

From the Ministry Desk of Stephen A. Macchia

LTi E-Newsletter June 2007

www.LeadershipTransformations.org

Personal Reflections

Christian Community

“Jesus lived his life in community. From his childhood with Mary and Joseph to his calling and traveling with the disciples to his declaration that he and the Father were one, Jesus lived in community. A community of faith nurtured him, supported him, and informed him. It is unthinkable that we would try and live a faithful life without the gifts offered in a faithful community of Jesus. Jesus was known for valuing solitude since he retired to rest and pray, but living in community also marked his life. We receive encouragement, guidance, comfort, and hope by participating in community. These gifts of community are available to us all, and we receive them more readily when we remember that Jesus meets us there.”

From Rueben P. Job, *Guide to Prayer For All Who Seek God*

Who among us doesn't long for authentic Christian community? When living for Christ stretches us into facing life's challenging realities or delights us when embracing our deepest desires, it's far better to share the journey with others of like heart and mind. We are not meant to live in isolation from one another - we need the body of Christ if we are to experience the richness of our vitality in Christ. Suzanne Farnham puts it this way, “A wise swimmer does not cross a difficult channel without a boat close behind, with those aboard watching for signs of danger or weariness and providing words of encouragement along the way. Nor does a prudent climber scale a mountain alone, without companions to hold the rope and help along the way.” Neither should we pursue the fullness of the Christian walk alone – reach out and discover the richness of community!

Coming Alongside

“Something happens to us when we consult one another in Christian community. In sharing our thoughts with others, surprising insights often emerge – opening our eyes to what we have not seen and our ears to what we have not heard. This can transform and liberate us beyond our own narrow expectations. Both the one experiencing a call and those helping that person may express God's wisdom and grace in the process. ‘I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding’ (Jer. 3:15). Because God often reveals part of the picture to one person and another part to another person, it is prudent to consult one another to discern God's counsel, guidance, and direction.”

From *Listening Hearts*
by Suzanne Farnham et al.

Listening is one of the most central responsibilities of leaders and teams! First of all, we need to learn how to listen to God's still small voice in prayerful attentiveness and discernment. Secondly, we need to learn how to listen to one another and those the team is called to serve. Without active listening in place, the Christian community misses much of what the Lord so graciously intends. Listen well and you will certainly experience the richness of spiritual discernment and the guiding hand of God.

TRAINING YOU TO LISTEN...

SELAH, our new Certificate Program in Spiritual Direction. Coordinated by Susan Currie, this training initiative will begin in the fall and last for two years. Designed



Stephen A. Macchia
Founder and President



Inside this issue:

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

COMING ALONGSIDE
SELAH—A NEW CERTIFICATE
PROGRAM IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
SOUL CARE RETREATS

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT
TOOL (CHATSM)

RENEWAL YEARNINGS
COMMUNITY OF FAITH...LANGUAGE
OF LOVE

around 6 residential retreats, we will grow from the wisdom and experience of the Church, through readings in the “classics” of spiritual formation, and the instruction in the learned practices of spiritual direction. Selah is intentionally Trinitarian in theology (paying attention to how God the Father is actively shaping a person’s life through the Holy Spirit in ways that form them ever more deeply into the image of Christ), intentionally contemplative in style (characterized by an attentive resting in Christ’s presence in the direction time, noticing the movement and activity of the Holy Spirit), and intentionally Biblical in grounding (drawing our understanding of God and His ways from the pages of Scripture).

Recommended Resources

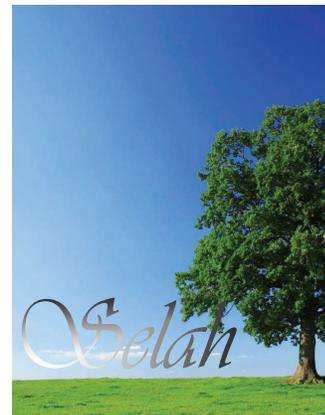
Enter into a discernment process with your church by listening to your leadership team and congregation. Our Church Health Assessment Tool (CHATSM) has already been used by churches in more than a dozen states and one eastern European country. CHATSM is a listening tool for church leaders who are interested in having a “heart to heart conversation” with every member of the congregation. It’s a 72 question assessment based on research with thousands of churches and individuals. Over the past decade, this survey has been used by hundreds of churches – but in its original paper form (which required labor intensive tabulation from the church). The newly revised online version is completely automated and comprehensive, giving users the opportunity to get a holistic view of their church’s health in 30 days or less. The survey questions are biblically centered and based on the cross-denominational, principle-based traits from *Becoming A Healthy Church* (BakerBooks, 1999/2006).

CHATSM is both easy to use and cost-effective. Since it’s web-based, all surveys can be completed in as 20-25 minutes from the convenience of home or office. CHATSM also tracks the responses of the congregation and leadership team separately for direct comparison. Best of all, CHATSM does all the work but the church is in the driver’s seat from start to finish via our Pastor’s ConsoleSM. At the end of the data collection

INVITING YOU TO LISTEN...

Soul Care Retreats offer you a two day experience of listening to God in prayer, biblical reflection, and community conversation. Our next Soul Care Retreat will be held on October 25, 26 on beautiful Cape Cod. Join us at Craigville Conference Center by signing up today!

In addition, we continue to come alongside leaders and teams in a variety of ways... Spiritual Leadership Communities, Soul Care One-on-One’s, Team Care Retreats, and Team Care Intensives. Visit www.LeadershipTransformations.org or call toll free 877-TEAM-LTi for more information on these services.



window (dates chosen by the church), an easy to read, full color report is sent directly to the church contact’s email inbox. This user friendly report will clearly identify the strongest areas of your church as well as the soft spots, discrepancies between congregation and leadership team responses, participant demographics, open-ended comments from the participants, and suggested next steps which will empower you and your leadership team to make needed adjustments for increased ministry health and effectiveness.

CHATSM is unlike any other resource available to the Church today – check it out at www.HealthyChurch.net and recommend it to your church leaders...it’s the best way to listen intently to your leadership and congregation!

“A HEART TO
HEART
CONVERSATION
WITH EVERY
MEMBER OF THE
CONGREGATION”

www.HealthyChurch.net



“CHAT WAS WELL RECEIVED BY OUR PEOPLE AND LEADERS, PROVIDING US WITH OBJECTIVE FEEDBACK AS TO OUR PROGRESS IN CHURCH HEALTH. OUR PEOPLE FOUND IT EASY TO USE. AS ONE HAS SUGGESTED, A BIG VALUE OF THE EXERCISE WAS THE CONVERSATIONS IT BEGAN ALONG THE WAY. IT IS PROVIDING A BASIS FROM WHICH TO WORK AS WE LOOK TO THE LORD TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE. I APPRECIATED THE EMPHASIS ON IT BEING A “LISTENING EXERCISE,” HEARING GOD’S VOICE THROUGH HIS PEOPLE, WHICH WE WILL CONSIDER AS LEADERS, TOGETHER WITH HIS WORD AND OUR MINISTRY CONTEXT.”

LEE NANFELT, PASTOR
ALLIANCE BIBLE CHURCH, WI

Check out our newly updated website for additional resources for leaders and teams:

www.LeadershipTransformations.org

Here you will find the full complement of ministry services and resources LTI is currently providing our constituents.

Becoming A Healthy Church

(available in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese and Thai), Baker Books, 1999/2006 –a Baker Bestseller!

Becoming A Healthy Church Workbook, Baker Books, 2001

Becoming A Healthy Disciple, Baker Books, 2004

Becoming A Healthy Disciple Small Group Study and Worship Guide, LTI, 2004

Becoming A Healthy Team, Baker Books, 2005 – a Baker Bestseller!

Free PDF's for your ministry use

E-newsletters and ministry updates

Meet the LTI Team...in picture-perfect smiles!

Renewal Yearnings

“Without the discipline of community, solitude degenerates into self-absorption and isolation; without the discipline of solitude, community generates into codependency and enmeshment...the community of faith is where we learn the language of love.”

From *Journeyman* by Kent Ira Groff

May you discover the fullness of God's incredible love within the context of relationships that know how to speak the language of love...in words, attitudes, and actions that express the richness of authentic Christian community.

Your Brother and Friend in Ministry,



Stephen A. Macchia, D.Min.

Founder and President

Steve@LeadershipTransformations.org

Rick Anderson, Vice President

Rick@LeadershipTransformations.org

The information contained in this newsletter may be freely shared with your friends and family. Should they desire being added to the e-mail distribution list for automatic receipt in the future, please send requests to news@leadershiptransformations.org. Your e-mail address is protected as your private, personal property. If you wish for us to discontinue sending this e-newsletter for any reason, please let us know. A simple e-mail will permanently remove you from the list—we promise!