

Adult Studies and Classes
at
Shelley Community
United Methodist Church
Shelley, Idaho



190 S. Holmes; PO Box 546; zip 83274

Telephone: (208) 357-3633

Fax: (208) 525-9387 or (775) 288-1529

Email: scumc@gobigwest.com

Web Page:

<http://pageproducer.gobigwest.com/scumc/index.html>

Shelley Community United Methodist Church
Adult Education Classes Rev. Michael Kennedy

A Model of Discipleship

“A Model of Discipleship” is one way of helping adults grow in their Christian faith and to understand what it is to be Jesus’ disciple. Rev. Kennedy wants to offer adult studies that help develop one’s understanding of the Holy Bible, the Christian life, and the spiritual disciplines, as taught by the tradition of the Church. The Spiritual disciplines are those things that we can intentionally do in order to grow in our experience of God’s grace: study, prayer, worship, and service. Rev. Kennedy believes that the adult studies/small groups must include foundational, informative studies if our classes are to help adults make the connection between attending a church and their life as a disciple of Jesus.

A model of discipleship offers classes/events in seven areas:

1. Bible Study
2. Christian Doctrine (beliefs)
3. Spiritual Disciplines/Faith Formation (personal devotion and congregational worship)
4. Social Issues and/or Mission Projects (linking faith to social questions; trips to communities in various locations (towns/cities, counties, states, countries) in order to provide direct mission support/services to others).
5. Personal Enrichment (personal, couple, and family relationships)
6. Faith Sharing/Evangelism
7. Training for Church Leaders/Members

Here are some studies that may stir your interest: (I know some of these studies look like they are expensive studies, but as other United Methodist congregations help each other, we could share in any of the studies below. Rev. Kennedy is certified/qualified to teach all the classes listed, except for *Jesus in the Gospels*, p.3)

1. Bible Studies

A Book of the Holy Bible

There is nothing like simply getting together to study a book of the Holy Bible. If persons request this method of Bible study, that’s

great. Rev. Kennedy is looking forward to offering a study on the letter Galatians because this letter is thought to be the very first letter or book written within the New Testament. What does this letter tell us about early Christianity?

Note: The following are professionally developed studies or books:

Encountering Jesus

This book is an introduction to who Jesus is in his many roles; it is scheduled for only 6 weeks.

Beginnings: A video based small group

This class invites seekers, new believers, and even longtime church members to take a fresh look at the Christian faith in a warm, relaxed setting. Participating churches report that new disciples are being won every day! The program balances individual study and reflection with an evening meal, fellowship, and group activities.

The 12 sessions take place over 9-12 weeks and include:

- Individual study during the week
- Weekly meetings that begin with a meal
- A 20-minute video presentation
- Discussion of the video and readings

The 12 sessions explore some of life's deepest questions:

So, is this all there is? (Introduction)

Who is Jesus, and why should I care? (Jesus Christ)

Why am I not where I want to be? (Sin and the Cross)

What happens when I die? (Death and Resurrection)

Can I trust God? (Providence and Suffering)

How does God speak to me? (The Bible)

If I don't feel lost, why do I need to be found? (Salvation and Conversion)

Can I start again? (Forgiveness and Wholeness)

How do I speak to God? (Prayer)

How can I make a life and not just a living? (The Good Life)

Why should I join any group that will have me as a member? (Church Membership)

Love feast! (Remembering, Sharing, and Continuing the Journey)

2. In-Depth Bible Studies: Disciple Bible Study Classes

There are four *Disciple Bible Study* Classes, each scheduled for 32-34 weeks. Each weekly class is introduced by a professor/pastor in a 15 minute video presentation. The weekly class is designed for two hours: reviewing video, the six scripture passages for that week (one for each day of the week), the study manual, and prayer. (The 32/34 week study is sometimes offered in two 16 week schedules for fall/spring.) The Disciple Bible Study series is “Bible study aimed at *transformation*-not just information.”

Disciple I “Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study” is an overview of the entire Holy Bible, from the Biblical story of Creation in Genesis to the New Jerusalem in Revelation. There is also a **youth edition of Disciple I**, which is written on a more appropriate level for high school youth. The hoped-for results of the program are to develop Biblically nourished persons committed to live as disciples.

Disciple II “Into the Word; Into the World” is a more detailed study of the Old Testament books of Genesis and Exodus and the New Testaments books of Luke and Acts.

Disciple III “Remember Who You Are” is a study of the Prophets and Paul’s Letters.

Disciple IV “Disciple: Under the Tree of Life” This Disciple study covers the Old Testament Writings (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) and the Gospel of John; 1,2,3 John; James; Jude and Revelation in the New Testament.

Jesus In The Gospels invites believers to look at Jesus in each of the four Gospels and ask the question "who is the Jesus that you see?" This study will deepen discipleship through better understanding of the biblical texts and their message.

Two questions frame this study—"Who is the Jesus you bring with you to this study?" and "Who is the Jesus you take with you from this study?" JESUS IN THE GOSPELS takes participants on a journey from one question to the other.

Completion of DISCIPLE: BECOMING DISCIPLES THROUGH BIBLE STUDY is prerequisite for JESUS IN THE GOSPELS.

JESUS IN THE GOSPELS is different from DISCIPLE Bible Study in its approach to Scripture—it looks more closely at the Gospel texts, in the kind of daily preparation and study required of the participants, in lesson layout and design, and in the nature of the study and discussion that takes place in the weekly group meeting.

JESUS IN THE GOSPELS focuses on the portraits of Jesus found in the four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The word in used in the title signals that this study takes an approach different from the familiar "life and teaching of Jesus" approach of reading stories and accounts of what Jesus said and did in order to draw conclusions about their meaning and about who Jesus was. This study looks at the way each Gospel writer presents events and teachings and at the picture of Jesus that emerges in each of the Gospels.

For more information about Disciple, look for the booklets or visit the web site:

<http://www.cokesbury.com/services.aspx?s=1>

Small Group Study Overview of Money and the Bible (Crown Financial Ministries)

The Small Group Study is a 10-week in-depth study of what scripture teaches about money and possessions. Graduates have confirmed that marriages are being strengthened and individuals are find their way out of debt. They are also becoming consistent savers, generous givers, and prudent consumers. Most importantly, people are entering into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ as they learn to apply His Word. Groups meet for 2 hours every week and include scripture memorization and interactive discussions.

There are four requirements for students participating in this study:

Daily prayer for each member of your group

Memorize one assigned scripture each week

Complete weekly homework assignments-both Bible study and practical application. (approximately 2 hours of homework per week)

<http://www.crown.org>

2. Christian Doctrine (Beliefs)

Christian Believer: Knowing God with Heart and Mind

This 30 week study program is similar to Disciple Bible Study. This study requires a weekly two hour class. Each weekly session begins with a video presentation of a seminary or university professor offering a 15 minute lesson on the doctrine to be discussed for that weekly session.

Your weekly study schedule is thirty to forty-five minutes of personal daily study, six days a week. Personal preparation includes reading the Bible, a manual teaching 30 doctrines of the Christian faith, and a “reader,” illustrated by the writings of early and modern church leaders, and prayer. The aim of this study is to provide an opportunity for people to better understand the doctrines of the church, “to the end that informed believing leads to committed discipleship.”

If you would like more information, look for the handbook by the church office or log onto the website:

<http://www.cokesbury.com/disciple> follow the link to Christian Believer on the left of web page.

3. Spiritual Disciplines

(Short Classes in Spirituality and Daily Living :)

Top Ten List for Christians: Priorities for Faithful Living

This book presents a contemporary list of ten things for Christians to remember as they live their lives as Christians; it is 10 weeks.

Attitude is Your Paint Brush: It Colors Every Situation

This book looks at how to transform negativity into optimism centered on the love and hope of Jesus Christ; it is 13 weeks.

Small Group Spirituality and Daily Living

Companions in Christ

This 28-week study develops the spiritual disciplines of Bible reflection (reading Scripture in new ways), prayer (various forms and styles of prayer), journaling, conversation, listening for the

Spirit, and discernment (serving God in obedience, and learning ways of giving and receiving spiritual guidance). The study uses the Holy Bible, a participant's book with readings and exercises, and a journal. Each week begins with an inviting and stimulating reflection by a recognized spiritual author. Over the next five days, scripture passages and questions guide you through your own reflections, as you note important insights in a journal. The week closes with a two-hour group session of no more than 10 people where you can share insights, reflect together, and take part in a variety of group exercises. Some of these exercises are inwardly focused, while others call for hands-on creativity. Web site: <http://www.upperroom.org/companions>

Covenant Discipleship: Christian Formation through Mutual Accountability

The author of this book (David Lowes Watson) reviews the basic method of how John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, originally helped people "become disciples." He teaches Wesley's General Rule, the process of faith, the deepening of grace, being accountable to others in a small group, and how to grow in our discipleship by these same disciplines: compassion, justice, worship, devotion, and accountability. If you are looking to experience "growing in grace" as modeled by John Wesley, this class is for you. This class is scheduled for approximately 10 weeks. You will then know how to form a Covenant Discipleship Group.

Web site: www.gbod.org/smallgroup and follow link to the left of web page.

"Growing Your Church Through Spiritual Gifts Workshop"

This 8 hour workshop is sponsored by the respected Stephen Ministries, located in St. Louis, Missouri. The focus of the workshop includes three goals: 1) to help participants discover their gifts, 2) to educate participants about spiritual gifts, discipleship, and calling, 3) to teach practical methods of helping church members use their gifts in ministry.

The benefit for each of us will be matching our involvement in church ministries with our particular gifts! Did you ever say to

yourself, “I really ought to help somewhere in the church,” then realize you did not enjoy your work? No more burn out because we are mismatched in a particular ministry.

A unique part of this workshop will be the presentation of recent research that relates to Spiritual Gifts. The *Huagh Spiritual Gifts Inventory* has been completed by 3,180 persons from 180 congregations representing 42 denominations. The results have been connected to 120 typical ministry activities. Congregations will no longer have to guess which gifts are associated with which ministry activity. The resources also contain sample job descriptions for the 120 ministry activities.

Each person will have the opportunity to take the inventory and score it for our personal results.

In the past, the pastor was to shepherd the church members. Ordained clergy were to minister *to and for* church members. “Today, one person [church staff persons] cannot possibly manage alone. Effective spiritual leadership must be *shared*. Today, effective pastoral leaders work *with* congregational leaders to create systems for effective mission and ministry. Pastoral leadership is not a solo endeavor, but a team act, where the pastor works to build teams and a team environment that honors the gifts and abilities of all people” The Changing Role of the Pastor, The General Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church.

The primary task of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. If each one of us better understands where our gifts fit into the specific ministry activities of the church, if each one of us is enabled to grow in our faith and our discipleship, we will better serve ourselves and others.

Daily Readings with John Wesley

This class guides persons in better understanding the spiritual teachings and disciplines. John Wesley was a professor at Oxford in the 1700's, as well as an Anglican priest. He sought to preach “plain truth for plain folks.” His preaching began the Methodist Movement. John Wesley kept a journal and a notebook during his

life, documenting his ever maturing understanding of the Christian life. We will read a 96 page book which has one page summaries of the fundamental ideas of the Christian life as explained and experienced by John Wesley, in addition to the Scriptural passages which these teachings are based. The one page summaries are John Wesley's own words, not an editor's. The "reader" (Daily Readings with John Wesley) begins with the idea of sin and works its way through such teachings as the spiritual birth, service to others, prayer, fasting, Christian freedom, to name a few, and ends with a life toward perfection. This "reader" is a wonderful aid, really bringing a deeper understanding and appreciation of Jesus as Lord and Savior. *Wesley's own words are filled with the passion and reason of a preacher and scholar!* There is plenty a material for daily reflection; this class is 8 weeks.

Forming Disciples

The Scripture readings for each Sunday were used by the early church as a way of forming disciples. Together, converts studied the Gospel passages as they prepared for Baptism. In this class, the Scripture readings from the preceding Sunday worship service would be used in a time of personal and group reflection; the main focus usually is on the Gospel reading. A time of purposeful reflection, guided questions, and prayer deepen one's faith. The purpose of this class is deepening our faith and clarifying our discipleship, connecting the gospel passage with discernment and ministry in daily life. This class is scheduled through the Church seasons of Lent, Easter, and Pentecost (spring—about 12 weeks).

The Jesus I Never Knew

This class is scheduled for 14 weeks. Based on the award winning book by Philip Yancey, the class will use video, weekly readings, and discussion to explore together the life of the most compelling, convincing, comforting, challenging and ultimately satisfying person anyone can know: Jesus Christ. According to Yancey, "No one who meets Jesus ever stays the same. In the end, I found the process of writing this book to be a great act of faith--strengthening. Jesus has rocked my own preconceptions and has made me ask hard questions about why those of us who bear his name don't do a better job of following him."

5. Social Issues and/or Mission

Mission Projects

Mission projects are available in many areas-- through Food Banks, Soup Kitchens, surrounding United Methodist Women, Men's Groups, and Youth groups, groups of persons traveling to a foreign country (Nicaragua), or with a VIM team (Volunteer in Mission) through our Annual Conference or the national church.

Mission projects undoubtedly prove to be life-changing experiences for persons who go to serve others. Miraculous experiences are often the result--from the deep friendships that develop the joy of serving others, and the gratitude of knowing our own blessings!

6. Personal Enrichment

All personal enrichment classes will include the discussion and application of Scripture, meant to under gird the benefits of the skills offered in the following class programs.

Life Search Series ...

This series of workbooks covers a variety of life issues from a Christian perspective. Each issue is presented in a personal as well as a community / congregational concern. Each workbook is designed to cover 6 weeks; the workbook is appropriate for personal, as well as partner or small group study.

...Parenting Your Parents

...Health and Wholeness

...Spiritual Disciplines

...Stress

...Dealing with Change

...Spiritual Gifts

Boundaries: When to Say Yes, When to Say No, To Take Control of Your Life

by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend.

The class requires the book, which is filled with Scriptural references; it is scheduled for 16 weeks. The book and video series presents the importance of having healthy, clear boundaries in a balanced life. Together they define what boundaries are and the purpose for boundaries in relationships.

Boundaries help clarify who I am and what I am responsible for and what I am not responsible for in relationships. Boundaries help clarify feelings of obligation and feelings of choice--how to decide. Some symptoms of a “boundary less” life are anger, lack of energy, feeling dominated and controlled by others, disorganization, or an inability to finish a job. Christians often think that we should do more and be more kind to others, though sometimes this attitude may cause an inability to take care of our self -- and a life that seems unmanageable.

To make matters worse, sometimes when people say, “no” to others, they get labeled rude or difficult to work with. Yet, sometimes saying no is important to a balanced, healthy life. Trying to live in the balance of taking care of oneself and yet helping others can be difficult.

Boundaries in Marriage

The authors Cloud and Townsend apply healthy boundaries to couple relationships. This book and workbook help couples apply the ten laws of boundaries, build appropriate boundaries in couple relationships, resolve conflict in marriage, and the book ends with an explanation about misunderstanding boundaries in marriage. Scripture passages are cited throughout the books. If there is any one cause of conflict in marriage, it is confused boundaries between spouses. The ideas are suitable for persons who are dating as well. If you are a single person, or if your spouse can't attend the class, don't let that prevent you from learning these important principles. This class is 16 weeks.

“Dynamics of Couple Relationships”

This study is scheduled for 6 weeks; it reviews the dynamics of couple relationships. This class will not focus on “skill development,” such as active listening, assertiveness, using “I statements,” goal setting, budgeting, etc. Developing those interpersonal skills might be described as seeing one's marriage or couple relationship from the inside. This class, instead, will allow

us to see our marriages or couple relationships from the outside. For example, we will look at the traits and the patterns of couple relationships—what hinders or allows people to have a “healthy” couple relationship. (“Healthy” couple relationships are often measured on two traits: stability and satisfaction.) Did you know that the *vast majority* of marriages are less satisfying for both partners within three years of the marriage date? All couples enter into the same tendencies and the same patterns of interaction—some are able to maintain a happy medium, while others enter into despair, while a few are able to enter a consistent state of happiness.

We all need insights which will allow us to see “the bigger picture” of couple relationships. There are many occasions when couples get into patterns where they “can’t see the forest for the trees.” In our relationship, if we are able to see the road just a little bit further, we can make positive choices.

Who wouldn’t want to have the most satisfying couple relationship possible? The class is suitable for anyone—teenager or adult—whether you are married, dating, or single. This class is not for couples per se; this class is for anyone who is interested in learning more about the traits of couple relationships. If your partner isn’t able to attend, or if you are single, please don’t let that hinder your participation. This information also will be a great asset for you—especially singles who may someday consider marriage.

Empowering Couples: Building on Your Strengths

This program develops specific skills within your marriage; it begins by building on your strengths and gives you the skills to help you turn your stumbling blocks into strengths.

A group of six to ten couples meet weekly to learn, practice, and share insights about these new skills. The program can be designed to last from 7 to 12 weeks.

Each couple needs to take the couple inventory (one of three designed for your circumstance). The Building A Strong Marriage Workbook is provided for each couple. Six couple exercises are then completed either at home or within the group. In addition, the book Empowering Couples: Building on Your Strengths provides

additional couple exercises and insights based on the categories of the inventory. *This book shares what happy couples are doing and what their strengths are.* The insights come from 21,501 married couples who took the ENRICH inventory in 1998-1999—5,153 couples who were both happily married, and 5,127 couples who were both not happily married. The PREPARE/ENRICH program has been taken by more than a million couples in the United States, and has been in use (and is constantly updated) for the past twenty years. This is a comprehensive study worth the investment of your time.

The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heart Felt Commitment to Your Mate

This book is by Gary Chapman; it comes with a comprehension study guide at the end of the book. The author explains how each person has a primary and a secondary love language. If you know how to “speak” your spouse’s love language, then their “love tank” will be full, rather than empty; as each person is better able to love their spouse the way they need to be loved, the more harmonious the relationship. The five love languages are quality time, words of affirmation, gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. Chapman’s simple idea supports the notion that how each spouse behaves in the relationship is simply their way of trying to gain the safety and comfort they need in the relationship—a great 8 week study.

Starting Again: A Divorce Recovery Program

Professional licensed counselor, Sandra Scott, developed this book from her own experience and offers it other Christians. She identifies the grief process, offers insights into survival and coping skills, explore new possibilities and options for your life, and helps you experience God’s loving and sustaining presence. A wonderful study that helps review one’s past marriage and plan for one’s future. This class is 9 weeks.

SOS Help For Emotions: Managing Anxiety, Anger, and Depression

This book explains Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Emotional Intelligence in simple, straightforward language.

The premise of REBT is that much of the anxiety, anger, and depression we suffer derive from the negative conversations we have with ourselves—negative or unrealistic “self-talk” subverts our ability to be happy and self-directed. Rather than lives events causing our feelings, our “self-talk” shapes our feelings. The ideas presented in this book can help persons have a more proactive, positive approach to lives problems and opportunities. Scripture is filled with the commandments to live (and think) with faith, hope, and love—all of which is “positive self-talk.”

PARENTING SKILLS

Boundaries with Kids: When to Say Yes, When to Say No, to Help Your Children Gain Control of Their Lives

Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend apply the ten laws of boundaries to parenting children. This book explains the “why” of boundaries—why children need to learn healthy boundaries and the benefits for our children as they struggle through the natural and logical consequences of life, developing healthy boundaries. Numerous examples offered in the book show parents how healthy boundaries are instilled in our children.

The Five Love Languages of Children

This 12 week class applies Gary Chapman’s “five love languages” to children. Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, M.D. help parents “hear” what their child(ren) are saying, and thus what their needs are. Ideas for understanding discipline, anger and love, single parent homes, and two couple homes are discussed. The book includes a workbook in the back section. This class is 12 weeks.

Becoming a Love and Logic Parenting Series

This 8-week class uses a video and a workbook. Each weekly meeting is suggested to be 2 hours. The strength of Becoming a Love and Logic Parenting Series is its ability to convey the philosophy and practical skills of parents expressing a heavy dose of love to their children/youth, while helping children/youth learn to think for themselves. This video series helps parents learn how NOT to become unnecessarily angry with their children and how to keep healthy boundaries between parents and children/youth. Dr.

Foster Cline, an adult and child psychiatrist, Jim Fay, high school principal, and Charles Fay, PhD, a Nationally Certified School Psychologist, developed this practical “how to” program.

7. Faith Sharing/Evangelism

Caring Evangelism: How to Live and Share Christ’s Love

The Stephen Series created this program to help Christians learn their own “good news story,” understand how we each grew in choosing our faith, and identify the needs of others as not only practical needs, but also spiritual needs. This class offers specific, concrete suggestions on how and when to appropriately share God’s love in Jesus Christ with others. This class uses a workbook and role play. This class is 16 weeks.

The Faith Sharing Congregation: Developing a Strategy for the Congregation as Evangelist

Congregations either have or do not have a strategy for helping people become disciples of Jesus Christ. The authors offer a simple, deliberate strategy: welcome people, help them belong, and help them grow as a disciple. How would we apply this lesson to Trinity UMC? This class is 8 weeks.

Witness: Exploring and Sharing Your Christian Faith

This class is scheduled for 25 weeks; it is designed to be a small group experience. The class uses Scripture, a manual, a personal journal, and video; it is a full study exploring and sharing the Christian faith. Each week has daily reading assignments and reflections, as well as an action assignment, encouraging you to discuss some aspect of the Christian faith with one to two other persons. Web site: www.gbod.org/witness

8. Training for Church Leaders /Members

Ideas can be discussed about training for church officers. Perhaps an annual retreat may be a possibility--a time for church members to gather for fellowship, study / training, and worship. A new theme could be chosen each year, as well as new topics for presentation and discussion.

The Discovery Church Journey Workshop

A workshop for strategic planning, using the following workbook: Ruffle, D. (2002). *The discovery church journey: An invitation to congregational transformation: A workbook for local churches*. The Evangelization and Church Growth Mission Program Area, General Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1527, New York, NY 10115.

Adult Forums (may be offered at any time)

The pastor, or invited guests, will offer brief studies (one to three week classes) on a specific topic during the Sunday morning Sunday school hour. These classes are designed to cover basic information about the Christian faith, Methodism, church leadership, and/or current social issues. These forums may be repeated on a rotating schedule.

Meet Rev. Michael Kennedy...

Michael's education includes the following:

Master of Divinity,
Graduate Certificate in Family Centered Practice (Specialist in Family Interventions),
Psycho Rehabilitation Specialist,
M.Ed. (HRTD) Training Analysis and Instructional Design

Rev. Michael Kennedy is an ordained pastor (Order of Elder) in The United Methodist Church, The Oregon-Idaho Conference. Michael is appointed by the Resident Bishop of The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference to serve as the Pastor of the Shelley Community United Methodist Church and also the Director of Christian Education at First Presbyterian Church (Idaho Falls) at the request of the Executive Presbyterian of the Kendall Presbytery. Michael's credentials include his being a "*Certified Specialist in Family Interventions*," having completed the graduate course work at Idaho State University, the Department of Counseling: the Family Centered Practice Graduate Certificate (1999). In addition, he is a *Certified Advanced Seminar Director of PREPARE /ENRICH /MATE premarriage and marriage inventories*. Michael

is also a *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Specialist*, through a local psychiatric agency. He has earned a *Master's of Education: Human Resource Training and Development*, from Idaho State University (2002), as well as the Master of Divinity from San Francisco Theological Seminary in 1990. Michael is a Registered Facilitator for the Disciple Bible Study (Abingdon Press & Cokesbury), a Registered Facilitator for the Christian Believer Study (Abingdon Press & Cokesbury), a Certified Advanced Trainer for Life Innovations, Inc. (Couple inventories and skill building workshops), a Facilitator for the “Becoming a Love and Logic Parenting Program,” and also a Registered Facilitator in The Discovery Church Journey Workshop. Michael has hopes of someday completing graduate course work, so he may be a licensed therapist, in Clinical Social Work. Michael enjoys learning and teaching. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is relevant for our lives—seeing change in people’s lives is what motivates Michael in parish ministry. Fly fishing, art, learning, and getting to know people are his hobbies. He is married to Sharon, who is a Nationally Certified Pharmacy Technician and a student pursuing her education in hope of being a pharmacist or a veterinarian.

The Benefits of Assessments

The ability to assess and evaluate family functioning can be a great asset in a parish ministry. Occasionally, families find the stresses of life to be more than they can handle. Identifying strengths within a particular family can help them to better use their strengths and solve problems, while identifying growth areas can help families improve in these areas or to find community resources to help with their specific needs. Getting the family back to smooth functioning is the benefit of assessment and evaluations. When families are assessed, each member of the family completes one or several inventories designed to measure the overall functioning of a family. The trained clinician evaluates a family by offering his or her personal opinion on how well this family uses its strengths or gets stuck in patterns that perpetuate problems. A clinical report with recommendations for treatment (interventions) is written. Such reports are written for counselors,

therapists, and psychiatrists who offer treatment for families, as well as courts and social service agencies.

One key aspect of the Family Centered Practice course work is **prevention**. Prevention is learning new skills or gaining personal insights rather than receiving treatment. Often, a member of a family may seek guidance before a situation worsens or to prepare for an expected transition within the family. Seeking guidance in these times is securing the benefits of prevention.

COUPLE INVENTORIES

The PREPARE / ENRICH / MATE inventories are designed to benefit **couples** as they prepare for marriage, or seek marriage enrichment. A seven to twelve week program for couples is based on these inventories, “Empowering Couples: Building on Your Strengths.”

YOUTH LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

In addition, there is a thirteen-week **life skills program for youth**, Building Relationships: Developing Skills for Life.

Web site: www.Lifeinnovations.com

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