
Soul Food Discipleship Booklet

Nourishing our Souls Together



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Nourishing our Souls Together



I pray that all is well with you and your loved ones. Pastor Rhonda and I have been praying about how we can help nourish the souls of God's people. After conversing with our church members and considering the church's mission, we have prayerfully developed a discipleship focus you can think of it as a "recipe for discipleship." You can add more salt, use less salt, or substitute some ingredients. It is up to all of us to set aside the time to prepare the meal with the resources God has made available to us. We must trust God with the outcome. So, this month, we will share new "recipes" each week. It is our prayer that everyone will be nourished and shared with others.

What is a disciple?

A disciple is a person who is a devoted follower and learner of Jesus Christ and is committed to his mission.

Why?

At Saginaw United Methodist Church, we nurture and support your faith, joining you on the journey to live and love like Jesus and experience God-given happiness in your relationships. We not only help introduce people to a new way of life, but we also help you experience joy and happiness throughout your lifelong discipleship journey.

Where do I start?



So, how do we start this journey? God has already taken the divine initiative. The grace of God has led you to Saginaw, guiding and reassuring you in your faith journey. You can begin with the spiritual practice of prayer.

Prayer is a powerful practice that connects us to God and provides us with the support we need in our faith journey. If you have not asked Jesus to come into your heart or if you would like to reaffirm your faith in Jesus, pray this prayer:

Dear Glorious and Blessed God,

I confess that I am a sinner. Forgive me. I need you. I accept your gift of salvation. I am no longer my own but yours. Use me as you wish. Let me work for you. Humble me for you. I willingly and wholeheartedly give all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, loving God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And may the covenant I have made on earth be accepted in heaven. Thank you for saving me. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."

(Modified Wesleyan Covenant Prayer)

Make Time

We need food and water to survive. A disciple needs soul food; setting aside time daily to eat a well-balanced diet is essential. There are 168 hours a week. I encourage you to assess how you spend your time here:

_____ Sleeping

_____ Eating

_____ Exercising

_____ Household Activities

_____ Purchasing Goods & Services

_____ Caring for helping others

_____ Working

_____ Educational Activities

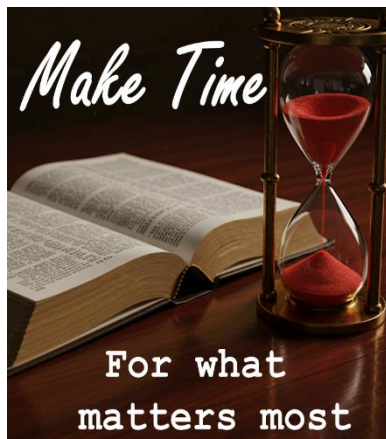
_____ Religious Activities

_____ Leisure and Sports

_____ Watching Television

_____ Phone Calls, mail, social media, & email

_____ Total hours



If you are like most people, your schedule has little to no margin to add anything new. Please evaluate your time and make room to feed your soul. Following Jesus means putting him first in your life, so what will you lay aside?

Soul Food Recipe

This recipe calls for one part prayer, one part Reading the Bible, one part Reflection, one part Rest, and one part Response.

Prays

A Disciple is a person who prays.



Why do we pray? Prayer is not about using impressive words but understanding our deep and personal relationship with God. Prayer is an intimate conversation between us and God. Prayer brings us closer to God and others, providing healing and transformation.

How do we pray? A Pattern to Follow

None of us are born knowing how to pray. Like most things in life, we need to be taught. In Luke 11:1, Jesus was praying alone when one of the disciples asked him to teach them how to pray. In Matthew 6:5-13, Jesus gives the Sermon on the Mount when he teaches the disciples how to pray. First, Jesus teaches the disciples that the intention of their hearts needs to be right when they pray. Jesus gives his disciples a pattern to follow. When you pray, remember:

Prayer Practice: Next Faithful Steps (there are many ways to pray, but this practice offers some structure)

ACTS Prayer Model (Ingredients)

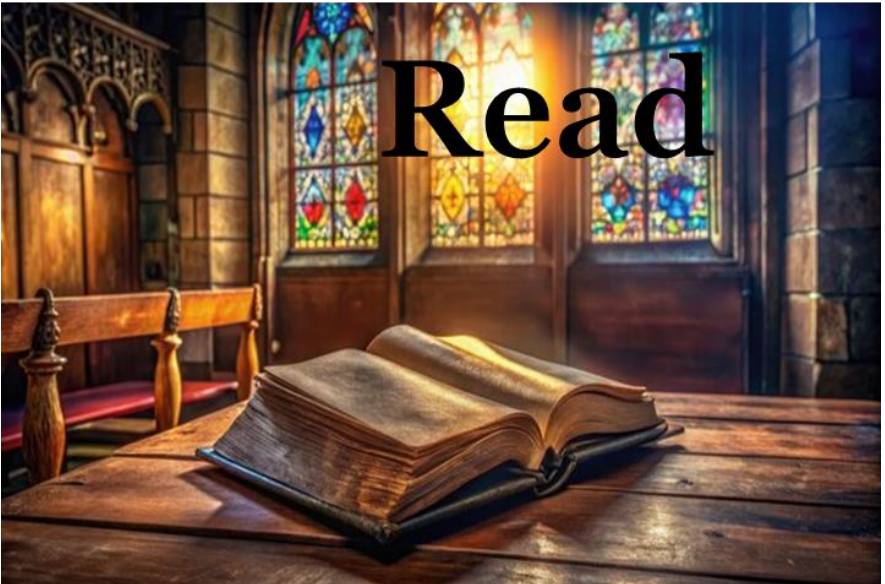
1. **Adore** and praise God for all the ways He allowed you to see his activity. God is our Divine Parent and King. He cares about his children, and we must align our will with His.
2. **Confess** and ask forgiveness for any harm you may have caused. Seek to make things right with that person. Also, grant forgiveness to others who have harmed you.
3. **Thank** God for the good things he has done for you and what you could do for others by his grace.

4. **Submit** your requests to God to address your concerns and for God to help you discern your next faithful steps. Trust that God holds both the present and the future. God is working for your good.

Prayer Group Opportunity: Prayers and Cares Team

If you desire to join the Cares and Prayers Team, please get in touch with Pastor Rhonda at Rhonda@saginawumc.org.

Reads the Bible



A Disciple is a person who reads the bible.

Why read the Bible? We learn about our need for divine Grace and God's mission to save humanity. When understood within its context, the Bible provides instructions to improve our lives and relationships.

Questions to consider when reading the Bible:

- What did this passage mean to its original hearers? **(see list of recommended resources)**
- What part does it play in the Bible's total witness?
- What part does it seem to play in my life, community, and world through this passage?
- What changes should I consider making due to my study?

Practices:

- Choose a reading plan on your own or use a monthly reading plan supplied by the church (go to www.SaginawUMC.org for monthly reading plans)
- Join a pastor-led bible study
- When available, join a Sunday School class focusing primarily on scripture. **(contact information, location, description, and time found on church calendar)**

Recommended Resources for Understanding the Bible

- **Wesley Study Bible** (CEB)
- **Wesley One-Volume Commentary** Edited by: Kenneth J. Collins, Robert W. Wall
- The Bible Project Videos via YouTube or download the app at <https://bibleproject.com/app/>
- **Gospel Parallels, NRSV. Edition: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels** By: Burton H. Throckmorton.

Reflects

A disciple spends time in daily reflection.

Ask these five questions daily:

1. Where have I seen God today?
2. Did I cause any harm today?
3. What is one good thing that I did for someone today?
4. What has broken my heart today?
5. How is God calling me to respond?



Use the ACTS model in response to the Five Daily Questions.

1. **Adore** and praise God for all the ways He allowed you to see his activity. God is our Divine Parent and King. He cares about his children, and we must align our will with His.
2. **Confess** and ask forgiveness for any harm you may have caused. Seek to make things right with that person. Also, grant forgiveness to others who have harmed you.
3. **Thank** God for the good things he has done for you and what you could do for others by his grace.
4. **Submit** your requests to God to address your concerns and for God to help you discern your next faithful steps. Trust that God holds both the present and the future. God is working for your good.

Responds:

Presence, Service, Gifts, & Witness

Matthew 25 Model of Outreach Opportunities

Hunger	Thirst	New-comers	Clothing	Care & Visitation
Community Link	Saginaw Water Project	Ushers Greeters	Friends of Lancaster	Cares and Prayers Team
Friends of Lancaster	Friends of Lancaster	(Everyone) God Cares Bracelet Ministry	Saginaw Elementary School clothing donation	Epiphany Prison Ministry
		Doorstep		Kids Hope at Saginaw Elementary

Sunday Morning Service Opportunities

- **Ushers**
- **Watchmen**
- **Choir**
- **Communion Stewards**
- **Communion Assistants**
- **Altar Guild**
- **Decorations**
- **AV team**
- **Acolytes**
- **Children and Nursery Volunteers (training and background checks are mandatory)**



Please use the QR Code if you feel called to serve in any of the ministries above. You should hear from a ministry leader within three days.



Life Stage Groups (contact information, location, and time found on church calendar)

- Wisdom Group
- Youth Group
- Children’s Ministry
- Young Adult Group



Affinity Groups (contact information, location, and time found on church calendar)

- Women’s Quilting Group
- United Methodist Men
- The Sisterhood

Rest (Spiritual Retreats)

Walk to Emmaus



Saginaw United Methodist Church

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About the Authors

Rev. Ramon F. Smith serves as the Lead Pastor of Saginaw United Methodist Church. Passionate about preaching, teaching, and transforming communities through faith, he brings deep theological insight and pastoral care to the discipleship journey. His leadership empowers believers to grow in grace and mission.

Rev. Rhonda Chambers is the Pastor of Congregational Care at Saginaw United Methodist Church. She guides individuals on their spiritual path with empathy and prayerful wisdom. She leads prayer groups and Bible studies and supports spiritual development through loving connection and pastoral presence.