

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 

# THE WAY OF LOVE

with Bishop Michael Curry



**Season I**

Reflection Guides

[wayoflove.episcopalchurch.org](http://wayoflove.episcopalchurch.org)

“The way of Jesus is the Way of Love, and the Way of Love can change the world.” Presiding Bishop Michael Curry closes each episode of his podcast with these important words.

He encourages us to take what we have learned and heard about the practices for Jesus-centered life – turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, and rest – and put it into action.

The reflection guides compiled here can be used with each episode of Season 1. Whether you are listening alone or as part of a group, the scripture passages, reflection questions, and prayers can help you as you grow your faith and engage the Way of Love.

The deep roots of the Christian tradition offer a spiritual path toward deeper relationship with God, neighbor, and self.

Season I

Episode I

What is the Way of Love?

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry

### “What is the Way of Love?”

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you?**

##### Matthew 22:34-40

<sup>34</sup> When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, <sup>35</sup> and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” <sup>37</sup> He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. In his sermon, Bishop Curry challenges those listening to follow Jesus and his way of love, saying, “Don’t be ashamed to be people of love.” Have you ever felt reluctant, or embarrassed, to live a Jesus-centered life? Where did those feelings come from? If you are still in that season, what would help you live a shame-free life of love?
2. The Way of Love is not a curriculum or a program; it is a set of timeless practices that are meant to help people structure their lives around the life and teachings of Jesus. In his conversation with Lorenzo Lebrija, Bishop Curry speaks about the importance of “training the spirit” and practice, practice, practice. Have you ever thought about your spiritual life as something that needs practice and training? Just as we develop physical muscles when we exercise, so our soul develops spiritual muscles when we practice things like prayer, worship, and studying Scripture over and over. What “spiritual muscle” would you like to build up?
3. Living in a context greater than ourselves is essential to a healthy and whole life. How does (or how could) being part of the Jesus Movement inform how you live your daily life, how you interact with others, and what choices you make – from how you spend your money to how you spend your time?

#### Prayer

##### A Collect for Guidance

O heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray thee so to guide and govern us by thy Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget thee, but may remember that we are ever walking in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Prayer is an opportunity to be authentic with God and ourselves, to connect with each other, and to be transformed.**

**Season 1**

**Episode 2**

**Pray**

**Spending time with God**

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Pray

### “Spending time with God”

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you?**

##### I Thessalonians 5:15-19

<sup>15</sup> See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. During the conversation between host Kyle Oliver and Bishop Curry, several different forms of prayer are mentioned: the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer and Compline, as well as Centering Prayer. Take a moment to list all the ways that you have practiced praying in the past. What prayer practice do

you feel the greatest connection to? Why?

2. Bishop Curry keeps a prayer list on his mobile phone, a list that he often prays with slowly and intentionally in the morning. As he prays, he brings into focus the faces of each person, trying to see them as God sees them – with abundant love and affection. Bishop Curry says that this practice of noticing the details of each person brings a new awareness, slowing him down long enough to “pay attention to them and not just to check off the box.” How does this practice challenge or inspire you? How can you create a more intentional and slow practice of prayer?
3. During his recovery from a recent surgery, Bishop Curry discovered the Facebook resource Pop-up Prayer from the Rev. Katie Churchwell. This free resource helped him when he was unable to follow his standard prayer practices. Prayer, like all Way of Love practices, is meant to change and adapt according to your season of life. What season of life are you in, and what adaptations need to be made to your prayer life? Is there a resource you need help finding, or are you perhaps ready for a spiritual director or prayer partner? Offer up these requests to God today.

#### Prayer

Lord God, may we follow Christ’s teaching: coming before you with humble hearts, boldly offering our thanksgivings and concerns to you, and listening for your voice in our lives and in the world. Whether in thought, word or deed, individually or corporately, create an awareness within us, that when we pray we invite and dwell in your loving presence. Amen.

God invites us to dedicate time  
for restoration and wholeness  
– within our bodies, minds,  
and souls, and within our  
communities and institutions.

Season 1

Episode 3

Rest

“At peace with the one  
who made you”

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Rest

### “At peace with the one who made you”

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection.

As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you?**

##### Genesis 2:2-3

<sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. <sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. In his conversation with host Kyle Oliver, Bishop Curry defines “rest” in terms of Sabbath rest: to “dwell in God, abide in God, to be at peace and one with God.” When we enter into this Sabbath rest, we are able to be fully ourselves and be fully in the presence of God. Think of a time when you felt fully yourself: What were you doing? How did it feel? Can you find the presence of God in that moment?

2. “When a spiritual practice becomes part of your routine, it becomes part of the energy of your life and it changes the rhythm of your life.” - Bishop Michael Curry

Stillness and silence are both ancient spiritual practices that seem countercultural to our modern lives. Have you ever practiced intentional stillness or silence? If so, what opened up in your life because of the space those practices created? If not, what would it take for you to begin to practice these disciplines for even 10 minutes a day? Could you begin with simply a silent commute to work, or five minutes of sitting still on your sofa? What could happen to the rhythm of your days?

3. Bishop Curry concludes by saying, “There is point when you just have to stop and let rest happen.” For co-host Sandy Milen’s family, this happens on Sunday afternoons. Her sister noticed that her busy modern family was growing apart and requested that they begin the practice of spending intentional family time together once a week. Now, that time has become essential to the mental and spiritual well-being of the family – opening up space for them to know and be known better, and to enjoy each other’s presence. The same is true of our relationship with God. How would you like to know and feel yourself known by God? How can you begin to receive and enjoy God’s gifts for you with your whole self?

#### Prayer

Creator God, from the beginning you have established the sacred pattern of going and returning, labor and rest. Especially today, you invite us to dedicate time for restoration and wholeness – within our bodies, minds, and souls, and within our communities and institutions. Give us wisdom and courage to practice resting, saying no to the tyranny of the urgent, instead placing our trust in you, the primary actor who brings all things to their fullness. Amen.



Regular worship can both help us to deny self-interest as the main aim of life and also re-center our lives on God.

Season I

Episode 4

Worship

Putting God at the center

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Worship

### Putting God at the center

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you?**

##### Colossians 3:12-17

<sup>12</sup> As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. When asked about the difference between “worship” and “prayer,” Bishop Curry reflects on these points:
  - a. Worship in community “requires me to get out of my comfort zone” and to remember “that it’s not all about me.” We are placed in community, just as Jesus was in community.

- b. Through the practices – the hymns, the preaching, the Scripture, prayer, and the Eucharist – we are reminded together that “behold, there is something greater than all of us.” We are not the center – God is the center. “The whole experience is actually ingeniously designed to de-center myself and re-center my life on God.”
- c. The elements of our Episcopal tradition that seem almost strange or alien – the robes, the incense, the eating bread and drinking wine – “push us beyond the contemporary to more ancient ways of connecting to God.” They remind us that “there is another world” – a world of mystery and holiness.

Which of these three elements most resonates with you as a reason you value worship? Which is the most challenging aspect of worship for you? Where would like further connection or understanding?

2. In their conversation, hosts Sandy and Kyle talk about a variety of worship experiences, discussing how different styles speak to them in different ways. While we do have a framework for our liturgy, there are many ways to express that liturgy through styles of music, dress, language, and surroundings. Take a moment to reflect on a worship service at which you felt incredibly connected to God: What was happening in that service that drew you into God's presence? What were the smells, sounds, or words that opened your heart?
3. One of the essential parts of worship is being in community. Through our baptismal covenant (based on Scripture), we promise, with God's help, to “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers.” But keeping this promise can be daunting for some – especially if they feel isolated or unsure whether they are welcome. This week, think and pray about whom you might invite to join you in worship. Who might be waiting to be invited into something greater than themselves?

#### Prayer

Oh God, be present to us as we gather with others before you to worship. Open our hearts and minds to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Help us give thanks, confess, and offer the brokenness of the world to you. As we break bread, may our eyes be opened to the presence of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit among us, making us into one body, the body of Christ, being sent forth to live the Way of Love. Amen.

By becoming familiar with the stories and insights of scripture, we are better able to see God's story unfolding all around us.

Season 1

Episode 5

Learn

“Letting the Word master us”

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Learn

### Letting the Word master us

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible).**

**What words or phrases jump out to you?**

##### Deuteronomy 6:4-9

<sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.

<sup>5</sup>You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. <sup>6</sup>Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. <sup>7</sup>Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

<sup>8</sup>Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, <sup>9</sup>and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. Bishop Curry recommends that when we begin reading the Bible, we start with a short passage, focusing on the Gospels – the words and life of Jesus found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He also recommends that we read the passage aloud, one to three times, following the form of Lectio Divina, as modeled in the podcast by hosts Kyle and Sandy. Whether you are by yourself or in a group, take a few moments to try this simplified method, using either the Scripture provided or another passage:

- Read the passage aloud, listening for a word or phrase that stands out.
- Read the passage a second time, asking God to show you how that word or phrase relates to your life today.
- Read the passage a third time, asking God to show you how to respond to this passage.

What did you notice? What was revealed?

2. In our personal encounters with the Bible, Bishop Curry encourages us toward an experiment that is “less studying the Scripture, which can be us mastering it, and more listening to Scripture, and maybe letting the Word master us.” This approach creates an invitation in which Scripture can impact not just our minds and our intellect, but also our hearts. Is the idea of reading Scripture for yourself a new idea, or a comfortable one? Do you tend to approach the reading of Scripture from a place of mastering the passage or letting the passage master you? How do Bishop Curry’s words challenge or encourage you?

3. *“Take your Bible and take your newspaper, and read both. But interpret newspapers from your Bible.”* - Karl Barth

Citing this quote, Bishop Curry points out that when you read Scripture and pay attention to current events, a conversation can begin – internally or with others – exploring, “How does this word of God connect to the reality of the world?” Have you had an experience where you have seen Scripture come alive in your eyes, when something you witnessed triggered a verse or phrase from Scripture to rise up in your memory? If not, have other important words from your life (another piece of writing, song lyrics, a quote from a friend) ever come to mind in this way? Share or journal about that text. How might this kind of experience change how you will approach Scripture – or the news?

#### Prayer

Oh God, be present to us as we gather with others before you to worship. Open our hearts and minds to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Help us give thanks, confess, and offer the brokenness of the world to you. As we break bread, may our eyes be opened to the presence of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit among us, making us into one body, the body of Christ, being sent forth to live the Way of Love. Amen.

When we practice blessing, we walk with others, listening to and sharing stories, journeying into a deeper relationship with the living God we have known in Jesus Christ.

Season 1

Episode 6

Bless

Sharing & listening  
to stories of life

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Bless

### Sharing & listening to stories of life

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible).

What words or phrases jump out to you?

##### John 4:1-26

<sup>1</sup> Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard, “Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John”<sup>2</sup> —although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized—<sup>3</sup> he left Judea and started back to Galilee. <sup>4</sup> But he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.”<sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?” (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”<sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?”<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?”<sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,<sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.”<sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’;<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!”<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet.”<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.”<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

<sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”<sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.”<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

#### Questions for Reflection

Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.

1. One of the core aspects of the practice we call “bless” is evangelism. But evangelism is not about achieving a determined outcome, such as making more Episcopalians or more Christians, although those are great. Instead, it “is to be on a journey with someone else, and journey with them into a deeper relationship with the living God that we know in Jesus Christ.” We do this by the gift of our presence, the gift of our story, and most especially through the gift of listening – seeking, naming, and celebrating where God is at work in our community, our lives, and the lives of our neighbors. Evangelism is relational – it is a circle of blessing. When has the sharing of spiritual stories – the stories of how God has showed up in daily life – impacted you? Consider times both when you took the step to share and when you blessed another by listening.
2. In this episode, Canon Stephanie Spellers reflects that “part of what happens when we bless or are blessed is an unveiling. What blessing does is pours forth whatever is necessary so that the thing being blessed becomes what it was always supposed to be.” Often, this unveiling happens when we are blessed by the caring presence of a counselor, a friend, or a mentor. Bishop Curry shares a story of when deep listening helped him discover his call to the priesthood. When have you been blessed by deep listening from another? What did that listening unveil or call forth in you?
3. Not only are we blessed when we listen to others or when others listen to us, but we also are practicing bless when we listen to ourselves. Bishop Curry, expanding on a quote by Maya Angelou says, “Listen to your life, listen to the stories that it tells, and listen to how God can be an author of that story.” One way that Bishop Curry recommends listening to your own life is this: Every few months set aside some time to review your recent calendar. Look back on the previous months, reflecting on events or encounters you may have forgotten. Ask yourself whom you were with and what you were doing. Next, see if you notice any patterns of God’s presence woven throughout those months – either through the events or the people around you. What were the blessings that rise to the top through those patterns? Right now, in your group or in your journal, simply think over the past few days: Where do you see blessing?

#### Prayer

Just as Jesus called his disciples to give, forgive, teach, and heal in his name, we are empowered by the Spirit to bless everyone we meet, practicing generosity and compassion and proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ with hopeful words and selfless actions. Help us, O Lord, to boldly share our stories of blessing and invite others to follow your Way of Love. Amen.

On the Way of Love, we turn ourselves toward God like a flower setting its face toward the sun.

Season I

Episode 7

Turn

Learning to live unselfishly

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Turn

### Learning to live unselfishly

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible).  
What words or phrases jump out to you?**

##### Mark 2:13-14

<sup>13</sup> Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. <sup>14</sup> As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. This episode begins with a conversation between Canon Stephanie Spellers and Bishop Curry about what it truly means to turn, or to repent. Bishop Curry gives this definition: "to repent is actually to turn toward God, away from the direction I was going before." He then goes on to share a wonderful image of a flower that turns its face toward the light – gaining energy and life from that light, just as we gain our life from the light of Jesus. How does this metaphor change or inform your practice of repentance?

2. Sin is often a "dirty word" in many circles – including some churches. Ideas of what sin is and what it means to be a sinful person have been used to abuse or control people for centuries. But instead of ignoring the presence of sin, Bishop Curry is asking us to embrace what it truly is – anything of our own making that separates us, or places a barrier between us and God, us and creation, us and our neighbor, us and ourselves – and then to turn away from those acts or attitudes of "unbridled selfishness and self-centeredness" that cause us to choose our own agendas over the loving, liberating, and life-giving way of Jesus. With this understanding of sin, where do you see separation in your own life? Where do you feel God calling you back to the light?

3. Hosts Sandy and Kyle both share stories about their own moments of turning. Kyle's moment prompted him to seek a new, life-giving, and sustainable way of living his daily life. Sandy's moment led her to a liberating love for her racial identity. Both Sandy and Kyle made outward and visible changes in response to these inward spiritual turnings. When has a moment of turning – large or small – led to an outward and visible life change for you? What about that experience are you grateful for? What did you learn about God's love in that process?

#### Prayer

##### Collect

Like the disciples, we are called by Jesus to follow the Way of Love. Help us, O God, to remember that with your help, we can turn from the powers of sin, hatred, fear, injustice, and oppression toward the way of truth, love, hope, justice, and freedom. And that in turning, we reorient our lives to Jesus Christ, falling in love again, again, and again. Amen.



How we can take all we've learned about the Way of Love and put it into action?

Season 1

Episode 8

Go

Doing our best to live like Jesus

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Go

### Doing our best to live like Jesus

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out to you?**

##### Matthew 28:1-8

<sup>1</sup> After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

<sup>2</sup> And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup> For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified.

<sup>6</sup> He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ This is my message for you.”

<sup>8</sup> So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. During his conversation with co-host Kyle Oliver, Bishop Curry tells two stories about women who were moved to “go” – crossing the boundaries of what might be expected of them and providing for a need that they saw. The choices

and sacrifices they made changed not only the children they helped feed and celebrate but also their communities and their churches. When have you seen someone “go” in this manner? Whom or what did it change? What attributes of God did you see in this person’s actions?

2. When trying to discern how to “go,” Bishop Curry recommends that we ask ourselves, “What is the greatest approximation of love in this context, and how can I do that?” Think about a challenging situation in your neighborhood, workplace, or community. What would radical love look like in that situation? Is there a way that you can begin to approximate that love through one small action?

3. Part of being a baptized disciple is following Jesus across boundaries – going into places where we may encounter discomfort or awkwardness in order to find liberation for ourselves and others. But we must be formed in order to be ready to go. Bishop Curry speaks about the forming nature of reading and studying Scripture, saying that when you “live in Scripture enough, you begin to engage the world out of biblical way of thinking or being, which brings you closer to living the habit of grace.” In other words, “going” becomes a “gut response to grace” instead of a guilt-based or mechanical obligation to be a good person. How are you being formed to “go”? Think of things that you do out of love instead of obligation. What feels different? Why are they different? This week, meditate on one step you could take to grow in your relationship with God that would help you keep “living the habit of grace” out in the world.

#### Prayer

##### Collect

Just as Jesus went to the highways and byways, he sends us beyond our circles and comfort, to witness to his love, justice, and truth with our lips and with our lives. Lord, help us as we go to listen with humility, and to bring your healing to a hurting world. Be present to us dear Lord, as we work to live into our identity as the Beloved Community, a people reconciled in love with you and one another. Amen.