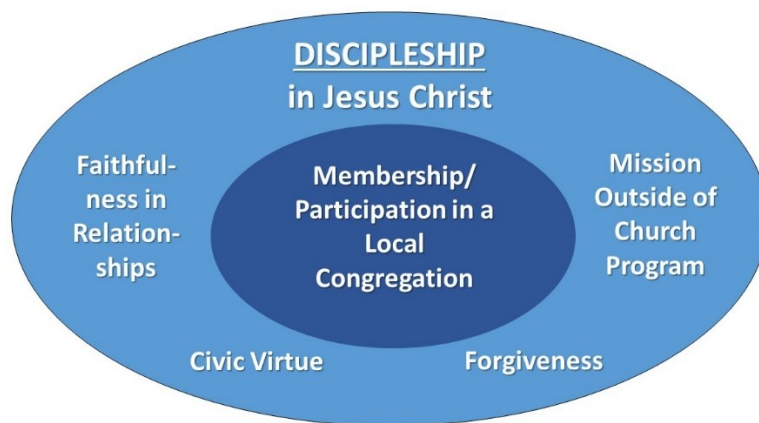


## A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words

Over the past months I have tried to give you a better view of my understanding about **Christian discipleship**—**what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ**. I've shared with you the inner virtues that we are called to exhibit (the Moral Law), the prophetic foundation of Christian morality from the Old Testament (Micah, to be precise), and some life circumstances and situations in which we can meet our Lord and Savior. All of what I have shared via newsletter articles and sermons all have one purpose: to give you a glimpse of my vision—what I see as the foundation upon which we will build and grow as a congregation.

I realized this morning (Monday, Nov. 16) that I have laid out my pastoral philosophy and theology with a lot of words. Words are important, and written words in particular are how I best express myself given that I am an *introvert*—getting my energy for life from my inner world of thoughts and ideas. (In contrast, *extraverts* get their energy from the outer or social world and prefer to express themselves verbally.)

But sometimes, words are not enough, especially if you are a visual learner. So I am following the old adage you see in the title—"a picture is worth a thousand words"—with an idea that flashed into my head during my morning devotion. The picture, or graphic, you see with this article summarizes much of what I have written and shows the relationship between **discipleship in Jesus Christ** and **membership/participation in a local congregation**.



Being a disciple of Jesus Christ entails or encompasses being a member or active participant of a particular congregation like ours. This relationship is shown in the smaller (darker blue) circle being inside the bigger (lighter blue) circle.

The picture also suggests that Christian discipleship and membership/participation in a local church are not the same thing but yet are very much related to each other.

We are disciples of Jesus Christ 24/7/365—every moment of every day. We don't stop being a disciple of Jesus Christ when we leave the church building on Sunday morning. Through our baptism and the movement of God's grace through the Holy Spirit (what John Wesley called *prevenient grace*), we are always in a relationship with God through Christ our Lord. Even when we make mistakes or feel separated from God, God's love is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (Romans 5:5) when we open our hearts to God. That spiritual realization—that we are indeed saved by the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—then pushes us toward worship of our loving God within a community of faith and trust.

Our active participation in a local community of faith (the smaller circle), then, feeds and informs our discipleship (the larger circle) in all sorts of ways: worship; Sunday school; Bible or book studies; our devotional & prayer life; fellowship events (after the pandemic); and programmatic ways. Our love and devotion to God through our Lord and Savior, however, extends beyond our participation in the programming of the local congregation. I've suggested some of those areas of life in the diagram; more can be included. In other words, there is no barrier or wall between the two circles. There is a free flow of energy, devotion, care, and love as we live out our lives as Christ's disciples within our families, our vocations, and our civic lives. As the flow of grace goes back and forth (what Wesley called *justifying* and *sanctifying grace*), our concept of "church" (the inner circle) increases beyond a building, property, and programming, and others are drawn in our midst. As an old campfire song puts it, "*They will know us by our love.*"

Yours in Christ our Lord,

*Pastor Tom*



As we improve our ability to live stream our worship services with better equipment within the next month, we will need one other person in the back (in addition to the team that monitors our worship slides) to operate the high definition camera that will be mounted on the wall and the additional laptop computer that will be hooked to it for our 10:00 Sunday morning service. It sounds daunting, I know, but there will be a tutorial and a written guide on this vital part of our virtual ministry as we continue to live stream the service to those who cannot attend and those who may be "checking us out." **If you or someone you know can help us, please let Pastor Tom know (831-333-6893 or [pastorllcumc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorllcumc@gmail.com)).** Our hope is that we can begin to use the new camera and laptop on Sunday, November 29, the first Sunday of Advent in our newly decorated sanctuary.



Pastor Tom would like to invite everyone to come join him

***Saturday the 28th at 11:00 am*** to decorate the church for Christmas. As we all know this is his first Christmas at LLCUMC, so we need to all pitch in and show him how beautiful our church looks with all our traditional décor. We will be keeping up our Covid protocol with masks and social distancing as best as possible while decorating. We understand that some of you are not comfortable getting out and we totally understand and pray that you can still feel the Christmas spirit from afar.

Pastor Tom will be supplying the hot apple cider to keep us warm and ignite this holiday season within us all.

Please feel free to contact the church office with further questions or concerns. [816-578-4544/secretaryllcumc@gmail.com](mailto:816-578-4544/secretaryllcumc@gmail.com)



***On Going:*** Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koleiny, Shane Miley, Nancy Rowe

***Depression and Mental Health:*** Robby Sherrod

***Strength and Healing:*** Gene Crist, Graves family, Mike McMillin, Kirk Morehead and family, DJ Petty, Dennis Rogers, Andrew White, Luke, Emma, Leih

***Missions:*** Kenyan G-Marc Project, Chics for Chicks, Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

***Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests***

# November 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	2	3	<b>4 Missions</b> <b>Meeting 7:00</b>	5	6	7
<b>8 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>15 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	16	17	18	<b>19 PPRC</b> <b>Meeting 7:00</b>	20	21
<b>22 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	23	<b>24 Church</b> <b>Council Meeting</b> <b>7:00</b>	25	<b>26 Happy</b> <b>Thanksgiving</b>	27	<b>28 Christmas</b> <b>Decorating</b> <b>11:00 am</b>
<b>29 Services</b> <b>8:00 &amp; 10:00</b>	30					