

spiritual assessment

knowing God

	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and feel confident that I could explain them to a non-religious friend.						
2. I have a good knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read it for maximum understanding.						
3. If someone were to ask me, "What do United Methodists believe?" I feel confident in my ability to answer them.						
4. I understand basic Christian ethics, and I know how to draw upon my faith to come to conclusions about important moral and ethical issues.						
5. I have a good understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern his will for my life in particular.						

DOES NOT APPLY
 APPLIES SOMEWHAT
 APPLIES COMPLETELY

loving God

1. I know God has the power to transform lives and I'm open and responsive to wherever that may lead in my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I lay aside my own desires and sense of importance and submit to God's will for my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. As a means of growing in Christ, I prayerfully practice various spiritual disciplines in my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am experiencing "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22) in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a group of friends who grow in faith together and challenge each other to grow deeper in Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5

serving God

1. I invest time in building my relationships with God and with others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know my God-given spiritual gifts, and am actively serving Christ by using those gifts.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. I give back to Christ by giving to the church and to others in proportion to my income, with at least 10% as my goal.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I spend time serving in God's world by helping meet critical needs and showing what it means to follow Jesus Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am actively nurturing the spiritual lives of others, sharing my faith story, offering spiritual encouragement and leading others to Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Place your self-assessment number for each question below and add across, giving you an overall total.

Knowing: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ Total Head _____

Loving: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ Total Heart _____

Serving: 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ Total Hands _____

■ No one can concentrate on too many things at once. Look first at the individual questions, and then turn to the inside of this folder to consider next steps. Seek to find one or more areas in which you can grow in your relationship with God. Use the following scale as a general guide to the three levels:

0-2 Level 1 3-4 Level 2 5 Level 3

Knowing God

We can never fully understand God (if we could, we wouldn't have much of a God!). But the mysteries and questions are not obstacles to growth – they are an invitation to continually journey deeper in our understanding of God and the Kingdom to which he invites us. As we increase our understanding of the God we worship and serve, which is what the word "theology" means, we increase our capacity to live the life God designed us to live. Calendar items and volunteer opportunities marked with the knowing designation will lead you to a deeper understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom.

Loving God

What we think and what we do are expressions of who we are. Trying hard to change ourselves is a losing proposition – but when we're traveling with God and letting God work in our lives, we find that transformation becomes a beautiful reality! When you see a calendar item or volunteer opportunity marked with the loving designation, it means that participation will draw you into a deeper level of love for God and neighbor.

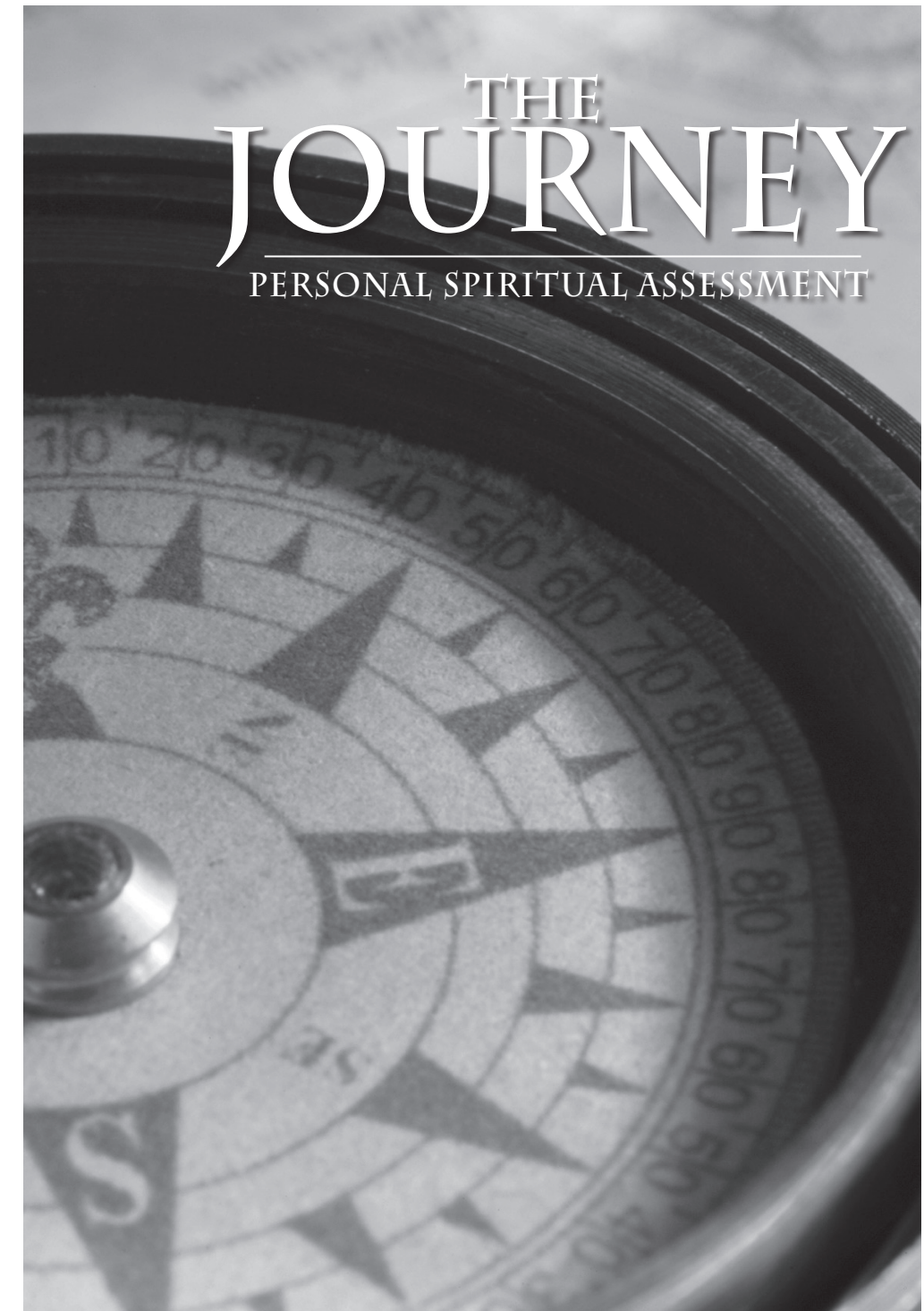
Serving God

The Christian life is about more than correct thoughts and a loving attitude, its about living our calling to be salt and light in the world. This means doing the work of the kingdom. Calendar items and volunteer opportunities marked with the serving designation will help you get your hands dirty for the kingdom. These include mission opportunities, volunteering and much more.

Take the next step today.

Visit www.cor.org/nextsteps or the Connection Point in the Narthex to view a detailed listing of classes and service opportunities and to register.

The United Methodist Church of the
Resurrection



The Journey: Knowing, Loving and Serving God

At Church of the Resurrection, our purpose is to build a Christian community where non and nominally religious people are becoming deeply committed Christians. Christians who know, love, and serve God. This short assessment is designed to help you identify where you are in your spiritual journey so that you can make better choices to guide your growth.

Use these 15 questions to assess where you are at honestly and prayerfully.

Add up your totals, and select one or two of the suggested next steps.

The United Methodist Church of the **Resurrection**

Knowing God: Becoming Theologically Informed

1. I have a growing understanding of the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and feel confident that I could share my understanding of them with a non-religious friend.

Level 1

We recommend the Alpha course as a great starting point. Alpha is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed, non-threatening manner over 10 thought-provoking weekly sessions. It's low key, friendly and fun (click here for more information, or to register).

Level 2

Many Christians find a hymnal their most helpful spiritual book after the Bible. Buy a United Methodist hymnal to use in daily private and family devotions. Read the words of one hymn daily as poetry. Sing the ones you know. Study and memorize the creeds and prayers.

Level 3

Within your small group or with a group of two to three others, memorize the Apostle's Creed. Write down what each belief statement means, find where it is supported in scripture, and share your understanding of this belief with your group.

2. I have a growing knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read it daily for maximum understanding.

Level 1

Commit to reading your Bible each day, using the GPS (Grow-Pray-Study) guide. Click here to download the guide each week, or to sign up for e-mail delivery of the daily readings.

Level 2

Purchase a good study Bible, such as the TNIV Study Bible or The New Interpreter's Study Bible. Learn how to use the notes, maps and other tools, and begin by studying the book of Mark for yourself.

Level 3

Talk with your small group about how to deepen your group Bible study, using questions such as "How is God speaking to me personally through this passage?" or "What will I change in my life because of what I've learned from this passage?"

3. If someone were to ask me, "What do United Methodists believe?" I feel increasingly confident in my ability to give an informed answer.

Level 1

Learn and understand the purpose and vision of The Church of the Resurrection. Why is this vision important? How do you see your church being faithful in living out this vision?

Level 2

Study Lovett Weem's *John Wesley's Message for Today*, a pocket guide available at The Well bookstore, to deepen your understanding of our church's major teachings and heritage.

Level 3

Study the documents included under the "Beliefs" tab on the umc.org website. Invite two or three people to read the Beliefs with you and dialogue around what you read.

4. I have a growing understanding of basic Christian ethics, and I am continually developing a deeper ability to draw upon my faith to come to conclusions about important moral and ethical issues.

Level 1

Each day you face ethical decisions. Before you act, ask yourself (and pray about the answer), "What course of action will best express my love for God and neighbor?"

Level 2

Read Adam Hamilton's book *Confronting the Controversies*, available at The Well bookstore. As you read, reflect on how willing you are to look at both sides of tough issues, and prayerfully ask God to help you grow in your ability to make informed, responsible ethical choices.

Level 3

What is the difference between charity and justice? Prayerfully study what it would mean for you to actually "do justice" versus "charity." Write out two specific ideas you could adopt, and live into them.

5. I have a growing understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern his will for my life in particular.

Level 1

Choose one decision, little or big, you are currently making, and pray over that decision at the same time each day, seeking God's will rather than your agenda. Keep a journal of your experience.

Level 2

We long to be needed. One way we try to meet this need is busyness. Keep a log of your busy life, of your activities and obligations. Ask "Does this busyness flow from God's will, or is it just an effort to make myself feel important and needed?" Is there something you need to give up doing?

Level 3

Prayerfully study Romans 8 and 12. Based on these chapters, answer the questions, "Who am I?" and "Who does God want me to be?" Alter your life, even your calendar and finances, in light of your answers. Discuss your changes (perhaps with your congregational care pastor), and pray about the changes with that person.

Loving God: Becoming Spiritually Transformed

1. I know God has the power to transform lives and I'm open and responsive to wherever that may lead in my life.

Level 1

Intentionally spend ten minutes daily thinking about good things. Make a list of the "good things" you think of during this time. Discipline your thoughts to live out the principles of Philippians 4:8 – what is true, honorable, just, pure and commendable.

Level 2

Set a plan to rid your life of hurry. Take the first step by, picking the longest line at the grocery store, choosing the slow lane, celebrating each red light, parking in the farthest parking space. Use the time to speak to the person in line with you, pray, or enjoy a time of silence.

Level 3

Memorize the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17). Assess yourself. Are you stealing (even stealing time)? What "gods" do you place before God? Do you honor your parents? Love your neighbor? Discuss with a trusted Christian friend (perhaps your congregational care pastor) how to make the Commandments a guide in your daily life.

2. I have a growing ability to lay aside my own desires and sense of importance and submit to God's will for my life.

Level 1

Examine your life and identify things you do or say to mainly make yourself look good to others. Surrender those habits to God.

Level 2

Fast from TV or another time-consuming habit for one week. Reflect on how this habit affects you. Use the extra time to enjoy your family and friends, or to spend with God.

Level 3

Each day pray the Wesley Covenant Prayer. After praying the prayer, take one line each day and meditate on what living a life reflective of this line would mean for you.

3. As a means of growing in Christ, I regularly practice various spiritual disciplines (e.g. worship, prayer, Bible study) in my life.

Level 1

Pray "flash prayers" silently for others. Standing in line, driving your car or riding on a bus, sitting in a room — in any setting, pray for the people or circumstances around you, saying "God touch their lives, watch over them, and draw them to you."

Level 2

Discover what it means to really worship. Arrive early and pray for those who will sit near you; meditate on God's majesty and love; look at the words to the songs and sing with enthusiasm; savor the times of silence; enter deeply into prayer; praise God and welcome others with joy.

Level 3

Set aside 15 minutes a day for solitude. Use the time for journaling, meditation on the scripture, or some other spiritual discipline to which God calls you. Choose a discipline (for ideas, consult *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, available at The Well bookstore — and commit to incorporating it in your spiritual growth plan.

4. I have a deepening experience of "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22) in my life – of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Level 1

Memorize Galatians 5:22, the verse that lists "the fruit of the Spirit." Which fruit do you struggle living out daily the most? Ask God to help your life show the fruit of the Spirit to others.

Level 2

Ask yourself, "Where does my joy go when something painful happens?" or "Why do I lose my peace when something frightens me?" Ask God to plant the fruit of the Spirit in your life under all circumstances, and to teach you how you can cooperate in that.

Level 3

Ask three people who know you very well for honest feedback on your life and on how well you live the fruit of the Spirit. Enlist their help in targeting one area for growth.

5. I have a group of friends with whom I meet regularly in order to grow in faith together and to challenge each other to grow deeper in Christ.

Level 1

Reorder your time to make two hours a week available for Group Life or another group that fosters Christian friendships.

Level 2

The disciples gathered around Jesus, not just to get to know one another, but to respond to the vision of shared life in the Kingdom of God. How is your group moving beyond socializing, and into a deeper shared life in the Kingdom? Discuss what you want the group to become as you journey in Christ.

Level 3

Help your group become one where trust and accountability replace surface talk. If one member is trying to grow in a particular area, do you ask "How is it going?" Does the group share pain and failure, as well as joys and victories? Is it okay to say, "Pray for me – I'm struggling spiritually."

Serving God: Serving God daily in the World

1. I actively serve in God's world by helping meet critical needs through acts of justice and mercy, showing in actions what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

Level 1

Volunteer inside and outside the walls of the church choosing occasional or one-time opportunities like FaithWork, Vacation Bible Camp, or a mission team.

Level 2

Consistently give volunteer service inside and outside the walls of the church, e.g. a regularly scheduled usher or ongoing involvement with a mission partner.

Level 3

As God leads you, serve others and pursue justice in all that you do, including (in accordance with your giftedness) leadership in a ministry area or extended missionary service.

2. I am actively nurturing the spiritual lives of others by sharing my faith story, offering spiritual encouragement and leading others to Christ.

Level 1

Invite a friend, a family member or a neighbor to attend worship or other church activity with you. Begin by praying for God to open doors to extending such invitations.

Level 2

Keep a pocket Testament with you and be prepared to give it to someone who does not have a Bible. Pray for greater awareness and when the opportunity comes your way, give the pocket Testament away and tell the person how God is changing your life.

Level 3

Practice turning conversations toward a spiritual focus, creating more intentional opportunities for you to share your faith story. Make this a regular part of your interaction with others.

3. I have discovered my God-given spiritual gifts, and regularly take steps to develop those gifts and to actively serve Christ by using them.

Level 1

Identify what things (paid or volunteer) you really love doing, and find energizing and rewarding. Find ways to do those things for God.

Level 2

Learn what your God-given spiritual gifts are, and connect to one or more ministries that will benefit from those gifts. Study the *Serving from the Heart* Spiritual Gifts curriculum with your small group.

Level 3

Focus on how God intends your giftedness to shape, not just occasional volunteer activities, but your entire life. Find a mentor (possibly your congregational care pastor) and discuss how you might use your gifts to live out your God-given calling.

4. I give back to Christ by giving to the church and to others in proportion to my income, with at least 10% as my goal.

Level 1

Begin planning your financial giving as a proportion of your income, given at each pay period, rather than simply on impulse as a special appeal moves you.

Level 2

Increase your giving by one or two percent of your income, as a move toward the goal of tithing (giving 10% of your income).

Level 3

Make tithing the baseline for your giving, and give more than 10% of your income as God makes that possible. Include God's kingdom in your estate planning, as well as in your regular, ongoing giving.

5. I invest time in building my relationships with God and with others, and I increasingly manage my time according to God's priorities.

Level 1

Set aside at least two hours a month specifically for serving God and others.

Level 2

Identify two non-productive activities you spend time on, and eliminate them in order to have more time to give to God and God's service.

Level 3

Review your entire calendar. Ask yourself, "If I were accused of making God the most important person in my life, would my calendar convict me of that charge, or acquit me?"