



Guides in Covenant Discipleship with Youth

This online resource is designed as a supplement to *Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Youth*. This piece outlines the ideal qualities and role of the Guide for youth involved in Covenant Discipleship, and is meant for a church volunteer or staff person interested in starting and organizing covenant discipleship groups with youth.

Why Guides?

- Covenant discipleship with youth encourages youth to be accountable to each other by discussing their faith lives on a regular basis.
- Guides send reminders of meeting times
- Guides keep in-person discussions on point
- Guides relay back any information of note to the youth minister (or other staff person)
- Youth Ministers (or other staff) relate with the guides in order to effectively administrate Covenant Discipleship Groups
- The growth of early Methodism was tied to John Wesley's willingness to "make every member a minister" and utilize lay people in church leadership

The Role of the Guide

- Simply put, Guides are disciples who disciple others.
- Guides are a spiritually mature youth or adult who volunteers to intentionally coach and guide a covenant discipleship group of youth to live into the covenant they create for themselves.
- A youth covenant discipleship group should be between 4-8 members, so the guide participates alongside those 4-8 youth in their regular meetings.
- The guide reminds the group of their regular meeting times, helps each in-person meeting start and end on time, and encourages continuous growth and effort from others.
- Guides remind Covenant Disciples of their group covenant, formed by the General Rule of Discipleship. Encourages group members to live out their covenant daily.
- Guides interact with the youth minister, or other church staff, to keep their Covenant Discipleship Group running smoothly.

Consider Experience & Giftedness

While any spiritually mature youth or adult can serve as a guide, consider first those gifted in ways that will encourage spiritual growth in others.

Spiritual Gifts: servanthood, teaching, exhortation (encouragement), leadership, administration, helping, and shepherding.

Experience, skills: A guide will act as a participant in a covenant discipleship group with youth, willing to:

- Be held accountable for personal discipleship
- Show leadership potential in ministry
- Gain an understanding of the General Rule of Discipleship
- Listen and communicate with people of all ages, especially youth
- Work with other ministry leaders toward goals of the congregation
- Delegate responsibility, when appropriate, to their group
- Serve as the primary point of contact for a youth minister, or other appropriate church staff, regarding the spiritual development of their group.

What does a Guide do?

- Meet regularly (weekly if possible) in their covenant discipleship group
- Develops a plan for regular connection and support in their covenant discipleship group (get creative using text, social networks, phone calls, letters, etc)
- Contacts group members on a regular basis in order to help them grow in discipleship through the living out of their group covenant.
- Actively encourages group members to live into their shared covenant every day
- Practice acts of justice, compassion, worship, and devotion as a witness to Christ in the world
- Meet every 1-2 months with church leaders, youth staff or volunteers, lay leader, or other guides to develop the congregations mission.

Where can I get help?

- Read *Job Descriptions and Leadership Training in the United Methodist Church, 2013-2016*, Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation 2013-16: Small Group Ministries and the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2012 to understand the depth and breadth of the role of a Guide from Everyday Disciples
- Become familiar with the Works of Piety and Mercy and participate in them (acts of worship, devotion, justice, and mercy)
- Meet with youth minister(s), church staff, or a youth leadership team to evaluate the discipleship systems and process affecting youth. Create a discipleship plan that includes covenant discipleship with youth, revisit that plan on an annual basis
- Work with other leaders of the congregation to align covenant discipleship with the vision and ministry of the congregation
- Learn about discipleship formation for children, youth, and adults and provide appropriate materials and training guides.

Agencies & People Helps

- Your pastor, class leaders in your congregation and other congregations in your conference that have a covenant discipleship ministry
- [InfoServ](#) answers questions and provides current information about United Methodist resources, programs, and staff services.
- [Discipleship Ministries: Covenant Discipleship](#)

Web & Print Helps

- *[Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Youth](#)* by Chris Wilterdink
- *[Growing Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Children](#)* by Melanie C. Gordon, Susan Groseclose, and Gayle Quay
- *[Disciples Making Disciples: A Guide for Covenant Discipleship Groups & Class Leaders](#)* by Steven W. Manskar
- *[Accountable Discipleship: Living in God's Household](#)* by Steven W. Manskar
- *[The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church](#)*
- *[Job Descriptions and Leadership Training for the United Methodist Church 2013–2016](#)* by Betsey Heavner
- *[Class Leaders: Recovering a Tradition](#)* by David Lowes Watson
- [Covenant Discipleship](#) website has a monthly e-letter, information about organizing Covenant Discipleship and training.
- *[Covenant Discipleship](#)* by David Lowes Watson
- *[Forming Christian Disciples](#)* by David Lowes Watson
- *[Guidelines for Leading your Congregation 2013–2016: Small Group Ministries](#)*
- *[Interpreter magazine](#)* for church leaders – Available in Spanish
- *[Opening Ourselves to Grace](#)* (DVD) four sessions with leaders guide, introduces Wesleyan concept of grace.
- *[Praying in the Wesleyan Spirit: 52 Prayers for Today](#)* by Paul Chilcote
- *[The United Methodist Book of Worship](#)* (see especially “[an Order for Commissioning Class Leaders](#)”)
- *[The Class Meeting](#)* by Kevin Watson
- *[Small Group Bands](#)* by Kevin Watson
- *[How to Pray: The Best of John Wesley](#)*
- *[A Life-Shaping Prayer](#)* by Paul Chilcote