

# The Way of Love for Families



## **THE WAY OF LOVE** *Practices for Jesus-Centered Life*

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry has invited each of us, young and old alike, to practice the Way of Love; to grow more deeply with Jesus at the center of our lives, so we can bear witness to His Way of Love in and for the world. He has named seven practices that can help us grow deeper as we love ourselves, love our neighbor and love God

In today's world of busy schedules, hurried meals and fleeting time together, it is now more imperative that we make and take the time to center ourselves and follow the way of Jesus by finding a slice of time to center our thoughts on Jesus.

Here are the seven practices, a couple questions to help flesh it out, and then simple ways to live out that practice. As a family you already might be following some of the practices like meal prayers, learning through faith formation sessions, and engaging in acts of service; if so, build upon what we have to offer here; if not, here is a way to begin. Select what interests you; what resonates with your particular family. Anywhere is a good place to start; listen for a call from God telling you how to move closer to Jesus.

### **You are invited to Turn-Learn-Pray-Worship-Bless-Go-Rest!**

#### **Turn= Pause, listen and choose to follow Jesus**

Who is Jesus? How can we reorient our lives so that we turn to Jesus?

- ◇ Share family photos and memories of baptism- recall what the way was like
- ◇ Wonder together about how Jesus looked, what he ate, what he liked to do
- ◇ Read Bible stories about Jesus together (we offer a bible to every child/teen and adult in the parish- contact Sue if you need one)
- ◇ Take a walk, go to a park, soak in God's creation; where do you see Jesus?
- ◇ Share stories and talk about God's kingdom and the principles of love, justice, forgiveness, peace and acceptance
- ◇ Make Jesus a part of your life through talking, listening, praying & asking questions. Where is God in this?

#### **LEARN=reflect on scripture, especially on Jesus' life and teachings**

How do you see God's story and activity happening today in everyday life? Where do you see yourself in the stories of Jesus?

- ◇ Participate in age specific faith formation to learn more about Jesus:
  - ◇ -Infants-toddler nursery
  - ◇ -Prek-2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Kids Word
  - ◇ -Prek-2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, Confirmation and Adults Wednesday Formation
- ◇ Attend GIFT (generations in faith together) Nights Wednesday once a month
- ◇ Bible Studies on Tuesday mornings or monthly in the evening
- ◇ Finding Faith in Harry Potter Fest - all ages Sept. 26, adults only September 27, teen overnight September 28-29
- ◇ Celebrating the Liturgical Seasons
  - ◇ - Advent Around the World Festival- December 2, 2018
  - ◇ - Christmas Pageant- December 24, 2018
  - ◇ - Epiphany Celebration- January 6, 2019
  - ◇ - Lent Festival-March 3, 2019
  - ◇ - Alleluia/Easter Festival- April 20, 2019
  - ◇ - Pentecost Festival- June 9, 2019

#### **PRAY=dwell intentionally with God daily**

What prayer practices center you in God's presence, so you can hear, speak or simply dwell with God? How will you incorporate intentional prayer into your daily life?

- ◇ Set aside time to pray together as a family; lots of easy, quick ideas can be found at <https://www.stpaulsfaithformation.org/prayer-and-worship.html>
- ◇ Try a new prayer practice like praying with color, journaling, prayer beads, music, meditation, check out our pinterest board on prayer <https://www.pinterest.com/stpaulsduluth/prayer/>

- ◇ Say grace (meal time prayer) to thank God for the food before you
- ◇ Create a prayer space at home reminding everyone of God's presence; a portion of a table, a mantel or a shelf to place a candle, cross, Bible or other object on a piece of cloth. Can add seasonal accents during the year
- ◇ Place notes, prayers, sayings like "You are loved" on the refrigerator, bulletin board or bathroom mirror
- ◇ Arrange a quiet place to sit and reflect in your home, encourage children to create their own prayer space in their bedrooms
- ◇ Remind children/youth to pray for their prayer partners; include them in your family prayers

### **WORSHIP=gather in community to thank, praise and dwell with God**

Worship is a sensory experience where we encounter God. What parts of the worship experience; candles, gathering with others, music, sermon, stained glass, etc awaken in you that God is present?

- ◇ Attend worship together (Sundays at 8 or 10am or Wednesdays at 5:30pm) and discuss the rituals and symbols you find there
- ◇ Encourage children to follow along in the service, using the bulletin and worship boxes
- ◇ Relax! God put the wiggle in children; all are welcome!
- ◇ Talk about what you experience in worship on your way home; what was your favorite part?
- ◇ Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses
- ◇ Volunteer to usher as a family, lector, be a chalice bearer or acolyte
- ◇ Listen for Jesus in music; share your musical talent at church

### **BLESS=share faith and unselfishly give and serve**

What are the ways Jesus is calling you to bless others? How might we love one another better at home as well as in the places we learn, play and work? How do we share our blessings with others?

- ◇ Participate in church milestone celebrations:
  - ◇ -Baptism- contact Fr. Bill if anyone in your household would like to be baptized
  - ◇ -Blessing of backpacks September 9, 2018
  - ◇ -Gifting and Blessing of Bibles September 23, 2018
  - ◇ -Blessing of the Animals October 7, 2018
  - ◇ -Remembering deceased on All Saints Day November 4, 2018
- ◇ Ask the clergy to perform a house blessing for your home
- ◇ Use Milestone at Home Kits- 25 kits for all life ages and stages, located in the parish hall
- ◇ Practice Christian generosity in the sight of your children
- ◇ Teach them basic financial planning tools, how family finances work and what family priorities are
- ◇ Give them opportunities to practice blessing and giving to others
- ◇ Involved children in the family giving process; let them know who you give to and involve them in the decision making process

### **GO=cross boundaries, listen deeply and live like Jesus**

At the end of every worship service we are told to "go and serve the Lord.;" how is your family called to go and serve? How does your family express and give love to each other and those outside your household? What is Jesus calling you to do in your neighborhood?

- ◇ Invite a friend or extended family member to come to church with you
- ◇ Pray for others and the world
- ◇ Participate in Serving Other Sundays and Fifth Wednesday Service Projects
- ◇ Participate in the Advent Giving Tree and Lent Mission project
- ◇ Visit the elderly at a nursing home or do chores for seniors living near you
- ◇ Give food to the CHUM food shelf
- ◇ Practice recycling, eliminate single use plastic bags, clean up the environment



**Called to the  
Way of Love**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

### **REST=receive the gift of God's grace, peace and restoration**

What practices restore your body, mind and soul? How does rest fit into your weekly schedule in your family? How do we make time for God and renewing our body and spirit in the midst of our busy lives?

- ◇ Create a sabbath basket- put all phones and electronic devices in it for a certain amount of time on a weekend
- ◇ Cook a meal together
- ◇ Call someone on the phone to get caught up
- ◇ Have FOBBY time- flat on your back by yourself
- ◇ Spend some time reading a book, everyone on their own or together
- ◇ Play a board game together
- ◇ Block off sabbath time at least once a week, even if it means eliminating something