

Appendix

Appendix Two

Three Congregational Stories

*If my people who are called by my name
humble themselves,
pray,
seek my face,
and turn from their wicked ways,
then I will hear from heaven,
and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
Now my eyes will be open
and my ears attentive
to the prayer that is made in this place.
For now I have chosen and consecrated this house
so that my name may be there forever;
my eyes and my heart will be there for all time.
(2 Chronicles 7:14-16)*

This book extends an invitation to congregations to practice soulful pastoral care so that individuals and communities can live authentically in full companionship with God. But the final shape, substance, and character of soulful pastoral care can only be discerned in relationship to the particular context of a faith community. Soulful pastoral care has common and recognizable features, yet it will be practiced in the light of the distinctive needs, vision, and available resources of local faith communities.

For this reason, the actual experiences with spiritual development of three different Protestant congregations are helpful starting points for formulating a vision of soulful pastoral care.^j In our search for soulful pastoral care, it is important to take a close look at the experiences of actual congregations who are being intentional in this regard. In many respects, these three congregations can be described as ordinary, and each of them is a work in progress. Like most congregations, they struggle to discern their mission and ministry and to identify how they can most effectively provide pastoral care that listens for the souls of individuals and faith communities. None would claim to have the best or only solution for responding to the widespread

yearning for personal and communal spiritual renewal. None would describe themselves as having set out to develop and test a model for linking pastoral care and spiritual direction, yet each distinctly journeys toward a complementary relationship and does so in ways that are unique to the situations. All would say that they are learning as they go and that their efforts are subject to review, modification, and expansion.

It is not my intention to present these particular congregations as ideal models for soulful pastoral care. Rather, I present them as differing but authentic examples of congregations that are intentionally enhancing their approach to the soul. Each approach has merit, credibility, and strength, as well as distinct challenges and opportunities. We can listen for the soul of each congregation, consider particular models and methods for practicing soulful pastoral care, and discern what may be transferable to congregations with which we are more familiar. These stories offer inspiration and invoke respect for their communal spiritualities of perseverance, daring hope, vulnerability, and faithful risk. Common to all three is their contagious enthusiasm as they aspire to be hospitable environments for the many souls who yearn to find and connect with God.

Christ Church Cathedral (Vancouver, British Columbia) is the cathedral church of the Diocese of New Westminster, The Anglican Church of Canada. Housed within and accountable to Christ Church Cathedral is The Cathedral Centre for Spiritual Direction. Christ/Crossman United Methodist Church (Falls Church, V.I.) is the result of a merger of two United Methodist congregations.

Throughout the amalgamation process, it demonstrated a strong commitment to the spiritual development of its members and to being intentional about spiritual discernment for its new mission and ministry. Harcourt Memorial United Church (Guelph, Ontario) is a congregation of the United Church of Canada. Over two decades, it focused deliberately and by various means on the development of spirituality within the congregation. It also developed a ministry called the Spiritual Companionship Program and commissioned two members from the congregation as spiritual directors.

Christ Church Cathedral: An Organizational/Professional Model

The Genesis of the Model

The motto of Christ Church Cathedral best describes their primary spiritual objective: "For the Soul of the City." The cathedral is publicly identified as "a house of prayer and a symbol of hope." A recent readers' choice publication honored it as the "best place in Vancouver to experience worship and the

presence of God." The cathedral, declared a heritage site in 1974, is the city's oldest surviving church building (since 1889) and is both a parish church and the cathedral church of the Diocese. Once surrounded by private homes and some stores, today it stands as a symbolic contradiction to the homeless, the high-rise condominiums and apartments, and the soaring towers owned or leased by corporate businesses and banks.

The cathedral is home to an active worship community that also gathers for study, prayer, healing ministries, and various expressions of service. Through all of its ministries, it aims to serve the spiritual and support needs of both parishioners and the surrounding community, including the homeless. Public worship takes place on weekdays, evenings, and on Sundays which include Holy Eucharist, Choral Eucharist, Compline (Gregorian chant), and Evensong. The cathedral is open at all times during the day for meditation and prayer and church members are present to answer queries and guide persons accordingly. Following the tradition for cathedrals, it is also a diocesan center, a civic center, and a place to celebrate and promote the arts, music, and learning. It boasts an extensive music program and its choral groups have been heard on local and national radio broadcasts.

In June 1993, a conversation began that led to the genesis of the Cathedral Centre for Spiritual Direction. The Very Reverend Michael Ingham (then dean and rector of the cathedral), Ms. Shiella Fodchuk, and Dr. Bonnelle Strickling (members of the cathedral) began to talk about a vision they held in common for providing a safe place for people to explore their spiritual lives. Following several lengthy conversations, they tested their inspiration within the congregation and the diocese. The church committee agreed to form a board of directors for a Cathedral Centre for Spiritual Direction (hereinafter CCSD) with accountability and linkages to the church committee. The dean became president of the board of directors, Shiella Fodchuk was named executive director of the CCSD, with reporting accountability to the board and the church committee, and Bonnelle Strickling became the senior spiritual director. The CCSD was established as a non-profit, charitable organization located within the cathedral building.

Although the diocese views the CCSD as a diocesan ministry and resource, in fact the center makes its ministry of spiritual direction and counseling available and accessible to members of the wider Christian community and to all people in the Vancouver area. It is the center's stated aim to provide "a safe and open context for individuals, within the Church or without, in the process of spiritual questioning or awakening, or spiritual formation, to grow

spiritually and to develop their own authentic relationship to religious tradition and to the divine." The spiritual direction relationship is normally understood as a long-term one in which there is time for the person to grow spiritually within a confidential relationship and a private setting. The center charges a fee for services on a sliding scale according to the ability to pay, and donations to the center enable the provision of some fee subsidies.

In addition to spiritual direction, the center staff and cathedral priests provide education about the spiritual life by various means ranging from credit courses at local theological schools to various retreats, seminars and lecture series. CCSD staff also provides training and supervision to interns in the field of spiritual direction and peer consultation to other spiritual directors. There are plans to add a part-time psychologist. Currently Shiella and Bonnelle are the two salaried spiritual directors who provide individual spiritual direction and counseling. Both are registered clinical counselors and members of local and international associations of spiritual directors. Between them, they hold certificates and post-graduate degrees in the areas of the arts, religious studies, philosophy, and spiritual direction, with emphases upon counseling and psychology. They continue to share and develop their work by conducting research, granting media interviews, and presenting articles or lectures to local associations of clinical counselors, therapists, academic societies, and spiritual directors. The bishop has licensed the center's executive director to practice spiritual direction and ministry within the CCSD and the cathedral. Within the cathedral, the executive director assumes regular liturgical responsibilities, including occasional preaching.

The CCSD is a highly structured, professional, accredited, and accountable ministry of spiritual direction. It operates with a clear set of ethical guidelines and subjects itself to periodic objective, professional, and external review. CCSD staff uses an intake interview form to assess suitability for spiritual direction and counseling and whether referral is necessary. Following each session, a staff member fills out a spiritual direction session report as a means of record-keeping, session reflection, and ongoing assessment. They hold weekly confidential two-hour case conferences to enable staff members to examine their ministry with spiritual directees, increase their effectiveness, and benefit from peer support and review. The CCSD maintains insurance under a combination of secular and ecclesiastical policies that cover the staff as counselors and supervisors, directors of the governing board, and general office liability and contents. A grievance board with policies and procedures has been established for clients who wish to register informal or formal complaints.

Although center staff remains in the cathedral congregation as active parishioners, they have chosen to restrict their involvement to avoid dual relationships and to protect the professional and confidential nature of the relationships formed with congregational members seeking spiritual direction. Each staff person has an ongoing relationship with a spiritual director from another locale, and these relationships are a positive means for diminishing potential difficulties that may arise from the plurality of roles they hold within the parish community. CCSD staff members have willingly accepted the loss of more personal relationships within the faith community in favor of ensuring their full availability to church members seeking spiritual direction. Aiming for high standards of respect is an enabling factor in the center's provision of spiritual direction.

Opportunities and Challenges of the Model

The cathedral uses an organizational/professional model as a means to move toward soulful pastoral care. There are several significant opportunities and challenges presented by such a model. Because the center is publicly identified with the cathedral and is housed within the cathedral building, it maintains both a real and symbolic connection to the church. Pastoral care is integrally connected to a specific congregation and to the wider church through financial sponsorship, governance, and public relations, yet it is also positioned to offer care at arm's length from the church through its non-profit, charitable, and professional structure. The distinct opportunity here is that the model provides a means for the church to deal with people whose relationship with the church has been damaged or who feel marginalized from the church. The CCSD serves as a safe entry for those who left the church in a wounded state and have been unable to find their way back into the church or to an authentic spiritual life that enables them to connect with God.

While it is certainly not the center's purpose to produce more faithful church members, the search for authentic spirituality may well lead individuals to a deeper understanding of community and cause them to reflect on the creative, even sacred, tension generated by the human desires for spiritual authenticity and inclusion. Because the CCSD provides a safe context for marginalized persons to take their sorrow, rage, conflict, and critique, it serves as a bridge that enables individuals to cross over to a restored and authentic relationship with a faith community. The process of spiritual direction may well result in persons working through their negative experiences of the church and becoming "creative irritants" as they participate in restorative acts - now able to demand justice and seek change in the life of the church.

Another opportunity provided by this particular model is in the interface generated between spirituality and psychology. Staff members can draw upon therapeutic expertise and skills even as they maintain their primary focus on spiritual direction. This may lead to some overlap in function, but generally the psychological realm remains a resource for the primary spiritual direction process. For example, the spiritual director may draw upon psychological skills in making an assessment for service. A spiritual directee may reveal ambivalent feelings about God and may view the church as highly moralistic and judgmental. The spiritual director may recognize that such a conclusion presents obstacles to prayer and to a deeper relationship with God. If God is perceived as a punitive or abusing figure because of past experiences with an abusive parent, a staff member may make an appropriate and necessary referral to a family therapist to deal first with past relational dynamics. Or it may be that the act of simply naming the correlation may be sufficiently freeing to continue spiritual direction. Someone may also choose to see a spiritual director and a therapist concurrently, experiencing the differing processes as beneficial both to spiritual and psychological growth.

A clear guideline maintained by the CCSD in determining whether a person is ready and suitable for spiritual direction is that presenting issues need to reflect existential issues about the person's relationship with God. It is true that someone may not always identify concerns as spiritual. A person may have questions about drafting a living will or selling a house in preparation for moving into a care facility. Yet it is possible that such apparently practical questions may disguise a deeper spiritual search. Though lacking a spiritual language to describe these struggles, an individual may truly want to develop their trust in God and a readiness to die in the presence of God.

The presence of the center within the cathedral leads to several opportunities and challenges for the cathedral itself. At a basic level, cathedral ministry staff or lay pastoral caregivers can refer parishioners on a regular basis to the center and thus adjust the pressing pastoral commitments accordingly. The Cathedral publicly identifies its pastoral care ministry as including "counseling and visitation, sacramental rites, healing prayers, and spiritual direction through the Centre for Spiritual Direction." Congregational members referred to the center for spiritual direction may discover dimensions of themselves that were hidden for a long time. Individuals who develop a greater authenticity in God will have a notable impact on the congregation.

On another level, the presence of the center in the cathedral emphatically highlights spirituality and thus brings it into the focus, mission, and everyday

life of the congregation. The interconnectedness of the CCSD and the cathedral has helped the cathedral to clarify that the preaching, liturgical, pastoral, and mission priorities in the church aim to take the life of prayer seriously and are designed to help people find soul in all of its personal and communal dimensions. In striking contrast to the city's messages of "retail, tourism, industry, competition, and capitalism," the cathedral has the opportunity to claim a role in helping people "get in touch with the true and living God so that all being and doing is shaped by being in touch with God at the deepest levels of being."

Not long ago, the cathedral's church committee formally agreed to disband all other church committees in favor of the establishment of small groups that focus on the spiritual life and ministry in the world, home, and places of influence. The development of grassroots projects in the cathedral and community-centered ministry and mission has been an obvious outcome of these small groups. The pastoral care emphasis that has developed on healing ministry and healing prayers is a clear example of the cathedral's efforts to embody the traditions of Christian spirituality. The healing ministry is based on the understanding that "all human beings have brokenness in their lives and are called toward healing the divisions of the world in themselves and others through meeting God within." Not only does the cathedral offer midweek healing services, but trained lay teams also offer individual prayers for healing (as an option for those who request them) during the weekly Eucharist. This healing ministry is a direct outcome of the cathedral's intentional focus in its pastoral care on listening "for the soul in the city."

The systemic linkages of the ministry staff of the cathedral and the ministry staff of the CCSD unquestionably lead to greater opportunities for ministry and a vibrant interdependence that is mutually beneficial. The presence, mission, and expertise of the center aid the cathedral's pastoral and educational program developments in spirituality. Similarly, the center benefits from the built-in support, resourcefulness, and capabilities of cathedral staff and laity. The interdependent nature of the relationships contributes to the prevention of lay leadership and ministry staff burnout and increases the overall potential to respond creatively to spiritual needs and congregational objectives. The leadership, energy, and vision exist for promoting, planning, and executing spirituality events, congregational quiet days, small group ministries, workshops, study events, and retreats. Satellite centers of the CCSD, located in other city churches, are now being considered as part of the CCSD's long-range visioning process.

An organizational/professional model also contains many challenges. An obvious one is that such a model runs the risk of identifying pastoral care as a "professional business" that severely restricts accessibility to soulful pastoral care. Access can be restricted in several ways. First, because spiritual direction and counseling is available only at an additional cost to the parishioner or spiritual seeker, many simply may not view it as an option. Second, clergy themselves may become less inclined to spend individual time with spiritually seeking persons. Either by default or intent, the danger is that pastoral care can be too easily relinquished to the professional form of spiritual direction, which not everyone will prefer. Third, as this model is presently defined, children are excluded. The model reflects a bias toward self-initiating individuals and financially resourceful adults.

Besides the accessibility factor, other challenges are evident in this model. Preferential time and energy is clearly allocated to the spiritual development of individuals rather than communities. Although the CCSD does offer some education about spirituality that brings disparate groups of people together, the orientation is less communal and more individual. Also, staff composition is an important factor that can present both opportunity and challenge for any organizational/professional model. In this case, both salaried spiritual directors are female. Consequently, the nature of the spiritual direction offered, and its appeal, may be limited by the lack of gender equity on the center staff. Obviously, the relative effectiveness of such a model will be largely dependent on its leadership and the particular competencies, personalities, and availabilities represented.

As mentioned previously, the intentional integration of spiritual and psychological approaches is an opportune way to move toward soulful pastoral care. However, the opportunity presented by such an integrative approach equally becomes a challenge. In this case, the interface of spiritual and psychological approaches can be solely attributed to the particular combination of educational backgrounds and training achieved by the center staff. Until more interdisciplinary trust and understanding is developed at a broader societal level, and multidiscipline educational programs are created and undertaken, such leadership in the church will be rare.

Evaluating the Model

Ultimately, in evaluating whether an organizational/professional model moves a congregation toward the provision of soulful pastoral care, we need to keep in mind some implementation factors. These may determine how and/or if such a model is transferable to other congregational contexts. Clearly, a

model such as this requires an intentional, long-term commitment of time (at least ten years) and resources (human and fiscal) from the congregation and its leadership. Even more critical is the development of a common set of core beliefs to undergird the formation of a spirituality center. Will spirituality be understood within a Christian framework or a multifaith context? Will spirituality be viewed as an individual or communal enterprise? Will the primary focus be on spiritual care, psychological counseling, or an integration of both? The core beliefs will determine the goals and objectives of such a center for spiritual direction. In this case, the CCSD was founded on the assumption that the spiritual nurture of individuals will transfer over to the whole life of a church. Over time this assumption may be tested, but like most matters of the spirit, the winds of influence may blow in mysterious and immeasurable ways.

It remains to be seen whether all of this energy has positively and irrevocably transformed the soul of the cathedral, and if it will persist should it happen to face an unexpected shift in ministry staff. In its early years of existence, it was not yet possible to ascertain all the ways it might have a broader impact on other churches, clergy, denominations, local theological schools, the immediate church neighborhood, and the surrounding city and region. Nevertheless, the cathedral merits commendation for responding to the gifts for spiritual development ministry that have emerged from within. The cathedral remains uniquely positioned to be an invaluable resource for people taking the spiritual path.

Christ/Crossman United Methodist Church: A Community Development Model

The Genesis of the Model

Lutheran pastor Timothy Kuenzli once gave a prescription for what he called the "fatigue trap" leading to pastoral burnout: "Clergy must take good spiritual care of themselves and help find ways for their people to take care of each other." In many ways, this prescription began the journey toward soulful pastoral care at Christ/Crossman United Methodist Church (hereinafter CCUMC) which is in suburban Falls Church, Virginia, within commuting range of Washington, D.C. While many factors contributed to congregational transformation, the minister's own spiritual life and development provided significant impetus for the spiritual renewal of the congregation.

Soon after the 1990 arrival of the Reverend Doctor James "Jim" Melson as pastor of the Crossman UMC, Jim discerned that a long-term leadership

commitment was required. Little did he know that this commitment would lead him to become the first minister of CCUMC, a congregation birthed from the amalgamation of two United Methodist congregations on June 29, 1997. To sustain himself spiritually in a longer pastorate, Jim made a personal commitment to deepen his own spiritual life by participating in some educational courses on servant-leadership, sponsored by the Church of the Savior, Washington, D.C. These courses led Jim into deeper awareness of his own spiritual life and strengthened his disciplines of prayer, meditation, and devotional reading. For him, these became increasingly and integrally connected to worship, responsiveness to the claims of the poor, and a compassionate sharing of his resources and livelihood.

That the Church of the Savior significantly influenced Jim's self-understanding and style of ministry is reflected in the way spiritual development has happened at CCUMC. The congregation demonstrates a high degree of intentionality in all their processes, decisions, and actions. Correlating inward spiritual practices with outward expressions of compassionate service is an important touchstone for the congregation and its minister when assessing the church's spiritual health. Although most members of CCUMC are middle-class, their commitment to society's marginalized persons is clearly apparent in their faith and practice.

Further reflecting the Church of the Savior influence, and mindful of their Methodist heritage, the congregation is comfortable using religious language that includes such terms as call, commitment, discipleship, stewardship, discernment, and service. The church's mission statement expresses CCUMC's intent "to help people experience a vital relationship with God by providing a community in which (1) all people are welcomed, accepted, and loved; (2) people are invited, encouraged, and challenged to grow in Christian faith; (3) people openly express the love of Jesus Christ through the sharing of faith, gifts, and resources in service to others." This stated mission's dominant assumption is that when people experience a vital relationship with God, they provide a community in which people take care of each other and reach out in loving and compassionate service to others.

At CCUMC, the integration of pastoral care and spiritual direction occurs through a community development model. Pastoral care attends to the soul by helping people experience a community where God is present and known. As with any congregation, there are pastoral circumstances, such as bereavement or hospitalization, that require individual attention from the pastor and church members. But at CCUMC, primary attention is given to

small groups, the core leadership, and communal processes in order to foster relationships with God and to listen for the presence and voice of God. Whenever "two or three are gathered," or the entire community assembles, people are invited to notice that God is there and to discern whom God is calling them to be and what commitment God is asking them to make. It is by the fruits that emerge from CCUMC's spirit that an assessment can be made as to whether souls have been nurtured. As one church member put it: "If there is a congruence between inner growth and outer expression in ministry that is other-centered, then our church is spiritually alive."

This inner and outer development of spiritual lives and the fostering of community has been addressed by several intentional actions which are most clearly highlighted and emphasized in the amalgamation process. A mile away from Crossman UMC stood Christ UMC. For Christ UMC, changing neighborhood demographics, a declining membership, and a tightening financial situation prompted discussions with their neighboring congregation, Crossman UMC. The potential for a merger grew and the negotiations increasingly required more detailed investigation and planning in order to develop a merger proposal. Each congregation was simultaneously invited into a process of spiritual discernment and prayer. A transition team, including clergy and lay representatives from each congregation, met regularly during the year prior to the merger. The responsibilities of the transition team included paying attention to the spiritual/pastoral needs that would emerge over the course of the year and responding compassionately to the issues of change, loss, and grief that would inevitably arise. The congregations were living out the spiritual rhythm of death and resurrection. Each church was experiencing the death of multiple facets of its ministry and each was being invited to listen for what was dying and to discern signs of life emerging in what was to become a new faith community.

Throughout the merger year, the two churches' clergy exchanged pulpits and provided leadership to adult education classes in the other congregation. The congregations worshipped together occasionally and were invited to hold each other in prayer and to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Members from each church were given names of individuals, including children and teens, from the other congregation. They were invited to get to know these persons and to pray for them during the merger discussions and the decision-making year. The clergy from both congregations were invited to reflect with their district supervisor on their call to ministry and to discern the ways God was beckoning forth their gifts during the merger and beyond. It was clearly communicated and experienced that the merger was not merely an exercise

in survival or an organizational process; it was an invitation to embark upon a spiritual journey.

The report submitted by the transition team and the governing bodies of the two churches testified that they were shaping a new faith community and were paying attention to the spiritual life and witness of that community. Setting their development in the context of their scriptural heritage, the writers of the report invited the community to prayer and discernment:

. . . God calls people to move out and follow God's direction into a future that appears to be uncertain and uncomfortable. Yet the journey becomes the way to blessing because God provides what we truly need-God's presence and promises. Remember just a few of those who journeyed with God in Scripture-Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Mary, Peter, Paul. When God became a person in Jesus Christ, he invited people to follow him . . . Each and every person who believes in God as revealed in Scripture is on a journey of faith with God and the people of God . . . The people of Christ and Crossman United Methodist churches are at a special place in our journey with God. Through prayer and discernment, we believe that God is calling us to follow in a direction which is new for us . . . May we begin this new stage of our journey by recommitting ourselves as individuals and as a church to being open to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. This is the way of blessing. This is the way of life.

Not long after the merger, the newly elected leadership (a mix of Crossman and Christ Church representatives) and their newly called pastor (Jim Melson) went on a retreat together to deepen their sense of being a new faith community and to begin the process of moving from an inward focus to an outward one. Led by an external facilitator and a church consultant, they set guidelines for the financial resources brought to the merger by the Christ Church. The focal question for this phase of the process was a spiritual one: "What mission is God calling us to now?" By framing the question as a spiritual matter for discernment, the newly merged congregation intentionally sought to move from a stance of institutional survival to mission development. Money, and its use, was defined as a communal spiritual matter. The leadership understood regular church giving and tithing to be a spiritual discipline and determined that money from the sale of the Christ Church facility and property was not to be used for the regular operating budget, but was to be directed toward mission and ministry development. The congregational guidelines that emerged were based on a comprehensive

decision to invest the money and apply its accrued interest for ministry development as follows: 50% allocated to new ministries connected to the church and determined in response to a communal discernment process; 30% to mission-related projects that connect the congregation to local, national, or global needs; and 20% for capital improvement projects that would strengthen the Crossman facility for ministry. These guidelines demonstrate the spiritual development that was taking place and contributing to the shaping of a new faith community. Members were cultivating their relationship with God, praying that God would make them truly alive and reveal direction for their journey, and discovering that to be truly alive meant giving so that they would have enough while also sharing their abundance. The congregation's inward spiritual journey was equally reflected in its commitment to an outward journey. One made the other possible.

This process of spiritual discernment continued into the winter months following the merger and the leadership retreat. With the assistance of the same external church consultant, they planned a congregational event to determine specific areas for ministry and mission development. As preparation for the event, they distributed a congregational survey to help identify possible areas of involvement. To assist in completing the survey, a small group of laity prepared and distributed a Lenten prayer and devotional guide to the entire congregation. People were invited to "ask God about the unfolding work in our personal and community lives," which again reinforced that the congregation was involved in far more than organizational reconstruction. In fact, it was participating in the formation of a vital relationship with God that contributed to the spiritual development of community.

The survey results revealed four potential ministries that were subsequently highlighted in a consciousness-raising mission fair held following a Sunday morning worship service: (1) ministries with mentally challenged persons; (2) local ecumenical ministry projects; (3) short-term volunteering for international denominational mission projects; and (4) inner-city ministries associated with established programs in Washington, D.C. At the congregational event, the central question posed was, "Who feels called to ministry in this area?" This question reveals that the congregation was engaged in spiritual discernment. People were given the opportunity to identify their own gifts for ministry and to determine where their interests were best matched and where they felt energy for mission could be generated. They were invited to make a commitment to one of the four areas for ministry and to follow-up in ways that would establish a spirit of cooperation among the four ministries. Fostering a congregational

spirit of commitment and prayerful support for all of the ministries was an important part of the process.

Opportunities and Challenges of the Model

What is so hopeful about this community development model is the opportunity it presents to identify boldly pastoral care as spiritual ministry that belongs to, and addresses, the whole people of God. The community development model can be viewed as broadly inclusive in that it has the opportunity to appeal to all ages and has the potential to address all sorts and circumstances. Caring for one another means caring about shaping a community that is alive in the Spirit and constantly discerning the presence, voice, movement, and invitations of God to be blessed and to join hands and hearts together to bless the world. To quote one church member: "If God resides among us, stuff will happen."

Undoubtedly, in the case of CCUMC, the capacity to envision ministry and respond in compassionate service was strengthened by the significant financial resources and increase in church membership and lay leadership that occurred as a result of amalgamation. CCUMC may be unique in this regard, but the process it has used to move toward communal spiritual development need not be. The process reflected in this model is generally transferable to other faith communities. A spiritually healthy faith community where people readily sense and acclaim that "God is here" is a community where people will repeatedly experience the invitation to find, know, and respond to the abundance of God. That abundance need not be tied to money. It can be connected to processes that foster a deeper listening for the beckoning voice of God. As souls are attended to and emphasis is consistently placed on listening for God, the soul of a faith community is on the way to becoming ever more compassionate, other-centered and hospitable.

The communal focus of this model is its strength and it holds great promise for the future, but several challenges also exist in this approach toward a soulful pastoral care. Apparently, the language of call, prayer, and spiritual discernment is well suited to the denominational context of United Methodism. It is advantageous to spiritual development in this context because the language connects with the historical and cultural experience of the people. This may not be the case in other Protestant faith communities and the question of "what language shall we borrow" will need to be seriously asked and answered. What ought not to be compromised in the process is the foundational concept of commitment or intentionality as a way to nurture a

vital spiritual existence. At a basic level, one cannot be connected to God without a commitment to be in the company of God.

Admittedly, fostering the notion of commitment in this era is somewhat countercultural. The challenge is to be deliberate and to use intentional communal processes that can help us to grow together in the spiritual life. Fostering a self-conscious awareness that belonging to the Church is belonging to a distinct people who are called to be in the world but not of the world will be a difficult piece of the process. It will challenge our best intentions to be relevant and accommodating to the world. It will require of us a willingness to devote concentrated time to those prepared to experience the spiritual journey and to develop practices that nurture it. Developing the awareness in others that their primary life vocation is to be spiritual beings is a critical dimension that needs to be included in a pastoral care aiming to be soulful.

Another challenge of this community development model lies in the fact that, within a faith community, not everyone will choose to participate fully in the processes that lead to the development of community. Some may genuinely want to belong but may lack the will or means to become participatory agents in the development of a community that practices listening for the soul. On the one hand, a core group can serve to lead the way and mirror spiritual vitality for others. On the other hand, the existence of a core group may lead to the development of factions and the perception that some expressions of spirituality are inferior to others. Still others may hang out on the fringes, either because they fear the implications of choosing spiritual vitality or because they harbor a hope that, by lingering on the edge, the vitality will rub off. Developing a spiritual community requires leaders who possess a spirituality that can be sustained in the midst of questions, flack, and fray. Active resistance or indifference inevitably will manifest within a community concerned with growing spiritually. Finding and practicing the ways and means to communicate about the practices and promises we affirm as brothers and sisters together is essential in addressing the challenge of who participates and who is absent from the spiritual work of community development. It is important that we regularly remind (covenant with) one another that prayer, study, worship, tithing, and compassionate service are commitments that enable us to glimpse hope for renewal and the fullness of life.

Evaluating the Model

As a means of moving toward soulful pastoral care, a community development model has the potential to be highly effective. Its effectiveness, however, is contingent upon the quality and constancy of its leadership. As with the previous organizational/professional model, any congregation's best intentions to offer soulful pastoral care are largely dependent upon the openness, commitment, spiritual passion, and competency of its leadership. Selecting a community development model requires either a long-term planting of leadership or growing seeds of dedicated, credible, and informed leadership from within. Such leadership requires people who are willing to share their spiritual lives, to learn continually, and be willing to change and be accountable for the ways they nourish their spiritual lives and engage in ministry. Additionally, it is important to have access to leadership that is trained in the principles and processes of community development, especially collaborative and consensus building efforts.

What distinguishes this model from the previous one is that such leadership need not necessarily be professional or salaried. A community development model can be fully initiated and implemented by church members who hold fast to the vision that commitment to community is a way to be more connected to God. A member of CCUMC described how this spiritual vision motivates spiritual development: "I will be with you and I welcome you to be with me. It is in your being with me that I come to know who I am and who God is. It is in our being together that it is possible to know that God has the power to change both of us and to be at work in us to make a difference in the world."

It is yet to be determined whether this model can resist the typical temptation faced by Protestant congregations. Simultaneously enslaved to the Protestant work ethic and captivated by the desire for spiritual wholeness, congregations can fall into an all too familiar pattern-doing compassionate service in the wider community and world becomes busy work rather than spiritual vocation. To be most effective in its practice of soulful pastoral care, a congregation using this model will want to balance the attention it gives to the church's programmatic outreach ministries and the laity's involvement in their daily work. Helping people relate their spiritual life to everyday life and work is an indispensable dimension of soulful pastoral care.