questions I have sought to answer, in conversation and prayer with God, and with spiritual companions and advisors, over the years. Rules were never meant to be discerned or kept in isolation. The support of a close friend, advisor, or a prayer community makes all the difference in living a rule of life.

Over the years I’ve also struggled with the amount of structure to build into a rule. People I respect tell me that if they don’t get up at 6:30 each morning and take a half hour of prayer time that they will never get to it during the day. But that doesn’t work for me. It makes my spiritual life into something to add to my to-do list, and it becomes a chore and not a blessing. I have found that my rule for prayer needs to be more open-ended. I am committed to praying daily, but how and when I do that varies from day-to-day. Some days God gets five minutes of my time, and other days we spend an hour together.

That’s the thing to remember with rules: We all have our own unique relationship with God and we need to pay attention to that. Think of it as you would your close friendships. One friend you might see or talk with daily. With another perhaps you have drinks every Thursday night after work. What God calls you to do, and how you communicate with God is unique to your own relationship, and it takes some time and experimentation to discern what form your rule should take.

Writing down your rule of life, and learning to live it more intentionally, is, of course, only the beginning of this part of your spiritual journey. Following your rule deepens your relationship with God, and as a result of that, your rule will develop and change as you seek God more fully. In the end it is all a bit circular. We live a rule of life as a response to the God who loves us, and in doing so, we discover, "that you are known and loved in a way surpassing anything one can imagine, loved before anyone had thought or spoken your name." Amen.

Godly Rules In Four Steps

Step 1

Stand up! Stretch! Smile!!! Now sit down and write a list of all the things you do that nurture your spirit. Your list may include gardening, walking the dog, making love, talking with close friends, cooking, painting, jumping out of airplanes, or any number of other possibilities. Don’t censor yourself. List them all! That list that you create, whether you know it or not, is your unconscious rule of life. By recognizing those things that you do that are already spirit-filled, and by doing them more deliberately, you can make your unconscious rule of life into a conscious one.
Step 2

Divide your list among the seven categories on the Rule of Life Map you’ve been given. These cover both BEHAVIOURS and ATTITUDES. Your initial list may leave some empty categories. Work, for example, may draw a spiritual blank. But, more often than not, we have blanks because we limit our definition of what is spiritual. For instance, being intentional about listening to the wisdom of others at work and considering their opinions is the practice of finding God’s guidance in those who surround us. Recycling paper and practicing stewardship of our materials and time can also be spiritual activities at work.

Step 3

Practice being intentional about dedicating these activities to God. Make them a conscious part of your rule of life. Take this rule of life to God in prayer and add to it as you feel called to do so. Over time, make an effort to fill in any holes in your rule; doing so will help insure that you are leading a balanced life that focuses equally on God’s call to you, your own needs, and the needs of the world that surrounds you.

Step 4

Follow the Ten Rules for Keeping Rules:

1. Listen to your heart’s desires when discerning your rule. God often speaks to us through our heart’s desires.
2. Make sure your rule includes some joy, play, and fun.
3. Take baby steps. Don’t make your rule impossible to follow.
4. Baby steps are good, but give yourself a little bit of challenge, too.
5. Figure out how much structure you need: lots or just a little?
6. Learn to pay attention deeply to your practices, whatever they are. It will help to prevent boredom.
7. Find someone to talk with about your rule; it will help you stay realistic.
8. Think about how to help yourself be accountable for keeping your rule. See a spiritual director or talk with a spiritual friend about your rule on a regular basis.
9. Read your rule regularly. It is easy to forget the stuff we don’t like so much.
10. You’re going to have trouble keeping a rule sometimes. Recognize that you’re human and either try again or adjust it if it’s not realistic.
Rule of Life Chart
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List both the personal qualities you nurture and the disciplines you practice...

- Gym membership
- Visiting Art Galleries
- Recreation / Health
- Worship / Prayer
- Worship Music
- Retreats
- The Eucharist
- Sian and Rachel
- Sustaining Relationships
- Cursillo
- Wider Networks
- Me as a disciple of Christ
- Personal Qualities
- Gratitude
- Learning / Scripture
- Work / Ministry
- Counselling Course
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Theme: Sum it up

Most challenging?
Best things?
Other?
What more do I want to know?
Where does this learning take me?
Where is God in what I’ve experienced?
Alternative Learning Log

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Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To consider different meanings and expressions of the Good News.
- To understand what the Gospel, or Good News, means for me now.
- To relate the Gospel, or Good News, to our life of discipleship.

Scripture in Summary:

- The message of Jesus, the ‘Gospel’, is good news for us and for our whole world. The word gospel comes from a Greek words meaning ‘good news.

- ‘Time’ here is a Greek work ‘kairos’ (not ‘chronos’) meaning it’s not chronological time but rather a decisive moment in which a new era of justice, peace and joy begins: the Kingdom of God. Like Jesus, we bring the Kingdom of God near whenever we proclaim the Good News.

- The Greek word for repent, ‘metanoia’ literally means a transformed mind. It’s not a matter of recalling all our sins but more a matter of a constant process of turning to God and away from the old ways. This process transforms our hearts and minds.

- When Jesus says ‘believe’ he asks us to trust our lives to the Good News. If we believe in this way then the Kingdom of God will invade our hearts, minds and lives. It’s liberating stuff!

- In this session we will consider what the Good News looks like in the world around us, in our lives and discipleship, and in our churches.

Tasks for Session 7:

- Try Lectio Divina with another passage on your own.

- Ask someone in your church’s leadership how their discipleship relates to their ministry.

- Reflect on how your character and gifts serve the good news of the Kingdom of God.

- Write the results of all this into your learning log or journal.
Session 6
Good News and Us

Mark 1.14-15
Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

Lectio Divina - Luke 4: 16-21
• Is there a particular word or phrase that jumps out at me?
• Is there anything here that challenges me or develops my understanding?
• Is there any action that I am being invited to take?
(Remember: Keep it personal)
The Good News and good news

- Think of good news generally in the world around us.
- When we hear a good news story, what kind of story is it?
- How does it influence us?

The Good News and good news

- Could the good news in the world around us also be The Good News of Jesus?
- What does The Good News of Jesus look like in people’s behaviour and attitudes?
- Is there a difference between just being a good person and living out The Good News of Jesus?

The Good News: my life

How does The Good News of Jesus influence your behaviour and attitudes in your different life contexts? For example in relation to:
- work, unemployment or retirement?
- family relationships?
- friendship networks?
- neighbours?
- leisure, pastimes and interests?
The Good News: my church

How does your church experience The Good News through the following:
• Art, architecture, music?
• Liturgy, silence, ritual?
• Preaching, scripture, learning groups?
• Fellowship, sharing food, working together?
• Serving others through prayer, mission or ministry?
• What else?

The Good News: my church

How does your local community see your church as a people and place of good news? Illustrate with examples from your village, town, neighbourhood, community organisations, civic organisations, schools, pubs, leisure groups, those of faith or no faith.

Good News gone wrong?

• How do we respond when we see the Good News compromised in us and in our own churches?
• What can we learn from Jesus about how to live with frustration when the people can’t or won’t hear the Good News?
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Most challenging?

Best things?

Theme: Sum it up

What more do I want to know?

Where does this learning take me?

Where is God in what I’ve experienced?

Other?
Alternative Learning Log

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Kingdom through Church

Session 7

return to table of contents
Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To explore what Jesus means by the Kingdom of God
- To look at how our church reflects the Kingdom of God
- To consider how our church enables our discipleship

Scripture in Summary:

- The Biblical word for ‘kingdom’ is not about geographical area; rather, it represents the power, authority, domain and influence of God.

- Jesus rejected evil in the wilderness and now the Kingdom of God is able to come near. The good news is that God’s kingdom is breaking into a world that was dominated by evil.

- There is a cycle going on here:

  - When a group of us repent and believe in the Good News a new community is formed, and Jesus says ‘the kingdom of God is among and within you’. This community is Jesus’ Church.

  - So the Church is not the Kingdom, nor is the Kingdom the Church. Where people respond to Jesus they become part of the Church. The Church should be an expression of the Kingdom. The Church can be seen as a sign, servant and a foretaste of the Kingdom.

  - In this session we will consider how the Kingdom of God is expressed in world around us, in our lives and discipleship, and in our churches.
**Task for Session 8:**

- Obtain a copy of your church’s Mission/Vision Statement and bring it with you next week. If your church doesn’t have a vision/mission statement, list your impression of its top five priorities from what you have heard.

- Consider the Spiritual Accompaniment, iD and Vocations leaflets.

- Reflect on your learning log entries. As you prepare for the course to finish try to identify the actions that will yield the most fruit for you.

- Prepare something creative to express the heart of what you have learned during this course. It could be a collage, a drawing, a painting, a poem, a story, a song, a prayer, a video, a flower arrangement, photographs, baking, textiles. The point is to shift from a left-brain analytic understanding to a right-brain, intuitive, prophetic engagement. Bring it with you next week.

- Bring food and drink to share and enjoy while those who wish to share what they have created.
Session 7

*Kingdom through Church*

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Mark 1.14-15

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.’

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Images of the Kingdom

a) Wheat, Weeds and Yeast  
- Matt 13: 24-30, 33
b) Treasure & Pearls  

c) Seeds – Matt 13: 3-23, 31-32
d) A King’s Finances – Matt 18: 23-35
e) The Banquet – Matt 22: 1-14
Images of the Kingdom

- What is Jesus saying the kingdom of God is like?
- What do these parables suggest is valued in God’s kingdom?
- Can you re-tell this parable in a contemporary way using other words or images?

Kingdom through Church

Which of these metaphors best illustrate characteristics of your church?

- a) Conference
- b) Self-help group
- c) Community group
- d) Sacrament
- e) Refuge
- f) Heritage site
- g) Health centre
- h) Nursing Home
- i) Embassy
- j) Another metaphor?

How does your church express the Kingdom of God?

- Where do you see signs of the Kingdom in your church?
- How is your church a unique expression of God’s Kingdom?
- What are its strengths?
Your church and discipleship

Discuss the answers you found to this week’s homework:
• Ask someone in your church’s leadership what they do spiritually to sustain their discipleship? How does this help their ministry?

Your church and discipleship

Are there spiritual ‘disciplines’ that your church practices and promotes? (Both individual practices and things you do together).

For example: prayer, meditation, fasting, simple-living, fellowship, service, worship, journaling, chastity, stewardship, study, contemplation, confession, solitude, self-examination, celebration, mentoring, silence…?

Kingdom through Church: expression

• How are kingdom values most and least expressed in your church community?
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it...

Theme: Sum it up

Most challenging?

Best things?

What more do I want to know?

Other?

Where does this learning take me?

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God’s Mission and our Discipleship

Session 8

return to table of contents
Session Summary

Outcomes:

- To understand the connections between God’s mission and our discipleship.
- To consider how our church and our own discipleship serve God’s mission.
- To express creatively what we have learned.

Scripture in Summary:

- The Good News is being proclaimed and people are responding – they are experiencing the Kingdom of God! Jesus is transforming people’s lives.
- Here are some examples of Jesus ministry and the way he is carrying out God’s mission:
  - His teaching breathes life into dead religion.
  - His healings bring wholeness to the ailing.
  - His exorcisms bring liberation to the oppressed.
  - His presence brings hope to synagogue, home and community.
- All these things are God’s Mission at work. In this session we will consider how we and our church join in with God’s Mission.

Future tasks:

- Complete your learning log or journal.
- Meet with your Accompainier to discuss your next steps as you seek to put into practice what you have learned.
- Continue to practice and review your Rule of Life.
- Complete and return your course evaluation form.
Session 8
God’s Mission and Our Discipleship

Mark 1: 21-24
They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”

Mark 1: 25-28
But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.
The *Missio Dei*: God’s Mission

“It is not the Church that has a mission of salvation to fulfil in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the Church.”

*Jurgen Moltmann*

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**Missio Dei and Discipleship**

- How do you join in with the Mission of God?
- How does your church join in with the Mission of God?
- What things in your Rule of Life help you join in with the Missio Dei?
- How else could you join in with God’s mission as you develop as a disciple of Christ?

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**Mission Priorities**

These are the Diocesan priorities put together by Diocesan Synod and Archbishop’s Council. These priorities encourage growth and renewal of the church and are based on a strategy called Changed Lives, Changing Lives:

- To grow the church numerically and spiritually
- To re-imagine ministry
- To build partnerships that enrich communities

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Vision/Mission Statements

• What priorities of your church encourage growth and renewal?
• Can you see any connections with the Diocesan priorities?
• How does your statement or list reflect your church's actual priorities in terms of the time, effort and money given to them?
• In what way does your statement or list join in with the Missio Dei?

DEEPENING Discipleship

The Missio Dei in Scripture

How is the Missio Dei expressed in:

a) Genesis 28:10-17 (Jacob’s Revelation)
b) Exodus 3:1-8 (The burning bush)
c) Philippians 2:5-11 (One with Christ)

Optional Exercise
Learning Log
What are you learning? Write it, draw it, jot it…

Most challenging?

Best things?

What more do I want to know?

Where does this learning take me?

Where is God in what I’ve experienced?

Other?
Alternative Learning Log

May be the learning log on the previous page doesn’t suit your learning style. Use this blank page to keep track of what you are learning in whatever way works best for you.