

TRANSFORMATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

Transformation Team—Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada

You may have a lot of questions about transformation. Your congregation may want to do some serious study to better understand what this will involve. Here are some resources the Transformation Team thinks would be helpful. There are a LOT; we've framed the ones we like the best. We're happy to add to this resource list; give us your favorites with a brief description!

Web sources: page 1

Congregational Transformation Books: page 2

Handbooks, study guides, etc: page 6

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WEB-BASED RESOURCES

“Spiritual Strategic Journey: Tutorial for Congregational Redevelopment.”

George Bullard. Written by one of the foremost scholars in the field of congregational transformation, this 143-page document takes a congregation through a survey to help them analyze their current position and talks it through the challenges and hope for transformation.

<http://www.congregationalresources.org/Bullard.asp>

Net Results is a popular church revitalization organization with a regular magazine as well as coaching and information on national events. Take a look at the articles in their most recent magazine:

<http://www.netresults.org/online/2006/JanFeb/cover.html>

Link2Lead. A website with free registration, Link2Lead provides basic demographic information about the neighborhood in which your church is located along with quizzes that help you see how in touch you are with your surroundings. Might be a good activity to gather the elders or evangelism committee around the computer and have them take the quiz together! <http://www.link2lead.com>

<http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/front.htm> This site has links to about 2000 religion sites. It is maintained by the Brite Divinity School librarian and is up-to-date and very diverse.

Coachnet. This website offers some resources online with a free registration (and more resources with a paid subscription). It comes from the perspective of “Natural Church Development,” a worldwide movement that focuses on “quality” of church life rather than numbers. <http://www.coachnet.org/en/>

Also, for more on **Natural Church Development**, visit www.ncd-international.org/

BOOKS ON CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Bandy, Thomas G. *Coaching Change: Breaking Down Resistance, Building Up Hope.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000. 184 pgs.

“This work is a missional, organizational, personal, and social comparison of modern and postmodern life in the community of faith. You will struggle, argue and fight with Bandy, and you will be stimulated, surprised, and moved to mission. Each chapter is a challenge and an opportunity, an occasion to disagree and to be called into action.” (Review by Tex Sample, St. Paul School of Theology)

Uses the model of coaching to approach the resistance to change systemically and personally, and gives bold suggestions for carrying forth, as well as covering some consequences of change to be ready for, including the sabotage.

Bayer, Charles H. *The Babylonian Captivity of the Mainline Church.* Chalice Press, 1996.

“The mainline church is besieged today, caught between a secular society on one side and the evangelical far right on the other. Can it survive—and if so, in what form?”

Likening the situation to the seventy-year captivity of Judah by the Babylonians, Bayer takes up themes he originally raised in his 1991 work, *Hope for the Mainline Church*. Clearly and persuasively, he explains how we wandered into this wilderness in the first place, what it will take to find our way out, and how we too can teach our children to sing the Lord’s song in this very strange land.” (*back cover*)

Dale, Robert D. *Seeds for the Future: Growing Organic Leaders for Living Churches.* Lake Hickory Resources, 2005. 176 pages.

From the back of the book:

“In this time of historical transformation, Christian leaders have an opportunity to help seed new ways of thinking and acting while maintaining appropriate roots in scripture and church heritage. Bob Dale’s important new book brings to life how new forms of leadership, based on the principles of living systems, will be required to ensure a vital and sustainable church in a different kind of twenty-first-century world that is emerging.”

Dulles, Avery. *Models of the Church.* Image Publishers, 1991. 288 pages.

Dulles looks at the models used for looking at how the church functions. He deals with the theology of the different ways of looking at church and suggests that a balance between the models makes for a living church. I [Natalie Chamberlain] have a review of the major points in the book for those who do not want to tackle the Dulles book.

Fishburn, Janet F., ed. *People of a Compassionate God: Creating Welcoming Congregations.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003. 214 pgs.

From the back cover: “...offers a comprehensive introduction to how congregations implement change around issues of greater inclusivity and openness.... Using theological, educational, and sociological tools, the authors seek to understand how congregations succeed in consciously becoming open and affirming of diversity—and how they fail. Contributors include Janet Fishburn, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Linda Vogel, Nella Slate and Elizabeth Box Price.”

“This gifted group of Christian educators offers powerful testimony, in their case studies of five UMC congregations that have considered becoming Reconciling Congregations, that doing the work of justice and love revitalizes congregational life. Contrary to conventional wisdom, it is not sexuality or even conflict that puts churches at risk. The real problem is the fearful avoidance of the gospel call to ‘welcome the stranger,’ a call these educators convincingly show lies at the very heart of contemporary faithfulness.”

Fraze, Randy. *The Connecting Church: Beyond Small Groups to Authentic Community*. Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan. 2001. 254 pgs.

Review from the inside cover flap: “In *the Connecting Church*, pastor Randy Fraze lays the groundwork for churches to become places where believers experience the kind of strongly interwoven relationships that are the biblical norm for the body of Christ. *The Connecting Church* is challenging. It runs against the grain of what we’re used to, what we’ve grown up with. Dismantling our preoccupation with individualism and independence, this book shows how we can attain the connectedness our hearts long for. It calls us to take serious inventory of our priorities, our neighborhoods, how we use our time...every facet of the way we’ve chosen to live. And it offers in turn a compelling vision—one whose rewards far surpass every effort and sacrifice we might make, as we enter into the full meaning and potential of doing life together in Jesus’ name.

Using experiences of families in his own church who are endeavoring to make Christian community a reality, Fraze exposes the problems of individualism, isolation, and consumerism. He reveals the importance of finding common purpose and place and what it means to share common possessions. And he guides us into rediscovering relationships, neighborhood and interdependence.”

For more information and the Christian life Profile: www.TheConnectingChurch.com

Hadaway, C. Kirk. *Behold I Do A New Thing: Transforming Communities of Faith*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press. 2001. 140 pgs.

[note: This is a personal favorite of Sandhya’s.]

“Rather than trying to educate and motivate apathetic church members, churches can liberate their congregations into a continuous cycle of renewal. A new model for congregational change is introduced and implications are given for leadership, worship, preaching, formation, and religious education.” The author is minister for research and evaluation at the Office of General Ministries for the United Church of Christ. Excerpt: “Calling a visionary pastor is the wrong place for a church to begin. Trying to generate a vision is the wrong place for a pastor to start. The best thing to do is to confront the issue of organizational purpose. What we should ask is ‘what is a church?’ Then we should ask, ‘why is this church here?’... Do we have some reason for being other than the fact that we have always been here and our members feel at home? If not, then... we are a club that happens to hold worship services, led by a pastor serving as ‘clan priest.’” p. 18.

Kysar, Robert. *Stumbling in the Light: New Testament Images for a Changing Church.* Chalice Press.

Kysar discusses images used in the church today and how these images facilitate or hinder our message of Christ to the world. He suggests ways of using lesser known Biblical images to encourage the faith community and to better represent our understanding of ourselves to the people we meet. This is quite a scholarly work and could be quite daunting for those not used to reading such things.

Law, Eric. *Sacred Acts, Holy Change: Faithful Diversity and Practical Transformation.* Chalice Press, 2002. 166 pages.

“...offers practical guidelines for transformation, challenging us to not just read about the theology of change but to actually live it. Drawing on his experience with more than seventy-five congregations, Eric Law teaches us how to apply the techniques and theories of his extensive work, spelling out the processes for achieving genuine transformation in a congregation attempting to be multiculturally inclusive.” (Amazon review) For congregations striving to be multicultural, this book offers some insights on how to engage in transformation while staying true to that commitment.

Linn, Jan. *Rocking the Church Membership Boat: Counting Members OR Having Members Who Count.*

Linn challenges us to change the way we define church membership and to view it as a spiritual discipline. He introduces us to a new concept of membership, "covenant membership," in which the church and its members are bound together in a relationship of mutual support and responsibility. (from Chalice Press review)
--see your Transformation Summit packet for readings from Linn.

McLaren, Brian D. *A Generous Orthodoxy: Why I am a missional+evangelical+ post/protestant+liberal/conservative+ mystical/ poetic+ biblical+ charismatic/ contemplative+ fundamentalist/Calvinist+Anabaptist/Anglican+Methodist+ catholic+ green+incarnational+depressed-yet-hopeful+ emergent+ unfinished CHRISTIAN.*

This book is one of the best books I [Paula] have read on offering true Christ-like ways to embrace diversity and go beyond all the labels we are so quick to put on people. This book will lend itself easily to group discussions and adult education classes and I believe is a must for study to begin to understand the direction we must go as followers of Christ in this “post-modern” world. Even if you don’t agree with everything the author says—and you won’t!—it is worth the time to read and discuss the many different ways he will make your thinking break out of old boxes and come to your own solutions.
(Note from Paula: This book would make an excellent region-wide study.)

Rendle, Gilbert R. *Leading Change in the Congregation: Spiritual and Organizational Tools for Leaders*

“Many books have been written about leadership and change, but until now none has focused on the kind of change that tears at a community’s very fabric. Alban senior consultant Gil Rendle provides a respectful context for understanding change, especially the experiences and resistances that people feel. Rendle pulls together theory, research, and his work with churches facing change to provide leaders with practical diagnostic models and tools. In a time when change is the norm, this book helps to “lead change” in a spiritual and healthy way.” (*back cover*)

This book addresses contextual and foundational shifts of thinking that need to be made in order to move towards a fuller understanding of the ways individuals and congregations can be spiritually transformed.

Robinson, Anthony B. *Transforming Congregational Culture*. Eerdmans, 2003. 138 p.

Writing from twenty-five years of experience in four congregations of differing size, location, and ethnic makeup, Robinson prescribes concrete changes in the practice of ministry that have been tried, tested, and lived out to great success. At the heart of his framework for church renewal is what he calls "cultural change." According to Robinson, technical or programmatic change is not sufficient to address the needs of the day. He argues for changing the very culture of mainline congregations, which involves recognizing and fostering their particular gifts and genius rather than trying to remake them into something they are not. His fruitful strategies for renewal touch every aspect of congregational life, from personal spiritual formation to church leadership. (*from Amazon.com review*)

Warren, Rick. *The Purpose-Driven Church*. Nelson Books, 1995. 400 p.

The thesis of *The Purpose Driven Church* is that when churches think first about their *health*, growth is sure to follow. "If your church is healthy," writes Rick Warren, "growth will occur naturally. Healthy, consistent growth is the result of balancing the five biblical purposes of the church." These five purposes are to "Love the Lord with all your heart," "Love your neighbor as yourself," "Go and make disciples," "[Baptize] them," and "[Teach] them to obey." And those purposes can only be accomplished, argues Warren, when church leaders stop thinking about church-building programs and shift their focus to a "people-building process" involving fellowship, discipleship, worship, and evangelism. Warren, the founder of the fastest-growing Baptist church in American history, has taught seminars to thousands of pastors from all over the world, many of whom have successfully implemented his techniques. (*from Amazon.com review*)

HANDBOOKS, STUDY GUIDES, ETC.

Serving From the Heart by Carol Cartmill, Yvonne Gentile. There is also a leader's guide with a CD. It is a small group study on spiritual gifts. If we can discover people's spiritual gifts and help them plug into their passion, we will have personal and congregational transformation. (*Another of Sandhya's picks!*)

Discerning Your Congregation's Future by Roy M. Oswald and Robert E. Friedrich, Jr. Alban Institute. 1996, reprinted 2000. 174 pgs. Combines spiritual practices of prayer and discernment into a strategic and vision planning process for a congregation, including an assessment of current strengths and weaknesses, and a detailed goal-setting process.

Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations by Gil Rendle and Alice Mann. "Planning can be challenging in the contemporary congregation, where people share a common faith and values but may have very different preferences and needs. Much of the literature on congregational planning presents it as a technical process: the leader serves as the chief problem solver, and the goal is finding "the solution to the problem."

Popular Alban consultants and authors Gil Rendle and Alice Mann cast planning as a "holy conversation," a congregational discernment process about three critical questions:

- ◆ Who are we?
- ◆ What has God called us to do or be?
- ◆ Who is our neighbor?

Rendle and Mann equip congregational leaders with a broad and creative range of ideas, pathways, processes, and tools for planning. By choosing the resources that best suit their needs and context, congregations will shape their own strengthening, transforming, holy conversation. They will find a path that is faithful to their identity and their relationship with God." Chapter one: http://www.alban.org/pdf/chapters/Chap_AL276.pdf

101 Ways to Reach Your Community by Steve Sjogren. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. 2001. 111 pgs. Great, doable ideas for "servant evangelism;" for example:

- ◆ Do a neighborhood trash pick-up, maybe around a retail area, putting out large signs that say, "Kindness in Progress" and have people wearing safety vests that say the same. Check in with the merchants before hand and let them know what you are doing, "showing God's love in a practical way," and give them what he calls a 'connection card'—with the church's information on it.
- ◆ Coffee/hot choc/cappuccino giveaway: "on a blustery day you can touch hundreds of shoppers as they go into a grocery store with the simple question, 'which would you like, coffee or hot chocolate? It's free.'" Give out connection cards, and have "Kindness in Progress" signs if you want.

More ideas at www.servantevangelism.com

Calling The Circle: The First and Future Culture by Christina Baldwin. Bantam Books, 1998. 238 pgs. This book offers a new model for discussion and conflict resolution for all groups—not just women. It focuses on relationship-building and creating the sacred in every space and meeting. She gives detailed instructions for getting started, setting goals and solving disagreements using the circle model. She shares many inspiring stories of groups who have used the circle model to decide key issues in their lives. A truly powerful re-thinking of the way to communicate and do meetings or decisions.

Moving Off The Map: A Field Guide to Changing the Congregation by Thomas G. Bandy. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. 1998. 278 pgs. From Preface: “This book is the result of the courageous experiments and explorations of transforming congregations and visionary congregational leaders. It has emerged from consultations in a wide diversity of social and cultural contexts in the U.S. and Canada. Small and large churches...rural, urban, and suburban churches...English, Hispanic, French, Chinese, and numerous other cultural churches...all these have helped shape the tools for transformation presented here.”

Approaches areas of systemic change from the leaders first, then to the congregation; understanding and defining core values and “bedrock beliefs”; and the motivating vision and passion for mission.

Proposes ministry mapping versus strategic planning—which focused on programs rather than systems. Strategic planning is linear, usually follows a structured chain of command and allows for little deviation. Ministry mapping can go in a multitude of directions, relies on spiritual discipline and activities aimed at transforming the personal and corporate bodies and is open to constant deviation and change as it goes along.

Praying the Scriptures: A Field Guide for Your Spiritual Journey by Evan B. Howard. This book is a field guide that uses the Lord’s Prayer as the basis for personal prayer. It has 10 chapters, each based on a phrase from the prayer. I have used this for teaching about prayer and I have a complete study guide that uses parts of this scheme for a 6 week study. I like practical applications and this is the best I’ve found.

Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity by Eugene H. Peterson. “This second volume provides an antidote to the powerful pressures that reduce pastoral vocation to a managerial religious job of running a church by defining the distinctive work of the pastor as helping others to listen to God as [he] speaks in Scripture, prayer and the neighbor.”

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION BOOKS

The point has been made time and again that congregational and personal transformation simply cannot be separated from one another—as the individual is transformed, she/he transforms the church, and vice versa. So here are a few recommendations for personal growth, renewal and, well, transformation.

Awed to Heaven, Rooted to Earth: Prayers of Walter Brueggemann is published by Fortress Press. This is one of the few books of this sort that I [Natalie] use for my own devotionals. The prayers are written as poetry and address a great variety of issues and Scripture references. I highly recommend this book to anyone who appreciates thoughtful prayer.

The Circle of Life: The Heart's Journey Through the Seasons by Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr. Soren Books, 2005. 283 pgs. From the back cover: “[This Book] encourages readers to connect their experience of the unfolding seasons with inner spiritual growth and movement, and to know that the presence of God is within and around us all.”

“Using reflections, poems, prayers and meditations, they invite us to listen carefully and closely to the wisdom of each season. They help us open our eyes to what each season teaches and show us how we can claim its unique grace.

Getting In The Gap: Making Conscious Contact with God Through Meditation by Wayne W. Dyer. Hayhouse, Inc. 2003. 89 pgs. With meditation CD. “The practice of meditation takes us on a fabulous journey into the gap between our thoughts, where all the advantages of a more peaceful, stress-free, healthy, and fatigue-free life are available—but they’re merely the side benefits. The paramount reason for daily meditation is to get into the gap between our thoughts and make conscious contact with the creative energy of life itself—making conscious contact with God.”

The Gift of Change: Spiritual Guidance for a Radically New Life by Marianne Williamson. NY: HarperCollins. 2004. 251 pgs. From the front cover flap: “In this honest and uplifting book, [the author] delves deeply into the powerful role of change in our lives today. Far from being something to fear and avoid, she says, every change—even the most difficult and painful—gives us an opportunity to receive the miraculous gift of personal transformation. The only real failure in life, she observes, is the failure to grow from what we go through. We will find real growth when we reorient ourselves using an eternal compass of spiritual principles...”

Her “10 Key Bridges of Transformation: From Forgetting Who We Are to Remembering Who We Are; From Negative Thinking to Positive Love; From Anxiety to Atonement; From Asking God to Change the World to Praying That He Change Us; From Living in the Past and Future to Living in the Present; From Focus on Guilt to

Focus on Innocence; From Separation to Relationship; From Spiritual Death to Rebirth; From Your Plan to God's Plan; From Who We Were to Who We Are Becoming.

Gifts: The Joy of Serving God by John Ortberg, Laurie Pederson and Judson Poling.. Zondervan, 2000. 149 pgs. From the back cover: “Through personal study and small group interaction, this study will help you develop a passion to be used by God. You’ll find out about your unique place in the body of Christ and how to surmount the obstacles that keep you from thriving. You’ll discover the joy of serving with others—doing together what you cannot do alone. And you’ll learn how to abide in Christ, experiencing a freshness and vitality that grow as you give.”

From the Ten Core Values for Spiritual Formation: “Spiritual transformation...is essential, not optional, for Christ-followers; is a process, not an event; is God’s work, but requires my participation; is not individualistic but takes place in community and finds expression in serving others...”

Immanuel: Reflections on the Life of Christ and **A Violent Grace** by Michael Card are two devotionals that I [Natalie] actually use. Most devotionals are written for a learning style or spiritual style different from mine; these books are powerfully written and thought provoking.

Learning to Lead from your Spiritual Center by Patricia Brown. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. 149 pgs. From the back cover: “This new model of spiritual leadership encourages readers to accept five affirmations about themselves as leaders. Through five ‘Spiritworks,’ they learn to be open to God’s presence and to center their leadership in ways faithful to the gospel. The author addresses issues of personal identity, spiritual survival in corporate environments, the importance of relationships, and the struggle for integration of all parts of one’s life.

Original Blessing by Matthew Fox. Tarcher/Putnam, 2000 (newest printing). 368 pgs. Former Catholic priest Matthew Fox was silenced by the Vatican for his powerful transformation of western original sin teachings to the original blessing experiences and relationships shown throughout the western Christian mystics, mostly of the 12th-15th centuries. Humans are God’s good creation, and have never fallen from God’s grace, though we do many harmful things which separate us from experience the love of God always available to us.

Fox maps out the four paths of Creation Spirituality, Awe and celebration; letting go and often suffering and sacrifice; rebirth; and transformation which includes both compassion and outward social justice action.

Protestant Spiritual Exercises: Theology, History and Practice by Joseph D. Driskill. Moorehouse Group: 1999. 131 pgs. Rev. Dr. Joseph Driskill is a Disciples minister and a professor at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley. He has put together an excellent book tracing the traditions of Christian spiritual practice and presents easy to follow and implement spiritual disciplines to deepen one’s faith and spiritual life.

Scribbling in the Sand: Christ and Creativity by Michael Card. This is a look at the biblical foundations of Christian creativity. This book explores the nature of Christian vocation in all its many forms.

Spiritual Mentoring: A Guide for Seeking and Giving Direction by Keith R. Anderson and Randy D. Reese. This book deals with mentoring and being mentored. It draws on work of classical spiritual writers. Because it relies on the “classics,” it may offer more “traditional” or “conservative” theology. It has much to teach people of *all* theological perspectives, however.

Transformative Rituals: Celebrations for Personal Growth by Gay Williamson and David. Health Communications, Inc., 1994. 184 pgs. Simple, easy to follow rituals for individual or group use for a variety of life occasions, including births, deaths, divorce, moving, new home blessings, a walk with God, naming rituals, etc.

Why Christian: For Those on the Edge of Faith by Douglas John Hall and published by Fortress Press. This is a very readable and intriguing book; it is actually a collection of dialogues with doubt. I [Natalie] found it worth reading and I do believe it gives an honest view of questions held by those who do not share my Christian faith.

THE GREATEST TRANSFORMATION GUIDE OF ALL TIME:



Check out the following scriptures for inspiration and ideas:

- † Genesis 32:22-32
- † Romans 12:1-12
- † Acts 2:17-28
- † Philippians 3:18-21
- † John 5: 2-15
- † Ephesians 3:14-21
- † Psalm 51:10
- † Matt. 11:16-19, 25-26
- † John 5:2-15
- † Mark 8:4-9
- † Ezekiel 37:1-14
- † Genesis 32:22-32