



# Discover Your Gifts

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APPLICATION GUIDE

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## Welcome to Discover Your Gifts!

You are about to embark on a journey. A journey of discovering what's near and dear to the heart of God. A journey of discovering who God created you to be and how God is calling you to be a collaborator in God's Kingdom-building work in the world, right now, in this very season of life that you find yourself living.

As we begin this class we want to you to be forewarned: this has the potential to be a journey of transformation. Only God knows where the winding road of self-discovery will take you. Be prepared to learn new things about yourself.

Be prepared to hear God's voice calling you to step away from what you've always expected from yourself, and step into some new aspects of who you are and who God is calling you to become.

At the heart of this class is this foundational belief: In every season of our lives God gives us a mission and the means to achieve it; how we receive, accept, and pursue that mission is up to us and our spiritual fitness. If you want help naming your God-given mission, harnessing your spiritual gifts, and growing in your spiritual fitness so that you can pursue God's mission freely and wholeheartedly - then you are on the right place. Peace be with you on this journey!

# The Pastoral Team

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APEX UMC

THE PEAK

519

FIESTA CHRISTIANA

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## OVERVIEW

# How You Will Discover Your Gifts



## REMEMBER THIS

*In every season of our lives God gives us a mission and the means to achieve it; how we receive, accept, and pursue that mission is up to us and our spiritual fitness.*

## BE READY TO DO THIS

- Identify and explore your God-given spiritual gifts.
- Discern a mission statement for this season of your life.
- Make a plan for how to develop and use your gifts to answer God's call to mission.

## YOU'LL NEED THIS

- This application guide
- Journal
- Something to write with

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- **During Sessions:** Follow along for visuals, references, and additional information that corresponds with the session's content
- **After Sessions:** Refer to the listed questions for reflection and/or discussion

## Tips for Getting the Most Out of This On-Demand Virtual Course

*This course was designed for individuals or group use, and below you will find some suggestions on how to get the most out of this self-directed on-demand course, whether you are taking this course by yourself or if you are taking it with a small group.*

### BY YOURSELF

Without the accountability of a group, the key will be consistency in when and how you access this course. You might consider scheduling it on your calendar when you will watch the video and do the homework, that way you will be more likely to follow through. It will also be helpful to have someone to process with, so schedule a coffee date with a friend midway through and at the end of the course so you can share what you've learned and what you plan to do as a result of this course.

### WITH A GROUP

Trust and comfort will be key if you are taking this course with a group. You will be asked to share information about who you are and how God is calling you, so make sure you take the time to get to know one another as part of each group session. It may help to set "group guidelines" together that outline desired behaviors like confidentiality.

### ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

*Rev. Laura Johnson serves as the Campus Pastor of Apex United Methodist Church.*



# So I Am Sending You

Discover Your Gifts  
*Session 1*

## 1. God is on a Mission

"God has been on a mission from the beginning to **reconcile** with us and to **transform** this world into the **paradise of harmony** that God intended."

## 2. Jesus gave God's Mission to the Church

"As the Father has sent me, **so I send you.**" -John 20:21

## 3. Every disciple of Jesus has a part in God's Mission

"The calling of discipleship is a calling to be **partners with God** in God's Kingdom-building mission. Your life has a **purpose** to it. Your life is meant to have an **impact**. Your life is meant to be part of something **bigger and greater** than yourself."

### The Mission of the Church Universal

To carry on Jesus' ministry

### The Mission of the United Methodist Church

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

### The Mission of the Apex UMC Family of Faith

Inviting and equipping all to follow Jesus in transforming the world



# Invitation to Reflection

*Use these questions to guide your personal reflection and group discussions before the next session:*

- How does thinking about God's mission in the world change your understanding of the purpose of the Church and the purpose of life?
- How might God be calling you to help fulfill the mission of the church?
- What Scripture passages could you embrace as a "guiding verse" (a verse that inspires you to pursue the heart of our mission as Christians) over the next few weeks?

## What's a Guiding Verse?

*A verse that inspires you to pursue the heart of our mission as Christians*

### Pastor Laura's Guiding Verse:

*Isaiah 58:10-11*

If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

### Other Places to Look

Psalms 34:14

Micah 6:8

Matthew 25:40

Galatians 5:22-24

Proverbs 31:8-9

Matthew 7:12

Matthew 28:19-20

James 2:14-17

Isaiah 1:17

Matthew 11:28

Luke 10:36-37

1 John 3:18

Amos 5:21-24

Matthew 22:36-40

Romans 8:18-21

Revelation 21:3-5



# Here I Am, Lord

Discover Your Gifts  
*Session 2*

## 1. Can I be called by God?

"God calls everyone. Every single follower of Jesus will be called by God. ... Every calling is holy, is important, and is part of God's mission to heal and save the world."

### ***Discernment***

*Discernment is the process of listening for and understanding God's voice.*

## 2. Spiritual disciplines are essential to the process of discernment.

Spiritual Disciplines are God-given tools to help us learn to listen for and understand God's voice.

## What is a **CALLING?**

A summons from God to do or be something for the sake of God's Kingdom.

### **Vocational Calling**

A summons to a career or long-term commitment to a particular cause.

### **Situational Calling**

A summons to respond to a particular situation at a particular moment.

## Session 2

The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.

Frederick Buechner



### 3. Christian Community is essential to the process of discernment.

Who helps you listen for the voice of God deep inside?

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## Invitation to Reflection

*Use these questions to guide your personal reflection and group discussions before the next session:*

- What spiritual disciplines help you hear the voice of God? What spiritual disciplines do you need to begin practicing?
- Let's start the process of defining the mission statement for this season of your life. In light of Buechner's quote about calling that we discussed earlier, how are you especially moved by the world's needs? What makes your heart ache? What makes your heart sing?

## Want to Dive a Little Deeper?

*What do God's mission, your sense of calling, and the practice of discernment have in common? Lots! Spend some time reflecting on or discussion these questions to synthesize the first two sessions of this course.*

### Mission

Read Micah 6:8 and Matthew 22:36-40. How do you rate yourself in living out the mission of discipleship as described in these two passages?

### Calling

The Bible is full of call stories. Check out Abraham's calling in Genesis 12, Moses' calling in Exodus 3, Isaiah's calling in Isaiah 6, Jeremiah's calling in Jeremiah 1, Jonah's calling in the book of Jonah, Mary's calling in Luke 1, and Paul's calling in Acts 9...just to name a few. What about their callings feels familiar to you? What can you learn from their choice to say "yes" to God?



# To Equip the Saints

Discover Your Gifts  
*Session 3*

## What are Spiritual Gifts?

Spiritual gifts are special abilities given by God to every believer for the sake God's mission to save the world.

1. Every person who confesses Jesus is given one or more spiritual gifts through the Holy Spirit.
1. Spiritual gifts are given for the common good. God gives us spiritual gifts so that God can work through you for the good of God's Kingdom.

## Spiritual Gifts are ...

1. NOT the same as natural talents.
2. NOT given to us as fully developed packages.
3. NOT something to boast about.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7

**“Each gift is an invitation and provides the means to participate in the work of Jesus.”**

Eugene Peterson



## Invitation to Reflection

*Use these questions to guide your personal reflection and group discussions before the next session:*

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus that God sends to live within us and to work in the world around us. So it is the Holy Spirit who enables and equips us to carry on the ministry of Jesus. How does this statement enhance, challenge, or confirm your understanding of the Holy Spirit?
- Read Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Corinthians 12. How do these passages speak to you about what spiritual gifts are and what they are not? How do these passages enhance, challenge, or confirm your understanding of the purpose of spiritual gifts?

*Before next session, take the*

**Spiritual Gifts Assessment**

**[apexumc.org/spiritual gifts](https://apexumc.org/spiritual-gifts)**



# Spiritual Gifts

## *Part I*

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### Discover Your Gifts

#### *Session 4*

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## Administration

The gift of administration is the God-given ability to understand what makes an organization function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the group or organization.

*People I know with this gift...*

## Discernment

The gift of discernment is the God-given ability to distinguish between truth and error. It is being able to discern the difference between good and evil, right and wrong, truth and deception.

*People I know with this gift...*

## Remember:

Spiritual gifts are special abilities given by God to every believer for the sake God's mission to save the world.

### Encouragement

The gift of encouragement is the God-given ability to present words of comfort, consolation, and encouragement so as to strengthen or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Evangelism

The gift of evangelism is the God-given ability to effectively communicate the gospel to nonbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Faith

The gift of faith is the God-given ability to act on God's promises with confidence and unwavering belief in God's ability to fulfill his purposes.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Giving

The gift of giving is the God-given ability to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and generosity.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Helps

The gift of helps is the God-given ability to accomplish practical and necessary behind-the-scenes tasks, which frees up, supports, and meets the needs of others.

*People I know with this gift...*

### Hospitality

The gift of hospitality is the God-given ability to care for people by providing friendly reception, food, and lodging.

*People I know with this gift...*

\*These spiritual gift definitions are from Group Publishing's Spiritual Gifts Discovery Assessment

## Invitation to Reflection

*Use these questions to guide your personal reflection and group discussions before the next session:*

- Spend some time processing how you've experienced and used your spiritual gifts. What do you enjoy about your gifts? How have you tried to use them, and what did you learn from those experiences? What opportunities to use your gifts interest you?
- Consider the Biblical characters mentioned in this session (Moses and Aaron, Peter, and Paul). What about their gifts inspires you? What about their gifts challenges you?
- Consider the names you wrote down of people in your life who have some of the gifts mentioned in this session. How are they using their gifts for the sake of God's mission? How can you support and encourage them?

**If you haven't yet, complete the spiritual gifts assessment at  
[apexumc.org/spiritual\\_gifts](http://apexumc.org/spiritual_gifts)**



# Spiritual Gifts

## *Part II*

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Discover Your Gifts  
*Session 5*

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## Intercession

The gift of Intercession is the God-given ability to consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results.

*People I know with this gift...*

## Knowledge

The gift of knowledge is the God-given ability to learn, analyze, and uncover insights from the Bible that are pertinent to the growth and well-being of the church.

*People I know with this gift...*

## Remember:

Spiritual gifts are special abilities given by God to every believer for the sake God's mission to save the world.

### Leadership

The gift of leadership is the God-given ability to cast vision, motivate, and direct people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Mercy

The gift of mercy is the God-given ability to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then demonstrate actions to meet those needs.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is the God-given ability to reveal God's truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance, or edification.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Shepherding

The gift of shepherding is the God-given ability to assume long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of an individual or small group of Christ-followers by nurturing and guiding them toward ongoing spiritual maturity.

*People I know with this gift...*

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### Teaching

The gift of teaching is the God-given ability to understand, clearly explain, and apply the Word of God in such a way that it is clearly understood by others.

*People I know with this gift...*

### Wisdom

The gift of wisdom is the God-given ability to apply spiritual truth effectively to meet a need in a specific situation.

*People I know with this gift...*

\*These spiritual gift definitions are from Group Publishing's Spiritual Gifts Discovery Assessment

## Invitation to Reflection

*Use these questions to guide your personal reflection and group discussions before the next session:*

- Consider again the quote from Frederick Buchner: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." How do your gifts uniquely position or equip you to address the things you are most passionate about? What is holding you back?
- Consider your gifts. Are you surprised by your gifts? Which gifts do you feel are most developed (meaning, you are most comfortable using them)? Which gifts are your growing edges?
- Consider the names you wrote down of people in your life who have some of the gifts mentioned in this session. How are they using their gifts for the sake of God's mission? How can you support and encourage them?

# Accepting Your Mission

Discover Your Gifts  
*Session 6*

## So You Know Your Spiritual Gifts... Now What?



**Explore** your gifts to understand them.



**Experiment** with your gifts by trying different ministries to see what fits



**Examine** your feelings after you've served.

# How are you answering God's call to contribute to God's Kingdom in this season of your life?



## How to Write a Personal Mission Statement

**Step 1** - Considering what you've learned about God's Kingdom, describe/list how you are most eager to see "thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven?"

**Step 2** - Define the kind of person you want to be: values, integrity, etc. Consider all aspects of your identity: spouse, friend, parent, employee, employer, etc.

**Step 3** - Define the legacy you hope to leave as a result of this season of life. Write down every role, and define how you wish to be remembered.

**Step 4** - Explore your gifts: What are the gifts and skills that are most important to you, that you enjoy the most?

**Step 5** - Considering all of that you've already process in steps 1-4, what goals do you have for the future?

**SMART Goals** are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-Bound

**Step 6** - Craft your mission statement in 1-2 sentences



## Examples of Personal Mission Statements

"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style."

— Maya Angelou

"To be a teacher. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be."

— Oprah Winfrey

"I want to serve the people. And I want every girl, every child to be educated."

— Malala Yousafzai

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### **Pastor Laura's Personal Mission Statement**

"I am a parent, wife, pastor, family member, and friend who is committed to creating spaces of healthy belonging, where people can experience unconditional love and grow in their unique giftedness as God's children. I will use my gifts to counteract divisiveness, exclusivism, and discrimination and promote love, respect, and peace so that God's Kingdom can reign in my heart, my family, my neighborhood, and my church."

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## Wesley's Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside by thee. Exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

## Want to Dive a Little Deeper?

*To dive deeper into the Explore, Experiment, Examine process, discuss in a small group or reflect in your journal about these questions:*

### **Explore...**

What was affirming for you when you received your gifts results? What was surprising?

### **Experiment...**

What kinds of things do you want to try next considering your gifts? How do your gifts clarify your experience with ways you are already serving, whether they are life-giving or not?

### **Examine...**

What kind of service have I been part of that has "felt right" or felt fulfilling? Does faithful service always have to be fulfilling or "feel right"? In those seasons when it feels life-draining and hard, does that mean I'm not serving faithfully?