

THE WAY OF LOVE: NINE SESSION SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM

SESSION ONE

RULE OF LIFE

The Way of Love as Rule of Life

Prayer

Check-in

- What is your name and religious background, and how long have you been a part of this faith community?
- Why did you want to participate in this Way of Love small group, and what are you hoping to experience?
- What is your favorite routine of your day?

A Rule of Life for Your Small Group: Group Norms

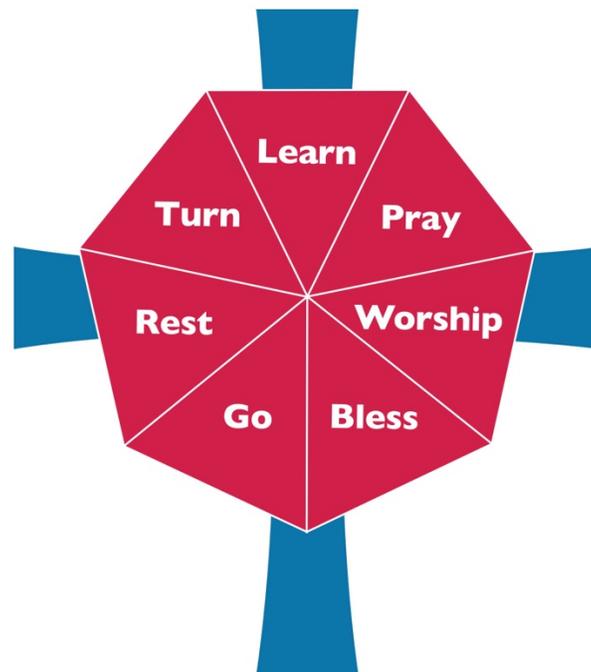
- Confidentiality – What is allowed to be shared outside the group? What may be shared on social media? (One often-reached decision is that conversations stay in the group unless the person who shared gives explicit permission for someone else to share the story outside of group.)
- Respect – How will group members respect each other during their conversations? How will group members signal they would like to add something to the discussion? Will participants strive to speak from an “I position” and tell their own stories and not others’ stories?
- Logistics – How important is arriving on time? What are expectations around attendance? What constitutes a valid excuse for missing the session? Who will lead worship or bring snacks/meal? Who will help clean up? What is the group’s position on alcohol? Do members of the group have food restrictions?
- Technology – What is the mobile phone policy? Will they be turned off and set aside? Silenced? Or is casual use acceptable? Will the group make exceptions for important work or family calls?
- Session preparation – What, if anything, are group members supposed to prepare before they meet each session? How will members of the group pray for one another?

Discussion

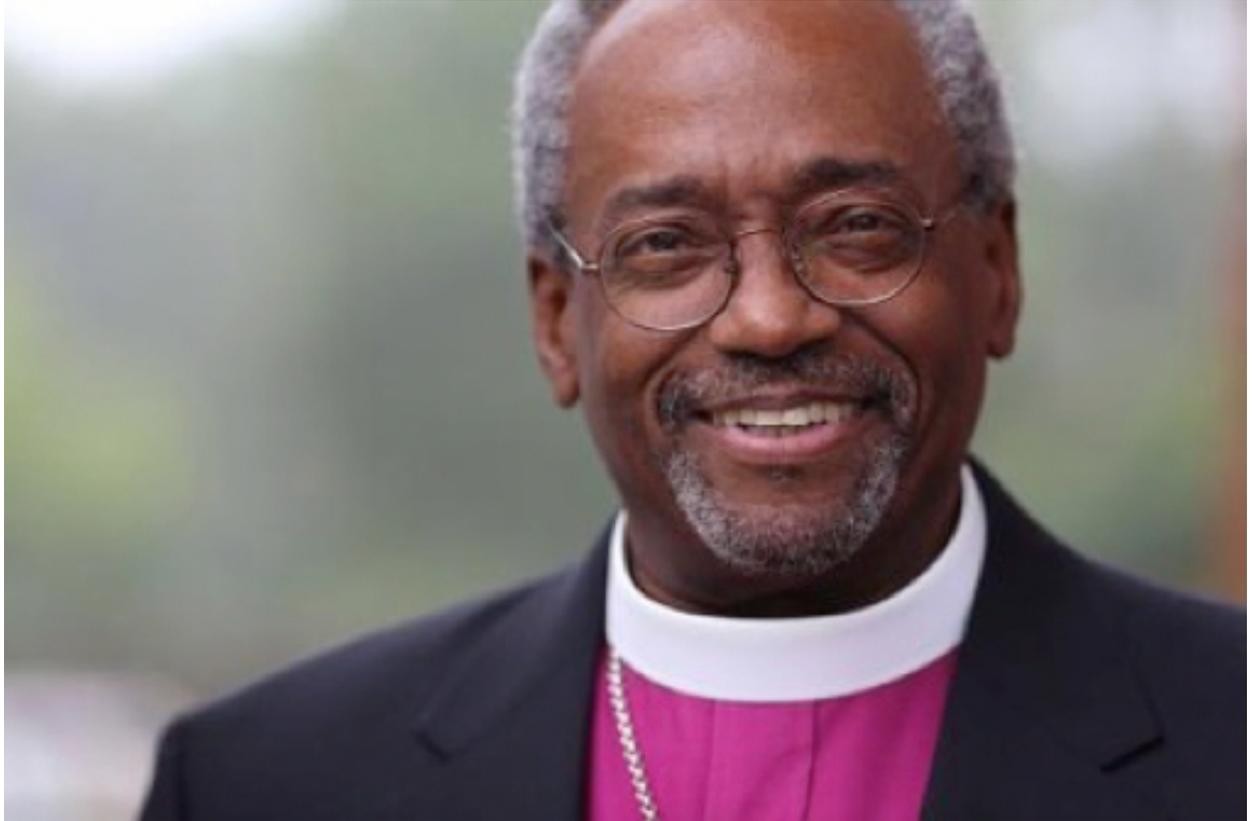
- What are some rules of life that already exist in our own lives, consciously or unconsciously? Are they helpful, or hurtful?
- Where is God calling you to pay more attention in your life? In what specific ways would you like to be more intentional with God?
- Monastics have been using rules of life for centuries. What do you think is key to the rule of life's staying power? What is appealing? What is daunting?
- What is holding you back from being more intentional about your relationship with God? What can you do this week to take down one of those barriers?
- The Way of Love is a rule of life. With whom could you travel the Way of Love, helping to keep each other accountable?

Practicing a Rule of Life

Noon Day Prayer



THE WAY OF LOVE
Practices for Jesus-Centered Life



An Invitation from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry to Practice the Way of Love

In the first century Jesus of Nazareth inspired a movement. A community of people whose lives were centered on Jesus Christ and committed to living the way of God's unconditional, unselfish, sacrificial, and redemptive love. Before they were called "church" or "Christian," this Jesus Movement was simply called "the way."

Today I believe our vocation is to live as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. But how can we together grow more deeply with Jesus Christ at the center of our lives, so we can bear witness to his way of love in and for the world?

The deep roots of our Christian tradition may offer just such a path. For centuries, monastic communities have shaped their lives around rhythms and disciplines for following Jesus together. Such a pattern is known as a "Rule of Life." The framework

you now hold – *The Way of Love: Practices for Jesus-Centered Life* – outlines a Rule for the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.

It is designed to be spare and spacious, so that individuals, ministry groups, congregations, and networks can flesh it out in unique ways and build a church-wide treasure trove of stories and resources. There is no specific order you need to follow. If you already keep a Rule or spiritual disciplines, you might reflect and discover how that path intersects with this one. By entering into reflection, discernment and commitment around the practices of Turn - Learn - Pray - Worship - Bless - Go - Rest, I pray we will grow as communities following the loving, liberating, life-giving way of Jesus. His way has the power to change each of our lives and to change this world.

Your brother in the Way of Jesus,

+Michael

The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry, Primate and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church