

## What is a *Transforming Church*™?

*“Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* Romans 12:2 (NRSV)

A *Transforming Church* is a church or ministry organization on the journey to becoming a transforming community that is discerning and doing the will of God. At the outset of the journey, a *Transforming Church* is guided by a leader or leaders who have completed (or are in the process of completing) the *Transforming Community*® experience, and are committed to leading their community in an intentional process of corporate spiritual transformation.

The *Leading a Transforming Church* program is designed to support and equip transforming leaders in this endeavor.

### Convictions and Commitments

In partnership with the Transforming Center, *Transforming Church* leaders are taking concrete steps to cultivate the following shared convictions and commitments in ways appropriate to their church polity/organizational structure and sensitive to the particularities of their situation. These include:

1. A shared commitment to arranging our lives for spiritual transformation so we can discern and do the will of God.
2. A shared definition of spiritual transformation:
  - a. What it is—the process by which Christ is formed in us for the glory of God, for the abundance of our own lives, and for the sake of others.
  - b. How it takes place—through spiritual disciplines that open us to God’s transforming work.
  - c. What the outcome is—increasing capacity to love God and others and to discern and do the will of God.
3. Shared conviction that:
  - a. Spiritual transformation is central to the Gospel message and therefore to the mission of the Church.
  - b. It is God’s will and delight that we are to be transformed into the image of Christ.
  - c. The transformation of human beings into the image of Christ is a testimony to the power of Gospel
  - d. Spiritual transformation is prerequisite to discerning and doing the will of God.

4. Shared understanding that spiritual transformation is both:
  - a. an ***end in itself***— it brings glory to God and abundance to our own lives;
  - b. a ***means to other ends*** –it is for the sake of others in that it motivates us and leads us to discern loving action in the world:
    - i. evangelism
    - ii. generous giving of our resources
    - iii. reconciliation and peacemaking (interpersonally and also across lines of race, gender, socioeconomic status, warring nations)
    - iv. social action regarding issues of justice and compassion
    - v. care for the poor
    - vi. community development and transformation
    - vii. involvement in government and politics
  
5. Commitment to a strategic approach to becoming a transforming community.
  - a. **Work from the center out.** Begin with the senior leader/leaders so that the values and practices of spiritual transformation emanate from the “leadership center” to other community leaders and members.
  - b. **Start with personal transformation.** Through shared teaching and experience, leaders and members are engaging in an ongoing process of spiritual transformation while working to foster transformation throughout the community.
  - c. **Move to corporate transformation.** The community clarifies and adheres to a community rule of life—shared values and practices that transform us in community.
  - d. **Seek organizational alignment.** Leaders cultivate an organizational culture in which spiritual transformation values and practices permeate all aspects of the community’s life together.
  
6. Commitment to discernment as a way of making decisions:
  - a. At the leadership level through an agreed-upon process for corporate discernment.
  - b. At the community level so that all members are involved in the discernment processes in ways appropriate to church polity or organizational structure.
  
7. Committed to affiliate with the *Transforming Church*<sup>™</sup> network in variety of ways, including participating in the *Leading a Transforming Church* program, contributing to the network as God leads, displaying the Transforming Church logo on website, publicity materials, etc.

## **Benefits of being in the *Transforming Church*<sup>TM</sup> network**

- 1. Relationships.** Face- to- face community with other leaders on the same journey *plus* access to coaching and consulting from leaders experienced in guiding transforming communities.
- 2. Resources.** Access to the *Leading a Transforming Church* program which will provide teaching and experiential learning, shared wisdom and best practices, guest presentations and resource materials prepared by significant thought leaders.
- 3. Strength of Soul.** Ongoing opportunities for fixed hour prayer and worship, solitude, spiritual direction and discernment that will continue to strengthen your soul and the soul of the community you lead.