CULTIVATE

LIFE TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT



NOVEMBER

GROUP GUIDE

Welcome Back to Cultivate

Ten months ago, we began a journey together. We imagined our lives as gardens, places where the Spirit of God could take root and grow something beautiful within us. Throughout this year, we have explored love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, discovering how each expression of the fruit reveals the character of Christ being formed within us.

Now, as we approach the end of our journey, we turn our attention to the garden to come.

Throughout Scripture, the imagery of planting, growing, harvesting, and bearing fruit helps us understand the life God desires for his people. From the first garden in Genesis to the restored creation promised in Revelation, we discover a God who creates, cultivates, redeems, and brings new life.

This month, we will consider what it means to offer God the firstfruits of our lives, recognize the fruit that reveals our roots, and embrace the surrender that makes new life possible. Finally, we will look toward the garden to come, where God's work of restoration will be complete.

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."

Proverbs 3:9–10

For God's people, offering the firstfruits was an act of gratitude, trust, and faith. It meant recognizing that everything they possessed came from God and offering back to him the first and best of what they had received.

As followers of Jesus, we are invited to consider what it means to offer God not simply our possessions, but our whole lives.

The fruit of the Spirit is evidence of a life rooted in Christ. Genuine faithfulness invites us to examine what is taking root beneath the surface, surrender what keeps us from growing, and trust that God can bring new life even through loss.

Scripture begins in a garden and ends with a vision of restored creation. The tree of life appears again, its leaves bringing healing to the nations. The brokenness of our world does not have the final word.

As we conclude our Cultivate journey, you are invited to look back with gratitude, examine your life with honesty, surrender with trust, and look forward with hope. The garden is still growing. And God is not finished with you yet.

Personal Reflection and Practice
Looking Back at What God Has Grown

Throughout Cultivate, we have invited you to spend time in Scripture, examine the soil of your life, and notice where the Spirit is at work. This month, we invite you to revisit the journey. The following reflections return to the Scriptures and themes explored since January. You do not need to complete them all at once. Allow space for prayer and honest conversation with God.

January: The Soil of Our Lives

Galatians 6:7–9

We began by considering our lives as gardens and God as the gardener. Spiritual formation is not simply self-improvement; it is learning to make room for the Holy Spirit.

Reflection:

What did you hope God would cultivate in your life this year?

Where have you noticed small beginnings of transformation?

What habits or patterns have you begun to surrender?

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February: Love

1 John 4:7–12, 16–19

Love is something we receive before we reflect. We considered love that obeys, remains, serves, and never ends.

Reflection:

How has your understanding of God's love changed?

Where have you become more willing to love someone difficult to love?

Have you grown in receiving God's love rather than trying to earn it?

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March: Joy

John 15:9–11; Nehemiah 8:9–12

Joy is not merely happiness or the absence of suffering. We explored joy that dances, strengthens, finishes, surrounds, and cries out.

Reflection:

Where have you experienced joy unexpectedly?

How has joy accompanied disappointment, grief, or uncertainty?

What helps you recognize God's presence?

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April: Peace

John 14:27; Philippians 4:6–7

Jesus offers peace beyond perfect circumstances. We considered peace that rises, intervenes, reigns, and stills.

Reflection:

Where have you experienced peace amid unresolved circumstances?

What have you learned about surrendering worry or control?

How have you become a vessel of peace?

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May: Patience

Romans 8:22–25; James 5:7–11

Patience means remaining steadfast in hope, trusting God even when outcomes are not visible. We explored patience that longs, laughs, perseveres, renews, and waits together.

Reflection:

What have you been waiting for this year?

How has waiting shaped your relationship with God?

Where have you remained faithful without seeing the outcome?

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June: Kindness

Luke 10:25–37; Ephesians 4:31–32

Kindness is the outward expression of God's compassion. We considered kindness that surprises, convicts, cares, and endures.

Reflection:

When have you experienced unexpected kindness?

Where has God revealed indifference or resistance?

How have you become more attentive to others?

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July: Goodness

Genesis 50:19–21; Romans 12:17–21

God's goodness is active and restorative. We explored goodness that works, gives, reconciles, and overcomes.

Reflection:

Where have you recognized goodness amid difficulty?

How have you brought goodness into someone else's life?

Where have you witnessed restoration or reconciliation?

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August: Faithfulness

Hebrews 10:19–25; Lamentations 3:22–23

Our faithfulness grows from God's faithfulness. We explored faithfulness that draws near, risks, provides, stands firm, and finishes well.

Reflection:

Where has God demonstrated faithfulness to you?

What helps you remain close to God in difficult seasons?

Where are you being invited to trust more deeply?

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September: Gentleness

Matthew 11:28–30; Galatians 6:1–5

Gentleness is strength shaped by love. We explored gentleness that carries, defuses, witnesses, and restores.

Reflection:

Where have you learned to respond more gently?

When has someone offered you patient presence?

Where are you invited to listen rather than fix?

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October: Self-Control

Proverbs 25:28; Galatians 5:22–25

Self-control is Spirit-formed freedom rather than simply willpower. We explored self-control that guards, resists, speaks wisely, and wins.

Reflection:

Where have you noticed changes in reactions or choices?

Which patterns have become clearer to you?

Where are you invited to pause or surrender?

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Bringing It All Together

Read Galatians 5:22–25 slowly. These are not separate accomplishments but the character of Christ being formed in us.

- Which fruit has become more evident this year?
- Which fruit has been most challenging?
- Where have you seen the fruits work together?
- What has the year taught you about God's character?
- Where do you still long to see transformation?

Write a prayer of thanksgiving for what God has begun and a prayer of trust for what remains unfinished.

November Personal Reflection

Firstfruits

James 1:16-18

The cultivated life begins with gratitude and offering. We give God our first and best because he has given us freedom and a future. We are part of his plan.

Reflection:

Where do you recognize God's faithfulness this year?

What does offering your first and best mean?

How might gratitude change your priorities?

Good Fruit

Psalms 1:1-3

Jesus teaches in Matthew that a tree is recognized by its fruit. Real fruit reveals real roots. From the beginning to the end of scripture, God's people are recognized by their deeds.

Reflection:

What does the fruit of your life reveal about your roots?

Where have you seen genuine inward transformation?

Where do your actions and professed beliefs not yet align?

Unless a Seed Dies...

Philippians 3:7-11

In the Gospel of John, Jesus uses the image of a grain of wheat to point toward his approaching death and calls his followers to a life of costly discipleship. True fruitfulness requires surrender. Similarly, in Philippians, Paul considers everything else a loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. Both passages remind us that the way to abundant life is found not in holding tightly to what we have, but in surrendering ourselves to Christ.

Reflection:

What have you surrendered this year?

What might you be holding too tightly?

How does Jesus reshape your understanding of fruitfulness?

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The Garden to Come

Isaiah 65:17–25

The restored creation promised in Scripture gives us hope from beginning to end. The Spirit-led life now offers a preview of the world God will make new (in Revelation 22) as well as the promises of old.

Reflection:

What gives you hope in this promise?

Where have you seen glimpses of God's Kingdom?

How might hope for the future shape today's life?

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GROUP TIME

NOVEMBER
The Garden to Come

Goal and Purpose: Reflect on the fruit God has cultivated throughout the year, explore how gratitude, authentic fruitfulness, and surrender shape our spiritual lives, and consider how the promise of restored creation gives us hope.

Themes for the Month:
Week 1: Firstfruits
Week 2: Good Fruit
Week 3: Unless a Seed Dies…
Week 4: The Garden to Come

This outline is a suggested framework. Use what serves your group, release what does not, and trust the Spirit to guide your conversation.

1. Welcome + Opening

Leader Says:

As we approach the end of our Cultivate journey, we are taking time to look back at what God has been growing in us. This has not been about mastering nine virtues, but recognizing the Spirit's work and making room for Christ's character to take shape.

- Which month or fruit has been most meaningful?
- What do you understand differently about spiritual transformation?
- Where have you recognized God's work in your life and group?

2. Watch the Teaching Video with Pastor Rich

Video Summary

- God created us to bear fruit that lasts.
- The fruit of the Spirit reflects who we are becoming as we abide in Christ.
- The Bible begins and ends with a garden, pointing toward God's new creation.
- The tree of life in Revelation bears fruit for the healing of the nations.
- God's greatest invitation is to participate in his work of healing and restoring the world.
- As we keep in step with the Spirit, our lives reflect the future God has promised.

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3. Scripture and Group Discussion

Firstfruits: A Life of Gratitude

Read Deuteronomy 26:1–11.

- Why was remembering God's faithfulness part of the offering?
- How does gratitude shape our understanding of what belongs to God?
- What might it mean to offer God the firstfruits of time, relationships, and resources?

4. Celebrating the Fruit

Invite each participant to share one example of how they have seen the Spirit at work in themselves or another group member. Encourage specific, small examples. The purpose is thanksgiving, not evaluation.

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5. Spiritual Practice: Offering Our Firstfruits

During the coming week, offer God the first portion of your day in prayer, extend kindness to someone in need, or practice gratitude in a difficult moment. At week's end, reflect:

- What did I learn about gratitude and trust?
- Where did I recognize the fruit of the Spirit?
- What might God be inviting me to continue cultivating?

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6. Closing Prayer

God, our faithful gardener, thank you for the work you have begun in us. Thank you for cultivating love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Teach us to offer you our first and best with grateful hearts. Help us remain rooted in Christ so that the fruit of our lives reflects your son, Jesus. May we join you daily in the restoration of all things. Amen.

Thank you for joining us for our 2026 Cultivate journey. Each month, a guide was offered to support reflection, conversation, and growth as we walked together.

To find these guides and other Cultivate resources, please visit:

PeachtreeChurch.com/Cultivate

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