



wake  
UP

22 QUESTIONS  
TO RENEW YOUR  
SPIRITUAL GROWTH



# Re:Group Guidebook



HARMONY

Devotionals written and compiled by Rev. Allison Yankey

# Re:Group

## Again

The idea of the people of Harmony meeting in small groups was put in to practice not too long ago, but the pandemic made it a challenge to meet. Now is the time for us to gather safely again and work on our faith in the spirit of community. Small groups are important and an integral part in United Methodist History. John Wesley believed that group gatherings outside of worship or preaching was integral to the life of a Christian. While he was an ordained priest in the Church of England, he often preached outside in urban and rural landscapes and in “preaching houses”. He drew large audiences to hear him preach the Gospel but felt it was important to develop one’s faith in smaller gatherings where participants could have the conversation.

Wesley believed that these groups embodied life of the early followers of the Christian movement in the Book of Acts and the Epistles. Their habit of gathering during the week centered around the following:

- Personal growth within the context of intimate fellowship
- Accountability for spiritual stewardship
- “Bearing one another’s burdens”
- “Speaking the truth in love.”

Everyone is on a faith journey. Some are traveling at lightning speed, others are taking their time, some may even be stuck. Some feel like they are seasoned travelers and some feel like they are taking their first steps. Gathering in a Re:Group enables us to learn from each other’s life experiences and wisdom, share questions and articulate our faith in a safe atmosphere.



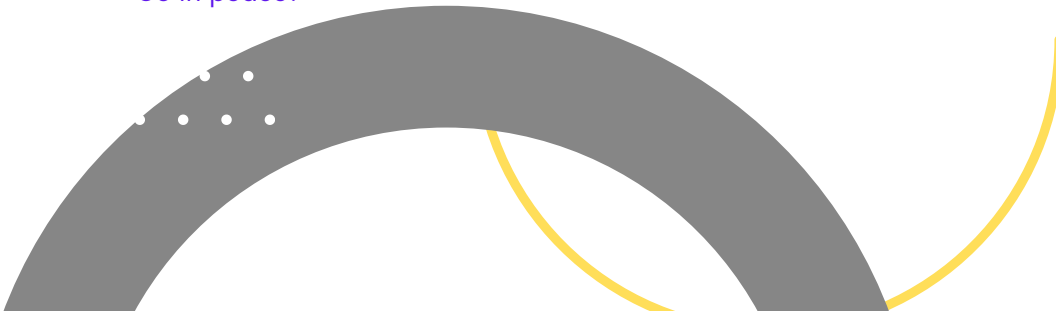
**Be a part of  
something greater  
than yourself**

# What does a Re:Group gathering look like?

- **15 minutes of connecting.** Part of it is a time to be social. For some who are retired or work at home, this kind of group may be the only other time of gathering outside of church. Make time to hear about each other's lives because then the group will know how to encourage and how to pray for others in the group. Need ideas for ways to do this? Check out the section on Starters (Page 5 & 6)

• **Share an opening prayer to center the group.** Here is a sample:  
Loving God,  
open our eyes to see what is beautiful, our minds to know what is true,  
and our hearts to love what is good;  
for Jesus' sake. Amen.

- **Go through one question in this booklet for each gathering.**
- **Read the scripture associated with the question.**
- **Read the Ponder This section.**
- **Share your thoughts on the question and how you may be wrestling with it.** Make sure everyone has an opportunity to share their perspective or ask questions.
- **Share any ways that you have seen God at work since you last met.** We are all starving to hear and see how God is active in a world that seems too distracted or preoccupied with other things.
- **Ask if there are any joys or concerns that the group can pray for then lift them up in prayer after the prayer for that session.**
- **Confirm the next meeting date.**
- **Go in peace!**



# Re:Group

## Guidelines

- **Committed discipleship:** This is how Re:Group small group is different from any other small group you may participate outside of church. Make sure that your group keeps on track with a focus developing a well-rounded disciple of Jesus Christ
- **A source of encouragement and accountability:** We all can grow, but we need supporters along the way to make sure we stick with it. Group members can keep you on the right track when you find yourself starting to slip. They can also pray for you and with you.
- **A safe place for all members:** Christ's compassion should lead the way for all sojourners in the group and we should hold others in loving care and understanding as God holds us. Only share advice when asked. Sometimes people just want to put to voice how they're feeling so they know they're heard.
- **Welcome the stranger:** The small group should be an inviting group, instead of a closed group (more of an open "C" than a closed "O") to allow others to experience the blessings of your group.

# Re:Group

## Guidelines Cont'd

- Prayer: Prayer is a uniting and powerful communication with God when done together. Take a moment during group time to lift up group joys, concerns, laments and encouragement.
- Leaders and shepherds: There should be group leaders who guide the group, but also establish a shepherd that follows up with members who did not attend to maintain a connection with the group. Feel free to switch up positions every three months.
- Present opportunities for service: Going out in to the community and putting hands and feet to your faith only confirms the spiritual growth you experience in your group. Encourage your group service opportunity at least once a year.
- No infinite lifespan: There is no rule saying a group has to last forever. After a year, assess the health of the group. If you personally feel like you or even the group is moving in a different direction, group members should understand that it is ok to step out, but ask that you continue to find another small group that can continue your faith development in different ways.





# Starters

- You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told to take 3 things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?
- What is one characteristic you received from your parents you want to keep and one you wish you could change?
- If you could interview anyone in history, who would you choose and why? What one or two questions would you ask?
- What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?
- If you knew you could not fail and money were no object, what would you like to do in the next five years?
- What would you like said about you at your funeral?



# Starters

- If your house was on fire and everyone was safe what 3 articles would you go back in and grab in 30 seconds?
- If you could go anywhere in the world right now, where would you go and why?
- If you could talk to anyone in the world (alive or dead), who would it be and why?
- Wish one thing and have it come true this year, what would it be and why?
- What do you do for fun?
- What would be your ideal vacation?
- What is the most memorable activity you did with your family as a child?
- What quality do you appreciate most in a friend?



# Question #1

**Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?**

## Scripture Reading

Psalms 26

## Ponder This

Am I being honest about who I am? Am I willing to see my faults? Am I willing to accept blame? Am I willing to take responsibility for my shortcomings? Do I pretend to be someone I am not? Am I willing to be authentically me? Do people see who I truly am? Am I willing to risk truly being seen?

## Prayer

Lord, it can be so easy to keep our relationships with others at surface level. Our fears and insecurities prevent us from entering into those hard conversations and we go around masquerading fake smiles and endless pretenses of, "I'm fine." But God, you know our thoughts before we even think them. You know all the hurt, the aches we can't identify and the longings for what's real. You go there, Lord, and you beckon us to come with you into the beautiful deep. God, help us to go there with you. Because when all the pretense melts away and we enter into that safe place, what we find is everything true, lovely, and worth pursuing. In Jesus' mighty name, amen. [credit: Abby McDonald]



# Question #2

Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?

## Scripture Reading

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

## Ponder This

Do I speak honestly? Am I realistic about the state of my life? How do I want people to see me? Am I adjusting what I do and/or say so people will see me how I want them to see me? Do I brag? Do I try to one-up people? Which is more important to me: to be better than others or to be with others? Why do I exaggerate? Why do I adjust the truth?

## Prayer

Lord, help us welcome you and all who come in your name. Give us a deep love for your living word and for all our brothers and sisters. Help us to avoid slander and deceit in all our dealings.

Guide us, O God, by the law given by your Spirit that our way may be blameless and pure. Help us always seek to please you rather than the favor of others. Make us gentle and compassionate, humble and forgiving, just and holy in all our relationships.

Help us be like Christ in whom we believe. Help us to meditate on his word and his example day and night. Lord, help us not only share the good news of your love with all we meet, but also to share our very selves. Thanks be to you, O Lord, for the word you put upon our hearts, Praise be to you, O God, for the spirit which brings it to life in us. Amen. [credit: Rev. Richard J. Fairchild]

# Question #3 <sup>09</sup>

## Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told to me in confidence?

### Scripture

Leviticus 19:16; Proverbs 11:13;  
Proverbs 26:20–22

### Ponder This

Am I trustworthy? If I share a secret, why do I do it? What does it take to keep a secret? What is the risk of not keeping something confidential? What harm do I do my neighbor when I don't keep something confidential? Do I look for loopholes to share information? Do people see me as someone who can be trusted? What do I need to do to keep something confidential? Are there times I need to say no to being a recipient of confidential information?

### Prayer

Father, we don't want to proclaim our own loyalty, but we give glory to You, when others testify of our loyalty, our trustworthiness, our dependability. Your Scripture teaches us to be people who are honest and dependable, who do to others as we would have them do to us. Living among such people makes day to day living so much more enjoyable, relationships more trustworthy, and dealings with those who do business a more fair and pleasant experience. You "detest lying lips but delight in people who are trustworthy". We want to bring delight to You today and always, and we can do so by being people who are trustworthy. Through Christ Jesus we pray. Amen. [credit: Stephen & Brooksyne Weber]



## Can I be trusted?

### Scripture

Luke 16:1-15

### Ponder This

What do I do with what I've been given? Do I multiply or divide? Do I build up or tear down? Do I hold space for others? When someone shares something with me, do I secretly talk about them when they walk away? Do people see me as a person to go to? When I say I will do something, do I follow through? Do I handle the things of others (objects, information, relationships) as if they were mine? Am I consistent in my thoughts and actions?

### Prayer

Father, I abandon myself into Your hands;  
Do with me whatever You will.  
Whatever You may do, I thank You.  
I am ready for all, I accept all.  
Let only Your will be done in me,  
And in all Your creatures.  
I wish no more than this, O Lord.  
Into Your hands I commend my spirit;  
I offer it to You, Lord,  
and so need to give myself,  
to surrender myself into Your hands,  
Without reserve and with boundless confidence,  
For You are my Father.  
Amen.

# Question #5

**Am I a slave to dress,  
friends, work, or habits?**

## Scripture Reading

Galatians 4:6-9

## Ponder This

Are there material things that get in the way of my relationship with God? Are there things that get in the way of my relationships with others? What do I value? Things? People? God? What motivates me? Am I willing to just be myself without needing to hide behind how I dress, the friends I have, the work I invest in, and the habits I live by? Are there things I need to let go of?

## Prayer

Gracious God,  
you have blessed us with the entirety of your creation and we have taken it all and tried to place it in a box that we can control rather than manage. When we go against your will we wonder why life does not work out for us. In our brokenness we seek happiness and joy in things and expectations. Then, outside of your hope, we are crushed by the world around us and our own inward thoughts.

Holy Father, shine your light into the dark days and nights of our lives. Forgive us for falling from your love and blessings, and for the sake of Jesus, restore in us the joy that only comes through your Spirit living in us and through us. Amen. [credit: Carl Eliason]

# Question #6

Am I self-conscious,  
self-pitying, or  
self-justifying?

## Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:3-4

## Ponder This

Am I more aware of myself than others? Do I focus on myself to the detriment of others? Do I spend a lot of time throwing myself pity parties? Do I do things I know aren't right but try to justify them to make myself feel better? Do I look to God to find my value, or do I look to the world? Do I compare myself to others?

## Prayer

This world I live in, this town I live in,  
this street I live in, this house I live in,  
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Those I live with, those I rub shoulders with,  
those I work with, those I don't get on with,  
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Those who laugh, those who cry,  
those who hurt, those who hide,  
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Prayers centred less on self and more on others

less on my circumstances more on the needs of others.

May my life be likewise centered less on self and more on

You and through You to the world

in which I live and move. [credit: John Birch]

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## Did the bible live in me today?



### Scripture

Isaiah 55:11; Hebrews 4:12-16 CEB

### Ponder This

Do others see Jesus in me? Am I seeking to love others as I have been loved by God? Is my relationship with God impacted when I read scripture? Is my relationship with others impacted when I read scripture? Is my relationship with myself impacted when I read scripture? Is scripture a reference point in my life? Have I taken what I've read in scripture and found ways to translate that into my daily living?

### Prayer

You call us to love those whom you would love, and give us the words to say. You call us to bring wholeness to lives that are broken, and give us the words to say. You call us to bring comfort to those who are grieving, and give us the words to say. You call us to bring good news to those who are seeking, and give us the words to say. Your word, living water in desert sands. Your word, blossoming in parched earth. Your word, bearing fruit wherever it is sown. Amen  
[credit: John Birch]



# Do I give the bible time to speak to me everyday?



## Scripture

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

## Ponder This

Do I read scripture regularly? Do I seek to understand the context of scripture or do I make scripture fit what I want to hear? Do I take time to let scripture impact my life? Am I willing to be changed by what I read in scripture? Do I take time to sit in silence and meditate on what I have read or heard? Do I look for meaning in scripture? Do I listen for what God is trying to say to me through scripture?

## Prayer

Your word is a lamp to my feet, Lord. Your word is a light to my path. Though the world around me tosses and tumbles, I hold fast to you. Though I have doubts and worries and I wonder, I hold fast to you. Though my heart hurts, my spirit aches, and I lose my way, I hold fast to you. Though I encounter wickedness and hate seemingly around every corner, I hold fast to you. Your stories and your songs, O Lord- they comfort me.

Your will and your way, O Lord- they nudge me along. Your presence and your promise, O Lord- They give me hope. Your world is my heritage and my heart. And I will turn toward you forever. I will hold fast to you. And I will sing praises to your name! [credit: Erin Counihan]

# Question #9

## Am I enjoying prayer?

### Scripture Reading

Psalm 62

### Ponder This

Do I pray regularly? Do I have a prayer routine? Do I know how to pray? Do I feel stuck in my prayer life? What resources do I need, or who do I need to talk to, to improve my prayer life? Do I feel I connect with God when I pray? What is my goal when I pray? To receive? To give? To connect? To build a relationship? Do I pray for others? What do I receive from prayer? Do I feel empowered, strengthened, challenged after praying? Am I willing to try different forms of prayer (body prayer, contemplative prayer, prayer beads, labyrinth prayer, etc)? Is prayer important to me?

### Prayer

Faithful God, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving, deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness. You have shown toward us, Your people. When we call out to You, You answer. When we are exhausted, You give us the strength to go on. When we find ourselves in trouble, you are there, standing beside us. And so we come before You gratitude and praise, offering You the worship of our hearts and lives. Open our eyes to see and know You here among us; open our ears to recognize Your voice. And then send us out from here, to live and work in the world as Your faithful disciples. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

[credit: Christine Longhurst]



# Question #10

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**When did I last speak to  
someone else about my  
faith?**

## Scripture Reading

Romans 10:11-15; Matthew 28:18-20

## Ponder This

Does my faith make a difference in my life? Can others see the effects of my faith in my life? Are there exciting things going on in my faith life that I want to talk about? If not, why not? Are there challenging things going on in my faith life that I want to talk about? If not, why not? What does my faith mean to me? Are there other believers in my life that would benefit from having someone else to talk with about faith?

## Prayer

How beautiful are the feet of those  
who bring good news—  
the good news of God's victory,  
of peace and forgiveness available to all who believe!  
Go from here to share that good news with all you meet.  
And may the blessing of God,  
the love of Jesus Christ,  
and the presence of the Holy Spirit  
be among you and within you.  
Amen.

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# 17 Question #11

## Do I pray about the money I spend?



### Scripture

Matthew 6:24

### Ponder This

How do I spend my money? What do my purchases say about what I value? Do I buy things so people will see me in a certain light? Do I buy things to feel better (“retail therapy”)? Do I think and pray before I give to organizations? Does my relationship with God impact how I spend my money? Does my faith inform my relationship with money?

### Prayer

Lord God,  
Help me not to be driven by greed through seeking money, success and power above you. Teach me to seek your kingdom of justice and compassion and place the love of God and people above money. Amen.



## Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?

### Scripture

Mark 6:30-31

### Ponder This

Do I realize that sleep, or lack of sleep, affects my day? Do I value work over rest? Do I work tirelessly? Do I expect to accomplish too much in a single day? Am I allowing my body to rest? Do I sleep too long? Am I avoiding work? Am I avoiding relationships? Do I sleep instead of dealing with my problems? Am I lazy? Do I use my body to its fullest potential without overexerting?

### Prayer

[Evening Prayer]

Father God, we rest in you. Jesus the Son, we rest in you.

Holy Spirit, we rest in you.

[Silence]

Loving Father, for the things this day that have brought us joy, we give you thanks. Healing Lord, for the things this day that have brought us sorrow, bring peace.

Spirit of life, in the closing of this day, give us rest.

O God, you create all things, drawing them to yourself. You made time, space, and matter from nothing, and yet through you they are given life and meaning. May the words of these prayers, brought from nothing, rise to you as a sufficient offering of praise and thanksgiving. Amen

[credit: Josh Walker]

# Question #13

**Do I disobey God in anything?**

## Scripture Reading

Deuteronomy 11:1-15, 2 John 1:6

## Ponder This

Do I know what it means to obey God? Do I know what God is asking of me? Do I avoid knowing what God is asking of me? Do I justify my actions? Does listening to God feel like a chore or a joy? Am I quiet enough to hear God? Do I trust God's will for my life? Am I disobeying God by not doing something? Am I disobeying God by intentionally doing something?

## Prayer

You are the God who makes extravagant promises. We relish your great promises of fidelity and presence and solidarity, and we exude in them. Only to find out, always too late, that your promise always comes in the midst of a hard, deep call to obedience. You are the God who calls people like us, and the long list of mothers and fathers before us, who trusted the promise enough to keep the call. So we give you thanks that you are a calling God, who calls always to dangerous new places. We pray enough of your grace and mercy among us that we may be among those who believe your promises enough to respond to your call. We pray in the one who embodied your promise and enacted your call, even Jesus. Amen. [credit: Walter Brueggemann]

# Question #14

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• **Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?**

## Scripture Reading

1 Peter 1:13-16

## Ponder This

Am I aware of what it feels like for my conscience to be uneasy? Do I have the willpower to stop myself from doing something I shouldn't do? Do I care about doing the right thing? Am I causing damage to my relationships with others? Am I causing damage to my relationship with God? Am I causing damage to my relationship with myself? What is God trying to teach me in those moments? Am I willing to admit I am wrong? Am I willing to ask for forgiveness? Am I willing to accept forgiveness?

## Prayer

For ignoring the vision breathed by the living Spirit churning deep within our souls; Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, have mercy upon us.

For refusing to look at the vision alive within those who look or act or sound different from us; Christ have mercy, Christ have mercy, Have mercy upon us.

For choosing familiarity, ease, and comfort rather than risking the opportunities afforded in the vision; Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Have mercy upon us.

[credit: Katherine Hawker]

# Question #15

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## Am I defeated in any part of my life?

### Scripture

John 16:33; Romans 7:21-25;  
2 Corinthians 12:9-10

### Ponder This

Do I have the courage to admit I am defeated? Am I willing to admit that my strength, stability, and sustainability come from God? Am I willing to admit that I need God's help? In what areas of my life do I often feel defeated? What are the warning signs in my life that help me see my need for help and support? What do I need to change, such as personal habits like healthier eating or exercise, that would help me overcome feeling defeated?

### Prayer

Creator God,  
May your peace go with us wherever we will be this day.  
May you guide us through the challenges,  
protect us when in need  
and inspire us with your love.  
May we acknowledge your presence  
in all the human goodness we will see.  
May you bring us home rejoicing  
to our place of rest this night.  
Creator God,  
we now go into this day in the name of the Father  
and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.



# Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?

## Question #16

### Scripture

Ephesians 4:29-32

### Ponder This

Am I critical of myself? Am I critical of others? Do I look for the worst in others? Do I complain? How do I speak about others? How do I speak about situations? Are there any areas (e.g. politics, sports, business competitors, maybe even church music) where I tend to give myself an exemption from listening to the words of Ephesians 4:29-32? What do I need in order to begin to steer myself away from being critical? What would it take to begin to be more positive about others, myself, the situations I find myself in?

### Prayer

O Eternal One, whose message to us has always been that our relationship to you is inextricably related to how we treat our sisters and brothers, bend low your spirit this day and touch us with your power. Wean us from our tendency to nurture perceived slights and to put hot coals to our anger. Wean us from all tendencies to take advantage of others for personal gain. Wean us from negativity and from becoming bitter whether or not we think we are justified in our feelings. Wean us from the all too human and common tendency to gossip about others and to slander them in any way. Wean us from carrying malice in our hearts and from giving in to anything that would poison relationships with others. Make us over again, O gracious God. Give us a consistent kindness and compassion for others. Keep us always tender hearted even when the world delivers difficult blows and setbacks to us. Teach us once again about your redeeming grace in order that we may learn, however slowly and however tentatively, how to forgive others. Teach us how to live abundantly into the future as victorious and expectant people, greeting each new day with eagerness and excitement. And indelibly remind us that we are among your forgiven and beloved community. Amen [credit: Richard Einerson]

# Question #17

How do I spend my spare time?

## Scripture Reading

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

## Ponder This

What refreshes and renews me? What sucks the life out of me? How can I spend more of my spare time doing that which refreshes and renews rather than that which sucks life? Do I use my spare time to re-energize me for the work of God? Do I have spare time? If not, why not? What do I need to give up in order to create life-giving spare time? Can my spare time function like a sabbath?

## Prayer

Spirit...

Wind...

Breath...

fill our lungs and lives with your energizing presence;  
refresh our stale minds;

and stir our slowly-beating hearts; so that we may humbly  
and courageously be your breathing, gusting, good  
presence in the world. Amen [credit: Scott Cervas]



# Question #18

Am I proud?

## Scripture Reading

1 Peter 5:5-6

## Ponder This

Am I focused on my accomplishments? Do I find my value in my doing rather than my being? Am I so focused on my excellence that I have neglected the existence of others? Do I believe I am better than others? Do I believe I am more important than others? Do I believe my needs are more important than others? Do I believe God loves me more than God loves my neighbor? Are there things I am insecure about that I try to cover with pride? Can I be happy for others when they are successful? How can I take a step toward humility today?

## Prayer

Merciful Savior, We have traveled this long, dusty Lenten journey. Our feet are tired, dirty, aching, and calloused.

You have shown us Your love by becoming a humble servant. Humble us when we try to travel without You.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another.

Humble us when we believe some work is below us. As

Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another. Humble us when we are too proud to accept help, or care, or love.

As Christ has washed us, so let us wash one another.

Humble us when we do not fully receive the gift of Your amazing and bountiful grace. As Christ has washed us, so

let us wash one another. Amen. [credit: Karen Turner]

# Question #19

**Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?**

## Scripture

Luke 18:9-14

## Ponder This

Do I judge others? Do I look down on others? Am I insecure? Do I feel the need to validate myself? Do I need to be affirmed? Am I confident in who God has created me to be? Do I see the faults of others more easily than I see my own? Do I focus on the differences, rather than the similarities, of those around me? Do I work to see Jesus in everyone? Am I willing to treat others as I desire to be treated? Am I afraid of others? Do I avoid those who do not appear to be like me?

## Prayer

Lord God of justice, you know no favorites and show no partiality; but you have given us assurance that the prayers of the lowly pierce the clouds, their petitions reach the heavens. Look upon us who come before you as did the penitent tax collector, and grant that we may open ourselves with confidence in your mercy, and be justified by your grace. We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. [credit: David Beswick]



**Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward, or . . . disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?**

## Scripture

Colossians 3:12-14

## Ponder This

Are there people in my life I need to forgive? What is holding me back from forgiving someone else? How is holding a grudge affecting my life? How is holding a grudge affecting my relationship with God? How is holding a grudge affecting my relationships with others? Do I dislike someone for a petty reason? Do I have any estranged relationships? What am I willing to do to restore the damaged relationships in my life? How can I reconcile with those I am currently at odds with?

## Prayer

Father of all who live in the Spirit,  
you have brought unity through your Son Jesus Christ:  
help all who profess his name to show in their lives,  
in their worship, and their evangelism  
that oneness which springs from the truth  
as it is found in Jesus,  
and fill your church with the desire  
both to seek and find that unity  
throughout the world; in his name. Amen.  
[credit: Michael Saward]

# Question #21

**Do I grumble or  
complain constantly?**

## Scripture Reading

Psalm 94:19

## Ponder This

Do I look for the negative? Do I voice my opinion regularly? Do my words uplift others or tear them down? Do I allow myself to experience joy? When I have the opportunity to choose joy, do I? Do I prefer to sit and stew? Do I feel compelled to complain to others? Do I have a good outlet for expressing my dislike in a way that isn't damaging to my relationships with others? Do I have good resources for learning to look past the negative and seek to find the positive? Do I grumble and complain because I don't understand the other person's perspective? Am I willing to accept that maybe my way, or my preference, isn't the only, or even the best, way? Can I find something to be thankful about in everything?

## Prayer

Gracious God,  
you have blessed us with the entirety of your creation and we have taken it all and tried to place it in a box that we can control rather than manage. When we go against your will we wonder why life does not work out for us. In our brokenness we seek happiness and joy in things and expectations. Then, outside of your hope, we are crushed by the world around us and our own inward thoughts. Holy Father, shine your light into the dark days and nights of our lives. Forgive us for falling from your love and blessings, and for the sake of Jesus, restore in us the joy that only comes through your Spirit living in us and through us. Amen. [credit: Carl Eliason]

# Question #22

Is Christ real to me?

## Scripture Reading

Colossians 1:24-29

## Ponder This

What difference does my relationship with Christ make in my life? Do I accept the presence of God in my life? Do I want the presence of God in my life? Christ is the physical representation of union of the human and the divine: am I working toward union with God? Do I believe God can live in and through me? Am I chasing after God or ignoring God? Am I willing to take the next step in being a disciple of Christ?

## Prayer

Gracious God, we place ourselves in your presence. Our minds and our spirits are cluttered. Help us make space for you. Help us to be fully present here, now. We release to you all that we have done today— whether for good or for ill. We release all that we feel like we should have done today, but did not do. We release all of the people who weigh on our hearts and minds this evening. We release our fears. We release our anxiety. We release our impatience. We release our pride. All of the thoughts, all of the feelings that pull us away from you, O God, we release. [silence]

And now with open hearts we receive what you offer us now: We receive the gift of this space and this time. We receive the gift of being with each person here. We receive the Holy Spirit's presence within us for guidance and healing. We receive the sacred words that will be spoken and thought. We receive the holy touch of hand and heart. We receive the silence. We receive the music. Fill us now with the peace of your deep, abiding presence. We offer all of ourselves to you, our One God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. Amen [credit: Joanna Harader]







HARMONY  
UNITED METHODIST

## **Vision:**

Different voices uniting together to live like Christ, love others, and grow in Spirit

## **Mission:**

Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## **For 2024:**

Be a part of something greater than yourself