



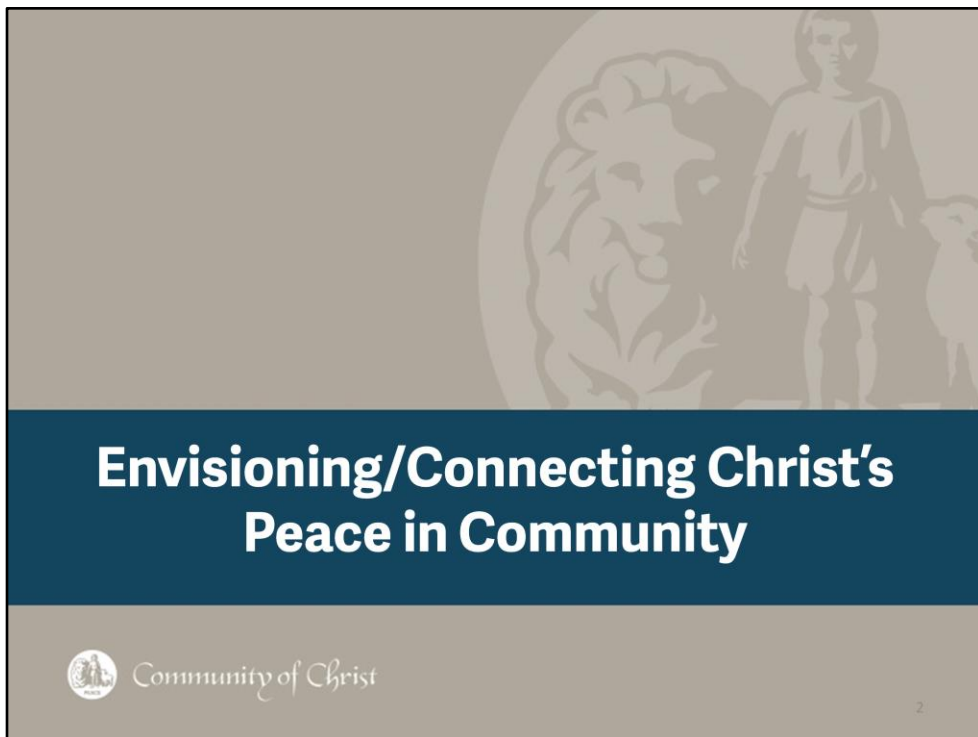
Community of Christ

# Pastor Leadership Team Retreat 6

**"Share the Invitation to  
Christ's Peace"**



Please have music or music video playing as people gather



First, invite participants to spend a moment or two greeting one another at the tables.

Bring everyone back together with a few verses of “Alleluia” of “Spirit of the Living God”

Share the following introductory points:

- We gather in this place because “something not fully explainable but utterly transforming has occurred”. What has become common, known, and even expected for us is still illusive for so many searching for meaning and connection in our world.
- Who will risk something new, allow their daily routine to be disrupted, awaken to God’s movement nudging us toward others?
- Who will risk the invitation to loving community, to a relationship with the living Christ?
- Disruption . . . it is at the heart of the gospel – it begins with encounter and sets us on a trajectory of seeing, hearing, and becoming something new!

# Essential Question

How is the Holy Spirit disrupting me with new ways of seeing and being?



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The Exploration Question for this session: (3 minutes)

Exploration Question:

*How is the Holy Spirit disrupting me with new ways of seeing and being?*

Ask if someone would be willing to begin this session with prayer.

**“DISRUPTION”** – a disturbance that interrupts an event, activity, or process.



Continue with the following points:

- We begin with a key principle of Leading Congregations in Mission – Mission is Disruptive. Following God’s movement is disruptive to our personal and congregational agendas!
- We are journeying together through a process of *Encounter, Envisioning, Discovery, and Experimentation*. At the heart of this process is **DISRUPTION** – *the yearnings of God for each of us* – that we might discover and risk living into God’s future together.
- DISRUPTION is what tells us we are spiritually awake! It means we are picking up on the *relational impulse of Christ* moving us toward relationships of meaning, depth, and transformation.
- From Doctrine and Covenants 163:2b “Generously share the invitation . . .”  
Generously share the invitation . . . Generously share the invitation!
- The *divine relational impulse* to risk a new relationship, to risk sharing an invitation is DISRUPTIVE!
- Moving from a world of *fear and separation* to world of *hope and loving community* depends on this disruption and our response.

## Prayer of Disruption - Video



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Dwelling on the video “Prayer of Disruption”

Share the video, provide a moment of silence, and ask the following question for discussion at tables. (15 minutes):

How do the words and images of the video connect with your faith journey?

Provide a few moments for large group reflection on this question.

- Luke 5, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people" - a glimpse of ***what could be*** if the disciples would risk something new.
- Jesus called the disciples to ***move beyond their fears*** and risk something new with him.
- The people Jesus invited were ***no different from you or me*** today.
- Their willingness to risk something new emerged ***after*** encountering and receiving Christ's peace as **life giving and life DISRUPTING presence!**

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Share the following points:

- Jesus' invitation to his new disciples in Luke 5, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people" was a glimpse of what would be if the disciples would risk entering the depth of people's lives and *embody* hope and healing.
- Catching fish would be less risky than getting involved in the messiness of people's lives. However, Jesus called the disciples to move beyond their fears and risk something new with him.
- The people Jesus invited were no different from you or me today. They had no extraordinary gifts that qualified them for this adventure. Their willingness to risk something new emerged *after* encountering and receiving Christ's peace as life giving and life DISRUPTING presence!

### ***Receive, Embody and Share Christ's Peace:***

- We have received the invitation to Christ's peace – a peace that provides assurance and disrupts us with a vision of what could be in our world.
- Sharing the Invitation to Christ's Peace has been and continues to be one of the more difficult missional challenges we face as a movement.
- As our experience in the western world has become less communal and more individual we have become even more hesitant to share the invitation to Christ in all its dimensions.

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Share the following points in conclusion:

- We have received the invitation to Christ's peace – a peace that provides assurance and disrupts us with a vision of what could be in our world.
- Sharing the Invitation to Christ's Peace has been and continues to be one of the more difficult missional challenges we face as a movement.
- As our experience in the western world has become less communal and more individual we have become even more hesitant to share the invitation to Christ in all dimensions.

## ***Receive, Embody and Share Christ's Peace:***

- We have forgotten at times the power that is resident in our shared stories.
- Our words have the power to open up new horizons, even new life for another person searching for meaning and connection!
- This weekend we will continue our exploration of how we Share the Invitation through our individual stories and the stories that have shaped who we are as Community of Christ in the world today!



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### Share:

- Whether inviting someone to the table for dinner or a journey of transformation with the living Christ, we have forgotten at times the power that is resident in our shared stories.
- **Our willingness to share matters!! Our words have the power to open up new horizons, even new life for another person searching for meaning and connection!**
- When we risk receiving, embodying, and then sharing Christ's peace amazing possibilities open up before us.
- This weekend we will continue our exploration of how we ***Share the Invitation*** through our individual stories and the stories that have shaped who we are as Community of Christ in the world today!



## ***Prayer of Disruption by Joyce Rupp***



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Note to Facilitator: Please be prepared to read the “Prayer of Disruption” by Joyce Rupp found in your Practice tab on page 1.

Share the following:

As we continue our journey this weekend let us listen to the words of the “Prayer of Disruption” by Joyce Rupp.

### **Reading of the Prayer of Disruption by facilitator:**

Prayer of Disruption

Divine Challenger, when did I stop risking? When did I lose my edge for adventure and surprise? When did I start pretending that what I now know is all there is to know? When did I give in to fear and bow to security? When did I let uncertainty press against my free spirit? When did I start moving toward the sure, easy thing? When did I give away my ability to be disturbed? When did I start refusing to pay the price for fuller depth and joy? When did I let panic of the unknown future wrap its barbed wire fingers around my desire to grow? Inner source of courage, nudge me toward growth. Urge me away from my strongholds. Convince me of my potential to leap beyond the barriers.

***Time for a quick stretch break . . .***

Be back in 15 minutes at 9:30 a.m.



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Time for a quick stretch break.

Be back in 15 minutes at 9:30 a.m.



### Participants sit at a table of their choosing.

Share the following affirmations and Essential Question: (4 minutes)

- Christ's mission—our mission—our inviting people to Christ—emerges out of and is strengthened by **encounters**—***our encounters***—with the Living Christ.
- The mission initiative we are exploring this weekend is "Inviting People to Christ."
- A key to personally inviting people to Christ is **personally getting to know the Christ we are committing our lives to** so that we can generously share Christ's invitation with others.

## Essential Questions

- Who am I becoming in Christ?
- How do I share this evolving faith story with others?
- Why does it matter?



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In the next two explorations we will consider the following essential questions:

Who am I becoming in Christ?

How do I share this evolving faith story with others?

Why does it matter?

## ***Receive, Embody, Share Christ's Peace***

- A new approach to evangelism is critical in order for ***the living Word to become real*** for those who have walked away from both God and the church.
- Our contexts for mission call for a radically different kind of church that engages in the places and spaces where people live, work, and play.
- Our contexts for ministry require US to ***move toward others as God first moved toward us*** in Jesus Christ!

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Share the following points:

- In “*Retreat 5 – Receive, Embody, Share Christ's Peace*”, we discussed how a new approach to evangelism is critical in order for **the living Word to become real** for those who have walked away from both God and the church.
- We must continue to remind ourselves that the majority (as high as 85%) of Americans do not attend church. Entire generations of young people who are now adults grew up without ever attending a church.
- Our religious *language and form* or ways of doing church are entirely unfamiliar to the majority of the population. The notion that we can just keep improving what we are doing in our congregations in the hope that someone might stumble through our doors is totally unrealistic!
- Our contexts for mission in the U.S. and Canada now call for **a radically different kind of church** that engages in the places and spaces where people live, work, and play.
- Our contexts for ministry require **US to move toward others as God first moved toward us in Jesus Christ!**

## ***Receive, Embody, Share Christ's Peace***

- It is imperative that we ***fully explore and live into*** what it means to receive, embody, and share Christ's invitation or we will bypass the spiritual revival so desperately needed in our individual lives, congregations, neighborhoods, and world.
- Why? Because we don't need more evangelism programs or gimmicks, **WE NEED AWAKENING**—a spiritual awakening to the possibilities of how an ongoing relational engagement with our neighbors might change us, them, and our world!



Continue with the following points:

- As we discussed in Retreat 5, ***It is imperative that we fully explore and live into what it means to receive, embody, and share Christ's invitation or we will bypass the spiritual revival so desperately needed in our individual lives, congregations, neighborhoods, and world.***
- **Why? Because we don't need more evangelism programs or gimmicks, we need awakening – a spiritual awakening to the possibilities of how an ongoing relational engagement with our neighbors might change us, them, and our world!**
- The resource entitled ***Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace*** lays out a *renewed vision* for evangelism. Its foundation is built on our enduring principle ***Worth of Persons*** and our willingness to risk new relationships of invitation, hospitality, and healing outside the doors of our congregations!
- ***Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace*** also draws from Doctrine and Covenants 162:2a, "*Listen carefully to your own journey as a people, for it is a sacred journey and it has taught you many things you must know for the journey yet to come.*"

## ***Receive, Embody, Share Christ's Peace***

- ***Embodying the Invitation*** to Christ's peace is how we intentionally enter into relationships of meaning and depth. It is how we ***create the safe space*** that leads to ***conversations of significance*** about our lives, hopes, struggles, and ***the essence of our faith journey***.
- When we risk new and deeper relationships, ***the Spirit creates opportunities*** for us to share our evolving faith story.
- ***Our stories are powerful and can change lives***. As Jesus shared with his disciples in Matthew 13, *"That's why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight."*

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Continue with the following points:

- As we shared in Retreat 5, ***embodying*** the invitation to Christ's peace is how we intentionally enter into relationships of meaning and depth. It is how we create the safe space that leads to conversations of significance about our lives, hopes, struggles, and the essence of our faith journey.
- When we risk new and deeper relationships, the Spirit creates opportunities for us to share our ***evolving faith story***. We are invited to trust that *"My Spirit is reaching out to numerous souls even now and there are many who will respond . . ." (D&C 153:9b)*

**Note to Facilitator:** Consider sharing a testimony of a time when someone's story significantly impacted your life.

- Our stories are powerful and can change lives. As Jesus shared with his disciples in Matthew 13, *"That's why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight."*

## Question for Consideration

How has your life been impacted because someone risked sharing their evolving faith story with you?



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Invite individuals to share in groups of three on the following question (10-12 minutes):

How has your life been impacted because someone risked sharing their evolving faith story with you?



What does it mean to discover and share your *evolving faith story* today?

Different than **“this is why I believe in Jesus”** it is more about **“let me share with you what really matters to me, what is the substance of my life, what is shaping me right now.”**



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Share the following points:

- So what do we mean by *evolving faith story*? Why is this important?
- Our faith story is unfolding... it is a LIVING RELATIONSHIP that has a past, present, and future. Consider a person who means a lot to you. How would you describe how that relationship has impacted your past, present, and future? Can we look at our relationship with God/Christ in this same way? **What is a faith story a story about? It is about a relationship!**
- What does it mean to discover and share your *evolving faith story* today? Different than **“this is why I believe in Jesus”** it is more about **“let me share with you what really matters to me, what is the substance of my life, what is shaping me right now.”**

## My Evolving Faith Story

- Not necessarily **WHAT I BELIEVE** – Remember, this is where traditional evangelism begins and often ends - **IT IS WHO I AM IN JESUS CHRIST-** and **who I am becoming?**
- This impacts also **HOW I SHARE** my faith story. What can I share with others about who I am becoming in Jesus Christ and why that means something in my life?
- Again this is why **mission begins with and is sustained by encounter!** The practices cultivate the soil of ongoing encounter with God and others.

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Share the following:

- MY FAITH STORY is not necessarily WHAT I BELIEVE – Remember, this is where traditional evangelism begins and often ends - **IT IS WHO I AM IN JESUS CHRIST- and who I am becoming?**
- This impacts also HOW I SHARE my faith story. What can I share with others about who I am becoming in Jesus Christ and why that means something in my life?
- **Again this is why mission begins with and is sustained by encounter! The practices cultivate the soil of ongoing encounter with God and others. Our experiences form the essence of our evolving faith story – who we are becoming in Christ and why it matters to us!**

## Discovering Your Evolving Faith Story

*The goal of this practice is to consider those things that have made up and are still making up the substance of your story. It is from this substance that we are called to share with others.*



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Refer to ***Discovering Your Evolving Faith Story*** Booklet.

### **Share the following:**

You are invited to take time to reflect on your evolving faith story by considering the questions in your booklet. Let the Spirit guide you in your responses. If you feel led to linger on one of the questions longer than the others, allow yourself to explore what you are being drawn to discover.

### **On slide**

The goal of this practice is to consider those things that have made up and are still making up the substance of your story. It is from this substance that we are called to share with others.

*You will have until 10:45 a.m. to reflect and respond to the questions.*

*Feel free to find a quiet place to reflect. We will observe a time of silence until 10:45 a.m.*

*We will take a break at 10:45 a.m. and be back here at 11:15 a.m. for our last session before lunch.*



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**Note to Facilitator:** Play some soft quiet music after giving instructions.  
(Suggestion: Paul Cardall New Life Album)

You will have until 10:45 a.m. to reflect and respond to the questions.  
Feel free to find a quiet place to reflect. We will observe a time of silence until 10:45 a.m.

We will take a break at 10:45 a.m. and be back here at 11:15 a.m. for our last session before lunch.



**Participants sit at a table of their choosing.**

## Essential Question

How do I share my evolving faith story with others?



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Welcome participants back and share the following:

In this exploration we will consider the following question:

How do I share my evolving faith story with others?

We begin by sharing our evolving faith story with one another. It is in the sharing of our stories that we are **strengthened in faith and prepare ourselves** for opportunities to share with those outside our congregations or small groups.

## Sharing Our Evolving Faith Stories

- You will now have opportunity to share your evolving faith story with two other individuals.
- Find two partners (*preferably individuals you don't know well*). You will each have 10 minutes to share the essence of your faith story.
- After 30 minutes we will stop and reflect on the experience.

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Share the following:

- You will now have opportunity to share your evolving faith story with two other individuals. Find two partners (preferably individuals you don't know well). You will each have 10 minutes to share the essence of your faith story. Part of the discipline in this activity is to be able to summarize and articulate what your evolving faith story is and why it matters to you.
- After 30 minutes we will stop and reflect on the experience before going to lunch.

Close with the following points:

- Just like the mission prayer prepares us to be fully awake and ready to respond, it is important that we take the time to reflect, articulate, and share our evolving faith stories with one another.
- Sharing our faith stories – our ongoing encounters with God and our neighbors is one way we proclaim the living Word and raise the level of expectation for what is possible when we gather as congregations. **This is a very important ongoing practice for congregations!**
- When we practice articulating and sharing our evolving faith stories we are then *prepared to share* in the sacred spaces that open up as we risk new relationships with others.

***Practice Sharing Your Stories in Worship, Small Groups, and Other Times of Gathering***

- It is important that we take the time to reflect, articulate, and share our evolving faith stories with one another.
- Sharing our faith stories – our ongoing encounters with God and our neighbors is one way we proclaim the living Word! ***Our Faith and confidence is strengthened!!***
- When we practice articulating and sharing our evolving faith stories ***we are then prepared to share*** in the sacred spaces that open up as we risk new relationships with others.

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Close with the following points:

- Just like the mission prayer prepares us to be fully awake and ready to respond, it is important that we take the time to reflect, articulate, and share our evolving faith stories with one another.
- Sharing our faith stories – our ongoing encounters with God and our neighbors is one way we proclaim the living Word and raise the level of expectation for what is possible when we gather as congregations. **This is a very important ongoing practice for congregations!**
- When we practice articulating and sharing our evolving faith stories we are then *prepared to share* in the sacred spaces that open up as we risk new relationships with others.

**Site Coordinator please check on set-up and lunch at 12:00 pm**





## Please line up a group to do the prayer for peace

Prayer for Peace

Leading Congregations in Mission – Retreat 6

CCS 164 – Prayer of Peace

Video: “Have the Homeless Become Invisible?” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6jSKLtmYdM>)

Today’s prayer for peace is a little different than usual. Today we don’t pray for a nation or its people. We pray for a group, many of whom often feel as though they have no country: we pray for those who are without decent housing, without a home – the poorest among us.

While circumstances can vary...the main reason people experience homelessness is because they cannot find housing they can afford. It is the scarcity of affordable housing in the United States (and Canada), particularly in more urban areas where homelessness is more prevalent, that is behind their inability to acquire or maintain housing.

Child homelessness in the U.S. is on the rise, according to a report published last month by the National Center on Family Homelessness. The study showed that 2.5 million American children were homeless at some point in 2013 – one child in every 30, an all-time historical high for the United States. About 15 percent of our homeless population is considered “chronically homeless” individuals, and about 9 percent of homeless people are veterans.

### Families

Homeless families are similar to other poor families. Typically, families become homeless as a result of some unforeseen financial crisis - a medical emergency, a car accident, a death in the family - that prevents them from being able to hold on to housing.

**Youth** Young people often become homeless due to family conflict, including divorce, neglect, or abuse.

**Veterans** Veterans often become homeless due to war-related disabilities. For a variety of reasons – physical disability, mental anguish, post-traumatic stress, etc. – many veterans find readjusting to civilian life difficult. Difficulties readjusting can give rise to dangerous behaviors, including addiction, abuse, and violence, which, coupled with the difficulties, can lead to homelessness.

**Chronic Homelessness** Chronic homelessness is often the public face of homelessness. “Chronic” has a specific definition, involving either long-term and/or repeated bouts of homelessness coupled with disability (physical or mental).

It’s a common misconception that this group represents the majority of the homelessness population. Rather, they account for less than 15 percent of the entire homeless population on a given day.

Fortunately, there has been significant progress to address chronic homelessness in the last decade.

- information referenced from National Alliance to End Homelessness

The way we speak of persons who find themselves in this situation matters. Often spoken of as less than human – being compared to feral cats or rats even by municipal officials, the term “homeless” has now become a label: “he is a homeless.” What if we could use a term like “persons without homes” or even “friends without homes”?

As we prepare to offer our prayers on behalf of those who without housing, with marginal housing, without a home, let us hold these mothers and fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, friends, in our hearts.

### Instrumental Music

O God,

Hear our prayer today...

for all women and men, boys and girls who are homeless.

for those sleeping under bridges, on park benches, in doorways or bus stations.

for those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander in the daytime.

for families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.

for those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.

for those who have no place to keep possessions that remind them who they are.

for those who are afraid and hopeless.

for those who have been betrayed by our social safety net.

for all these people, we pray that you will provide shelter, security and hope, which is to say, we pray you will help us to become your instruments of blessing in providing shelter, security, and hope.

May those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.

And may we see the face of Jesus – who also experienced homelessness – in the eyes of every person without a home we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed, and through the political means we have, to bring justice and peace for those persons who are without a home.

Amen.

- adapted from “Prayer for Homeless People” (Mennonite worship resources)

CCS 304 - Sometimes We Wait, Expecting God

Silence

Amen

## Lunch, Personal Renewal, and Revitalization

Be back at 2:00pm



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**Be back at 2:00pm**



**Welcome participants back.**

**Note to Facilitator:**

Prior to this session find two readers who can read the quotes on pages 1 and 2 of What Is Our Name Calling Us To Become?

## Essential Questions

- *Who are we becoming in Christ?*
- *How do we live and share our unfolding story in new language and form?*



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Ask Participants to set at different tables.

Share the following introductory points:

In this session we will explore the following essential questions:

- Who are we becoming in Christ? This question comes from Doctrine and Covenants 163:1 and our call to discern and embrace the full meaning of our identity as Community of Christ.
- How do we live and share our unfolding story in new language and form? This question from Doctrine and Covenants 162:2e and our call to express and live essential truths in new language and form.

## Our Evolving Faith Story as a Movement

- It is inextricably linked to our personal story and we will each bring unique insights as we share and invite others to experience Community of Christ.
- The Blessings of Community is ***more than an enduring principle, it is a gift*** we have been given that will bring blessing to others. It is at the heart of discovering our identity and calling in Section 163:1.
- As we continue to live fully into our identity and calling as Community of Christ we must ***recover our passion for INVITING OTHERS*** into the Blessings of Community.

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Share the following points:

- This morning we focused on ***our evolving faith stories as individuals*** and being prepared to share those stories as our relationships with others deepen and opportunities emerge.
- This afternoon we focus on ***our evolving faith story as a movement*** and being prepared to share our unfolding story. It is inextricably linked to our personal story and we will each bring unique insights as we share and invite others to experience Community of Christ.
- ***The Blessings of Community is more than an enduring principle, it is a gift we have been given that will bring blessing to others. It is at the heart of discovering our identity and calling in Section 163:1.***

***Note to Facilitator: Consider sharing a personal testimony about the Blessings of Community.***

Continue with the following points:

- As we have shared in prior retreats, the highest expression of the gospel is lived out in relationship with others. **The gospel can only be experienced in its fullness in relationship with others!**
- In a world that is increasingly individual we must **convey and live** a deeply relational expression of the gospel in community – **an expression that goes deeper than simply doing church but creates space for transformative encounter with God and one another!**
- As we continue to live fully into our identity and calling as Community of Christ we must **recover our passion** for INVITING OTHERS into the ***Blessings of Community.***

***We have a story to live and share. . .***

Doctrine and Covenants 163:1 challenges us to discern and embrace the fully meaning of our identity and calling as Community of Christ in a changing world.



Community of Christ

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Refer participants to ***Our Identity and Calling - The Key to Our Future (one page handout)***

Share the following points:

- We have an amazing story to *live and share*!
- As we continue to explore who we are becoming in Christ we are challenged to respond to the following essential question from D&C 163:1-

***How do we discern, embrace, and risk living fully into our identity and calling as Community of Christ in a changing world?***

- There a number of key words in this question including:
  - ***Discern*** – how do we encounter new insights?
  - ***Embrace*** – how do we make space for these new insights even when they may be disruptive to our preconceived notions?
  - ***Risk Living*** – how do we take initial steps to experiment with the insights as we try new ways of being disciples and the church?
  - ***Community*** – how does the word Community draw from the well of our sacred story and point us in the direction of our future?
  - ***Christ*** – who is the living Christ, the Word made flesh to us and how do we live and convey his world changing message today?
  - ***Changing World*** – How do we relate our evolving ways of being and doing to neighborhoods, towns, and cities across Europe searching for meaning and connection?



- **There is a lot in this question!** This is the **PRIMARY ESSENTIAL QUESTION** that will lead us into the future. Doctrine and Covenants 163:1 reminds us, ***If you will discern and embrace its message you will not only discover your future, you will become a blessing to the whole creation. Do not be afraid to go where it beckons you to go.***

Refer participants to ***What is Our Name Calling Us to Become?***

- Have two readers alternate reading the quotes on pages 1 and 2 of this resource allowing 15 seconds between each reading. Ask participants to underline words or phrases that resonate with them during the readings.
- Refer to participants to the bottom of page 2. Provide **10 minutes** for personal reflection on the quotes and first three questions. (*consider playing some quiet reflective music*)
- Refer participants to **page 3** and invite them to discuss their responses to **questions 1, 2, and 3** at their table groups (**25 minutes – 8 minutes for each question**). Let them know there will be time for large group sharing.
- Provide some time for large group sharing (**10 to 15 minutes depending on time**).

*Note: It is important for the tables to share their initial responses to the questions so we can learn from one another. These are challenging questions and cannot be answered in one short session. These questions help us explore how we are beginning to discern and risk living into our identity and calling as Community of Christ in a changing world!*

“WHEN YOU LIVE IN GOD, your day begins when you open your eyes, though you have done nothing yourself to open them, and you take your first breath, though there is no reason why this life-giving breeze should be given to you and not to some other. In the dark or in the light, with a stone slab under your back or a feather topper, your day begins when you let God hold you because you do not have the slightest idea how to hold yourself—when you let God raise you up, when you consent to rest to show you get the point, since that is the last thing you would do if you were running the show yourself. When you live in God, your day begins when you lose yourself long enough for God to find you, and when God finds you, to lose yourself again in praise.” *An Altar in the Word – Pg. 179*

Question for Contemplation –

*How am I losing myself so God might find me?*

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Invite participants into a moment of blessing by sharing the following quote and inviting them into a moment of silent reflection and prayer:

“WHEN YOU LIVE IN GOD, your day begins when you open your eyes, though you have done nothing yourself to open them, and you take your first breath, though there is no reason why this life-giving breeze should be given to you and not to some other. In the dark or in the light, with a stone slab under your back or a feather topper, your day begins when you let God hold you because you do not have the slightest idea how to hold yourself—when you let God raise you up, when you consent to rest to show you get the point, since that is the last thing you would do if you were running the show yourself. When you live in God, your day begins when you lose yourself long enough for God to find you, and when God finds you, to lose yourself again in praise.”

*An Altar in the Word – Pg. 179*

Question for Contemplation – How am I losing myself so God might find me?

End with the following prayer – *God, help us to let go of what occupies our thoughts long enough to be found in you. Amen.*



***Framework for Discerning and Leading Mission in the USA and Canada***

- This resource is one tool we can utilize to begin thinking about how our ministries and activities as Community of Christ specifically relate to our changing context.



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Refer Participants to ***Framework for Discerning and Leading Mission in the USA and Canada*** and share the following points:

- As you will recall from ***Retreat 2 – Discovering Our Context Through Story***, Context is one of our **four compass points** for navigating into God’s future.

Note: Refer participants to the color 8.5 x 11 brochure entitled ***Leading Mission: Principles***. On the inside of the brochure point out the **four compass points** – Missional Process, Missional Leadership, Missional Context, and Missional Practices.

- This resource is one tool we can utilize to begin thinking about how our ministries and activities as Community of Christ specifically relate to our changing context.

## Framework for Discerning and Leading Mission

- **Renewal** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to know and experience the essence of God as love, joy, hope, and peace
- **Relationships** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to belong, to experience unconditional acceptance, and to walk life's journey in companionship with God and one another
- **Relevance** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to participate in co-creating a meaningful and hopeful future for all in partnership with God.



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Continue with the following points:

- The **Framework for Discerning and Leading Mission in the USA and Canada** attempts to summarize thousands of pages of analysis on how our religious and social landscape has changed across the USA and Canada and reduces them to three basic trends: **Refer participants to pages 2 and 3 of the document.**
  - **Renewal** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to know and experience the essence of God as love, joy, hope, and peace
  - **Relationships** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to belong, to experience unconditional acceptance, and to walk life's journey in companionship with God and one another
  - **Relevance** - our deepest intellectual and spiritual longings to participate in co-creating a meaningful and hopeful future for all in partnership with God.
- In each of the statements above, “our” refers to people inside and outside the church.
- Along with each trend you will also find **three essential questions** for consideration along with **suggested practices** that relate to that trend.
- This afternoon we will **begin to think about these trends** and how they relate to our identity and calling as Community of Christ. We will discuss this planning tool in more detail tomorrow during next steps.

## ***What Is Our Name Calling Us To Become***

*How does our identity and calling specifically relate to the three trends that describe our context in the USA and Canada? (i.e. Renewal, Relationships, Relevance)*



Community of Christ

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Let's go back to our handout – ***What Is Our Name Calling Us To Become***. Refer to Question 2 on page 3 and discuss at your tables: **(15 minutes)**

*How does our identity and calling specifically relate to the three trends that describe our context in the USA and Canada? (i.e. Renewal, Relationships, Relevance)*

Provide some time for large group reflection **(5 -10 minutes)**

Conclude with the following points:

- The next step is to go a little deeper – to begin to think about what we do when we gather as congregations and how we engage in mission.
- How do these trends challenge us to “rethink” what we do and how we do it in order to reach a changing world? More on that during next steps tomorrow.

**3:00-4:00PM Break (30 minutes)**



36



## Discovering Our Evolving Faith Story *Risking the Invitation*



Community of Christ

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## Our Evolving Faith Story as Community of Christ

It is important we create opportunities to discover, articulate, and share our story with one another so we are prepared to *risk sharing the invitation* with others!



38

Welcome everyone back and share the following points:

- In our last session we began to explore ***our evolving faith story*** as Community of Christ and how that identity is calling us to convey and live essential truths in new language and form.
- Relating our message and mission to a changing world is ***an ongoing challenge***. It is how we make the living Word tangible in ways people can experience Christ and the church as though they encountered them both for the first time!
- In this session we will explore two ways we can discover, articulate, and share our story as a movement.
- **It is important we create opportunities to discover, articulate, and share our story with one another so we are prepared to risk sharing the invitation with others!**

## Video “*Let the Spirit Breathe*”



39

Share the video *Let the Spirit Breathe* and provide 5 to 7 minutes for large group reflection?

What did you see and experience in the video?

## ***Sharing Essential Truths in New Language and Form***

- Doctrine and Covenants 162:2e challenges us, *“The Spirit of the Restoration is not locked in one moment of time but is instead the call to every generation to witness to essential truths in new language and form. Let the Spirit breathe.”*
- 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, *“I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn’t take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view.”*

40

Refer to ***Sharing Essential Truths in New Language and Form*** (on yellow paper) and share the following points:

- Doctrine and Covenants 162:2e challenges us, *“The Spirit of the Restoration is not locked in one moment of time but is instead the call to every generation to witness to essential truths in new language and form. Let the Spirit breathe.”*
- As we have explored in prior retreats we are ***cultural interpreters*** that live and convey essential truths in ways that relate to a changing world. This is not new but is nevertheless very challenging!
- As the Apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, *“I have voluntarily become a servant to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn’t take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view.”*
- **From the beginning the living Word had to become flesh in every new context!**



- It is important to recognize that the same words we use to describe God, Jesus Christ, the church, and mission mean very different things for different groups of people.
- Many have walked away from both God and the church assuming that the predominant “religious voices” portrayed in media or public forums represent Christ followers as a whole.



***The Word must become flesh!***

41

Continue with following points:

- Modern media tends to portray extremes when it comes religious thought – especially when it is attached to politics. This is especially true in the USA.
- It is important to recognize that the same words we use to describe God, Jesus Christ, the church, and mission mean very different things for different groups of people.
- Many have walked away from both God and the church assuming that the predominant “religious voices” portrayed in media or public forums represent Christ followers as a whole.
- **The counsel in D&C 162:2e could not be more relevant to our current predicament!**
- The video Missio Dei from Retreat #1 ended with this challenge –

**The Word must become flesh!**

- We now have generations of adults who never shadowed the door of a church. Our rituals, language – everything is unfamiliar and even strange.
- We have to **reintroduce** our nations to Jesus Christ and the church with **new language and form** that conveys the timeless underlying truths that have transformed us as *communities* of Christ!



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- In addition to the challenge of public perception, **we now have generations of adults who never shadowed the door of a church. Our rituals, language – everything is unfamiliar and even strange!** It is like speaking English to a group that only understands Spanish. The majority of the population in the USA and Canada is no longer churched Christians. It is a strange, new world out there!
- We have to start over and see the USA and Canada in the same way we use to view other nations with respect to mission.
- **We have to reintroduce our nations to Jesus Christ and the church with new language and form that conveys the timeless underlying truths that have transformed us as *communities* of Christ!**
- This is challenging work especially during a time of transition when we are in that ***in between space*** between the ways things use to be and what is emerging in the western world.

## ***Sharing Essential Truths in New Language and Form***

- **“Church”** refers to a building or place of worship. It is a place to gather and to follow a particular sequence of events we call church. For some it is synonymous with Sunday morning.



- **But what about people who don't attend church or who have never attended church?** They may associate words with church like judgmental, close-minded, rules based, etc.

43

Refer participants to ***Sharing Essential Truths in New Language and Form*** (yellow paper) and share the following:

- This resource helps us begin to think about religious words and phrases we use, what we mean when we use them, how others perceive the words, and how we might convey them in new language and form.
- **Lets take an example.** For many of our people the word **“church”** refers to a building or place of worship. It is a place to gather and to follow a particular sequence of events we call church. For some it is synonymous with Sunday morning.
- **But what about people who don't attend church or who have never attended church?** What does it mean to them? It could mean something highly structured, unfamiliar rituals, rules, and expectations just to name a few. They may associate words with church like judgmental, close-minded, rules based, etc.

How might we **convey** the word “church” in new language?  
And then more importantly how might we **live** the word  
“church” in new forms that match our language?

*gathering,*  
*community of Christ followers,*  
*movement,*  
*loving community,*  
*sacred community,*  
*missional order, etc.*

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- How might we **convey** the word “church” in new language? And then more importantly how might we **live** the word “church” in new forms that match our language?
- So instead of “church” we may use words like gathering, community of Christ followers, movement, loving community, sacred community, missional order, etc.
- Also think about how our identity and calling as Community of Christ invites us to **describe and do** church differently in order to connect with a changing world.
- The table and descriptions moving from left to right is way for us to take any word and begin to think about how it is perceived and **how it can be expressed in new language (what we say) and form (what we do)**.

# TableTalk

- Discuss one of the religious words using the chart and filling in the boxes from left to right.
- You can either choose one of the words provided or select their own.



45

Share with participants they will have **10 minutes** at their table to discuss one of the religious words using the chart and filling in the boxes from left to right. They can either choose one of the words provided or select their own.

*Note to Facilitator: We also included a **Glossary of Terms** in participants' packets. This glossary contains frequently used words in Community of Christ. They include how we define the word. This is provided for reference.*

Take **5-7 minutes** and ask for some examples from the table discussions.

Close with the following:

We have just begun the process this afternoon. Consider involving your congregation in this activity over several months. This can be challenging but also fun. Consider dividing into teams and drawing words out of basket. Share the results of your work on newsprint and discuss insights gained as well as questions.

## *Moment of Blessing*

*"Christianity did not begin with a confession. It began with an invitation into friendship, into creating a new community, into forming relationships based on love and service."*

*Diana Butler Bass*



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Invite Participants into a moment of blessing by singing several rounds of "Alleluia" and then share the following quote from Diana Butler Bass:

*"Christianity did not begin with a confession. It began with an invitation into friendship, into creating a new community, into forming relationships based on love and service."*

Allow for a moment of silent reflection.

Doctrine and Covenants 163:2b challenges us,

*“Generously share the invitation, ministries, and sacraments through which people can encounter the Living Christ who heals and reconciles through redemptive relationships in sacred community. The restoring of persons to healthy or righteous relationships with God, others, themselves, and the earth is at the heart of the purpose of your journey as a people of faith”*



47

Continue with the following points:

- Receiving, Embodying, and Sharing the **Fullness of Christ's Peace** **always** involves an invitation to sacred community (i.e. the church) in some form.
- Doctrine and Covenants 163:2b challenges us, *“Generously share the invitation, ministries, and sacraments through which people can encounter the Living Christ who heals and reconciles through redemptive relationships in sacred community. The restoring of persons to healthy or righteous relationships with God, others, themselves, and the earth is at the heart of the purpose of your journey as a people of faith”*



## ***Sharing in Community of Christ – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*** ***Discovering Our Evolving Faith Story Booklet***

This time of reflection is to consider those things that have made up and are still making up *the substance* of our shared story.



We will **gather back at 5:00 p.m.**

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- We will now take time to reflect on our evolving faith story as a movement. You will need ***Sharing in Community of Christ – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*** and ***Discovering Our Evolving Faith Story Booklet*** for this time of reflection.
- The purpose of this time of reflection is to consider those things that have made up and are still making up the substance of our shared story. It is from the essence of this living and evolving faith story that we are called to *share with* and *invite others*.
- Refer to ***Discovering Our Evolving Faith Story Booklet***. You will have **25 Minutes** for personal reflection and response to the questions. During this time we will observe a period of silence.

**Note to Facilitator: Please ask people to return promptly after 25 minutes.**

- **Be sure you have some time to consider the question on page 8.** We will have some time when we get back to hear each other's responses.
- We will gather back at 5:00 p.m. sharp.





## ***Expressing Your Evolving Faith Story in Community of Christ***

- Get together with **two other individuals** you don't know well and share your responses to Question 8.
- You may also wish to share something that was important for you in response to one of the other questions.

**Tabletalk**

49

Share the following as instructions: **(15 minutes)**

- Get together with **two other individuals** you don't know well and share your responses to Question 8. You may also wish to share something that was important for you in response to one of the other questions. **Each person should have about 5 minutes to share.**

Take just a few moments and ask the large group for any insights they gained during this activity? Was it easy to respond to the questions?

Suggest congregations or small groups consider this activity back home. Additional copies of the booklet can be obtained by emailing [rharmen@cofchrist.org](mailto:rharmen@cofchrist.org) or [rborkowski@cofchrist.org](mailto:rborkowski@cofchrist.org).

***We have a powerful, meaningful, and transforming story to tell! Do we believe it?***

At the heart of our story are ordinary people who *continue to receive, seek to embody, and generously share* the invitation to Christ's peace in relationship with others!



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- Just as it is important to be prepared to share our evolving faith stories as individuals, so it is with our shared story as a movement – a movement committed to Christ's vision of the peaceable kingdom of God on earth.
- ***We have a powerful, meaningful, and transforming story to tell! Do we believe it?***
- Our story is a different story than what certain segments of Christianity are sharing today.
- ***We don't have all the answers and we are not afraid to struggle with the difficult questions. At the heart of our story are ordinary people who continue to receive, seek to embody, and generously share the invitation to Christ's peace in relationship with others!***

### **Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother?**

Who is my mother, who is my brother? All those who gather round Jesus  
Christ: Spirit-blown people born from the gospel sit at the table, round Jesus  
Christ.

Differently abled, differently labeled widen the circle round Jesus  
Christ: crutches and stigmas, cultures' enigmas all come together round Jesus  
Christ.

Love will relate us—color or status can't segregate us, round Jesus  
Christ: family failings, human derailing's— all are accepted, round Jesus  
Christ.

Bound by one vision, met for one mission we claim each other, round Jesus  
Christ: here is my mother, here is my brother, kindred in Spirit, through Jesus  
Christ.

Words: Shirley Erena Murray, 1931— Music: Jack Schrader, 1942—

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Invite Participants into a moment of blessing by having someone read the following hymn and inviting everyone into a moment of reflection prior to dinner:

### **Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother?**

Who is my mother, who is my brother? All those who gather round Jesus Christ: Spirit-blown people born from the gospel sit at the table, round Jesus Christ.

Differently abled, differently labeled widen the circle round Jesus Christ: crutches and stigmas, cultures' enigmas all come together round Jesus Christ.

Love will relate us—color or status can't segregate us, round Jesus Christ: family failings, human derailings— all are accepted, round Jesus Christ.

Bound by one vision, met for one mission we claim each other, round Jesus Christ: here is my mother, here is my brother, kindred in Spirit, through Jesus Christ.

New Zealand/U.S.A. 10.9.10.9. KINDRED Words: Shirley Erena Murray, 1931—  
Music: Jack Schrader, 1942— Words and Music © 1992 Hope Publishing Company License  
number: A723145

**5:30 – 6:45 PM Dinner**



**Be back at 7:00PM**

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Dinner Time

Be back at 7:00PM



## **Living Fully Into Our Identity as Community of Christ**



Community of Christ

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## Essential Question

How we discern, embrace, and risk living fully  
into our identity as *Community of Christ*?



Comunidad de Cristo

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In this brief session return to our essential question from yesterday – the question that leads us into the heart of God’s future for the church and creation:

How we discern, embrace, and risk living fully into our identity as *Community of Christ*?

### ***Understanding the Nature of Community in All Things***

- Scientists tell us that, from smallest to largest, the universe appears to be a fractal collection of communities (through about fifty powers of ten increasing in size).
- Even we humans, who consider ourselves individuals, are in fact a living community.

55

Share the following quote from *Discovering the Other: Asset Based Approaches for Building Community Together*:

Scientists tell us that, from smallest to largest, the universe appears to be a fractal collection of communities (through about fifty powers of ten increasing in size). Vibrating strings of energy form communities called quarks. Quarks of various kinds (up, down, strange , and so forth) form communities of protons, neutrons, electrons, and the like. They in turn form communities we call atoms, and those gather into various kinds of molecules. Communities of molecules form organelles, and those form cells. Trillions of cells form organisms like us, and this whole earthly biosphere of organisms and inorganics makes up a planet. Planets and suns form solar systems. And solar systems gather in galaxies, and the galaxies in clusters and the clusters in super clusters. And all through the universe run vast streams of warm-hot gas that feed and flow out of those galaxies, knitting the whole universe into one great, integrated community.

Even we humans, who consider ourselves individuals, are in fact a living community.

Harder, Cameron (2013-05-06). *Discovering the Other: Asset-Based Approaches for Building Community Together* (Kindle Locations 246-253). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

### ***So, if the nature of God is community . . .***

- What does that suggest about our divine challenge to ***discern and embrace our identity and calling*** as Community of Christ?
- How might this deeper understanding actually become a blessing to the whole creation?
- What does all this mean for how we receive, embody, and share the invitation to the fullness of Christ's peace in a separated world?

56

Share the following:

“So, if the nature of God is community (i.e. our humble attempt to describe God as Trinity), if God has given a communal structure to the universe, and if God is leading humanity toward community that better reflects the character of God's own life”, ***what does that suggest about our divine challenge to discern and embrace our identity and calling as Community of Christ?***

How might this deeper understanding actually become a blessing to the whole creation?

What does all this mean for how we receive, embody, and share the invitation to the fullness of Christ's peace in a separated world?

Harder, Cameron (2013-05-06). *Discovering the Other: Asset-Based Approaches for Building Community Together* (Kindle Locations 246-253). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.



## ***Community of Christ - Redefining Church, Redefining Community in a Hurting World***



- *What is the Spirit seeking to reveal to us in our new name?*
- *What do this mean for how we **convey and live** our identity and calling in a separated and fearful world?*

57

Share the Video: ***Community of Christ - Redefining Church, Redefining Community in a Hurting World***. Refer participants to the video script. Invite participants into a moment of reflection after the video.

Ask the table groups to consider the following questions **(15 minutes)**

*What is the Spirit seeking to reveal to us in our new name?*

*What do this mean for how we **convey and live** our identity and calling in a separated and fearful world?*

If time permits provide a few moments for large group reflection. **(5 minutes)**

If risking new relationships, new invitations, and radical hospitality is the pathway to our future as Community of Christ, how do we develop the capacity to ***generously share*** when our lives are already so full?



58

Share the following:

If risking new relationships, new invitations, and radical hospitality is the pathway to our future as Community of Christ, how do we develop the capacity to ***generously share*** when our lives are already so full?

## ***Making Room Practice***

*“So what will it take to be successful in this mission? We must start with ourselves. The call of discipleship is the call to attach our lives fully and completely to Jesus Christ. Are we experiencing the peace of Jesus Christ in our heart, mind, and soul? Discipleship must be grounded in intentional spiritual formation that centers us in the presence of God, where we find inner peace. It is out of the depth and overflow of this peace that we find the capacity to cope with life and to extend ourselves in the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world.”*

President Veazey’s 2005 World Conference Sermon

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Refer participants to the ***Making Room*** practice on page 15 of the blue pages and share the following:

- In President Veazey’s 2005 World Conference Sermon he shared the following:  
*“So what will it take to be successful in this mission? We must start with ourselves. The call of discipleship is the call to attach our lives fully and completely to Jesus Christ. Are we experiencing the peace of Jesus Christ in our heart, mind, and soul? Discipleship must be grounded in intentional spiritual formation that centers us in the presence of God, where we find inner peace. It is out of the depth and overflow of this peace that we find the capacity to cope with life and to extend ourselves in the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world.”*

- How do we make room in our lives to ground ourselves more completely in the presence of God?
- What is currently filling our lives that can be decreased or even eliminated?



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- How do we make room in our lives to ground ourselves more completely in the presence of God?
- What is currently filling our lives that can be decreased or even eliminated?
- ***Making Room*** is a practice designed to help us look back on our lives weekly to answer these questions. This practice is not about trying to squeeze more church activities into our lives or give more money.
- This practice is about saying no to what clutters our lives and yes to what brings us joy and purpose. **For some of us the best way to increase our capacity for mission is to be more intentional about taking time for rest and renewal. For some it may be to finally put a plan together to reduce debt.**

- What one action could I take to increase my capacity for mission over the next several months?



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Invite Participants to pair up and discuss the following question: **(10 minutes)**

What one action could I take to increase my capacity for mission over the next several months?

**9:15 to 9:30 AM**





## Next Steps, Discussion, and PLT Planning Time



Community of Christ

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## ***Next Steps for Congregations and Small Groups***

- Key Planning Tools
- Practices Associated with *Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace*



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**NOTE TO FACILITATOR** – Become very familiar with the Next Steps Document and Resources so you can walk participants through the resources and practices available to them after the retreat.

Refer participants to ***Next Steps for Congregations and Small Groups*** on gold paper.

Share the following:

In this session we will work through the following steps:

- Review Suggested Next Steps (30 minutes)
  - Review Key Planning Tools
  - Review Practices Associated with *Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace*
- Provide Opportunity for Planning Team in PLT Groups (40 minutes)
- Questions and Discussion (20 minutes)



## The Essential Question That Leads to Our Future

*How do we discern, embrace, and risk living into our identity and calling as Community of Christ in a changing world?*



65

Share the following key points over the next several slides:

First, I want to again refer you to the Essential Question that will lead us into the heart of God's future for the church and creation:

*How do we discern, embrace, and risk living into our identity and calling as Community of Christ in a changing world?*

If you have struggled to identify an essential question begin with this question and see where it takes you over the next six months.

Second, at your next PLT meeting spend some time reviewing the questions on page 1 of **Next Steps**. These questions provide a helpful starting place and bring forward much of the key concepts and practices from prior retreats.

- This is ***your journey*** as a congregation. No one can discern and embrace the future for your congregation – only you can in partnership with God.
- God is up to something in our lives, congregations, neighborhoods, and world!
- **Do we believe it?**



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As we have said from the beginning, this is your journey as a congregation. No one can discern and embrace the future for your congregation – only you can in partnership with God.

God is up to something in our lives, congregations, neighborhoods, and world! Do we believe it?

We provide tools and potential next steps for you to use as you discern the needs of your unique congregation and neighborhoods.

Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace

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*Generously Receiving  
and Sharing the Invitation*



**A Twelve Week Study Guide**

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**NOTE TO FACILITATOR:** Review steps 1 through 4. Especially highlight the ***Twelve Week Study for Generously Receiving and Sharing the Invitation*** that is a companion to ***Receive, Embody, and Share Christ's Peace***.

Hold up the booklet and encourage its use in congregations and small groups.

More books can be ordered by emailing [rharmon@cofchrist.org](mailto:rharmon@cofchrist.org) or [rborkowski@cofchrist.org](mailto:rborkowski@cofchrist.org). Depending on the number of books ordered there may be a small copy and postage charge.

This will enable us to provide the resource for everyone that requests it.

## ***Next Steps and Planning Tools . . .***

- Framework for Leading Mission in USA and Canada
- Envisioning/Sharing Our Identity and Calling Through Three Shared Practices



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Refer participants to the Two Planning Tools on page 3 of Next Steps including:

- ***Framework for Leading Mission in USA and Canada***
- ***Envisioning/Sharing Our Identity and Calling Through Three Shared Practices***

These tools are covered in more detail in Steps 5, 6, and 7. **Take the time to walk participants through the descriptions of each tool** and hold them up so people can find them in their folders.

**NOTE TO FACILITATOR** – Spend a little extra time with the ***Framework for Leading Mission in USA and Canada***. We introduced this yesterday. Walk the group through the planning grid on the last few pages of the document. A simple way to use this is as follows:

- The focus of this tool is to **think about what you are currently doing as a congregation**. So simply make a list of everything you do down the left hand column.
- Then have some discussion about the three questions from left to right.
- As you look at each ministry or activity consider how it relates or does not relate to the three trends.
- Are there changes that could be made to existing activities or ministries so they connect better with the trends?
- Are there new experiments of ministry that should be considered to connect better with these trends?
- Be patient!! This is a challenging but important conversation to have over time.

### ***Next Steps, Resources, and Practices. . .***

- What is Our Name Calling us to Become?
- Sharing Essential Truths in New Language and Form
- Making Room Practice
- Sharing My Story
- 24 Months of Dwelling in the Word.

*Clean copies will be available on the website.*

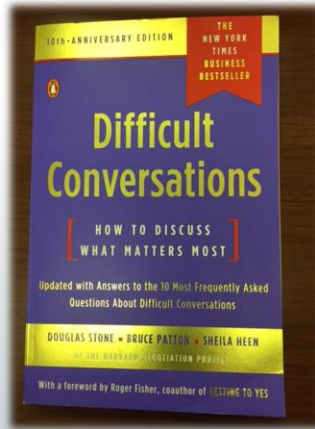
69

Review the additional resources in Steps 8, 9, and 10. These are additional resources we utilized in the retreat that can be utilized back in congregations.

**Emphasize that all the resources, activities, and practices are intended for use back in congregations or small groups.**

Clean copies will be available on the website.

If you have not had an opportunity, please read:  
***Difficult Conversations:  
How to Discuss What Matters Most.***



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Share the following:

In Retreat 7 we will explore the steps of Evaluate and Rest/Renewal. If you have not had an opportunity, please read ***Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most.*** We will dedicate several hours to some helpful tools from this book.

## **Moment of Blessing**

*"In biblical terms, it is wisdom we need to live together in this world. Wisdom is not gained by knowing what is right. Wisdom is gained by practicing what is right, and noticing what happens when that practice succeeds and when it fails. Wise people do not have to be certain what they believe before they act. They are free to act, trusting that the practice itself will teach them what they need to know.*

*If you are not sure what to think about washing feet, for instance, then the best way to find out is to practice washing a pair or two. If you are not sure what to believe about your neighbor's faith, then the best way to find out is to practice eating supper together. Reason can only work with the experience available to it. Wisdom atrophies if it is not walked on a regular basis."*

Pg 34 from An Altar in the World

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Invite Participants into a moment of blessing by sharing the following reading. Provide a moment for silent reflection:

*"In biblical terms, it is wisdom we need to live together in this world. Wisdom is not gained by knowing what is right. Wisdom is gained by practicing what is right, and noticing what happens when that practice succeeds and when it fails. Wise people do not have to be certain what they believe before they act. They are free to act, trusting that the practice itself will teach them what they need to know. If you are not sure what to think about washing feet, for instance, then the best way to find out is to practice washing a pair or two. If you are not sure what to believe about your neighbor's faith, then the best way to find out is to practice eating supper together. Reason can only work with the experience available to it. Wisdom atrophies if it is not walked on a regular basis." Pg 34 from An Altar in the World*

Lead the group in a few rounds of "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow"

# You're invited

- To discuss some key ideas from the retreat that your team would like to share with the congregation. Begin to discuss the best way to share these ideas.
- To choose one resource, planning tool, or practice from Retreat 6 to implement back home that will be helpful introducing how we **receive, embody, and share Christ's Peace** with others.

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Invite Pastor Leadership Teams to do the following:

- Discuss some key ideas from the retreat that your team would like to share with the congregation. Begin to discuss the best way to share these ideas. (15 minutes)
- Choose one resource, planning tool, or practice from Retreat 6 to implement back home that will be helpful introducing how we receive, embody, and share Christ's Peace with others. (10 minutes)
- Discuss time, place, and agenda items for next meeting including the review of questions on Page #1 of Next Steps. Assign the Connecting, Centering, Dwelling in the Word practice to someone. (10 minutes)
- Close with circle sentence prayer. (5 minutes)





Question Time!

Inform participants we will move into worship promptly at 11:15 a.m.



Community of Christ

**Worship begins at 11:15 AM**



**Worship begins at 11:15am**

**End of Power Point, set up for worship**