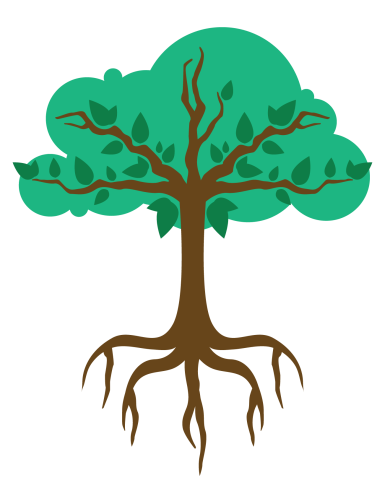
AMC 4-Year plan

*“Irresistibly Drawn”*

Unit descriptions



Year 1:

Digging deeper

*Developing spiritual practices that root us deeply in God and lay the ground for transformation*

**Unit: Preparation (our “John the Baptist” period)**

* Goals
  + To recognize that Christian growth is a process requiring intentionality and commitment
  + To prepare our hearts to fully engage the journey
* Topics for exploration
  + Jan. 12 🡪 “the second call,” going back the beginning as the key to going forward
    - Sermon text—John 21
  + Jan. 19 🡪 how Christian growth and transformation happens, the importance of intentionality
  + Jan. 26 🡪 the role of seeking
  + Feb. 2 🡪 removing major obstacles from life, clearing the way for God’s entrance
    - Sermon text—John the Baptist
  + Feb. 9 🡪 identifying our hunger, answering the question “What do you want me to do for you?”
    - Sermon text—Mark 10:46-52
* Action ideas
  + Write down and displaying answers to the question “What do you want me to do for you?”

**Unit: Prayer**

* Goals
  + To develop regular habits of prayer as individuals
  + To offer tools for people at all “levels” to take a next step in broadening/deepening their personal prayer practices
  + To pray together corporately
* Topics for exploration
  + What to pray for
  + How to pray, introducing different modes/guides for prayer practice
  + How to integrate habits of prayer into your life
  + Counsel for people at different stages: increasing frankness/boldness, talking constantly, interceding for others, asking in faith
  + How to listen in prayer, make the conversation 2-way
* Action ideas
  + Stations of the cross during Lent
  + Praying the divine hours
  + Weekly church prayer service
  + Study of Richard Foster’s book *Prayer*
  + Drawing prayers
  + Teaching different practices of prayer
  + Using prayer room
  + Prayer retreat

**Unit: Scripture**

* Goals
  + To better understand the nature of Scripture and how God can be engaged through it
  + To increase comfort in engaging Scripture more deeply and imaginatively
  + To develop regular habits of Scripture reading
* Topics for exploration
  + The nature of Scripture—what it is and what went into its development
  + How to listen for God’s voice while reading Scripture
  + Ways to engage Scripture with the imagination
  + Basic tips/skills of interpretation
  + The role of the community in interpretation
* Action ideas
  + All-church Bible memory, with prizes
  + Interpretive workshop, open to PNMC
  + Congregation assist w/ prep of sermons by engaging texts ahead (SS class?)
  + Exercise of creating our own Bible together as a church
    - Have people draw, write, or otherwise engage a text meaningful to them, put it together and bind it

**Unit: Other Spiritual Practices**

* Goals
  + To introduce the basics of diverse spiritual practices which may connect with different spiritual “types”
  + To encourage individuals to try some new practice
* Topics for exploration
  + Fasting
  + Silence/solitude
  + Journaling
  + confession
* Action ideas
  + A silent retreat
  + Invitation to fast as a church, break fast together
  + Journaling workshop

**Unit: Hospitality**

* Goals
  + To create more space in our lives/homes for engagement with God and others
  + To diversify the company of those we are in relationship with
* Topics for exploration
  + Why hospitality is a key biblical virtue , how it relates to God’s character and the possibilities it creates for us
  + How to offer genuine welcome to others
  + Creating space in our lives for hospitality
  + The gift of ‘other’ who is different from us
* Action ideas
  + Have a house-church Sunday where people meet in homes
  + Christmas caroling/party
  + Book study on hospitality

Year 2:

Growing upward

*Shaping everyday lives that are faithful to Christ and in step with the Spirit’s movement*

**Unit: Jesus-shaped Existence**

* Goals
  + To recognize the core values of Jesus and his vision for life
  + To identify a specific area where we personally are being called to grow in Christlikeness
* Topics for exploration
  + *(to be taken directly from a close reading of the life/teachings of Jesus)*
  + Grace and non-judgment
  + Trust/faith, not worrying
  + The real meaning of purity
  + Forgiveness
  + Relationship with money
  + Relationship to power, good and bad forms of it
  + Role of the community
* Action ideas
  + Read-through of the gospels
  + Special service where people are invited to offer in any form what it means to them to be a follower of Jesus (song, poem, dance, skit, picture, story, etc)
  + Show a movie based on the life of Jesus

**Unit: Walking with Spirit**

* Goals
  + To recognize the movement and nudging of the Spirit
  + To practice ethical “improvisation” in applying the principles of Scripture and Jesus’ character to the sorts of real-life situations
  + To become attuned to ways we can cooperate with God’s work in the world in the midst of our everyday lives
* Topics for exploration
  + Introducing the Holy Spirit and what the Spirit does
  + How to stay listen for and respond to the Spirit’s leading in everyday life, opportunities and possibilities
  + Becoming sensitive to conviction and quick to change course
  + Performing ethical improv, discerning what’s right in diverse situations not explicitly addressed by Scripture
  + Fruit of the Spirit, character of one the Spirit leads
* Action ideas
  + Study of the Holy Spirit or of prophesy
    - Ex. Heidi Bakers bio testifying to how has seen God move
  + Series—“What Would Jesus Do?”
    - Create real-life situations and invite people to imagine responses by applying principles and understanding of Spirit

**Unit: Discernment**

* Goals
  + To embrace on-going discernment as a fundamental Christian task
  + To understand a healthy process/model of discernment, individual or corporate
* Topics for exploration
  + Distinguishing the voice/presence of God from other voices
  + Recognizing that there are other voices speaking (‘discerning the spirits’)
  + Individual discernment of the will of God
  + Principles and procedures of corporate discernment
  + Good kind of judgment and wrong kind of judgment
    - Discerning the world
* Action ideas
  + Have a moderated congregational discussion of a controversial issue

**Unit: The Body**

* Goals
  + To recognize and celebrate the goodness of our physicality in light of the incarnation
  + To identify how our faith impacts our experience of embodiment
* Topics for exploration
  + Ethics of eating, food choices
  + Body image
  + Care for the body—diet, exercise, etc
  + Sexuality and physical intimacy
  + How to interact with experiences of aging, frailty, or disability
  + The redemption of our bodies/creation
* Action ideas
  + Have a cooking class or a potluck where everyone brings a healthy dish
  + Host an exercise class
  + Marcus Smucker study on aging and what the failing of our bodies/minds teach us spiritually
  + Study of Barbara Brown Taylor’s *An Altar in the World*

Year 3:

Stretching outward

*Bringing the life-giving power of God’s alternative kingdom to bear in a broken world*

**Unit: Church**

* Goals
  + To shift understanding of Christianity from a fundamentally individual to a fundamentally corporate phenomenon
  + To recognize what actually makes the church the church in a time of shifting forms
  + To facilitate deeper bonds of fellowship and service
* Topics for exploration
  + The changing shape of the church, distinguishing what can change from what is definitional
  + Why the church exists, it’s mission
    - Church as a continuation of Israel, it’s corporate mission
  + Why no one is fully Christian without the church, the difference between the Christian as an individual and who they are as part of the body
  + Gifts of community—fellowship, accountability, discernment, mutual care, etc
  + What to do when church (and leadership) lets us down
* Action ideas
  + Hold an alternative/emergent church service
    - Or have a Sunday of worshipping in houses
  + Emphasis on fellowship events, playing together
  + All-church service project or day of service in groups

**Unit: Kingdom Economics**

* Goals
  + To recognize God’s revolutionary vision for economics and the way it differs from our customary way of functioning
  + To increase awareness of how people live in other parts of the globe
  + To take a concrete step somewhere in our material lives to align ourselves more closely with God’s vision
* Topics for exploration
  + Jubilee as a way of life
  + Environmental stewardship
  + The practice of simple living—it’s merits and how to start simplifying
  + What it means to be a part of the global family of God, living as a member of this broader family
  + Financial planning for the kingdom, investing in light of the kingdom/future we’re expecting
  + The role of Christian businesspeople and their business practices
* Action ideas
  + Each Sunday give a short presentation and focus prayer on a different country
  + Adult mission trip, possibly to Mexico
  + Do a reverse offering (take from the plate)
  + Tell stories of Christian businesspeople making a difference (use Everence resources?)
  + Financial planning workshop

**Unit: Reconciling all things**

* Goals
  + To recognize reconciliation as core to our work as Christians
  + To gain skills for reconciliation and peacemaking in places of conflict
  + To become a presence of healing and hope in our community
* Topics for exploration
  + Bringing meaning into our work-life
  + Undoing racism
  + Non-violence and pacifism
  + Conflict mediation
  + The true meaning of justice and how it relates to mercy
  + Becoming healers and creating a church culture of healing
  + Immigration and our identity as an immigrant people of faith
* Action ideas
  + Conflict mediation training/workshop
  + Do *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande again as a Sunday School class
  + Have Carolyn offer something about trauma healing or walking with those in crisis
    - Offer this as a community-wide event?
  + Church letter-writing or advocacy campaign
    - Teach how to do letter-writing to government
  + Vigil for the war or at a prison
  + Congregation members share stories of ways they’ve been reconcilers

Year 4:

Blooming

*Discovering how our gifts and callings fit within the broader story of God*

**Unit: Dreaming God’s Dreams**

* Goals
  + To develop an imagination for what we would like to see God do through our lives, for who we want to be
  + To set concrete goals for growth and risk that are in line with this vision
* Topics for exploration
  + The promises of God that we stand on
  + Praying and believing boldly
  + Stepping out on faith, risk-taking
  + What sorts of dreams God has, the things they concern
    - Holiness and character a primary concern
* Action ideas
  + Obituary-writing exercise
  + Create a congregational mural of our goals/dreams

**Unit: Continual Turnings**

* Goals
  + To recognize repentance as a lifelong process and turning again and again toward light
  + To identify the areas in our own lives where we currently need to turn
* Topics for exploration
  + How to evaluate ourselves, do self-assessment
  + Broader definition of sin, underlying attitudes and obstacles impeding further growth
    - Discussing sin from the standpoint of a later stage in Christian maturity
  + Cross-carrying and death as route to life
* Action ideas
  + Have a “cleansing” ceremony of washing things away (or use fire to burn symbol)
  + Practice of the daily examen

**Unit: Knowing Your Story**

* Goals
  + To identify and articulate our own testimonies of where/when we have witnessed God at work in our lives
* Topics for exploration
  + Meaning of a testimony
  + Experiences of God’s presence and absence, what we learn from both
  + Salvation as bigger than a one-time event, something God does over and over
* Action ideas
  + Workshop writing and giving testimony
    - How to sum it up in a few sentences, identify the core of what God has done
  + Sharing testimonies on Sunday morning
  + Pictures with cards saying in one word what God has been for them (ex. healer)

**Unit: Finding Your Place**

* Goals
  + To understand the unique gifts, inclinations, and life-experiences we each bring and where they fit in the life of the body
  + To identify our own core calling/vocation that underlies everything we do
* Topics for exploration
  + The intentionality of God’s design, fearfully and wonderfully made
  + Spiritual gifts
  + Personality
  + The importance of saying ‘no’
  + Calling and vocation as bigger than work
  + The reasons we need each other, the wholeness of the body
  + Relating graciously and cooperatively with those who are quite opposite from us
* Action ideas
  + Study of *Cure for the Common Life* by Lucado or S.H.A.P.E material
  + Personality profiles
  + Church ministries fair
    - Or also include community ministry opportunities
  + Form groups to sit down with individuals and help discern/identify what have to offer
  + Campaign to write notes of encouragement, affirmation

**Unit: Making Disciples**

* Goals
  + To understand and inhabit all of life as mission
  + To begin investing in someone else not as far along in the faith journey in the process of beginning or deepening Christian discipleship
* Topics for exploration
  + Summing up the core of the gospel story
  + “Reproducing” as a core component of discipleship
  + How to disciple other people
* Action ideas
  + House-parties where non-church-going friends are deliberately invited
  + Discipleship training workshop
  + Create “match-ups” of older and younger members and put together for a “tea” or other set time of conversation

**Unit: Worship**

* Goals
  + To close our 4 years celebrating God and how we’ve seen God at work
  + To recall worship and enjoyment of God as the fundamental purpose of the Christian life
* Topics for exploration
  + Gratitude and giving thanks
  + Finding strength in joy
  + Naming who God has been for us
  + All of life as worship
* Action ideas
  + Special celebration service—music, food, testimonies