



COMMUNITY

Desire: *To develop a continual openness and awareness of Christ's presence living in me.*

Definition: *Christian community exists when believers connect with each other in authentic and loving ways that encourage growth in Christ. They engage in transparent relationships that cultivate, celebrate and make evident Christ's love for all the world.*

Scripture: *"I am writing you these instructions so that... you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." (1 Timothy 3:14-15)*

God-given fruit:

- *Working against the spirit of isolation and independence that cripples the church by practicing the "one anothers" within the body of Christ*
- *Having a relational rather than a functional definition of identity.*

Reflection Questions:

1. *How does the life you are leading reflect the value Christ places on belonging to the family of God?*
2. *When has the body of Christ nurtured and sustained you? What was it like for you?*

Spiritual Exercises:

1. *Ask someone to tell you their story. Listen to the story as deeply as you can. Tell the person how much it means to you to hear the story. How does the story give you a deeper understanding of your friend, of God and of yourself?*
2. *Include others in family gatherings. Practice what it is to belong to God's family- not just your nuclear family.*
3. *Begin a thank-you list. Thank God for the people in your life who have helped you grow. Write a song or poem about God's good gift of family.*