

2024 Commitments

At The United Methodist Church of Berea, **our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Each year during the fall, we re-consider what this mission statement means for our lives as disciples and our life together as a community of faith.



What is a disciple?

How do disciples make up the community of faith?

What does a community of faith following in the footsteps of Christ do and what does it look like?

We desire to be a unified community that reflects the heart of Christ, embodying the love that Christ has for each of us. With that in mind, I am encouraging the leadership of the church to read *Living into Community: Cultivating Practices that Sustain Us*, by Christine Pohl. I am inviting the whole church to read this book together. The book itself outlines “four practices that sustain community.”

They are:

1. living a life of gratitude,
2. making and keeping commitments (this commitment card, and what it represents, is part of that),
3. living and embodying truth, and
4. practicing radical hospitality.

All of these are important, but I want us to really lean into hospitality as it is one of our main goals for the coming year. We are a loving community, but all of us have naturally settled into certain habits due to the appropriately instituted COVID parameters. I want to help us reset a bit, so that anyone who visits here can feel welcome and feel that they belong--because they do!) We will be sharing more goals with you soon, but in the meantime, I have also asked the leaders of the church to simply encourage one another and encourage everyone in our church family.

The Apostle Paul in his letters regularly encouraged the Christian communities to edify, encourage, and build one another up. Unfortunately, I believe that the North American church is overall discouraged. Let us not forget dear sisters and brothers that we serve the risen Lord! Think of all the things that God has done for us and let us take on a life of gratitude and celebration! We are asking that you think about what you can do for Christ, what you can bring to this community (because you all have something to give and to bring—YOU ARE A VALUABLE CHILD OF GOD!). Together we get to share in those gifts.

The 2024 Commitment Forms are on the pages 11-12 of the November Caller and will be available on tables at the back of each worship space. If you prefer, you may complete and submit your commitment form online at www.umcb.org/donate. Again, please prayerfully consider your commitments for 2024. I also invite you to bring this completed form with you to worship on **Sunday, November 19**. Thank you. It is an honor to serve Christ among and be in the community of Christ with you. Whatever we do, my friends, we do it together in Christ, with Christ leading the way.

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Stephen J. Knisely

2024 Commitment Form

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____



Worship—a life of gratitude

As an individual, I will:

___ pray once each day ___ pray 5 times each day

Together, with the community of faith, in 2022 I will:

___ worship 26 Sundays (50%) ___ worship 47 Sundays (90%)

When I am at church, I will:

___ have a heart that reflects Christ and is open to Christ's work in me
___ intentionally encourage one other person
___ greet and talk with one visitor

I will spend time giving thanks to God:

___ once a day ___ all day long (I know that is a lot)

Through these practices, I will live a life of gratitude for God's grace and love.



Give—a life of generosity

As an individual, I will:

___ pursue 1 act of radical generosity each month
___ pursue 5 acts of radical generosity each month

Together, with the community of faith, in 2024 I will:

___ give an offering proportional to my income (an intentional %)
___ grow into a tithe (10% of total income)
___ if I haven't been giving, I will find a way to begin giving (even a little bit)
\$_____ per year/month/week to the General Operating Fund
\$_____ per year/month/week to the Capital Improvement Fund
\$_____ per year/month/week to the Endowment Fund
___ please send me information about electronic giving options
___ please send me information about including The UMC of Berea in my estate planning

Through these practices, I will live a life of generosity, in response to God's generosity toward me.



Study—a life of learning

As an individual, I will:

- ___ read scripture once each week
- ___ read scripture 5 days each week

Together, with the community of faith, in 2024 I will:

- ___ participate in one short-term class or Bible study
- ___ participate in an ongoing small group
- ___ read *Living into Community*

Through these practices, I will live a life of learning, growing more fully into the image of Christ.



Serve—a life of justice and kindness

As an individual, I will:

- ___ practice 1 intentional act of kindness each week
- ___ practice 5 intentional acts of kindness each week

Together, with the community of faith, in 2024 I will:

- ___ participate in 1 service project during the year
- ___ participate in 1 service project each quarter

Through these practices, I will live a life of service, serving Christ by serving others.



Share—a life that bears witness

As an individual, I will:

- ___ get to know my neighbors better, learning their names first and then their hopes and passions
- ___ pray for 5 individuals who are not yet disciples
- ___ share about/demonstrate Christ's love with someone who does not know Christ, has become distant from Christ, has doubts, or has been hurt by a church/followers of Christ.
- ___ practice love, forgiveness, grace, and patience during my daily life
- ___ pray for a specific person each week (this can change from week to week)
- ___ pray for a specific ministry each week (this can change from week to week)

Together, with the community of faith, in 2024 I will:

- ___ invite 3 people this year to some event or gathering
- ___ invite 5 people this year to some event or gathering
- ___ pray for God's will and vision for UMCB

Through these practices, I will live a life of witness, sharing with others God's unconditional love.