DISCRIMING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Hope Partnership’s purpose is to empower courageous leaders as they guide the church into life giving expressions of ministry in this new era of God’s mission

God has always had a mission. It started with creation, and worked through our ancestors in the faith. God has been redeeming people, and leading them to fullness, long before the establishment of the church. Sometime though, the church loses its way, and adds numerous layers of traditions and structures that shift our focus away from God’s mission, and towards institutional viability.

Every 500 years or so, God shakes up those who follow him with a new paradigm. It happened during the Babylon captivity, again at the time of Jesus, followed 500 year later by the Council Chalcedon, then 500 years later with the Great Schism, then the reformation. Today the church is facing another 500 year major shift that requires all leaders, lay and clergy, to lead with creativity and initiative. As Phyllis Tickle say; “we are lucky we get to live in one of those eras”.

We are in one of those redefining periods for all of our congregations. Spiritual practices are shifting dramatically, and the role of the church will either shift, or be left irrelevant for the next generation. The church will need to explore its economic models, how it uses volunteers, what it does with its buildings, how it helps people grow spiritually so that they want to become a part of God’s mission.

For nearly 20 years now, congregations have been facing decline. It is a fact that 80% of all congregations across North America are declining. Our focus has mainly been on preserving the institution of the church, however, we have done so asking the wrong questions and sought answers on faulty assumptions.

Are you willing to “DARE to Lead”

DARE to Lead Event is the entry experience into Hope Partnership. It will engage you in a variety of self-reflective experiences by which you can begin to reshape and gain clarity in your call to ministry. The components of DARE include:

1) Discernment: Over the next 30 days, we are asking you to reflect on your willingness to join in God’s mission. The following process will help you explore your feelings, gifts, and leadership skills through a deep conversation with God. Since leading in a time of major shift requires much, we ask you to enter into leadership prayerfully and intentionally.

2) Assessment: During the DARE Event, you took an assessment. We are asking you to review your assessment privately, and consider what it has to say about you as a leader for this new age. Do you have all you need—or can your engagement with other people throughout the Region help you in your development?
3) Recruitment: Will you consider recruiting key leaders from your congregation to join you in this adventure of personal growth that will lead towards congregational spiritual growth.

4) Empowerment: This is the place where you say; “Here I am Lord, send me”. Empowerment is giving oneself again to the spirit of God, and seeking to be God’s instrument for peace.

At the end of this Discernment period, we invite you to consider your congregation’s commitment to **HOPE** in your Region. **HOPE** is a process where you engage in a number of experiences over two years that lead to your growth and development as a leader.

**HOPE FOR LAY PERSONS:**
- Participation in two Experiences. (separated by three months) These 3 day events are held with your pastor in a retreat setting. During this time you will explore your assumptions about the church’s role in the world. You will also engage in deep conversations about your role in all of this. You will explore what it means to live missionally as a church, and find a way to enter into new conversations in your church as you begin to focus on God’s mission in your specific context.
- Participation in Cohort groups: Every 6 months, over the next two years, you will gather with lay and clergy leaders from a number of other churches in your region to explore your progress. Congregations will provide insights to each other about things that are working in their contexts, giving a cross-fertilization of ideas.

**HOPE FOR PASTORS:** Your pastor will receive:
- Participation in the two experiences with their lay leaders. Pastors also receive an additional day of specific training at the end of each Experience.
- Monthly Coaching Sessions with a trained coach. This person accompanies the pastor as they think through situations related to your congregation’s development.
- Quarterly CARE Groups: A safe place for collaborative inquiry. These covenantal groups of pastors come together to ask deep probing questions, reflect theologically, and engage their context in a new way. (Both coaching and peer group participation are proven methods for the development of healthy pastors)
- Participation in Cohort Groups: Learning from neighboring congregations and lay leaders

**HOPE** is not a predetermined destination. Instead it is a change in environment that allows the greatest creativity within a congregation to use its resources in a new way. While we cannot predict what your congregation will choose to do, the church will give itself permission to stop doing things that no longer have meaning, turn outward, and give itself the freedom to fail forward.

The spirit of God sent Samuel on a mission to seek out the next King for Israel. While tending sheep for his father Jesse, David was sought out and anointed to be the next King. Scripture gives us no clue as to whether David knew what was about to happen. He went about his daily routine and business of tending sheep. When each of David’s brothers passed before Samuel, he discerned that they were not the one to be king. He asked Jesse **“Are these all of the sons?”** Jesse replied, **“There yet remains the youngest, and there he is, tending the sheep. David came before them - he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good looking.”**

When Samuel realized that David was the one, God worked quickly in that moment (God Moment) to anoint him for Kingdom work (**1 Samuel 16:8-13 NKJV**). There is an urgency to seek, call out and equip a new generation of leaders. The God in us sees the God in potential leaders and we get excited.
The question is “Are you one of the invisible leaders among us, tending sheep, maintaining established ministry, providing hospice to churches at death’s door? Are you seeking, longing, and waiting for something to happen to move you to the next level in ministry. If your passion and desire is to engage your community in mission, nurture relationships and create unique and radical ways of being Christ incarnate in the World, well, “Your wait is over.” We have been searching for you.

This guide will also help you to explore the question, “What is my God moment and what do I do with it?” It is a time to connect with God to ask difficult questions about the future vision for your life, calling and vocation. Through the centuries, Christians have referred to such a seeking for clarity about God’s call a time of “spiritual discernment.” Discernment is being able to distinguish what is from God and what is from some other source. Discernment is seeing our lives and circumstances through God’s eyes, thus being able to see more clearly the path God wants us to follow. Discernment is ultimately what God does as God’s desires and plans are revealed to us through the Holy Spirit. We offer our effort and intention in activities that help us “see” what God is doing and “hear” what God is saying.

How do we position ourselves to be most receptive of God in these moments? We ask the Holy Spirit to help us develop some essential attitudes and approaches and to practice them daily. This discernment period is a 30 day journey into reflective prayer practices, including Lectura Divina, prayer, meditation, and listening to the biblical stories of those witnesses who have gone before you. Discerning depends on your individual transformation (your relationship with God), the vision, mission, and the call to leadership to meet the needs in your community, and the courage to step out in faith to take the DARE into transformational ministry. To put it another way, Parker Palmer says your Life Speaks when “that place of deep gladness within you, meet the world’s greatest need.”

Once you sense the direction to which God may be leading you, it is up to you to initiate the next phase of the DARE process.

Getting Started:
For the next month, set aside 30 minutes for reflection. This time must be your best shot at uninterrupted time.

My Best time of Day on average is
- First thing in the Morning.
- In bed at the end of the day before I turn the light out.
- During my lunch break.
- Other __________________________

We know you’ll have circumstances that change your schedule, but try to make time each day. We’ve set up 30 activities for your reflection. You do not have to limit yourself to these. Some people have regular practices that will work outside of this. We offer these activities though as ways in which you can explore new spiritual disciplines as you focus on the large question: “Am I called to be a leader in this time of shift?”

__________

1 Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak.
Structure Recommendation:
You may choose to organize your Discernment Session any way you wish. We would recommend though a discipline of letting God speak to you using the practice of Lectura Divina, Ignatian Exercises, Spiritual Disciplines, and reflection of God Moments in your life. Each session can be structured as follows:

10-min. Lectura Divina of the day (LD: See page 5)
10-min. Exploration (Ignatian Exercise; see page 6, God Moments; see page 6)
10-min. Prayer and Journaling (Prayer practices see page 9)

CALENDAR: On the Calendar below you will see your Lectura Divina (LD) Passage for each day. On many days there are areas of exploration. You will also note that there are optional spiritual disciplines listed below—You are invited to schedule a day for the disciplines that you would like to try.

You will see the practice of weekly communion in worship each week is a part of your discernment.

A NOTE ON JOURNALING: Discernment leads to daily insight. Without journaling these insights however, they are soon lost. You do not have to write a book, or even in complete sentences. Just make simple notes around the Discernment Question: “Am I being called to lead during this time of Shift”.

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### My Discernment Calendar

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week I. The Call to Leadership</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Day 1:</strong> Discipline of Prayer</td>
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<td>GM # 1 Isaiah 6:1-9</td>
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<td><strong>Day 10:</strong> Discipline of Meditation</td>
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<td>Habakkuk 2:1-3</td>
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<td><strong>Day 12:</strong> Discipline of Fasting</td>
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<td>Nehemiah</td>
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<td><strong>Day 14:</strong> Praying God’s Will</td>
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<th>Week III. The Call to Mission</th>
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<td>GM # 3 Mark 6:30-44</td>
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<td><strong>Day 17:</strong> Discipline of Solitude</td>
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<td>Matthew 9:35-38</td>
<td>GM # 4 John 21:1-17</td>
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<td><strong>Day 19:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Day 20:</strong> Reflect on your Journal</td>
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<td><strong>Day 21:</strong> Discipline of Worship</td>
<td>Luke 5:1-11</td>
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<th>Week IV. The Call to Community</th>
<th>The Call to Transformation</th>
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<td>Acts 1:8</td>
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<td><strong>Day 24:</strong> Kneeling Posture</td>
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<td><strong>Day 26:</strong> Discipline of Submission</td>
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<td><strong>Day 28:</strong> John 1:1-14</td>
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<th>Week V. The Call to Transformation</th>
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<td><strong>Day 29:</strong> Prayer Walking</td>
<td><strong>Day 30:</strong> Disciples of Solitude</td>
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<td>Romans 12:1-8</td>
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<td><strong>Day 31:</strong> Kneeling Posture</td>
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<td>Romans 12:1-8</td>
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Decision Day!!
THE PRACTICE OF LECTURA DIVINA

The 30 day scripture reflection is designed to lead you into a meditative process surrounding five areas: The Call to Leadership, The Call to Vision, The Call to Mission, The Call to Community, and the Call to Transformation. Set aside 30 minutes a day for the next 30 days to spend time with God and be attentive to what God may be saying to you through these passages about the life and mission of Biblical Leaders who were challenged to change and practice ministry in radical and transforming ways. Read the scripture in whatever translation you are comfortable with. Attempt to read the scriptures with a fresh set of eyes. Look for characters that in times past seemed insignificant. Put yourself in their role. Some passages are very familiar. You may want to challenge yourself by reading a translation that you have never read before.

Read the passage several times. Try reading it aloud to yourself. Pray with the question, “What are you saying to me, Lord?” Spend a few minutes “listening” as thoughts, images, memories, related scripture passages may come to mind. Read the scripture for your daily devotion, journal your thoughts and read it again as an evening prayer before retiring. Write in a journal insights, revelations, ponderings, and challenges from the Spirit. There is also a daily prayer practice that you can follow as well.

At the end of the thirty days, go back through your journal, noting themes or patterns that repeat and messages that particularly stand out. Make a note of these “Big Themes and Important Messages.” If you are comfortable, share them with your family and friends.

**The Call to Leadership**
Day 1: Exodus 3:1-14a & The Discipline of Prayer
Day 2: Jonah 2:1-6 & The Discipline of Worship
Day 3: Jeremiah 1:1-10 & the Discipline of Solitude

Day 4: The Discipline of Study
Day 5: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 & Prayer Walking
Day 7: & Praying God’s Will

**The Call to Vision**
Day 8: Nehemiah 2:1-10 & The ACTS of Prayer
Day 9: Isaiah 6:1-9 & The Discipline of Confession
Day 10: Habakkuk 2:1-3 & The Discipline of Meditation

Day 11: John 1:14 & the Discipline of Service
Day 12: Nehemiah & The Discipline of Fasting
Day 13: Exodus 3:1-14 & Kneeling Posture
Day 14: Praying God’s Will

**The Call to Mission**
Day 15: Romans 8:18-27 & Breathing Amidst
Day 16: Mark 6:30-44 & Kneeling Posture
Day 17: Matthew 9:35-38 & The Discipline of Solitude


**The Call to Community**
Day 22: Acts 1:8 & the Discipline of Worship
Day 23: Acts 2:40-47
Day 24: Nehemiah 2:11-18 & the Lord’s Prayer

**The Call to Transformation**
Day 27: II Kings 18 & The Discipline of Submission
Day 28: John 1:1-14 & Praying God’s Will

Day 30: Romans 12:1-8 & The Disciples of Solitude
Day 31: Romans 12:1-8 & Kneeling Posture
IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

Ignatius of Loyola was a devoted Christian who lived in the 16th Century and developed practices for spiritual discernment that many have found helpful ever since. This exercise involves living a few days with one option, then living a few days with another option and noting our feelings. Ignatius gives two main categories of feelings: “consolation” and “desolation.” Feelings of consolation usually indicate the choice that corresponds with God’s will for your life. Feelings of desolation usually indicate that this is not in God’s plan for you. “Consolation involves feelings of peace, freedom, and joy. There is a sense of lightness and rightness. Desolation is a troubled, ill-at-ease-feeling, heaviness, and the absence of peace and joy, darkness. Instead of freedom, you feel stifled. It does not feel right. In time, either consolation or desolation will prevail.” (From “Yearning to Know God’s Will,” by Danny Morris, Zondervan, 1991).

#1: Assume that you have decided to accept the call to become a transformational leader with Hope Partnership.
   Live with this option for 5 days.
   Record your feelings in your journal.

#2: Assume that you have decided not to become a transformation leader with Hope Partnership, but to use your gifts in some other form of ministry.
   Live with this option for 5 days.
   Record your feelings in your journal.

GOD MOMENTS

(Please take some time to reflect on the questions and record them in your journal. They should be returned with your Redevelopment/Transformational Experience Application)

GM#1: Describe a God Moment you encountered on your spiritual journey? What was the experience? What did you do with it?

GM#2: How do you keep your faith alive and growing amidst the heavy demands of ministry leadership/everyday life/education?

GM#3: When did you know you were being called to leadership? How did you know?

GM#4: Reflect on one significant event in your life that led to a deeper, more-active, commitment to God in this world and the church.

GM#5: Reflect on a time when a leader (pastor, elder, teacher, etc.) made a deep and positive impact on your faith. What did they do that impacted you?
GM#6: Leadership guru Warren Bennis once said, “Becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It is precisely that simple, and it is also that difficult.”² In this light comes the question, “What do you need in order to fully ‘become yourself’ in the church and your life of faith?” Or, to put it another way, “what do you need in order to answer God’s call to more fully become your true self?”

GM#7: Describe one way that God continues to work in you to touch the world? What keeps you from sharing your story?

These questions are designed to challenge, inspire, and to cause you to reflect on your genuine leadership characteristics for transformational ministry. What answers did you come up with? If you are like most of us, these questions challenge you to a deep and abiding appreciation for the God who called and equipped you to serve. God’s Spirit is at work calling leaders with passion to move into transforming communities to embody the Gospel and minister to declining and suffering congregations and communities. “The word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, true from start to finish (John 1:14 The Message).”

DECISION DAY

Day 30 is decision day. Discernment leads towards a decision.

Suggested Format for this day:
Morning: Review your Journal—what insights did you experience during the past month? Reflect throughout your day.

Afternoon: Read Appendix #3 (Characteristics of a transformational leader). As you consider the insights of the past month do you have gifts that could help lead your church towards transformation? Reflect throughout your afternoon and evening.

Before Bed: As a result of your Discernment, prayerfully consider these choices:
1) I am not called, nor is our church called towards transformation.
2) I will support others who lead our church towards transformation.
3) I am open to God’s call to become a transformational leader in my congregation, and wish to commitment my gifts towards our congregation’s transformation.

Note your commitment in your journal, and imagine what your decision will mean for your congregation as you go to sleep. Tomorrow, you will want to fill out the application found at the end of this guide.

² Warren Bennis, “Becoming Your True Self.”
OPTIONAL SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Transformational leadership begins on the wings of spiritual practice and prayer (which is a spiritual practice also). Developing disciplined spiritual practices allows openness to God and others. Included in this discernment guide are different models of spiritual disciplines that will hopefully enable you to make a decision about engagement with transformational ministry. It is a process of experimenting with silence, listening, songs, Lectura Divina questioning, solitude, intercessory prayer, confession, and testimonials. Listed below are several models of prayers that can be practiced. These practices are taken from Richard Foster’s “The Celebration of Discipline” and can be catered to your moments and journey over the next 30 days.

**Discipline of Prayer** - Prayer is perpetual communion with God. To pray is to change. Praying is desiring what God desires and asking God to show us how to pray - Mark 1:35.

**Discipline of Study** - Studying aids in transforming our minds. John 8:32. Studying frees us from Religious motions and forms (Deu. 11:18).

**Discipline of Meditation** - Introduces us to the inner life. (2 Cor. 4:6). The ability to hear God’s voice and spending time with self. I come to the garden alone, where the dew is still on the roses...He walks with me and talks with me.” Meditation takes us to the inner sanctuary in our heart.

**Discipline of Solitude** - Solitude is an inner fulfillment; a state of mind and heart. Many people equate loneliness with solitude. However, solitude equips us with a portable sanctuary therefore God is always present with us as we take the Spirit with us everywhere. “Let him who cannot be alone beware of community - let him who is not in community beware of being alone. (D. Bonheoffer).

**Discipline of Submission** - Submitting is laying down our burden, things, people and Importance, The best way to submit is through silence. Submission gives us the ability and freedom to give up things, people, and our own importance to draw close to God.

**Discipline of Fasting** - Fasting is an accompanying means of drawing closer to God, as we abstaining from, ___________ (you fill in the blank). Jesus gives us the perfect model for fasting (scripture). Fasting is a demanding call to obedience, as it has the power to uncover the things that control us, and helps us to be sustained by God.

**Discipline of Service** - The towel is the sign of service, John 13:14-15, Service helps the leader to focus on function not status, while serving is most conducive to our growth in humility.

**Discipline of Confession** - Confession is the work of redemption, 2 Cor. 5:21, it is a means of healing the inner spirit and moves us to an “Examination of Conscious.”

**Discipline of Worship** - Worship is experiencing the resurrected Christ, John 4:23-24. “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.” (William Temple)

**The Practice of Sabbath** - Sabbath is our practice of relinquishment, a time of deep listening, of rest, and doing nothing (no thing). Sabbath is a time to reconnect with ourselves and with God, a time of being,
not doing, a time to remember that we are unconditionally loved and held by God’s grace. Whatever
day your Sabbath falls on during the 30 Day Scripture reflection, use this practice on that day.

APPENDICES:

1: Models of Prayer

ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Submission - Submit to God, scripture, our family, our
neighbors, believing community, the broken and despised, and the world). After reading the scripture,
pray the ACTS in whatever way is comfortable for you.

Praying God’s will: praying for your life, call and vocation. Pray “Not My will, but let your will be done
in my life.” Sing a song before leaving your prayer time. See resource of songs at the end of this guide or
choose one of your favorite (hymns, spirituals, contemporary, jazz, traditional, folk lore). See resource
of songs at the end of this guide or choose one of your favorite (hymns, spirituals, contemporary, jazz,
traditional, folk lore).

Intercessory Prayer: Sharing with someone close to you (spouse, significant other, family members),
how these passages challenge you to “be” the mission God requires. The intent with this model of
prayer is to allow someone to pray for you, becoming vulnerable to the Spirit working through them. To
end the discussion, ask them to pray for you. You can seek someone out in the morning or evening,
whichever is convenient. You can seek someone out in the morning or evening, whichever is convenient.

Prayer Walking: If you can find one, Labyrinth walk. There may be a church or organization near you
that offer the Labyrinth. If not, spend some time walking, praying, and listening for the Holy Spirit
reflecting on the scriptures and the call to be in community with others. You can walk in the morning,
evening or both. The discipline may take some planning and preparation on your part.

Kneeling Posture: Kneeling is a sign of surrender, and it is a lost form of prayer. For days 27 through 30,
the daily prayer exercise is a kneeling posture. Kneeling is a sign of surrender, and it is a lost form of
prayer. If you are not able to kneel, move into a posture that is comfortable for you. After reading your
scripture, spend five minutes on your knees asking God to transforming you so that you make walk with
others into places of transformation. After praying, take time to listen to Spirit come forth in you.

The Model Lord’s Prayer

And when you come before God, don’t turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people
making a regular show of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat? Here’s
what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded plan so you won’t be tempted to role-play before God.
Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you
will begin to sense his grace. The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant.
They’re full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from
God. Don’t fall for that non-sense. This is your father you are dealing with, and he knows better than
you what you need. With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

Our Father in Heaven.
Reveal who you are.
Set the world right;  
Do what’s best- as above, so below.  
Keep us alive with three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You’re in charge!  
You can do anything you want!  
You’re ablaze in beauty!  
Yes. Yes. Yes. (Matthew 6:5-13 the Message)

2: Breathing Amidst the Dangerous Presence of God

Often our prayers become confined to only what we have to say to God. But prayer, like an incarnation of our relationship with God is about more than what we say. It is also what God might have to say to us. Still more, it is about what we do that facilitates an awareness on our part, as to the reality that God is already and always present in our lives, and would like us to embody an awareness of such Presence by what we do and what we leave undone, how we relate to others, how we simply decide to represent, ourselves, in this relationship throughout every circumstance of our lives. Be aware, such a powerful attentiveness to God’s presence as this is wonderfully dangerous, because it is in such intimate relationship as this that God will transform us, even radically, but slowly, until who we are can be nothing but the person God wants us to be.

It is also important to know, though, such a way of being on our part requires a life-long, consistent and ongoing practice. One of the wonderful ways to enter into such a life of prayer is to intentionally schedule appointments with God on your calendar. Do it weekly, at least. Start with just ten minutes at a time. Make sure you can be undisturbed during these moments. Find a quiet place, even if it means closing the door to your office, placing a “do not disturb” sign on the door, and dimming the lights. Take off your shoes for you are about to become more aware of the holiness of your relationship with God in which you are grounded. Sit comfortably in your chair; good posture, both feet flat on the ground, hands held together and turned upward in your lap in a cupping position, as if you are about to receive a full measure of God’s grace. Close your eyes.

Then simply begin to breathe. Let any stamped of thoughts and distractions move freely through your mind. It is alright that they are there, but do not block them. As they flow in one side let them move freely out the other, like a fast glowing stream scouring out the silt of decay. Do not dwell on these thoughts; simply breathe.

As you breathe, and with each breathe, think to yourself, “Breathing in God feeds my spirit; breathing out God cleans my soul.” Breathe through all the distractions that attempt to steal your focus. Acknowledge your own agenda for this time and then let go of it. Breathe deeply. Let God’s presence become present to you. Don’t dwell on what might be said, or how God’s presence should be, rather enjoy simply being aware of God-with-you. Each time you get distracted don’t dwell on your distraction; it is alright; simply breathe back into an awareness of God’s presence: “Breathing in God feeds my spirit; breathing out God cleans my soul.” Let your breathing be slow, but natural. Let your breathing be relaxed and deep. Enjoy being present to God; enjoy your awareness of God’s presence with you.

Just remember, you will never be the same again. And remember, if you are changed, so will your church be changed, in wonderful, dangerous ways.
LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRANSFORMING LEADER

Jesus, the Lord of the Harvest, is the one who calls and equips transforming leaders to serve. We have Jesus' word about recognition of spiritual leaders by their fruit (Matt 7:20, John 15:8). Paul also instructs us about the diversity of gifts and the importance of matching people’s gifts to ministry, so that they can gather people from among the lost, grow them into leaders, and mobilize new communities of faith. It is with this confidence that we share the following characteristics and behaviors for transformational leadership:

This is a brief overview of the unique qualities of transforming leaders and provides you with an initial description of the work. It is presented in the hope that God will speak to your heart to transform 1,000 congregations.

1. **Passionate Spirituality** - Transformational leaders are living stones, transformed, and in relationship with a living Christ. They live passionately in relationship with a living Christ.

2. **Visioning Capacity** - With boldness of vision, transformational leaders open the hearts and minds of participants to the possibilities for being ministry and paint pictures that demonstrate the ways churches can make a difference in the lives of their neighbors. They have the uncanny ability to call people to join them in this vision.

3. **Personal Transformation** - Transformational leaders experience God in new and refreshing ways that move their congregations to move in a new way.

4. **Healthy Self-Differentiation** - Transformational leaders have a keen self-awareness and the spirit of the creator. These leaders’ lives are not enmeshed or overly distant with the congregation in unhealthy ways. They have the resources that help them see and avoid unhealthy patterns. They are comfortable with introducing tension into the congregational system and exhibit skills in diplomacy.

5. **Interpreters of Culture/Context** - Transformational leaders understand how to exegete their context, look at their resources for ministry, and communicate compelling visions for a congregation's future.

6. **Life-long learners** - Transformational leaders adaptive and stay current with contemporary information. They are intrinsically motivated to be curious.

7. **Action Oriented** - Transformational leaders don’t ask permission. They seek buy-in for a vision, but do not wait for everyone to adopt that vision before moving forward.

8. **Ability to Reproduce Leaders** - Giving ministry away, Transformational leaders multiply their efforts through other people. They inspire people to follow Jesus and not themselves. They influence people to give up “meetings” in favor of “mission.”

9. **Courageous** - Transformational leaders show emotional strength and courage in moving their congregation forward. They are transparent, patient, and persistent with organizational development.

10. **Compassionate** - Transformational leaders care about and love all God’s people.

11. **Leadership** - Transformational leaders are team collaborators, with a fluid style of leadership; they are not afraid to make a decision that will move the ministry to new levels of sustainability in mission.

We encourage you to prayerfully reflect on these leadership principles together with your spouse or significant other, family, and friends and ask the question, “Do I have the DNA of a transformational leader?
The Hope Partnership is a collaboration of Disciple Seminaries, Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, Church Extension, Disciples Home Missions, and your region.

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