This guide, part of Antioch's *Spiritual Formation Series*, focuses on spiritual wellness through communal care. Rooted in the biblical principle of *Ubuntu* — "I am because we are" — it introduces five care systems that ensure no one grows alone. Practical steps and a personal planning section help participants both receive and extend Christlike care within the church.

Spiritual Formation Series

Living in Community Through Ubuntu

Pastor Hawkins

ANTIOCH
BAPTIST·CHURCH

Antioch Ubuntu

Ubuntu Care: A Philosophy of Christian Community and Growth

Introduction

At Antioch, spiritual growth happens through a grace-filled journey supported by three interconnected frameworks:

- **Identity Through Purpose** — You are uniquely made by God. Discover your identity and live with intentionality.
- **Community Through Ubuntu** — We grow better together. Ubuntu Care helps us love and support one another.
- **Maturity Through the 7 Commitments** — Growth doesn't happen by accident. These commitments help us take meaningful next steps in faith.

This guide focuses on *Community Through Ubuntu* — our framework for living in connection with the church and world. It includes both the philosophy and the practical systems that help us live and grow together in Christ.

Antioch Ubuntu is a strategic initiative designed to help our church live out its mission through a unified approach to pastoral care and discipleship. It is built on interconnected systems of care that promote resilience, healing, and maturity by integrating Christian identity, spiritual formation, Christian care, and biblical justice. Together, these systems form a comprehensive network that transforms lives and communities for the glory of God.

Applying the Spirit of Ubuntu

Beyond formal care systems, Ubuntu is a mindset. It means:

- Embracing connectedness.
- Choosing community over isolation.
- Engaging in biblical justice.
- Being present for others and letting others be present for you.

As we grow in Christ, Ubuntu invites us to say with our lives: *"I am because we are."*

Philosophical, Biblical, and Theological Foundations

Ubuntu is an African philosophy meaning, "I am only because we are." It reflects our biblical calling to live in compassionate, connected community shaped by the many "one another" commands of the New Testament.

Christian Identity affirms that every believer is a "new creation" in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), growing through spiritual disciplines and reflection within trusted Christian relationships.

Spiritual Formation is the lifelong journey of becoming like Christ (Romans 8:29), shaped by both personal devotion and shared spiritual practices.
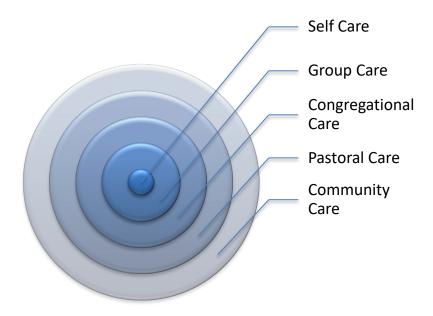
Christian Care is the intentional demonstration of compassion that helps others face life's challenges while continuing to grow in faith and community.

Biblical Justice affirms the dignity of all people created in God's image (Genesis 1:26–27) and calls us to respond to injustice with truth and compassion.

Resilience is the spiritual capacity to endure hardship and "press on toward the goal" (Philippians 3:14) through faith, supported by God and Christian community.

Healing is the restoration of the soul (Psalm 23:3), made possible by God and nurtured through environments of grace, forgiveness, and love.

Maturity is the pursuit of Christlikeness (Colossians 1:28–29), nurtured through intentional spiritual growth and total dependence on God.

Self Care

Group Care

Congregational Care

Pastoral Care

Community Care

Ubuntu Care: Our Five Interconnected Systems of Care

Ubuntu Care is organized into five care systems that work together to support spiritual growth and well-being across our church and community:

1. **Self-Care** Encouraging personal spiritual and emotional growth through daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual spiritual rhythms of self-care.
2. **Group Care** Facilitating care through small groups and ministries where mutual support, accountability, and growth can happen.
3. **Congregational Care** Ensuring every member is seen, supported, and encouraged through structured support from the diaconate and church leadership.
4. **Pastoral Care** Providing specialized support from the pastor during times of transition, crisis, or discernment.
5. **Community Care** Extending care beyond the church through partnerships, service projects, and local outreach to meet needs in the broader community.

These systems overlap and strengthen one another. When they work together, we build a culture where compassion is consistent, growth is intentional, and care is shared.

My Community Care Plan

"Ubuntu Care invites you to reflect on your needs and how you'll stay connected. Use this section to create a simple, personal care plan."

Self-Care
- What spiritual rhythm do I need to strengthen right now?
- Which tool or rhythm resource will support me?
  - ⚒ *Tools Available:*
    - *[Embracing Spiritual Rhythms (Commitment 3)](#)*
    - *[Learning Module 3: Embracing Spiritual Rhythms](#)*

Group Care
- Which discipleship group, class, or community am I part of?
- How will I contribute to the health of this group?
  - ⚒ *Tools Available:*
    - *[Learning Module 4: Belonging to a Discipleship Group](#)*

Congregational Care
- Who is my assigned diaconate/care leader?
- How will I stay connected to them or share care needs this season?

Pastoral Care
- Are there any issues that I need additional support from the pastor? (ex: premarital, marital, divorce, grief and loss, trauma, conflict, spiritual development)
  - ⚒ Tools Available:
    - [Pastoral Care Consent Form](#)

Community Care
- Are there any issues that I need additional support from the community? (grief and loss, addiction, abuse, employment, financial, housing, education, etc.)
  - ⚒ *Tools Available:*
    - [Community Resource Directory](#)

Next Steps & Follow-Up

- Transfer my care plan into My Personal Growth Plan
- Who can I share my plan with for encouragement and accountability?

🌱 My Personal Growth Plan

Name: _____

Date Completed: _____

Begin this plan during Session 3 and continue it with your Next Step Guide. It's designed to help you reflect on your identity in Christ, engage in community care, and grow with purpose at Antioch.

✨ Rooted in Identity Through Purpose

Reflect on your personal calling and how God is shaping you to grow and serve.

- 💬 **What aspects of the Purpose Document (Ultimate, Universal, Corporate, and Personal) need to be addressed now?**

- 🛠️ **What is my plan for addressing these areas?**

  _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

🤝 **Living in Unity Through Ubuntu**

Identify how you'll engage with the 5 systems of care at Antioch.

- 💛 **Self-Care:**
  Which spiritual rhythms will I begin practicing?

  _____

- 👥 **Group Care:**
  What group am I joining or staying connected to?

  _____

- ⛪ **Congregational Care:**
  Who is my assigned diaconate, and how will I stay connected with them?

  _____

- 🤝 **Pastoral Care:**
  Are there any personal or family needs I should share with the pastor for additional support or prayer?

  _____

- 🌍 **Community Care:**
  What additional community resources do I need at this time?

  _____

🌱 Developing in Maturity Through the 7 Commitments

Take steps toward a lifestyle of spiritual growth.

- 📌 **How I will walk with the 7 Commitments:**
  ☐ Individually
  ☐ In a Discipleship Group *(recommended)*
  ☐ With a group of family or friends
- 🎓 **Do I know how to access the learning modules?**
  ☐ Yes
  ☐ Not yet
- 📚 **What learning module do I plan to explore first and why?**

_____

_____

_____

🗓️ Follow-Up Timeline

Check in regularly with your Next Step Guide.

- Initial Plan Started: _____

- 30-Day Check-In Notes:

_____

- 90-Day Check-In Notes:

_____

- 6-Month Reflection:

_____