The way to…

To live is to live here and now – of the one universal Good News message as the Kingdom of God.

To proclaim the Good News requires that the server be competent and healthy. Service is not systemic injustice, oppression, universal and material abundance and wealth accumulation and to be more important than pledges and oaths and empire and nationalism and patriotism and citizenship and civic religion and national and race and gender and sexual orientation and geography and religion and slavery, and not an opportunity or a justification for the server to be oppressed or abused.

To know that the children of God are one family in one place. There are no races, no tribes, no indigenous peoples, no ethnic groups, no castes, no nations, no royalty, no aristocracy, no kings, no classes, no economic systems, no nation, no denominations, no sects, no churches, no elite, no privileged, no saved, no unsaved, no slaves, no outcasts, no untouchables – none of these are a consideration or a barrier or a limitation to the possession and development and utilization of time and effort and gifts and talents for service to others or participation in the Kingdom of God – there is no “us” and no “them”, no “here” and no “there”, no families other than the one family of all people together in one place as the children of God.

To know the community of followers of The Way and worship and living the Good News message as the Kingdom of God to be more important than dogma and creeds and land and structures and debt and continuing expenses and material abundance and wealth accumulation and to be more important than pledges and oaths and empire and nationalism and patriotism and citizenship and civic religion and parochialism and nationalism and parochialism and political influence and social standing and financial clout.

To know that it is more important to largeness and to hold that generosity and hostility to all is a fundamental element of the Good News message and a defining characteristic of the Kingdom of God.

To know compassionate service to those who are hurt or lost or oppressed as a fundamental element of the Good News message and a defining characteristic of the Kingdom of God. Service requires partnership between the server and the served. Holy and wholesome service requires that the server be competent and healthy. Service is not slavery, not some form of servile subjugation, and not an opportunity or a justification for the server to be oppressed or abused.

To know that of the children of God, we are one family in one place. There are no races, no tribes, no indigenous peoples, no ethnic groups, no castes, no nations, no royalty, no aristocracy, no kings, no classes, no economic systems, no nation, no denominations, no sects, no churches, no elite, no privileged, no saved, no unsaved, no slaves, no outcasts, no untouchables – none of these are a consideration or a barrier or a limitation to the possession and development and utilization of time and effort and gifts and talents for service to others or participation in the Kingdom of God – there is no “us” and no “them”, no “here” and no “there”, no families other than the one family of all people together in one place as the children of God.

To know the constant inviting presence of God.

To know the reemergence and revitalization of the disciples after the death of Jesus: as the first followers of The Way, as the first Good News resurrection and transformation; as the first example and witness that resurrection and transformation do exist and do not require death as a precedent, as example and witness that resurrection and transformation are available to all; and as example and witness that the Kingdom of God is here and now and active.

To know baptism, regardless of the method used, as a public act of private intent – to commit to living as a follower of the Good News message by being the Kingdom of God. Other followers are to provide the new follower with tolerance (ideally, acceptance) and the safety of time in a place devoid of condemnation and retribution which is necessary for the new follower to put behind and to put away a past life, a past life where a previous life died and in its place resurrect a new transformed life and person.

To know communion, regardless of the frequency it is shared or what elements are used, as a public act of universal unity. We gather at an open table without exception and without qualification, all are invited. At an open table, we celebrate and affirm the ever-present life of the Good News message and the ever-present all-inclusive unifying love of the Kingdom of God.

To proclaim “Jesus is Lord” and mean that I have no other Lord, that no person of any social or political or religious position has dominion over my life. To proclaim “Jesus is Lord” is to take a moral and spiritual stance and to commit an act of radical counter-cultural non-violent defiance of the oppression and systemic injustice committed by empire and civic religion and by individuals who are more interested in power over others than in service to others. My faith is personal. My faith is not a matter of proxy or the authority of others.

To know that the Good News message is not a loss of my freedom or independence, indeed, it is a much fuller realization of my freedom and independence; is not a forsaking of intelligence or wisdom or knowledge or the search for new knowledge or learning or finding new ways to see reality, or new insights into the workings and purposes of reality, or discovering or creating new visions of what reality could be; is not to forsake seeking or questioning or doubting or examination or reexamination or analysis or reanalysis. The Good News is dynamic, not static; is life, not death, not after death; is growth, not stunted development; is moving forward and moving beyond my current existence and is moving forward and moving beyond my current understanding of my existence and of God.

To be guided and instructed by the Good News message, which is: God is unconditional boundless grace and unlimited unrestrained love and always has been, God wants to have an intimate relationship with each of us without exception and without qualification; seek justice as healing and rehabilitation and restoration; seek universal forgiveness and reconciliation and inclusion and participation; in healthy partnership, compassionately serve all who are hurt or lost or oppressed; be generous and hospitable to all; live non-violently without vengeance and with a cheerful fearlessness of death and worldly powers; and be – here and now – the Kingdom of God. Whatever we do, whatever we are, wherever we are – can never separate us from the love and grace and the surrounding and inviting and welcoming and inclusive presence of God.