



COMMUNITY GUIDED JOURNAL



A guided journal to enhance your Community life in The Bible Church, Singapore

How to use this guided journal

- 1. In addition to the "Daily Devotions for Lent 2024" by The Bible Society of Singapore, read the weekly devotional thought in this guided journal prayerfully.
- 2. Journal your Personal Reflection.
- 3. Commit every day to have at least one *Community moment* with a fellow worshipper in the Church. They can be with your CARE Group (CG), ministry groups or someone who attends the same Service as you. Use this opportunity to get to know one new friend every week!
- 4. Journal your experience. For example, when you reached out, or accepted someone's invitation, to connect over a drink, or when you carried out an act of kindness for a fellow believer who is going through a difficult personal time, etc. Write how it went, how did you feel about the process, were you nervous at first, and how did you feel afterwards? Record your journey of faith.
- 5. Arrange to pray together once a week using the Focused Prayer Pointers. Form a small prayer group or have someone to be your prayer buddy for a season. You may approach a fellow CG member, or anyone from the Church. If you need help, please do not hesitate to contact A/P Lai Keet Keong at 9618-7220, or email keetkeong@biblechurch.sg and we will assist you to form one.



PREFACE

As we focus on deepening our community life as a church this year, nothing beats practicing it through an actual small group of brothers and sisters in Christ. Over the next six weeks of Lent, I want to encourage you to meditate and reflect on the work of Christ for us, together with a small group of spiritual friends. These could be friends in your CARE Group, Mentoring Group or service teams. It could also be a small group of church friends who are working or living around the same vicinity.

The invitation is to use this guide to share and journal your own encounter with the living Christ during this season and share this with one another in the small group so that you may grow together. Some of us may be doing well in some areas of our lives but could do with some encouragement in other areas. Others are isolated and in need of friends on this journey together. Whatever your circumstances, we invite you to dive deeper into the grace and mercy of our Lord with the support and encouragement of one another.

I think of the four friends of the paralysed man who brought him to Jesus in Mark 2.1-12 They were so determined to bring him to Jesus that they broke the roof to gain access to him. They did whatever they could so that their friend would be touched and healed by Jesus. Would we do the same for one another, and bring each other to Jesus in our moment of need?

May the Lord use this season and this guide to help us grow deeper in Christ and in an authentic biblical community.



Senior Pastor Beh Soo Yeong

"THE GREATNESS OF A COMMUNITY IS MOST ACCURATELY MEASURED BY THE COMPASSIONATE ACTIONS OF ITS MEMBERS."

CORETTA SCOTT KING

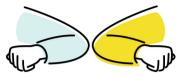


Those who love their dream of a
Christian community more than the
Christian community itself become
destroyers of that Christian community
even though their personal intentions
may be ever so honest, earnest, and
sacrificial.

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer —

AZ QUOTES

Relational Community



(John 15:12-14, Acts 20:35, 1 Corinthians 13:7, Romans 12:9-18)

Community is about relationships. And relationship is about giving and receiving. At home, we give by serving, supporting, obeying (our parents) and having patience (with our kids). We receive by being vulnerable, accepting each other's help and enjoying their company.

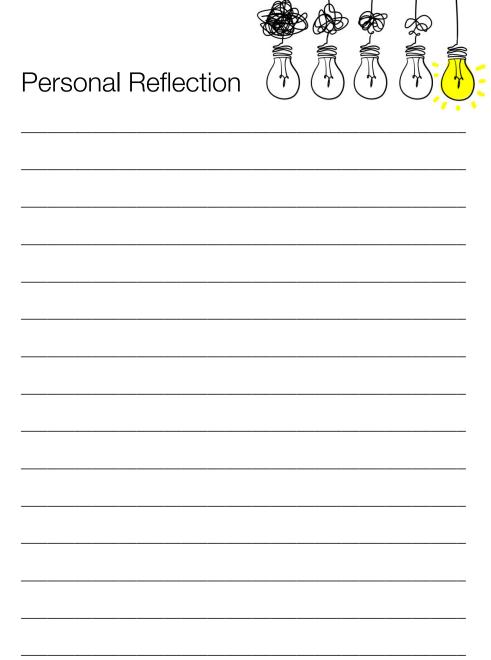
In the same way, the Church community is our spiritual home on earth. We are bound together by our faith in God, saved by the sacrifice of our Lord Christ, and strengthened by the hope of eternal life. Jesus commanded us to *love one another* (John 15:12-14).

The Apostle Paul wrote in Acts 20:35 that Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Not because giving satisfies our desires to be needed or shows we are well-off, but because giving is a virtuous expression of love. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, He

gave..." The act of giving requires love.

At the same time, to receive also requires love. That is because receiving involves the element of trust. 1 Corinthians 13:7 said, "Love always trusts." When we receive, we trust the giver's intent for our good. When we learn to receive, we learn to love those who desires to bless us. Skeptics are often poor receivers.

My dear friends, when it comes to relating within the Church Community, which do you often find yourselves struggle more: to give or to receive? Why not ask the Holy Spirit to show you reasons that made you hold back either way. Then invite the Spirit of God to help you overcome these obstacles and lead you to discover a newfound freedom that awaits you as you grow in the Community of faith.



MONDAY	
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY

	THURSDAY
FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SUNDAY	



(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

• Be still before God. Acknowledge His presence and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and speak to you in this time of prayer.

Pray for each other

Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.

natural disasters, injustice or calamities of any kind.

- Pray for each other to experience a spiritual breakthrough this year.
- Pray for courage and wisdom to connect with more worshippers in our community. Pray for eyes to see and a heart to feel for others in need.

Pray for the church

- Pray for worshippers who are genuinely struggling with community, that they will be able to find fellow believers or a small group to do life together.
- Pray for newcomers in our church to integrate well into our community of faith.

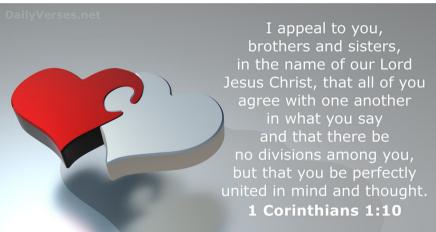
Pray for nations or peoples of the world who are suffering from wars,

Pray for the world

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Missional Community



(John 13:34-35, John 13:2-5, 1 Thessalonians 5:24, Ephesians 4:2-6)

A Missional community is a group of believers united as a Body of Christ in common faith and vision. We serve one another and are called to be a witness for Christ. In The Bible Church, our mission is "to glorify God by being disciples in a disciplemaking community of Jesus Christ."

John 13:34-35 says, "A new command I give you: Love one another... By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." In other words, we shall not be known merely by our enjoyable services or programs, nor by our unique history and achievements. We shall be known by our genuine and tender love, one for another.

Yet to love those who agrees with us is easy. It is **loving the others** that is so much harder. It requires our obedience to God, willingness to surrender past disappointments and

hurts to Him, and invite the Spirit of God to mould our characters as we grow together in love and harmony.

Jesus knew how difficult this would be for His disciples. He demonstrated true love earlier that evening by washing their feet (John 13:2-5). He then explained that this is how they ought to follow Him. We are to be humble and be willing to serve one another. Martin Luther wrote, "A religion that gives nothing, costs nothing, and suffers nothing, is worth nothing."

What is the first step to making disciples? It begins in the community. Take some time and reflect on areas where you may need to surrender to the Lord. Do not be fearful. Trust that *God who called you, is faithful* (1 Thessalonians 5:24). He will strengthen you and do great things through you when you put your faith in Him.

Personal Reflection

MONDAY	
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY

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FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SUNDAY	

Focused Prayer Pointers:

(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

 Be still before God. Acknowledge His presence and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and speak to you in this time of prayer.

Pray for each other

- Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for more compassion towards others in the church, with eyes to see fellow worshippers the way God sees them.

Pray for the church

- Pray that prejudices and biases will be eliminated in our church, that we
 may welcome each person regardless of race, economic background,
 social standing etc. with the love of Christ.
- Pray for renewal of our mission in the community, that God will mould us to be an authentic biblical community that disciples effectively.

Think or look through recent news headlines. As events, people, places,

Pray for the world

would bring freedom to those in bondage.

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."

MARGARET J. WHEATLEY

Transforming Community

(Matthew 5:13-16, 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12, Philippians 2:3-16)

A biblical community always transform the people in the community. God has called His disciples to be Salt and Light of the World (Matthew 5:13-16). The nature and presence always result in transformation. As believers such transformation takes place in our thoughts and actions. We grow in love and obedience to Bible's teaching and follow them as best as we can.

Such community is not just about having small talks, attending weekly sermon discussions, or hanging out and play board games or badminton (even though I thoroughly enjoyed those sessions!). While these activities are helpful for community building, if we want a true biblical community, we need to intentionally build and be devoted to it. It also requires us to be willing to be accountable to someone in the community.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12, the Apostle Paul outlined important



traits of a transforming community. They include:

- 1. The Glory of God must be the main focus (v6, 10).
- Believers willing to endure oppositions and challenges (v1-2).
- 3. Believers are Gospel-centered and Mission-driven (v3-4).
- 4. Believers to give, not get (v5).
- 5. Believers have love for others (v8-9). And finally,
- 6. Believers share lives with one another (v8).

My dear friends, which of the above traits resonates in your heart and which ones do you struggle with the most? God's Word is true and always desires the best for us. Take some time to ask God to show you how you contribute to make our Church a **transforming community**. Then share your reflections with your prayer buddy as the Holy Spirit leads you. Pray for one another, and intercede for the Church.

Personal Reflection	

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SUNDAY	

Focused Prayer Pointers:

(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

• Be still before God. Acknowledge His presence and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and speak to you in this time of prayer.

Pray for each other

- Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.
- Pray that, by God's divine grace, our faith will grow even in the face of strong opposition. Pray that God will guard our minds and hearts from error and impure motives (1 Thess. 2:2-5).

Pray for the church

- Pray that believers and small groups in our church may encourage, comfort and urge one another to live lives worthy of God, who calls us into His kingdom and glory (2:12).
- Pray for believers to have courageous faith to receive and obey God's divine Word (2:13-14), and live it out as Christ's ambassadors in our homes, work and community.

Pray for persecuted Christians who are undergoing hardships around the

Pray for the world

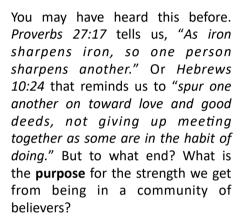
world, that God will sustain their faith and enable them to continue being witnesses for Christ.			





Victorious Community

(Proverbs 27:17, Hebrews 10:24-25, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Acts 2:44-47)



Ecclesiastes 4:12 (AMP) tells us, "A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triplebraided cord is not easily broken." The united community of believers brings strength into every battle the battle for souls, the battle for health, the battle for family, the battle to walk in God's destiny for our lives both individually and as a Church. When we stand together, that is when we are strongest. God has placed each of us in a larger community that we might



experience victorious Christian living.

How to be strong for others when we may be facing challenges our lives? There are days we might not feel we are up to it. During those times, we must stay plug in to our Christian community more than ever so that someone else's strength could give us support. It is interesting that our challenges often could make us more sensitive and empathetic to the needs of others around us. It is all about the small gestures, the little things we do that often makes the difference. A smile. identification by being vulnerable, a simple text message or just assurance of praying alongside. Simple gestures will simply do.

My dear friends, think about how you can step out of your own comfort zone, and be a strength to someone in the community. And trust in God who will grant us the victory.

Personal Reflection	

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Focused Prayer Pointers:

(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

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Pray for each other

- Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for one another to live a life worthy of the calling we have received (Eph. 4:1).

Pray for the church

- Pray that our church will make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (4:3).
- Pray for those who have been given equipping gifts to equip the church for works of service so that the church may be built up and reach unity in the faith and in knowledge of Christ (4:11-13).

Pray for churches in post-Christian countries to keep bearing the light of

Pray for the world

as to be more accepted by the wider society		

Romans 12:4–5 ⁴For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: ⁵So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.









Inclusive Community

(1 Corinthians 12:22-30, 1 Peter 4:8-11, Romans 12:3-16)

Every person matters. Everyone in the community of the Church is a part of the body of Christ. This includes those who are new in faith, struggles with difficult issues in life, or might be a little rough at the edges. 1 Corinthians 12:22-25 says that the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. And God who put the body together gives greater honor to the parts that lacked it.

When we read this passage, it may be easy to misunderstand that God honours the frail, and so we need to be patient with those who are weak in their faith, or that the author is emphasizing the importance of the body over the value of any individual member. While these principles are not wrong, this was not what this passage is about.

The passage said that there are parts of the body that *seem to be weaker*, which inferred they were, in fact, not



weak. That is because **every believer is given a role** in the body of Christ. No matter how insignificant they seemed in the eyes of others, they are **indispensable** for the Body of Christ. In the passage (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:27-30), Paul instructed the believers on

- a. How they ought to look at their own gifts,
- b. How they ought to look at other's gifts, and
- How they should look at the whole body of Christ.

My dear friends, have you discovered your gifts in the community of faith? You do not need to be like the others when God has called you to serve differently. The key is to grow in Christlikeness in the way you exercise your gifts. We can all serve better. Let us embrace one another. Be inclusive and celebrate diversities as we unite our hearts to serve God in the Body of Christ.

Personal Reflection	

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SUNDAY	

Focused Prayer Pointers:

(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

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Pray for each other

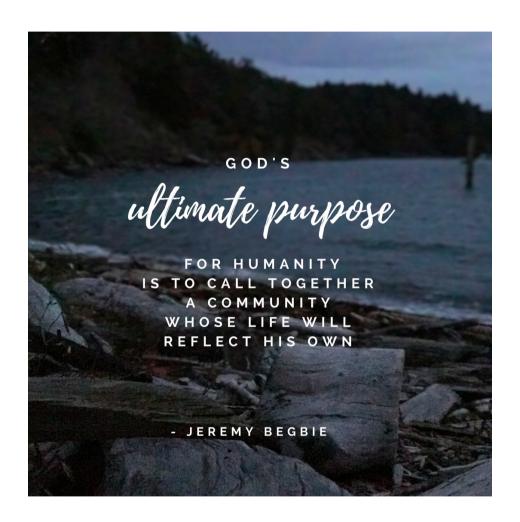
- Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for one another to discover and use our spiritual gifts for the common good (1 Cor.12:7-11). Pray that we would be willing to step out of our comfort zone to serve others and build them up.

Pray for the church

- Pray for the church to be united as one body even though we are diverse in many ways, and to be humble in acknowledging that we all need one another (12:12-20).
- Pray for those who are discouraged, unappreciated or burnt out in their service to be refreshed in the Lord, renewed in their faith, and to find spiritual companions who can walk with them in their journey of recovery. Pray that they would step up and be willing to be used by the Lord again.

Pray for the world

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Week 6

Wosrshipping Community

(Psalms 34:1-22, Acts 2:46-47, Ephesians 5:18-21, Colossians 3:16)



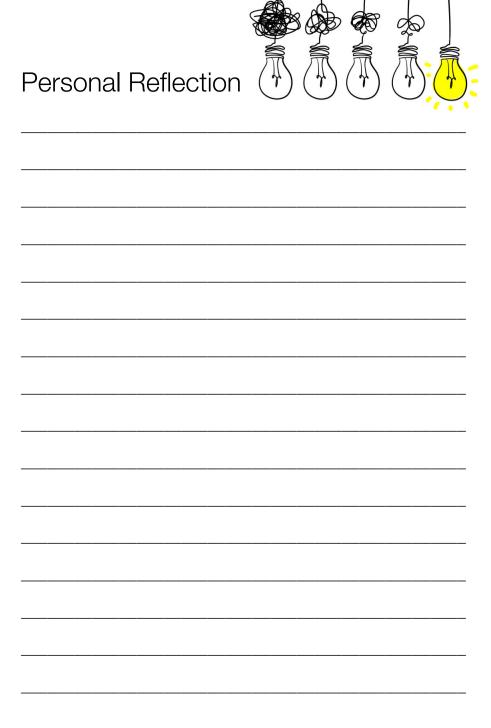
There is something about **gathering to worship God** together that refreshes us and lift our spirits. God desires a worshipping community of interconnected, interdependent people. There is a difference between having a **worship experience** and being a **worshipping community**. Someone¹ puts it this way:

Worship Experience	Worshipping Community		
Temporary (60-90 mins)	Eternal		
Focus on leading worship	Focus on leading people		
Expression	Formation		
Individual	Relational		
Controlled	Shepherded		
About Worship	More than the Worship		
Can be virtual	Must be IRL (in real life)		

Worship experiences do not necessarily lead to worshipping communities but worshipping communities do lead to worship experiences. This is because we are not merely thinking creatures. Rationalizing our faith is not enough for us. We are fully embodied image-bearers of our Creator who thrive on and grow through physical experiences and interaction. God Himself is a community, a triune God. And He calls us to *exalt His name together* (*Psalms 34:3*).

My dear friends, the Church is not a theatre but a **rally ground**, where the **presence of the Lord** abides and believers called to **make disciples in the nations**. As we worship together, we are emboldened and empowered to go forth and serve the Lord.

¹ www.forcey.org/media/blog/cultivating-a-worshipping-community/



Community moments:Daily acts of kindness, connection, and care for others.

MONDAY	
TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY

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FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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Focused Prayer Pointers:

(in small groups or prayer buddies)



Pray for yourself

• Be still before God. Acknowledge His presence and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and speak to you in this time of prayer.

Pray for each other

- Share personal prayers requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for each other to encounter Christ as He truly is and to drink of the water He gives through which they will never thirst again (John 4:13-16).

Pray for the church

- Pray for the church to worship in God in Spirit and in truth (4:23-24). Pray
 that through our corporate worship each weekend, we may glorify God
 and build one another up in truth and love.
- Pray for seekers coming for our Good Friday and Easter services to understand the gospel, encounter Christ and respond to the Spirit's promptings. Pray that they may come to faith and enter into a new life in Christ.

Pray for the many in our world who are hungry, needy or oppressed, that

Pray for the world

they may put their hope in God and be delivered through the mighty resurrection power of God who alone can save them.

AFTERWORD

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we trust that as you have spent the Lent season more intentionally with one another through times of sharing and prayer, your experience of community has been enhanced. Our prayer is that we will continue to grow as community in accordance with the purposes and promises of God.

To that end, we invite you to carry on deepening your spiritual friendships with one another. Why not commit to regularly meeting in small groups of 3-5 (perhaps with the very ones you have spent Lent drawing closer to)? I have found it helpful in the small groups I am a part of to meet once a month for a meal, have each person share their joys and challenges, and pray for one another. This simple practice, done over the course of a year or two, has done wonders for my soul and my friendships. Over time, as these groups have grown more comfortable with one another, we have opened up the deeper parts of our lives to one another, sharing stories of our deep distresses, confessing our sins, and urging each other to keep trusting and obeying the Lord.

Imagine a church where everyone is in 1-2 of these small groups. Imagine a church where no one feels disconnected and alone in their walk. Imagine a church where the love of life of the Triune God can be experienced vibrantly in the relationships between people. Imagine a church where people constantly spur one another on toward love and good deeds. What a gift that church would be to the world!



A relational community, a missional community, a transforming community, a victorious community, an inclusive community, and a worshipping community. Let us pray for this to be what our church community becomes. And let us walk with one another in the power of the Spirit to make it happen.

Pastor Lim Wei-en



PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY CAN MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

JACOB REES-MOGG



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The Bible Church, Singapore 152 West Coast Road Singapore 127370 t: 67793255 e: office@biblechurch.sg w: www.biblechurch.sg