



AN APOSTOLATE OF PRAYER
“Imagine Ministry”
A Guide for Reading, Meditation, and Prayer
Week Two: August 9 -15, 2009

In this prayer guide, we take seriously the reflection and discernment of what it means for our churches and church members, to study and reflect upon the Mission of The United Methodist Church, “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Any such endeavor really begins with the church *in me*, the church *in each of us*, and Christ who links and connects us to one another across the distance of space, race, culture and lifestyles.

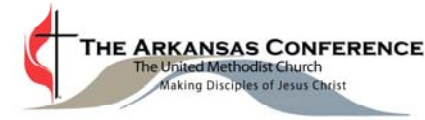
Read John 15:1-5 slowly and prayerfully. What words or phrases stand out for you?

The covenant is a powerful biblical metaphor for our relationship with God. Another metaphor for life in Christ is that of the vine and the branches. Reflect on the spiritual meaning of Jesus words “I am the vine, you are the branches.” (v.5a) What does this mean to you?

What is the relationship between abiding and pruning? Why is it that some United Methodist leaders and some United Methodist congregations are fruitless? Why are some leaders and congregations fruitful?

Wisdom from the Wesleys:

*If grafted into Thee, the Vine,
I bring forth fruit, the praise is Thine;
But use Thy sin-retrenching power,
Prune me that I may bring forth more;
That through Thy Spirit's grace, I may
The truth with all my heart obey.*



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*Kindly Thou does chastise, reprove,
The objects of Thy choicest love,
That thus we may Thy mind express,
Partakers of Thy holiness,
May meekly all Thy sufferings share,
And fruit unto perfection bear.*

Read John 15:7-8. What words or phrases stand out for you?

The promise of Jesus is shocking and based on one single condition, abiding. (vs. 7)

What does this mean to you?

What does it mean for the local church, conference, for The United Methodist Church?

What is the relationship between bearing fruit and becoming disciples? (vs. 8)

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