**IN**

**APEST**

What it is:

Discovering your spiritual gifts is an important step in more fully understanding how you can contribute to the church and community.

A – Apostolic

P – Prophet

E – Evangelist

S – Shepherd

T – Teacher

How to do it:

[Take the test](http://fivefoldsurvey.com/) to learn more about how God has wired you. Along with the test, talk to a few people whose opinion you trust and ask them what gifts they see God using in you right now. Learn more [here](http://theforgottenways.org/apest/).

**How to Confess Sin and Offer Grace**

What it is:

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9*

When we have sin in our lives, we often want to avoid God, fearing He will be angry. But God is not human. While humans often want revenge, God’s desire is to restore our relationship with Him and for us be free of the burden. He already knows our action and is longing for us to agree with Him about sin and help us resist it.

*Jesus kept saying, “Father, forgive them, because they don’t know what they’re doing.” Luke 23:34*

How do I forgive others when they hurt me? It helps to understand that often people who hurt, are acting out of the pain they have experienced; pain that breaks God’s heart. God doesn’t want any one created in His image to live a life of pain and hurt, that was never His plan for anyone.

How to do it:

Offering grace to yourself: Ask God for the desire to change. Consider sharing with a trusted friend what sin you are confessing and ask them to pray for you.

Offering grace to others: Ask God to help you see the person through His eyes and for the desire to forgive. Ask Him to give you love, perception, and compassion that will help you respond in a way that imitates Jesus.

**Study through Prayers and Creeds**

What it is:

Using historical church literature, such as prayers and creeds, in order to connect to the broader Christian Church and God. It is something done with a group of people as a form of corporate worship. Often prayers and creeds are recited as a group. There can also be call and response readings. Lectionaries can be utilized for church services as well. A lectionary is a book of scripture readings by week for a service throughout the year.

Incorporating prayers and creeds into worship encourages Christians to join together in voice and unity around central parts of faith. Participants are able to connect to the present Body of Christ, and the rich history of the Christian tradition.

How to do it:

Examples and Resources

[The Lord’s Prayer](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+6%3A9-13&version=NIV)

Read Psalms together

[Nicene Creed](http://www.theopedia.com/nicene-creed)

[Apostles Creed](http://www.theopedia.com/apostles-creed)

[Book of Common Prayer](http://www.bcponline.org/)

[Revised Common Lectionary](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/)

[Some prayers to pray and study together](http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/5-prayers-changed-world) (Many more can be found with a little searching online)

**Communion**

What it is:

Communion is an act of worship that helps us remember the work of Christ and look forward to his return to make all things new.

How to do it:

Prepare both the cup and the bread for a time of communion. You can get thoughts on different ways of taking communion [here](http://www.rustyparts.com/wp/2006/01/29/how-to-take-communion/). You don’t need to have any special ability or knowledge to lead a time of communion. You can simply read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 and then pass around the elements. You can add prayers, devotional thoughts or music as you feel comfortable.

**Sharing Stories**

What it is:

Getting to know one another by taking the time to let community members share their life story with one another.

How to do it:

There are lots of ways to give everyone the opportunity to tell their story. You can give each person a whole night and as long as they want to share, or give people a set time limit. The goal is to get to know each other and how you have all ended up where you are in life right now. Always make sure to give space for questions and close by spending time praying over whoever has shared.

**Anointing**

What it is:

Anointing is a Biblical symbol of God being with people. The Bible says we are anointed by God (1 Cor 1:21-22) and that we can anoint people who are sick to be healed (Jam 5:14). Chief Priests were anointed with oil when they moved into that role (Ex 29:7). Today, anointing someone with oil is a powerful symbol of God’s intention to work in and through us.

How to do it:

As someone shares a place they are experiencing a hard circumstance or challenge, they may want or be open to receiving an anointing. With some oil (any kind will work!), make the symbol of the cross on the person’s forehead while praying for them. The prayer doesn’t need to be complex, but pray that they would have strength and the Spirit’s guidance/healing/wisdom in whatever they are facing.