

The SPEP Discipleship Roadmap

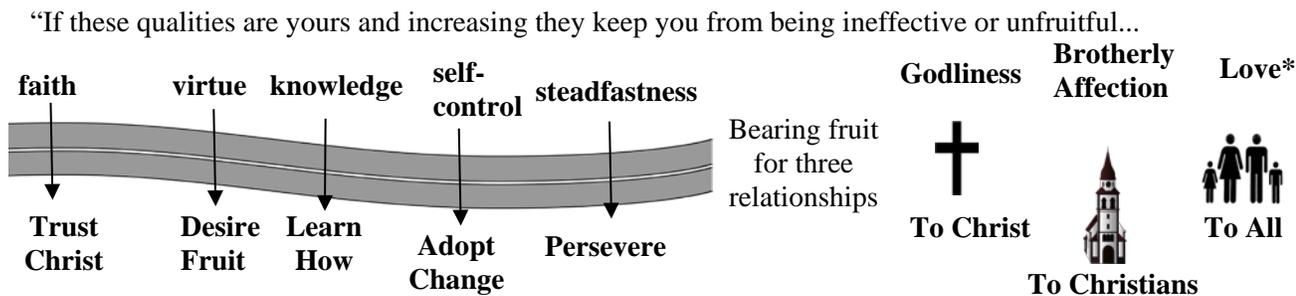
Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19

Discipleship is learnership; we learn who He is and we learn how to obey Him in love so that we can bear His fruit.

At SPEP we believe discipleship depends on three things:

- 1) **Pilgrimage:** All are on the path of discipleship (Acts 17:24-27)
- 2) **Promise:** 2 Peter 1:3-11 marks the way to fruitfulness:
- 3) **Partnership.** Jesus' ministry on earth shows how He combined our Pilgrimage with God's promises in 2 Peter 1:3-11.

Seeker of God **Follower of Jesus** **Growth in Christ's Body**



The SPEP Discipleship Framework

Jesus worked with:	The Many	The 12	The 3
To focus on:	Faith Virtue Knowledge	Virtue Knowledge Self-Control	Self-Control Steadfastness In relationships
By Answering:	How Should We Grow?	How Can We Encourage Growth in Each Other?	How Am I Growing?
At SPEP, that means:	Sunday Worship <i>Personal Workbook</i>	Sunday Growth Groups <i>Discussion</i>	Action Groups <i>2-3 in Mutual Support</i>

How Can I Be Involved?

1. Worship with Us Sunday Morning and Use Our Workbook to Perceive the Work of God's Spirit. Jot down things you want to understand better, pray about, or act upon. If you are unsure whether you are heavenbound, then ask the LORD to show Himself to you.

2. Join a Sunday Small Group: In these groups, we gather to encourage God's work in each other.

- Traditional Sunday School for children and youth groups for teens.
- Growth Groups (~12) where we interact from our workbooks. One larger group will be led by the Pastor in the sanctuary. One goal is to walk away with one solid conviction about what God wants for me right now,
- A Connections group for newcomers to meet others, meet church leaders, and explore the SPEP spiritual family.
- A deep dive into a systematic understanding of God's Word.
- A group highlighting some important aspect of Christian life, including spiritual disciplines and skills.

3. Form an Action Group: Iron sharpens iron. An Action Group consists of two or three of the same gender with whom I am comfortable sharing what I believe God wants for me right now. The group prays, encourages and celebrates as each of us reaches out for God's good will. It may physically meet, simply communicate, or some of both.

Notes:

* In 2 Peter 1:3-11, "Love" is the word *agape*, and covers every way God calls us to care for our neighbors, whoever they are. That includes sharing the gospel, sharing the hope and witness of our lives, giving material aid, and treating everyone with righteousness and mercy.

Steps to Re-Energize Discipleship at Severna Park Evangelical Presbyterian Church

The SPEP Strategy directs us to be good stewards of our heritage in teaching, worship and prayer while making discipleship more deliberate, personal and fruitful - pressing towards our vision of being a place where Jesus mends broken lives. This strategy is independent of the pastoral transition process. It's what we believe God wants us to do.

The Strategy tasks the Session to "identify changes to Sunday that enhance discipleship, fellowship and worship by January 2019." After reflecting on the task and after considering the implications of the SPEP Discipleship Roadmap (attached), the Session has a vision for how we should modify our Sunday assembly: a worship service followed by Sunday Growth Groups (~12), weekly communion and a spiritual workbook that integrates all.

How Does This Vision for Sunday Help Enhance Discipleship, Fellowship and Worship?

Discipleship: The new discipleship workbook provides a simple tool to enable us to identify something God is teaching *us* and develop that theme in the worship service, Sunday Small Groups (~12) and weekday Action Groups (~3).

Fellowship: One unified service enables greater connection between the full body of SPEP; Sunday Growth groups, where we will now hold our coffee fellowship, provide an easy means to get to know each other better over time.

Worship: Weekly Communion focuses our worship around the central theme of His sacrifice, drawing the Body together before we continue our pilgrimage in the world. Likewise, one unified service with children fosters a truly intergenerational Body.

This vision for Sunday acknowledges our busyness, a key finding of the Assessment Team. With the workbook and Sunday Growth Groups, the Session expects to foster discipleship without requiring more commitment on more days of the week.

How Will SPEP Implement This Vision? The Session is confident about the goals and the general vision of the future. But we cannot anticipate every detail of the journey so it would be foolish to try to work out everything before we begin. Moses could not have guessed how the Lord would lead through the wilderness. But he did know when it was time to set out. Our approach will be to move on what we feel confident about, keep lots of discussion going, and adapt as God raises up wisdom and faith.

Before Each Phase: 1) Preach biblical truth related to the next phase. 2) Hold regular open forums to share what God is doing and discuss thoughts about the next phase so we can adapt as needed. 3) Establish a task force to examine implementation metrics and explore and recommend options to avoid constraining numerical growth, as the Lord expands our spiritual family.

Phase One – March, 2019 Begin to build into SPEP's DNA an expectation that God speaks to us individually & we will listen.

- Initiate the new tradition of a spiritual workbook, designed to capture what we believe God is personally saying to each of us through the exposition of the Bible.
- Restructure adult education, using the categories of our emerging discipleship roadmap. This will not benefit adults in our 9:30 assembly, but it will help us establish new methods of discipleship and train future leaders.
 - An ongoing Connections group for newcomers to meet each other, meet church leaders, and explore SPEP.
 - Sunday Small groups (~12) who study, share and pray for a quarter, then regroup:
 - Multiple discussion groups in which people share and refine the personal insights in their workbook.
 - Topical study: a deep dive into a systematic understanding of God's Word.
 - Topical study: a group highlighting an important aspect of the Christian life, including spiritual disciplines and skills.

Phase Two – April 2019 Begin a new spiritual rhythm by incorporating the Lord's Supper into every service.

Phase Three – June 2019 Restructure to one worship service, followed by a discipleship time (including children's Sunday School). This opens Sunday discipleship to all but those teaching and providing childcare, so we'll be careful to rotate those workers so everyone benefits from personal study, fellowship and prayer. We'll also: 1) Add a Pastor-led discussion in the sanctuary of how we might personally apply what we just studied. 2) Expand the number of Sunday morning Growth groups (~12), filling the Fellowship Hall as necessary. 3) Encourage the formation of small (~3) Action Groups.

But I'm Concerned...

This requires too much time on Sunday morning; it will alienate the uncommitted. No one is compelled to participate in discipleship. Our challenge will be to make our discipleship efforts worthy of people's time.

What happens to our current Small Groups? We encourage small groups to discern the best time and place for them – there will always be groups meeting throughout the week. However, we hope that Sunday Growth Groups will free time for Action Groups (which do not need to meet in person).

The following is taken from *When the Word Leads Your Pastoral Search* by Chris Brauns.

Prayer is essential at every stage of your pastoral search, from choosing a pastoral search committee to praying for your next pastor. Be sure you do more than just talk about praying. What your local church really needs to do is organize prayer and actually put it into practice. At the end of the pastoral search process, you are going to want assurance that you sought and received God's provision, not your own solutions. The assurance will come in part from knowing that God answered your prayers for those things! It's not a matter of whether you agree that prayer is important. It's a given that prayer is essential. Therefore, your assurance of a right choice is going to hinge on how that prayer infiltrated the search process.

Pray for the Search Committee

- *Pray for patience.* Pray that the group would wait for God's timing.
- *Pray that your search committee will have the mind of Christ and agree.* Much of the process is subjective. Personal opinions and preferences are involved. Difference can divide. Ask that they would heed Paul's advice for unity, having the humble attitude of Jesus (Phil 2: 1-12, especially verse 5).
- *Pray for wisdom to choose the right person.* Pray that the pastoral search committee will renew their minds in the Bible so that they can have Word-centered wisdom.
- *Pray for discipline for your search committee and other church leaders.* The search process will require a great deal of follow-through on the parts of individuals. It will also require that they not digress from the agenda or retrace decisions they have already made. Pray for unity and agreement between your elders and the pastoral search committee.
- *Pray for protection.* Pray for the protection of the committee members and their families.

Pray for Your Next Pastor

- *Pray that God would increase his passion for preaching the Word of God.*
- *Pray that God would give him a love for your church and the strength to leave his current position* (if the candidate senses that is God's direction).
- *Pray that your next pastor would begin new relationships at your church in the right way, even during the search process.*
- *Pray that God would prepare your future pastor to shepherd your flock more effectively through the trials and blessing he has faced or currently faces.*
- *Pray for your next pastor's family.* Of course, he may be single or married. He may have children or not. God knows all that. Pray that God, who knows each detail about each member of your pastor's household, would give the member of his family strength as they consider leaving their current setting and going to a different church, or beginning pastoral ministry for the first time.

Pray for the People in Your Church

- *Pray for patience.* The search process can go on longer than expected. It is hard for people doing the work of search. It is also difficult for those in the congregation who must wait without knowing exactly what is going on. Pray that your people would trust the leadership and uphold you during the whole process.
- *Pray that your people would learn to place a high priority on biblical preaching.* It is easy to gravitate toward personality, programs, a particular "ideal" age, etc. Pray that, above all, the congregation would call a pastor who will proclaim the Word without apology.
- *Pray that your people would not react to a previous pastor.* Some churches struggle with wanting a pastor who is like their old one (they had a good experience). Other churches want someone who is just the opposite.
- *Pray for a loving and welcoming response* to the next pastor and an excitement for what God is doing.