

talent, or gift you have, but it may also be a totally different gift that God through His Spirit gives to you in order to accomplish His mission through His church.

- There are a number of “spiritual gifts” passages. Let’s look at a few of them. Read together Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11-16; and 1 Peter 4:10-11. What words or phrases stick out to you in these passages?
- What are some of the spiritual gifts that these passages list out?
- Spiritual gifts are given for the growth of the body of Christ “as each part does it work” (Eph. 4:16). How have you seen some of these gifts being utilized in your group and in the larger community of First Methodist Mansfield to help us grow as the body of Christ?
- What is your spiritual gift? [If you don’t know, you can take a free Spiritual Gifts test at <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/spiritual-gifts-online-assessment>]. What ways can use your gift to minister to others? Which ministries of our church match some of the gifts listed?
- 1 Peter 4:10 states that “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” None of these lists comprehensively cover all the many and various gifts that God can give to his church, because God’s grace can be given in many and various ways. What gifts have you seen at work in your group and in our church that you would add to this list?
- Paul says in Romans that one of the motivations for knowing and using our gifts is that “each of us belong to all the others” in the body of Christ (Romans 12:5). How is belonging and connection magnified when we begin to use our gifts to serve?

## Together in Service

This picture of a strong, growing, mature body of Christ is not just about our ministry to one another within the body of Christ. It points to the reality that when Christ ascended to heaven he commissioned the church as His presence, His body, to advance God’s kingdom in this world. One of our Sunday groups has taken the name “His Hands, His Feet,” and that is a good summary of how we as the body of Christ at First Methodist are called to serve together in our community. We are Christ’s hands and feet,

extending His presence into the places that He sends us.

**As we allow the Spirit to twine together our resources, skills, gifts, and callings as a community of faith we will begin to see Christ’s presence cast a wider and wider net of impact within our neighborhoods, communities, workplaces, and world.**

- Read Luke 5:27-32. This is another example of Jesus calling someone to serve. Note how He calls Levi, a tax collector, and in turn Jesus gains access to “a large crowd of tax collectors” (Luke 5:29) through the banquet that Levi puts together. Sometimes you are called to serve in a job or live in a neighborhood so that you can be the access point for Christ’s presence in that place. Are there any specific people that the Spirit has placed on your heart for you to represent Christ to them--to become the access point for Christ’s presence in their lives?
- Both Peter (Luke 5:11) and Levi (Luke 5:28) said yes to Jesus’ call, and this meant that they were able to see Jesus create many more “big fish” stories through their lives (you can read about many of them in the book of Acts). What “big fish” stories could Christ be waiting to create in the places He has called you to? How can we become better at supporting one another as a group and as a community of faith as we “fish for people” (Luke 5:10)?

## CLOSING PRAYER

If you have not already done so, take some time to take down prayer requests and pray over these needs together. Be sure to email these out to your group members so that you can be praying “together” for one another throughout the week. Close your time by reading and praying together an edited version of a prayer poem attributed to the 16th century Christian mystic, Teresa of Avila:

Christ has no body but ours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but ours,  
Ours are the eyes with which he looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Ours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Ours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Ours are the hands, Ours are the feet,