

Rule of Life

An introduction for CCE Family Meeting – 21st April 2024

Monastic communities understood that good intentions alone weren't sufficient; they needed a practical framework to embody the teachings of Scripture. This framework, known as a "Rule of Life," is exemplified by the renowned Rule of Benedict. But what exactly is a rule of life? It's not a rigid set of regulations, despite what the term might imply. Instead, think of it as a guidepost or a handrail along life's journey, offering direction and support rather than constraints. Some liken it to a trellis, nurturing growth and vitality.

If the term "rule of life" feels too restrictive, consider it as a "way of life" – a collection of principles, values, and habits that mirror the life and teachings of Jesus. Another perspective is to see it as a practice of remembering. It's about recalling our identity, our journey, and our purpose. As the Northumbria community aptly puts it, a rule of life declares, "This is who we are, this is our story," guiding us back to our foundational truths and aspirations.

Every person has a rule of life, even if we are not aware of it! One of the benefits of crafting a personal rule of life is to become aware of our habits, practices and values, that shape our lives and who we are becoming. This will be true of a community too. You can listen to a recent sermon, in the Ancient Wisdom series, on a rule of life for more information [here](#).

In CCE, we are increasingly seeking to be focussed on following our core purposes (see below), to allow them to be a compass that directs us. So, we want to ask if it might be helpful to have a parallel communal (or CCE) rule of life or framework for living out our core purposes? And if so, what kind of things would you like to see in a communal rule of life?

Some communities have very broad principles for a rule of life: For example, Northumbria Community has two words – vulnerability and availability.

Other communities, have something with a bit more specific detail, while still not be too prescriptive. For example, see this [example](#) from Gloucester Cathedral. The Iona Community has fleshed out their rule of life, which you can read about [here](#). And the 24-7 Prayer movement have a new-monastic "order", called the Order of the Mustard Seed, that has [their own rule of life](#).

Pete Scazzero, who wrote Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, formed a rule of life for the leaders of the church he was leading at the time, which is more specific and detailed. You can see this rule of life [here](#).

These are just examples, and we would need to discern if a rule of life is helpful for the CCE community and if so, what would be in our rule of life. For example, we might find something based around our three core purposes could be a helpful way to think about what God is inviting us into. We are in the very formative stages of considering this, and your perspective would be helpful to hear as we seek God's leading for us.

CCE Core Purposes

CCE exists:

- to be a Christ-centred community
- to see people fully alive
- to help the world flourish

If you were to think about it, what is in your own current rule of life?

Considering, for example, our core purposes what would be appealing and helpful to you and us as a group to include within a communal rule of life?