**Discipleship Journey Guide**

**Purpose**

*“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” –Matthew 28:18-20*

 These words of Jesus known as the “Great Commission” provide a clear direction for what the Church is supposed to be about: making disciples. Yet it’s so easy for us to put the focus on attendance as the mark of discipleship. If someone has been confirmed, are they a disciple? If they’re at youth group, worship, or a small group have we done our job? If someone “put in their time” being active in church when they were younger, do they now get to coast until the Lord calls them home?

 As long as we are here on this earth, we are both being made disciples through the Word and Sacraments and also being called to be active as disciples in loving and serving our neighbors. This is the twofold journey of discipleship, and it is never finished. Our goals in ministry need to be based in these areas rather than just attendance. “Be at youth group” is not a discipleship goal, neither are “join a small group” or “be confirmed”. The purpose of this guide is to be able to put some guidelines and goals for what we are seeking to develop through the various programs and ministries of the congregation.

**Discipleship Areas**

In order to be more intentional about having programs that serve the lifelong journey of discipleship, the focus will be put on developing these 7 discipleship areas. There is some overlap between these areas and it is not a totally exhaustive list, but these 7 areas give a good picture of what it looks like to be a disciple:

1. **Personal spiritual growth**- What the individual believes and confesses about their faith, themselves, and the world around them.

*“But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” –John 20:31*

*"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” –Acts 2:38*

*“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” –Ephesians 3:17-19*

1. **Congregational life**- We are not called to be “lone wolf” Christians. Instead, we have been blessed to be a part of the body of Christ. Within that body, we are called to be an active member of a local congregation, with whom we share a confession, mission, and ministry.

*“For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another”–Romans 12:4-5*

*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,**to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” -Ephesians 4:11-13*

1. **Christ-centered relationships-** More than simply having relationships with other Christians, a sign of Christian maturity is having relationships that are centered in and focused on Christ and what He’s done for us. This applies to relationships both with other believers (for encouragement, strength, building up, etc.) and with those that do not know Christ (ie. relational evangelism).

*“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” -1 Corinthians 2:2*

*“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” –John 13:35*

*“But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” –Acts 20:24*

1. **Prayer-** Regular communication with God in all circumstances that flows out of a relationship with Him.

*“Rejoice always,**pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” -1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.**And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” –Philippians 4:6-7*

*“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us” -1 John 5:14*

1. **Studying the Word-** Listening and obeying the Word of God, letting His Word be the authority in all things. This happens both personally and publically, individually and corporately.

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” -2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*“How can a young person stay on the path of purity?
By living according to your word” –Psalm 119:9*

*“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free'” –John 8:31-32*

1. **Worship life**- Receiving God’s gifts through the Word and Sacrament in the Divine Service is an absolute necessity in the life of every believer.

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God”-Colossians 3:16*

*“Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” –Hebrews 10:25*

***“****In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” -1 Corinthians 11:25*

1. **Service**- We respond to God’s gifts with our obedience to His commands, service to His people, and love for our neighbors.

*“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;**if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;**the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness”-Romans 12:6-8*

 *“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” - Mark 10:45*

*“But be sure to fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you” -1 Samuel 12:24*

*“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’**The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” –Mark 12:30-31*

**Cradle to Grave Discipleship Goals**

 What exactly makes something a “discipleship goal?” The simple answer is that it is a goal that is based on living out being a disciple, instead of being based in some other standard. For example, an attendance goal would be “have 10 kids in the confirmation program,” an outcome goal would be “get confirmed,” and a discipleship goal is “take personal ownership of your faith.” All of the discipleship goals in this guide go back to either learning more about what it means to be a disciple of Christ or finding ways to live that life out in service to the church and world.

 For each of the 7 discipleship areas outlined in this guide, there will be a discipleship goal and then underneath that goal will be a list of some opportunities to grow in that area. For example, if the goal is for an adult to “actively participate in weekly studying the Bible with others,” then what are some chances for adults to grow in this? They could go to a Sunday morning Bible study, join a small group, participate in family devotions at home, etc. These lists are not exhaustive, as there are many ways to develop each of the areas, but hopefully they serve as ideas of ways that our congregation is helping to provide support for each of these goals.

 Some of these goals are not currently addressed by any of the programs at the church, and instead are an opportunity for a new ministry, resource, program, or event. These are noted in [brackets], which means that we either currently don’t have that resource or ministry, or that we have that ministry but it doesn’t address that specific goal at this time. This will help the church in determining which programs and ministries to add, as well as what content to include in them. These bracketed items also give great opportunities for individuals to step up and serve in exciting new ways, while at the same time helping to equip other church members to grow in those areas.

Just so there’s no confusion, here are a few things that this guide is NOT…

* A list of things you have to do in order to be saved. These goals are not required for salvation, nor by doing them do you somehow earn God’s love more. Ephesians 2:8-10 helps clarify this for us: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” These discipleship goals are part of the good works that God has prepared for us, not to earn our salvation, but as a joyous response to us. Good works follow grace. We serve from our salvation, not for it.
* A measurement of how “good” of a Christian you are. Someone that is seeking to grow in these ways cannot look down on anyone else, because we are all sinful. The church is a hospital for sinners, not a country club for saints. These goals don’t change the mission of the church, rather they help us to live out that mission as we continue to grow in Christ.
* A list of requirements in order to be a member at this church. This journey of discipleship is something that we are all on together. This is what we as a church are called to be all about. None of us are going to “make it” and be done with the journey. We help each other grow through this process, instead of judging one another based on how well it appears we’re doing, which is the trap the Pharisees got into all the time in the Bible.

**Ways to Use This Guide**

 With any journey that you go on in life, it is useful to have a guide. There is a reason that tour guides and guide books are so popular for individuals who are traveling to a new place. They may not tell you absolutely everything you could ever want to know about your journey, but they can hopefully give you some needed information and help you know where to go next. This discipleship journey guide is designed to do the same for you in your walk as a disciple of Christ. Here are some ways that this can be a resource for you:

* **Parents** are called to be the spiritual leaders in their home, but it’s really tough to know what that looks like and where to start. This guide can be used for parents to give them some starting points for ways they can go about spiritually leading their families and the progression of what this can look like over time as their children grow.
* For **church leaders**, this is meant to be used to help create programs that better target the needs of the members. Each program, resource, or ministry opportunity can now look at setting discipleship goals rather than just attendance goals. This can also be used to identify new ministry opportunities or new focus areas for current ministries, based on discipleship goals that we currently don’t provide many resources for to help equip our members.
* **Older adults** can sometimes struggle to find where they fit in service and ministry now, and with what their purpose is after retirement. This guide can help give some guidance on ways to continue to grow in faith and service, because that process is never done. We may retire from full-time employment, but we never retire from being disciples.
* **New members** who are looking for a way to get involved with their new church can get a good picture of what is offered and how to get connected.
* **Youth** who are transitioning into being adult Christians often just get pushed into that role with little to no preparation. It often is “you’re confirmed or graduated, now be an adult” and that abrupt shift results in a lot of missing youth. This guide gives a transition plan over the course of a few years that can ease youth into that responsibility and the personal ownership of faith, while giving them a clear path towards active involvement in their congregation.
* **Children** thrive when they are able to see all the different things they are able to do. This resource can be used to show them all the skills that they have learned already, and also give them some goals to strive for in the present and future.
* **College students** often need guidance on how to stay connected to the church while off at school. This guide gives them numerous ways they can stay plugged into their home congregation, as well as be active disciples in their campus community.
* **Sunday School teachers** can use this as a guide for what else they can work on with their kids outside of just teaching the Bible story for the week, like what skills they can work on, what memory work would be helpful, and what opportunities can be given to the kids to be active and leading.

**Discipleship Journey Categories**

 This guide breaks the lifelong journey of discipleship into categories based on age, development, and seasons of life. There are certainly some overlaps between these categories and some individuals may fit into more than one at the same time (a family with multiple kids of varying ages may be classified as a young family, growing family, and youth family all at one time), but they serve to give each person, regardless of their age, some goals to set and ways to get involved as a disciple that is relevant to their individual context.

**Birth-2 years old**

**2-4 years old**

**Pre-K (4-5 years old)**

**Kindergarten-2nd grade**

**3rd-5th grade**

**Middle School (6th-8th grade)**

**Freshman/Sophomore**

**Junior/Senior**

**College Students**

**Young Adult (20’s)**

**Young Couples (Newly married, no kids)**

**Young Families (Families with infants/young children)**

**Growing Families (Families with elementary age children)**

**Youth Families (Families with teenagers)**

**Empty Nesters (Families with adult children)**

**Single Parent Families (One parent with children)**

**Grandparents**

**Single Adults (Non-married adults in 30’s or older, with no children)**

**Single Seniors/Retirees**

**Retired Couples**

**Birth-2 years old**

Personal spiritual growth

* Know that Jesus loves them
	+ Family devotionals, children’s Bible, Sunday School

Congregational life

* Be adopted into God’s family
	+ Baptism
* Start habit of weekly learning about the Bible
	+ Little Blessings Sunday School class

Christ-centered relationships

* Have adults that share Jesus with them
	+ Relationships with parents and baptismal sponsors

Prayer

* Listen regularly to others pray
	+ Prayers in the home, [family prayer guide], prayers in worship/Sunday School
* Be able to say short prayers of their own
	+ Prayers at home, Sunday School

Studying the Word

* Gain familiarity with key Bible stories
	+ Have Bible stories read to them at home, Sunday School

Worship life

* Introduced to the worship service of the church
	+ Regularly be in worship services with the family

Service

* Learn to be thankful when others serve them
	+ Manners in Sunday School and home

**2-4 years old**

Personal spiritual growth

* Know that Jesus died for them to forgive their sins
	+ Family devotionals, Sunday School, Children’s church, Vacation Bible School

Congregational life

* Be able to identify to others which church they belong to
	+ Sunday School, Sunday morning worship

Christ-centered relationships

* Have adults that regularly share Jesus with them
	+ Relationships with parents and baptismal sponsors, relationship with pastors and Sunday School teachers

Prayer

* Understand that they can talk to God whenever they want through prayer
	+ Family prayers, Sunday School, Children’s Church, [family prayer guide]
* Be able to say sentence-length prayers of their own
	+ Family prayers, Sunday School, Children’s Church, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Be able to recite one or two key Bible verses
	+ Pastor’s Award (Sunday School), Children’s Church

Worship life

* Listen to and participate in age-appropriate sermons/lessons
	+ Children’s Messages, Children’s Church
* Sing along with a few favorite hymns and songs
	+ Worship service, Sunday School opening, Children’s Church, Vacation Bible School

Service

* Serve in small ways around their Sunday School classroom
	+ Clean up or passing out materials in Sunday School/Children’s Church

**Pre-K (4-5 years old)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Know the 3 persons of the Trinity- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
	+ Sunday School
* Know and have memorized John 3:16
	+ Pastor’s Award

Congregational life

* Build friendships with other kids their same age at church
	+ Sunday School, family connections events

Christ-centered relationships

* Be able to ask for and receive forgiveness
	+ Children’s Church, family devotions
* Have relationships with older children/youth
	+ Youth Sunday School mentor program

Prayer

* Be able to say more complex prayers, including adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication (ACTS prayer)
	+ Children’s Church, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Familiar with the Book, Chapter, Verse organization of the Bible
	+ Children’s Church, Sunday School, Worship bulletin/liturgy, [family devotion guide]

Worship life

* Able to follow along with the order of service (stand up, sit down, go up for communion, etc.)
	+ Sunday morning worship services, [family worship guide]

Service

* Identify ways that they can serve those around them
	+ Children’s Church, Sunday School

**Kindergarten-2nd grade**

Personal spiritual growth

* Know and memorize the Apostle’s Creed
	+ Pastor’s Award, Children’s Church, Sunday morning worship

Congregational life

* Begin to learn the practice of offering/tithing
	+ Family devotions

Christ-centered relationships

* Have simple conversations with older youth at church
	+ Youth Sunday School mentor program

Prayer

* Grow in ability to pray on their own
	+ Children’s church
* Be able to pray for others
	+ Children’s Church, Youth Sunday School mentor program
* Memorize the Lord’s Prayer
	+ Pastor’s Award, Children’s Church, Sunday morning worship

Studying the Word

* When given a passage in the Bible, be able to find it using the Table of Contents
	+ Sunday School, Children’s Church, Family devotions
* Memorize the books of the Bible
	+ Pastor’s Award
* Memorize more key Bible passages
	+ Pastor’s Award

Worship life

* Gain familiarity with the hymnal
	+ Worship bulletin, [family worship guide]

Service

* Thank those who serve around the church
	+ [Sunday School service projects]

**3rd-5th grade**

Personal spiritual growth

* Develop habit of personal Bible readings
	+ Family devotions, [family devotion guide]

Congregational life

* Learn the mission statement of Christ the King Lutheran Church
	+ Church bulletin, [Pastor’s Award]

Christ-centered relationships

* Have deeper conversations with older youth and adults at church
	+ Youth Sunday School mentorship program
* Invite other friends/family to church
	+ VBS, family connection events, Sunday morning worships

Prayer

* Grow more comfortable in praying out loud
	+ Children’s church, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Develop habit of personal Bible readings
	+ Family devotions, [family devotion guide]

Worship life

* Be able to follow along and participate in the entire worship service
	+ Sunday morning worship, [family worship guide]

Service

* Serve together as a family
	+ Church service events

**Middle School (6th-8th grade)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Take public ownership of their faith
	+ Confirmation
* Be able to better articulate what you believe
	+ Confirmation, youth group, Sunday morning Bible class

Congregational life

* Learn the 6 Chief Parts of the Lutheran faith
	+ Confirmation

Christ-centered relationships

* Mentor Sunday School children
	+ Youth Sunday School mentorship program
* Develop meaningful relationships with other youth at church
	+ Youth group, Sunday morning Bible class
* Participate in regular faith conversations with their parents
	+ Confirmation, [family devotion guide]

Prayer

* Pray regularly with their family
	+ Family devotions, [family prayer guide], confirmation
* Gain confidence asking others for prayer requests
	+ Youth group, Sunday School

Studying the Word

* Foster personal devotional life
	+ Confirmation, family devotions

Worship life

* Be able to articulate the importance of the worship service
	+ Confirmation

Service

* Find an area of regular service inside the congregation
	+ Acolyte, usher, VBS, etc.
* Participate in church-sponsored service events
	+ Youth servant projects, confirmation

**Freshman/Sophomore**

Personal spiritual growth

* Build a foundation on their identity in Christ
	+ Youth group
* Have faith reinforcing “mountain-top” experiences
	+ National Youth Gathering, mission trips, youth retreats

Congregational life

* Actively participate in congregational decisions
	+ Voters meetings

Christ-centered relationships

* Build Christian friendships centered in encouragement and prayer
	+ Youth group, Sunday morning Bible class

Prayer

* Develop skills in writing out prayers or journaling
	+ [Youth devotional book], [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Be able to regularly apply Scripture to life
	+ Youth group, Sunday morning Bible class
* Grow in ability to articulate what they believe verbally and written
	+ Teaching Bible class/Sunday School, [youth worship service], [youth devotional book]

Worship life

* Regularly receive the Lord’s Supper
	+ Sunday morning services

Service

* Actively serve with fellow church members
	+ Church service events, various ongoing service opportunities
* Find opportunities to serve outside of church-sponsored events
	+ Various school, community, and neighborhood opportunities
* Engage in service outside of our own community
	+ Mission trips/servant events

**Junior/Senior**

Personal spiritual growth

* Be able to articulate “the Lutheran difference”
	+ [Youth group]
* Have Biblical opinions on importance social issues
	+ Youth group, Youth leadership team

Congregational life

* Active in leadership in the congregation
	+ Youth leadership team, [Church boards]

Christ-centered relationships

* Serve as a mentor for younger youth
	+ Youth leadership team
* Actively seek relationships with Christian adults
	+ Youth leadership team, family connections events

Prayer

* Develop a regular prayer routine
	+ Youth leadership team, family devotions

Studying the Word

* Grow in ability to teach the Word to others
	+ Youth Bible class, youth leadership team, family devotions
* Be able to discern various Christian resources in light of Lutheran doctrine
	+ [Youth group], [youth leadership team]

Worship life

* Seek opportunities to be involved in worship
	+ Music ministry, children’s church, [youth worship service]

Service

* Gain experience organizing service projects
	+ [Youth leadership team]
* Transition towards more relational service opportunities
	+ [Youth servant events], [youth leadership team]

**College Students**

Personal spiritual growth

* Seek opportunities to grow spiritually on campus
	+ DCE 1on1 meetings, [college connections program]
* Explore areas of giftedness and interest
	+ [Youth Leadership Team]

Congregational life

* Stay connected to home congregation
	+ [College Connections Program], Sunday morning worship
* Serve as mentor/adult leader to younger youth while home on breaks
	+ Youth group, [Youth Leadership Team]
* Get involved in adult ministries in the congregation
	+ LWML, [CtK Serves Ministry], Bible studies, small groups, etc.

Christ-centered relationships

* Get connected with a group of Christian friends
	+ DCE 1on1 meetings
* Reach out to others on campus who don’t believe the same as you
	+ [Evangelism ministry]

Prayer

* Reach out to their family through regular prayer
	+ [College Connections Program]

Studying the Word

* Find a campus Bible study to be a regular part of
	+ DCE 1on1 meetings
* Maintain a regular personal devotion time
	+ [Family devotion guide]

Worship life

* Regularly attend worship at a local congregation
	+ DCE 1on1 meetings, [College Connections program]

Service

* Find ways to serve the community around your college
	+ [College Connections Program]
* Be active in serving in the congregation that you attend while at school
	+ [College Connections Program]

**Young Adult (20’s)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Be able to strongly articulate what you believe
	+ [Lutheran Confessions Bible study]
* Able to use resources to find Biblical answers to questions you have
	+ Family discipleship class
* See yourself as a witness for Christ in workplace, neighborhood, etc.
	+ [Evangelism ministry]

Congregational life

* Get involved in leadership within the congregation
	+ Church boards

Christ-centered relationships

* Connect with a group of similar-aged Christian friends
	+ [Young adult group], small groups
* Build relationships with older adults as informal mentors
	+ Adult ministries, [intergenerational ministry]
* Get involved with youth/children’s ministries in a mentor capacity
	+ Youth group, Sunday School, VBS

Prayer

* Develop a regular prayer routine for home, work, and church
	+ [Family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Actively participate in a weekly Bible study
	+ Sunday morning Bible studies, weekly Bible study opportunities, small groups

Worship life

* Continue to be regularly strengthened by the Divine Service
	+ Sunday morning services
* Be able to explain the importance of Word and Sacrament ministry
	+ New member class, [family worship guide]

Service

* Actively use gifts to serve those in need
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

**Young Couples (Newly married, no kids)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Be able to talk and agree as a couple about what you believe
	+ New members class, [Lutheran Confessions Bible study]
* Have a strong Biblical foundation for what the purpose of your marriage is, what your roles are, and how you treat one another
	+ Family discipleship class, [marriage enrichment ministry]

Congregational life

* Both be active members on the roster of the same congregation
	+ Membership class, Sunday morning worship
* Set the habit early on of tithing as a part of your stewardship and life as an active congregational member
	+ [Financial Peace classes]

Christ-centered relationships

* Build relationships with other Christian couples
	+ Small groups, church fellowship events

Prayer

* Pray with and for your spouse on a daily basis
	+ [Family prayer guide], [marriage enrichment ministry]

Studying the Word

* Regularly participate in devotions as a couple
	+ Portals of Prayer, [family devotion guide]
* Actively engage in Bible study weekly
	+ Sunday morning Bible classes, small groups

Worship life

* Make worshipping together a habit of your marriage
	+ Sunday morning services, [marriage enrichment ministry]

Service

* Find opportunities to serve others together as a couple
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)
* Find ways to serve individually using your unique gifts
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

**Young Families (Families with infants/young children)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Be able to share with your kids the basics about what you believe
	+ Family discipleship class, [Bible 101 Bible study]
* Have a strong Biblical foundation for what your roles are as parents
	+ Family discipleship class

Congregational life

* Bring your children to be baptized and become members of this congregation
	+ Baptism

Christ-centered relationships

* Build relationships with other Christian families
	+ Small groups, family connection events
* Lay the foundation for your relationships with your family on God’s Word
	+ Family discipleship class

Prayer

* Pray with and for your kids and spouse on a daily basis
	+ Family discipleship class, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Regularly read the Bible to your children
	+ [Family devotion guide]

Worship life

* Make worshipping together a family habit
	+ Sunday morning services
* Add some favorite hymns or praise songs to the music library that your family listens to
	+ Music ministry

Service

* Allow others to use their gifts and generosity to serve you, even if you don’t think you need the help
	+ Angel food ministry, scholarship fund, church service opportunities
* Serve one another in your family through the daily tasks around the household and teach about how we are serving God at the same time
	+ [Family discipleship class]

**Growing Families (Families with elementary age children)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Be able to apply Law and Gospel in your parenting and marriage
	+ Family discipleship class, [Lutheran 101 Bible study]
* Base your household rules and decisions on Scripture
	+ Family discipleship class

Congregational life

* Find an area of ministry in the congregation to connect with other members and be active in using your gifts
	+ Various service opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

Christ-centered relationships

* Build relationships with other Christian families
	+ Small groups, family connection events
* Have regular faith conversations with the members of your family
	+ Family discipleship class, [family devotions packet]

Prayer

* Model a lifestyle of regular prayer throughout the day
	+ Family discipleship class, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Regularly lead family devotions at home
	+ [Family devotion guide], family discipleship class
* Actively engage in Bible study weekly
	+ Sunday morning Bible classes, small groups

Worship life

* Help explain the various parts of the worship service to your family
	+ Sunday morning services, family discipleship class, [family worship guide]
* Add a favorite hymn or praise song to your family devotion time
	+ [Family devotion guide], hymnal

Service

* Begin the habit of serving together as a family in your neighborhood, church, and community
	+ Church service projects

**Youth Families (Families with teenagers)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Grow in your identity as a child of God first, husband/wife second, parent third, and employee fourth
	+ Family discipleship class, small groups
* View situations in the world and your family in light of God’s Word
	+ Family discipleship class, small groups

Congregational life

* Actively participate in the teaching of the faith to your kids in confirmation and beyond
	+ Confirmation, family discipleship class, [family devotion guide]
* Engage your kids in youth ministry and other church opportunities
	+ Youth ministry, Bible studies, service events, small groups

Christ-centered relationships

* Build relationships with other Christian families
	+ Small groups, family connection events
* Serve as another caring Christian adult for your children’s friends, encouraging them in the faith and praying for them
	+ Youth ministry

Prayer

* Pray with family members not only during difficult times, but also regularly pray out-loud prayers of thanksgiving with your family
	+ Family discipleship class, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Maintain a regular family devotional life at home, encouraging other members of the family to lead more and more as they get older
	+ [Family devotions packet], family discipleship class

Worship life

* Actively participate in every part of the worship service (singing the songs, reading the responses, taking notes during sermon, etc.) and teach your family to do the same
	+ Sunday morning services, family discipleship class, [family worship guide]

Service

* Find or plan opportunities to serve as a family above and beyond planned church events
	+ Small groups, family discipleship class

**Empty Nesters (Families with adult children)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Continue to see your everyday purpose as a disciple of Christ
	+ Small groups, [adult ministry]

Congregational life

* Instill in your children the importance of being an active member of a local congregation, while maintaining that life of stewardship (giving time, treasure, and talents) yourself
	+ [Adult ministry]

Christ-centered relationships

* Build relationships with other Christian adults
	+ Small groups, family connection events, [adult ministry]
* Look for opportunities to serve as a mentor to younger adults and families
	+ Family connection events, [intergenerational ministry]

Prayer

* Regularly ask family members how you can pray for them and follow up on those requests
	+ [Family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Maintain a regular family devotional life at home, and encourage your adult children to do the same in their new families
	+ [Family devotions packet]

Worship life

* Make worship a regular part of family gatherings, both for church holidays and regular weekends
	+ Worship services

Service

* Serve regularly in at least one area of the church, based in your areas of giftedness
	+ Various service opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

**Single Parent Families (One parent with children)**

Personal spiritual growth

* Seek contentment and wholeness in Christ
	+ Family discipleship class, Sunday worship service, small groups

Congregational life

* Increase involvement with your church family, drawing on them for support and encouragement
	+ Small groups, family connection events

Christ-centered relationships

* Surround yourself with Christian friends who will support you and serve as caring Christian adults and mentors for your children
	+ Small groups, family connection events, family discipleship class, [adult ministry]
* Focus on laying a solid, Biblical foundation in any future relationship more than just someone who will help provide for and support the family
	+ Family discipleship class

Prayer

* Surround your family with prayer warriors and continually pray throughout your day
	+ Family discipleship class, [family prayer guide]

Studying the Word

* Maintain a regular family devotional life at home and encourage children to read on their own as well
	+ [Family devotions packet]

Worship life

* Make worship a regular part of your family routine, even as the family dynamics change as a single parent
	+ Worship services

Service

* Reach out to others when you need help and allow them to use their gifts and generosity to serve you
	+ Angel food ministry, scholarship fund, church service opportunities
* Find ways to use your talents to serve others, which will reenergize you for the vocations God has given you
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

**Grandparents**

Personal spiritual growth

* See your calling and opportunity as a spiritual mentor for your grandchildren
	+ [Adult ministry], small groups

Congregational life

* Remain active in church leadership and congregational decisions
	+ Church boards, voter’s meetings

Christ-centered relationships

* Be a consistent spiritual example and encouragement for your grandchildren
	+ [Adult ministry]
* Look for opportunities to serve as a mentor to younger adults, families, and youth
	+ Family connection events, [intergenerational ministry]

Prayer

* Pray for your children and grandchildren specifically and regularly. Ask them what you can be praying about for them on a weekly basis.
	+ [Family prayer guide], small groups

Studying the Word

* Get involved in an adult Bible study that will help you apply the Word to your life
	+ Sunday morning Bible classes, weekly Bible studies, small groups

Worship life

* Make worship a regular part of your family routine when the family gets together
	+ Worship services

Service

* Find opportunities to serve with your grandchildren
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)
* Share your experience and expertise in your areas of interest and giftedness with your grandchildren by mentoring, teaching skills, and sharing stories
	+ Small groups, [senior ministry]

**Single Adults (Non-married adults in 30’s or older, with no children)**

Personal spiritual growth

* See yourself as a witness for Christ in workplace, neighborhood, etc.
	+ [Evangelism ministry], Sunday morning worship
* Seek contentment and wholeness in Christ
	+ Family discipleship class, Sunday worship service, small groups

Congregational life

* Stay involved in at least one area of leadership within the congregation
	+ Boards, other leadership opportunities

Christ-centered relationships

* Connect with a group of similar-aged Christian friends
	+ Small groups, adult ministry
* Be another caring Christian adult in the lives of some of the young people in the congregation
	+ Youth ministry, Sunday School, VBS, [intergenerational ministry]

Prayer

* Regularly pray for those on church prayer list and follow up with them as able
	+ Church prayer chain

Studying the Word

* Use a regular reading plan to read through the whole Bible
	+ [Reading plan outline], [Bible in 2 years Bible class]

Worship life

* Set an example of what it looks like to be actively engaged in the worship service
	+ Sunday morning worships service, [sermon note outline]

Service

* Seek out opportunities to use your gifts to serve those in need
	+ Various volunteer opportunities (altar guild, ushers, Gospel Gardeners, etc.)

**Single Seniors/Retirees**

Personal spiritual growth

* See your calling to continue to be an active disciple
	+ [Seniors ministry]
* Gain confidence and hope from Scripture about end of life issues
	+ Sunday worship service, small groups, Grief Share

Congregational life

* Stay involved in at least one area of regular leadership/service within the congregation
	+ Boards, other leadership opportunities, various church service opportunities
* Support ministry opportunities with finances, service, and prayers
	+ King’s Academy, church worker scholarship fund, VBS, youth ministry, etc.

Christ-centered relationships

* Connect with a group of similar-aged Christian friends
	+ Small groups, adult ministry, men and women’s Bible studies, LWML
* Serve as a support for some of the younger adults in the church
	+ [Intergenerational ministry opportunities]

Prayer

* Regularly ask others how you can pray for them and follow up on those prayer requests
	+ Church prayer chain, [family guide to prayer]

Studying the Word

* Take opportunities to read and discuss the Word with others
	+ Bible study opportunities, small groups

Worship life

* Find encouragement and strength through the Divine Service
	+ Sunday morning worships service, [sermon note outline]

Service

* Seek out opportunities to pass on the skills and knowledge that you have that can help equip others to serve in the church and world
	+ Various volunteer opportunities, [church service program], [intergenerational ministry]

**Retired Couples**

Personal spiritual growth

* See your calling to continue to be active disciples
	+ [Seniors ministry]
* Gain confidence and hope from Scripture about end of life issues
	+ Sunday worship service, small groups, Grief Share

Congregational life

* Stay involved in at least one area of regular leadership/service within the congregation
	+ Boards, other leadership opportunities, various church service opportunities
* Support ministry opportunities with finances, service, and prayers
	+ King’s Academy, church worker scholarship fund, VBS, youth ministry, etc.

Christ-centered relationships

* Connect with a group of other retired individuals and couples
	+ Small groups, [adult ministry], men and women’s Bible studies, LWML
* Serve as a support for some of the younger adults in the church
	+ [Intergenerational ministry opportunities]

Prayer

* Regularly ask others how you can pray for them and follow up on those prayer requests
	+ Church prayer chain, [family guide to prayer]

Studying the Word

* Take opportunities to read and discuss the Word with others and as a couple
	+ Bible study opportunities, small groups, family devotions

Worship life

* Find a church to worship at weekly during times of travels and moving
	+ Sunday morning worships service, LCMS website church-finder

Service

* Seek out opportunities to pass on the skills and knowledge that you have that can help equip others to serve in the church and world
	+ Various volunteer opportunities, [church service program], [intergenerational ministry]