

give us the greatest joy, fulfillment and effectiveness. Please check the list of dreams on the next page and select all that apply. Remember, this isn't a complete list of possible dreams. Write yours in if it's not listed here.

Experiences

Good or bad, our experiences have made us who we are today. As we look at life through the eyes of God, we come to understand that God's gracious, healing touch can use all of our experiences to prepare us for service. Our pain can help us minister to others in pain. Our success can give hope and direction to others who are failing. All of our experiences — family, work, ministry, relationships, circumstances — are building blocks God can use to equip us to serve. So review your life experiences, and prayerfully ask God to guide you in using those experiences to bless others.

Hitting Your S.T.R.I.D.E. And there you have it — a quick outline of how you can find your S.T.R.I.D.E. for service to God and others. There is, of course, more to learn, and the real fun of the process comes in actually getting involved in service, "getting our hands dirty" for God.

Next Steps For help in connecting your S.T.R.I.D.E. with a service opportunity, the following options are available:

- Learn more about spiritual gifts classes at Ardmore by visiting www.ardmoreumc.org/spiritualgifts or contact _____
- Once you've identified your S.T.R.I.D.E. profile and are ready to get involved, contact _____

God bless you as you discover your unique personal S.T.R.I.D.E. as you connect to God, one another, and the world.

Trusting
 Prayerful
 Conscientious
 Objective
 Inspiring
 Motivating
 Faith-Filled
NURTURING
 Persevering
 Visionary
 Intuitive
COMPASSIONATE
 Responsible
 Comforting
 Resourceful
 Organized
SENSITIVE
RELATIONAL
 Merciful
 Challenging
HUMBLE
 Optimistic
 Giving
 Adaptable

DREAMS

(check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abuse Victims | <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Moms | <input type="checkbox"/> Chronically Ill | <input type="checkbox"/> Mission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community | <input type="checkbox"/> Drama | <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. High Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. High Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Fitness | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Minorities | <input type="checkbox"/> College Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction/Recovery | <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly | <input type="checkbox"/> Decorating | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitalized | <input type="checkbox"/> Singles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Underprivileged | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Design Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Babies | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipping | <input type="checkbox"/> Infertility | <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Discipleship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Widows/Widowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing Leaders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospice Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prisoners | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Care Giving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship | <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening | <input type="checkbox"/> Event Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Grief/Grieving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing/Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Video Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship with God | <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement of Others |
- Other _____

TALENTS • SKILLS • ABILITIES

(check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting/Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Good Listener |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drama | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Graphics | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music—Vocal | <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Knowledge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Sound Mixing | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Decorating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic | <input type="checkbox"/> CPR/First Aid | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Event/Party Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Set Design/Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Music—Instrumental |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painting | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Coach | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Data Entry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera Operator | <input type="checkbox"/> Craftsmanship | <input type="checkbox"/> Encourager | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Creative | <input type="checkbox"/> Career Counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Desktop Publishing | |
- Other _____

Ardmore United Methodist Church Guide to:

Hitting Your S.T.R.I.D.E.

He has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ... Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

- Ephesians 4:7-16, selected verses, NLT

One key membership expectation at Ardmore United Methodist Church is that each member will give time and energy in service to others. That expectation is based on four foundational Bible passages: Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4:1-16 and 1 Peter 4:8-11. However, it can be hard to decide where and how we will serve. There are so many good and important ministries. Not even the most dedicated Christian can possibly respond to all of the calls that cross our path. The question is, how shall we choose?

The answer is a process called S.T.R.I.D.E.

- S** Spiritual Gifts
- T** Talents
- R** Resources
- I** Individuality
- D** Dreams
- E** Experiences

Just as you cannot fit a square peg into a round hole, you cannot fit all people into the same ministry positions. Every position, and every person, is unique. The purpose of the S.T.R.I.D.E. process is to help you understand how God has created you, and to help you find an area of service that fits you well.

This guide will introduce you to the S.T.R.I.D.E. process, and help you start down the path of meaningful service. There is much we can't cover here — please consider this the beginning of your journey, not the end! As the Holy Spirit urges you to learn more, and deepen your understanding of how God has equipped you to serve, the church offers Spiritual Gifts classes several times a year, as well as personal consultations and support from the Guest Services office. You'll want to check them out at the appropriate time. But for now, let's get started!

Spiritual Gifts

In a nutshell, here are some of the main things the Bible teaches us about spiritual gifts:

- Every Christian (yes, even you) has one or more God-given spiritual gifts (1Corinthians 12:7)
- Spiritual gifts are given, not for personal improvement or profit, but to serve others (1Peter 4:10)
- God, not us, chooses which spiritual gifts we receive (1Corinthians 12:18)
 - We're each gifted to fill a different place in God's service — both envy and ego are ruled out
 - Only as we all do our unique parts will the church achieve its God-intended effectiveness
- The Church operates like our body, with each part doing its special function, and all directed by the Head, Jesus Christ (Romans 12:4-8)

So which spiritual gifts has God given you? Ultimately, the best way to discover that is to "try out" various service areas. Those areas in which you are most effective, that bring you the most joy, and in which you receive the greatest support and confirmation from fellow Christians will be the ones in which God has gifted you to serve. Use this guide to narrow the options so you can focus your choice of which service areas you want to try out.

Here's an exercise to help you start thinking about which gifts God may have given you. Listed on the adjacent page are some of the gifts identified in Scripture that are often used in service at Ardmore United Methodist Church. Under each gift's name is a word or phrase that indicates its contribution to the church along with a list of words that are often descriptive of people having that gift. If five or more words on a list are true of you, you may have received that gift. To further explore the gifts you may have, ask one or more Christian friends or family members who know you well to do the same process for you, without knowing your answers.

Talents

Everyone (not just Christians) are born with natural talents. We may also develop talents through workplace experiences, schooling, and in other ways. God often takes our talents and uses them with our spiritual gifts. To help assess your talents, prayerfully study the list (which is just a sampling) and check all that apply.

Resources

The word "resources" may bring finances to mind, but our resources also include our time, our contacts, our hobbies and many other things. Our time is one of the most critical elements of the S.T.R.I.D.E. profile to consider when looking for a place to serve. The time you have available will vary greatly depending on your season of life. Parents with young children will likely have less available time to serve than single persons, empty-nesters or retirees. God calls us to be good stewards of the time that we do have, and to use it in serving one another, but we also have to balance that with the demands of our life stage. God doesn't want us to burn out! Jesus urged us to "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." (Matthew 6:20) In other words, He called on us to find ways to invest our earthly resources in things that have eternal value. This is an important part of our service profile: how am I using my resources? How could I use them more effectively to advance God's Kingdom?

Individuality

Are you a "big picture" person, or do you like to work out every detail of a project? Which is harder — being with 12 other church members discussing a need, or being alone writing a proposal about that need? It's important to understand your individuality — the way that you work best.

There are many ways to understand personal styles. For S.T.R.I.D.E., we work with two dimensions: one axis from Extrovert (energized through interaction with people) to Introvert (energized by reflection, usually alone), and the other from Stable (prefer deadlines, structure, accountability and systems) to Flexible (focused on goals, preferring to leave details to be worked out). This produces four basic styles:

- Extrovert/Stable: likes clearly-defined relationships, warm, thoughtful, loyal, trusting
- Extrovert/Flexible: spontaneous, enthusiastic, fun, inspirational, welcomes change
- Introvert/Stable: quiet, reflective, practical, thorough, fact-oriented
- Introvert/Flexible: prefers general guidelines, self-confident, competitive, risk-taking, visionary

Few people are "pure" examples of just one style, but most of us can identify one of these four styles that seems to describe us best. Seek ministry opportunities that are a good fit for your style.

Dream

God cares about every need that exists on earth — every hurt, every brokenness, and every lost person. But God knows that such expansive caring is beyond our humanness. That is why God places a dream (a desire, a passion, an interest, a calling) in each of our hearts. Our dream helps to define the sphere in which our gifts can function best.

Our dreams are often about helping a particular people group (e.g. the elderly), advancing a particular cause (e.g. relieving hunger), or exercising a particular function in a helping way (e.g. mentoring). The list on the next page is meant to help you begin thinking about where your dream lies. Your dreams are another element of your S.T.R.I.D.E. profile that often change based on your season of life or your life experiences. For instance, you may be very passionate about working with teenagers, but faced with an aging parent with Alzheimer's, find yourself becoming more focused on helping others cope with that issue. In the end, as with our gifts, we discover our dreams through trying various areas of service, and finding the one (s) that

CIRCLE THE GIFTS YOU MAY HAVE

<p>Administration Efficiency</p> <p>Conscientious Objective Efficient Organized Dependable Thorough Goal-oriented</p>	<p>Giving Resources</p> <p>Charitable Generous Responsible Disciplined Depends on God Good steward Resourceful</p>	<p>Mercy Care</p> <p>Empathetic Tender Sensitive Responsive Kind Compassionate Burden-bearing</p>
<p>Apostleship New Ministries</p> <p>Entrepreneurial Cause-driven Risk-taking Adaptable Persevering Adventurous Culturally sensitive</p>	<p>Healing Wholeness</p> <p>Faith-filled Power in prayer Submissive Compassionate Spiritual Humble Trusts in God</p>	<p>Pastor-Teacher Shepherding</p> <p>Nurturing Disciple-maker Guiding Relational Protective Facilitating Instructing</p>
<p>Discernment Clarity</p> <p>Insightful Truthful Confronting Intuitive Receptive Perceptive Decisive</p>	<p>Helps Assistance</p> <p>Available Reliable Pragmatic Dependable Willing Selfless Servant-oriented</p>	<p>Prophecy Conviction</p> <p>Confronting Convicting Uncompromising Penetrating Outspoken Authentic Compelling</p>
<p>Evangelism The Good News</p> <p>Confident Relational Faith-sharing Outgoing Spiritual Challenging Communicator</p>	<p>Hospitality Welcome</p> <p>Warm Open Relational Friendly Hospitable Inclusive Outgoing</p>	<p>Teaching Application</p> <p>Articulate Analytical Practical Well-grounded Authoritative Incisive Teachable</p>
<p>Encouragement Motivation</p> <p>Supporting Affirming Consoling Challenging Reassuring Comforting Positive</p>	<p>Leadership Direction</p> <p>Diligent Visionary Persuasive Influential Role model Activating Inspiring</p>	<p>Wisdom Guidance</p> <p>Reasonable Thoughtful Clear-sighted Skillful Sensible Obedient to God's will Wise</p>
<p>Faith Confidence</p> <p>Prayerful Assured Trusting Illuminating Optimistic Convinced Hopeful</p>	<p>Knowledge Awareness</p> <p>Comprehending Astute Rational Observant Diligent Reflective Studious</p>	