

2019 Advent Adult Formation
Session 1 - December 4, 2019

Introduction Video

<https://episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love>

What is a Rule of Life

The idea of a “rule of life” comes from the Latin word *regula* and suggests a way to regulate or regularize our lives to stay on an intentional path. A rule of life is not just a set of rules to live by; rather, it is a gentle framework to guide and support us on our way.

A rule of life allows us to live with intention and purpose in the present moment. It helps us clarify our most important values, relationships, dreams, and work.

A rule of life is meant to be simple, realistic, flexible, and achievable. It is a purposeful tool to help us grow into a more meaningful life with God.

Handout: Living Intentionally - A Workbook for Creating a Personal Rule of Life

Discernment Questions:

- What are some rules of life that already exist in our own lives, consciously or unconsciously? Are they helpful, or hurtful?
- Where is God calling you to pay more attention in your life? In what specific ways would you like to be more intentional with God?
- Monastics have been using rules of life for centuries. What do you think is key to the rule of life’s staying power? What is appealing? What is daunting?
- What is holding you back from being more intentional about your relationship with God? What can you do this week to take down one of those barriers?
- The Way of Love is a rule of life. With whom could you travel the Way of Love, helping to keep each other accountable?

Practice - Turn

Like the disciples, we are called by Jesus to follow the Way of Love. With God’s help, we can turn from the powers of sin, hatred, fear, injustice, and oppression toward the way of truth, love, hope, justice, and freedom. In turning, we reorient our lives to Jesus Christ, falling in love with Jesus again, again, and again.

Traveling the Way of Love Video - Turn

<https://episcopalchurch.org/twol/turn>

Discernment Questions:

- Tell a story about a time you realized you were spiritually lost and had to find your way back to God. What made you turn back toward God?
- Why do you think the Church sets aside the season of Lent for repentance?
- The Book of Common Prayer offers two Rites of Reconciliation (pp. 446-452). (The Rite of Reconciliation is sometimes colloquially called “Confession.”) Did you know these rites are available? When do you think they might be helpful?
- Scripture is full of people, from Moses to Matthew, who turn from their old life to a new life in deeper relationship with God. What biblical stories speak to you? How has God called you out of an old life and into the new?
- When everything goes wrong, what practices help you to turn again and again to Jesus Christ and the Way of Love?
- What would it look like in your own life if you turned from the powers of sin, hatred, fear, injustice, and oppression toward the way of truth, love, hope, justice, and freedom? What specifically do you need to turn away from in your own life? What do you need to turn toward?

Practice - Learn

By reading and reflecting on Scripture, especially the life and teachings of Jesus, we draw near to God and God’s word dwells in us. When we open our minds and hearts to Scripture, we learn to see God’s story and God’s activity in everyday life

Traveling the Way of Love Video - Learn

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Discernment Questions:

- The Catechism says that “God still speaks to us through the Bible” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 853). How has God spoken to you through Scripture? How does God speak to the Church through Scripture?
- What is your favorite story about Jesus? What about it speaks to you?
- How does hearing the stories of God working in the world in Scripture help you spot God working in the world today?
- What is the sermon you have always wanted, but have never heard, preached? What Scripture would you use?
- How has your approach to understanding Scripture changed over time? Has this changed how you relate to God and others?
- What ways of reflecting on Scripture are the most life-giving for you?
- What gets in the way of making time to read and reflect on Scripture during your day? What is one thing you can do to set aside time for Scripture?