

# Deepening Our Discipleship

Welcome to this devotional

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## Devotional



## *A Time to Thrive*

WATER

ROOTS

LIGHT

FRUIT

Trinity United Methodist Church

Fall, 2017

This journal is about you. It's about what God has done, is doing, and wants to do in your life and through your life. It's a tool we developed to help you process through some of the topics we will be discussing during our deepening our discipleship gatherings and in worship next month. We invite you to consider the question: **How is God calling you to invest yourself more deeply in God's mission through Trinity?**

We won't ask you to give this journal back to us. We want you to keep it, to refer back to it, and ultimately, to reflect on the thoughts you've had and the notes you've made.

Some of the questions asked in this journal may be easy for you to answer. Others may take time to really think through. Our hope is that as you spend time thinking about the impact you can make through generosity, this simple notebook will become a catalyst that helps you clarify what matters most to you, how God wants to work through your life and resources, and the next steps you plan to take.

No matter where you are on your journey of spiritual growth with God, we absolutely believe that God has more to come and that the most life-changing, the most influential, and the most personally engaging days of your life still lie ahead. It's our privilege to press on with you as you follow after Christ.

May God continue to lead you to a life of faith that pushes you to THRIVE.

Yours on the journey,

Pastor Dave Harris

Pastor Megan Croy

*Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give him will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."*

### Questions for Reflection:

1. In my everyday life, what kind of things do I "thirst" for the most?
2. When I think about my relationship with God, for what do I thirst?
3. What three things can I do to improve my relationship with Christ?

### Looking In (Personal Evaluation)

- I often find myself wanting more out of life.
- I am typically pretty content with what I have.
- I am thirsty for deeper relationships
- I have trouble making sure my priorities are in line with my faith.

### Looking Up (God's Leading)

- I want to pray more regularly to strengthen my relationship with God.
- I will worship God with my whole heart, mind and soul.
- I commit to start each day by taking time with God.

### Looking Out (New Possibilities)

- I want to connect with people both in and outside the church to engage in faith forming conversation.
- I could dream of new ways to engage in study and acts of service that connect the church to the community.
- I will examine my resources of time, money, and talents to better align my priorities with my values.

### Prayerful Pondering

To be filled with the soul-refreshing love of Jesus.

*Happy are those who trust in the Lord, who rely on the Lord. They will be like trees planted by the streams, whose roots reach down to the water. They won't fear drought when it comes; their leaves will remain green. They won't be stressed in the time of drought or fail to bear fruit.*

### **Questions for Reflection:**

In what ways and in what times has my life felt very stressed?

How have I sought to be "rooted" in God's resources?

What changes can I make to direct my "roots" to God?

### **Looking In (Personal Evaluation)**

- I often find myself anxious about things that I have no control over.
- Stress is a normal part of my life.
- I only get stressed when too much piles up.
- I have healthy outlets that help me deal with the stresses of life.
- I am pretty good at letting things roll off of me.

### **Looking Up (God's Leading)**

- I will join a Bible study.
- I want to find a spiritual discipline that can root me more firmly in the Christian faith.
- I need to set aside some of my preferences and desires in order to root myself in God's desires.

### **Looking Out (New Possibilities)**

- I could learn from others who worship, think or experience life differently than me.
- I could be a resource for others seeking a place to put down roots.
- I have resources (time, money or talents) that could be redirected to God.

### **Prayerful Pondering**

To be more deeply rooted in God's resources for my life.

*You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice and truth.*

### **Questions for Reflection:**

How have I experienced darkness in my life?

What is motivating me to live more in light?

How can I live in “all goodness, justice and truth”?

### **Looking In (Personal Evaluation)**

- I try to forget about the darkest moments of my life.
  - I feel that I am always living in darkness.
  - I try to hide my problems from most people.
  - People often feel comfortable telling me their problems.
- There are times in my life when I have been so thankful to have God to get me through.

### **Looking Up (God’s Leading)**

- I want to remember to lean into God during the darkness in life.
  - I will look for God’s presence in my every day life.
- I will seek God’s guidance to look for ways to respond to others with goodness, justice and truth.

### **Looking Out (New Possibilities)**

- I will watch for ways where I can do all the good I can, in all the means I can, in all the ways I can, in all the places I can, at all the times I can, to all the people I can.
  - I will treat everyone I meet justly.
- I will use Jesus as a model to transform a practice or a relationship from darkness to light.

### **Prayerful Pondering**

For God’s guidance in my life choices.

Jesus said, “Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can’t produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can’t produce fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything.”

### Questions for Reflection:

Being a positive influence is an example of a “fruitful life”. Name three persons who have had a positive influence on your life.

How is my life bearing fruit?

How is God leading me to be more fruitful?

### Looking In (Personal Evaluation)

- I can name numerous people who I look up to for the way that they have influenced me.
  - I find it challenging to stay motivated when I can’t always see the fruits of my labor.
  - Most people who know me can see evidence of my faith in the way I interact with others.
- I tend to keep my faith life separate from other aspects of my life.

### Looking Up (God’s Leading)

- My relationship with Christ informs the choices I make on a daily basis.
  - I struggle to let God guide my decisions.
  - I know that I could do more to grow closer to God.
- I sense that God is leading me to take a next step on my faith journey.

### Looking Out (New Possibilities)

- I believe that I could rearrange my life to put more time into strengthening my relationship with Christ.
  - I would like to explore ways to reallocate my resources that they might be better used to bear fruit in our community.
- I want to commit to mentor someone else in his/her discipleship.

### Prayerful Pondering

For a stronger connection to God for a more fruitful life.