

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNITIES



**Community is not an end  
in itself. It is a way of  
being in solidarity with  
the work of the Holy  
Spirit.**

**-Dietrick Bonhoeffer**

"The people who come to our churches now are quite possibly the most stressed, overworked, and generally unhappy people churches have ever seen. The very fact that they live in a time of cultural transformation is mentally and emotionally exhausting to them. The simple world of their parents' traditions has exploded in every direction... People feel out of control of their life and environments. They are confused about how a faith of shepherds and tentmakers fits in a world of rock stars and microchips. "Peace" is just a word to them. They have forgotten how to imagine what it really is."

"One of our greatest tasks, in a world that has been so heavily indoctrinated by the enlightenment and its twin emphases on reason and empiricism, is the refurbishing of our people's faith in the transcendent, the holy, the supernatural, the extraordinary that inhabits the ordinary. "What we seek, in the end, is not to turn our parishioners into otherworldly persons, ethereal wraiths dancing on the cusp of the world, but to deliver them more solidly than ever to the real world they live in."



*Preaching to a Church in Crisis*, John Killinger  
Css Pub, 1995, Lima, Ohio

# Toward Daring Discipleship



March, 2009  
Looking to Easter

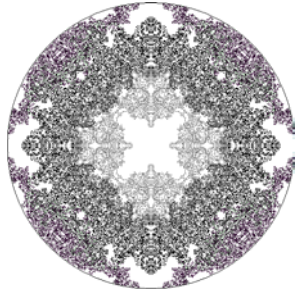
**As a Resurrection People we are called to community. The presence of the Crucified One was made known in his community after his death. Powerful experience of his ongoing presence in the midst of that people transformed a shattered group of diverse and broken men and women into a courageous and passionate community .**



**It is in community that our eyes are opened and our hearts burn within us.**

*Luke 24- The walk to Emmaus*

# LIVING DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY



## Facilitated Learning Circle

This United Church program offers trained facilitators to work with groups of paid accountable leadership (lay or ordered) that wish to study and meet around issues related to church and ministry. The purpose is mutual learning and support.

The groups covenant for a year or longer around self determined learning goals. Groups usually meet monthly either face to face, by conference call, or over the internet. This is a potentially life-giving and engaging alternative model of continuing education in ministry.

For more information: <http://www.united-church.ca/adultlearning/coned/learningcircle>  
or contact Bill Lord : [wll10@sympatico.ca](mailto:wll10@sympatico.ca)

## Common Life Community

The Common Life project fosters small groups that are committed to intentionally engaging in accountable community and living out spiritual practice within everyday life. Each Common Life group determines how they will live out the following five practices:

- Engagement for Justice
- Attending to the Spirit
- Dedication to Learning
- Commitment to Community
- Retreat



The Common Life Community is a project of four UCC Education and Retreat Centers to “establish and nurture a network of Christian disciples who share a common life in order to discern and do God’s healing work.”

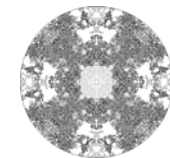
Contact **Five Oaks** 519-442-3212 for more information about the upcoming program: May 4, 2009. [www.fiveoaks.on.ca](http://www.fiveoaks.on.ca)

## Courage to Lead

“How can I maintain a strong connection between who I am and what I do?” “What practices will help me align my soul and my role?” “When pulled in so many directions that I feel dis-membered, how can I re-member myself and stay connected to the heart of my vocation?”

- Renew heart, mind and spirit
- Reconnect personal identity and professional integrity
- Create a community of mutual respect
- Participate in the Clearness Committee discernment process
- Explore connections between the leader’s inner life and the renewal of the cong. life.

Contact: *Five Oaks- registration by Mar. 23*



Participants are expected to participate in five seasonal retreats. They journey with one another in a circle of trust, guided by skilled facilitators with encouragement and compassion. In solitude and group settings they are encouraged to share their inner journeys and build trustworthy relationships while finding the courage to live authentically.

