

The title slide features the text "Hudson UMC Discipleship Pathway" in a green, sans-serif font. The background is white with abstract green geometric shapes on the right side.

Hudson UMC Discipleship Pathway

RECORD

We're here to provide you with information about HUMC's discipleship pathway and the team that will be formed to implement the pathway here. If something is not clear, I welcome you to stop me and ask questions.

The DP is one of two transitions we're currently making as a church, the other being the SAS leadership model. It's fitting that they happen together, because each supports the other.

SAS is organized around a mission, always asking, "What decision will support our mission?"

HUMC's mission is to make disciples.

**To make and mature
disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation
of the world.**

Hudson UMC Mission Statement

Disciples aren't just made; they mature over time.

How they're made is something that we've learned more about over the past year.

The DP as a strategy for accomplishing our mission.

Before we talk any further about the discipleship pathway, we need to pause and define the term, disciple.

What is a disciple?

Someone who trusts and follows Jesus, is being changed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus.

There are many “right” ways to say it...

- Change
- That change has resulted in a calling that leads to action

A disciple has become part of what God is doing in the world, continuing the work of Jesus.

Our mission is to make disciples.

Making disciples is fundamentally different from making members, which is the easy fall-back position for churches. I think it’s helpful to spend some time contrasting the two.

Here is how my resources describe the differences.

Making Members:
**Using people to
build the church.**

Using people...

- To fill our programs
- To fill our pews

Idea/approach:

We can build it, you can help.

.

Making Members:
**Using people to
build the church.**

Making Disciples:
**Using the church
to build people.**

Using resources of the church to invest in the spiritual formation of its people.

The church is encouraging and enabling people in their own growth and ministries.

Idea:

You can build it, we can help.

You can see how this is related to the definition of a disciple. There is a call to action, and the church positions itself to support those calls.

Making Members:

GOALS

**Attendance, Giving,
Participation in church's
ministries**

Goals focus on...

Making Members:

GOALS

**Attendance, Giving,
Participation in church's
ministries**

Making Disciples:

GOALS

**Transformation; To develop and
deploy people in their own
ministries to which they are
gifted and feel called**

Transformation of people. Transformation of the world...

When making disciples is the goal, the concern is how the Holy Spirit is working in people's lives

Making Members:
**A volunteer
culture**

Constant recruiting of volunteers

Church is recruiting for its own conceived ministries.

People are waiting to be asked.

Result: small numbers of people doing large amounts of work

Making Members:

**A volunteer
culture**

Making Disciples:

**A calling
culture**

People are actively asking themselves where they are being called.

Result: the ministries of the church reflect the gifts and passions of its people.

Making Members:
**Leads to burnout
and disengagement.**

Making Members:
**Leads to burnout
and disengagement.**

Making Disciples:
**Leads to people
involved and energized
for ministry.**

People are working in their areas of strength, expertise, passion.

Doing work that energizes them.

***Discipleship only happens
INTENTIONALLY.***

Discipleship only happens **INTENTIONALLY.**

Environment

Mindset/Culture

A church needs to create an **environment** for discipleship to happen: a clear path to follow. When we talk more about that, you'll see that many parts of a pathway are already in place here at HUMC. But they're currently not being presented in relation to discipleship.

But the environment also needs to be supported by a **discipleship mindset and culture**. *This* is actually the shift that will either make or break this effort.

- A discipleship mindset in our **Members** means that they're actively *seeking out* the path toward becoming spiritually mature and *deliberately* taking their next steps along it.
- A discipleship mindset in our **Leadership**, who are creating and supporting the path, is to position themselves as a *guide* who shows the way to the next steps and also challenges members to walk along the path.

Our intention, then, is to encourage personal ownership of one's own spiritual formation, with the church playing a very important

equipping and guiding role.

Discipleship Pathway

A STRATEGY for making disciples

The Discipleship Pathway represents the church's investment in its people. When we develop our discipleship pathway, we're developing our strategy for making disciples.

As part of our strategy...

Discipleship Pathway

A STRATEGY for making disciples

➤ We offer opportunities for intentional growth.

Take the form of:

- Bible studies
- Fellowship Events
- Small Groups
- Service Projects
- Spiritual Discernment Class
- SHAPE Class that guides one to discover where they're called and most suited to serve.
- Faith 101-type classes in topics like prayer or worship,...

We already have many of these elements in place, but not all of them, and we need to develop our capabilities in the next two areas:

Discipleship Pathway

A STRATEGY for making disciples

- We offer opportunities for intentional growth.
- We make those opportunities visible and accessible.

Discipleship Pathway

A STRATEGY for making disciples

- We offer opportunities for intentional growth.
- We make those opportunities visible and accessible.
- We create a culture of both invitation and challenge, as well as personal responsibility.

Invitation and challenge on the part of the **church**. Embedded in this is an air of expectation around individuals pursuing growth.

And then, personal responsibility on the part of every **member** to seek out opportunities to grow.

Again, the **culture** will be the hardest part of this movement or mission to affect, but it will also be the most influential factor in its success.

Responsibilities of the Discipleship Pathway Team that we're forming are two-fold.

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

The creation of the discipleship pathway is based on two understandings:

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

**Becoming a disciple
is an evolution that
develops over time.**

For simplicity, we're identifying 4 stages of growth.

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

**Becoming a disciple
is an evolution that
develops over time.**



For now, we're calling them Exploring, Beginning, Growing, Maturing.

Exploring (new to faith; looking for something more)

Asking: *What is all this?*

Beginning (trying things; looking for understanding)

Asking: *What does all this mean?*

Growing (beginning to be changed)

Asking: What does this mean to *me*?

Maturing (mentoring others, looking to give back)

Asking: *What can I do with all of this?*

Not MATURE – all fluid, lifelong process

With an awareness of this evolution, we can make available spiritual growth opportunities and experiences in all of these stages so that people can begin where they are and continue to grow through the next stages.

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

**Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.**

2nd understanding

1. *Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.*



Worship

**Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.**

A disciple **worships** and grows through worship.

1. *Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.*

Worship

Community

Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.

A disciple is part of a **community** of other disciples who disciple one another.

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

Worship

Community

Spiritual Practices

Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.

A disciple spends time with God through **spiritual practices**:
prayer, Bible reading, devotional reading, meditation, journaling,...

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

Worship

Community

Spiritual Practices

Generosity & Service

Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.

A disciple **gives** of themselves and their resources to **serve** others.

A disciple is service-oriented and other-focused, as Jesus was –
which leads us to...

1. Build the structure of HUMC's discipleship pathway.



Becoming a disciple
involves multiple
disciplines.

A disciple is not only *learning* about Christ's life and teachings but is *evolving* to become more **Christ-like**.

As a church, we want to offer opportunities and experiences to help people mature in *all* of these areas.

And someone may be in a different stage of growth in all of these areas.

2. Develop the communication plan needed for the success of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

2nd responsibility of the Discipleship Pathway Team...

A communication plan...

- To affect the necessary mindset shifts.
- To simplify the process of growing as a disciple.
- That makes the best use of all communication platforms.

2. Develop the communication plan needed for the success of HUMC's discipleship pathway.

- **Messaging**
- **Branding/Marketing**
- **Website**
- **Digital Tools**
- **Print Tools**
- **Social Media**

These are some areas we'll focus on with our communications.

We'll develop the plans, but it won't be our task to create or implement a webpage or a digital communication...

We've already developed a position for a **Digital Media and Communications Coordinator** and we're currently in the beginning stages of our search process.

Part of this person's role will be to use their knowledge and skills in communications to support efforts like ours here at HUMC.

Making disciples of Jesus who make disciples.



We want to be very intentional about how we go about putting a clear and effective discipleship pathway in place here at HUMC. So, we're forming a team whose sole responsibility will be to define and build a system that by its structure, **will bear fruit** in making disciples.

In putting together a discipleship team, we want to recruit those...

- Who believe in this approach and feel strongly about helping HUMC move in this new direction.
- (To be consistent with the model,) Who regard serving in this way as an application of their gifts, passions, and skills and a step in their own faith formation.

Making disciples of Jesus
who make disciples.



QUESTIONS?