



Scripture, Story, and Spirit *Discerning the Way of Jesus Together*

First Baptist Church of Asheville will be a church that welcomes and includes all in a way consistent with God's love and wisdom.

Opening Prayer

Psalm 19:14

*Let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts
be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.*

Guiding Words

As our congregation seeks to be faithful to the way of Jesus, we read & study Scripture together, listen with respect to one another's stories, and seek guidance from God's Spirit for all we say and do.

1. We emphasize the importance of Scripture and its guidance for discernment (1 Corinthians 14:26-33). Read & study Scripture individually and in community.
2. We interpret from our own context. Share your story, experiences, and understanding.
3. We listen to the stories and experiences of one another, especially those from different perspectives. Seek first to understand and learn in love.
4. We spend time in prayer for the Spirit's guidance.
5. We assume positive intent. Assume that those in our congregation pray and read Scripture to learn how to live the life God is calling them to live.
6. We recognize the sacred worth of all persons, each one created in the image of God.
7. We join with Jesus who prayed that we all may be one. Seek unity in truth and love, that all may be encouraged.

Follow-up Questions to the Discernment Bible Study

1. What interpretation of Scripture was new to you?
2. Has there been a time when you changed your mind based on a new understanding of Scripture?
3. What helps you interpret Scripture? To whom do you give authority in interpretation?
4. What question do you have today that might need a response? (Please share with Discernment Committee)
5. Have you listened to the stories of church members who identify as LGBTQ? If so, what did you learn from them? If not, would you be willing to listen to them?

Prayer

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. – 1 John 4:18