

## The Journey of a Covenant Disciple

By Marcel Doyon

**A**s I look back on the past two years as a member of a Covenant Discipleship group, I find myself blessed and thankful for John Wesley's emphasis on its importance to Christian growth and Reverend Jim Reuteler's devotion to it. To explain its impact on me I need to briefly describe my religious background and personal spiritual journey.



I was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition. It's a tradition that has served millions (like my parents) well. But somehow it didn't fit me. While still a teen I left the church and busied myself with other aspects of life. I worked, married, raised a family, and did the other incidentals that all people do. I still considered myself a Christian. I prayed most mornings, gave thanks (whenever I remembered to), and occasionally attended a Sunday service at different churches. In hindsight I recognize that I was a lukewarm Christian like the people of Laodicea referred to by John in Revelation (3: 14-16). At some point in my life certain

events unfolded that led me to understand that I needed a community to worship with. So I joined Grace United Methodist Church. There I found a Christian family that I liked and felt a fellowship with. But I continued to maintain a lukewarm posture until I was invited to attend a Discipleship class. Fortunately, I thought I was attending a 2 or 3-week class and not making a life long commitment. Had I known that, I'm quite certain I would have passed on it and missed out on the most important and inspiring part of my religious journey. I would have continued to attend church on Sundays. But I believe that would have been the extent of my "Christian Experience".

Instead, I've been compelled to look further within myself and grow as a Christian. I've learned to appreciate the warmth of writers like Joseph Girzone and conviction of martyrs like Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I find myself wanting to understand Scripture instead of just hearing it. Enjoying the challenge presented to me each week by my fellow Disciples. Because of Covenant Discipleship, my spiritual growth has been tenfold.

We each travel a different road on our journey to be closer to our Savior Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. But I pray that many more of you will consider joining a Covenant Discipleship group and experiencing the possibilities it presents. It's been one of the most important decisions I've ever made. Whatever your journey, may the Holy Spirit guide you. "I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith". Romans (1:11-12). ☩

## Covenant Discipleship at Saron United Church of Christ Sheboygan Falls, WI

### How has the group changed the lives of group members?

**I**n general, we have a deeper faith and greater understanding of how our faith is relevant in our daily lives. As a result, it impacts our decisions and interactions with others on a daily basis. We are more comfortable asking questions of ourselves and each other

about our faith, beliefs and understanding of Scripture. We have a stronger connection to our church, as evidenced by our level of involvement.

We have developed strong, familial type, bonds with each other. We enjoy our time together each week and genuinely care for and love each other. We celebrate our group's anniversary each year with communion and dinner at a local restaurant.

In seven years, we have been through a lot together. We have comforted and supported each other during sad and difficult times: stressful situations at work; illnesses of our own or of loved ones; changes and difficulties in our personal lives or families; deaths of loved ones. We have also celebrated the joys we have experienced: graduations of children from high school and college; engagements and weddings of children; accomplishments of a personal goal; births and baptisms of children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Through all of these things, we draw love,