

WAY OF LIFE

A PATTERN FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

Journeying towards maturity in Christ

2025





CONTENTS

WHAT IS THE WAY OF LIFE?	3
WAY OF LIFE FOUR DIRECTIONS	6
JOURNEYING UP	7
JOURNEYING IN	10
JOURNEYING WITH	12
JOURNEYING OUT	14
LIVING THE EUCHARIST	16
REFLECTION & ENCOURAGEMENT	17
FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES	19

‘Way of Life’ (Fordh bewnans) is a tool for disciples within the Diocese of Truro - irrespective of tradition, age, and situation. It’s designed to help us be intentional and disciplined in our walk and talk with God, as pilgrims on the Way.¹ It’s a bit like a packing list for the rucksack which we carry as we walk with God.



WAY OF LIFE

begins with God's overwhelming love for us, expressed in creation and in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We love God because he first loved us. How are we to respond to so great a love? Our Christian faith must be at the heart and not just the edge of our lives.

WAY OF LIFE

helps us to deepen our relationship with God. It's not about 'thou shalt' and 'thou shalt not', but about how and why we live our lives.



What does it mean for me?

WAY OF LIFE

is a discipline taken on freely to bring order, direction and support to your Christian life. It is important to be realistic about your particular life circumstances. Don't overload yourself with a pattern that's crushing and lifedrainning. Finding the right balance will both stretch and sustain you.



WAY OF LIFE

is a deliberately generalised framework, allowing people in very different circumstances to make very different commitments, but still have in common their experience of using the rule.²

Why not begin by simply noting down the things you already do in journeying **up, in, with** and **out** with God? Then you may want to consider prayerfully whether this pattern could be changed in any way to help you continue to grow in your walk with God. This can be helped in conversation with another person (see 'Reflection and Encouragement' on page 17).

WAY OF LIFE

is intended to help us grow as disciples, to be changed by God's Spirit, to begin to bear a growing resemblance to Christ.

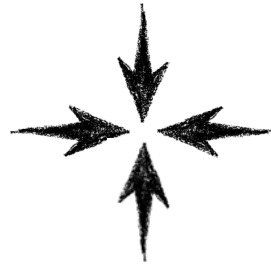
Our Christian faith must be at the heart and not just the edges of our lives.

WAY OF LIFE

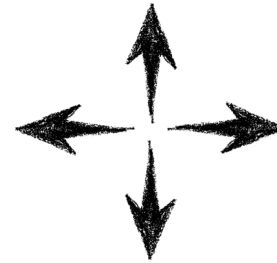
helps us to think of our walk with God in terms of journeying in four different directions:



UP



IN



OUT



WITH



JOURNEYING UP

Forgive the simplicity of thinking of God as being up there. This is about growing in our relationship with God and joyfully acknowledging his Lordship in our lives.

How can we do that?

Sunday worship and Eucharist

We need to ask ourselves: what will we regularly commit to in terms of Sunday worship in response to God's overwhelming love for us?

It's important to be realistic about what's possible, but also to be prepared to make an effort to enable this to happen. Holy Communion (the Eucharist) is a central part of Christian spirituality – we have been commanded to do this in remembrance of Christ.

Towards the end of this booklet you'll

see that all four directions of spiritual journeying are included in each act of Eucharistic worship³. But this does not mean that any other act of worship is second best, or not worth the effort.

It's not always possible to have a service of Holy Communion in our own church each Sunday; sometimes there may not be any service.

Will you remain committed to your church irrespective of the service, journey to other churches in your benefice/cluster to worship with others, or will you take the Sunday off?



Journeying up is about our love of God and our response to his overwhelming love for us.

It's about living for God not for ourselves.

Journeying up means acknowledging that he comes first in our life.

And it means we truly are a living sacrifice.



JOURNEYING UP

Daily worship and prayer

What we do in our daily pattern of prayer will vary according to tradition, upbringing and circumstances. For some a quiet time will include bible reading and prayer, perhaps guided by bible reading notes.⁴ Others will attend morning or evening prayer in their parish church on certain weekdays, and others will aim to pray during the day at their computer.⁵ Praying with others is really helpful, as we sometimes find prayer tough. Prayer-triplets, partnerships, groups and

circles are helpful, as are quiet prayer services in church. Prayer is about listening as well as speaking, so spending time with God in silence is important. Good resources to help in your prayer life are included here.⁶

Retreats or quiet days

A retreat may mean a day of quiet at home dedicated to prayer and silence, or going away to a place of retreat for one, two or more days. A number of places of retreat are available relatively locally.⁷

*All good things from you,
and of your own do we give you*

1 Chronicles 29:14

Also valuable are Christian festivals or conferences.

Sacrificial Financial Giving

God's amazing generosity in creation, in Christ and in the Church came first. This encourages us to be generous and giving in return. It's important to see ourselves as stewards not possessors of God's gifts. As we say during the offertory: All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. When did you last review your giving? Are you honestly sacrificial in your generosity? In

the Church of England we're challenged as an initial target to give 5% (or £1 in £20) of our after-tax income to and through the Church, and to give a similar amount to other work that helps to build God's kingdom⁸. If we find this too hard at the moment, we might consider our giving in terms of a few pints in the pub, our weekly paper bill, or TV subscription. Giving is not simply about money, though. We are also called to be generous with our time, possessions and hospitality.



JOURNEYING UP

In response to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer my life to God and commit myself to:

(Write your personal Way of Life commitments here)

■ a pattern of Sunday worship, including regular Eucharist services

.....

.....

.....

■ a pattern of daily worship and prayer, including praying with others

.....

.....

.....

■ special days like retreats or quiet days

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.....

.....

■ sacrificial financial giving

.....

.....

.....



JOURNEYING IN

Our internal journey concerns our personal growth and maturing as a Christian. The New Testament shows a clear expectation that we should mature from being spiritual babies to being spiritual adults.⁹ The same principle applies to us - we shouldn't expect to have the same faith today as we had in Sunday school or at confirmation. Learning happens through scripture, tradition, reason and human experience. It's not an academic exercise, but something to be changed by, so that gradually we take on the likeness of Christ.

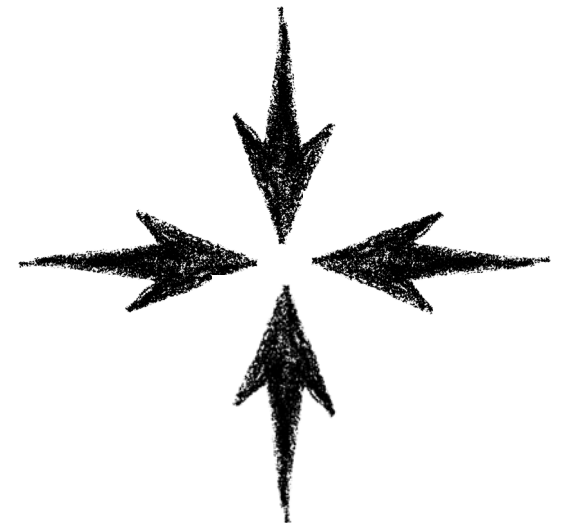
Our faith grows through reading and studying the Bible – on our own and in groups. There are great Bible reading notes that encourage our daily reading, not just on the page but through iPhone Apps, email and pdf downloads.¹⁰ Reading and learning from the Bible with others is not as daunting as it sounds – everyone assumes that everyone else is far more learned! It can be encouraging and challenging. If your benefice doesn't already have a Bible-study or fellowship group, why not ask about starting one?

Learning Bible verses off by heart is an old fashioned discipline that is gaining modern respect. It's a tough challenge but can really help us to genuinely take the meaning of scripture to our hearts.¹¹

Local learning opportunities include the Windows Into series,¹² Exploring Christianity,¹³ the SW Peninsular Gospel Partnership¹⁴ and Spiritus Theological College.¹⁵

If it proves impossible to meet regularly with others to learn, why not commit to reading a book about your

faith each month, term, or over Lent and Advent? Your parish priest can recommend something suitable. Perhaps you could agree to read it at the same time as someone else, and have an ongoing conversation about it.



JOURNEYING IN

Rest and recreation have been a vital part of the natural order of life from the earliest of times.¹⁶ Part of our spiritual discipline will be to find a right and wholesome balance between the different calls on our life. Finding time to recharge our batteries, to simply be, is a way of reflecting the Sabbath values of God and an expression of spiritual maturity.

In response to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer my life to God and commit myself to:

(Write your personal Way of Life commitments here)

■ reading and studying the Bible

.....
.....
.....

■ learning about our faith, our history, our tradition

.....
.....
.....

■ seeking in life to find that healthy balance of work, family, church and self

.....
.....
.....

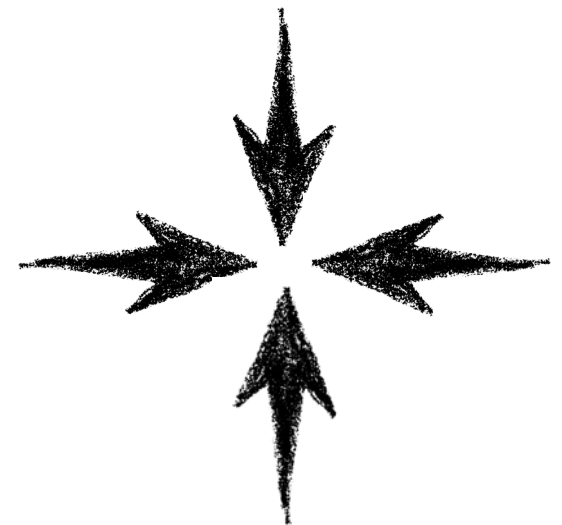
The glory of God is a human being fully alive¹⁷

...is about loving ourselves so that we can love others

...enables us to grow, develop and mature as a Christian

...is how we build our lives on Christ as our cornerstone and foundation

...being transformed into the likeness of Christ



JOURNEYING WITH

Journeying with is about being united to one another in love within the Church, the body of Christ, the people of God. It's about belonging to our local church, to the Diocese of Truro, to the Church of England, to the worldwide church.

Christians are not called to be disciples on their own, but to journey together with other disciples as members of the Church. A number of images in the New Testament help us to think about this reality.¹⁸ We understand God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit living together in a community of love, and we are called to live in God's image, reflecting this community of love. Jesus commanded his disciples to 'love one another as I have loved you'¹⁹ yet sometimes

churches can be difficult places.

How are you going to make an effort to love the people who are different from you in church? Who might you need to make an effort to get to know, to understand, and to bear with in love?²⁰ Who might you offer simple hospitality to?

St Paul writes about the church being a body with different members, in which each member has a

vital part to play.²¹ How do you participate in the life of your church? Is this the best use of your talents and time? Are you as willing to help with the hidden and unattractive jobs, as you are the obvious and exciting ones? Might you be able to contribute to the life of your deanery or the diocese as well?

'The Church' may be understood at different levels. There is the parish church where you live, which may belong to a

benefice or cluster of churches. There is also the deanery and the diocese, and all Christian churches locally, nationally and internationally.



JOURNEYING WITH

Are you conscious of being committed to God's Church in all its variety? Do you pray regularly for the different members of your parish church?

One way to pray for the Church in the diocese and across the world is through the use of the Diocesan Prayer Diary.²² Missionary and similar organisations also produce prayer diaries.²³

In response to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer my life to God and commit myself to:

(Write your personal Way of Life commitments here)

■ bearing with one another in love

.....
.....

■ participating in the life of the church by giving my time, gifts and talents

.....
.....

■ praying for members of my church and the worldwide church

.....
.....



JOURNEYING OUT

Journeying out is about sharing the love of God with others in both deeds and words; it is about discovering God's kingdom in our midst and joining in; it is about seeking to change the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves.

God created all that is, seen and unseen. God became incarnate, and dwelt among us. God is involved in all our lives, and so we are called to be involved in our community, our society, and all life around us. Just as God reaches out to us, so we are called to reach out to others and to share God's love with them.

We can share God's love in practical ways by caring for those in need. When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples he told them (us)

that we too should wash one another's feet²⁴. Can you commit yourself to a simple act of service for others which you will consciously do in God's name? In serving others, so we are able to serve Christ too.²⁵ Are you aware of what happens within your parish or local community that you could be involved in? What opportunities are there for offering care, hospitality and friendship in your area?

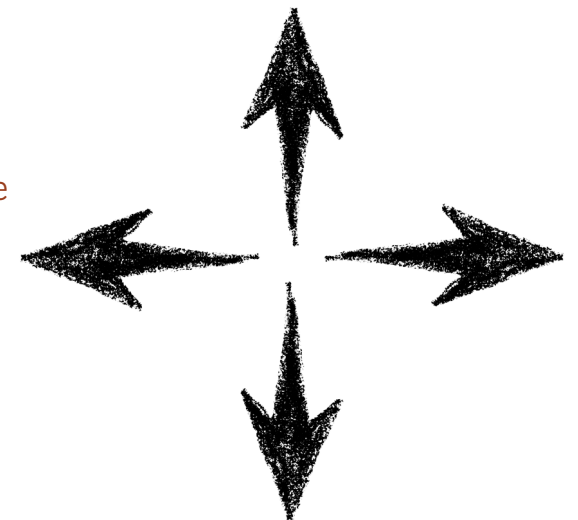
So few people today know

even the basics of what the Christian faith is about – how are they going to know unless someone will share with them?

The Church is called to live her faith and to proclaim it. How are we going to play our part? We can invite people to attend church with us, particularly at festival and other special times and we can of course pray for them beforehand. Lending Christian books to our friends can be helpful as they can set out and explain our faith better

than perhaps we can²⁶.

Many churches within the diocese run a variety of courses that explore the Christian faith, providing great opportunities to invite friends along.



JOURNEYING OUT

God's hand is behind all that exists, His love and generosity easily seen within it. But human actions increasingly plunder and misuse world resources, and we live with the consequences. The Christian understanding of stewardship calls us to seek to safeguard the God-given integrity of the world, to work along the grain of its sustainability, and to bring renewal where there is wasteland.

What do you deliberately seek to reduce, reuse, and recycle - and how? How might you contribute to the earth's fruitfulness and sustainability? Are you conscious of seeking a simple way of living to allow others to share in God's generosity in creation?

In response to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer my life to God and commit myself to:

(Write your personal Way of Life commitments here)

■ acts of service for others

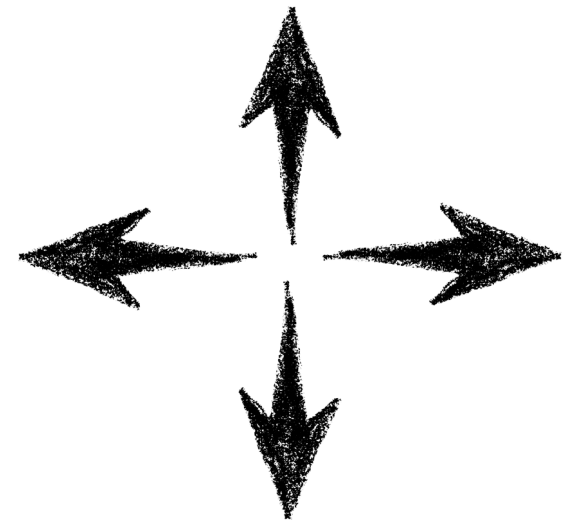
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■ caring for God's creation

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.....

■ sharing our faith

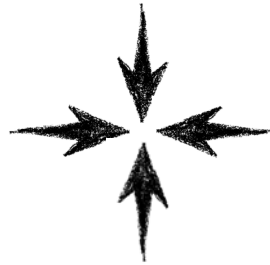
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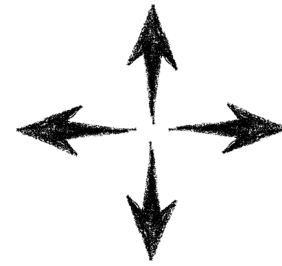
UP

as we
worship God
and receive
from Him



IN

as we
listen to
God through
scripture and
the sermon



OUT

as we
share bread
and wine,
and Christ's
peace,
together



WITH

as we
pray for
others and
are sent out
into the world

LIVING THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist is a vital part of 'Way of Life'. In this service we journey in all four directions:

When you have worked out your commitments within 'Way of Life', you can consciously take them with you to a service of Holy Communion, and dedicate yourself to God as you seek to live by them in the coming months.



A stone cross stands in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The cross is made of two simple, rectangular stones. The background is a clear blue sky with a few wispy white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and contemplative.

REFLECTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Sharing your Way of Life, or spiritual journey, with someone else can be very helpful. Think of this as a chance to review your walk with God, a bit like a spiritual MOT. It need not be very regularly, meeting two or three times a year even, making it possible to choose someone who lives further away from you. It may be an existing mutual relationship, making it easy to both reflect and encourage one another. Possibly there is someone you already share your faith and pray with - someone from your house group or who has shared significant life-events with you. A soul friend, if you like.²⁷

Alternatively, you may want to enter into a more formal one-way relationship with someone who is trained to be a mentor (a Spiritual Guide or a Spiritual Director).²⁸ Whoever, and however you choose to share your journey, it is meant to be an easy, unpressurised way to consider where you are with God and how to keep moving forward.

All of us sometimes kid ourselves into thinking that we're doing OK in our walk with God, when really we're not. Just as easily, we can beat ourselves up about not being disciplined enough, when actually



REFLECTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

we have good reason for not being able to do something. Having someone to share our journey with can protect us and help us to get the balance right. They can help us to reflect and understand what God asks of us, to understand where we have come from, the progress we've made and the barriers that stop us from continuing the journey. It's easier for a friend to stand back and get a better perspective,

suggesting things to reach for, and things to let go of. They can encourage and challenge, with their prayers for us and with us.

Choosing someone to share your journey is by no means compulsory and it may feel a scary thing to do, but many have found it greatly helpful.

In response to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I offer my life to God and commit myself to:

(Write your personal Way of Life commitments here)

.....

■ (name of the person/ group with whom to share times of reflection)

.....

■ (frequency of meeting for review/ date of next meeting)

FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES

1. Acts 9:2.
2. You may already have a rule of life; perhaps from a community like the Franciscans, Taizé or Iona. 'Way of Life' is not meant to compete with or negate this. You may like to record your existing rule within this framework.
3. Page 16
4. E.g. from Bible Reading Fellowship (www.brf.org.uk) or Scripture Union (www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Shop/Biblereadingguides/164493.id)
<https://www.churchofengland.org/coronation/prayer-worship>
5. www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/learnpray.aspx
6. "How to Pray: Alone, with others, at any time, in any place" by Stephen Cottrell
"How to Pray: A User's Guide" by John Pritchard
"Patterns not Padlocks" by Angela Ashwin (is a good book for busy parents). A more demanding book would be "God in All Things" by Gerard W. Hughes
7. Epiphany House, Lee Abbey, The Society of Martha and Mary
8. <https://trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/parish-facing-support/stewardship/>
9. Hebrews 5:12-14.
10. See footnote 4.
11. The 'Topical Memory System' from the Navigators is a good systematic tool (from www.navpress.com).
12. Modules available include: "Windows into New Testament", ".....Old Testament",
".....Church History", ".....Ethics". Soon to be available are "..... Spirituality",
".....Doctrine", "..... other faiths". Enquiries can be made at The Old Cathedral School or the cathedral.
13. <https://exeter.anglican.org/christian-faith/explaining-faith/christianity-explored/>
14. www.swgp.org.uk
15. Through Spiritus Theological College: <https://www.spirituscollege.ac.uk>
16. Genesis 2:1-3 and Exodus 20:8-11.
17. St Irenaeus in the 2nd century.
18. The Church as: a body (1Corinthians 12), the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), the people of God (1Peter2:9), a dwelling place for God (Ephesians 2:19-22).
19. John 15:12.
20. Colossians 3:12-14.
21. 1Corinthians 12.
22. <https://trurodiocese.org.uk/faith-life/prayer/>
23. See for example: <https://churchmissionsociety.org/get-involved/pray/>
24. John 13:1-15.
25. Matthew 25:37-45.
26. For example 'Lord.... Help My Unbelief' by John Young (who writes the 'York Courses' for Lent) or John Pritchard's book "How to Explain Your Faith."
27. Being a soul friend is about listening to God. When we pray for each other, "holding the Christ Light" for one another, our focus is first of all on God. Being a soul friend means listening to each other. We create a hospitable space when we attend (using eyes, ears, mind and heart) to what our friend is really saying. Being a soul friend is about listening together to what God might be saying. We travel shoulder to shoulder, offering encouragement and support rather than telling each other what to do. Being a soul friend means listening to ourselves. When we know our own boundaries it prevents us trying to fix things that aren't ours to fix!
28. For information on spiritual accompaniment visit trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/ministry/spiritual-direction/ or email Revd Janette Mullett, via janette.mullett@gmail.com

WAY OF LIFE

Eternal God,
your Son Jesus Christ is the way,
the truth and the life for all creation;
grant us grace to walk in his way
to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God now and forever.
Amen.

GET IN CONTACT

T 01872 274351
E info@truro.anglican.org
www.trurodiocese.org.uk

The Old Cathedral School,
Cathedral Close,
Truro, TR1 2FQ

