

# Where are you on the Journey?

## Self Assessment

<b>Knowing God - Head</b>	Not True		Sometimes True		Very True	
1. I understand the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and feel confident that I could explain them to a non-religious friend.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a good knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read it for maximum understanding.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. If someone were to ask me, "What do UCC'ers believe?" I feel confident in my ability to answer them.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I understand basic Christian ethics, and I know how to draw upon my faith to come to conclusions about important moral and ethical issues.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a good understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern God's will for my life in particular.	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Loving God - Heart</b>						
1. I know God has the power to transform lives and I'm open and responsive to wherever that may lead in my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I lay aside my own desires and sense of importance and submit to God's will for my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. As a means of growing in Christ, I prayerfully practice various spiritual disciplines in my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am experiencing "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22) in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have a group of friends who grow in faith together and challenge each other to grow deeper in Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Serving God - Hands</b>						
1. I actively serve in God's world by helping meet critical needs through acts of justice and mercy, showing in actions what it means to follow Jesus.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I know my God-given spiritual gifts, and am actively serving Christ by using those gifts.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. I give back to Christ by giving to the church and to others in proportion to my income, with at least 10% as my goal.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I spend time serving in God's world by helping meet critical needs and showing what it means to follow Jesus Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am actively nurturing the spiritual lives of others, sharing my faith story, offering spiritual encouragement and leading others to Christ.	0	1	2	3	4	5

**No one can concentrate on too many things at once. Look first at the individual questions, and then turn to the other side to consider next steps. Seek to find one or more areas in which you can grow in your relationship with God.**

Use the following scale as a general guide to the three levels:

0-1 Level One    2-3 Level Two    4-5 Level Three

## Suggested Next Steps

Knowing God: becoming informed	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
1. I understand the essential beliefs of the Christian faith, and feel confident that I could explain them to a non-religious friend.	We recommend the Bearings course as a great starting point. Bearings is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed manner over 10 thought-provoking weekly sessions. It's low key, friendly and fun	Within your Journey group or with a group of two to three others, memorize the Apostle's Creed. Write down what each belief statement means, find where it is supported in scripture, and share your understanding of this belief with your group.	Consider becoming a confirmation mentor or a Journey group leader.
2. I have a good knowledge of the Bible, including its major events and themes, and I know how to read it for maximum understanding.	Commit to reading your Bible each day or to sign up for e-mail delivery of the daily readings.	Purchase a good study Bible, such as the Oxford Study Bible or The New Interpreter's Study Bible. Learn how to use the notes, maps and other tools, and begin by studying the book of Mark for yourself	Talk with your Journey group about how to deepen your group Bible study, using questions such as "How is God speaking to me personally through this passage?" or "What will I change in my life because of what I've learned from this passage?"
3. If someone were to ask me, "What do UCC'ers believe?" or "What programs does your church offer?" I feel confident in my ability to answer them.	We recommend the Embark! course. Here you will get an overview of the church offerings and a brief summary of the United Church of Christ.	Memorize the UCC Statement of Faith. Rewrite it in your own words.	Get involved in a church board to deepen your involvement. Consider chairing the board.
4. I understand basic Christian ethics, and I know how to draw upon my faith to come to conclusions about important moral and ethical issues.	Each day you face ethical decisions. Before you act, ask yourself (and pray about the answer), "What course of action will best express my love for God and neighbor?"	Read 20 <i>Hot Potatoes Christians are Afraid to Touch</i> , available in the church library.	What is the difference between charity and justice? Prayerfully study what it would mean for you to actually "do justice" versus "charity." Write out two specific ideas you could adopt, and live into them.
5. I have a good understanding of God's will for human beings, and I know how to discern God's will for my life in particular.	Choose one decision, little or big, you are currently making, and pray over that decision at the same time each day, seeking God's will rather than your agenda. Keep a journal of your experience	We long to be needed. One way we try to meet this need is busyness. Keep a log of your busy life, your activities and obligations. Ask "Does this busyness flow from God's will? Is there something you need to give up doing?"	Prayerfully study Romans 8 and 12. Then ask "Who am I?" and "Who does God want me to be?" Alter your life, even your calendar and finances, in light of your answers. Discuss your changes with one of the pastors, and pray about the changes with that person.
Loving God: becoming transformed			
1. I know God has the power to transform lives and I'm open and responsive to wherever that may lead in my life.	Intentionally spend ten minutes daily thinking about good things. Start a gratitude journal for the "good things" in your life. Discipline your thoughts to live out the principles of Philippians 4:8 – what is true, honorable, just, pure and commendable.	Set a plan to rid your life of hurry. Take the first step by, picking the longest line at the grocery store, choosing the slow lane, celebrating each red light, and parking in the farthest parking space. Use the time to speak to the person in line with you, pray, or enjoy a time of silence.	Memorize the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17). Assess yourself. What "gods" do you place before God? Do you honor your parents? Love your neighbor? Discuss with a trusted Christian friend how to make the Commandments a guide in your daily life.
2. I lay aside my own desires and sense of importance and submit to God's will for my life.	Examine your life and identify things you do or say to mainly make yourself look good to others. Surrender those habits to God.	Fast from TV or another time-consuming habit for one week. Reflect on how this habit affects you. Use the extra time to enjoy your family and friends, or to spend with God.	Each day pray the Lord's Prayer. After praying the prayer, take one line each day and meditate on what living a life reflective of this line would mean for you.
3. As a means of growing in Christ, I prayerfully practice various spiritual disciplines in my life.	Pray "flash prayers" silently for others. Standing in line, driving your car or riding on a bus, sitting in a room — in any setting, pray for the people or circumstances around you, saying "God touch their lives, watch over them, and draw them to you."	Discover what it means to really worship. Arrive early and pray for those who will sit near you, look at the words to the songs and sing with enthusiasm; savor the times of silence; enter deeply into prayer; praise God and welcome others with joy.	Set aside 15 minutes a day for solitude. Use the time for journaling, meditation on the scripture, or some other spiritual discipline to which God calls you. Choose a discipline (for ideas, consult <i>Celebration of Discipline</i> by Richard Foster) and commit to incorporating it in your spiritual growth plan.
4. I am experiencing "the fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22) in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.	Memorize Galatians 5:22, the verse that lists "the fruit of the Spirit." Which fruit do you struggle living out daily the most? Ask God to help your life show the fruit of the Spirit to others.	Ask yourself, "Where does my joy go when something painful happens?" or "Why do I lose my peace when something frightens me?" Ask God to teach you how you can cooperate in living a more fruit filled life.	Ask three people who know you very well for honest feedback on your life and on how well you live the fruit of the Spirit. Enlist their help in targeting one area for growth.
5. I have a group of friends who grow in faith together and challenge each other to grow deeper in Christ.	Reorder your time to make two hours a week available for a Journey group or another group that fosters Christian friendships.	How is your Journey group moving beyond socializing and into a deeper shared life in the Kingdom? Discuss what you want the group to become as you journey in Christ.	Help your Journey group become one where trust and accountability replace surface talk. Does the group share pain and failure, as well as joys and victories? Is it okay to say, "Pray for me – I'm struggling spiritually."
Serving God: becoming involved			
1. I actively serve in God's world by helping meet critical needs through acts of justice and mercy, showing in actions what it means to follow Jesus.	Volunteer inside and outside the walls of the church choosing occasional or one-time opportunities like Lunch on US, Vacation Bible School, or a Summit Service Project.	Consistently give volunteer service inside and outside the walls of the church, e.g. a regularly scheduled usher or ongoing involvement with a mission partner.	As God leads you, serve others and pursue justice in all that you do, including (in accordance with your giftedness) leadership in a ministry area or extended missionary service.
2. I know my God-given spiritual gifts, and I am actively serving Christ by using those gifts.	We recommend the Navigate workshop to explore the type of service most rewarding for you.	Connect to one or more ministries that will benefit from your gifts and feel rewarding.	Focus on how God intends your giftedness to shape, not just occasional volunteer activities, but your entire life. Talk to one of the pastors and discuss how you might use your gifts to live out your God-given calling.
3. I give back to Christ by giving to the church and to others in proportion to my income, with at least 10% as my goal.	Begin planning your financial giving as a proportion of your income, given at each pay period, rather than simply on impulse as a special appeal moves you.	Increase your giving by one or two percent of your income, as a move toward the goal of tithing (giving 10% of your income).	Make tithing the baseline for your giving as God makes that possible. Include God's kingdom in your estate planning, as well as in your regular, ongoing giving.
4. I spend time serving in God's world by helping meet critical needs and showing what it means to follow Jesus Christ.	Set aside at least two hours a month specifically for serving God and others.	Identify two non-productive activities you spend time on, and eliminate them in order to have more time to give to God's service. Attend a Crossings session.	Review your entire calendar. Ask yourself, "If I were accused of making God the most important person in my life, would my calendar convict me of that charge, or acquit me?"
5. I am actively nurturing the spiritual lives of others, sharing my faith story, offering spiritual encouragement and leading other to Christ	Invite a friend, a family member or a neighbor to attend worship or other church activity with you.	Be able to answer Jesus' question, "Who do YOU say that I am. Become comfortable sharing your own faith story.	Practice turning conversations toward a spiritual focus, creating more intentional opportunities for you to share your faith story. Make this a regular part of your interaction with others.