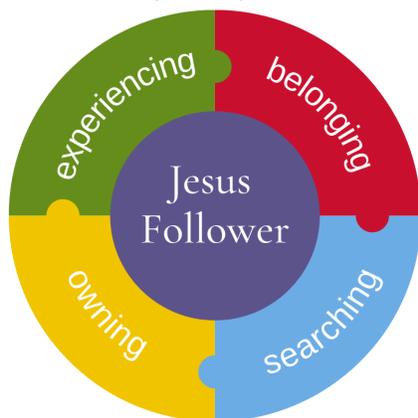


Styles of Faith

People grow in faith through a lifetime, expanding capacities and understandings, doubting, searching, experimenting and recommitting along the way. One way to think of styles of faith is as the rings of a tree that expand over a lifetime. Why tree rings? Just like a tree with one ring is as complete as a tree with three rings, every Christian is complete no matter their style. Just like no tree is better than the other, every Christian is valued. Finally, just like a tree doesn't shed its rings, a person retains every style of faith along the way. As we expand in faith, we do not leave other styles behind. We simply grow closer to God as we grow in faith. In this graphic we illustrate the styles of faith as a circular journey to emphasize Jesus as the center of the journey.



What is your style of faith?

Read the statements below each style and find the one that reflects your life of faith. Once you have found your style, consider taking a next step in faith to go deeper with God. Remember, one style is not better than another. We grow as Christians throughout our lives. You will likely find you resonate with more than one style.

Experiencing faith

- I pray with others at mealtimes, at the beginning and end of day, and at church gatherings.
- I attend worship occasionally.
- I read the Bible from time to time when led by others.
- I enjoy serving others with my faith community.
- I share my income, time, and talents with others.
- I notice the ways that God is actively present in my life.

Belonging faith

- I pray with others at mealtimes, at the beginning and end of day, and at church gatherings.
- I have begun to worship regularly and am more aware of God's presence each day.
- I read the Bible regularly as part of a group.
- I'm beginning to understand how the Baptismal Promises guide how I live my daily life.
- I serve others, including advocating and acting for peace, justice, human dignity, and care for creation.
- I share my time, talent and treasure as a sign of my membership in my community.
- I help make my faith community a place that welcomes others.



Searching faith

- I am looking for prayer that helps me draw closer to God.
- I attend worship regularly and reflect on what worship means to me.
- I read the Bible regularly and use resources to help me understand its context, history, and meaning.
- I am exploring what Christian beliefs I can claim as my own.
- I reflect on the purpose, and my own call, to serve others and creation.
- I commit to regularly sharing my time, talent and treasure in the community.
- I wonder about the variety of ways people experience God's loving presence in life.

Owning faith

- I set aside time to pray regularly on my own.
- I worship God in daily life and in community.
- I lead Bible study and can share important Biblical stories with others.
- The Baptismal Promises guide how I live my daily life.
- I structure all aspects of life to join God's reconciling work in the world and as an expression of Jesus' way of love in daily life.
- I give time, talent and treasure in daily life as a grateful response to God's abundant blessings.
- It is natural for me to share my faith story.

Experiencing Faith

Someone expressing this style of faith feels the love of Jesus in community through experiences characterized by love, trust, and acceptance--whether through worship, friendships, or serving others.

Core questions for some with this style are: Who am I as a follower of Jesus? How do I hear and discover what being a follower of Jesus means for me? How do I hear and discover what being an Episcopalian means for me?

Belonging Faith

Someone expressing this style of faith is drawn to a community committed to following Jesus, and enjoys participating in experiences that include a sense of awe, wonder, and mystery. They begin to connect their faith with a sense of feeling at home with a particular group of people in a particular tradition.

Core questions for some with this style are: What gifts do I bring to my community? How do my relationships help me understand God more fully? How does my community inform my attitudes, beliefs, and values?

Searching Faith

Someone expressing this style of faith is in a time of doubting, questioning, experimentation. Their attitudes, beliefs, and values regarding faith have been challenged by a new circumstance, crisis, or relationship. This is a time when a person claims for themselves what they believe. They may make a personal (re)commitment to follow Jesus.

Core questions for some with this style are: What helps me go deeper in my relationship with Jesus? Who are my models and inspiration? How can I reconcile my doubts and my faith?

Owning Faith

Someone expressing this style of faith is committed to following Jesus with their heart, hands, and head, putting faith into personal and social action. They are willing and able to stand up for what they believe and share faith with others.

Core questions for some with this style are: How can I invite others to follow Jesus and disciple others? How can/do I pass on faith? What difference can I make in the world?