Commitment to Living a Christian Life

Primary Objective: Prepare the Ministry Development Team to lead the congregation in the ongoing support and growth of living a Christian life. By the end of this section, team members will be able to:

1. Complete the Team and Individual Assessments
   Suggestion: complete the "How Am I Equipped" column on the Individual Assessment, then complete the Team Assessment, then finish the Individual Assessment.
2. Articulate what it means to live a Christian life as identified in the Baptismal Covenant. This will be demonstrated by:
   a. An ability to define Christian living – personally and communally and how this definition is informed by the Baptismal Covenant.
   b. An ability to define, practice and reflect on one's Christian life using a variety of discernment practices
3. Develop a deeper appreciation of scripture from a variety of historical and interpretive perspectives
   a. Understand the importance of reading the Bible in light of tradition and reason
4. Articulate a personal Theology of Ministry and then a congregational Theology of Ministry which can be used to organize, lead and then reflect on practical experiences (ministry).
   a. Ability to define ministry
   b. Develop a method of theological reflection which can be used to reflect on ministry experiences
   c. Ability to relate ministry experiences to one's growth in God.
   d. Recognize the difference between "doing to" and "doing with"
5. Develop a Rule of Life
   a. Ability to define the elements of a Rule of Life
   b. Ability to lead individual's development of a Rule of Life
   c. Ability to lead the Congregation's development of a Rule of Communal Life
   d. Construct an ongoing practice of spiritual growth through following a Rule of Life
6. Teach the congregation about the importance of prayer and lead prayer services
   a. Ability to define prayer
   b. Ability to describe various types of prayer
   c. Ability to pray with others
   d. Ability to develop and lead prayer in public situations, planned and spontaneously
7. Develop and implement a stewardship program for the congregation
   a. Articulate an understanding of the benefits of stewardship in one's personal life and the life of a Christian community

Module: Commitment to Living a Christian Life
Session 1: Team Assessment and Learning Plan

Primary Objective: Prepare the Ministry Development Team to lead the congregation in the ongoing support and growth of living a Christian life.

Competency	How is the team equipped? Name the gifts, knowledge and skills already present in the team.	What the team needs/wants to learn.	How will the team accomplish this learning? What format will the team use to provide evidence of this learning?	Observations about the team process of reaching the competencies.
Articulate what it means to live a Christian life as identified in the Baptismal Covenant. This will be demonstrated by: An ability to define Christian living – personally and communally and how this definition is informed by the Baptismal Covenant. An ability to define, practice and reflect on one's Christian life using a variety of discernment practices				

Develop a deeper appreciation of scripture from a variety of historical and interpretive perspectives Understand the importance of reading the Bible in light of tradition and reason				
Articulate a personal Theology of Ministry and then a congregational Theology of Ministry which can be used to organize, lead and then reflect on practical experiences (ministry). Ability to define ministry Develop a method of theological reflection which can be used to reflect on the experiences Ability to relate ministry experiences to one's growth in God. Recognize the difference between "doing to" and "doing with"				

Develop a Rule of Life Ability to define the elements of a Rule of Life Ability to lead individual's development of a Rule of Life Ability to lead the Congregation's development of a Rule of Communal Life Construct an ongoing practice of spiritual growth				
Teach the congregation about the importance of prayer and lead prayer services Ability to define prayer Ability to describe various types of prayer Ability to pray with others Ability to develop and lead prayer in public situations, planned and spontaneously				

Develop and implement a stewardship program for the congregation Articulate an understanding of the benefits of stewardship in one's personal life and the life of a Christian community				

Module: Commitment to Living a Christian Life
Session 1: Individual Assessment and Learning Plan

Primary Objective: Prepare the Ministry Development Team to lead the congregation in the ongoing support and growth of living a Christian life.

Competency	What knowledge, skill, experience do you bring to this competency?	What would you like to learn or what experience would you like to create?	What format will you use to provide evidence of your learning?	Observations about your process of reaching the competencies.
Articulate what it means to live a Christian life as identified in the Baptismal Covenant. This will be demonstrated by: An ability to define Christian living – personally and communally and how this definition is informed by the Baptismal Covenant. An ability to define, practice and reflect on one's Christian life using a variety of discernment practices				

Develop a deeper appreciation of scripture from a variety of historical and interpretive perspectives Understand the importance of reading the Bible in light of tradition and reason				
Articulate a personal Theology of Ministry and then a congregational Theology of Ministry which can be used to organize, lead and then reflect on practical experiences (ministry). Ability to define ministry Develop a method of theological reflection which can be used to reflect on the experiences Ability to relate ministry experiences to one's growth in God. Recognize the difference between "doing to" and "doing with"				

Develop a Rule of Life Ability to define the elements of a Rule of Life Ability to lead individual's development of a Rule of Life Ability to lead the Congregation's development of a Rule of Communal Life Construct an ongoing practice of spiritual growth				
Teach the congregation about the importance of prayer and lead prayer services Ability to define prayer Ability to describe various types of prayer Ability to pray with others Ability to develop and lead prayer in public situations, planned and spontaneously				

Develop and implement a stewardship program for the congregation Articulate an understanding of the benefits of stewardship in one's personal life and the life of a Christian community				

Module: Commitment to Christian Living
Session 2: Articulate what it means to live a Christian life as identified in the Baptismal Covenant. This will be demonstrated by

Competency	Readings	Suggested Activity	Reflection	Resources
An ability to define Christian living – personally and communally and how this definition is informed by the Baptismal Covenant An ability to define, practice and reflect on one's Christian life using a variety of discernment practices.	The Liturgy of Baptism in *The Book of Common Prayer* "The Model of a Virtuous Life" by Richard Foster https://renovare.org/articles/model-virtuous-life "Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry" World Council of Churches paper www.anglicancommunion.org/media/102580/lima_document.pdf *Listening Hearts* by Suzanne Farnham *Grounded in God* by Suzanne Farnham "The Clearness Committee" http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/writings	Explore the Renovare website. There are many avenues on this site. You may find articles/podcasts etc. that you would like to pursue in addition to the ones mentioned here. Do the same with the CS Lewis Institute website. Make a list of what it means to live a Christian life. Dialogue with your team mates about your list including how the Baptismal Covenant informs the items on the list. Begin a "notebook" that includes definitions of "Christian Living", "baptism" and "Eucharist". Search for the ways others have defined these concepts. Ask the congregation to commit to a 1 or 2 session conversation gathering in small groups to dialogue on the conversation starters for Baptismal Living Groups. Develop opportunities to include the Baptismal Covenant in a variety of worship experiences. Read *Listening Hearts* together. Using the Discernment Manual from the Diocese of Iowa, each team member chooses a	In your journal: Who am I as a baptized member of the Body? What does my baptism mean to me? How does my personal history connect with the sharing and development of ministry? What is my cultural background? What in my background will enhance my ministry, what might present a barrier? How practicing a discernment technique help inform your life as a Christian. What spiritual disciplines do I have that will sustain me in this ministry? Where do I need to grow? How do I function best as a member of a working group, learning group, team?	https://renovare.org Choose from the Resources menu, the section on Articles and Letters. A list of authors will appear on the side, choose Richard J. Foster. Scroll through his articles for "The Model of a Virtuous Life" and "How to Start a Prayer Journal" www.cslewisinstitute.org There is a good amount of information concerning the Christian Life on this website. Conversation starters for Baptismal Living Groups: What does my baptism mean to me? What are the ways baptism influences my daily life? Which of the baptismal promises do I find the most challenging? *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church* *A User-Friendly Reference for Episcopalians*

		different discernment practice and works through it with the team. After reading *Grounded in God* reflect on the practices that would shift the Vestry meetings or any meeting in church into more of a discernment experience. . Implement the practices in a trial and error mode and reflect on the experiences Explore the websites in the Resource section that deal with discernment. Explore the information on group decision making based on Ignatian spirituality. "The Art of Hosting" has tools that help groups practice participatory leadership. Check out ways of encouraging conversations in your congregation	How can we move our team and congregational gatherings into more of a discerning attitude?	Donald S. Armentrout and Robert Boak Slocum https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/anepiscopaldictionaryofthechurch *Convictions* by Marcus Borg, Harper One, 2014 www.spirithome.com/discernment.html Discernment Manual from the Diocese of Iowa Commission on Ministry http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Knowing_and_Doing a wide variety of articles on spiritual practices Several articles by Teresa Blythe on discernment can be found on the Patheos website: http://www.patheos.com/blogs/spiritualdirection101/2012/07/a-step-by-step-discernment-process/ http://www.patheos.com/blogs/spiritualdirection101/2012/07/basic-principles-to-help-you-discern/ There are discernment resources on the Quaker website:

				http://www.fgcquaker.org/resources/clearness-committees-what-they-are-and-what-they-do and on Center for Courage and Renewal http://www.couragerenewal.org/clearnesscommittee/ http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/making-good-decisions/an-approach-to-good-choices/a-method-of-group-decision-making http://artofhosting.ning.com/

Module: Commitment to Christian Living

Session 3: Develop a deeper appreciation of scripture from a variety of historical and interpretive perspectives.

Competency	Reading	Suggested Activity	Reflection	Resources
Develop a deeper appreciation of scripture from a variety of historical and interpretive perspectives Understand the importance of reading the Bible in light of tradition and reason	*In Dialogue with Scripture* –Sections on • *The Bible and the Episcopal Church* • *Methods for Use with Small Groups* *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg	Include a variety of translations in the Bible study groups Complete the Bible Study course using *Understanding the Bible* by Stephen Harris. This begins with a weekend retreat to introduce the book then weekly sessions covering the entire book. Learn and practice Lectio Divina using the Revised Common Lectionary lessons. Compare several translations. Method on "Ignation spirituality" explained in Resource section Begin building a library around topics such as scripture, ministry, mission, church, Christian life. Make these resources available to the congregation. Set up Bible study groups with the congregation. Practice methods: Oral Tradition Method, Mission Awareness, Theological Bible Study – found in *In Dialogue with Scripture* Use *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* as a congregational book study, possibly during Lent.	Practice *In Your Own Words*, Bible study method from "In Dialogue with Scripture" What changes do you notice in your relationship with God and neighbors as you dig deeper into understanding scripture? Write about how the passage(s) used in meditation relates to your life What surprised you in your congregational Bible study groups? How practiced am I in using the Bible? What methods am I familiar with for studying scripture? Leading Bible study?	*In Dialogue with Scripture* http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/in_dialogue_with_scripture.pdf *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg *The New Church's Teaching Series*: *Opening the Bible* and *Engaging the Word* http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-prayer/praying-with-scripture

Module: Commitment to Living a Christian Life
Session 4: Articulate a personal theology of ministry and then a corporate/congregational theology of ministry

Competency	Reading	Suggested Activity	Reflection	Resources
Ability to define ministry Ability to relate ministry experiences to growth in God Recognize the difference between "doing to" and "doing with"	*The Book of Common Prayer* Catechism *We Are All Theologians* by Fredrica Harris Thompsett *Let's Do Theology A pastoral cycle resource book* By Laurie Green	Using the catechism, reflect on the section on ministry. With your team, create a definition of ministry that can be used to explain ministry to others. This includes an understanding of personal ministry and corporate ministry. You may want to search on the internet for ways others have defined ministry and determine differences in the definitions available. "All of us are natural theologians, willing and able to think through questions of belief and relate the insights of theologians to our public and personal lives. In this clear and engaging introduction, Thompsett gives us the tools to think theologically by grounding us in the history, theology, spirituality, and biblical foundations of Anglican belief, particularly that of the Episcopal church." This is a quote from the book, *We Are All Theologians* by Fredrica Harris Thompsett and available through Amazon – new and used. Order enough of these books in order to share and set a time with small groups of dialoguing about the issues and topics identified by Thompsett	In your journal… How do you recognize ministry in your actions? In what ways do I see myself as a minister? How do I articulate a theology of ministry in everyday language? Describe changes you have noticed in your own views or thoughts as you have worked on theological reflection. How am I learning from reflection on experiences and expanding my background knowledge? Why is it important to be careful with words in conversations about ministry? Saying, "my ministry is to people who are hungry" or saying, "my ministry is with people who are hungry"	"A Theology of Ministry" http://theimageoffish.com/2013/05/03/a-sketch-of-a-theology-of-ministry/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+TheImageOfFish+%28The+Image+of+Fish%29 "Theological Foundations for Ministry" By Catherine A. Deddo http://www.trinitystudycenter.com/topicalcathy/theo-of-ministry.php

Module: Commitment to Living A Christian Life
Session 5: Develop a Rule of Life

Competencies	Readings	Suggested Activity	Reflection	Resources
Define the elements of a Rule of Life Ability to lead individual's development of a Rule of Life Ability to lead the Congregation's development of a Rule of Communal Life Live an ongoing practice of spiritual growth through following a Rule of Life	3 articles on the Northumbria Community website: (there is a search box) https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/ "How do we use a Rule as a Way for Living?" "Why do we need a Rule?" "What is a Rule of Life?"	Study the *Society of Saint John the Evangelist* website www.ssje.org on developing a Rule of Life. You may want to commit to using their video series to help you develop your own Rule of Life Make a list of what elements will be part of your Rule of Life. Use the resources in the curriculum and/or ones you have discovered. Develop your own Rule of Life that you will be able to commit to Develop a way to instruct others in the congregation in creating their personal Rule of Life. This could be taught individually or in small groups. A workbook can be downloaded from the ssje site in the resources. As a congregation, reflect on the life you now live as a congregation and then develop a corporate Rule of Life. There may be helpful information on the SSJE website in the Resources. Create a way you can commit to following your Rule. Begin your practice your Rule of Life. Note when elements seem to become a habit rather than an activity.	In your journal… What elements of your rule seem to come naturally? What elements challenge you? What seems to present the most difficulty in the explanation of the various steps Journal on the experience of committing to the disciple of following a Rule of Life	Podcast: https://renovare.org/podcast/episode-56-steve-macchia-rule-of-life http://ssje.org/ssje/framework-for-freedom/ http://ssje.org/ssje/category/growrule/ a video course on rule of life also with an option to download workbook https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/ *Living Intentionally: A Workbook for Creating a Personal Rule of Life* http://ssje.org/ssje/monasticwisdom/

Module: Commitment to Living a Christian Life
Session 6: Teach the congregation about the importance of prayer and be able to lead prayer services

Competency	Reading	Suggested Activity	Reflection	Resources
Ability to define prayer Ability to describe various types of prayer Ability to pray with others Ability to develop and lead prayer in public situations, planned and spontaneously	*The Practice of Prayer* by Margaret Guenther *The New Church's Teaching Series.* "How to Start a Prayer Journal" by Richard Foster https://renovare.org/articles/how-to-start-a-prayer-journalri "Praying with Scripture" http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-prayer/praying-with-scripture	There are many definitions of prayer on the internet. Using the Catechism in *The Book of Common Prayer*, begin a conversation in the team about prayer. Search the internet to find ways others have defined prayer. Articulate in your own words your definition of prayer As a team, read *The Practice of Prayer* and discuss. Using the Renovare website, search for "How to Start a Prayer Journal" by Richard J. Foster as well as other resources There are a variety of ways to pray and you will want to spend some time on the internet sorting through various websites gaining information that suits you personally as far as ways of praying. Explore praying with others – a couple of resources on the web Design and hold a prayer service that responds to a community issue. You may find templates in the BCP and in *Daily Prayer for All Seasons*, or other resources. Pay attention to the rituals used, to the space and to the liturgy. You may want to ask people of other faiths to join in this exercise	In your journal… You might title a page, "What is Prayer", then note your thoughts on this. Keep this open, so that you can continue to reflect on your definition drawing on experiences you have. Keep a record of the experience of learning these prayer methods. Note your levels of comfort and your questions. What kinds of prayer are most meaningful for me? Reflect on your experiences praying as a group or with just one other person.	https://www.episcopalcafe.com/the-magazine-learning-to-pray-with-the-church/ http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/ens/2014/01/08/episcopalians-on-prayer-just-pray/ https://renovare.org/ What is Lectio Divina? http://ocarm.org/en/content/lectio/what-lectio-divina The Lectio Divina Homepage: http://www.lectio-divina.org/ Contemplative Outreach http://www.centeringprayer.com/ http://www.stlukesnola.org/prayer https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/category/category/centering-prayer http://www.prayerguide.org.uk/prayingothers.htm http://www.patheos.com/blogs/billykangas/2013/07/10-tips-for-teaching-others-how-to-pray.html *Daily Prayers for All Seasons* http://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/document/daily-prayer-all-seasons

Module: Commitment to Living a Christian Life
Session 7: Develop and implement a stewardship program for the congregation

Competency	Reading	Activity	Reflection	Resources
Develop and implement a stewardship program for the congregation Articulate an understanding of the benefits of stewardship in one's personal life and the life of a Christian community	*Holy Currencies* by Eric Law http://www.kscopeinstitute.org/holycurrencies1/	Read and research on ways other congregations have taught and implemented stewardship programs. Each team member can take a particular model and prepare a review for the team. Check out the "Insights into Religion" web site Insights into Religion is dedicated to promoting the work and research of over twenty-five websites of religion institutes, programs and projects related to initiatives of the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, Inc. Visit the website for the Institute for Faith, Work and Economics and search for materials that will help develop conversations with your community on the understanding of stewardship Explore Eric Law's book, *Holy Currencies*	In your journal: After studying some of the resources listed here, think about how your mental model of stewardship has been influenced by what you have studied. Articulate a theology of stewardship and caring Why is it important to understand stewardship and the many ways it affects you and the congregation? How am I stewarding my own gifts, money, time and dreams?	Consider using and joining TENS (The Episcopal Network for Stewardship) http://www.tens.org/ http://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/topics/stewardship http://www.religioninsights.org/best-resources-stewardship-and-finance?gclid=CKrx-MCixdMCFQ-RaQodhAINuQ https://tifwe.org/