

## Living a Rule of Life

We are becoming a church that looks and acts like Jesus. Transformation and *re*-formation like this requires intention, wisdom, community and the Spirit. In other words, it takes a Rule of Life.

**A Rule of Life** is not just a list of rules. It's an intentional commitment to a set of habits and practices that provide guidance, rhythm and inspiration for living a beautiful, holy life. Especially today, our identity as church doesn't come from sharing the same space; we are church because we share an intentional commitment to a particular Jesus-centered way of life.

## How to Discern and Live a Rule of Life

**STEP 1: Breathe and Pray.** Don't get hung up on content and format. What matters is prayerfully setting an intentional commitment to orient your life toward God. Note: If you already have a Rule, recommit to that.

**STEP 2: Set a Specific Intention.** What ultimate goal guides your Rule? In this time of upheaval and possibility, Presiding Bishop Curry invites us to commit to becoming people and communities who look and act like Jesus. How and why would you like to be more like Jesus and to live a God-centered life?

**STEP 3: Identify Habits and Practices.** Focus on specific spiritual habits that both nourish and reflect your intention. What will you embrace? What will you resist? If it helps, revisit the Way of Love's 7 practices for Jesus-centered life: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go and Rest.

**STEP 4: Make a Plan.** Decide when and how you will pursue various habits and practices. When could mean daily, weekly, monthly or annually. How includes considering your relationships with God, yourself, others and the earth. Be sure to also identify helpful tools and relationships.

**STEP 5: Commit to Community.** Form and covenant with a small gathered community where you are accountable to your Rule and support others living their own Rule, or where you share a common Rule.

## Want Help?

### My Way of Love



[episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/my-way-of-love](https://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/my-way-of-love)

### About Rules of Life



[episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/about-rules-of-life](https://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/about-rules-of-life)

### The Way of Love



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## Forming Small Gathered Communities

There is no better context for growing into people who look and act like Jesus than an intentional small community of people committed to the same journey.

**Small gathered communities** (or small groups, discipleship groups, house churches, however you name them) where we experience belonging to God and to each other are a true game-changer in Christian life. The seeds planted in our individual and congregational lives will bear more fruit when we nurture them in a small group where we gather, covenant and share faith and life.

## How to Form and Host a Small Gathered Community

### **PREP STEP: Invite the Group.**

Groups are ideally between 8 and 12 people. They can meet anywhere (at church, in homes, online), for varying lengths of time (6 weeks to 2+ years), and may be closed (same people throughout) or open (new people join mid-journey). Transformation and belonging happen when groups are intentional and committed, rather than simply fellowship or drop-in.

### **STEP 1: Gather 'Round.**

Begin with prayer and the breaking of bread. Sharing a meal – preparing it together, ordering in, or settling with plates in front of laptop screens – places us in the footsteps of the early church.

### **STEP 2: Share about God.**

Invite each person to briefly share whether and how God is showing up in their lives right now. Reflect honestly on your individual or shared Rule of Life, and how you are following Jesus and his way.

### **STEP 3: Reflect on Scripture and Wisdom.**

Read scripture and discuss how it intersects with your life today (try the Sunday Lectionary or Daily Office). You could use a book study or curriculum, but it's not required.

### **STEP 4: Pray and Worship.**

Close with prayer and thanksgiving. In word, song and/or silence, invite people to offer thanks, hope and concerns.

## Want Help?

### **Building Intentional Small Groups**



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### **The Way of Love**



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