***Core Spiritual Practices***

As part of our church growth consultant’s report, Trinity was encouraged to name and identify Core Spiritual Practices. On Tuesday, October 27, the Vision Team presented their recommendation for Core Spiritual Practices to the Church Council for approval. These Core Spiritual Practices are:

* Daily Prayer – for the church, individuals and the world
* Attendance in Worship
* Financial Stewardship that emphasizes tithing
* Evangelism that is invitational and relational
* Discovering and using spiritual gifts and talents to serve individuals and the church
* Study and reflection on scripture and other religious writings

*But what does it really mean for Trinity to name and identify Core Spiritual Practices?* Well, if you notice, many of the practices above are related to the vows we take when we join the United Methodist Church.

* We promise to pray. We promise to pray for our world and our community and our church’s mission and ministry.
* We promise to be present; a promise we live out most notably when we gather together for worship.
* We promise our “gifts.” The 3rd practice listed above better defines what it means when we make that promise. We promise to be good stewards of the financial resources God has blessed us with and to strive to tithe.
* We promise to use our gifts and talents to serve those in need individually and as a church.
* And, we promise to be witnesses to our faith. We understand that the most effective witness occurs in the context of meaningful relationships as we invite (not coerce or intimidate) those around us to meet the Jesus we love and serve.

Finally, our Vision Team felt strongly that, in order to grow in our understanding of these Christian practices, we need to study and reflect on scripture and other religious writings alongside fellow believers through classes and small groups.

*So, if we already promise most of these things when we join the church, why do we need to adopt Core Spiritual Practices?* By formally adopting these Core Spiritual Practices, Trinity affirms and clearly communicates that the promises we make when we join the church can only be lived out faithfully when we do, in fact, put them into practice on a regular basis within the context of Christian community. We believe and affirm that these are necessary spiritual practices or disciplines if we want to mature as Christian disciples. And so, from this point forward, the need to engage in these practices on an on-going basis will be clearly communicated in newsletters, the website, and other regular communications.” These core practices will be affirmed in Trinity’s preaching and teaching and be reflected throughout our programs and ministries.