



Could transformation help *your* congregation?

If at least three of these statements sound like you or your church, CCNC-N's Year of Transformation is for you!

- ✝ Members of our congregation only pray together during the prayers of the people on Sunday morning.
- ✝ Our congregation is pretty much the same despite having gone through a visioning process.
- ✝ We have delayed/rejected a new ministry idea because "that's not what the By-laws say."
- ✝ Our members aren't very hopeful about the future of our church.
- ✝ We tend to focus on delivering the same programs over time.
- ✝ I haven't invited someone to church in a long time.
- ✝ Most of our board meetings focus on the budget—especially on what we have to cut.
- ✝ It feels like the same small group of people are in charge of everything in the church.
- ✝ By and large, we feel church is a place to spend Sunday morning.
- ✝ We wish someone would "fix" our church to get it going again.
- ✝ We'd like to give or do more for mission but we don't have the time or money.
- ✝ We think the Holy Spirit is pretty nifty—as long as it doesn't get out of control.

The Biblical Call to Transformation!

Hundreds of passages focus on the call, imperative and empowerment of God to enable transformation, from the story of Saul/Paul's conversion to Christianity (a story of personal transformation) to the story in Ezekiel of the valley of the dry bones! Remember, we worship a God who proclaimed, "Look, I am making all things new!" [Rev. 21:5] Here are just a few passages that remind us God longs for our continual transformation into a thriving, devoted and passionate body of believers proclaiming God's goodness to the world:

- **Genesis 32:22-32**
- **Romans 12:1-12**
- **Acts 2:17-28**
- **Philippians 3:18-21**
- **John 5: 2-15**
- **Ephesians 3:14-21**

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Why is 2006 the Year of Transformation for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada?

The scriptures remind us that when we seek to know Jesus we "are being **transformed** into [God's] image from one degree of glory to another." [2 Cor. 3:18] What great news!

Despite this great news, however, many of the congregations in our region face the reality of fewer people in the pews, financial struggles, limited leadership pools, or simply a lack of energy in the church. Some congregations even wonder, "How long can we keep the doors open?"

CCNC-N has committed itself to a three-year process helping congregations seek the challenging and life-shifting direction offered by God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. It all begins with 2006, Year of Transformation, so that together, we can grow in Christ and share great news with people whose lives will be transformed by God in our midst, "from one degree of glory to another."



What Transformation *IS*:

According to the General Transformation Team: **Transformation is a spiritual, systemic, and strategic journey traveled by a congregation urgently striving to realize what God has called it to be and do.**

That definition's a great start. In the CCNC-N region, we'd like to expand a little. It is also:

A spiritual journey that causes us, as individuals and Church, to become all God would have us be. This is a **covenantal process** of relationship building: relationships between a person and God, and between one person and another—within the church community and between church and world.

A living, dynamic process of change where we recognize the gifts that have brought us this far, admit that our church needs to change in order to be more fruitful as a vehicle of God's will, and seek the courage to go in new directions.

A culture shift: a radical move in our **group attitude**, affecting the way we view our church, its possibilities and the people in it (both present and future).

An **intentional** congregation-wide **willingness to step into the unknown** and leave behind some of the certainties of the way we've done church before.

A process that recognizes the necessary interdependence of personal change and congregational change.

An openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit as we boldly ask "What is God calling our church to be and do in the next ten years?"

What Transformation *IS NOT*:

"Changing curtains." *Transformation* is a rigorous process that involves deep involvement and a serious time commitment—it is not simply about surface changes.

"Church revitalization." Church revitalization emerges from a corporate model that tinkers around the edges of the existing structure. *Transformation* believes in looking at whether the structure really works towards the goal of making us completely new people in light of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

"Visioning." Many congregations have gone through a visioning process; many congregations would benefit from one. *Transformation* is not the same as visioning—instead of asking what should I/we do, it asks what is God calling me to be (and, as a result, to do)?

"Just evangelism." Some might argue that growing a church is only about recruiting new members. *Transformation* believes that church growth has to do with our spiritual well-being and our response to God's call for our congregation. When we really embrace God's call, though, we'll want to share it in countless ways. Chances are that spiritual growth will eventually translate into growth in membership, too.

What are some of the opportunities that will be available during the Year of Transformation?

During 2006, you will be able to learn more about transformation through the following venues:

- † **Transformation Summit, February 24-25 in Santa Nella. (Bring one pastor and at least three lay people from your congregation—transformation is not a one-person task!)**
- † **Congregational Lenten Bible Study on Transformation**
- † **Lenten devotional guides for individual use**
- † **Annual Meeting, April 28-30 at Asilomar. The theme this year is: "God's Power at Work Within Us."**
- † **If your congregation chooses to sign a covenant with the region to commit yourselves to a three-year process of transformation, you will receive consultations from the Regional staff and Transformation Team to help you in your process.**
- † **The Transformation Van, coming to your geographic area this summer and fall! Members of the region's Transformation Team and other visiting professionals will travel the region, offering workshops on concrete ways of creating transformation in your congregation based on your particular needs and vision.**

