

Purposeful Living



**Congregational Leaders
Edition**

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Welcome to Purposeful Living

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, this child/this adult disciple is now received into the visible membership of the holy catholic Church, engaged to confess the faith of Christ, and to be God's faithful servant/s until life's end.

These words from the RCA's baptismal liturgy declare an important truth: in baptism we are marked as Christ's own; forgiven; adopted into the body of Christ, the church; and sent into the world to live as Christ's faithful servants—as full participants in God's mission. In other words, our baptism is our ordination to ministry.

Purposeful Living is a personal renewal process designed to allow you to discern God's leading and to help you cooperate with the Holy Spirit in discovering and living out your baptismal identity. Purposeful Living is designed for all disciples of Jesus Christ. Engaging in the Purposeful Living process will give you clarity about how God intends for you to join Jesus in ministry.

The Purposeful Living journey is best taken in the company of others who can pray with you, ask you questions, and help you clarify what God is showing you. Out of this process emerges each individual's uniquely personal calling. After engaging in this process you will be more intentional about your personal and spiritual growth and development. You will be better able to align your life with God's purposes in the world. You will also be equipped and empowered to lead others through this process, beginning a groundswell of momentum that will help prepare your congregation for a new day.

You will also be a more missional leader—someone who will help your congregation be more outwardly focused in mission and more engaged in God's world. You will be better equipped to help members of your church grow as disciples and develop a lifestyle of transformation rooted in their relationship with Jesus Christ. As a result your congregation will help your local community become more gracious, just, and merciful.

May God use the Purposeful Living process to bring new clarity and direction to your life and lead your congregation into a deeper engagement in the world God loves.

Purposeful Living can help you...

...discover who God has uniquely shaped you to be.

- Constructing a **timeline** will help you see God's shaping hand in your life more clearly.
- Your **core values** (assumptions and convictions that guide your behavior and decisions) will become apparent through reflection, prayers, and conversations.

...gain greater clarity about why you are here.

- Reflecting on Scripture and conversations with others will lead you to a Holy Spirit shaped understanding of your purpose.
- This understanding will take shape as you write your **biblical purpose statement**. While God's purposes for baptized disciples of Jesus Christ apply to all of God's people, the shape and texture of God's purpose is unique for each person.

...discern what God is preparing for you to be and do.

- You will also create a statement that captures God's **motivating vision** for your life. God has used the people, events, and circumstances in your life to form your core values; you'll see how those people, events, and circumstances can also serve as guideposts to your future.

...express how you understand and live out your calling as a baptized disciple of Jesus.

- Further prayer and conversation will guide you in writing a **personal calling statement**. Your personal calling is lived out through opportunities God gives you throughout your life. Purposeful Living helps you see the connection between your calling and these opportunities.

...be empowered to be more intentional in your commitment to grow, develop, and serve as the person God designed you to be.

- Through coaching, other one-to-one relationships, and networks of peers you will grow in your understanding of the life and ministry God is shaping for you and gain the ability to live, grow, and minister more intentionally. You will be clearer about how you can best continue to grow and who might be good companions on your journey.

The hoped-for outcome is that you will experience a fresh awareness of God's calling and purpose for your life and a full surrender to God's will for you—a life:

- Guided by the life and ministry values God shaped within you.
- Driven by God's purpose.
- Destined to fulfill a unique vision.
- Unified around a clear sense of God's calling.
- Supported by intentional discipleship and life in community.

Who has God created and shaped me to be?

The following activities will help you discover your **core values**—your inner convictions that have been shaped by your life experiences and that affect your actions and decisions.



Journal your story.

Each of us has a story. It is filled with events and experiences—some good and some difficult—that have contributed to making us who we are today.

Write a summary of your life. Use a computer or write in a journal—whatever works best for you. It can take the form of:

- a chronological journal
- “bullet list”
- a random list you brainstorm and put in order later

As you recall and build a summary of your life, many details, people, and events will come to mind—some that you haven’t thought about in years. Let them come. Jot them down.

To help you remember things that are part of the story God has been writing in and through your life, think about:

- **Events** that have had an impact on the person you are today (school incident, family change, moving to a new city, a job, graduation)
- **People** who have influenced and shaped you (parents, siblings, other family members, teachers, coaches, friends, church members, spouses)
- **Significant circumstances** that have affected your life direction (your place in your family, where you lived, what your parent(s) did for a living)
- **Aha! moments**—moments of great insight that have influenced the direction your life has taken



Create a post-it note timeline.

Your post-it note timeline will shed light on where God has been working in your life in the past, which can help you understand where God may be leading you in the future. The past has shaped your values and laid the foundation for your vision of God’s preferred future.

Five Assumptions

- When Jesus calls someone to follow, the Holy Spirit will be at work to develop that person to her or his full potential.
- Every follower of Jesus is responsible for cooperating with the Holy Spirit in her or his own development. No one else is responsible for this.
- God continually develops a faithful follower of Jesus. Character formation is ongoing. Times of reflection and renewal are needed.
- Every follower of Jesus operates from a set of convictions and values. God's people live more purposeful and fruitful lives when they identify these values and convictions from their past and use them as a guide for the future.
- God is shaping a vision for every baptized disciple of Jesus. That vision is formed in the events, relationships, and people of our past. Every good vision for the future is foreshadowed somewhere in the past.

Post-it Note Timeline Process

On yellow post-it notes, briefly describe events, people, or circumstances that had an impact on your life. Write only one thing per note and don't worry about where you place each note on the poster board. Allow your mind to flow and the Holy Spirit to work. Generate as many of these as you can.

Identify which of these were difficult at the time they happened. Rewrite these on pink post-it notes and discard the corresponding yellow notes.

Leaving room for a row of post-it notes at the top of the poster board, arrange all of your notes in chronological order, starting in the upper left corner and working down in columns and from left to right. You might want to leave a blank space every now and then as you will likely add things and move others around.

Now, arrange your notes into "chapters" or eras of your life. These chapters are often marked by key events or people that helped you move into another phase in your life. Using a blue post-it note, give each chapter a title.

On green post-it notes, identify the significant lessons you have learned throughout the chapters of your life.

Reflect more deeply on your timeline.



Think about what God taught you in each chapter of your life regarding:

- your character.
- character traits you have come to value.
- your uniqueness as God's creation.
- your effectiveness in serving God.

What core convictions about people and relationships did God wire into you?

What lessons did God teach you through painful events?

How would you describe your passion for ministry in one word?

Name your core values.



Naming your core values is the first step in discerning your personal calling statement.

The journey of Christian discipleship is a process of transformation—of learning to value what God values. Values are inner convictions that are shaped through our life experiences. They are underlying assumptions that shape our actions and decisions.

Our core values are born out of lessons we have learned through experiences—both good and bad—and then built into our lives. Our values change as we journey with Jesus; some things we used to value are no longer important or essential, while other things we never valued become highly important to us. This is the result of the transformation process the Holy Spirit empowers in our lives.

Core values are our “non-negotiables”—things that, at a particular time, we will not ignore and won't abandon. They represent our unique wiring and the specific ways we view and approach life.

“Actual” core values are values that we consistently demonstrate in our day-to-day behavior.

“Preferred” core values are values and behaviors to which we aspire but that we aren't currently demonstrating in our life.

Core Values

- Offer a clear picture of who we are as we live our lives, what priorities will guide us, and who we will be on the journey.
- Define what is fundamentally important to us.
- Provide guidelines for our choices and actions as we pursue our biblical purpose.
- Answer the question “What do I live by, and how?”

- Describe how we intend to live, the type of relationships we desire to develop, how we will shape our family life, how we will do our work, and the approach we will take toward the ministry God gives us.
- Are revealed through our behavior—if they aren't consistently acted upon, they are only good intentions.

A focused leader understands how God has shaped her or him—the values God has wired in.

Honesty about our core values helps us know where we still want God to do more work on our character and help us move our preferred values into actual values.

Clarity about actual core values brings direction to our life, clarifies future decision-making, and helps us see how we can better live and serve in alignment with our values. Our core values are one component of our personal calling statement.

Discovering Your Core Values

Review your timeline and ask:

- What key lessons has God been teaching me during different chapters of my life?
- What core convictions do I hold as a result of these lessons?

Now, list eight to ten key convictions and significant lessons and the values associated with them. For example:

| Value | Conviction |
|----------------|--|
| Relationships | My ability to influence others is connected to the strength of my relationships. |
| Family | My family of origin has been God's gift to me and my family is my primary résumé. |
| Team | Doing life and work alone proves nothing and is usually less effective |
| Learning | Lifelong learning and a teachable spirit are central to both my growth and my effectiveness. |
| Faith | Life requires working through change and facing fear, and faith is essential for both. |
| Being Real | Have fun, enjoy people, laugh a lot; it makes life more enjoyable and others more eager to follow. |
| Accountability | To whom much is given, much is required. |

Why am I here?

As you move toward defining your personal calling, these next steps will help you reflect on what God, through the Bible, teaches disciples of Jesus Christ about their life purpose. From these reflections you will develop your **biblical purpose statement**.

What is your destiny? God has shaped and prepared each of us to play a unique role at this point in time that will bring glory to God, share the grace of God, and extend the reign of God in specific ways.

Our best understanding of our unique destiny is built upon the solid foundation of what the Bible says about God's purposes for the people of God.

Clarifying your biblical purpose helps you in three ways:

- 1. It declares why you exist.** It captures the heart of why you are on this earth and why Jesus died for you.
- 2. It defines your life**—not in terms of what you think but what God thinks. It anchors your life in the character and call of God.
- 3. It clarifies the non-negotiables.** It identifies what never changes about who you are, regardless of circumstances.

Reflect on Scripture that is important to you.



List the Bible verses God uses to give your life focus, purpose, and direction. These are the verses that tell you who you are, what is important, and what you are called to do.

They are probably the verses to which you turn when you are confused, lost, or losing hope. They anchor your life.

- Note the reference or write out the verse or verses completely, whichever is most helpful for you.
- Paraphrase or summarize what each verse says to you.
- Explain why each verse or passage is important to you.
- Look for common themes.
- Reflect on how these verses generally function in your life (offer hope, give direction, bring correction, shape identity).

Reflect on Scripture about God's purposes.



Read the passages below. Summarize the insights they provide regarding the purpose for the life of a follower of Jesus:

- Genesis 12:1-3
- Deuteronomy 6:4-9
- Isaiah 58:6-12
- Micah 6:6-8
- Matthew 22:34-40
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Luke 9:46-48
- John 13:31-35
- John 15:1-11
- John 17:20-23
- Acts 8:26-40
- Romans 12:1-8
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-20
- Ephesians 2:8-10
- Philippians 2:1-13
- Philippians 3:8-14
- Colossians 3:2-17
- 1 Peter 2:1-10

Ask yourself:

- Why do I exist?
- What does God say about a person's greatest fulfillment?
- What does God intend as my response to God's work of grace and salvation on my behalf?
- Where do I find my place in God's story?

Write your biblical purpose statement.



A biblical purpose statement isn't a lengthy "to do" list of duties. It is a concise statement of why you exist, based on Scripture.

Draw on your reflections on Scripture and your answers to the questions on the previous page and write a first draft of your biblical purpose.

Keep it short.

Focus more on "being" than on "doing" (which will be addressed in your vision statement). Use language that grips and energizes you.

Examples:

"I live to bring glory to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through consistent worship, by my praise and in my life; to cultivate a life of intimacy with God; and to equip women and men for ministry through the power of the Holy Spirit."

"The purpose of my life is to know God and hear his voice so I can live a life of servanthood and obedience; then I will be a God-defined person and a non-anxious presence in every situation."

"I exist to live in authentic intimacy with Jesus and let him shape my life in such a way that believers are encouraged and unbelievers are motivated to join me in the journey of discipleship."

Use the space below to write the first draft of your biblical purpose statement. Write what God guides you to say at this point; you will continue to refine your statement as you move through the Purposeful Living process.

What is God preparing me to be and do?

In these next steps toward purposeful living, you will prayerfully discern who God is shaping you to be and the work God is calling you to do. A “motivating vision”—a “word picture” of God’s preferred future for your life—will come into focus.

Understanding Motivating Vision

You’ve defined your core values and biblical purpose. Your motivating vision is the third and final component of your personal calling statement. This vision is a picture of God’s preferred future that flows from the loving heart of God, is rooted in the mission of Jesus, and is guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives you the ability to see the future from God’s perspective.

Your personal vision captures in a word picture what God wants to accomplish through your life. It is the heartbeat of a personal calling statement. God designs it; we discern it. This vision is concerned with what you will do in the next chapter of your development as a follower of Jesus.

We all face the temptation to pursue our dreams, call it a vision, and then ask God to bless it. Discovering this vision is discovering who God has created you to be and what God has shaped you to do.

Your personal vision is not static; it is revealed to you over time. You usually see only part of the vision at first. As you respond to what God shows you and begin to live into God’s preferred future, the vision becomes more vivid and real.

Vision builds on biblical purpose, but there are differences between the two:

- Purpose clarifies; vision motivates.
- Purpose is the reason you live; vision is the song your heart sings.
- Purpose gives meaning; vision prompts action.
- Purpose uses your own words to capture God’s common purposes for all disciples; vision is specific and unique to you.
- Purpose anchors you; vision evokes awe and releases imagination.

Motivating vision is a picture of God’s preferred future. Pictures have power because of the way they focus us. The picture needs to be clear, and it must capture what God wants to create through you and be focused on the outcome rather than the process.

Reflect on God's shaping work in your life.



Discerning your vision requires time for reflection and processing, as well as the faith to embrace it. It grows from your past and all God has done to shape you. Vision is revealed as you let your life speak. As you "listen" to your life and what God is saying to you through it, the Holy Spirit will show you what you need to see and understand.

Here is one way to think about past, present, and future when it comes to motivating vision:

Learn from your past,
envision your future,
so you can live your vision
in the present.

Below you will find ways to listen to your life and discover the future God has been preparing for you. Not all of them will generate insights. Respond only to the statements and questions that stir something inside of you.

Consider how you would complete these sentences and answer these questions:

- The people and circumstances that have most shaped my life and ministry are...
- The qualities of character I most admire and desire for God to shape in my life are...
- People who know me well believe I am most used by God when I...
- As I reflect on my life, things I have done, experienced, or accomplished that were satisfying and energizing are...
- When I think about ministry in the future, the area of ministry I would love to focus on is...
- Though I have always dismissed the thought, at times I have really felt I should be doing...
- Ask others to answer the question, "What do you see in me?"

Based on how God has shaped you, if you knew you could not fail, what would you do in your lifetime for God's glory?

Review your timeline.



Because God's vision for your future is anticipated in your past, you may wish to review your timeline. Note the faith challenges, divine contacts, destiny revelations, and/or negative preparation God used. As you do this, you will discover a number of "destiny pointers":

- Circumstances God used to direct your life.
- People God used as divine contacts to help you hear God's call or understand yourself more fully.
- Events that became divine appointments; events through which God shaped who you are and the values you hold.

What common themes stand out?

Your responses to the questions and statements above and your review of your timeline likely have revealed common threads or patterns God has been weaving through your life to shape you for the "good works" God is preparing for you to do.

Prayerfully reflect on and respond to these questions:

- What are some of the common themes?
- What do they tell you about God's work in your life?
- What do they say about the future God has been shaping for you?

Write your motivating vision.



Write your vision in response to the questions below. (The next page has space to write.) Remember, this represents your best understanding to date of God's motivating vision for your life. It isn't the final understanding. You may find a better way to state the vision at a later date. The vision will become clearer as you obey and answer God's call. However, this is the vision God has given you to date. Begin to live it now, and trust God to show you more as you are faithful.

- What is God's vision for my life?
- Who is God shaping me to be?
- What does God want to accomplish through me?

Reading these examples of vision statements may help you refine what you have written.

"My vision is that people whose lives are limited by poverty, lack of education, or deficient training will experience the love of Jesus through me as I give them employment, encourage their education, and offer them training so they feel successful and are able to support a family."

"I know God desires to use me to offer our children the spiritual, emotional, relational, experiential, and financial resources they need to become disciples, grow in faith, answer God's call, and make their own unique contributions as adults."

"I know God has placed me as a public school teacher so I can be a source of light to others and I can offer my students a chance at a better life."

"God has given me a vision for a family that loves God and models a genuine, believable faith in our neighborhood and community. My role is to help my wife discover her own unique calling and grow in her effectiveness and to build up and empower my children to make their faith their own."

"God has given me a vision to build a congregation passionately committed to the goal of reproduction of disciples, leaders, groups, ministries, and sites. My role is to model reproduction and make it the highest possible priority in my ministry."

My Motivating Vision

Test your vision statement with these questions:

- Is it anticipated in my past?
- Can I visualize it?
- Is it clear?
- Is it focused on the outcome?
- Does it engage my passion?
- Do I need God's help to achieve it?

How do I understand my personal calling as a follower of Jesus Christ?

You are ready to integrate the three separate strands you have written—your biblical purpose, core values, and motivating vision—into your **personal calling statement**, a holistic statement of your unique destiny. Your personal calling statement is your best understanding to date of God’s unique destiny for you as a follower of Jesus.

Understand the nature and function of a personal calling statement.



A personal calling statement is a faith statement. It is your best understanding to date of who God has called you to be and what God is calling you to do for God’s glory.

Over time, a disciple refines and refocuses her or his personal calling statement by living out the implications and following God’s call. It becomes an increasingly unique document, reflecting one’s style, gifts, passions, growing insights, and perspectives.

Your personal calling statement synthesizes the work you have done on your biblical purpose, core values, and motivating vision. It brings these three strands together into one statement that gives you direction for your life. It describes why you exist, who God has shaped you to be, and what God is preparing for you to accomplish.

Your personal calling statement is a dynamic guide. It is not a taskmaster. It is a compass to guide you into the future.

A personal calling statement has at least three key benefits:

Direction: A personal calling statement offers a focused path. Sometimes just having a clearer sense of where you are going provides much-needed encouragement and the ability to persevere.

Decision-making: It provides you with a tool to use when deciding whether to say yes or no as you assess opportunities to serve and lead.

Fulfillment: It gives you a greater sense of personal destiny and a better idea of your own contribution to the work God is doing around you. In the demands of daily living it is easy to lose sight of the big picture. Your personal calling statement is your much-needed reminder.

Bottom line, effective disciples learn to focus their lives and ministries. They abide in Jesus, so their lives bear fruit; the Holy Spirit helps them become more like Jesus in all they think, say, and do. Disciples’ lives are centered in Jesus and built on a biblical foundation. They

are good stewards of all God entrusts to them, including God's unique shaping of their lives and the gifts given to them through the Holy Spirit.

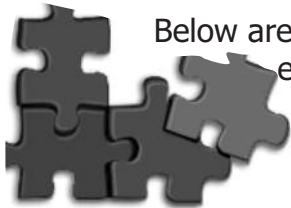
Your personal calling statement is your unique, personal understanding of the transformed life God promises for everyone who is baptized and answers the call to follow Jesus. Your ultimate destiny rests in God's hands.

The work you have done in developing your biblical purpose, core values, and motivating vision has prepared you to write your personal calling statement and help you live a life of personal satisfaction while also advancing God's purposes on earth.

You will experience satisfaction because you are becoming and doing what God intended from the beginning.

You will help advance God's purposes because you are doing what God designed you to do through specific life experiences and a unique personality, in a certain context, at a particular time, with and through specific people.

Learn from others.



Below are three personal calling statements. Each weaves together all three elements—purpose, values, and vision. One is more values-driven, another is more vision-driven, and the third is more purpose-driven.

A business woman's values-driven calling statement:

My mission is to give my life away for others. I will give my life away

- to my family, who need me to be a woman of integrity, compassion and faith.
- to fellow believers, with whom I am called to a life of accountability.
- to work associates, who read my life more than they listen to the words I say.
- to my business—my mission field—where I integrate my faith and life and impact lives.
- to personal, business, and community relationships.
- to my world, whose problems are immense but in whose solutions God wants me to play a part.

A church worker's vision-driven calling statement:

I live to glorify my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through personal worship and inner life growth, through a lifestyle that displays grace and truth, and by joining God in loving, winning, and developing new believers who will lead the advancement of the church.

As a result of my calling and my own unique giftedness, I have committed my life to raising a family that loves God and models a genuine, authentic, believable faith. I desire to intentionally help my wife discover her place in ministry and grow in her effectiveness and to spend time building up, encouraging, and empowering my children.

I dedicate myself to extending the reign of God through refocusing mission-based, Christ-centered local churches and developing relational support systems that will mentor and empower a new generation of church leadership. In the end, I desire to impact 1,000 churches and 1,000 leaders into the twenty-first century.

A homemaker's purpose-driven calling statement:

My personal mission is to be a living example of Christ's love, power, and grace, bringing hope, encouragement, and joy to this generation, beginning with my husband and family. I have been called and gifted to love and serve others.

I dedicate myself to

- be in God's Word daily, listening in prayer, responding in worship, and applying what I am learning.
- serve my family, team, and church in prayer and with encouragement, ideas, and support in their tasks and their lives.
- help women discover their unique calling and encourage them to grow and mentor other women in a holistic manner.
- build bridges to my neighbors in order to expose them to the life and hope that is found in Jesus.
- pray for this valley, that God's purposes may be fulfilled.

Write your personal calling statement.



Using the sample statements as a guide, and building on the work you have done so far, blend your purpose, values, and vision into one comprehensive statement. Check it against these ministry questions:

- Does it reveal a passion for a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and for his life to be formed in you?
- Does it contain phrases, ideas, and thoughts that "get your juices flowing"?
- Does it create a sense of hope and release your energy?
- Does it help you make decisions?
- Do you need God's guidance and power to accomplish it?

As you write your own personal calling statement, be brief and concise while also capturing what God has been saying to you. Spend time in prayer, and let God speak to you as you write.

This is just a draft. In some ways, that is all we will ever have, because our personal calling statement is only our best understanding to date of God's call in our lives. Pray; trust God; begin writing.

If you wish, use the following blank page to write a draft of your personal calling statement.

My Personal Calling Statement

Integrate your personal calling statement into your life.



All the prayer, reflection, conversation, and work you have put into your personal calling statement will only bear fruit if it becomes integrated into your life. As important as this work is and can be, it can easily become a casualty of more urgent (but not necessarily more important) concerns.

The key to building your personal calling statement into your life is to understand the roles you fulfill—or the assignments God has given to you and that you have accepted at this time in your life. Each of these assignments helps you faithfully live out your baptismal identity and fulfill your primary vocation as a disciple of Jesus.

The step of integration is designed to help you navigate life and connect your personal calling statement to the realities of your daily life. It will help you find a rhythm between what your vision calls you to do and who God calls you to be.

The goal is to help you enjoy and be fully present in each moment while also staying focused on your mission, vision, values, and purpose—to live in the present while moving into the future.

Review your answers to the questions on page 14.

- Have you gained any new insights since you wrestled with these questions?
- What do those insights say about who you are and the roles you fulfill?

Reflect on who you are.

- What **natural abilities** have you received? For example, are you creative, artistic, sensitive, empathetic, analytical, a writer, responsible, persuasive?
- What **skills** have you acquired and developed? For example, can you teach, manage, design, consult, care, nurture, listen, counsel, coach, decide, lead?
- If you are aware of your **spiritual gifts**, what are they?
- If you have done an **inventory** such as Myers-Briggs, DISC, or the Clifton Strengths-Finder, what do you know about your personality and/or work style?
- How do you grow spiritually?
- What practices or disciplines bring you closer to God?
- When you feel most fully alive in Christ, what are you doing or experiencing?

- If you haven't done an inventory, which of the following describes you?

Task-oriented—You enjoy results and are determined. You value productivity and are usually optimistic, but you can be insensitive to the feelings of those with whom you work or whom you lead.

Influence-oriented—You enjoy influencing others to achieve results. You are relational, idealistic, and expressive by nature. You are people-oriented, and that can sometimes lead to a lack of discipline.

Team-oriented—You enjoy participating with others. You are adaptive, realistic, and loyal. You prefer to serve and support others. As a result, you can be a spectator or become too dependent on others.

Detail-oriented—You enjoy jobs that are done well and completed. You tend to be analytical and drawn to administrative detail. You are reflective, but you can also become critical or judgmental.

Identify your current life and ministry assignments.



Many people find three categories helpful when thinking through their life and ministry roles: self, family, and vocation.

No matter what our gender, age, or stage in life, we tend to see our lives through these three lenses. We can usually identify one or two key God-given assignments in each category.

- Examples of life assignments viewed through the **self** lens are disciple, helper, friend, servant, worshiper, citizen, intercessor, mentor, and local church leader. Which fit you? What would you add?
- Examples of life assignments viewed through the **family** lens are wife, husband, son, daughter, sibling, father, and mother. Which fit you? What would you add?
- Examples of life assignments viewed through the lens of **vocation** are teacher, boss, team player, catalyst, innovator, nurse, production worker, craftsman, supervisor, and life-planner. Which fit you? What would you add?

Build on the reflecting you have done so far.



Using the grid on the next page, be creative and descriptive as you capture your dreams, aspirations, and motivations.

- Go back through your personal calling statement one more time.
- Identify three to six roles you fill or God-given assignments you have accepted.
- Write a brief description of each role, tying it to your personal calling statement.

Which relationships help me stay faithful to God's calling in my life?

Discern the type of support you need.



You have reflected prayerfully and carefully on God's shaping hand in your life values and the life purpose God has given you. You have heard and seen the specific ways Jesus is calling you to join him in ministry. You have discerned the vision God has for you as you participate in and witness to the realm of God. You have synthesized those elements into a personal calling statement and you have begun to live out that calling in your various life and ministry roles.

Your relationship with Jesus Christ, grounded in prayer, Scripture, community and service, is central to everything else in your life. This is where you begin.

Relationships are also important for your ongoing growth. Ongoing faithfulness to God's calling in your life is maintained as you nurture and develop key relationships.

Creative and consistent commitment to God's call requires the help of others. The model of the relationship of Jesus with his disciples is a great example. While each disciple heard and responded to a unique and personal call to follow Jesus, each also entered into a community of disciples. Lives of faithful discipleship and courageous leadership were sharpened and deepened in community with other servant leaders.

Triads

You might want to consider regularly coming together with other leaders for learning, accountability, and support. It would offer a solid context for equipping and encouragement. It doesn't need to be a large group. In fact, a group of three—a triad—often works best.

Triads gather weekly for at least a year. Each triad is grounded in God's Word, rooted in trust, and fosters trust and vulnerability. Transformation occurs as triad members discern together what Christ is doing in their lives and service as they live out their call. There is also mutual accountability as triad members seek to remain faithful to their baptismal identity and calling.

Do you have such a group in place? What would it take to form one? The Reformed Church in America has a variety of helpful resources to assist you in forming triads for your ongoing growth as a disciple and a leader, and for implementing the Purposeful Living process.

Leadership teams, service teams, and mission groups

These are groups of people who know you well and have seen you in action. Explore with these types of groups your leadership style, how you have developed, and ways you hope to grow as you learn to lead and serve and do mission together. These groups can help develop deliberate processes by which to measure meaningful ministry for you individually and how it pertains to integrating leadership, discipleship, and mission.

Families

Processing Purposeful Living with family members will communicate your hopes and dreams with the ones you love and that love you. It will make it possible for family members to encourage, support, and walk alongside you in times of joy and questioning. It will promote spiritual growth opportunities at home, and if you are married it may strengthen that relationship. These family relationships aren't limited to your immediate family; they may include parents and siblings as well.

Transformational one-to-one relationships

One or more one-to-one relationships—especially a coaching relationship—will help empower you as you apply what you are learning, seek new ways to be faithful to your calling, and discern God's ever emerging future. Being in a one-on-one relationship, such as coaching, will enable you to:

- Grow deeper in Christ-like **character**.
- Gain increasing clarity and focus in your **calling**.
- Develop new ministry **competencies**.
- Live out your calling with **courage**.

Coach

A coach is often a peer who has been trained to listen attentively and ask powerful questions in order to help you be who God is calling you to be and do what God is calling you to do. A coach helps you grow in awareness and understanding of the present through discernment and self-discovery in order to help you live into God's preferred future with intentional follow through and implementation. A coach also adds an element of accountability that helps you act on your intentions.

Spiritual director

A spiritual director is a helpful companion as you seek to nurture space to hear God more clearly and see God's activity more readily. Through prayerful listening and discerning questions a spiritual director can help you gain greater clarity about how God has worked in your life and spoken to you in the past. A spiritual director will help you discover the spiritual practices that will allow Christ to be more fully formed in you, and that will sustain you in your calling over time.

Mentor

A mentor is a person who, through training and experience, has knowledge, demonstrates skills, or exhibits character traits that you would like to more fully develop yourself. A mentoring relationship grows out of an affinity with the mentor. Although a good mentor always listens carefully and asks good questions, when you ask someone to be your mentor you invite that person to share his or her acquired knowledge drawn from past experiences in order to help you live more faithfully in the present.

One-to-one relationships in your past

Identifying past coaches, spiritual directors, and mentors often provides encouragement and helps you identify the type of one-to-one relationships you need at this stage in your life.

On the chart below list people who have significantly influenced you. List their names and the contribution they made to your life and growth. Once their contribution has been named, identify the type of relationship they had with you.

Past One-to-One Relationships

| Name | Contribution to My Life/Growth | Type of Relationship |
|------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
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As you review past one-to-one relationships, reflect on the following:

- What types of relationships has God used to nurture your growth?
- Who has helped you grow as a disciple?
- What types of relationships are missing?
- Would a spiritual director, mentor, or counselor be helpful?

In particular, as you continue your journey of purposeful living, who can help you?

- Do you need someone to disciple you?
- What role could a spiritual director play?
- Do you have a coaching relationship in place?
- Do you need a coach?
- Who can help you find a coach?

Develop and maintain relationships that sustain your calling.



Throughout the Purposeful Living process you have been challenged to embrace learning as lifelong and to approach it with imagination, wonder, and exploration.

You have realized that transformation occurs in community through day to day life with the church, your family, your small group, your triad, your mentors, coaches, friends, and colleagues.

As your dreams, calling, and life experiences are shared in community with others, a greater self awareness occurs and life as a follower of Christ takes on new meaning. All of this is enhanced as you develop and maintain life-giving relationships that sustain your calling.

Your life as a baptized child of God is experienced as a daily adventure.

Congratulations!



By working through the Purposeful Living process, you have taken one more step in your ongoing personal renewal.

- You have a better understanding of **God's shaping** in your life.
- You have a **personal calling statement** that will help you live more intentionally as a disciple of Jesus Christ and as a leader.
- You have a plan to continue to **grow, develop, and serve** as the person God designed you to be.

As a result of this process you will be better able to live a life:

- **Guided** by the life and ministry values God has formed in you.
- **Motivated** by God's purpose for you.
- **Destined** to fulfill the unique vision God has for you.

But remember—the Purposeful Living process is about more than just you. The ultimate purpose for engaging in this process is to invest your life in such a way that lives are transformed and the world around you is more gracious, merciful, and just.

Because you have been personally renewed and become more purposeful through this process, you are now better equipped to join with other disciples of Jesus Christ to help your congregation:

- Develop a clear sense of identity as a people called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow Christ in mission.
- Minister out of a clear and compelling vision, become motivated by a powerful biblical mission, and be guided by deeply held core values.
- Grow deeper in their love of God and wider in their love of one another and of the people among whom God has called them to serve.
- Nurture a missional mindset resulting in externally focused ministry that contributes to a healthier and more just community around your congregation.
- Refuse to play it safe or to do business as usual, but rather long to give their lives away as they make a difference in the world.
- Be more faithful and more fruitful as they multiply new disciples, new mission, new ministries, new worship services, and new congregations.

You and your congregation will do all of this because you believe that you—along with all disciples of Jesus Christ—are called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the very presence of Jesus Christ in this lost and broken world so loved by God.

Let the adventure continue!

Contact Information

Feel free to contact any RCA staff member listed below with questions and comments related to her or his area of ministry.

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