

From the Ministry Desk of Stephen A. Macchia

LTi E-Newsletter December 2007

www.LeadershipTransformations.org

Personal Reflections

Guides to Prayer...With Companions Sharing the Journey

*What can I do to keep my experience with God alive?
How should I read the Bible for my own spiritual nurture?
What can I do when I simply can't pray?
What are the books I should be reading?*

"These were the questions put to us," write Rueben Job and Norman Shawchuck, compilers of the *Guide to Prayer* series published by Upper Room. "After much serious prayer, we decided to prepare a book in response to those questions."

In fact, those were the words from the preface of their first *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, nine printings ago in 1983. Since then, they've also compiled *A Guide to Prayer for All God's People* (Upper Room, 1990) and *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God* (Upper Room, 2003).

Since the start up of Leadership Transformations, our board and staff team have prayed our way through each of these *Guides to Prayer*, now into our second annual rotation of the second *Guide*. As a result, our spiritual community experience has been richly blessed and our spiritual leadership has been deepened significantly.

At our annual celebration reception, we invited our donor family to join us on this prayer pilgrimage. More than 30 signed up on the spot. We now have nearly 50 on this prayer journey together, and in addition another 50 seminary students sharing this discipline. If you'd like to join us, simply send along an email and we'll order *A Guide to Prayer* for you. In nearly 30 years of ministry, I have yet to see a better tool for enhancing community and developing godly team leadership.

Our covenant community provides support and accountability for our lives and ministries. We follow the daily discipline of scripture, prayer and meditation. We all read the same material each day. This has created a 'connectedness' among us even when we are separated by many miles. As weak and desperate as we are, we could hardly imagine trying to keep the disciplines and to carry on our ministries without the support and accountability of such a community.

From the Preface to *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*

Coming Alongside

In addition to the many ways we come alongside leaders and teams in church and para-church ministry settings, we have been given an open door to communicating with the wider body of Christ. Please note the following articles and interviews that our ministry team have written or participated in over the past few months:



Stephen A. Macchia
Founder and President



Inside this issue:

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS
GUIDES TO PRAYER...
WITH COMPANIONS SHARING THE
JOURNEY

COMING ALONGSIDE
OUR WRITING MINISTRY EXPANDS

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT
TOOL (CHATSM)

RENEWAL YEARNINGS
DIARY OF PRIVATE PRAYER

Diana Bennett, our Coordinator of Spiritual Leadership Communities and Small Group Consultant has written her latest article called "[Are you Listening?](#)" You can read more articles by Diana by joining smallgroups.com.

Rick Anderson, our Vice President and chief architect of our Church Health Assessment Tool, wrote an article for BuildingChurchLeaders.com entitled "[Directionally Impaired Leadership](#)". Rick was also interviewed for a [podcast](#) for a new website, TodaysPastor.com.

I had two articles published this fall, one in Church Executive Magazine entitled "[The Importance of Listening](#)." The second called "Graced in Silence: Gifts from a Monastic Community" was published in the Fall/Winter 2007 issue of Conversations Journal (www.conversationsjournal.com).

Inviting you to become the person God intends...

Soul Care Retreats offer you a two day experience of listening to God in prayer, biblical reflection, and community conversation. As a result, we grow in our awareness of being the beloved, broken and blessed children of God. Sign up for our next New England Soul Care Retreats:

Lenten Soul Care Retreat for Women
March 18, 9am - March 19, 1pm
Glastonbury Abbey, Hingham, MA

Spring Soul Care Retreat
April 17-18, 2008
Emery House, West Newbury, MA

Recommended Resources

Every church has a unique thumbprint given to them by God. 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 spread across the country and internationally on three continents. 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 few 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 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.



"THIS IS A FABULOUS TOOL! IT IS INTERNET BASED, AMAZINGLY COST EFFECTIVE, AND EASY TO USE FROM BOTH THE CHURCH SIDE AND THE RESPONDENT SIDE. WE INTEND TO DO A FOLLOW UP SURVEY IN THE FUTURE. WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND CHATSM!!"

**BOB GRABAU
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE PASTOR,
THE CHAPEL AT CROSSPOINT, NY**

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.

Visit 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!

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

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

www.HealthyChurch.net



Renewal Yearnings

O Holy Spirit of God, visit now this soul of mine, and tarry within it until eventide. Inspire all my thoughts. Pervade all my imaginations. Suggest all my decisions. Lodge in my will's most inward citadel and order all my doings. Be with me in silence and in speech, in my haste and in my leisure, in company and in solitude, in the freshness of the morning and in the weariness of the evening; and give me grace at all times to rejoice in thy mysterious companionship.

From *A Diary of Private Prayer* by John Baillie

Found in *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, Upper Room, 1983.

May the longings of your heart be filled by the presence of God's Spirit, sustained by the living Word of God, and fulfilled daily in Christ. I trust 2008 will be an especially rich year for you and yours...let's be sure to share the prayerful journey together.

Your Colleague, Brother and Friend,

Stephen A. Macchia, D.Min.

Founder and President

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Merry Christmas from
the Macchia Family!

Steve, Ruth,
Rebekah and Nathan

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