



But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love. – Ephesians 4:15-16

We are called by God to grow in faith throughout our lives. These five time-tested Christian practices will help you deepen your faith and draw you closer to God in community. Together they mark the shape of a life centered on Jesus.

Check out the Diocese of Washington's path of discipleship and consider your next steps on your journey of faith at edow.org/path (coming soon).

Download the Path of Discipleship Phone App



APPLE



ANDROID

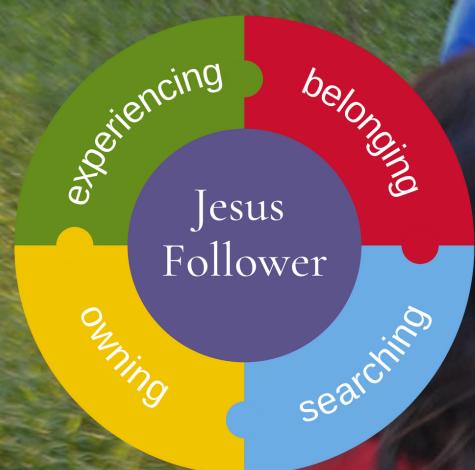
FIVE ESSENTIAL PRACTICES TO GROW IN FAITH



Episcopal Diocese
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PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Follow me."

We hear the biblical imperative to discipleship in these two words of Jesus. These simple words of invitation and command initiate every relationship with Jesus, whether spoken on a Galilean lake shore thousands of years ago or heard today in our homes, workplaces, schools, or streets. Simon and Andrew, Mary and Salome, and millions of Christians since have accepted that simple invitation to follow Jesus, often with little understanding of the life-changing nature of that decision.

The Diocese of Washington offers five time-tested Christian practices along a path of discipleship to guide the most challenging, and also the most rewarding, journey of our lives of following Jesus.

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FIVE ESSENTIAL PRACTICES TO GROW IN FAITH





PRAY
Talk, listen, and respond to God

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” – Luke 11:1

To pray is to dream, to hope, to expect, to trust, to imagine. Whether worshiping with a community, reading alone, reflecting on the Bible, considering a personal experience, a story, or a movie, we are at work in an ecosystem of prayer, the research and development aspect of the Church. Prayer attunes us to noticing God breaking into human history – breaking through our prejudices and preferred notions with questions about poor and powerless persons, about justice and peace, about personal and systemic transformation so we might break out with new God given hearts to pursue God's heart's desires.

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LEARN
Learn the story of God and God's people

“Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. – Philippians 4:9

God has revealed God's self throughout the history – in creation, through the people Israel, the prophets, and most especially in the person, Jesus, God's son. God continues to reveal God's self to us today through the Holy Spirit as we worship, study, and share life together. Learning is a lifelong endeavor.

We can notice what God is up to by listening to God in Scripture, nature, life experiences, and other people, the arts, science, and intuition. It takes setting aside time for intentional reflection on one's own or in a small group.

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SERVE

Take part in God's mission by serving others

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" – Micah 6:6b-8

Will you...

- Seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
- Strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? (BCP, 92–94).

These two of five questions begin to be written on our hearts as a seemingly impossible job description, made possible with God's help. As we live into our baptismal identities, we take on the role of servant and take part in God's mission of reconciliation.

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GIVE

Give generously from God's abundant blessings

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." – 2 Corinthians 9:11

Jesus's ministry demonstrated what life is like when people are given more than they can ask or imagine. When the disciples were faced with a hungry crowd of thousands and only a few fish and a couple of loaves of bread, Jesus fed them all – with twelve baskets of food to spare. Nothing ran out. When people asked him to describe the kingdom of God, Jesus told about a mustard seed that grows into a tree that provides a home for the birds, yeast mixed with flour that expands into nourishing bread that can feed a village, and a field that yields a hundredfold. In Jesus's life of abundance, out of little comes much. We too can share what little we have, and together with others who have little, provide enough for everyone.

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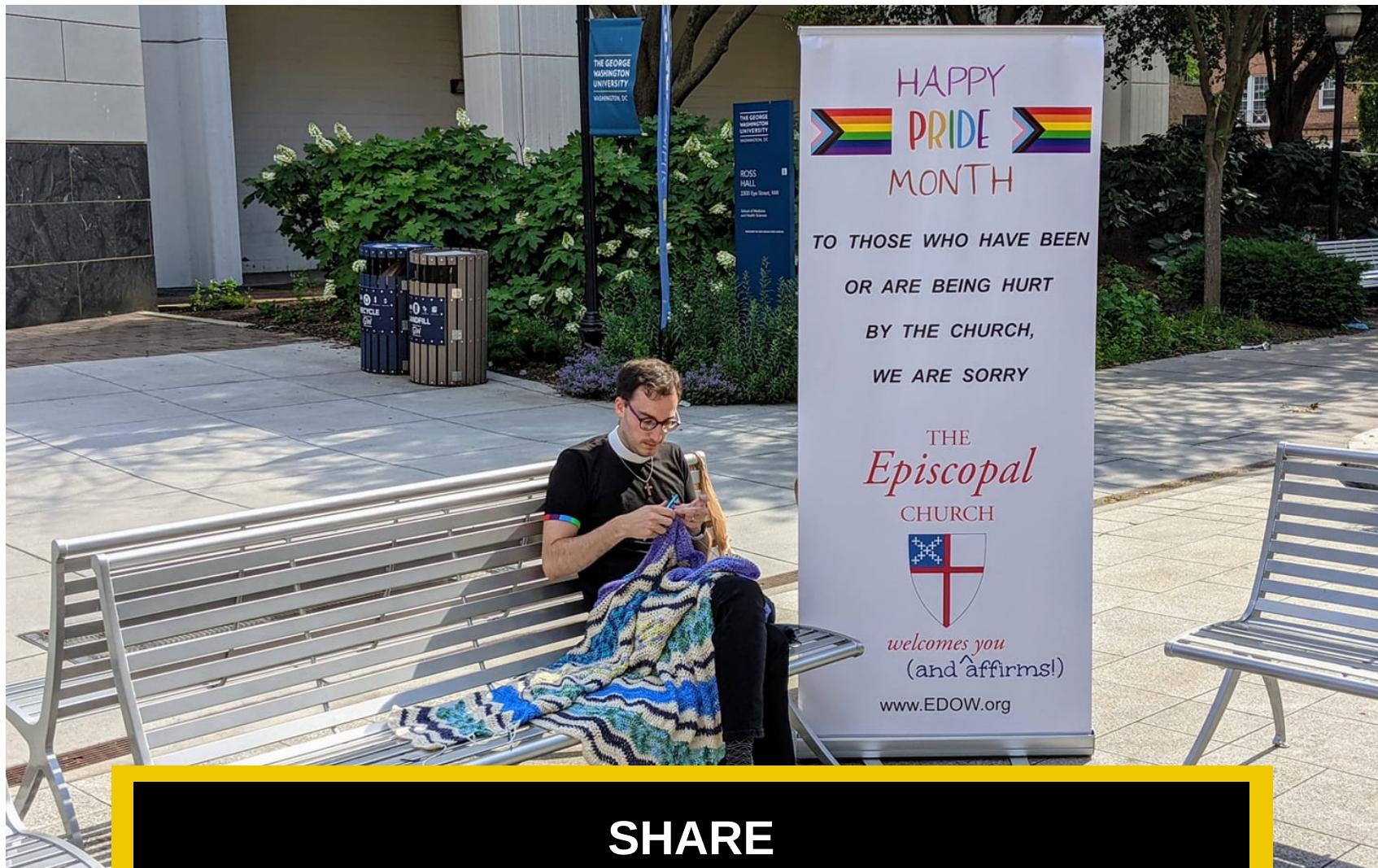
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SHARE

Invite others to come on the journey with God

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." – Acts 1:8

As Jesus followers, we are called to be witnesses to the liberating and life-giving love of Jesus. Witnessing to such love is less about recruiting church members, and more about inviting people to a way of life, a lifelong journey of discovering the gift of God's presence in our lives and in the world and growing more deeply in relationship with God and one another.

If you have experienced the love of Jesus, why not share it with others, inviting them to join the journey with God?

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