

Serve

- I will ask God to guide me toward new opportunities of service.
- I will find at least one way to serve the vulnerable.
- I will serve others at FUMC by becoming an usher, greeter, teacher, etc.
- This represents a new step for me in the area of service.

Share

- I will make a list of gratitude this week.
- I will tell one person, outside my usual circle, why I am grateful for my faith.
- I will pray for the courage to share my faith openly.

Your Name (please print):

Email:

Phone:

taking the next step

Dear Friends,

This fall we are encouraging every member of Floris United Methodist Church to respond to God's grace in Jesus Christ by taking new steps in discipleship. Specifically, we are inviting you to **Take the Next Step** along the **Discipleship Path of Worship, Spiritual Growth, Service and Generosity**.

The sermon series October 22, 29, November 5, 12 and 19 focused on Worship, Spiritual Growth and Service. This **Discipleship Path Statement of Intent Guide** suggests some steps you might prayerfully consider in these areas of discipleship.

Because of God's grace the next step in faithfulness is always before us. Progress in our spiritual journey is not made when we stand still, become sidetracked or move backward. Progress is made one step at a time in a certain direction. These steps are often not huge steps, though they can be. Normally they are regular steps, consistent steps, steps with a purpose and momentum that carry us forward to the next point in our journey.

Will you **take the next steps** in your path of discipleship?

In Christ,



Tom Berlin, Lead Pastor

taking the next step

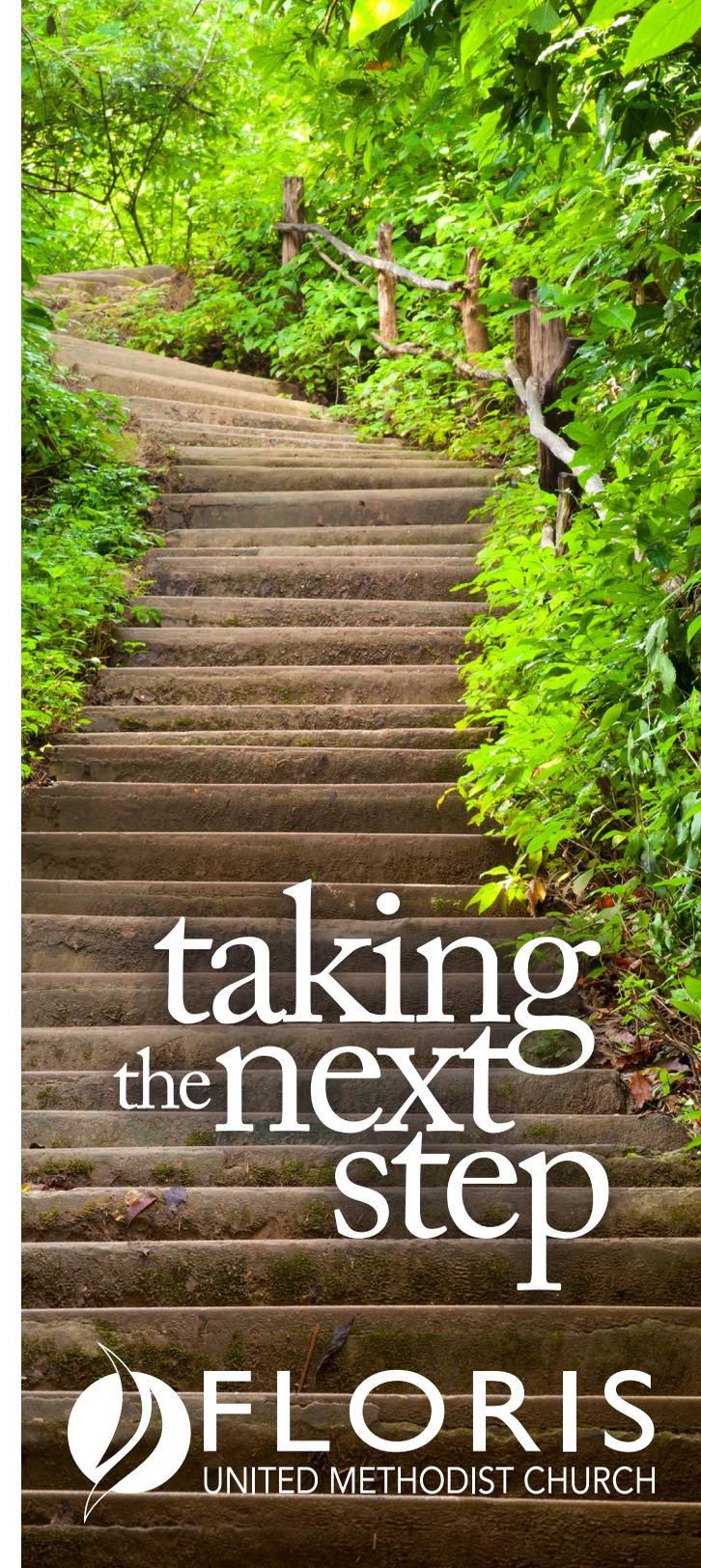
**During this time
of celebration
we encourage you to:**

- Pray for God to lead you on your new steps in your faith journey.
- Deepen your sense of generosity and gratitude.
- Discover the joy of giving.
- Give a percentage of your income systematically.
- Understand that stewardship is about raising disciples, not money.

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taking
the next
step

 **FLORIS**
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

taking the next step

Taking the Next Step GOAL

Stewardship is not our way of raising a budget. It is God's way of raising disciples.

Discover the joy of growing in your relationship to God as you begin **Taking the Next Step** in your faith journey and live generously.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

Why Talk About Money?

It's a Spiritual Issue

Stewardship is directly linked to our journey of discipleship. How we use our resources is primarily a spiritual issue, not a financial one. The quality of that decision is determined by the spiritual condition of our heart.

Jesus Talked About It

Jesus spoke openly about money and possessions. Nearly two-thirds of the parables and about one in every 10 verses in the Gospels address this very issue. As followers of Jesus, we should not be reluctant to talk about giving as an outward expression of our love for Christ.

It's Not About the Budget

During stewardship campaigns, it can be tempting to approach the financial needs of the church as if we were simply funding the budget. In **Taking the Next Step**, we acknowledge that living generously is an inseparable part of our following Christ. God does not need our money; rather, we need to give it as an act of gratitude and trust.

It's About Trust

As we learn to trust God more and follow Christ's teaching more faithfully, we learn to depend less on ourselves and more on God, relinquishing attitudes and habits that impede our relationship with God.

WHY Take the Next Step

It is God's intention that we grow more generous and take bigger steps in our giving as we become more aware of how richly God has blessed us in Christ.



The Giving Path

When we take a step along the Giving Path, we are moving forward in our spiritual journeys to be more like Christ. Jesus said that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

STEPS ALONG THE GIVING PATH:

First-Time Giver:

Begin to give.

Intentional Giver:

Plan what percentage of your income to give for a year.

Growing Giver:

Increasing the percentage of income toward a tithe.

Tither:

Begin to give a tithe (10% of income).

Extravagant Giver:

Give beyond the tithe, called an offering (10+% of income).

taking the next step

I will grow as follows...

(Please complete this sheet and put in the offering plate)

Worship

- I will pray about worshiping God on a more regular basis.
- I will make the worship of God with my family of faith at FUMC one of the highest priorities of my week.
- If I cannot be in worship I will go on-line and listen to the sermon at my convenience.
- This represents a new step for me in the area of worship.

Grow

- I will ask God to guide me toward new opportunities for spiritual growth.
- I will become part of a small group that will help me grow spiritually.
- I will begin a daily discipline of prayer and reflection.
- This represents a new step for me in the area of spiritual growth.

Please tear along the perforated line.