

Circle of DISCIPLES

A Conference on Adult Christian Formation

Guidedbook

Jan. 30–31
2009

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley



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Friday Evening Eucharist

Friday, January 30

7 p.m.

Denniston Refectory

Presider: Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston /
Rev. Lori Walton

Preacher: Rev. Chris Webb

Sermon: "Circle of Disciples:
Intimate and Intentional"

Music: Steve Hassett, Fred Goff

The Rev Stephen Hassett is Associate for Faith Formation and Fellowship (also known as AffFaF) at St John's Episcopal Church in Ross. In this capacity he is responsible for the spiritual formation of adults, children, and youth, and may occasionally be seen preaching and leading liturgy as well. When not at church, he spends a lot of time losing wrestling matches to his two sons, aged 2 and 4; cooking edible food with his wife Clancy; and remembering fondly the days when he had enough free time to have hobbies.

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About the Liturgy...

Christian liturgy has its roots in the home. The earliest Christians met in private homes and engaged in simple services of prayer and hymnody, culminating in what was essentially a potluck meal. The goal of worship was formation for the purpose of living a life "in Christ," and Followers of the Way, as they were known, supported one another in their discipleship to Jesus.

Small group faith formation also has its roots in the home. Community-oriented Bible study and prayer support groups are grassroots by nature. Church reform has always tended to empower the people of God, and the blessing of small-group ministries is that they put the tools of worship and study into the hands of the laity.

When designing the liturgy for this conference, we asked ourselves what liturgy would look like if it were analogous to small-group faith formation — what it would look like if it were still primarily found in peoples' homes. In reflecting on this, we came up with a set of principles that have informed our design: maximum participation by the most number of people; egalitarian leadership; an emphasis on the ordinary materiality of things; and unmediated human voice as an expression of praise.

Though faithful to conventional patterns of Christian liturgy, our opening Eucharist does not depend on the presence of any bulletin, book or hymnal. Rather, the liturgy is propelled and supported by the relationship of those who are co-creatively participating in it. The idea is to emphasize that liturgy is, as the Greek implies, the "work of the people," and that if the people don't work it, it ain't really liturgy.

We hope you will find grace in this experience of worship, and we pray that God's Spirit of creativity and blessing will be with us as we faithfully support one another on the Way.

— The Rev. Steve Hassett

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and Intentional (*sermon: no ms. provided*)

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A Brief History of Small Groups in the Church

In the first century, Jews in the diaspora who did not have access to the Jewish temple and priests that could offer temple sacrifice on their behalf formed small groups to pray and to study. Prayer and study of the law became a path of righteousness as an alternative to temple worship. After the loss of the temple in 70 CE this way of being Jewish survived the first century when the Sadducees and ultimately the zealots did not. Christian house churches were also developed in the first century when Christians were being kicked out of the synagogue.

Priscilla and Aquila in Romans (16:3-5) are an example. By the second century Christians dedicated to the Holy Spirit, or **Montanists**, gathered together to receive the Spirit. The expectation of the immediacy of the second coming added a sense of urgency to their meetings. Both men and women were leaders and allowed to prophesy and interpret the Holy Spirit's leadings in these groups.

Persecution began to decline and Christianity began to be more socially acceptable after the Edict of Constantine in the fourth century. This was when small groups formed religious orders. There was a rise in both cenobitic and eremitic religious orders. Religious orders began to withdraw from society in order to retain a sense of the "authentic" church in the wilderness.

Benedict founded his order in the 6th century and it still continues today. It was successful because they recognized human nature in its rule of life. Stability in the community was a feature of **Benedictinism**. The problems that naturally arose from living in community were a means of sanctification.

Other religious orders grew out of small groups, too, but each had different charisms. These different communities were an important part of Christian witness during the Middle Ages.

Small Groups: An Introduction

"Throughout our history, movements of church growth and renewal have typically shared at least two characteristics: a commitment to new patterns of mission and ministry outside the Church; and a concomitant embrace of Christian formation — rooted in community, sacrament and study of God's word.... In keeping with a major goal of Area Ministry, we encourage the creation of small groups that reflect the rich diversity of the areas, beginning where we hope to be: a multicultural community of many backgrounds, ages and circumstances."

— The Rv. Cn. Michael Barlowe
in the introduction to "Washed & Renewed"

There is an old German fable that one winter night, the porcupines came together seeking heat and comfort. Their quills kept pricking each other as they attempted to move closer to each other. Eventually they arrived at a distance within their gathering that allowed both warmth and connection.

Community is what people say they are seeking when they join small groups. Beginning in the 1960's and 70's, churches began to offer small groups as a remedy for social isolation and response to the spiritual longing of congregants for an experience of the Sacred. These groups were consistent with a long religious history from first century house churches through the Reformation, of providing faith formation in small groups.

In the 19th century America, large scale immigration, westward expansion and the diminishment of tight-knit communities created a need for churches to provide a greater sense of community. The denominations that grew most rapidly were the ones that provided small groups. Most churches had 100 members or less and groups formed informally, other groups organized around a task, like being part of the altar guild or singing in the choir.

When urban churches in the early decades of the 20th century grew to an average size of 300, churches needed more organized ways of grouping people together. Sunday schools within churches were formed to divide people into smaller classes by age and gender.

By the middle of the 20th century Sunday schools guilds and task oriented groups were in place but people were dissatisfied. By the 1960's and 70's the small group movement in and out of church drew explicitly from an emerging literature about group dynamics and group process to respond. Group leaders began to believe that greater self-awareness, healing and

the achievement of deeper life-goals could be accomplished by helping group members to express themselves. Instead of a teacher or a lesson plan groups began to expect that content would develop from encouraging people to talk about themselves.

Groups are well adapted to American life ... they structure human contact and support in a way that appeals to stressed and busy people. Neighbors are less likely to drop in on each other or spend hours in conversation over the neighborhood fence to develop informal sources of friendship. Small groups allow people to negotiate when supportive conversation takes place and if the group disappoints it is easy to extricate yourself.

Small groups by definition are composed of between 3-15 members. A group size of 5-8 is typical for ease in scheduling and facilitating conversation.

Groups go through three stages: a beginning, middle and end stage. This is true regardless of whether they meet for 8 weeks or 8 years. There is not standard for how long the stages last but with each stage the dynamics of the group shift.

The vision or reason for creating the group may be brought to the group by one person or formed by discussions in the initial meeting. But either way members need to "own" the mission as the group begins for their goal to succeed.

In the initial stage groups negotiate whether they will be an open or a closed (to new members) group. Decisions are also made in the beginning meeting about conflict-resolution, confidentiality and the leadership of the group. It is important that expectations be shared for the subsequent meetings to be successful.

As the group moves to the middle stage members may test a group leader's strength by offering unspoken challenges. What if I speak out of turn? What if I break group norms? Can the group deal with me? Good group leaders are able to maintain the group focus in a non-defensive way. In this middle stage group trust is strengthened because both the difficult and the rewarding times end up building group intimacy.

Finally in the end stage members say goodbye. If addressed directly and anticipated this stage allows group members to grieve the loss of the group and remember the changes they have seen in individual lives.

Small groups are a smaller part of the broader concept of spiritual community. They form at the intersection of individual spiritual experience and formal church structures. What they offer in faith formation is an important part of our experience of the Beloved Community.

— The Rev. Eileen Lindeman

The **Beguines** were members of a 12th century movement in the Netherlands which organized meetings of lay women — married and single — to pray, study and work together. They often created schools for girls in their homes. Their male equivalents were the **Beghards**. They met during the week for spiritual discipline and encouragement and attended their parish church on Sunday. The **Waldensians** also met in the 12th century. They came out of the Italian Alps and reacted to the corruption within the church by withdrawing in an attempt to preserve the purity of the gospel.

Religious orders had sodalities, or groups, that people could join to pursue a common prayer goal or mission. Count Zinzendorf (1727) started a community in Hernhutt where the community was divided into small groups called "choirs." The choirs met almost daily for prayer, intimate sharing, confession and spiritual growth. Eventually missionary groups were sent forth from the choirs to the new world.

One of those influenced by the Moravian theology of Zinzendorf was John Wesley. Wesley had already been profoundly impacted by his small Christian prayer-group at Oxford. His visit to Hernhutt only confirmed his belief that small groups were critical to developing and sustaining faith. Wesley's missionary work in America in the mid 1700's laid the foundation for bringing small groups to both colleges and churches. Such networks were a major factor in the spiritual awakenings of the 1790's and mid-1800's in the American religious landscape.

Sources

Wuthnow, Robert. *Sharing the Journey*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.

Livingstone, E.A., and Frank Leslie Cross, eds. *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 2nd ed.* Oxford UP: 1983.

The Rev. Eileen Lindeman's bio and contact information may be found on page 32



Plenary Speakers



CHRIS WEBB

Chris Webb is the recently appointed President of RENOVARÉ. He graduated from the University of Wales and received his theological training from Trinity College in Bristol, England. He has served as an Anglican Vicar in various churches in Wales and held several administrative posts including serving in the office of Rowan Williams who is now the Archbishop of Canterbury. Chris, his wife Sally, and their four children live in Castle Rock, Colorado.

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FREDRICA HARRIS THOMPSETT

Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett is a teacher and scholar of Anglican church history, theology, and baptismal ministry development whose current title is Mary Wolfe Professor Emerita of Historical Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) in Cambridge, Massachusetts where she has taught for over 25 years. She is perhaps best known for her 1989 publication, republished as a Seabury Classic in 2003, *We Are Theologians*.

Dr. Thompsett's most recent book is *Confronted by God, The Essential Verna Dozier* (edited with Cynthia Shattuck in 2006); she has also co-edited with Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook a volume on Episcopal women, *Deeper Joy: Laywomen and Vocation in the 20th Century Episcopal Church* (2004). Another volume, *Living with History* (Cowley Publications, 2000), is part of the New Church's Teaching Series. She is a recent member of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Education and Formation.

An experienced educator, Fredrica is a longtime advocate for the ministry of laity and clergy and she is currently working on a book focusing baptism and ecology, *Holy Water*. With Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, she will soon publish *Born of Water, Born of Spirit: Shared Leadership in Small Vital Parishes*. She is widely sought after as a conference and retreat leader, speaker and preacher.

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SUZANNE FARNHAM

Suzanne Farnham, the founder of Listening Hearts Ministries, continues as Program Director and spiritual leader of the organization. For a number of years, she served as Executive Director, relinquishing those duties in 2002 to focus her energy toward expanding programs. She has been a member of the Board of Trustees since the organization's inception and also serves on the Board's Executive Committee.

Suzanne developed the "Listening Hearts", "Grounded in God" and "Opening the Ear of Your Heart" training programs and continues to design training formats, retreats and workshops based on these programs. She is a popular and sought-after inspirational leader, who continues to play an active role in leading programs across the country.

Suzanne is co-author of *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community* and *Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations and Manual for Discussion Leaders*. She co-edited the *Listening Hearts Songbook* and is the author of *Listening Hearts Retreat Designs and Meditation Exercises*.

Suzanne was born in Georgia but grew up in New York State. She is a graduate of Sweet Briar College. She is married to The Rev. F. Lyman (Barney) Farnham. It was while Barney was the Rector at Memorial Episcopal Church in Baltimore that Suzanne began the process that led to the creation of the book, Listening Hearts. They have four children and ten grandchildren.



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KEVIN PHILLIPS

Kevin Phillips is the former Rector of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, in the Diocese of El Camino Real, and St. David's Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia. Currently Kevin is founder of Relationship Impact, a resource for business and non-profit organizations

who value the power of community. He is currently working on a book that explores the role five values play in the formation of community.



FREDRICA HARRIS THOMPSETT: BAPTISMALLY- GROUNDED SMALL GROUP LEARNING

LIFECYCLES: CHRISTIAN TRANSFORMATION IN COMMUNITY BAPTISMALLY-GROUNDED SMALL GROUP LEARNING

Fredrica Harris Thompsett ©

FOLLOWING CHRIST IS **LIFELONG EXPEDITION** and **LIFELONG FORMATION**

A call, a vocation, and an evolving promise of abiding in God's love.

*"We being little fishes, as Jesus Christ is our great Fish,
we begin our life in the water, and only while we abide in
the water are we safe and sound."* (Tertullian, On Bapt. 1)

LifeCycles is aptly named! It is a communal process not a set program.

BAPTISM: LIFE-GIVING SACRAMENT OF **LIBERATION AND JUST RELATIONSHIP**

*"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is now no longer slave or free,
there is no longer male and female: for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."
(Gal 3:28) i.e. a radical transformation of human relationships.*

*"Baptism overcomes all that alienates and separates human beings
from one another and from God. It signifies God's promise of freedom
in Christ. . . . Baptism both embraces differences and unites a liberated
humanity"* (Thompsett, *Living with History*)

MINISTRY IS THE INCARNATIONAL "**FLESH AND BONES**" OF BAPTISM

The Sacrament of Baptism is Incarnational: God in Christ dwelling in us.

*"Ministry gives faith concrete and specific expression. I cannot serve Christ
abstractly. . . . Ministry gives baptism its hue and texture – it
gives baptism flesh."* (Kevin Thew Forrester, *"I Have Called You Friends. . ."*)

"Everything Belongs": personal, communal, spiritual, social, material.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IS GROUNDED IN THE **AUTHORITY OF BAPTISM**

*"Religious authority comes with baptism, and it is nurtured by prayer, worship,
Bible study, life together."* (Verna Dozier)

"No one ever gets 'beyond' baptism." (Bp. S. Sykes, *Unashamed Anglicanism*)

AMONG THE BAPTIZED & THEIR FRIENDS **ONGOING INSTRUCTION COUNTS!**

"Christians are made, not born." (Tertullian, "On Baptism" 15)

FREDRICA HARRIS THOMPSETT: BAPTISMALLY- GROUNDED SMALL GROUP LEARNING

“Instead of a community gathered around a minister, a ministering community; instead of a community gathered around a learned person, a learning and reflecting community; instead of a ministry deliverer, a ministry developer.”
(Wesley Frensdorff)

RESPECTING THE **AUTHORITY OF THE LEARNER** IN COMMUNITY IS CENTRAL

“. . . and respect the dignity of every human being.” (Baptismal Covenant)

“Beginning with the questions, and not with answers, is the A-1 principle in teaching.” (Verna Dozier)

N.b. *LifeCycle* companions helpful “guides on the side, not sages on stage.”

COMMUNITY OF EQUALS NOT EDUCATION LEGITIMATING SOCIAL INEQUALITY

“In a book entitled, *The Rise of Professionalism*, Magali Larson has commented that ‘**education is now the main legitimator of social inequality** in industrial capitalism’. Similarly, the way in which *theological* education, deliberately or otherwise, had been handled by the Church has made it, likewise, the main **legitimator of ecclesial inequality**.” (*Local Ministry: Story, Process and Meaning*, R.Greenwood and C.Pascoe, eds, 2006, p. 29)

“Human Conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change—personal change, community and organizational change.”
(Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

“Do you want to follow Jesus or are you content just to worship him?”
(*Dream of God*, Verna Dozier)

EDUCATION AS COMMUNAL TRANSFORMATION IN MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT

A communication reversal that challenges assumed status:
“. . . learned to hear and heed the voices of small and often geographically marginal congregations . . . who have become the prophets, speaking out of their vulnerability and so-called weakness, challenging the more prosperous and comfortable congregations and modeling a new way of being church.” (p. 42)

“The urgent task for us in the closing years of this turbulent century is to reclaim our identity as the people of God and live into our high calling as the baptized community.” (*The Dream of God*, 1991, p. 145)

LifeCycle: enabling as many people as possible to participate to the maximum of their potential?

FREDRICA HARRIS THOMPSETT: BAPTISMALLY-
GROUNDED SMALL GROUP LEARNING

"Ole-time" Ecclesiology
(ca. 1950s on)

Baptismal (Open) Ecclesiology
(ca. 1990s onward)

Closed/distant Eucharist

Open table

Call as holy orders

Call as baptism

Traditional Clergy model

Shared, Mutual ministry models

"Paid my dues"

Partnership and ownership

Ordained professionals

Priesthood of all believers

Church's mission

God's mission

Education as information

Education as transformation

Chaplain to needy

Community formed around God

Clergy perform all important tasks

Community members empowered
for ministry

Clergy deliver ministry

Clergy developers of ministry

Church meets my needs

Church desires to meet God's
needs

Closed groups/guilds

Open/transparent, participatory

Churchy language

Common tongue/vernacular

Take care of people in church

Nourished people sent out

"Father" knows best

We all know together/learning

Gathered around a minister

Ministering community

FREDRICA HARRIS THOMPSETT: BAPTISMALLY- GROUNDED SMALL GROUP LEARNING

Trickle Down Theology

Community doing its own theology

Kingdom after death

Kingdom now

Clericalism

diverse ministries affirmed

Restricted space

Open and welcome at center

Museum of relics

Interactive in church and world

Far-away hierarchy chooses
those to be educated

Local discernment

Segregation by age

Education for all

Separation

Incorporation/ intergenerational

Hoarding

Hospitality

Christians only reflect on
themselves

Living in a multi-religious and
nonreligious world

Spiritual realm separated from
Secular world

Everything Belongs

(Updated Fredrica Harris
Thompsett, January 2009)

SUZANNE FARNHAM: SMALL GROUP
MINISTRY AS DISCERNMENT**Draft of Suzanne Farnham's Address prepared for the
Circle of DISCIPLES Conference, January 31, 2009:**

Listening Hearts is a ministry that promotes the practice of discerning God's call in community. Or, to put it another way, we aim to teach the people of the church how to distinguish God's voice from other voices that influence them: such as, the voices of the culture in which they live; the voice of a popular political leader or a respected church leader; the voice of a teacher or mentor that has been important to them in the course of their life; voices of friends; voices from literature or the media. Or the voice of their parents echoing through the years. God does in fact speak through such voices, but not everything they say is God's word for us. And what God may say for one situation at a given time may not apply to the same situation at a different time. The Listening Hearts way is to pursue discernment in small groups that provide intimate spiritual companionship.

The book *Listening Hearts* is the foundation for all of our work. Its 9 chapters are a clear, concise treatise on the subject of discerning call in community. Then the Appendices of Practical Suggestions provide guidelines for working together in discernment groups in order to help individuals who are wrestling with issues large or small. Perhaps a person is struggling with priorities, or wrestling with a moral or ethical dilemma. Maybe it is a difficulty with a personal relationship, such as how to deal with a rebellious teenage child, or determining the extent of one's call to care for an aging parent. Or it may very well be a desire to discern one's call to ministry in the church. Or in the community or the workplace.

The Listening Hearts discernment group is based on the Quaker clearness committee. We began with Parker Palmer's outline for a clearness committee, fleshed it out, then wove into it wisdom and experience from other spiritual traditions including Ignatian, Benedictine, Carmelite, Anglican, Orthodox, Protestant, and Jungian. The discernment session begins with centering prayer. It involves intense prayerful listening throughout. Out of the silence emerge questions for the person seeking discernment (called the "focus person") to consider. The discerners do not offer their own opinions or solutions, but instead pose prayerfully formulated questions to help the focus person get beneath the surface, find new perspective, and develop new insight. Ultimately, the focus person arrives at his or her own sense of what God seems to be saying and articulates the discernment. However, the discernment continues until the

SUZANNE FARNHAM: SMALL GROUP MINISTRY AS DISCERNMENT

entire group is at peace with the discernment that has unfolded, which constitutes spiritual consensus.

A second book, *Grounded in God*, takes the principles put forth in *Listening Hearts* and applies them to resolving group issues. This approach can be used by any church committee, commission, or board--- or even by an entire parish that is trying to address a major parish issue. It is especially helpful for vestries and gives them a way to conduct their meetings in a manner that is God centered, spiritually nourishing, and can draw members together in Christian love even as they deal with potentially divisive issues. Meetings can become restorative rather than draining.

Three companion pieces provide further resource material. The *Listening Hearts Manual for Discussion Leaders* helps leaders of *Listening Hearts* book discussions to steer away from intellectual discussions about the book and prompt participants to reflect on their own experience of how God works in their lives. The *Listening Hearts Retreat Designs* gives retreat leaders well developed plans for retreats and meditation sessions that enable retreatants to inwardly digest the principles put forth in *Listening Hearts* and apply them to the specific circumstances of their own lives. The *Listening Hearts SONGBOOK* contains the music and words for 52 hymns, from a variety of traditions, which are particularly suited to the *Listening Hearts* material. Accompaniment for these hymns is available on the *Listening Hearts* website.

The *Listening Hearts* Series of books can and does work well for groups that read them carefully, assimilate them, and conscientiously try to follow them. However, we do find that any group can use them much more effectively if it is properly trained. For that reason we have training programs that are available to parishes or dioceses. Especially, we have in-depth programs to train trainers so that a parish or diocese can develop its own team of trainers who can then set up many discernment ministry teams. We have a special training program so that Commissions on Ministry can develop a team of leaders to train and supervise discernment groups throughout the diocese, so that these groups can function in an informed way that is consistent with classic teaching of discernment and the quality of their work can be monitored. All of our training programs are rooted in the prayer of listening. They emphasize using Scripture, noticing signs of God's presence, and harnessing the creative power of the Spirit. Most importantly, they include practicum sessions that provide mentoring in the types of questions that

SUZANNE FARNHAM: SMALL GROUP MINISTRY AS DISCERNMENT

most often lead to breakthroughs in spiritual discernment; and give supervised practice in working together as a group. These sessions cultivate the art of working with others in a unified way.

Listening Hearts Ministries also leads parish retreats and vestry retreats. It offers one-day training workshops for search committees or profile committees to teach them how to work together in a way that truly focuses on discerning God's call.

Our programs can serve gatherings large or small. But always they depend on working together in small groups in which participants take time to become established in God's presence, share the responsibility for observing guidelines, treat each other with respect, and refrain from judging one another. When people come together in small clusters and create the safest possible environment, and try to stay tuned into one another and God, they become knit together in Christ. They discover their authentic selves, and begin to find themselves traveling their true paths.

Appendix 1 of *Grounded in God* contains what we call the "Discernment Listening Guidelines". These guidelines have been used as norms of conduct for many groups and even entire parishes. One vestry has been using them for over 10 years, through a couple of changes of rectors, reading them aloud at the beginning of every vestry meeting. Laminated copies of these guidelines can be purchased from the Listening Hearts office. They have had a significant impact on the way many groups function.

Small groups offer a good way to insure that everyone has full opportunity to participate. In small clusters, people can grow close together. And when they make a sincere effort to open themselves to God's presence, to listen to one another deeply, and to connect with the Christ in each other, they experience themselves as the body of Christ alive in a given location. So, when we get back to our parishes, let's try to make sure that we structure our small groups thoughtfully so that whenever they meet they always bring Christ more fully to life wherever they are. Amen.

KEVIN PHILLIPS: SMALL GROUP MINISTRY AS CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Small Group Ministry as Congregational Development

Circle of Disciples

January 31, 2008

The Rev. Kevin A. Phillips

I. The Old Church

- a. Social Character and the Power of Priests.
 - i. Social Character looked to authority.
 1. Education was limited.
 2. Opportunity was limited.
 3. Information was limited.
 - ii. Social Character sought subordination.
 1. Society was a series of hierarchies, from the patriarchy of Kings to the patriarchy of Fathers.
 2. People freely traded freedom for security.
 - a. Employment at all costs.
 - b. Heaven and Hell.
- b. Congregational Development as Hearing the Word
 - i. The Church reflected its society.
 - ii. Hierarchical liturgy – The Lord’s Supper or Priest Place of Privilege?
 - iii. The Authority of the Bible (and the one who teaches it.)

II. The Church in Crisis

- a. The Changing Social Character
 - i. Education broadly available.
 - ii. Opportunity increasingly egalitarian.
 - iii. Information unlimited.
- b. Congregational Development in Chaos
 - i. Priest increasingly loses status in society.
 - ii. Church increasingly becomes a museum, a showcase of an earlier era.
 - iii. Priest as buffoon.

III. The New Church

- a. Social Character and the Power Community
 - i. Increasing alienation of individuals and the cry for community.
 - ii. Virtual Communities vs. Real Communities.
 - iii. The Need: Not access to information, but the processing of experience.
- b. Congregational Development as Doing the Word
 - i. Leadership provides frame that allows community to form.
 - ii. Liturgy must become horizontal.
 - iii. People do the Word as they process their experience of the Holy together.

Circles of Trust

This workshop provides an introduction to “circles of trust” as described by Parker Palmer in *A Hidden Wholeness*. Dr. Palmer says of a circle of trust that “Its singular purpose is to support the inner journey of each person in the group, to make each soul feel safe enough to show up and speak its truth, to help each person listen to his or her inner teacher.” (*A Hidden Wholeness*, p. 54)

Circles of Trust can be appropriate for small groups (2 to 25 people) of almost any age and background. While the structure of a circle can be highly flexible to fit the needs of the participants, there should be an agreed upon schedule of meetings and a defined end point stated from the beginning. The conditions for a circle of trust include: clear limits, skilled leadership, open invitation, common ground and graceful ambiance.

There are no required materials for a circle of trust. Often a “third thing” — a poem, picture, story or object — can help participants focus, hear their inner teacher and speak their own truth. Any costs connected with a circle of trust will depend on the setting, the leadership and the materials used by the group.

In this workshop, we will discuss the principles and practices of a circle of trust and sample a circle of trust experience.

Excerpts from *A Hidden Wholeness* by Parker Palmer

- “We are born with a seed of selfhood that contains the spiritual DNA of our uniqueness — an encoded birthright knowledge of who we are, why we are here, and how we are related to others.”
- “Philosophers haggle about what to call this core of our humanity, but I am no stickler for precision. Thomas Merton called it true self. Buddhists call it original nature or big self. Quakers call it the inner teacher or the inner light. Hasidic Jews call it a spark of the divine. Humanists call it identity and integrity. In popular parlance, people often call it soul.”
- “A circle of trust, I said, has no agenda except to help people listen to their own souls and discern their own truth.”

Melissa Ridlon is a layperson in the Diocese of California serving on the Commission on Ministry and with a particular passion for lay discernment. She has completed the Circles of Trust retreat series put on by the Center for Courage and Renewal, and facilitates circles of trust groups in the Diocese.

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- “Its singular purpose is to support the inner journey of each person in the group, to make each soul feel safe enough to show up and speak its truth, to help each person listen to his or her inner teacher.”
- “A circle of trust is a group of people who know how to sit quietly ‘in the woods’ with each other and wait...”
- “The people who help us grow toward true self offer unconditional love, neither judging us to be deficient nor trying to force us to change but accepting us exactly as we are. And yet this unconditional love does not lead us to rest on our laurels. Instead, it surrounds us with a charged force field that makes us want to grow from the inside out — a force field that is safe enough to take the risks and endure the failures that growth requires.”
- “A circle of trust may lack size, scope and continuity as compared to a traditional community. But it makes up for what it lacks by being intentional about its life — about why we are together, about where we want to go, and about how we must relate to each other if we are to reach our destination.”
- “...speaking our own truth in a circle of trust always takes the same form: we speak from our own center to the center of the circle — to the receptive heart of the communal space — where what we say will be held attentively and respectfully. This way of speaking differs markedly from everyday conversations in which we speak from our own intellect or ego directly to the intellect or ego of someone on whom we hope to have an impact.”
- “How we listen in a circle of trust is as important as how we speak. When someone speaks from his or her center to the center of the circle, the rest of us may not respond the way we normally do — with affirmations or rebuttals or some other way of trying to influence the speaker. So we learn to take in whatever is said with as much simple receptivity as we can muster.”
- “Like every gift given, this one returns as a gift to the giver: when we learn how to listen more deeply to others, we can listen more deeply to ourselves. This may be the most important result of the unconventional speaking and listening that go on in a circle of trust.”
- “Truth evolves within us, between us, and around us as we participate in ‘the eternal conversation.’”

Covenant Groups

The objective of Covenant Groups is to develop strong Christians through studying the Scriptures, sharing their relationship with Christ with one another and praying for one another. The goal is to invite others to join the Covenant Groups so they can experience their blessing as well.

Raised at All Saints Episcopal Church, in Pasadena, California, the Rev. Susan Champion graduated from Brown University with a degree in English and Italian literature, spent time at Seabury–Western Theological Seminary, and received her MDiv from Bexley Hall. She has been ordained since 1991. Since then Susan has spent most of her ministry in small churches in western New York, eastern Oregon and here in California. Her ministry has included time as co-rector with her husband, the Rev. Peter Champion, and also as chaplain of St. Andrew's Priory School in Honolulu. Susan has served as vicar of Christ the Lord Church in Pinole, California, since December, 2006.

Susan and Peter live in Rodeo, California, with their golden retriever and two cats. They have two grown daughters who live in the Pacific Northwest. Susan loves gardening, classical guitar, cooking, reading, camping and hiking. Her interest in small groups arises from almost twenty years in 12-step fellowships, a place where she has received much spiritual nurture. It is her hope that the blessing of small groups will help renew the church for the 21st Century.

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Target constituency: any and all. These groups would work with anyone from high school age and up. Sometimes special groups (i.e. for women, men, youth, etc) are formed, but many groups contain a cross-section of people.

Leadership requirements: Anyone who has participated in a Covenant Group for awhile and who has some basic knowledge of group dynamics and leadership should be able to lead using the format.

Size of group: 3-12 (4-6 is optimal. If group reaches 8 or more regularly, it should probably be split into 2 groups).

Length of sessions: Most places encourage 1 1/2-2 hour meetings. At Christ the Lord Church, our meetings last 1 hour. This shorter length seems to encourage more people to make a commitment to join a Covenant Group.

Frequency of meetings: Normally once per week, though this is not essential. These are meant to be on-going groups, but it would also be appropriate to offer them for a season (Lent, etc) and encourage people to make a commitment to them for that time period.

Content: Weekly Look/Book/Took needs to be prepared and used by all participants at each meeting. The overall format remains the same from week to week.

Challenge: Getting the weekly Look/Book/Tooks done. Those who are already preparing them will probably be glad to share their resources. The lesson plans for Small Churches on the national church website often contains good ideas that can be adapted into Look/Book/Tooks.

— The Rev. Susan Champion

Theological Assumptions

Human beings are created in the image of the Trinity. Trinity expresses community. Like the Trinity healthy community exists as a mystery of persons in community. Personal identity cannot be conceived in terms of the individual. It can only be expressed in terms of persons-in-relations.

Eucharist is the community gathered to express the covenant that binds persons in relation to both God and Neighbor. The primary expression of communion is as covenant-meal. It is an expression of sacrifice only in so far as the death of Jesus binds in covenant relationship. The meal is a participation in covenant-making.

Thus, a church centered around the covenant- meal can only exist as a small group system. A small-group program built around a traditional church will fail. The small group must be the authentic expression of the ministry of the church.

Traditional churches are built around a "Great Man" theory of leadership, expressed theologically in terms of Christ Rex. The history of this conception may be grounded in the influence of the Constantinian transformation of the church. At that time formal ecclesiastic structures of hierarchy increasingly defined the life of the church. Feudalism reinforced this model. Monastic structures emerged as a response to maintain the notion of church as community. The dialectic between the church as hierarchy and the church as community continued through the Middle Ages, through the Reformation and into the Modern and Post-Modern period. It continues today

Under shadow of the "Great Man" the church exists as a response to creative work of one primary leader. In a traditional church the orientation of members is to the rector or vicar. In the non-traditional church conceived as a system of small groups, the primary orientation of members is to one another.

The rector/vicar must move out of the center and to the periphery of the congregational system. Thus, pastoral care must no longer be represented as the ministry of the rector/vicar, it is the ministry of the small group. Liturgy is no longer individuals gathered for prayer, but small groups gathered for prayer. The sermon is not a message to the individual worshiper, but a resource for small group discussion. Parish ministries arise out of small groups. Communication happens through small groups. Evangelism is the work of small groups. Youth ministry trains young people in the small group discipline

One sign that the church has become a system of small groups is that the individual who chooses not to participate in a small group feels increasingly marginalized while at the same time experiencing continuing invitations to participate in a small group. The congregation develops as individuals increasingly find their identities rooted as persons-in-relation in small groups. The congregation grows as its small group ministry grows. Here we find our authentic expression as human beings created in the image of the Trinity.

— The Rev. Kevin A. Phillips



Born in Atlanta, GA, the Rev. Maly Hughes has lived in California since 1991. She is a graduate of CDSP and was ordained in the Diocese of El Camino Real in 1997. Maly served in the Diocese of Los Angeles at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Los Olivos for three years before joining the staff at St. Timothy's in Mountain View. She has served as Priest Executive there for nine years. Maly serves on the ECR Commission on Ministry and is Secretary of Convention.

One her great joys in life is music and singing. She and her husband, Allan Hughes, are members of the San Jose Choral Project. Maly has three grown children: a soon to be married daughter in NYC, a daughter in San Francisco, and a recently married son in Pleasant Hill.

Maly had the opportunity to learn about Covenant Groups while working beside Kevin Phillips for seven years. Covenant Groups continue to flourish at St. Timothy's (12 currently meeting weekly). They are of great importance to the spiritual well-being of the individual participant as well as to the entire faith community.

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Kevin Phillips' bio and contact information are provided under Plenary Speakers, pages 6-7.



A Brief History of Covenant Groups

I began to develop the Covenant Group model at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Mountain View, CA. This congregation was in need or revitalization. I was seeking a small congregation where I could test a vision of ministry rooted in an uncompromising embrace of the ideal of covenant as expressed in the Hebrew Bible.

I began educating the congregation on theological foundations of covenant. I began two small groups in a structured, bible study program. The purpose was 1) to educate the participants on the theological foundations of covenant, and 2) to allow participants to experience the support of a small group.

After one year, I designed the Covenant Group format. My aim was to create a structure that could be led by anyone. It would not require extensive training or knowledge of the bible.

The Covenant Group leaders facilitates a discussion using a guide (The Look-Book-Took) . The purpose of the discussion is not bible-study. That is, the aim is not bible knowledge. The goal is to empower participants to listen to one another with greater depth. It allows the group to appreciate of the wisdom of lived experience. It affirms the power of the Holy Spirit at work in life. The Bible provides an interpretive filter by which to perceive the mystery of God at work in every day challenges.

— The Rev. Kevin A. Phillips

A Small Group Format

Begin with Silence

The leaders invite silence at the beginning of the meeting to help people center or focus. Silence takes people out of the world of stress and distraction. It places them in the world of the Covenant Group. Silence provides opportunity for minds and bodies to come together in one place.

Collect for Unity

Almighty Father, whose blessed Son before his passion prayed for his disciples that they might be one, as you and he are one: Grant that your Church, being bound together in love and obedience to you, may be united in one body by the one Spirit, that the world may believe in him whom you have sent, your

Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

High-Low of the Week

This process invites people to reflect on their week and share what has been their "high" and "low" point. Encourage your group to reflect on their week before they arrive for the meeting.

Honor what people say. Give them your full attention. Discourage feedback. Be sensitive to new members who may not be used to the power of a supportive community. Honor the option of passing. This creates a sense of security.

Look/Book/Took Bible Study

The purpose of this Bible Study is to encourage the sharing of people's lives as they explore the reality of God at work in the world. The Covenant Leader facilitates a discussion. He or she does not teach. The Look section helps the group to observe — look — at the world as they experience it. The Book section invites the group to think about the world in the light of God's Word. The Took section invites each person to take home a truth they may have discerned through the discussion.

Prayer

Ask participants to share aloud any answered prayer from the previous week. Ask each participant, "How can we help you in prayer this week?" Honor the freedom of the participants to pass. Pray for the Empty Chair. Ask, "Who do you believe is ready for the support of a Covenant Group?" Keep a list and pray for these people.

Collect for the Mission of the Church

O God of all the nations of the earth: Remember the multitudes who have been created in your image but have not known the redeeming work of our Savior Jesus Christ; and grant that, by the prayers and labors of your holy Church, they may be brought to know and worship you as you have been revealed in your Son; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

— The Rev. Kevin A. Phillips

Look/Book/Took: Transfiguration

LOOK

The experience described in today's Gospel lesson is usually called the Transfiguration. In the scriptures, right after the Transfiguration, Jesus and his disciples begin the journey to Jerusalem which will lead to the crucifixion. This is why one of the versions of this story is always read right at the end of Epiphany and right before the beginning of Lent.

Webster's dictionary defines *transfiguration* as: a: "a change in form or appearance or b: an exalting, glorifying, or spiritual change."

1. How was the transfiguration of Jesus different from the kind of changes of appearance we usually seek in our world? How well does the Webster's dictionary definition describe what happened in this story?
2. Although none of us living today were present at that original Transfiguration, most of us have had mountain-top experiences when we suddenly saw something new or experienced God in a new and transfiguring way. Share a mountain-top experience you have had.

BOOK: Mark 9:2-9

1. Why do you think Jesus was transfigured on the mountaintop in front of the three disciples?
2. Why do you think Peter responded as he did, wanting to build three dwellings, and why was this response not what God wanted?
3. The words God spoke echo the words spoken at Jesus' baptism with an important addition: "Listen to him." Why do you think God especially wanted the three disciples to listen to Jesus?
4. Jesus' commands not to tell anyone what has been seen fill the Gospel of Mark and are known as the messianic secret. Why do you think Jesus told the disciples to tell no one what they had seen?

TOOK

1. How well do YOU listen to Jesus on a regular basis? How might you listen better?
2. In a sense, Peter, James and John were part of a small group with Jesus when they went up on the mountain-top (and all of the disciples were part of a somewhat larger small group). In what ways can small group membership help you be more aware of transfigurative moments in your life and also help you make better sense of them?

Mark 9:2-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.



The name **Cursillo** means “short course,” and is often associated with a 3-Day weekend, which is only one aspect of the Cursillo Movement. The proper name is **Cursillo de Cristiandad** (“short course of Christianity”).

Molly McGettigan Arthur, a San Francisco native and UC Berkeley graduate, loves to be in small groups, starting with Girl Scouts around the campfire, to presenting to groups during her career in advertising sales, to guiding Lectio Divina groups at St. Stephens Church in Belvedere and leading Cursillo groups in Marin County. She is an Associate with the Religious of the Sacred Heart and is on the Boards of the Marin Interfaith Council, Marin Cursillo and Sage Femme (a groundbreaking non-profit which is endeavoring to “Change the current culture of child-birth to one that is good for women and babies, earth and humankind”).

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Cursillo & Fourth Day

The Group Reunion is a small accountability group of three to five persons who have usually participated in the three-day Cursillo weekend and who want to continue their pursuit of a life lived wholly in the grace of God. Anyone who is willing to use the ideals of personal sharing and mutual accountability as a means to becoming a better witness for Christ can be welcomed to participate in a Group Reunion. These small reunion groups help pilgrims translate the message conveyed on the three-day weekend into a daily walk with Christ. With the regular support of a few faithful friends, the gift of God’s love in Jesus Christ becomes a lifestyle of Christian discipleship through the threefold discipline of piety, study and action.

Target constituency: Past participants in a Cursillo weekend “Cursillistas” and others who may want to become Cursillistas

Leadership requirements: The group shares facilitation, there is no on-going leader

Outside and optimal range of participants: 3-5

Length of individual sessions: 1 hour

Frequency of meetings: variable, weekly, monthly, quarterly, as individual groups decide

Period of time over which units might be offered: on-going

Kind of content/material; its price per participant: one handout of format, free

Cost of license, registration or curriculum: none

A faith-sharing format, helping each other see God in their lives and how to live a Christian life. Being accountable to each other as a spiritual support.

Group Reunions, Spiritual Direction and Ultreyas

On our Cursillo weekend four parts of the Christian ideal were presented:

1. Living life in Grace — Grace is a free gift from God and results from a personal relationship with God (Spiritual Direction provides guidance)
2. Spreading life in Grace by personal (one on one) contact. Apostolic action.
3. Sharing life in Grace within small groups, (Group Reunion) Spiritual companionship

4. Witnessing to life in Grace in Christian Community (Ultreya) in order to transform individual life situations or environments.

We are called by Christ to the Cursillo Movement in order to grow in our life of grace through our full Fourth Day — by means of Group Reunions, Spiritual Direction and Ultreyas.

A Group Reunion is a group of friends, perhaps 3-6 in number, who agree to meet together regularly, share their spiritual journeys, and hold one another accountable in their growth in Christ. The Group meets to share their journeys with Christ, to provide a plan for ongoing spiritual formation, to hold each other accountable and to encourage one another in living out their faith. The experience of Group Reunion brings participants closer to one another and closer to God. With Christ in the center, Group Reunion offers growth in grace and faith that the members might go forth into the world and proclaim the faith to others- transforming the world for Christ.

Piety, Study and Action are the three elements necessary to grow spiritually and to reach out to change the world in Christ's name. Our Piety calls us to Study, our growth in Christ leads us into Action. We are created to give ourselves to Christ: our hearts (Piety), our minds (Study) and our wills (Actions).

Piety is living a life of grace in a conscious, growing and shared manner. Piety is a faithfulness to God as a fundamental part of our life in grace. We know of God's deep love for us: piety addresses our love for God. Will we love God back? Piety requires consent from us to allow God into all aspects of our lives. Piety calls us to a new life in which our relationships with ourselves, with God and with the world are redefined by our love for God. The practice of piety is an intentional process of spending time with God.

Study is a means of giving depth and strength to our faith. It points out the need for growth in our Christian life. We use our minds, as well as our hearts and souls, to learn how to be Christians. Study is an ongoing process of growth in Christ. We never stop learning in our faith, and our learning leads us to deeper holiness.

Action is our opportunity to share and spread the life of grace to others. Christian life is friendship with Christ; we want to share this friend with others. Personal contact is the basis of apostolic action; "Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ". Act in your own real world to attract people to Christ. Be supported by your community and join it in actions to transform the world.

Spiritual Direction is a faithfully guided human relationship submitted to the Holy Spirit to lead an individual Christian along the pilgrim way to union with God. It is the art of leading and guiding a person progressively from the beginnings of his or her spiritual life to a deeper union with God. God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, is ultimately an individual's spiritual director.

Ultreya says "Onward Pilgrim!" to encourage us to persevere in our faith journey, overcome our challenges and rest in the embrace of grace. We, as a beloved community, come together periodically to refresh and support our journeys. Ultreyas lead people to live, share and grow in the Spirit enkindled on the Weekend. We have a community that we can count on.

Dedication to Christ with these tools will allow our faith to become that which it is intended to be: deeply felt, lived in daily life, and spread by love in word and deed.

The Rev'd Canon Timothy M. Dombek serves as Canon to the Ordinary for the Diocese of Arizona. Prior to accepting this call in October 2007, Timothy served as rector of St. James Episcopal Church in Greenville, South Carolina. Timothy has twice served as Spiritual Director on Cursillo weekends.

Before moving to St. James, Greenville, Fr. Dombek served as school chaplain at Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, a K-12 college-preparatory school in Columbia, SC, while also serving as priest-in-charge of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, one of the five historic African-American missions of the Diocese, in rural Jenkinsville, SC. The Dombeks moved to Columbia, SC, in 1996 from Church of the Transfiguration, Dallas, TX, where he served a four-year curacy as Family Life Minister.

Prior to ordained ministry, Fr. Dombek, a 1992 graduate of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, worked as a Certified Financial Planner, following seven years in broadcasting as a radio disc jockey in his home state of Indiana. He and his wife, Beth, a Middle school resource teacher, have been married eighteen years, and they have one child, Jonathan, who turns sixteen on October 26.

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A Sample Fourth Day Group Format

Prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit

All say together to start (alternate leading each meeting):

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Send forth your spirit, and we shall be created.

And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations; through Christ our Lord. Amen

Pray: The Lords Prayer

And say: Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts and minds, and direct us as we share our thoughts and concerns.

Supportive reminders for a Rule of Life/growth in piety, spiritual growth that helps you live a life of grace and faith in a closer relationship with the Lord:

- Pray daily and often, have personal devotions
- Receive communion and pray at the altar
- Praise and glorify and be grateful and ask forgiveness
- Examination of Conscience- daily consolations and desolations inventory
- Spiritual Companionship and direction
- Bible Reading, Spiritual Study
- Acting on your witness to Christ
- Serving others
- Pray for each member of your Group Reunion daily

1. Sharing the living out of Piety

Each member takes a turn saying how they have lived Piety in their lives. Check in with what your Rule of Life/growth in piety, spiritual growth plan currently is, by answering any of the following questions:

- How have I fulfilled my commitments to my Rule of Life/growth in piety, spiritual growth?
- How have I nourished myself to be closer to God?
- What was my closest moment to God?
How is God working in my life?

- How have I been drawn to Christ in my everyday life?
- How has Christ come to express Himself through me?
- How have I let Jesus show through me?

2. Sharing the living out of Study

Each member takes a turn saying how they have lived Study in their lives:

- What have I studied this week that has increased my understanding of my relationship with God and His Creation?
- What have I learned from this study that can help me express Christ in my everyday life?

3. Sharing the living out of Action

Each member takes a turn saying how they have lived Action in their lives:

- How have I expressed my spiritual gifts to serve the Lord and others?
- How have I brought someone closer to Christ at home, school, work, recreation, parish or other environment or part of my life?
- What challenges have I faced to act as a Christian in my world/environment?
- What plans do I have to make my world more fully Christian?

4. Group plans

Discuss any group plans you might do together to bring Christ to your world.

5. Prayer requests

Share any needs or special prayer requests, give thanks for all God is doing in each one's life.

Devotional prayer

End with this devotional prayer:

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help in all our works begun, continued and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally by your mercy obtain everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imagination, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Brief History of the Cursillo Movement

A little Spanish island

The Cursillo Movement began in the Catholic Church in Spain in the 1940s. It began when a group of men dedicated themselves to bringing the young men of their island of Mallorca, Spain, to know Christ better.

The Cursillo Movement was birthed during a period of renewal that preceded the second Vatican Council. Vatican II was such a major event in the history of the modern Catholic Church that there is a tendency to date everything from the Council. But Vatican II was itself born out of an effort of spiritual and pastoral renewal that had begun years before. The liturgical movement, the scriptural renewal, Catholic Action and other movements of the lay apostolate had begun years before the Council. Everywhere in the Church, people were seeking to find ways of “bringing the Church to life in the hearts of men” (Romano Guardini).

Before World War II, a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostela was in the works. This spiritual journey to the great Spanish pilgrimage center dating to the Middle Ages was to provide a time for the young men and women of Spain to dedicate themselves in a renewed way to the work of the apostolate. After being postponed several times by the war, it was finally set for 1948.

The pilgrimage set a tone. The spirit of pilgrimage is a spirit of restlessness, of dissatisfaction with spiritual lukewarmness, of moving onward, of *ultreya*. It is also a spirit of brotherhood among

fellow pilgrims who are striving together to reach the goal of a life fully given to the love of God and man. The pilgrim style has marked much of the spirituality of the Cursillo Movement.

Preparation for the pilgrimage gave rise to efforts of renewal in the different Catholic Action groups in Spain, among them the branch for young men in the Diocese of Majorca. The groups responsible for preparations for the pilgrimage to St. James were the diocesan councils for the young men’s branch of Catholic Action. Catholic Action was the official organization of the lay apostolate in Spain (and in many other countries). The leaders of the young men’s branch on the island of Majorca were the founders of the Cursillo Movement.

They worked as a leaders’ team that prayed, shared their Christian lives, studied, planned, acted and evaluated together. Together they worked at the task of forming Christian life among the young men in Majorca. Out of their common efforts, something new in the life of the Church was born — spiritual and pastoral renewal, the pilgrim style, a pastoral plan, teamwork among leaders.

Cursillo in the U.S.

The first Cursillo in the United States was held in Waco, Texas, in 1957 and were led by Father Gabriel Fernandez and two airmen from Spain, Bernardo Vadell and Agustin Palomino, who were training with the U.S. Air Force. By 1959, Cursillo had spread throughout Texas and to Phoenix, Arizona. In August of

that year the first national convention of spiritual directors was held. In 1960, the growth of the Cursillo quickened in the Southwest, and weekends were held for the first time in the East in New York City and Lorain, Ohio.

Until 1961, all weekends were held in Spanish. That year the first English-speaking weekend was held in San Angelo, Texas. By 1962, twenty-five more English-speaking weekends had been held.

In 1962, the Cursillo Movement came to the Eastern United States and by 1981, almost all of the 160 dioceses in the United States had introduced Cursillo.

Cursillo worldwide

Today, Cursillo is a worldwide movement with centers in nearly all South and Central American countries, the United States, Canada, Mexico, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Yugoslavia, Australia, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and in several African countries.

In 1980, Pope John Paul II, addressing the first National Italian Ultreya in Rome said,

“You have discovered a new the explosive truth of the evangelical message: God, Father of all, comes to us as we encounter him in Jesus Christ to reunite us through the grace of the Spirit in one family which is the Church.”

— Adapted from a publication by the National Secretariat



Cursillo Movement, The Fourth Day!

The Three-Day Cursillo Weekend is a unique opportunity to reflect on one's faith journey and make a deeper commitment to Christ. Thus, the Fourth Day is central to the Cursillo experience, as it extends each individual's experience beyond the weekend and into life in the world.

In living their Fourth Days, participants are encouraged to continue to grow in relationship with Christ in Grace and live as faithful disciples in all of life. An important and necessary foundation for faithful Christian living is a vital connection to the Christian community for support, companionship, guidance, and challenge. This is most available through local church communities, Group Reunions, Ultreyas and Spiritual Direction.

The Group Reunion is a small accountability group of three to five persons who have usually participated in the three-day Cursillo weekend and who want to continue their pursuit of a life lived wholly in the grace of God. Anyone who is willing to use the ideals of personal sharing and mutual accountability as a means to becoming a better witness for Christ can be welcomed to participate in a Group Reunion. These small reunion groups help pilgrims translate the message conveyed on the three-day weekend into a daily walk with Christ. With the regular support of a few faithful friends, the gift of God's love in Jesus Christ becomes a lifestyle of Christian discipleship through the threefold discipline of piety, study, and action.

Group reunions meet at regular times, as frequently as the participants can gather, weekly is ideal. The meeting consists of persons' sharing the stories of their walk with Christ during the past week. Members listen to one another, celebrate the grace of God in each person's life, and reinforce each one's core commitment to living in union with Christ in all facets of daily life- their Rule of Life, growth in piety. Members express that reinforcement through gentle accountability, encouragement, and support of one's stated discipline and plans.

Group Reunions provide a natural launching pad for mission in the community. Shared engagement in service to others deepens friendships and opens up avenues for Christian action. Some groups, where members relate to the same church, find a shared ministry within their congregations. Other groups choose to serve together in supporting a three-day weekend by cooking or offering palanca.

You have received a sheet with a format of a Group Reunion, beginning and ending with prayer, structured to enable deep sharing, active listening and spiritual companionship. This is a guideline that works well to enable all to share and be heard. We are practicing how to listen to each other and how to share.

Here are some important **NORMS** for being a part of a Group Reunion:

First, listen, and let each member talk without interruption. **Second**, allow each member to tell as much of their story as they are comfortable telling. **Third**, avoid giving advice. **Fourth**, avoid passing judgment.

When this kind of listening, caring, loving and accepting situation takes place, you and all your Group Reunion members will experience the kind of profound support that a committed spiritual community can offer its members, empowered to live in the world with the living foundation of God's Grace.



Education for Ministry (EfM)

EfM is a program of theological education hosted by the Sewanee School of Theology. Over four years, seminar participants study Old Testament, New Testament, Church History and Theology and Ethics. By deeply engaging tradition and theological reflection, EfM seeks to prepare all Christians to be ministers of the faith.

Target constituency: Although primarily designed for lay persons, EfM is equally valuable for the ordained a) as continuing education, and b), more importantly, to engage in peer reflection with parishioners. It is an excellent program of discernment.

Leadership requirements: EfM is led by trained Mentors. Prospective Mentors attend a weekend of training and are required to recertify every two years. Both lay and ordained may serve as Mentors.

Outside and optimal range of participants: Minimum 6, maximum 12, 8-10 ideal.

Length of individual sessions: 2 1/2 hours

Frequency of meetings: Weekly

Period of time over which units might be offered: Course is 36 weeks; typically coincides with the school year.

Kind of content/material; its price per participant: EfM produces all its own material. Participants receive a binder with all the year's readings. Cost is \$340/year in sponsored parishes or dioceses; \$450 in non sponsored dioceses.

Cost of license, registration or curriculum: Mentor training is approximately. \$150 per weekend; active mentors receive a small monthly stipend.

EfM is designed for those who seriously wish to deepen their faith. Along with an excellent academic presentation of the tradition comes a very strong practice component that encourages surprising spiritual and vocational growth. Groups may be formed out of more than one congregation or community – the group I co-mentor is deanery wide.

EfM is a spiritually-orientated small study group. Small study groups are about connecting with self, God and others. EfM seeks to equip us in integrating our faith lives with our daily lives, which benefits us individually as well as our communities and the Church.

Have you ever wished that you could see God in your “Monday through Friday” life – in the humdrum of everyday life? Have you ever felt like God got left in the church on Sunday? Have you been looking for that next “stepping stone” to deepen your faith? If the answer to any of these questions is “yes,” “maybe,” or “tell me more,” then consider EfM as an opportunity for adult Christian education.

What makes EfM unique? What makes it worth your time, consideration and participation?

EfM is:

- NOT about books ... although there are books.
- NOT a Bible study ... although the Bible is studied.
- NOT a prayer group ... although there is prayer and worship.

The answer has more to do with the program’s process than its content.

Through discussion and guided reflection, EfM provides an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of the reading materials, especially the Bible in years One and Two.

As important as the reading materials is the development of skills in theological reflection. The goal is that we learn to think theologically. By examining our beliefs and their relationship to our culture and the tradition of our Christian faith, we can learn what it means to be effective ministers in the world. We also reflect on ourselves, by telling our spiritual autobiographies.

Group participants are given weekly lesson assignments to study with the help of resource guides. Each is responsible for setting their own learning goals; most spend between two to four hours in study and preparation each week. In the weekly meetings we have the opportunity to share insights and discoveries as well as discuss questions which the study materials raise.

Also, please note the Education for Ministry website has been updated. For more information, please visit www.sewanee.edu/EFM (case sensitive).

The Rev. Carol Luther is in her seventh year as Chaplain and Director of Service Learning at St. Paul’s Episcopal School, Oakland, CA. Carol received her BA from Scripps College and her MDiv from Church Divinity School of the Pacific. She was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in 1999 and has parish experience in urban, suburban and rural settings. She holds certificates as an EfM Mentor, both face to face and online as well as a certificate in Group Dreamwork. She has presented papers on “Public Myths and Private Dreams,” “The Inner Life of a Classroom: Dreamwork in a 4th Grade,” and “Servant Learners, Servant Leaders.” She spent the summer of 2008 as a parish priest in the Alaska Native village of Grayling on the Yukon River and will present a paper on Native Insights on Education at the CAIS Conference in March. She loves dogs, books, hiking, food, dreaming, community and Mother Earth.

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Theological Reflection

Theological Reflection is based on a 4-source model. Each of us approaches life from four different directions:

1. Tradition: What have my parents taught me about this?
2. Action: How do I experience it? What do I do?
3. Culture: What's the buzz in the media, on the 'street,' in the world?
4. Position: Where do I stand? What do I believe?

Within these directions we encounter the themes of:

1. Creation: Wholeness, beauty
2. Sin: How it falls short
3. Repentance: The "aha" of understanding
4. Redemption: How I live with my new understanding

We transform the stuff of daily life: newspaper clippings, an incident from the past, a piece of music, a favorite poem or story, a piece of scripture, the week we all had last week into a metaphor of what it feels like to walk the path of the spirit. We do this in four slightly different ways:

- Year One: The Microscope Method (Looking very closely)
- Year Two: Reflection beginning with a Text
- Year Three: The Wide Angle Method
- Year Four: Reflection beginning with an Issue

— The Rev. Carol M. Luther

Reflection in Motion

An active method of Theological Reflection which explores the 4-source model of:

ACTION ■ TRADITION ■ CULTURE ■ POSITION

Theological Reflection is at the heart of the Education for Ministry (EfM) course offered by the University of the South. For the purpose of enhancing the experience of the Circle of Disciples conference on Adult Christian Formation this method will be introduced and practiced in workshops throughout the day. For the purposes of this workshop, an image or piece of scripture will be used to understand this practice.

Description of Theological Reflection – Reflection in Motion (RIM)

RIM began as an experiment exploring the possible use of physical movement as a way to “enhance” theological reflection. The experiment succeeded and people began to experience and “see” the way their thoughts — and the thoughts of others — move. The flow of the thinking process became visible as people literally moved among the four (4) sources: Action, Tradition, Culture and Position.

According to Sewanee, through the practice of RIM people come to understand how movement can contribute to bringing head and heart, body and mind, together. Further, it viscerally demonstrates how the four sources operate in someone’s thinking as one comes to insight and implications and how much thinking people do even when they are quiet.

The EfM community provides a confidential, safe and nurturing space to seek, share and question your relationship with God and consequent ministry in the world. This 4-source model of understanding our theology in the world is beautifully understood with this practice of movement, quiet reflection and deep sharing.

Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God flavors of this earth.

— Matthew 5:13, *The Message*

— Melissa Neofes Mischak

Melissa has held the Children’s Education Director position for five years at Christ Episcopal Church in Alameda, CA and added the Sunday morning Youth program called, The God Squad, in the Spring of 2008. Before holding these staff positions, Melissa has been involved in children and youth ministries for almost 30 years.

Her ministries work has been an invaluable part of her spiritual growth. An important part of this growth has been Education for Ministry. Melissa is in her fourth year of EfM and in her second year as co-mentor.

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Melissa earned a BA from Duquesne University and a Master’s in Public and International Administration from the University of Pittsburgh. She received intensive training in the Appreciative Inquiry method through the Diocese of California using the approach with not-for-profit organizations, churches, universities and hospitals.

Melissa is the recipient of an Annie E. Casey Foundation grant, in conjunction with Girls Inc. of the Island City, for her training program, “Magic Within: Discovering How to Make Your Dreams Come True.”

Melissa resides on the island of Alameda with her husband and business partner Bob and their two West Highland white terriers, Hilo and Lulu.

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Group Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is the ancient art of being with another person in their relationship with God. In group spiritual direction all members are presumed to have an active and aware relationship with God. In order to participate, group members must express a desire to grow in their awareness of their spiritual lives and have a willingness to share their spiritual experience. The group provides a safe place where mysteries of the soul are honored as group members speak, listen and reflect with each other. The group is not there to problem-solve or reduce experience to symptoms. Advice may be given if the speaker asks for it.

The Rev. Eileen Lindeman is an experienced spiritual director, chaplain and parish priest. She has a Masters in Christian Spirituality and an active spiritual direction practice. Prior to moving to the Bay Area the Rev. Lindeman was Associate Rector of Christ Church — Coronado for ten years. She was named Chaplain of the Year for Episcopal Community Services-San Diego (1997) and Chaplain of the Year for Sharp Hospital System San Diego (1998). Eileen was ECW Chaplain for seven years, chaplain of the California Companions of the Holy Cross and a teacher and chaplain for the Bishop's School — La Jolla.

Eileen has an extensive background in human services and was the coordinator of placements in field education for Yale Divinity School. In 1994 she was honored by Nebraska Governor Ben Nelson for her work as an advocate for children with developmental disabilities. She is the author of the book *Respite Care*, published by the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Eileen is married to the Rev. Mitch Lindeman, rector of Christ Church Portola Valley. The Lindemans have three children ages 26, 21 and 20, one dog and four parrots.

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The need to keep the focus on the presence of the Holy Spirit and on what is being shared is the function of both the group leader and the group members. Some groups have a consistent leader and other groups rotate this function. The qualification to direct is based upon spiritual sensitivity, self awareness, wisdom and empathy. Groups function best with five to seven members but must have a minimum of three. Meeting once a month is common but if people are committed to attendance more frequent meetings are possible.

It is important to set clear guidelines from the beginning about the length of commitment to the groups (three months to a year, for example). Norms about confidentiality and the decision as to when to close the group to new members are made at the first meeting. This initial meeting lasts about two hours and subsequent meetings are usually 90 minutes. Enough time is needed for everyone to share without overly taxing the listeners.

The content of the group is provided by group members who bring critical moments of their lives and spiritual experience to the contemplative attention of the group. Silence, prayer and a prepared environment (i.e., an icon or a candle) are usually elements of the meetings. As the group grows in its ability to handle group issues of grace, sin, disclosure and discernment, the potential for individual growth unfolds.

— The Rev. Eileen Lindeman

Spiritual direction, or spiritual guidance or companioning has been a practice in the Christian tradition at least since the time of the desert fathers and mothers. It has many forms and expressions, depending on time and place. At times there has been a strong emphasis on direction. At times it has been closely linked to sacramental confession.

In the latter third of the 20th century spiritual direction experienced a renewal, with a notable growth of direction as a ministry of lay persons.

Today, perhaps the best contemporary definition of spiritual direction comes from Tilden Edwards' book, *Spiritual Director, Spiritual Companion* (Paulist Press, 2001), where he says, "The ministry of spiritual direction can be understood as the meeting of two or more people whose desire is to listen prayerfully for the movements of the Holy Spirit in all areas of a person's life (not just in their formal prayer life). It is a three-way relationship: among the true director who is the Holy Spirit . . . the human director (who listens for the directions of the Spirit with the directee) and the directee.

In recent years we have seen the emergence of spiritual direction done in a small group in which the participants become, collectively, the director for each other, that is, those who listen for the directions of the Spirit in others. Typically such a group is facilitated by one of its members to ensure that basic ground rules are observed, that the focus remains on the person(s) seeking direction, and that participation is appropriate.

In a congregation, group spiritual direction can be great blessing, especially in a context where the resources for one-on-one direction with an appropriately trained and grounded director are limited. It requires a high level of trust both for the dynamic of the group and in holding full confidentiality. Once formed, it is difficult, though not impossible, to incorporate new members, which can be seen as exclusionary in the life of the congregation. There are some variations in format that can be used.

A definitive text is *Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment* by Rose Mary Dougherty, SSND (Paulist Press, 1995).

— Roderick B. Dugliss, Ph.D., Dean
The School for Deacons

Dean Roderick Dugliss joined the School in the Fall of 1999. A graduate of Stetson University, with graduate degrees from Duke University, Dugliss has served as a teaching missionary in Japan, worked as a college professor and administrator, and for many years had a career in the business world.

In the Episcopal Church, Rod serves on the board of the North American Association for the Diaconate and on the Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations. As part of that work he serves on the team engaged with The Moravian Church in America, Northern and Southern Provinces, seeking a full communion relationship. He is an elected Deputy from the Episcopal Diocese of California to the church's General Convention — for both 2006 and 2009.

He is Vice President of The Pacific Center for Spiritual Formation, with whom he co-leads retreats that engage both Christian and Buddhist meditation practices. He is a member of the Shalem Society for Contemplative Leadership.

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LifeCycles

AN INTEGRAL APPROACH TO MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT

LifeCycles: Christian Transformation in Community is what we call an integral approach to ministry development. What does an integral approach mean? And how is such an approach to ministry development a strategic and practical tool to help us recognize, call forth and nurture the ministry of all the baptized?

An Integral Approach

It is not uncommon for someone to ask, “What do you mean by ministry development?” “What exactly is being developed?” “It looks to me like different people are developing different things. Who is right?”

Personal Transformation

It is quite true that in practice, people speak about ministry development as involving a variety of things. For instance, in some dioceses ministry developers focus on the personal transformation of individuals. Ministry development concentrates primarily on helping people discover a prayer method which fits their psychological and/or spiritual personality type. Resources such as the *Enneagram* or Myers–Briggs play critical roles. Schools and centers for spiritual formation are developed, which may well include exploration of meditation, centering prayer, as well as experiences with various eastern expressions of these prayer forms.

Skills Development

For others, ministry development tends to focus on necessary skills development. Here, the emphasis is on helping individuals acquire specific competencies that can be observed and measured in some appropriate manner. These competencies may have to do with developing the tools to critically read and interpret the scriptures for preaching and teaching. Or they may pertain to the training necessary to become an effective leader. Skills sessions are created and offered so that individuals might become proficient in methods of group inclusion, boundary setting, feedback, problem-solving, etc. Ministry Developers may spend their time designing courses to teach certain liturgical practices, such as presiding, preaching, discernment, hospitality, etc.

Individual and Congregation

Ministry development is not a choice between personal transformation and skills development. Something which personal transformation and skills development have in common is that their focus is essentially with individuals. Where they differ and complement one another is that matters of personal transformation have to do with the interior dimension of the person. Skills development, with their measurable competencies, has to do with the exterior dimension of the person – tools the individual needs to be effective in



Frederica Harris Thompsett's bio and contact information are provided under Plenary Speakers, pages 6–7

ministry. Both dimensions of the individual are essential to ministry development. But, there is more for us to consider. In addition to the individual, ministry development also is concerned with both the formation of the congregation as well as changing the systems which support baptismal ministry.

Congregation/Community Formation

One of the most ancient images of the gathered community of faith is as “the body of Christ.” For ministry development, this image or vision of the congregation translates into an emphasis on the formation of the faith community as a whole. The community, not individuals per se, is in the foreground of ministry development. Time and energy is given to creating appropriate processes for gifts discovery – processes which emphasize the role of the community in identifying, calling forth, nurturing and commissioning the gifts of the body of Christ. Great care is given to the creation of appropriate liturgies, and attention is applied to the critical role of nurturing congregations into communities of theological reflection. Ministry development recognizes both liturgy and theological reflection as basic ways in which faith communities say who they are, what they value and how they praise and serve God. Ministry development midwives the congregation’s faith journey, reflecting the ancient conviction of the vital connection known as *lex orandi, lex credendi* – the congregations’ life of common prayer is in dynamic relationship with how the community expresses its faith.

Church Systems

We are now quite aware that personal transformation, skills development, and congregation formation can only develop insofar as there are appropriate systems in place to support them. Ministry development thus tends to the complex network of church systems vital to baptismal ministry. It can be helpful to understand these systems as the exterior dimension complementing the interior journey of community formation. Ministry developers ask such questions as: What structures are in place to support the congregation’s or diocese’s community life? Who has access to leadership and how is it exercised? Who benefits? Who doesn’t? What is the system for reaching decisions? What are the mechanisms in place for exercising power? Who doesn’t have access to them? These kinds of questions direct the attention of ministry development to the world of church systems. These systems are the various networks which actually support or impede personal transformation, skills development and community formation. Ministry development thus finds itself dealing with the social systems we call Vestries, Commissions on Ministry, Standing Committees, Church Canons and Episcopal leadership.

Practical Benefits of LifeCycles Integral Approach

LifeCycles, as an integral approach to ministry development, recognizes that we must pay attention to all four areas of ministry development: Personal Transformation, Skills Development, Congregation/Community Formation, and Systems Change. No area, or quadrant, is more or less important than the others. As a diagnostic tool, LifeCycles is of immense practical use. This is because we know that any given congregation will only be as developed as its least developed quadrant. For example, ministry development may

Kevin G. Thew Forrester is currently the Ministry Developer/Rector of St. Paul’s Church, Marquette, acting Ministry Developer for the Eastern Region, as well as the Director of the Healing Arts Center at St. Paul’s and a board member of the Marquette Interfaith Forum. He is a certified teacher of the Enneagram in the Narrative Tradition, as well as a member of the Integral Institute (associated with the work of Ken Wilber) and a member of a Diamond Heart Group (associated with the Ridwhan school of A.H. Almaas). From 2001-2007 he was the Ministry Development Coordinator for the Diocese. From 1998-2001 he was the Ministry Development Coordinator for the Diocese of Eastern Oregon, along with being the Co-Missioner to Central Oregon with his wife, Rise, who is also an ordained priest. He was Assistant to the Rector at St. Michael & All Angels, Portland, Oregon, from 1993-97, where he also served as Vicar to the Native American Community, Church of the Four Winds. He received an M.A. in Systematics and a Ph.D. in Moral Theology from The Catholic University of America, and an M.T.S. from Church Divinity School of the Pacific, focusing on Bioethics and Liturgy.

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have done a marvelous job attending to matters of personal transformation, congregation formation and church systems. But it will remain stuck at relatively low level of functioning so long as the necessary competencies or skills are not developed in the leadership.

LifeCycles helps us to answer our question about “What exactly are we developing?” What we need to be developing is all four areas of ministry, but the focus of immediate energy will depend upon which quadrant needs the most attention.

A wholistic approach to ministry development, such as LifeCycles, enables ministry developers to identify all the essential aspects of baptismal ministry, give each its due place, and integrate them into a marvelous and dynamic whole – the living body of Christ. With LifeCycles, ministry development is able to see the forest as well as the various trees for what they are, and not get lost.

The chart on the next page is a helpful visual framework of the LifeCycles integral approach.

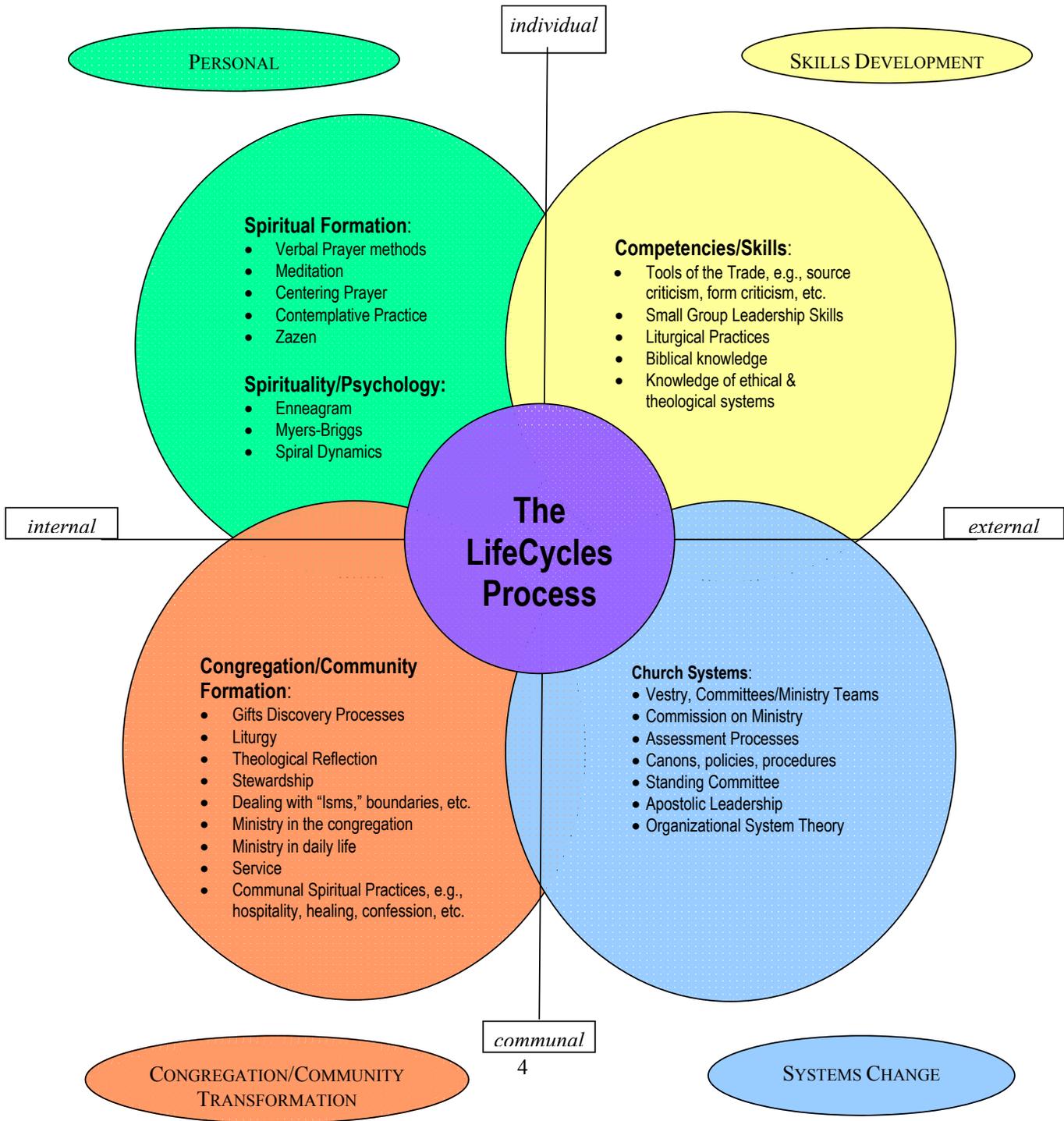
– Article and chart developed by Kevin Thew Forrester, ©2005

Charlie Piper has spent the entire thirty-six years of his ordained ministry in the Diocese of Northern Michigan. He currently serves as Rector, Holy Trinity Church, Iron Mountain (since 1979) and as Ministry Developer, Grace Church, Menominee (since 1989). He graduated from Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut (1969) and General Theological Seminary, in New York City (1972). He has served the Diocese in a variety of capacities, including the Core Team, Liturgy Committee, and, most recently, Episcopal Ministry Discernment Team. His wife, Linda, is a locally-affirmed priest and current President of the Standing Committee as well as the head of a two-county health department. They have two adult sons who live in Colorado.

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LifeCycles
An Integral Approach to Ministry Development



Based on and adapted from the work of Ken Wilber



LifeCycles

Cycles, Units and Sessions...

The following pages give you an overview of the sessions in each cycle. There are four cycles. Each cycle has six units (the themes are the titles across the top of the page). Each unit has six sessions (1-6 vertically below each theme title).

The focus of the First Cycle is the formation of community. The formation occurs through the sharing of personal stories within the context of the stories of the Scriptures. Participants are introduced to various “Tools of the Trade” and “Spiritual Formation” resources to provide practical assistance to the formation process. These resources are addressed in the introduction to each unit and then practiced in the unit and in one’s personal prayer and daily scripture reading.

The Second Cycle focuses on the formation of theologians, while the Third Cycle focuses on Life in Christ. A new segment is introduced: “Christian Practices.” These practices are those things that we, as the Christian community, do together. They are corporate practices. In the church, they are reflected in our liturgy so yet another new segment is added at this point: “Liturgical Practices.” In addition to talking about how we, as a congregation, practice hospitality in general, participants look at how that is reflected in our liturgy.

The Fourth Cycle, Awakening to the Sacred in Peoples of Other Faiths, will introduce aspects of organizational systems theory. This cycle provides an opportunity for participants to gain an understanding of and respect for other faiths which, in turn, enables them to gain a deeper understanding of their own faith.

Overview of Sessions

The Development Process

You will notice that parts of Cycles Three and Four are blank or in italics. That is because these *Cycles* are “under development” and will be finished by summer 2009. The process includes session content that is brainstormed by local *LifeCycles* groups who have been using two previous curriculums over the past 15-20 years and are drawing on their experience to help create this process. (This is *not* a curriculum – i.e., a course of study with a beginning and an end designed to teach a specific content. Rather, it is a process of formation intended to be repeated and become a way of being together as Christians rather than being a course of study.) The initial sessions are written by those with advanced degrees and/or are seminary faculty/deans. Activities, “information boxes,” additional resources, etc., are added by team members in other dioceses and organizations (all circulated electronically). Once the sessions in a unit are ready it is circulated to team members for copyedits. A final review is conducted by the publisher and it then goes to pilot parishes across the country and around the world. When input from those parishes is received, each unit is reviewed and that input incorporated. The unit is then posted as “ready” – but it continues to change as new users continue to contribute activities, corrections, additions, questions, references, etc. You can see where we are in the process by looking at this *Overview of Sessions* and seeing where the detailed titles end. Over the next couple of years, these pieces will be filled in as we grow.

The same process is used to develop Practicing Theology Units – which provide one to six or more sessions on a specific topic. Several are listed on the page after Cycle Four. Diocesan materials are developed by and for the primary diocesan partners; they include examples of how baptismal ministry teams have been established, Commission on Ministry procedures, preparatory materials for congregations, training for ordination, licensure and for specific ministries. These materials undergo a similar development process. For more information about *LifeCycles*, contact LeaderResources at 800-941-2218.



LifeCycles

Christian Transformation in Community

Cycle I: Forming Community Through Story

UNITS ⇒ Sessions ↓	UNIT 1 Encountering Our Story	UNIT 2 Gathered by the Spirit	UNIT 3 Sent Forth by the Spirit	UNIT 4 Washed & Renewed	UNIT 5 Fed with Thanksgiving	UNIT 6 Celebrate & Serve the Reign of God
Session #1 Experience	Telling Our Stories	Places where We Gather in Our Lives	Our Own Experiences of Being Sent	Living Waters	Telling the Stories of our Meals	Our Experiences of the Reign of God: Diversity
Session #2 Creativity in the Hebrew Scriptures	The Community Tells Its Stories of Creation: Genesis	Created for Places of Promise	Creating a People: Exodus	Created as a People Who Thirst	Created as a People Who Hunger	Co-Creating the Reign of God: Who Is In, Who Is Out?
Session #3 Love in the Christian Scriptures	Stories of Loving in John	Gathered to be a Community of Boundless Compassion	Church Built on Forgiving- Love: Matthew	Washed by Waters of Love: Mark	Love Known in Sharing a Meal: Acts	Anointed in Love: The Reign of God in Luke
Session #4 Liberty in the Saints of History	Being Set Free: Absalom Jones & Dorothy Day	Gathered to Be Free in Christ: Paul of Tarsus & Harriet Tubman	The Sacred Journey: Brigid & Brendan	Wading into the Waters: Sojourner Truth & Dag Hammarskjöld	Free to Eat, Free to Labor: Caesar Chavez & Elizabeth of Hungary	Celebrating & Serving God's Reign: Frederick Douglas & Eleanor Roosevelt
Session #5 Restorative Justice & Community	Creating Our Story of Restorative Justice	Gathered as a Sign of Justice	Sent to Heal	River of Renewal	Caring : Welcoming to the Table	Everyone Belongs: The Reign of God
Session #6	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate
Spiritual Practices	Daily Devotions The Offices	Journaling Canticles	Collects	Symbolic Action	Thanksgiving & Graces	Intercessory Prayer
Tools of the Trade	Biblical Overview	Scripture Translations	J.E.D.P	Gospel Parallels	Literary Devices	Types of Literature
Leadership Skills	Inclusion	Asking questions	Setting boundaries	Giving and receiving feedback	Caring vs. therapy	Supporting diversity
Technological Skills	Downloading files	Using website links	Logging onto the forums	Searching/evaluating websites		



LifeCycles

Christian Transformation in Community

Cycle II: All Are Theologians

UNITS ⇒ Sessions ↓	UNIT 1 Encountering Our Story	UNIT 2 Gathered by the Spirit	UNIT 3 Sent Forth by the Spirit	UNIT 4 Washed & Renewed	UNIT 5 Fed with Thanksgiving	UNIT 6 Celebrate & Serve the Reign of God
Session #1 Experience	All Are Theologians	All Are Theologians: A Communal Action	All Are Theologians: Resources for Reflection – Scripture	All Are Theologians: Resources for Reflection – Tradition	All Are Theologians: Resources for Reflection – Reason	All Are Theologians: Theology as Transformative
Session #2 Creativity in the Hebrew Scriptures	God's Ways Are Not Humanity's Ways: Jeremiah	Created At-one-ment: Suffering Servant of Second Isaiah	The Human One: God and Ezekiel	Renewal, not Destruction: Hosea	From Judgment to Restoration: Micah	Transformation & Instincts: Conversion in the Body Center
Session #3 Love in the Christian Scriptures	From Conditions to Compassion: Galatians	Self-Sacrifice, not Sacrifice of Jews: Romans	The Cross: Power & Wisdom – Corinthians	Clothed with a New Self: Colossians	An Empty Lordship: A Loss of Status: Philipians	Transformation & Avoidances: Conversion in the Heart Center
Session #4 Liberty in the Saints of History	Apostle of Non- Violence: Francis of Assisi	Common Ground: Meister Eckhart	Mohandas Gandhi: Satyagraha Warrior	Betrothed to Christ, Set Free to Reform: Teresa of Avila	The Motherhood of Christ: All Will Be Well -- Julian of Norwich	Transformation & Virtues: Conversion in the Head Center
Session #5 Restorative Justice & Community	Beyond Security and Status	Awakening to At-One- ment with All	Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly	Envisioning the Reign of God: From Domination to Wholeness	Restoration, Emptiness, Motherhood: A Compassionate Whole	Transformation & Holy Ideas: Journey into Holy Essence
Session #6	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate
Spiritual Practices	Centering Prayer	Lectio Divina	Imaginative Visualization	Meditation	Meditation on Images	Music
Tools of the Trade	Source Criticism	Form Criticism	Redaction Criticism	Tradition - Historical Criticism	Reader Response	Exegesis
Leadership Skills	Stages of Group Development	Task/Maintenance Functions	Handling Hogging, Frogging, Bogging	Understanding Power	Encouraging research & reflection	Using multiple intelligences
Technological Skills						



LifeCycles

Christian Transformation in Community

Cycle III: Life in Christ

UNITS ⇒ Sessions ↓	UNIT 1 Encountering Our Story	UNIT 2 Gathered by the Spirit	UNIT 3 Sent Forth by the Spirit	UNIT 4 Washed & Renewed	UNIT 5 Fed with Thanksgiving	UNIT 6 Celebrate & Serve the Reign of God
Key writer	Fredrica Harris Thompson	Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook	Ormonde Plater	<i>Eric Law</i>	Joseph Fortuna	Scotland
Session #1 Experience	Ethics as Relational-Responsibility	<i>An Ethic of Care</i>	Creator and Co-Creators: God and Humanity at Play	<i>Relational-Responsibility: Love (Compassion)</i>	<i>Liberty: A Puzzle Assembling Itself</i>	Voices in Our Communities
Session #2 Creativity in the Hebrew Scriptures	Shaping Ethical Covenants to Transform Community	<i>The Book of Psalms</i>	Societies of Mercy & Justice		<i>Song of Songs: Immersion into Beauty of Human Erotic Love</i>	Becoming a Community of Jubilee
Session #3 Love in the Christian Scriptures	The Prologue of John's Gospel as Community Transformation	<i>The Letter to the Hebrews</i>	Societies of Divine Love		<i>Epistula Apostolorum: The Self-Assembling Puzzle of Christian Origins</i>	Compassion as Loving Action
Session #4 Liberty in the Saints of History	Liberty and Learning in the Lives of the Saints: Richard Hooker & Verna J. Dozier	<i>Catherine of Siena: Mystic & Writer and George Herbert & Priest & Poet</i>	Anna Alexander of Georgia: A Paradigm of Service to All		<i>Bartolome de las Casas: Liberty for Liberty</i>	Dom Helder Camara & George MacLeod
Session #5 Restorative Justice & Community	Courageous Creative Conversations	<i>Racial Justice in the Church Community</i>	Communities of Creativity, Mercy, Justice, and Love		<i>Restorative Justice: Appreciation, Co-Creation, Articulation</i>	The Healing of Community
Session #6	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	Review & Celebrate	<i>Review & Celebrate: Fed with Thanksgiving</i>	Review & Celebrate
Spiritual Practices	Icons	Chanting	Prayer Beads/Rosaries	Healing Prayer	Sacred Movement I	Sacred Movement II
Tools of the Trade						
Leadership Skills	Introducing change	Decision-making	Handling conflict	Negotiation	Mediation	Pastoral Care
Christian Practices	Hospitality	Confession	Discernment	Healing	Thanksgiving/Offering	Celebration
Liturgical Practices	Hospitable liturgy	Corporate Confession	Affirmation of Discernment	Laying on of Hands for Healing	The Offertory/Thank offerings	Liturgical Celebrations
Technological Skills						



LifeCycles

UNIT 1

Encountering Our Story

SESSION 2

God's Ways Are Not Our Ways: Jeremiah

Purpose To explore the transformation in the understanding of the relationship between God and violence in Jeremiah and in our own lives

Skills: Practice inclusion methods and inclusion sensitivity; source criticism

Discover: *Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada*

Before this Session

Read *Telling the Story* (following)

Daily Scripture reading: Your choice of daily reading options

Daily Prayer Experience: Centering Prayer

Materials Needed:

- A copy of this lesson plan for each participant
- Symbol(s) for the center of your meeting table
- Music to be used in this session
- Personal journals of each participant (for reference during reflection time)

GATHERING

Leader: We gather in the name of Christ.

All: *Amen.*

*We are a community, gathered and sent forth by the Spirit
to encounter our story,
to be washed and renewed,
to be fed, with thanksgiving,
and to celebrate and serve the reign of God.*

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LifeCycles

Cycle II: Unit 1

Page 1

Centering

The song leader may lead a hymn or song. Suggestions.

“Lord, Make Us Servants of Your Peace,” *Hymnal* 593

“Come Now, O Prince of Peace,” *Wonder, Love, and Praise* 795

“Nada Te Turbe,” *Gather Comprehensive* 639

Praying

Prayer Leader:

As we spend these sessions encountering our story, we will experience together a form of prayer known as “Centering Prayer.” Please find a comfortable position in which to sit – with feet flat on the floor, hands laying gently on your lap, eyes lowered softly and out of focus or closed. Here are three simple guides for our Centering Prayer:

- Be present in faith and love to God who dwells in the center of your being.
 - Choose a love word (such as shalom, love, peace) and let it be gently present, supporting your being present to God in faith-filled love.
 - Whenever you are distracted by anything, simply, gently use your prayer word to return to God.
- M. Basil Pennington, *Centered Living*

After six minutes I will invite you to slowly open your eyes.

Prayer Leader:

When you are ready, slowly open your eyes.

Prayer Leader:

We pray you, Jesus,

All:

*take the old water,
our busy, conscientious lives,
and turn them into gospel wine,
that everyone may see your life,
and thirst.
Amen.*

A New Zealand Prayer Book, p. 612

Check-in

- Who is missing?
- Who will contact those who are missing?

The leader initiates check-in using a method that encourages full participation by all group members. Reflection is appropriate on your rule of life disciplines including discussion of what is working, what isn't and how you can support each other in finding and keeping spiritual disciplines. It is helpful if people share both the rewards and difficulties they have experienced – understanding that God's action is not always obvious. Sometimes it is only much later that we recognize that we have been fed by God's word and drawn closer to God in our times of prayer. In fact, it is often only when we *stop* a discipline that we realize its value and how it is nourishing us.

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TELLING THE STORY

God's Ways Are Not Our Ways: Jeremiah

~read aloud in group, alternating voices among the participants~

Hurt and Revenge

Think of an experience when you were hurt by someone, and you reacted by wanting to “get back” at them in some way so that they would also experience pain and suffering. Your group may choose to share some of these stories.

Question(s) or comment(s) from your personal reading:

Violence and the Sacred

In Session 1, we said it is possible to theologize on any experience. If we can name or describe an experience, we can reflect upon it, converse with it, attempting to discover how the divine is present, and in the light of that divine presence, how best to respond.

The prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures are keen observers of Israel. They are courageous observers as well, for they do not shy away from the underbelly, or the pain and suffering of Israel, endeavoring over and over again to discover how God is present and what this means for Israel's life.

Contemporary philosopher Rene Gerard points out that since the “foundation of the world,” violence has been associated with humanity's experience of the sacred. From Cain and Abel to the present, it is impossible (at least in the West) to

observe and reflect upon humanity's encounter with the sacred without talking about violence – often said to be done either by God or in God's name or for a just cause sanctioned by God. Two words which seem wedded together in the stories of Judaism and Christianity, are “*Violence*” and “*Sacred*.”

Rene Girard is a leading voice beckoning Christianity to reconsider this presumed link between violence and the sacred. He believes that the prophets, in particular, can help us reflect in a new way about who God is and how God is present in our lives. He speaks about *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*. We are thoroughly accustomed to thinking that God sanctions and works through violence, and this unquestioned belief blinds us to something God has been trying to reveal to us since the beginning. In the words of Gil Bailie: if we are able to unveil violence, we will discover that “humanity is at the crossroads” of survival. We are being given a rather stark choice: violence or life. Although we often confuse them – God's ways

Read the book of Jeremiah – preferably, with a commentary such as *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. See if you can answer the **Source Criticism** questions:

- Who wrote it?
- When was it written?
- Where was it written?
- Why was it written?
- Who was its intended audience?

If your group is especially interested in developing the scholarly skills of biblical criticism, you may want to add a full session in which the group does this discussion for your “content” time.

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are not our ways. The prophets, such as Jeremiah [jer uh MI uh], can help us to discover a different way: the way of life, the way of God.

Early Religion and Sacrifice

To appreciate Jeremiah's profound new insight, we need to understand that many religions, including the religion of the Hebrew people, are founded upon violence. In most, if not all, small-scale, essentially egalitarian societies (and many scholars believe early human societies as well) ritualized human sacrifice did not exist and would have been antithetical to their general concepts of the society as a family and the universe as a harmonious whole with little or no distinction between the spirit world and the visible world. But as human societies became larger, more impersonal and more hierarchical, many of them adopted ritual sacrifice of animals and often other humans. Ostensibly, such sacrifices were done to secure the favor of the god(s) and/or to restore or maintain balance and harmony in the cosmos [KOZ mos, an orderly, harmonious, systematic universe], but they also served the sociopolitical function of validating and sustaining the power of the leaders by invoking special religious authority.

Typically, the sacrifice was effective only for a while, and then, with the completion of a cycle of the universe or the emergence of a new crisis, another ritual sacrifice would be necessary. The god(s), the cosmos, the society, required it. Often ritual sacrifice was a kind of catharsis, whereby the people could project (or lay) their anger, hostility, desire for vengeance, upon the sacrificial victim.

Where was God perceived to be in the midst of such sacrifice? With those who sacrificed, it was believed. God called for – required – human sacrifice, in order to be satisfied. Abraham's "almost" sacrifice of Isaac reflects this demand of religion. The biblical references to high altars scattered throughout the land of Israel speak to the common presence of these places of human sacrifice. The alternative to such sacrifice was understood to be social chaos, cosmic disorder, and massive wars. And so, we read even in the gospels, "It is better that one man should die than that the whole nation be destroyed." (John 11:50) Caiaphas [KAY uh fuhs – the high priest] is simply echoing the inherited "wisdom" of sacrificing a human victim to "save" the nation from war and to keep the peace. Again, we ask, *where is God in this sacrifice?* The conviction (that is, *theology*) held by many is that God is making the demand for sacrifice. To speak somewhat simplistically, God is the Violator and we, created in God's image, are violators. Gil Bailie puts it this way:

"...cultures have forever commemorated some form of sacred violence at their origins and considered it a sacred duty to reenact it in times of crisis. The logic of sacred violence is nowhere expressed more succinctly nor repudiated more completely than in the New Testament, where the high priest announces its benefits and the crucifixion straightaway reveals its arbitrariness and horror. The New Testament account of the crucifixion reproduces the myths and mechanisms of primitive religion [such as the sacrifice of Jesus the victim on the cross to satisfy Rome and some of the Jewish authorities] only to explode them, reveal their perversities, and declare allegiance to the Victim of them."

Bailie is describing an earth-shattering shift, a shift in awareness that shatters our understanding of how God is present in creation. And when does this shift happen, that we come to perceive

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God as aligned not with the Violator, but with the Victim? Jeremiah lies at the heart of this transformation in faith and theology.

From Violator to Victim

The majority of scholars hold that Jeremiah began his prophetic ministry in 627 B.C.E., during the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah [jo SIGH uh]. His ministry continued over the next forty-five years, “holding the record for prophetic activity.” Jeremiah prophesies during the reforms of Josiah, during the reign of King Jehoiakim [ji HOI uh kim – Josiah’s son, 609-598], as well as through the first and second destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (598 and 586). Legend has it that in the end, he was stoned to death by his own people in Egypt.

Jeremiah lived during a time of tremendous social upheaval and chaos, when things were falling apart at the seams for Israel. The temple, which was understood to be the divine sanctuary and guarantee of God’s presence and protection of the people, was destroyed not once, but twice. What should the response of the people be to such brutal violence? Where was God now, and what was God asking them to do and to be in response to the Babylonian invasion?

This is a “major turning point,” in Israel’s history, Gil Bailie tells us. Where is God to be found? In the early prophets, such as Micaiah [mikh EYE a – see 1 Kings 22:26-28], we see a willingness to champion “the *cause* of victims.” These prophets “may have challenged the mighty and suffered their intermittent scorn.” With Jeremiah and the other latter prophets, we come upon persons willing “to actually suffer the *plight* of victims.” Jeremiah begins to see that God is to be found not in retribution, not in ritual sacrifice demanded to appease that God, angry with our moral and/or religious failure, but *in the victims of the violence*.

One of the consequences of this shift, this conversion, by the latter prophets such as Jeremiah, is that often they are not beloved by their own people. The people have grown accustomed to vengeance as cathartic. They *want* to retaliate. It is seen as the “reasonable” course of action. But now Jeremiah is offering another response rooted in the dawning awareness that “God’s ways are not our ways,” particularly and especially when it comes to violence. God does not divide and conquer. God embraces and forgives (70 times 7, as the gospels will remind us). Jeremiah is courageous because the center of his identity is neither himself nor the people whom he serves. His center is God – God who is trying to speak a new word, or an old word in a new way, so that people can see through the veil of violence that for so long has clouded their vision of the divine.

Jeremiah is capable of seeing God in the victims of violence because he himself is a prophet who suffers violence. And here we come to a pivotal point. *Jeremiah has a revealing word to speak about God because he himself has suffered*. His own suffering has begun to bring to birth in him and through him, a new sensibility and awareness. Israel remains embedded within a world cowered to *divine wrath* (Jer. 1:17-19; 6:11; Lamentations 4:11). In the life of Jeremiah and the other prophets, we begin to “see the first faint outlines of a world made morally intelligible by *divine empathy*.”

In Jeremiah’s call, we see the God-centered life of Jeremiah, the foreseeing of social upheaval, as well as intimations of divine empathy.

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“But you, gird up your loins; stand up and tell them everything that I command you. Do not break down before them, or I will break you before them. And I for my part have made you today a fortified city, and iron pillar, and a bronze wall, against the whole land – against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land. They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, *for I am with you, says the LORD, to deliver you.*” (Jer. 1:17-19)

Jeremiah is *a prophet precisely as a victim* of his society’s violence. “Especially in the extraordinary cases of Jeremiah and Second Isaiah, the suffering of the prophet at the hands of his society *was* his prophetic message.” Where is God? God is with the victims of unjust and brutal violence – whoever they may be. God is in the words uttered by the one killed in war. Violence is not what is sacred, rather the victim is the one who is sacred. God does not sanction violence – ever. Rather, *violence sacrifices God*. This transformation in awareness, this emerging theology, is part of the legacy of Jeremiah.

Such a radical transformation in human awareness and understanding of God and ourselves takes time to permeate into every aspect of life. The lures of violence are strong and seductive – especially when we are convinced the violence we do – the lives we sacrifice – is done in the name of good, in the name of country and religion, in the name of God. King Josiah, who ruled during the first period of Jeremiah’s prophetic activity, was considered a great king, who instituted reform of the Temple. Integral to this reform was the eradication of Canaanite religious influence including the places and vestiges of Canaanite human sacrifice. We are told in 2 Kings 23:10) that Josiah

“defiled [destroyed] Topheth [TOH fith], which is in the valley of Benhinnom [ben HIN uhm], so that no one would make a son or a daughter *pass through fire* as an offering to Molech [MOH lek].”

“Pass through fire” is a euphemism for ritual human sacrifice. Josiah’s reform sought out and destroyed such altars (also known as “high places”). And yet, the very means Josiah reverted to in order to accomplish his worthy goal, was itself laced with violence and killing.

“Moreover, Josiah removed all the shrines of the high places that were in the towns of Samaria, which kings of Israel had made, provoking the LORD to anger, he did to them just as he had done at Bethel. *He slaughtered on the altars all the priests of the high places who were there, and burned human bones on them.* Then, he returned to Jerusalem.” (2 Kings 23:19-20)

Josiah reverts to the human ways of violent slaughter. His own temple reform remains built upon a foundation of human sacrifice. The veil of sacred violence is again lowered on the people, and Jeremiah sees through it and speaks. A temple built on violence is a shrine to violence. The people are simply deceiving themselves.

“Do not trust in these deceptive words: ‘This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.’ For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and

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the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.” (Jer. 7:4-7)

Israel’s sacred violence eliminates God through its elimination (killing) of new victims. The people do not want to hear Jeremiah’s proclamation of God’s word. They want the temple and their violence as well. This is the human penchant. And so, the people now turn against Jeremiah.

“And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him saying, ‘You shall die! ... When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king’s house to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, ‘This man deserves the sentence of death because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears.’” (Jer. 26:8, 10-11)

Sedition [si DISH en – rebellion against the government] is the accusation or crime supposedly worthy of a new sacrificial victim. Divine empathy as the law of the universe is only a faint glimmer, but it is in the eye of Jeremiah and will not be extinguished. Bailie reminds us: “Here is the prophet as critic of religion becoming the prophet as the victim of religious righteousness. Here is Jeremiah as the spiritual descendant of Micaiah and the spiritual ancestor of Jesus of Nazareth.”

Resources: Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*; Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*; Burt Purrington, *Ph.D.*

Group Activities

How far have we come since Jeremiah, in identifying God as present not in violence, but in the victims of violence? What, in your personal life or experience, testifies to our readiness or lack of readiness to relate to God in these differing ways?

Discovering Our Ways

How would you describe your instinctive reaction to being hurt or wronged – with an angry gut, an anxious heart, a fearful mind? How do you feel when you are wronged? What thoughts come immediately to mind? What do you yearn for in response? What do you actually do? How do you tend to express and justify your own sense of wrath?

- Describe an experience in your life or that of your community or nation which legitimately raised your ire. In your and/or others’ response to that wrong ... where was God?
- Describe an experience when revenge was not exacted for being wronged. Why was revenge withheld? What encouraged that response, and what discouraged it? Where was God in that exchange?

Terrorism

For most Americans, terrorism became real on September 11, 2001. For many others around the world it has been a constant threat that has shaped their daily lives.

Think about past and recent acts of terrorism. What is the role of religion in those acts? How do current events echo the principles found in primitive religions? Why do you think human beings resort to violence in the name of religion? What do you think can help people see and act in new ways? What contribution can you, your church and your community make towards forming a new vision for life together in this world?

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OR

When Things Fall Apart

Describe an experience that happened in your lifetime in which a tragedy occurred (such as a significant loss, failure, death) and one or more of the following were true:

- the actions of a group you were a part of contributed to the tragic turn of events
- the actions of a person you knew and admired personally contributed to the tragedy
- your own personal actions contributed to the tragedy

What were your initial reactions to learning of the tragedy? Was there a tendency to:

- perceive yourself as a victim and lay blame for the tragedy on someone/something else? or
- seek a kind of scapegoat and exact a certain amount of revenge for your tragedy?

If so, how would you describe this experience?

Where, as the story unfolded, was there redemption? Where and how was God revealed?

OR

Transforming Perception of God and Self

In the light of what is presented above in the background and comparing this with Jeremiah 6:11, what is Jeremiah learning about how God responds to being wronged or hurt? Discuss humanity’s transforming perception of God discussed above –

- When have you, personally, in a church, or in a culture, experienced anew and come to know God not as a God of divine wrath, but as a God of divine empathy?
- When have you personally, as a church, or as a culture, experienced and come to know God not as a God aligned with the violator, but as a God in solidarity with the victim?
- Human awareness of “who God is” has experienced transformation throughout the scriptures and continues to undergo transformation in our own lives and experience. What difference does that insight have for us?

BREAKING BREAD

This is a time for snacks, informal conversation and stretching.

SENDING FORTH

So What?

The group takes a few minutes for each person and the group as a whole to reflect on what difference this session, your conversation, reading or reflection makes. OK, so you’ve had this experience....so what? What are you going to do about it? What are you going to do differently tomorrow? How are you going to be different?

How do you carry out Christ’s ministry in the church and in the world?

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Housekeeping

The group decides who will take responsibility for the various leadership roles in the next session:

Preparing

The session leader reviews the Rule of Life disciplines:

- Calls attention to the Scripture readings and prayer experience
- Encourages participants to use a form of reflection
- Points out *Telling the Story* in the next session to be read before the next meeting

Praying

The prayer leader invites the group to center itself in silence and then prays:

Draw your Church together, O Lord,
into one great company of disciples,
together following our Lord Jesus Christ into every walk of life,
together serving him in his mission to the world,
and together witnessing to his love on every continent and island.
We ask this in his name and for his sake. Amen.

“For the Mission of the Church,”
The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada p. 676

Intercessions: The prayer leader asks participants to name, either aloud or silently, those whom they would like the group to hold in prayer now and throughout the coming week.

The prayer leader invites the group to pray Psalm 17 together:

- 1 Adonai, I plead for a just cause!
Listen to my cry!
Turn your ear to my prayer,
for my lips are free from untruth.
- 2 *Prove my integrity—*
let your eyes see what is true!
- 3 *You search my heart,*
you visit me by night.
You test me and find nothing wrong:
I determined that my mouth wouldn't sin!
- 4 *And as for my actions,*
because of the word you spoke to me,
I was able to avoid a path
that leads to violence.
- 5 *I kept my feet firmly on your road,*
and my steps never faltered.
- 6 *Now I am the one calling to you—*
and you, O God, will answer me.
Turn your ear to me

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- and hear my prayer.*
- 7 *Show me your steadfast love—
and your great strength.
Save those who take refuge in you
from those who hate them.*
- 8 *Guard me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings,*
- 9 *and from violent and ruthless attacks—
from my enemies who surround me with deadly intent.*
- 10 *They close their hearts to compassion,
but open their mouths in arrogance.*
- 11 *They've tracked me down;
now they surround me.
Their eyes are alert,
ready to strike me to the ground*
- 12 *as though they were hungry lions about to pounce
or a young lion crouched in the bushes.*
- 13 *Adonai, arise! Confront them, strike them down!
Rescue me from the violent with your sword!*
- 14 *Let your hand rescue me from such people,
from such a world,
from people whose only reward is in this present life.
You fill the bellies of those you cherish;
their children will have plenty,
and will store up wealth for their children.*
- 15 *And me? When I look at justice I see your face;
and when I awake, I'll be content just to see your likeness.*

The Inclusive Hebrew Scriptures, Volume III: The Writings

Singing

The song leader may sing a song or use one of the following suggested songs:

- “Come My Way, My Truth, My Life,” *Hymnal* 487
- “Peace Among Earth’s Peoples,” *Wonder, Love, and Praise* 789
- “Put Peace into Each Other’s Hands,” *Wonder, Love, and Praise* 790
- “For the Healing of the Nations,” *Gather Comprehensive* 719
- “Gifts that Last,” *Gather Comprehensive* 583
- “How Good it Is,” *Gather Comprehensive* 727
- “Your Love, O God, Has All the World Created,” *Gather Comprehensive* 713

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve Christ in all of life.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

From the Vigil of Easter through Pentecost
Alleluia. *Alleluia* may be added to the dismissal.



Listening Hearts

Listening Hearts Ministries began in 1988 as a parish-based effort to take spiritual wisdom accumulated by various Christian traditions over the centuries and integrate it into the Quaker model. Its vision is to cultivate the church as a community of faith that is eager for God's guidance, alert to signs of the Spirit, and alive with the prayer of deep listening. By cultivating discerning communities within the body of Christ, it hopes to change the culture of the church. The ministry has consistently used the small group approach for its work. When a gathering is large, it is divided into clusters of 3 to 5 people.

Members of a group grow ever closer to God and one another as they:

- take time to open themselves to God's presence;
- honestly express the thoughts of their hearts;
- listen to each other in an intensely prayerful way, without passing judgment;
- creatively engage with Scripture;
- look for places where they can find common ground; and
- pay attention to signs of the Spirit.

Groups focus on one issue at a time, build in ample opportunity for silence, and trust that God is active when people come together with bodies, hearts and minds open to the Spirit ... whether or not those present are able to explicitly identify what God is doing as it is taking place. The time is structured in a clear and orderly sequence, with plenty of space for things to unfold in a free and fluid way.

Basic underlying assumptions are that: God loves each one of us and is always trying to communicate with us through people, events and inner promptings; authentic communication requires focused listening; we can most effectively listen to God with the help of others, if we do so in an informed and intentional way; Christ dwells at the center of every person; when two or three come together in the name of Jesus, he is there in their midst; whenever a group assembles attuned to that presence, those gathered experience themselves as the body of Christ alive in that place.

Any parish or diocese that commits itself to instituting the practice of prayerful listening in all of the groups that are part of it will most surely undergo a spiritual transformation.

Listening Hearts program leaders must be well formed Christians who agree with the basic teachings put forth in Listening Hearts and Grounded in God. They must have leadership ability, be trained as Listening Hearts trainers, and must have internalized the basic principles that are central to spiritual discernment.

Since Listening Hearts programs are designed for groups that have a continuing life together (vestries, parishes, dioceses, church related non-profits, seminaries and other schools), the fee is not normally calculated on a per person basis. With each morning, afternoon, or evening constituting a segment, the cost is usually \$500 for the first segment and \$400 for each additional segment. Contact the Listening Hearts office for specific information about vestry retreats, parish retreats, spiritual conflict resolution retreats, workshops for search committees, Training Weeks for Trainers, or training of trainers for Commission on Ministry discernment groups.

Suzanne Farnham's bio and contact information are provided under Plenary Speakers, pages 6–7



Circle of Disciples
LISTENING HEARTS WORKSHOP
Saturday, January 31, 2009



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

CHANT: "BE STILL AND KNOW"

Hum through once, sing through twice, then fall into silence for 2 minutes. Try to feel God at the center of your being and at the center of your small group.

Be still_ and know that I_ am God. Be
still_ and know that I_ am God. Be still_ and
know_ that I_ am God.

INTRODUCTIONS WITHIN GROUPS

In random sequence, each person please take one turn to introduce yourself by responding to the following questions.

- Your name?
- Where do you live?
- What is your parish?
- How comfortable are you in opening yourself to the power of the Holy Spirit?

IDENTIFY FOCUS FOR YOUR MEDITATION

We will chant “Be Still and Know” again, followed by another 2 minute silence. During that silence, consider the current circumstances of your life. Is there a specific issue or question you would like to hold before God? Or do you want to meditate on the general direction of your life?

MEDITATION EXERCISE

1. Help yourself to a piece of paper and a variety of coloring pens.
2. Claim a comfortable space for yourself somewhere in this room.
3. Close your eyes and take a minute to feel your life situation and your specific issue, if you identified one, as deeply as possible.
4. Select one of the following Scripture texts that may speak to your circumstances ... or some other text if one comes to you.

...if I do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.
—1 Cor. 13:1b

Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently....
—Ps. 37:7

*I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.*
—Ps. 32:8

*Whoever serves me must follow me, and where
I am, there will my servant be also....*
—Jn. 12:26

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge him.
And he will make your paths straight*
—Prov. 3:5-6 (NIV)

5. With your life circumstances planted in your consciousness, silently hold your selected Scripture text deeply in your heart for about 2 minutes.
6. Now take your coloring pens and begin to express your feelings on the paper by the colors you choose and by the way you move the pens. Through the movement of the pens, try to communicate

with God from your center. Do not be concerned with artistic merit. Alternate between drawing and resting.

7. After about 10 minutes, a small prayer chime will sound. At this time, fall still and silently gaze at what you have drawn so that God may speak to you through it.
8. When the prayer bell chimes again, return to your small group.

SMALL GROUP SHARING

about 8 minutes

1. Each person who would like to share the fruits of your meditation, take one turn to do so in whatever way the Spirit leads you.
2. Try not to take more than your share of time so that each person who wishes to speak has an opportunity to do so. No one should feel obligated to speak.
3. Receive what is said prayerfully. Allow silence to envelop each person's words. Let God's presence penetrate the group. Try to connect with Christ at the center of each person. Avoid discussion.
4. When it is time to conclude, one or more persons pull things together with a suitable quotation from Scripture and/or a few words that draw the reflections together.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

CONCLUDING PRAYER

PASS THE PEACE WITH YOUR GROUP

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RENOVARÉ
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspired by Eugene Peterson's important book THE JESUS WAY • 8 General Sessions with talks by Eugene Peterson, Richard Foster, Emilie Griffin, Chris Webb, John Ortberg, Dallas Willard, and others • 7 workshop tracks on intentionality in Christian spiritual formation for areas of everyday life: arts, home, business, church, lifelong discipleship, postmodern culture, and spiritual direction • 35+ introductory workshops on the basics of Christian faith and practice from the perspective of lifelong discipleship to Jesus 	<p>For More Information or to Register www.renovare.org/2009ic.htm 2009ic@renovare.org 1-888-792-2009</p>
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RENOVARÉ

RENOVARÉ Spiritual Formation Groups take their lead from various Christian and faith-based communities across the centuries covered by the Church, from the Benedictines to the Wesleyan Holiness movement to Alcoholics Anonymous, with similarities to any small group that has integrated reflection, intention and practice for spiritual growth.

The objective is to grow in the character, mind-set and lifestyle of Jesus. "Becoming Like Jesus" well expresses the hope for all folks that interact with the RENOVARÉ ideas and programming.

The primary statement of God from which RENOVARÉ draws inspiration/guidance is The Apostles' Creed, the idea that the God we see in Jesus Christ is part of an historical, Trinitarian community that is interested as much about the greater good of one another as in each member.

In clustering together for accountability and encouragement in the practice of historically-based Christian disciplines like meditation, service, solitude and guidance we make ourselves available to God that God might transform our hearts, minds and lifestyles.

To move in this direction leaders must be intentional about their own practice of the disciplines and live with it for awhile. They are then in a position to model and teach others about the more robust, whole-life, lifelong practice of discipleship to Jesus that RENOVARÉ represents.

Target constituency: Typically college age and above. While anyone given to intentionality could use it, the most common user is a person who has been churched for some time and is eager to go deeper in whole-life discipleship.



Chris Webb's bio and contact information are provided under Plenary Speakers, pages 6-7

Leadership requirements: No special training. A Spiritual Formation Workbook is self-directive.

Outside and optimal range of participants: Six people is the maximum, preferably 3-4.

Length of individual sessions: 90-120 minutes.

Frequency of meetings: Preferably once per week, though semi-monthly is OK.

Period of time over which units might be offered: A Spiritual Formation Workbook is formatted to be used for eight weeks. At the conclusion of the book groups are introduced to a "Spiritual Formation Group Order of Meeting" that can be used indefinitely. Or groups could decide to read and discuss other literature while at the same time helping one another practice disciplines for growth.

Kind of content/material; its price per participant: The book A Spiritual Formation Workbook costs \$12.95. Each Spiritual Formation Group should have at least one of these, and preferably each group member has her/his own.

Cost of license, registration or curriculum: Only the cost of the book per person. These can be found at local bookstores or ordered online from www.renovare.us or amazon.com.

I have been in churches that make the ideas that RENOVARÉ represents a primary focus of congregational life. Sunday schools, small groups, Lenten studies and other structures where people gather regularly are used. I have been with people who are disillusioned with churches, either then hanging on in a church or outside of it, for whom RENOVARÉ has brought renewed interest in discipleship. A Spiritual Formation Group and reading other RENOVARÉ literature have helped.

— Lyle SmithGraybeal

With a background in retail business and inner-city ministry, Lyle has been involved with RENOVARÉ in one respect or another for over a decade, is currently the RENOVARÉ Vice President for Publishing and Program Development, and with Felicia, his spouse, is a contributor to The RENOVARÉ Spiritual Formation Bible.

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Many of these books will be available for purchase at the Book Table in the Denniston Refectory.

Alternatively, many of these books – and more – may be borrowed from the Episcopal Resource Center.

The Book Table (books for sale) will be open **Saturday from noon to 4 p.m.**

The ERC Table (materials for lending) will be open **Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**



Episcopal Resource Center

231 S. Sunset Avenue
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Resources for Study

Recommended by the conference plenary speakers and workshop leaders

- Almaas, A.H. Facets of Unity: **The Enneagram of Holy Ideas.** Boston: Shambhala, 2000.
- Benedict. **The Rule of St. Benedict.** Trans. by Anthony C. Meisel and M.L. del Mastro. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. **Life Together.** Trans. by John W. Doberstein. New York: Harper & Row, 1954.
- Bourgeault, Cynthia. **The Wisdom Way of Knowing: Reclaiming an Ancient Tradition to Awaken the Heart.** San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.
- Brown, Raymond E. **The Churches the Apostles Left Behind.** New York: Paulist, 1984.
- Daniels, David N. and Virginia A. Price. **The Essential Enneagram: The Definitive Personality Test and Self-Discovery Guide.** New York: HarperOne, 2000.
- Donahue, Bill and Russ Robinson. **Walking the Small Group Tightrope: Meeting the Challenges Every Group Faces.** Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003.
- Dougherty, Rose Mary, SSND. **Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment.** New York: Paulist, 1995.
- Dozier, Verna. **The Dream of God: A Call to Return.** New York: New York: Seabury, 2006.
- Edwards, Tilden. **Spiritual Director, Spiritual Companion.** New York: Paulist, 2001.
- Farnham, Suzanne G., Joseph P. Gill, R. Taylor McLean, and Susan M. Ward. **Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community.** Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1991.
- Farnham, Suzanne G., et al. **Listening Hearts Manual for Discussion Leaders.** Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1993.
- Farnham, Suzanne G. **Retreat Designs, with Meditation Exercises and Leader Guidelines, rev. ed.** Photographs by Paul Hotvedt. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1994.
- Farnham, Suzanne G., Stephanie A. Hull, and R. Taylor McLean. **Grounded in God: Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations.** Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1996.
- Foster, Richard J. and James Bryan Smith, eds. **Devotional Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups, rev. ed.** New York: HarperOne, 2005.
- Foster, Richard J. **Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth, 3rd ed.** London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998.
- Foster, Richard J. **Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith.** San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Foster, Richard J., ed. **The RENO-VARE Spiritual Formation Bible w/ Apocrypha.** New York: HarperCollins, 2006.
- Green, Thomas H. Weeds **Among the Wheat: Where Prayer and Action Meet.** Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria, 1984.
- Greenwood, Robin & Caroline Pascoe. **Local Ministry: Story, Process and Ministry.** London: SPCK, 2006.

Greenwood, Robin. *Transforming Church: Liberating Structures for Ministry*. London: SPCK, 2002.

Johnston, William. *The Still Point: Reflections on Zen and Christian Mysticism*. New York: Fordham UP, 1989.

Maybe, Maylanne. *All Who Minister: New Ways of Serving God's People*. Cincinnati: Forward Movement, 2003.

Miller, John P. *Educating for Wisdom and Compassion: Creating Conditions for Timeless Learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2005.

Orsy, Ladislav. *Toward a Theological Evaluation of Communal Discernment (Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits, vol. 5, no. 5)*. St. Louis: American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality, 1972.

Palmer, Parker. *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.

Quaker Faith and Practice. London: The Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, 1995.

RENOVARÉ. *Connecting with God*. New York: HarperOne, 2006.

Rohr, Richard. *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*. New York: Crossroad, 2003.

Shattuck, Cynthia L. and Fredrica Harris Thompsett, eds. *Confronted by God: The Essential Verna Dozier*. New York: Church Publishing, 2006.

Smith, James Bryan and Richard J. Foster. *A Spiritual Formation Workbook: Small Group Resources for Nurturing Christian Growth, rev. ed.* New York: HarperOne, 1999.

Tamm, James W. and Ronald J. Luyet. *Radical Collaboration: Five Essential Skills to Overcome Defensiveness and Build Successful Relationships*. New York: Collins Business, 2005.

Thew Forrester, Kevin L. *"I Have Called You Friends": An Invitation to Ministry*. New York: Church Publishing, 2003.

Thompsett, Fredrica Harris. *Living With History (The New Church's Teaching Series, vol. 5)*. Lanham, MD: Cowley, 1999.

Thompsett, Fredrica Harris. *We Are Theologians*. New York: Seabury, 2004.

Vanier, Jean. *Community and Growth: Our Pilgrimage Together, rev. ed.* New York: Paulist, 1989.

Wheatley, Margaret J. *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World, 3rd ed.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2006.

Wilber, Ken. *Integral Spirituality: A Startling New Role for Religion in the Modern and Postmodern World*. Boston: Shambhala, 2007.

Wilber, Ken. *No Boundary: Eastern and Western Approaches to Personal Growth*. Boston: Shambhala, 2001.

Wilber, Ken. *The Integral Vision: A Very Short Introduction to the Revolutionary Integral Approach to Life, God, the Universe, and Everything*. Boston: Shambhala, 2007.

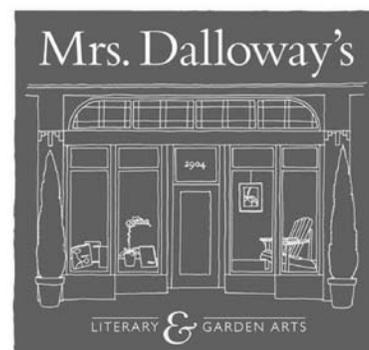
Woolman, John. *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*. Ed. by Phillips P. Moulton. Richmond, IN: Friends United, 1989.

Wuthnow, Robert. *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.

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Notes & Doodles



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Credits



As chair of this conference I want to welcome you to this exploration of your spirituality

and relationship with Jesus Christ. Because of the transformative power small group work can ignite in the individual and in the church, this is an exciting conference for our Diocese and province. As Christians, our path is one of relationship-building, that cultivation of how we love and sometimes struggle with ourselves, others and God.

This conference is meant to provide you with the tools for creating small groups, thus opening doors to fuller interactions and growth. So, relax, open your minds and hearts, and have fun!

The Reverend Lori Walton has over 15 years of experience in participating and leading small groups in both the secular and ecclesial settings. Through this work, she has come to realize that the some of the deepest interior work is done when one gathers with others to explore the relationships between self, God and others.

Lori is currently the Associate Rector at Saint Mark's Church in Palo Alto, CA where she has begun a small group ministry that continues to grow and enrich the spiritual paths of participants.

In terms of personal background, Lori is native to the Bay Area, spending her childhood on the Coast in Pacifica. Her upbringing was a wonderful mix of chaos and passion that comes from being one of five children in an Italian/Irish family. She was ordained by the Right Reverend William Swing in 2004.

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Text set in Poppl-Laudatio Light 10.5/12.5.
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Design and layout (and conference photography) by Sarah C. Jones
– sarahcjones@mindspring.com



Produced by the Diocese of California

The Right Reverend Marc Handley Andrus, Bishop

The Right Reverend Steven Charleston, Assisting Bishop

**The Reverend Canon Michael Barlowe, Canon for Congregational Ministries,
& Working Group Head for Area and Congregational Ministries**

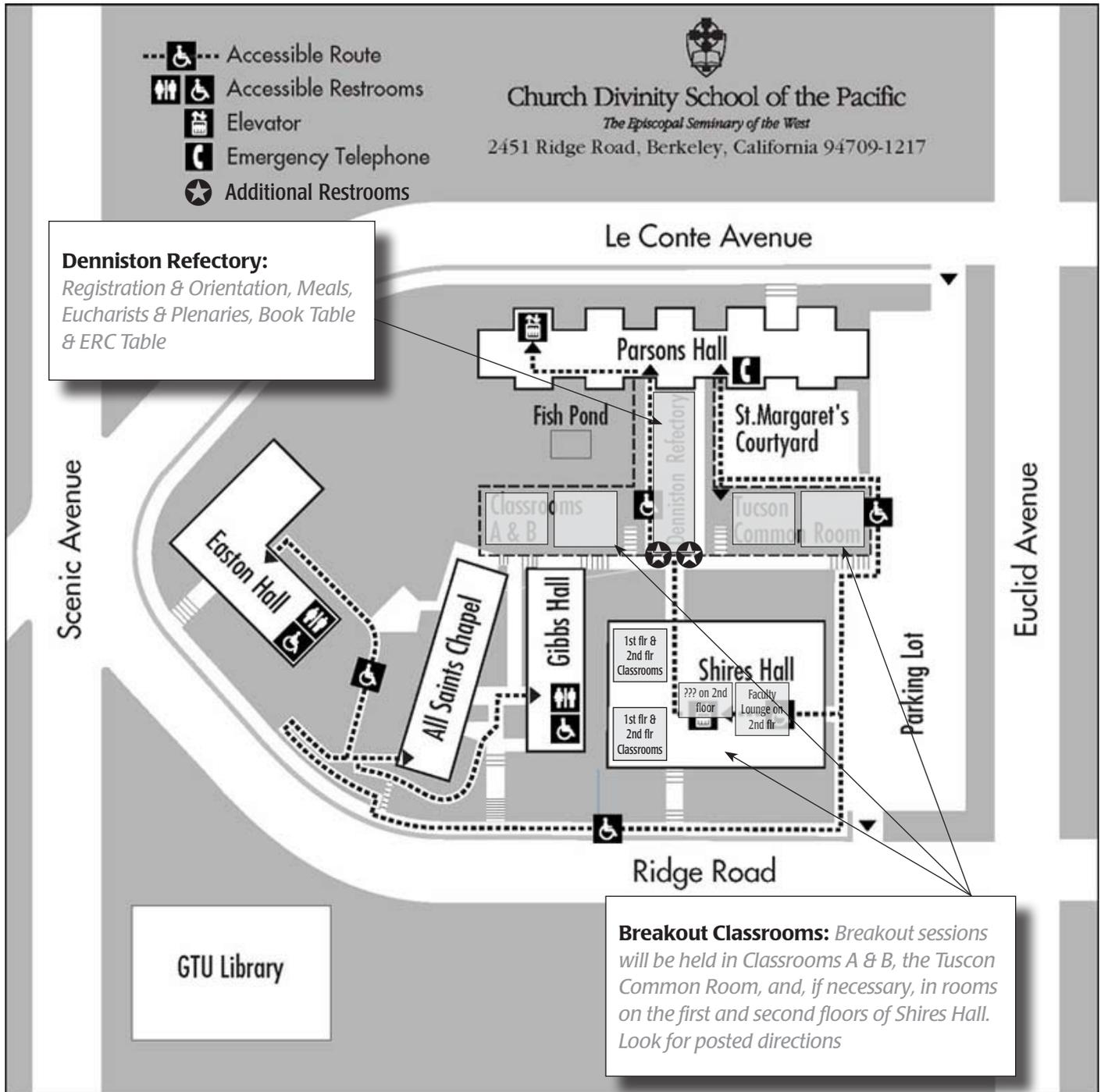
Julia McCray-Goldsmith, Ministry Development Officer



Campus Map

Most conference events will occur in the **Denniston Refectory**, on the lower level off St. Margaret's Courtyard

Breakout sessions will be held in Classrooms A & B, the Tuscon Common Room (also off the courtyard) or in rooms on the first or second floors of Shires Hall. Look for posted directions. **Your assigned breakouts will be on your name tag.**



Conference Schedule

Most conference events will occur in the Denniston Refectory, on the lower level off St. Margaret's Courtyard (see map on previous page). Breakout sessions will be held in Classrooms A & B, the Tuscon Common Room (also off the courtyard) or in rooms on the first or second floors of Shires Hall. Look for posted directions. Your assigned breakouts will be on your name tag.

Friday, January 30

- 6–7 p.m. Registration & Orientation
- 7–9 Conference Eucharist
The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, presiding
- Keynote Address –
Circle of Disciples:
Intimate & Intentional**
Chris Webb (*RENOVARÉ*)
- 9–10 Reception

LifeCycles Companion Mentor Training Schedule

Friday, Jan. 30:
2:00–6:00 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 31:
11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 1:
1:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 31

- 8 – 9 a.m. Registration & Coffee
- 9–10 Opening Worship
Welcome
The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus
- Plenary I –
Baptismally-grounded
Small Group Ministry**
Fredrica Harris Thompsett
(*LifeCycles*)
- 10–11 Small Group
Breakout Session I
- 11–11:20 **Plenary II –
Small Group Ministry
as Discernment**
Suzanne Farnham
(*Listening Hearts*)
- 11:20 a.m.–
12:20 p.m. Small Group
Breakout Session II
- 12:20–1:20 Lunch
- 1:20–1:40 **Plenary III –
Small Group Ministry
as Congregational
Development**
Kevin Phillips (*Covenant*)
- 1:40–2:40 Small Group
Breakout Session III
- 2:40–3:40 **Panel Discussion –
Best Practices
in Small Group Ministry**
The Reverend Canon Michael Barlowe,
moderator
- 3:40–4 Closing Worship



10 a.m. –
2 p.m.
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4 p.m.
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