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**SPIRITUAL FORMATION PRACTICES
TO FACILITATE SPIRITUAL HEALTH IN CLERGY
ON THE EAST OHIO DISTRICT**

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by
WILLIAM BAGGETT COKER, JR.

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ABSTRACT

William Baggett Coker, Jr.

Spiritual Formation Practices to Facilitate Spiritual Health in Clergy on the East Ohio District

In Wesleyan Christian Spirituality, spiritual formation for Christlikeness is a life-long pursuit of holiness in practical living, which implies spiritual health. The failure to deeply appreciate the life-long process of spiritual formation and intentionally pursue it frequently results in diminished spiritual health and may lead to ethical or moral failure in the minister's life. The spiritual health is the responsibility of each person seeking and holding ordination; however, the Church of the Nazarene charges each District with monitoring its pastors' annual Life-Long Hours, which is its only means of accountability to their spiritual health. This dissertation advances the spiritual formation practices of spiritual retreats and spiritual direction as a model to facilitate spiritual health for clergy on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene. Components and strategies for these spiritual retreats and system of spiritual direction are discussed in the literature review and presented as a proposed model with accompanying resources.

To my father, Rev. William B. Coker, Sr., Ph.D.
who has been my lifelong spiritual and intellectual inspiration
and
to my wife, Rhonda Wood Coker,
who has stood with me through every adventure of our married life

*If you don't come apart for a while,
you will come apart after a while.*
Dallas Willard

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CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM

The spirituality of clergy is unquestionably important to God and the Body of Christ, the Church, for furtherance of the kingdom of God. It is commonly regarded that ministers cannot spiritually lead into and through the journey of Christian faith if they have not been through or are not going in the same direction in their personal spiritual life. Therefore, for the sake of God and His Church, Christian spiritual development must be the primary priority for all ministers of the Church and especially for those who serve in pastoral ministry. Our consideration of spiritual health begins with an overview of the spiritual state of clergy in the United States. Then we will overview of the current ways that the Church of the Nazarene promotes on-going clergy development and spiritual health and note recent research on the spirituality of pastors in the Church of the Nazarene. Next, we will overview potential spiritual illnesses, consider a specific concern on the East Ohio District (EOD) of the Church of the Nazarene, introduce strategies that the EOD's District Superintendent proposed with respect to promoting spiritual health within the district's ministers, and consider overall implications of the EOD's situation.

State of Christian Spirituality within Clergy of the USA

To many, the year 2020 brought significant and dramatic challenges that suggest the potential exist for the occurrence of several long-term changes in society and the Church. However, we would be naïve to be surprised by the situation of society and the Church. Anglican Bishop James Michael Mark Dyer, who died in 2014, had warned that

“every 500 years, the church has a rummage sale. Everything is prone to change and perhaps we are at one of those times!” Olson, Rosell, Marsh, and Jackson note that the ensuing tidal wave has been on the horizon for more than half a century beginning with a spiritual storm around the 1960’s and aftershocks in the 1970’s to 1980’s and then again in the 1990’s to 2000’s. That second aftershock coincided with publication of a survey by Fuller Theological Seminary in 1991 documenting epidemic stress and burnout among American clergy. Ireland attributed that survey to spawning more than nine publications within a few years addressing the perils of the pastorate and issues of pastoral care in America, then his own dissertation. The research, reflected in Ireland and Selvidge’s dissertations, and publications in pastoral self-care address a variety of issues: physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual. The primary concern that will be examined and addressed here is for the spiritual health, which Oswald states “is of the prerequisite to healing on an emotional or physical level,” of clergy is reflected in an encounter described by Gordon MacDonald in his book, *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion*:

I sat at lunch with still another friend, who match my age. We had shared similar life and faith styles. Our backgrounds had caused us to know the Bible well, to make fellowship with Christians and important element of life, and to make doing Christians things a priority. But as we talked, I could tell that my friend bordered on boredom as he told me about certain activities in his church, and I decided to penetrate the cloud cover of religious jargon.

‘Where are you at these days with God,’ I asked, using the same, casual tone of voice I would have used to ask about the Dow Jones Averages.

‘Where am I at with God?’ he repeated the question as he looked off at a 45 degree angle from me. There was at least a 30 second pause, and I decided to wait it out. ‘Do you really want to know?’ he finally asked.

‘Yeah, I’m your friend, and I’m interested,’ I responded. ‘I’m not anywhere,’ he said, ‘and I haven’t been anywhere for a long time. When it comes to my Christian life, I’m going through the motions.’ I made a

mental note to ponder his meaning. His comment suggested that there as a sector of his world called the Christian life and that there were other sectors that were some other sort of life.

‘Gordon, there was a time in my younger years when it all seemed to grab my imagination, Christ and faith, I mean. I really wanted to make my Christian commitment the absolute center of everything. But I’ve lost it, and so now I perform more out of habit than anything else.’ ‘What drives you to keep on with the habits?’ I probed.

‘I suppose only the fact that I’m getting to the point in life where it’s too late to change. My family life is all centered on Christian activities, and I don’t want to hurt my wife or the kids. And besides, life has been good to me. Why upset the routines that have gotten me this far? So I just keep chugging along.’

This conversation illustrates the neglect of one’s spiritual health. Oswald regards pastors’ “self-care as a commitment we make to God when we accept the role of resident religious authority. When we accept the call to be an agent of Grace, we simultaneously promise to forgo the easy life of self-indulgence....”

Potentially related to ministers losing their spiritual passion in pastoral ministry, there is an alarming attrition of pastors during the first five years of their ministry. A 2005 study by the Association of Theological Schools found a one percent (1%) attrition a year across the first ten years of ministry for pastors graduating from Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Denominational, Nondenominational and rabbinical schools; however, studies by the Alban Institute and Fuller Seminary in 2009 reported that one out of every two pastors dropped out of ministry and many of the church during those first five years and a 2010 study in the Church of the Nazarene revealed a slightly over a three percent (3%) a year during the first five years and slightly over a two percent (2%) a year for the next five years for an overall twenty-six percent (26%) attrition within ten years of ministry. It is difficult to know whether these studies reveal an increasing trend or are

representative of the specific affiliations surveyed, regardless the statistics should be disturbing. Ken Crow stated in a report to the Consultation on Ministerial Preparation that “if these ministers invested three to seven years in formal preparation, the early withdrawal from their ministry plans probably represents an important loss [to the Church as well as their own lives], even though knowledge gained is inherently enriching and some skills are transferable to other vocations.” Eighty-nine percent (89%) of attendees at a Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Church Leadership Development in 2006 indicated that they had considered leaving the ministry and only twenty-three percent (23%) expressed that they were happy in their relationship with Christ.

Clergy Development in the Church of the Nazarene

The Church of the Nazarene depends upon the spiritual qualification and character of its ministers. The minister is to be an example for the congregation and the public-at-large of the power and grace of God for Christian perfection in salvation, in Christian ethics, and in practical living of holiness as revealed in the Scriptures. Thus, ministers bear witness to the Word of God and communicate the soundness of the Church’s doctrine, so that others will come to know and follow in God’s grace. The *Manual*, the official document of the Church of the Nazarene’s doctrine and polity, describes a validated course of study for ordained ministry in four categories:

- Content – Knowledge of the content of the Old and New Testaments, the theology of the Christian faith, and the history and mission of the Church is essential for ministry. Knowledge of how to interpret Scripture, the doctrine of holiness and our Wesleyan distinctives, and the history and polity of the Church of the Nazarene must be included in these courses.
- Competency – Skills in oral and written communication; management and leadership; finance; and analytical thinking are also essential for ministry. In addition to general education in these areas, courses

providing skills in preaching, pastoral care and counseling, biblical exegesis, worship, effective evangelism, biblical stewardship of life resources, Christian education and Church administration must be included. Graduation from a validated course of study requires the partnering of the educational provider and a local church to direct students in ministerial practices and competency development.

- Character – Personal growth in character, ethics, spirituality, and personal and family relationship is vital for the ministry. Courses addressing the areas of Christian ethics, spiritual formation, human development, the person of the minister, and marriage and family dynamics must be included.
- Context – The minister must understand both the historical and contemporary context and interpret the worldview and social environment of the culture where the Church witnesses. Courses that address the concerns of anthropology and sociology, cross-cultural communication, missions and social studies must be included.

The *Manual* further states that ministers after meeting the ordination requirements will fulfill the expectations of God and the Church through a program of lifelong learning, a minimum of twenty (20) hours of lifelong learning each year, which is administrated by the District Ministerial Board. Ministers continue to complete their annual lifelong learning hours (LLH) in those four primary categories: content, competency, character, and context. Typical ways to earned LLH are through in-services, webinars, reading books, professional-educational courses, and denominational-sponsored PAL-CON (Pastors and Leaders Conferences) and M (Missional) conferences, and workshops and conferences sponsored by the denominations' regional schools. District LLH coordinators monitor that ministers meet the basic requirement of hours; however, the *Manual* does not provide recommendations of a ratio or weighting or balance of the categories annually or across the years of ministry. Therefore, it is conceivable that ministers might focus their learning on subjects directly relevant to present or future functional or operational ministry responsibilities and needs, i.e. content, context, and competency, rather than

address their character evaluation and development. Even within the above description of ‘character,’ one could focus on business ethics, marriage and family, and emotional relationships without addressing the issue of spirituality. Yet, the qualifications of ministers in the statements of being an example of Christian ethics, practical living of holiness, bearing witness to the Word of God, and following in God’s grace are related more to the issue of character than to knowledge of content and context and performance competency in ministerial skills. Thus, the character category may be taken for granted and spiritual development and maintenance be presumed as addressed automatically or indirectly through engagement in ministers’ spiritual role and activities, thus less likely monitored or questioned until there are questionable actions or overt spiritual failure.

The East Ohio District has provided several avenues for clergy development across the years. Annually, they have provided two retreats: a minister and spouse retreat that generally hosted a minister from another region to preach two to three times during the retreat, and a *Pastors’ Breakaway* for relaxation, fellowship, and shared devotional times. Several times each year, the district sponsored training or educational in-services for pastors on a variety of topics from theological issues, church finance and legal issues, ministry programs, to evangelism strategies. Occasional book discussion groups have also been promoted across the district. Like the denominational sponsored events, most of these efforts have focused on areas of content, competency, and context. The East Ohio District is one of only three districts in USA/Canada that provides all district pastors with a subscription to The Center for Pastoral Leadership through Nazarene Theological Seminary, which aids pastors with online seminar and video and audio resources to complete their annual lifelong learning hours requirement.

Recent Research on Clergy Spirituality in the Church of the Nazarene

Selvidge cites an unpublished survey by Keith Schwan of graduates from Nazarene Theological Seminary between 2002 and 2012 revealed that slightly over seventy percent (70.3%) of graduates struggled over time to do what is expected of them. Only thirty-eight percent (38%) of graduates in lead pastor positions stated that they belonged to a group where it was safe to discuss personal issues; that number decreased to eighteen percent (18%) for a group that included their spouse. Ireland reported that sixty-one percent (61%) of Nazarene pastors had no affiliation with a small group. The importance of spiritual companionship is seen in the correspondence between John Wesley and Miss Frances Godfrey, dated August 2, 1789:

I hope you find satisfaction, likewise, in some of your Christian companions. It is a blessed thing to have fellow-travelers to the New Jerusalem. If you cannot find any, you must make them; for none can travel that road alone. Then labour to help each other on, that you may be altogether Christians.

Bob Wells concurs with the importance of these relationships, stating that:

Holy friendships may not look different to the outside world. But what sets them apart is that they have a larger purpose beyond the friendship itself: they help point us toward God. Holy friendships are about truth telling, encouragement and accountability.... But clergy also need a place where they can vent about the challenges and frustrations of ministry. They need somebody they can talk with who knows and understands the burdens of ministry. That's why friendships between clergy are so important....

Ireland's study also looked at the number of books that Nazarene pastors read annually on spiritual formation. He raised two concerns from the findings. His first concern regarded the quantity read: forty-one percent (41%) read three or less, fifty-seven percent (57%) read four or less, and sixty-nine percent (68%) read five or less. Secondly, he noted a disconnection between the report of books read and a desire for spiritual

disciplines that promote spiritual health, citing two examples: a pastor who reported reading 10-12 books annually, yet marked “NO” to a personal spiritual retreat, member of a small group, solitude, silence, chastity, and confession and ‘occasionally’ for fasting, spending fifteen minutes a day reading the bible for personal edification, and five minutes per day in personal prayer. Similarly, another pastor, who reported reading five books annually, marked “NO” to a personal spiritual retreat, member of a small group, solitude, silence, chastity, and confession and ‘rarely’ for fasting and indicated reading the Bible for twenty minutes a day and spending fifteen minutes in personal prayer daily. Ireland interpreted these reports to suggest that their personal readings in spiritual formation were not transforming their personal practices of spiritual disciplines and a better understanding of the disciplines is needed.

Although Jeremy Selvidge’s research was confined to only twenty-five pastors on the Church of the Nazarene’s Michigan District, his findings merit consideration. Surveying the health of pastors, they reported that spirituality was the most significant contributor to their health. Specific findings revealed that nineteen percent (19%) did not have a regular time of personal prayer and twenty-two percent (22%) did not read the Bible for personal spiritual growth; thirty-three percent (33%) did not have an accountability group and fifty-six percent (56%) indicated that they did not have a mentor or spiritual director, of note was that fourteen percent (14%) strongly disagreed with the query.

Manifestations of Spiritual Illness

There are variety of ways that spirituality may impact ministers’ ethical, emotional, physical, and moral health. The following spiritual illnesses are not intended

to be descriptive of the all cases; however, they represent the diversity of the problem. These examples illustrate the importance of spiritual self-care for developing spiritual disciplines and the importance of accountability in spiritual health.

Ministers' responsibilities include the management of the business of the church and its ministries, such as educational programs, compassionate ministries, and social justice programs. This involves oversight of fiscal management, personnel management, public relations, and other business practices. Communication, record keeping, and decision-making in each of these areas necessitates integrity; however, some common practices of business can be questionable in the ethics of spirituality and the pressures to succeed can lead to short-cuts and compromising of Christian standards. Often issues are unintentional initially but covering up mistakes can lead to improper and illegal actions. The range of issues can be from mismanagement to misappropriating to embezzlement of funds, biased personnel favoritism to prejudicial discrimination, misleading communication to deception and lying, and other questionable to unethical practices in every area of management.

Ministry can be taxing to personal and family life due to long hours, disruptions to schedules, and the necessity for confidentiality in a variety of interactional situations. Mental and emotional strains can lead to loneliness, anxiety, depression, frustration, abandonment, fear, doubts, and other feelings. A growing problem in our culture is pornography because of its seeming online secrecy and deceptive perspective as a victimless act. Other addictive activities or substances may also appear to provide an escape from emotional strains. A sense of loneliness or frustration with relationships can lead to sharing thoughts and feelings with a person outside of appropriate relationships,

such as with other ministers on staff or serving on area or district projects, interns, or lay volunteers. When casualness replaces positional authority or when authority overextends its boundaries, these interactions can become abusive, or result in breaks of confidentiality and mistrust, or lead to inappropriate emotional intimacy. Crossing boundaries of emotional intimacy can lead to inappropriate physical intimacy and then sexual infidelity.

Ministry deals with many complex social, philosophical, and theological questions. The answers to these questions can be addressed from a variety of perspectives without definitive assurance of what is true, each perspective or bias has its own view of what is true. Wrestling with different interpretations of Scripture and their varied implications on life can be mentally and spiritual perplexing and challenging as one strives to understand and communicate truth and uncertainty honestly and forthrightly to others. Questions, doubts, and skepticism can arise within the struggle; yet, there is a critical difference a ‘doubting Thomas’ in pursuit of a relationship with God who is striving to understand the mysteries of the Faith and one who abandons hope and faith in Christ Jesus and discounts the tenets of orthodox Christianity. Being a minister is more than occupation or job; it is fulfilling a vocational call from God and for His kingdom through the Church. Thus, a personal relationship with God of believing in Him, obeying His Word, and following the leading of His Spirit is essential. This is demonstrated by a godly life of study, devotion, and service. Anything less than this is to misrepresent God’s call on one’s life.

A Spiritual Health Issue on the East Ohio District

Rev. David B. Lutz, District Superintendent of the East Ohio District, stated in his annual report to the District Assembly on June 17, 2019 that he had to remove elder's credentials from two individuals and district license from a third individual during the 2018-19 District Assembly Year. In addition, he had investigated three other elders with allegations of questionable moral behavior. He further reported that in a conversation with Rev. Dr. Carla Sunberg, General Superintendent and former Co-District Superintendent of the East Ohio District, she stated: "I don't know what it is about that area but it's like there is a cloud of immorality over East Ohio." The thrust of Rev. Lutz' report centered on his statement: "I don't want another credential surrendered because of immorality." Since the year 2000, twenty-two individuals surrendered their credentials for immorality; in the thirty years prior to 2000, ten more had surrendered their credentials. Thus, thirty-two persons surrendered their credentials during the past forty-nine years on the East Ohio District.

Proposed Changes for the East Ohio District

Rev. Lutz's report to the District Assembly conclude that many of the long-standing systems of the EOD need to be revamped. The first area that he mentioned was a total reformation of the district's credentialing process, which included a streamlining of the studies and credentials boards into a Board of Ministry and assigning of a mentor or coach from the Board of Ministry to each candidate for ordination during their years of education and pastoral experience requirements. Unfortunately, the mentor or coach relationship is only planned for the years of candidates' studies and credentialing process and will not carry through the five to ten years after ordination, which the period of higher attrition rates. Further consideration of this approach to continuing the development of

ministers' spiritual health would be warranted.

Another area of revamping included a redesign of the district's website for better access to pastors' administrative tools and resources, such as monthly statistical reporting. How this will address most issues of spiritual health was not described; however, it could reduce frustrations over church administration and district reporting and thus impact emotional-spiritual health. Also, changes in compliance could signal potential need for exploration by the district office.

He also stated that the district's current zone system is not helpful to churches and pastors. Although specific issues were not described, the lack of collaboration between pastors and churches in the zones has been increasing for several years. At the time of the annual report, there were no recommendations on how it would be revamped. The importance of pastors' networking and accountability is important to their spiritual health, this future developments on this issue will be important.

Plans to change the annual Ministers and Spouses' retreat to a different location and time of the year was shared. He encouraged churches to make it possible for their pastor to attend as an investment on the pastors' emotional, spiritual, and relational health. At the Fall of 2019 retreat, Rev. Lutz announced plans for a marriage conference for all ministers and spouses across the regional educational field for the Fall of 2020. This conference was being designed to specifically address the primary issue revealed at the beginning of the annual report, surrendering of credentials due to moral failure in the marriages. As with all areas of spiritual health, "it is not enough to intervene when crisis occurs... conversations need to occur regarding what should be done to create an environment that recognizes what is happening" before the crisis. The plan for the next

retreat was to bring a prominent speaker to address marriage relationships; however, that conference had to be canceled due to travel and gathering restrictions with the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, no alternative plan has been announced.

In Rev. Lutz's report, it was announced that all auxiliaries would meet on the Saturday prior to the next Assembly for a combined convention with training sessions. The specific types of training sessions were not detailed at that time; unfortunately, the issues created by the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed follow through with that plan for the 2020 District Assembly.

The final area for change mentioned by Rev. Lutz was the district pastors' periodic meetings and learning opportunities called TEAM. He expressed that because those meetings no longer have a clearly defined purpose, it is difficult to determine if the current meetings are accomplishing their purpose. Although the need to define and reshape those events was articulated, a strategic alternative plan was not proposed in the report. The future direction and approach for on-going clergy development remains open; it is hoped that there will be consideration to creating at least a balance of the four general areas for lifelong learning.

Implications of a Spiritual Health Problem

The various manifestations of spiritual ill health presented earlier illustrate that regard by some clergy for development or maintenance of spiritual well-being, i.e. Christian character, one four categories listed by the Church of the Nazarene for lifelong learning, is a significant issue. Poor spiritual health is more than a personal issue because the minister's purpose is to be an example to the Church and the public of grace of God

for salvation and sanctification. The Apostle Paul wrote that we are to “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” This verse indicates that the work of God’s grace is a collaborative process, involving every person in the body of Christ in corporation with each other and with God. All believers are called to minister to all people; however, Christ specifically calls ministers to a lifetime of public ministry through the Church to develop the Christian graces in believers for practical living.

The 2017 General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene recognized the need to change the way that the denomination addressed ministers whose credentials are suspended or surrendered. They approved and adopted significant revisions to promote a redemptive process for clergy restoration. However, the impact of the situations leading to suspension or surrender of credentials on the clergy member’s life, their families’ lives, the victims’ lives, the local congregations, the denomination, and the public in general is significant, as cited by Rev. Lutz in his report to the East Ohio 2019 District Assembly. The overall impact of spiritual health and spiritual illness on the effectiveness of ministry across the East Ohio District is undoubtedly significant. Unfortunately, these issues are not unique to this district, as indicated by the denomination’s creation of a better clergy restoration process, or the Church of the Nazarene. A clergy restorative process is important, but it focuses on addressing the problem after the fact. The practice of solely relying on clergy to self-care for the development and maintenance of their spiritual formation has been inadequate to preserve the integrity of clergy and the Church. The Church of the Nazarene and its entities have a personal stake in the spiritual health of the clergy who are called by God and ordained by this arm of the Church. Therefore, it is

incumbent upon this denomination to partner with its clergy intentionally and actively in the development, revising, expansion, and monitoring of strategies that will foster lifelong spiritual formation and health. Proposing one potential solution, of several that are necessary, to facilitate spiritual health in the clergy on the East Ohio District, which could become a model for other districts, is the focus of this dissertation. The next chapter will review literature related to critical components for the formation of a proposal.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The term spirituality originates from the Latin *spiritualitas* of the Greek adjective *pneumatikos* (πνευματικός) meaning spiritual. The general concept of spirituality refers to human interaction with the transcendent or divine. Bernard McGinn noted an explosion of thirty-five different definitions of spirituality from spirituality of sports, new age spirituality, Catholic spirituality, Ignatian spirituality, Lutheran spirituality, Wesleyan spirituality, to every religious movement. George Lane, SJ, states that “Christian Spirituality,” which is our general concern, “is always rooted in the experience of Jesus.” John R. Tyson provides a more elaborate definition:

Christian Spirituality describes the relationship, union, and conformity with God that a Christian experiences through his or her reception of the grace of God, and a corresponding willingness to turn from sin and (to use a Pauline phrase) “to walk according to the Spirit.”

He goes on to say that although there is deep and foundational unanimity regarding the goal of Christian Spirituality, the diversity of traditions within Christianity creates a virtual smorgasbord of spiritual approaches, such that, borrowing the garment industry expression, “one size” does not “fit all.” These varied spiritual approaches also translate into normative and formative processes associated with improving or facilitating the relationship between the believer and the divine. Spiritual formation has become the general term related to all the ways, means, and disciplines utilized to deepen faith and promote spiritual health and growth, including spiritual instruction and the intimate and in-depth relational processes of spiritual guidance or direction.

The literature review will begin with an overview of several approaches to

Christian Spirituality and some specific aspects of spiritual formation related to those approaches. Then literature related to some key practices and avenues for spiritual formation will be discussed.

A Brief Historical Overview of Select Christian Spiritualities & Their Approaches to Spiritual Formation

This section will be in four divisions. First, it will highlight the root of spiritual formation in Judaism and the Mediterranean cultures, then it will review primary influencers from the Early Church and Roman Catholic Church. The third section will examine John Wesley's development of a Wesleyan Christian Spirituality and the concluding section will review more contemporary approaches to spiritual formation that are compatible with Wesleyan Spirituality.

Judaism and Mediterranean Cultures

In history of Judaism, the family was the primary providers of religious education and spiritual formation through rituals and stories of the past. God instructed the people of God to pass on the teaching to their children:

⁴Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷Recited them to your children, and shall talk of them when you are at home, and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ⁹and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.... ²⁰When your children ask you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the decrees and the statues and the ordinances that the Lord our God has command you?" ²¹then you shall say to your children, "We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²³The Lord displayed before our eyes great and awesome signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household. He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he had promised on oath to our ancestors. ²⁴Then the Lord

commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case. ²⁵If we diligently observe this entire commandment before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us, we will be in the right.

Priestly ceremonies in formal worship and national festivals in the Tabernacle, the Temple, and later the local synagogues collaborated with families in communicating the religious stories of the nation and the meanings of their rituals.

Then Greek and Roman cultures brought an emphasis on formative education to Second Temple era with three levels of learning: tutoring, elementary (grammar, music theory, and physical education), and advanced lessons (expansion of reasoning, philosophy, geometry, arithmetic, science, and public speaking). The Greek system viewed that the ultimate goal of teaching was to impart on youth the pursuit of virtues: truth, fidelity, beauty, and goodness.

Early Church and Roman Catholic Influencers on Christian Spirituality

The early Church continued Judaism's focus on Scripture, prayer, and worship as instruments of teaching the faith through its celebrations of the Eucharist and the Christian festivals (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost). In addition to these celebrations and festivals, the Early Church leaders played significant roles in the development of classical Christian spirituality and spiritual formation through their instructions on Christian life. Origen (A.D. 185-254) proposed three schemas for Christian life: the moral level, which relates to behavior, the natural level, which related to intellect, and the contemplative level, which refers to spiritual union with God. Around A.D. 500, Dionysius the Areopagite, also referred to as Pseudo-Dionysius, expanded upon Origen's contemplative level in *The Celestial Hierarchy* with three stages of

spiritual growth: purgative, illuminative, and unitive.’ Christensen notes that those stages are rooted in biblical reflection on the Exodus event of God delivering the Hebrew people from bondage in Egypt to freedom with God. Mulholland cites the expansion of the three stages to four, beginning with awakening. Nouwen listed five stages that within the Catholic mystical tradition that he followed in his early years as a priest and supervisor to seminarians: awakening of desire, purgation of the passions, illumination of God, dark night of the soul, and unification with the Divine. As discussed earlier, Nouwen later abandoned the stage models and developed a theory of spiritual formation involving dynamic movements. Mulholland’s approach to the classical stage model of spiritual formation has a dynamic aspect, also. He states that stages occur incrementally with our spiritual journey in addition to shaping the overall journey. Thus, in addition to describing the general path, the stages may relate to an aspect of the path in relation to a specific area of growth in Christlikeness.

Being formed in Christlikeness is the essence of Christian spirituality. However, it not merely an external exhibition, but that “Christ is formed in you.” The reality that Christ is formed in us, that we “may become participants of the divine nature,” also known as theosis, divination, and sanctification has been supported from early church history. Irenæus (A.D. 130-202) wrote that, “following the only true and stedfast Teacher, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself.” Athanasius (A.D. 296-373) expressed this understanding by writing that who wish to see God, to know and apprehend Him:

rather let him marvel that by so ordinary a means things divine have been manifested to us, and that by death immortality has reached to all, and that

by the Word becoming man, the universal Providence has been known, and its Giver and Artificer the very Word of God. For he was made man that we might be made God; and he endured the insolence of men that we might inherit immortality.

Clement of Alexander (A.D. 153-217) wrote on is the process of salvation that:

Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal. "I," says He, "Have said that ye are gods, and all sons of the Highest" (Ps. 82:6). This word is variously called grace, by which the penalties accruing to transgressions are remitted; and illumination, by which that holy light of salvation is beheld, that is, by which we see God clearly. Now we call that perfect which wants nothing. For what is yet wanting to him who knows God?

Western Christian traditions have not understood theologically this process of divination or theosis as ontological perfection; however, progressive perfection of Christlike character (e.g. holiness, love, wisdom) is of quality though not in essence.

Benedict of Nursia established the Benedictine Order, one of the largest religious communities today. Benedictines live a well-ordered, disciplined life of obedience to God and to the Rule of the community. A fundamental spiritual principle of the Rule is expressed in the motto *Ora et Labora*, prayer and work, and lived out through a rhythm of hours for prayer eight times daily, known as "the canonical hours of prayer" or Daily Office, which was described earlier. The Rule states that:

We will fulfill this sacred number of seven if we satisfy our obligations of service at lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline, for it was of these hours during the day that it was said: "Seven times a day have I praised you" (Ps. 119:164). Concerning Vigils, the same prophet says: "At midnight I arose to give you praise" (Ps. 119:62). Therefore, we should "praise our Creator for just judgments" at these times

It is important to realize that Benedict's era was prior to electric lights, so night was sunset to sunrise, roughly 6:00pm to 6:00am in Europe, and most went to bed at

6:00pm. Eight hours of sleep allowed them to rise at 2:00am for prayer and study prior to the workday. Many of Benedict's monks were community people with family to support, like most people today, so during the day they could recite brief, simple, scriptural prayers at the regular intervals, which Benedict scheduled to align with the times that the Roman imperial guard changed, even while in the workplace if they were not with the community in the monastery for prayer.

Ignatius of Loyola founded another significant religious community in 1540. He called them the Company (or Society) of Jesus, now commonly known as Jesuits. These Jesuits were to go wherever needs were the greatest and they could help souls through spiritual exercises. This led them to be described as “contemplatives in action.” Ignatian spirituality is characterized by four ways: finding God in all things, being contemplatives in action, incarnational spirituality, and discovering freedom and detachment. These four ways and learned, practiced, and lived through engagement with Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises. The Exercises are a process of praying through Scripture in meditation and contemplation. Meditation is using one’s intellect to wrestle with basic principles of life through reading Scripture and praying over the words, images, and ideas to discern who God is and allowing one’s heart to be moved to be who one is to be before God in the world. Contemplation is focused on feelings rather than thoughts, allowing one’s imagination to explore the setting from the Gospels or another situation for God, particularly Jesus, to reveal what God is doing in the world.

In addition to the Ignatian approach to Scripture, another significant practice in Ignatian spirituality is the *Examen*. Ignatius popularized this prayer, which he called the “examination of conscience,” as a daily or twice daily (noon and before retiring to sleep)

to enable believers to find God within daily life. There are various versions of the examen, which has six steps of asking for God's grace, inviting God to be present, and keeping aware of God's presence :

- Pray for God's help,
- Give thanks to God for the gifts received,
- Review the previous hours or day and pray over the thoughts and feelings that surface,
- Rejoice in God's closeness and seek forgiveness,
- Look ahead to the coming hours or next day for how God will be in the future and God's help will be needed, and
- Close in prayer.

A detailed guide or model for practicing the examen is included in the Appendixes.

Across the history of the Church, three major sects or divisions formed within Christianity: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant. Each branch shares some common fundamental beliefs, which are expressed through the ecumenical creeds: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and to a lesser extent, the Athanasian Creed. Each of these bodies have differences of interpretation and practices of the Faith that distinguish them. Within Protestantism, more several theological or doctrinal branches developed or divided the Church, such as Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Wesleyanism. Each theological branch divides further into a multitude of denominations or churches within that theological/doctrinal approach. Also, there are nondenominational churches that do not ascribe to one theological stream or are not part of an ecclesial organization of churches. It is beyond the scope of here to discuss all views of Christian spirituality. Since the Church of the Nazarene is part of the Wesleyan branch of Protestantism, the focus here on will be Wesleyan spirituality. The review will first discuss John Wesley as the originator of Wesleyan spirituality and then discuss other approaches in spiritual

formation that are affiliated with or are compatible with Wesleyan spirituality.

Christian Spirituality and John Wesley

Evolving from the classical Christian spirituality of the Early Church teachings and practices, traditional view of Wesleyan spirituality focused on personal and social transformation that is broad and gracious, spontaneous and progressive, and intentional and methodical in its practical application and praxis. John Wesley's use of the Bible as the foundational source of theology, emphasis on a life of prayer developed a spirituality that is deeply scriptural, and promotion of a sacramental liturgical worship revealed his understanding that Christ's church is to be "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic." These components of Scripture, prayer, and the Sacraments shaped the means of grace as central to Wesleyan spirituality and the responsibility of each believer to cooperate fully, through the gracious work of Christ and the Holy Spirit, by adopting the means of grace as spiritual practices and living a lifestyle of holiness. Mulholland cites Wesley as repeated affirming that there is no personal holiness without social holiness; thus, Mulholland contents that "the converse is also true: there can be no social holiness without personal holiness... and the ultimate test of our spirituality lies in the nature of our life in the world with others." Wesley described a series of grace stages, an *ordo salutis*, to reflect the progressive growth of spirituality, holiness, a process of four stages in sanctification. The process begins with prevenient grace, which is present at birth and continues until personal acceptance of the God's saving grace, initial sanctification. In *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, Wesley preached that "at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins." In Wesleyan theology, the progressive working of salvation in a person's life leads to submission to a second work of grace, entire

sanctification. Sanctifying grace continues the forming and transforming of the person's life, also called theosis or deification, until final sanctification, i.e. glorification, following physical death.

John Wesley proclaimed in his sermon *The Means of Grace* that there are “outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.” Wesley divided the means of grace into three groups: instituted, prudential, and general. Christ Jesus directly gave the instituted means through His teaching: reading, meditating on, contemplating on, and studying Scriptures; prayer; participating in Holy Communion; fasting; and spiritual conversation (Wesley frequently referred to Christian conferencing). The prudential means include obedience to God, small groups, special prayer meetings, visiting the sick, reading devotional classic, and doing all the good we can. The general means include watching for Christ's return, denying ourselves or sacrificing for Christ's sake, taking up our cross daily, and practicing the presence of Christ in daily life. However, Wesley did not limit God's grace to these practices; he believe that God could use any activity as a means of grace.

John Wesley concluded that spiritual authenticity or holiness necessitated that one looking beyond the standard services and programs of the existing church. Therefore, he established a meeting system of Societies, Classes, and Bands for equipping believers through an applied spirituality of prayer, encouragement, instruction, mutual confession, and accountability. These Societies, Classes, and Bands provided differing levels of spiritual formation through interpersonal spiritual contexts.

“All historians of Methodism alike acknowledge the class-meeting to have been among the most potent factors contributing to the success of

Methodist bodies in all countries down to the present time. In a very important degree they are the life of Methodist churches everywhere, and their tone and character are the measure of the church's spirituality and faithfulness."

Hogue later attributed the decline of class-meetings to a decline of churches spiritual life, power, and fruitfulness; and likewise whenever churches are spiritual feeble, interest in these meetings will be low. Yet, the very reason for the effectiveness of Wesley movement was its focus on providing spiritual direction to all who believers; the movement's spirit and approaches to spiritual direction established and promoted by John Wesley revealed that "the whole reason for the church's being... centered on spiritual direction." Without ongoing Christian conferencing Wesley's understanding of the importance of spiritual direction is evident in his letter to Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell on May 28, 175:

I have lately had peculiar reason to be thankful. In every place people flock about me for direction in secular as well as spiritual affairs; and I dare not throw even this burden off my shoulders, though I have employment enough without it. But it is a burden and no burden; it is not incumbrance, no weight upon my mind. If we see God in all things, and do all for him, then all things are easy.

Christian conference was "Wesley's way of declaring spiritual direction to be a mandatory means of grace." Conference occurred on two levels, as a vehicle for corporate spiritual direction (i.e. the class and band meetings) and through personal engagement (Wesley's predominant method was via letter writing). A count of the letters written by John Wesley during his ministry indicated that he wrote over eight hundred and eighty personal letters to fellow ministers, clergy and lay preachers, and spiritual friends. Some of the letters were in response to spiritual questions on doctrine and lifestyle practices and others Wesley initiated to address spiritual issues that he observed or were reported to

him. The original focus of corporate conferencing was on the spiritual condition of preachers, ordained and lay, and members of the societies rather than organizational business. Even though Wesleyan denominations continue to hold annual jurisdictional conferences or assemblies, the gatherings have lost much of the spiritual heritage for a collage of proclamation, exhortation, love feasts, and Eucharist by a reduction of time for the gatherings and emphasis on conducting business matters. Personal Christian conferencing or conversation was not conversation about the weather or other casual topics; it was Wesley's method of dialoging, educating, and confronting persons about their spirituality. Wesley believed that as Christians discuss Christian spiritual issues, God pours His grace upon those in conference, or conversation. In the early Wesleyan movement Christian conferencing was an intentional, purposeful, and meticulous practice of sharing faith and life together through the leading of the Holy Spirit for encouragement, accountability, and guidance in holy love.

In *The Character of a Methodist*, Wesley presented twelve distinguishing characteristics or marks of the people called Methodist, by which he meant a true Christians. Near the conclusion of his document, Wesley stated that “these are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist.” Randy Maddox stipulates that Wesley's *The Character of a Methodist* articulates subjective traits of Methodist faith rather than doctrinal content of the faith.

The Character of a Methodist

- Love the Lord God with one's all
- Be happy in God
- In everything give thanks
- Pray without ceasing
- Love all others
- Be pure in heart

- One's only desire is to do God's will
- Keep God's commandments
- Be obedient
- Do all to the glory of God
- Be unhindered by the world
- Do good toward all

Wesley did not present these twelve marks to create a doctrinal distinction. His appeal to these character marks was as universal evidences of true Christians, those who are “not in name only but in heart and life.” H. Ray Dunning provides a thorough analysis of John Wesley's use of happiness, the second character mark, as the central manifestation of Wesley's theology of holiness. Dunning details the extensive connection between happiness in God and holiness through citations from over forty of Wesley's sermons. In *The Way to the Kingdom*, Wesley stated that “true religion, or a heart right toward God and man, implies happiness as well as holiness... This holiness and happiness, joined in one, are sometimes styled, in the inspired writing, ‘the kingdom of God,’ (as by our Lord in the text) and sometimes, ‘the kingdom of heaven.’” Happiness, according to Wesley's own experience, comes only through knowing God; then, one can “expect that the power of the Highest shall suddenly overshadow you, that all sin may be destroyed, and nothing may remain in your heart, but holiness unto the Lord.” In *The Unity of the Divine Being*, Wesley stated that holiness is an attribute of God, who is known by those who love Him with all their heart and their neighbor as themselves, which is essential to Christian religion. In addition, Wesley adds other character marks of a Methodist in that “real Christians ‘rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.’ And their happiness still increases as they ‘grow up into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’” Wesley's writing and preaching

emphasis on these marks suggests that they are timeless; if so, then they are still relevant to Christians in the 21st Century, especially those within the Wesleyan ranks.

In addition to the twelve characteristics of a true Christian, Wesley wrote extensively on prayer, the fourth theme in *The Character of a Methodist*. In 1733, he compiled a cycle of daily, morning and evening, prayers and questions to nurture six virtues: love for God, love for neighbor, humility, mortification (repeated on Wednesday and Friday), resignation and meekness, thankfulness. David deSilva notes that Wesley regarded these six virtues as indispensable to the spiritual development of a Christian. The goal of deSilva's contemporary and expanded version is to make Wesley's model for the spiritual exercise of daily prayer for nurturing the virtues accessible by including a daily introduction to each virtue and self-examination questions, scripture readings, and reflection suggestions for each morning and evening.

Compatible Approaches to Wesleyan Christian Spirituality

Having discussed basic foundations of classical Christian spirituality and spiritual formation through spiritual direction and the development of Wesleyan spirituality and its focus on spiritual formation, we turn to consider elements of established approaches to Christian spiritual formation that align with Wesleyan spirituality. Although each of these are comprehensive approaches or theories to spiritual formation, the intent here is to highlight specific aspects of their approach that compliment a proposed format for the development of spiritual health within a Wesleyan context. That does not imply that other aspects of those approaches are contradictory to Wesleyan spirituality, just not selected for emphasis within the proposed format.

Mulholland's approach to spiritual formation emphasized not only the broad

classical disciplines of prayer, lectio Divina, and liturgy. He included a focus on what he called the inner dynamics, a deep inner posture of being, of how we engage in the disciplines through silence, solitude, and prayer. Ruth Haley Barton, a former student of Mulholland and founder of the Transforming Center, notes that her journey into silence and solitude has been the single most meaningful as well as a continuing challenge in her spiritual life. Nouwen also addressed the importance of solitude, silence, and prayer in a seminar on the spirituality of the desert at Yale Divinity School and later published under the title, *The Way of the Heart*. Nouwen cites a story of Abba Arsenius.

Arsenius was a well-educated Roman of senatorial rank who lived at the court of Emperor Theodosius as tutor to the princes Arcadius and Honorius. While still living in the palace, Abba Arsenius prayed to God in these words, "Lord, lead me in the way of salvation." And a voice came saying to him, "Arsenius, flee from the world and you will be saved." Having sailed secretly from Rome to Alexandria and having withdrawn to the solitary life (in the desert) Arsenius prayed again: "Lord, lead me in the way of salvation" and again he heard a voice saying, "Arsenius, flee, be silent, pray always, for these are the sources of sinlessness." The words *flee, be silent, and pray* summarize the spirituality of the desert.

Abba Arsenius' story was the foundation from which Nouwen's seminar addressed solitude as what it means for Christian ministers to spiritually flee from the world, silence as an essential element of a ministry in Christian spirituality, and prayer as a vocational challenge for all in Christian spiritual ministry.

In addition to his inclusion of the spiritual disciplines in the process of spiritual formation, Mulholland's incorporated a focus on Carl Jung's model of human personality, specifically the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which revealed that his holistic spirituality supported the social sciences along with the Bible and theology. He stated that "psychology is not a substitute for spirituality, but spirituality is not a substitute for

psychology.” Learning to recognize one’s given or developed personality and how to incorporate spiritual practices that align with it is essential to effectively nurturing one’s own spiritual life. In addition, we foster working out our salvation with the community of faith by learning how to relate to others effectively with similar and different personalities. This holistic approach reveals the uniqueness of individuals as members of the body of Christ with unique gifts and preferences, which is essential for the spiritual health and wholeness of the community and the individual.

Dallas Willard notes that revival of interest in the classical practices of the spiritual life including fasting, meditation, simple living, and submission to a spiritual director. Like Muholland, Willard’s model for spiritual formation in Christ is essentially holistic that follows closely the biblical writings and emphatically engages on the six inseparable dimensions of every human being and their role in life in life as a whole: thought, feeling, choice, body, social context, and soul. Key to Willard approach to spiritual change in Christlikeness is a general pattern of the mind through the constant grace of God. Willard’s acronym for this pattern of mind is VIM, which he notes is a derivative of the Latin term ‘vis,’ meaning direction, strength, vigor, energy, or virtue and represents vision, intention, and means. The vision for Christian spiritual formation is Christlikeness, partaking of the His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4) and participating fully in what God is doing in and around our life (Colossians 3:17) for the kingdom of God. The intention or decision to rely on Jesus Christ and live in the kingdom of God requires trusting in Him and obeying Him as our Savior and Lord, which is formed and sustained by a forceful vision of who Jesus is. Willard states that a vision and genuine intention for Christlikeness naturally leads to seeking and applying the means for spiritual

transformation, which begins by determining our thoughts, feelings, habits, social relations, and bodily tendencies that deter us and retraining our lives through study, meditation, and conscious practice in the way of Jesus and by earnestly praying that God will work directly in our inner being to enable us to obey Jesus.

Key Aspects of Christian Spiritual Formation

The general concepts of Christian spirituality will be grouped into three categories. The first category relates to the overarching concepts that are the essence of Christian spirituality: discipleship, Christian spiritual formation, character formation, virtues, and morality. The second category relates to relationships that support the process of spiritual development. The final category will review three basic, common practices that facilitate spiritual development.

The Essence of Christian Spirituality

It is commonly understood that growth and maturity in a Christian's life is not automatic and that it requires intentional decisions and a process of referred to as discipleship and Christian spiritual formation. Christian spirituality is about living all of life before God, through a relationship with Jesus Christ in the transforming and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. This concept is reflected within the Church of the Nazarene's Statement of Mission: "The mission of the Church of the Nazarene is to make Christlike disciples in the nations." At the 2013 General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene, the Board of General Superintendents expanded on the Statement of Mission with seven characteristics or descriptors that should be evident in all who are part of the denomination, with the fourth characteristic listed as 'Intentional Discipleship.' The

document *Nazarene Essentials* describes intentional discipleship as:

... helping people develop obedient intimate relationships with Jesus. In these relationships, Christ's Spirit transforms their character into Christlikeness – changing new believers' values into kingdom values, and involving them in His mission of investing in others in their homes, churches, and world.

Discipleship “is a means, rather than an end,”... it is “living in the presence of God in the person of Jesus and developing an in-depth relationship with Him.” Thus, it is not a static event, a church program, or an achieved condition; it is a process of Jesus transferring His life into the life of the disciple. Blevins and Maddix echo this perspective of a disciple as a follower of Jesus Christ as a learner and servant. However, they further state that the lack of a comprehensive approach to discipleship within Wesleyanism today reflects an influence of the reformed evangelicalism on the American church and that issue has soteriological risks. The collapse of evangelicalism into Fundamentalism and the tension for interdenominational cooperation threatens our Wesleyan identity as Calvinistic presuppositions, which now dominate American evangelical perspectives, conflict with Wesleyan doctrines of atonement, election, and holiness that underlie Wesleyan view of the process of salvation through growth in grace via the means of grace, discipleship, and spiritual formation. The later review of Wesleyan spirituality should make this point clearer.

In the mid-Twentieth Century, the *spiritual formation* movement emerged post-Vatican II as an approach for educating and training priests in the new ideals; the Association of Theological Schools then followed by adopting that perspective in the 1970's. Mark A. Maddix describes four aspects to understanding a definition of spiritual formation. First, it begins with a focus on the a process of being “formed” and

“transformed.” In Christian spiritual formation, this is understood as the work of God’s grace into Christlikeness. The second aspect is that it is an intentional personal and communal participation for growth in relationship with God. Thirdly, it is a lifelong process that occurs within the context of living in a local community of faith, i.e. a local church. Fourth and finally, spiritual formation results through nurturing of oneself in relationship with others through using our personality, talents, and strengths as God’s gifts in our life to invest in the kingdom of God.

Dallas Willard defines Christian spiritual formation as:

“the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself... it is focused entirely on Jesus. Its goal is an obedience or conformity to Christ that arises out of an inner transformation accomplished through purposive interaction with the grace of God in Christ.”

Willard states that this process of spiritual formation in Christ leads to that ideal end; its outcome is love of God with one’s entire human life and of others as oneself. It is an intentional transformational process of one’s whole being through growth in grace that works “from inside out, into harmony with the will of God and the kingdom of God.”

M. Robert Mulholland, Jr. defines Christian spiritual formation with a four-fold definition: (1) a process (2) of being formed (3) in the image of Christ (4) for the sake of others. He notes that spiritual formation is not optional for a Christian; we are either growing “toward wholeness in Christ or toward an increasingly dehumanized and destructive mode of being.” Mulholland’s road map to wholeness in Christ is a holistic spiritual process incorporating Carl Jung’s model of human personality; classical disciplines of prayer, *lectio Divina*, liturgy; and engagement with others in corporate and social spirituality.

Elizabeth O'Connor's words express Henri Nouwen's two-fold concept of spiritual formation: *a journey inward* to find Christ dwelling within us and *a journey outward* to find Christ dwelling among us and in the world. The uniqueness of Nouwen's model of spiritual formation is that it is not based on stage theory but polarities of twenty-six dynamic movements within each journey. Although progress occurs, it is not in measurable, upward results; and the movements are not clearly distinguishable or sequential. "Ultimately, for Nouwen, the spiritual journey is not to be found in the pursuit of perfection but in the practice of contemplative prayer leading to community and mission" which requires daily reflection and intentionality.

Thus, discipleship and spiritual formation is more than an educational process. Nouwen has indicated that through reflection and intentionality it leads to greater awareness, freedom, and spiritual connection to God and others. This prompts the question of how that is revealed or evidenced. Willard states that "spiritual formation, without regard to any specific religions context or tradition, is the process by which the human spirit or will is given a definite 'form' or character." So, we must consider what *character* is and what the nature of that character should be. Philip Dow defines person's character as "the habits that have been repeated so often that they have become inseparable from who we are." These traits may relate to psycho-emotional, moral, ethical, or intellectual patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting. Our thoughts are shaped primarily by ideas and images that grow up within us from childhood through teachings, expectations, behaviors observed in our family and community. These ideas and images create the foundation for the way one feels and behaves, impacting every aspect of life from our spiritual lives to our relationships with others and from our education to our

work to our recreation.

For Christians, the specific intent of spiritual formation, i.e. character formation, is godliness. In the Old Testament, the Decalogue or Ten Commandments provided the moral and spiritual photography of God as a gift from God to His people to accomplish character formation. Moral and spiritual may be understood as complementary concepts. Morals and morality pertain to the distinction of good and bad; right and wrong; or good and evil in relation to actions, volitions, and responsibilities. Modern and contemporary society have turned to fluid philosophical sources for moral guidance and pragmatic interpretation, or even to an individual's personal views. However, the traditional Judeo-Christian perspective for morality is derived from knowing the nature and character of God, with the Decalogue providing a primary source for understanding who God is and how we are live as reflections in God's image. God's intent for the Decalogue as character formation continued to be reflected throughout ancient sacred wisdom literature in a father's instruction to his children:

Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live.
Get wisdom; get insight: do not forget, nor turn away from the words of
my mouth.

And the in the psalmist description of the path of life in God's word:

Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the
Lord.... You have commanded Your precepts to be kept diligently.

And in the prophet's oracle:

Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statues and ordinances
that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

However, Martin Buber, a Jewish philosopher, notes that the God, who has sufficient power to create all that exists, who issues the commands of the Decalogue's executive

power lies in the hearer. God has renounced his power such that individuals may choose to open or close their ears and reject the I of I AM. Human society, although it recognizes the benefits of the Ten Commands, is less interested in those commandments with specific reference to relationship to God. Therefore, it transfers only those commands and prohibitions that it regards as important from the sphere of 'religion' to the sphere of 'morals' with a language of 'musts.' However, for the believer, Buber indicates that the Decalogue does not tell what one "must" not do, but what one "will" not do. Thus, adherence to the moral and spiritual character of God is a response to God's grace and love out of one's love for God.

Addressing the Christian character in response to the moral standard of God's Law, John Wesley, in his sermon "True Christianity Defended," stated:

What will it avail to tell the Judge of all, "Lord, I was not as other men were; not unjust, not an adulterer, not a liar, not an immoral man?" Yea, what will it avail, if we have done all good, as well as done no harm, – if we have given all our goods to feed the poor, – and have not charity?

Wesley preached that to seek salvation by words, mere obedience to the Law, revealed the absence of the love of God cuts one off from receiving faith freely and spreading salvation to others' hearts. Thus, Buber and Wesley suggest that although we may understand that the morality is revealed to the believer in the nature and character of God through the Decalogue, our response to God's commandments should reveal our understanding that supremely "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God and God abides in them."

Whereas character and morality are developed through the practice of observable habits, alongside and influencing that development is the issue of virtue. *Virtue and vices*

are internal perspectives and principles arising from one's thinking and attitudes, which then impact character conduct. Virtue is an enduring disposition of valor, worth, merit, and moral perfection, excellence, and rightness. The opposite of virtue is vice, the presence of extreme moral corruption; depravity; evil; grossly immoral or degrading habits or conduct. Dow summarized seven intellectual virtues:

- *Intellectual courage* – earnestly wanting to know the truth and consistently taking risks in pursuit of truth. Its corresponding vice is intellectual cowardice.
- *Intellectual carefulness* – making sure not to rush to hastily into conclusions based on limited evidence, being patient and diligent in thinking and careful not to overlook important details. Its corresponding vice is intellectual hastiness.
- *Intellectual tenacity* – unwilling to give up when an assignment is difficult or boring but fighting through to gain deeper understanding. Its corresponding vice is intellectual laziness.
- *Intellectual fair-mindedness* – listening in an even-handed way to differing opinions and attempting to view issues from the perspective of those with whom they disagree, believing that they do not always have the most accurate view on an issue. Its corresponding vice is intellectual bias.
- *Intellectual curiosity* – always asking why and not satisfied with easy and simplistic answers but desiring to understand at a foundational level. Its corresponding vice is intellectual indifference.
- *Intellectual honesty* – using information in a nonprejudicial or biased way, realizing that the strength of an argument is in its evidence and logic; thus, avoiding use of information out of context, without exaggeration, or distortion or in any way to mislead. Its corresponding vice is intellectual dishonesty.
- *Intellectual humility* – recognize the potential for sin and error and that truth is not of their own making but is God-breathed, so they admit their limitations of knowledge and rejoice when truth is discovered by others. Its corresponding vice is intellectual arrogance.

John Wesley stated that all genuine virtues are contained in the love of God and humanity, thus creating every godly and amiable temperament and behavior for life. In his opening on the rules for the practice of virtue, Francis de Sales stated that “the queen bee

never settles in a hive without being surrounded by her swarm, and charity never takes possession of a heart without bringing in her train all other virtues, exercising and bring them into play as a general his troops.” De Sales notes that some virtues are universal, whereas others, e.g. courage, magnanimity, and great sacrifice, have rare opportunities for practice; however, every day we can apply gentleness, temperance, humility, and purity. Although we should strive to exhibit all virtues, each person should focus on the virtue(s) that are especially relevant to the tasks to which God calls them. He then gives specific attention on ways to practice virtue in patience, external humility, inward humility, abasement, preservation of reputation, meekness and remedies for anger, gentleness for self-discipline, avoidance of worry, obedience, chastity, guarding purity, poverty of spirit, grace in poverty, friendships, external mortification, solitude, propriety in dress, conversations, judgment, amusements and recreation, faithfulness, justness and reason, marriage and fidelity, and singleness. Following the teaching and example of the Apostle Paul, imitation of Jesus Christ is the biblical way to cultivate Christian virtue. Whereas to follow the way of the world is a path of vice and destruction.

In the New Testament, the person and teaching of Jesus Christ further reveals the biblical perspective of the character and virtues of godliness, i.e. Christlikeness. Matthew’s collection of Jesus’ teachings in chapters five through seven, commonly called the Sermon on the Mount, explains how a “person ready for God’s rule should live.” Jesus revealed the dispositions and values in eight statements or beatitudes that constitute core values of God’s reign in the lives of Christians. Each statement begins with the Greek word ‘*makarios*’ (*μακάριος*), which means “to extol as blessed” or “to declare to be blessed” and denotes the transcendent happiness of life, a state of godlike blessedness,

and the distinctive religious joy which accrues from participation in the salvation of the kingdom of God. From the hallmarks of mercy, purity, and peace, which reflect the holy character of God, Jesus built His ethic for transformation of the heart and mind that leads kingdom righteousness. However, Jesus stated that to focus solely on actions will only match the outward righteousness of the scribes and Pharisee; so, He calls for a genuine transformation that exceeds them, rests in Him, takes up His yoke, which is easy, and discovers that His burden is light.

The Apostle Paul challenged the Church to imitate him as he imitated Christ. Across the Pauline corpus, there are several texts that reveal attributes of Christlike character. He wrote to Christians in Rome that the character of “love is the fulfilling of the law” and he detailed what love is and is not in what is commonly called the ‘Love Chapter.’ The grammar structure of Galatians 5:22-23 suggests that the fruit of the Spirit is love with the eight terms that follow as characteristics of love against which there is no law. In his letter to the church at Philippi, he emphasized the practice of six virtues of excellence that they had learned, received, heard, and saw in him Paul’s compact list of the virtues found in the Lord Jesus Christ is faith, hope, and love of which “the greatest of these is love” and corresponds with Jesus’ final command for His disciples “that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Philip Dow argues that to fulfil the radical transformation of Christlikeness, there must be a “renewing of your minds.” Willard postulates that since we turned away from God in our thoughts first, the first movement for renovation of the Christians’ heart must be through their minds.

Although Philip Dow does not offer a comprehensive model of spiritual

formation, he emphasizes the importance of intellectual virtues for character development within Christian spirituality; the development of character and virtues were an indispensable aspect of personal discipleship in daily prayer for John Wesley. Dow notes that “for good or ill, the habits of our minds trickle down into every part of our lives – from our spiritual lives to our marriages and from our jobs to our recreation.” Referencing Roman 12:1, Dow proposes that to the extent that we are good stewards of our mind, we are better worshippers of God and that when we exhibit godly characteristics of thinking (i.e. intellectual virtues), God’s goodness will be evident through our actions.

The essential objective of Christian spiritual formation through God’s transformative process is rooted in the Decalogue, Jesus’ Beatitudes, and Paul’s lists of virtues in his letters to the churches (specifically, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians) and supported in Wesley’s preaching and writing on Christian character and his daily prayers for godly virtues and in Dow’s intellectual virtues. These sources provide a substantial set of character traits and virtues for all Christians to strive toward developing godliness and Christlikeness across life. Maddix’s second and third points in defining spiritual formation raise the issue its intentional communal aspect, which is the next emphasis.

Supportive Relationships in Christian Spirituality

As pointed out previously in Paul’s words to the church at Philippi, the process of salvation, thus Christian spiritual maturation, depends upon fellow believers working together. Recall from chapter one, John Wesley’s advice to Frances Godfrey that “none can travel this road alone.” The Church functions as a body of believers working together; there is a value in supportive relationships between believers for instruction and

encouragement. Maddix's formulation of the definition for spiritual formation included that it occurs in the context of community and in the nurturing of self in relationship to others. These special relationships, described by various descriptive terms, can be fulfilled through persons who may or may not be in the role of a pastor and teacher.

Robert Wicks' clinical research found that to "maintain a sense of perspective, openness, and balance" in life, a person needs four distinct types of voices, which the same friend may provide at various times or through more than one friend: the prophet, the cheerleader, the harasser or tease, and the guide.

In Christianity, the most common descriptor of a person supporting a believer might be *discipler or disciple-maker*. This has been commonly regarded as one who guides another along the early or initial process of learning about and growing in understanding and practice as a follower of Jesus Christ; however, the duration is arbitrary. Jesus' command is that we "them to obey everything that I have commanded you;" however, the object is not that disciple-makers become master teachers of the faith, but a fellow disciple who is one of "the *Master's teachers*, attending and appreciating, yet remaining humbled by Jesus' ability and compassion." From this approach, the disciple-maker serves with the disciple in the scheme of God's kingdom at the feet of Jesus Christ as Savior, Lord, and true Rabbi (which means "my great one"). The duration of this relationship is often short-term, a month to six or nine months, if using a published discipleship curriculum.

An older term in the literature of Christian spirituality expressing a supportive relationship is *anamchara*. This Celtic word, *anamchara*, literally meaning "soul friend," originated from ancient Celtic tradition of a chief or king having a druid (a priest in the

ancient Celtic religion) in his court as a confidant, advisor, or counselor. Later, with Saint Patrick's spread of Christianity in Ireland, Christian clerics supplanted the druids' position as advisor or *soul-friend*. Saints Brigit and Comgall are attributed with a Celtic saying: "Anyone without a soul-friend (*anamchara*) is a body without a head." An *anamchara* is more advanced or experienced in the faith, yet an equal; a peer friend with whom one can share the most innermost thoughts, feelings, and acts, including failings and sins, with total confidence that it will be received with the appropriate grace for challenge as well as encouragement in the process of spiritual growth. Discerning whether a person will be an *anamchara* may be evident in seven signs:

- maturity;
- the ability to hear what another is trying to say;
- genuine respect for another, including one's stories and agonies;
- ability to keep things confidential;
- the willingness to be transparent, to share parts of one's journey but only when helpful;
- being "something of a scholar" continually reflecting and exploring personal questions and experiences as they illuminate our relationship with God; and
- the ability to "discern movements of the heart."

Another supportive relational concept is that of a *mentor* who serves as teacher, counsellor, facilitator, motivator, and friend. A mentoring relationship of a more experienced, knowledgeable, and trusted guide for a less experienced person originated from or is derived from a character in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Ulysses left his son, Telemachus, under the care of his trusted friend, Mentor, while away fighting the Trojan War; Mentor built a foundation for guiding Telemachus through establishing a supportive relationship. Mentoring relationships are not lifelong, the average is two to three years with the most continuing for eight to ten years. The Church of the Nazarene holds that it

is incumbent on ministers “to mentor future ministers and to nurture the call to ministry.”

According to Wesley Tracy, one-on-one mentoring relationships engage in seven roles:

- a trail guide who has taken the path before,
- a model or living example,
- a coach who instructs how to play the game and gives encouragement when situations are challenging and one wants to give up,
- an advocate who offers affirmation on the search for identity and meaning,
- a sponsor who supports full participation in spiritual practices,
- a guarantor who demonstrates the reality of authentic faith in God, and
- a mediator who communicates love, grace, self-knowledge, discernment of God’s will, acceptance, assurance, and direction in life.

Guenther develops another concept of a supportive relationship for spiritual guidance through the role of midwifery, drawing on Shiphrah and Puah in Exodus 1 and “the Celtic ‘knee-woman’ or ‘aid-woman, who made birth a sacrament.” The sacramental nature of birth is described by Alexander Carmichael, in his *Carmina Gadelica*, by citing the Celtic birth ritual of handing a newborn across the fire three times, carrying of the newborn around the fire in the direction of the sun three times, and then the midwife:

When the image of the God of life is born into the world I put three little drops of water on the child’s forehead. I put the first little drop in the name of the Father, and the women watching say Amen. I put the second little drop in the name of the Son, and watching-women say Amen. I put the third little drop in the name of the Spirit, and the watching-women say Amen. And I beseech the Holy Three to lave and bathe the child and to preserve it in Themselves. And the watching-women say Amen. All the people in the house are raising their voices with the watching-women, giving witness that the child has been committed to the blessed Trinity.

The function of assisting in birthing is not necessarily specific to a wife or

woman, since *midwife* literally means “with-woman.” More than assisting at only the moment of birth, a midwife is a teacher and guide throughout the preparation for delivery, by building rapport, inviting questions, taking time for patient guidance toward answers, confronting fears and misinformation, and comforting during labor and birthing. The spiritual application of midwife applies to a person who helps another through spiritual preparation, birth, and the development process. Guenther draws on her firsthand experiences in aiding with spiritual birth-giving, as well as the physical realm of labor and delivery, to sketch the process of pregnancy and birth and show that it is analogous to the spiritual process.

The final supportive relationship reviewed here is that of a *spiritual director*. Although this term is less familiar in Wesleyan circles, its historical origin traces back prior to the monastic period to the Early Church Fathers and Mothers and the Desert Abbas and Abbesses. Among Protestants, the terms “director,” “directee,” and “direction” may evoke a perception of an autocratic, hierarchical relationship. However, Nouwen states that a spiritual director is

not a counselor, a therapist, or an analyst, but a mature fellow Christian to whom we choose to be accountable for living our spiritual life and from whom we can expect prayerful support in our constant struggle to discern God’s activity. A spiritual director can be called a ‘soul friend’ or a ‘spiritual friend’ whom we trust to offer wisdom and guidance.

The spiritual director’s task “is to help connect the individual’s story to the story and thereby help the directee to recognize and claim identity in Christ, discern the action of the Holy Spirit.” This requires that the director be “simultaneously a learner and a teacher of discernment.” The task is two-fold: to engage in discernment and at the same time help the directee learn and trust their own discernment. Guenther adds that “directors, like all

good teachers, need to live with the silence, not merely to endure it but to be comfortable with it” and “recall Rilke’s advice to the young poet: to love and to live the questions.” Spiritual direction is a three-way relationship: the true director is the Holy Spirit, along with a human director and directee who trust in God and listen together for directions from the Holy Spirit. Thus, the human director’s role is primarily one of companionship and discovery on the spiritual journey rather than strictly informing the directee of the right track.

Whether following a stage model or dynamic movement model of spiritual formation, Christians throughout the centuries have sought individuals for spiritual counsel, encouragement, guidance, help, or direction. In the concepts described earlier, several terms related to this function: discipler, disciple-maker, *anamchara*, mentor, midwife, and spiritual director. The ministry of Christian spiritual direction, facilitating individuals seeking to grow in Christlikeness, originated through one-to-one conversations between the Desert Fathers and Mothers and those seeking understanding of what it means to live in relationship with God. Those conversations shaped and formed a process of spiritual direction “through a covenanted relationship with another, formalized in regular meetings for inquiry, conversation, and reflection around one’s personal experience.” Shinohara proposed the church’s “need to reevaluate the idea and practice of spiritual direction in Christian history to critique their individualistic mentality and to reconsider the reason why they still have a strong hunger for relationship and communality in spite of their firm conviction of biblical truths.” He described three interrelated goals and three modes of classical spiritual direction. The first goal of the spiritual director and the directee is to discern a deep awareness of God’s presence and

action in every aspect of their daily lives. The second is synonymous with heart of the gospel for theosis, deification, or sanctification, that the directee discover the deeper Christian life of wholeness and healing, i.e. holiness. The final goal is that the human spiritual friendship between the director and directee model and lead to a deep, intimate friendship with Christ. He concluded that the practice of spiritual direction is profoundly related to the Christians need for relationship and communality, that Christians need a shared faith journey.

Spiritual direction strives to accomplish its goals through three processes. The first process is an attentive and committed presence. Guenther refers to it as “holy listening,” which requires a willingness from the director to be open to anything that the directee shares and that the directee invite the director into a relationship of trust and commitment. The second mode corresponds to the third goal of friendship. This friendship between the director and directee is neither hierarchical nor manipulative, it is rooted in a sense of collegial equality. The final aspect of spiritual direction involves instruction in sound biblical, theological, spiritual principles, truths, and practices. Thus, it is a form of Christian discipleship, spiritual formation, theological/doctrinal instruction, and mentoring biblically ethical character development.

Guenther described eight responsibilities or marks of good spiritual direction. First is encouragement of creative and imaginative engagement with God, or as she terms it ‘play.’ Second is to know the directee’s limits and help them with gentleness and firmness to use their potential effectively. Next is to model and promote hopefulness. The fourth mark is to open doors, invite the directee to stretch and grow, to enable the directee to discover and embrace God through questions. The fifth mark is a willingness and

ability to provide the directee with helpful evaluation. Next, directors must be vulnerable, willing to share portions of their own struggles, failures, and healings. The seventh mark of a good director is that of being a consummate learner, showing the directee that they are also on the journey of discovery and living out a deeper spiritual life. The final mark is like a parent raising a child, preparing the directee for maturity to move out into their spiritual life independent of the human director, since the ultimate and eternal director is the Holy Spirit.

The discussion to this point has focused on defining the essential concepts of Christian spiritual formation and its primary objective of godliness or Christlikeness regarding formation of moral character traits and virtues and then what relationships believers may engage in to foster that process. This leads to the question of specific means that the believer may utilize and what avenues the believer may facilitate the process of Christian spiritual formation. First, the Church of the Nazarene's general approach to on-going clergy development will be overviewed and then key practices and avenues to facilitate Christian spiritual formation will be discussed.

On-Going Clergy Development in the Church of the Nazarene

Although not necessarily part of a formal model of spiritual formation, it is important to note some of the resources that pastors may frequently use for self-directed spiritual formation. As stated previously, in the Church of the Nazarene, clergy are to report twenty hours of Life-Long Learning annually. These hours are logged online in the Lifelong Learning Registry, which states:

The Lifelong Learning Registry provides Nazarene ministers the opportunity to record and report their efforts to develop and maintain a pattern of lifelong learning to

enhance the ministry to which God has called them... District Boards of Ministry and district, regional and general leaders also have access for the purpose of reviewing the lifelong learning activity of Nazarene ministers in accordance with provisions of the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. Every Nazarene minister is encouraged to engage in a variety of lifelong learning activities that further growth in character, provide insight into the context of ministry, increase competency, and deepen biblical, theological, and historical understanding. Such activities may be selected at the discretion of the minister...”

Although clergy are encouraged to engage in activities that further growth in character, there is not monitoring that what is logged address it and the review of activity is limited to a cursory monitoring of compliance to the hours longed without specific repercussions for non-compliance. The final statement that the activities selected are at the discretion of each clergy is most significant.

Some of the typical ways that clergy may fulfill the hours are online seminar, conferences, workshops, and reading. Denominational resources for webinars and online courses are through The Discipleship Place (and its app for smartphones), and Nazarene Theological Seminary’s Center for Pastoral Leadership. Most of the resources in The Discipleship Place are designed for laity and those pursuing a non-degree course of study as a lay minister; however, there are materials that can be useful for pastors, also. The Center for Pastoral Leadership has over four hundred recorded videos on webinars, workshops, and conferences; a survey of the contents revealed twenty-seven videos categorized as spiritual formation and an additional three video were found on a search for “character.” Most of the Nazarene colleges and universities in the United States have

workshops or seminars for pastors each year; in addition, there are two major conferences sponsored by the general church every two to four years, the M-Conference and the Pastors and Leaders Conference (PAL-Con), as well as workshops at the General Assembly every four years. Some districts include workshops during their annual District Assembly and hold periodic educational meetings and “preached retreats” for pastors. Most pastors can fulfill their annual requirement of lifelong learning hours through the above activities, although they may not focus on spiritual formation.

Two Key Practices and Two Avenues Facilitating Christian Spiritual Formation

Throughout the history of Judeo-Christian faith, in the early church and the time of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, through the development of monasticism, and into the present writings of contemporary spiritual formation, two core practices have facilitated Christian spiritual formation: Scripture reading and prayer. These two practices are at the core because they represent fundamental ways of understanding and relating with God in truth and spirit. Although patterns of engaging in these practices may vary according to one’s approach to discipleship and spiritual formation, participation in these practices is universal. The following brief discussion introduces a single application for each of these practices because these applications are utilized in many of the approaches to spiritual formation that will be discussed later.

We refer to the Bible as containing the Word of God; the Hebrew term for ‘word’ is *dābār* (דָּבָר) and in Greek it is *logos* (λόγος). In Hebrew and Greek, the meaning of ‘word’ relates to both the spoken and written word. The first time that God spoke to the Hebrew people, not just a single person, was in giving them the Ten Words, Decalogue.

In the opening of the Gospel according to John, Jesus is referred to as the ‘Word.’ Thus, to hear or read the Bible, Holy Scripture, is an essential practice in Christian spiritual formation because it is a way of listening to the Word of God, i.e. God. *Lectio Divina* is a Latin phrase meaning “sacred reading” and refers to a specific method of reading Scripture or other writings for spiritual purposes. The foundation of *lectio Divina* began in the Third Century with Origen, who regarded Scripture as a sacrament, and wrote to Gregory, later bishop of Neo-Caesarea, that:

applying yourself thus to the divine study, seek aright, and with unwavering trust in God, the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, which so many have missed. Be not satisfied with knocking and seeking; for prayer is of all things indispensable to the knowledge of the things of God.

In the Twelfth Century, a Cartesian monk, Guigo II, formalize the process of *lectio Divina* into four stages, which St. John of the Cross taught his followers in the Sixteen Century, John Calvin championed among the Reforms, and the Puritan Richard Baxter also promoted. John Wesley also advocated a form of it in his plan of discipline:

Search the Scriptures by,

- Reading: Constantly, some part of every day; regularly, all the Bible in order; carefully, with the Notes; seriously, with prayer before and after; fruitfully, immediately practising what you learn there
- Meditating: at set times
- Hearing: Every morning, carefully: with prayer before, at, after; immediately putting in practice

Jane Vennard offers a mnemonic of five R-words to remember five parts or stages

of *lectio Divina*:

- *Read (Lectio)*: Read and hear the text as if reading it for the first time and listening for a word or phrase that touches the heart.
- *Reflect (Meditatio)*: Read again, now concentrating on the meanings of the words in the passage.
- *Respond (Oratio)*: Read again and consider how you respond to God’s message in the passage.

- *Rest (Contemplatio)*: Read again and rest in the presence of God, knowing that He is with you and will enable you to do whatever He asks of you.
- *Return (Incarnatio)*: Read again and apply your understanding of the passage to the world and focus on how God is at work in the world or will use you to embody His Word through your life.

The practice of prayer, speaking directly to and listening to God, is a second essential exercise in spiritual formation for godliness or Christlikeness in one's life. Walter Wangerin, Jr. describes prayer as a four-part cycle: we speak, God listens, God speaks, and we listen. The *Divine Office or Hours*, initially developed by Benedict, which will be discussed later, relates to a practice of daily prayer across eight times of the day:

- *Vigils* – eighth hour from Compline, about 2:00am, or after midnight
- *Lauds* – sunrise or before breakfast
- *Prime* – after breakfast
- *Terce* – midmorning
- *Sext* – midday
- *None* – midafternoon
- *Vespers* – late afternoon, before or at sunset
- *Compline* – before retiring, about 6:00pm

Prayer services with specific liturgies for the different hours, seasons, and special times developed over time and used by various groups: Catholic, Anglican, Wesleyans, and Judaism. Examples are found in *Saint Joseph Daily Missal*, *Book of Common Prayer*, *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*, *Gates of Prayer*, and others. Although these liturgies outline formats for prayer services, the term liturgy originates from a Greek word *leitourgia* (λειτουργία) denoting “a voluntary work – political, technical, or religious – that was performed for the people as a whole.” The idea behind this work of liturgy is not following a rigid prescription of how something must be done but in discovering its benefits for people as a way of teaching, shaping, discipling the spiritual

lives of those who participate in and listen to the liturgy as it is enacted. I statement that I have often used in my congregations when discussing a liturgy for a worship or prayer services is that we have a sense of order but we do not pour concrete; the Holy Spirit always has the freedom to use the order or to interrupt us.

Scripture reading and prayer a core disciplines or practices for gaining insight and communing with God in the process of Christian spiritual formation. However, there are many other disciplines and concepts that are useful. Although discovery of those disciplines and concepts will be a lifelong process, there are two avenues that can facilitate their discovery and experimentation. In the process of learning to drive a car, one may read a driver's training manual. However, before attempting to drive down a crowded street or on an interstate at rush hour, it would be advantageous to practice on a simulator and a driving range, and then progress through levels of congestion with an experienced driving instructor.

Two avenues that can facilitate believers in the process of Christian spiritual formation are participation in *Christian spiritual retreats* and *spiritual direction*. We touched on the second avenue in the previous discussion of supportive relationships, yet there are a few more points to be made about it. First, we will look at Christian spiritual retreats.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, '*retreat*' has several meanings. It originates from Middle English, as a variant of the Old French past participle *retrait(e)*, and the Latin verb *retrahere*. The dictionary's second and third definitions relate to act of withdrawing in the face of opposition, difficulty, or danger. This is interpreted as a negative action; however, it can be a wise tactic. Expressing it in a positive perspective,

the military now refers to it as “*strategic withdrawal*,” which at times is the better wisdom in combat; Barton points out that there are good reasons for us to do likewise in our lives. The fourth listing refers to places of seclusion, privacy, or contemplation, refuge, and a withdrawal from public life; the fifth meaning is a period of complete seclusion for religious observance and contemplation.

Tyers, Holdeman, and others cite the embedded principles of retreats throughout the Scriptures in the lives of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Hosea, John the Baptist, the disciples as a group and individually the Apostles Paul and John, and Jesus. In the early centuries of the Church, individuals, who are now called the Desert Fathers and Mothers and early saints of the Church, retreated from public life to draw closer to God. According to Jerome, the first known to seek the solitude of the desert to live as a hermit was a third century zealot in Egypt named Paul, who was skilled in Greek and Egyptian learning, displayed a gentle disposition, and held a deep love for God. Other notables who followed his pattern from Egypt to Palestine to Syria and then to Gaul were Anthony the Great, Malchus, Pachomius, Hilarion, Ephraim, Martin of Tours, Hilary, Macarius, Bessarion, Abraham, Arsenius, and Simeon Stylites.

The Desert Fathers and Mothers practice of retreat into the desert, leaving one's everyday life to connect on a deeper level with God, was continued by the monks retreat from the world into monastery to follow a rule of life and to do the work of God through the study of Scripture and prayer. John Cassian's (A.D. 360 – 430) monastery in Gaul, ancient France, and then St. Benedict of Nursia (A.D. 480 – 543) created the monastic movement. However, in the 1520's St. Ignatius of Loyola's (A.D. 1491-1556) developed the Spiritual Exercises, which used the fasting of Jesus in the desert for forty days, as

practice of spending a specific time away with God and a biblical justification of retreats. Then St. Francis de Sales' (A.D. 1567-1622) *Philothea, or An Introduction to the Devout Life* in 1608 advocated that the spiritual retreat is "one of the most important means toward your spiritual advancement."

The first Christian retreat held by the Church of England was in 1856 and the Wesleyan Methodists in England started September 20-23, 1912 at Swanwick with the Free Church Fellowship with a primary purpose to "make discoveries in the corporate devotional life... for those who will adventure boldly, seeking the Master's guidance." As these retreats migrated to American and focused on harmony of insights from God in the Word, in the inner life, and in the world, James Wareham warned that the purpose of going on retreat should not be because one is frustrated with their spiritual life or situations in the Church, "but because their souls are hungry for God."

It has become common to use the term "retreat" with gatherings away from the typical workplace and an agenda of administrative or organizational goal setting or planning tasks; or to provide education about a subject or training of skills for leadership or program provision; or goals of team building, fellowship, increasing comradery, collaboration, or relaxation. If retreat coordinators do not clarify the purpose beforehand, participants may have different expectations that can lead to conflicts between the leaders and the retreatants and derail or reduce the effectiveness of the event. There are event terms that might be better suited for those gatherings, such as business meeting, seminar, conference, workshop, or camp. The solution that will be adopted here is to use the descriptive label of 'Christian spiritual retreat' to communicate that the retreat is "a time and space set apart in which to be very intentional about one's relationship with God. It is

a time not to do, but rather to be – to encounter God;” “a time to discern the reason for your life.”

Therefore, the retreat descriptor of ‘Christian spiritual retreat’ signifies that the intent is for human interaction with the transcendent or divine God through relationship with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This has been the traditional historical intent for retreats created by and for the Church and should be the present focus for these retreats.

Jane Vennard summarized this focus:

For me, a retreat is about God. A retreat places God and the things of God in the foreground of our attention. A retreat opens the time and the space so that we may hear God’s still, small voice. A retreat is about listening and waiting, receiving and being. A retreat is not about getting anything done. On retreat we may find clarity. On retreat we may make friends and build community. Plans may grow from retreat time. We may even have fun. But what occurs during or after time away is not the purpose of retreat. We go on retreat simply to be with God.

Ben Johnson states it this way:

...at the core of a retreat lies the decision to place yourself before God for an uninterrupted period of time.... In retreats humans aim to meet the Holy; the human spirit engages the Holy Spirit – the holy and the human touch each other. Usually this encounter is mediated through the Bible or beauty or memory or a spontaneous thought: this simple awakening to reality may occur through another person, silence and the image or vision, or listening to the voice of God speaking in the soul.

The primary focus of a Christian spiritual retreat is encountering or experiencing God rather than accomplishing a pre-established agenda, which differs from gatherings for planning, teaching, choir rehearsals, leadership development, or other agendas frequently promoted as retreats. Johnson further states that retreats allow retreatants to face the bigger questions about life: does it matter? Why am I here? Is God concerned about me and the situations in my life? Am I living right? Will God show me what to do?

Taking the time to retreat provides time away from the typical routines of life to consider these questions and that is more important than any planned activity. Ben Johnson lists seven reasons for why Christian spiritual retreats are important:

- It will help you attain balance in your life.
- It offers time and space to deal with the persistent questions in your life.
- It offers an opportunity to look at relationship issues in your life.
- It will lead you to the rhythm of your life.
- It gives you an opportunity to clarify your perspective, perhaps even acquire a totally new perspective.
- It builds on the nature of reality's rhythm of engagement and withdrawal.
- It allows you to establish, reestablish, or expand your consciousness of God.

Until readjusting the rhythm of routine life to patterns of spiritual renewal to discover that God is calling His people to be with Him, one may be skeptical; yet retreats can be of real help even to skeptics. Only by being a retreatant will one discover that retreats are not about doing, but “something you experience – and short of experiencing it, one is largely unconvinced of its value.” Scholars in philosophy describe experience as practical wisdom gained through a source or process, that it is a way of speaking about reality and it is more than a passive reception of sensations and transformation of perception, it is an active process of evaluations, actions, and habits involving cognition, emotions, and will. A retreat enables a break from the usual activities and routines of daily to allow us to slow down and notice thoughts and issues within us and around us that we have not taken the time to consider or have grown accustomed to or are trying to ignore, drown out. Time to experience freedom from typical routines and to consider physically, mentally, and emotionally our relationship with God, ourselves, others, and

life is the most important aspect of retreat. The crux of retreat is spiritual formation: “a time for one’s soul to stretch, to receive, to blossom, to grow. It is a time for healing, for resting, for receiving.”

Rueben Job echoes St. Francis de Sales admonition toward retreats in saying that “to sustain effective and satisfying ministry... requires an intentional effort to stay in touch with the ‘rivers of living water’ that refresh, renew, and sustain. Regular personal retreats are an important part of such an effort to keep our souls alive and healthy.” So, “From time to time, then gather your spirit into the solitude of your heart, where, separate from all men, you can lay open your soul and speak face to face with God.” Angell extrapolated three personal components or tasks of a Christian spiritual retreat from William Lonergan’s *Laymen’s Retreats Explained* (1930): ‘perspective’ – withdrawing from one’s ordinary activities and trusting in God, ‘peace’ – letting go of one’s agenda to sense who one is in relationship with God, and ‘power to love’ – planning changes in one’s life and world.

The second human avenue for facilitating the transformative process is through a supportive relationship of spiritual direction, which may be at various stages and several types of relationships: a discipler, an anamchara, a mentor, a spiritual midwife, or a spiritual director. Spiritual direction may occur in one-to-one relationship and through small groups. Depending on the type of relationship and personal desire, it may be for a single situation, a brief time of weeks or a few months, or extended period many months to several years. Spiritual direction may occur for a period, stop, and then resume later with the same or different person(s). Retreats can provide an opportunity to engage individually and with small groups, which may then continue after the retreat with an

individual or a small group as a way of extending the retreat with follow-up support and accountability. There are two appendices add additional information on this avenue for facilitating spiritual formation: one on principles and processes of spiritual direction, individual and small group, and one on Fourth Day Follow-up.

Throughout this section, the general concepts of Christian spirituality were addressed first by defining Christian spiritual formation and its objectives for godliness and Christlikeness in character, morals, and virtues. Next, we noted the variety of supportive human relationships that aid in the process of spiritual formation. Then two basic practices or disciplines and two avenues for facilitating the discover and exploration of Christian spirituality were considered.

In its essence, Christian spirituality is not a new concept in Christianity, its roots are historically rich and it compatible with our Wesleyan tradition. Christian spirituality is a call to spiritual formation. This will be a lifelong process of inner transformation of the Christian believer into Christlikeness by participating with God's grace, trusting and obeying the Holy Spirit, which must be lived within the context of a Christian community and extends in service to the world as Christ demonstrated. It is not a process that we are to pursue alone, God has provided many supportive relations to encourage, guide, and keep us accountable. Scripture reading and prayer are fundamental practices to this process and the avenues of Christian spiritual retreat and spiritual direction are methods available to facilitate encountering God and practicing new insights in our formation. From these understandings, an approach to promoting and deepening lifelong spiritual health for clergy on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene will be proposed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: THESIS

As we have stated previously, for the Church of the Nazarene to fulfill its function in the kingdom of God, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, lead people to salvation and sanctification, and guide and equip believers in the faith and mission of the Church, it must rely upon “the spiritual qualification, character, and manner of life of its minister.” Gallup research indicates that the two primary factors affecting spiritual health are spiritual commitment and engagement. Although the denomination requires all ordained ministers to complete at least twenty (20) hours of lifelong learning annually, ministers may focus their readings, workshops, and conferences on biblical and theological content, ministry contexts, and competency in ministry skills that address knowledge and skills of pastoral functionality and doctrinal soundness. Lifelong learning in those areas of knowledge and skill do not differentiate the spiritually committed from those who are not. The research of Ireland and Selvidge revealed evidences for concern in the spiritual health of pastors in the Church of the Nazarene, specifically related to prayer, Bible reading for personal development, engagement in peer groups for support and accountability, use of the spiritual disciplines, participation with a mentor or spiritual director. In surveying factors related to spiritual engagement, Gallup found that understanding expectations and encourage towards and accountability for spiritual development were the most significant indicators. Wes Tracy reported that John Wesley addressed the importance of small group accountability through the class-meeting structure for inspecting each other’s outward walk, inquire of their internal state, and discover their trials and whether they have fallen or conquered during them. The focus of this dissertation is to offer a proposal for a means

to facilitate ongoing spiritual formation and provide means for personal accountability toward that end in the lives of ministers on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene.

The Proposal

The proposal presented here is that regular participation in district-sponsored directed spiritual retreats and on-going spiritual direction for guidance, support, and accountability will foster spiritual formation for spiritual health in the lives of clergy on the East Ohio District. Ireland and Selvidge included pastors' participation in some type of retreat and spiritual direction in their recommendations for supporting and improving spiritual health. Directed Christian spiritual retreats create a vehicle for engagement with classical and Wesleyan spirituality that is intentionally focused on spiritual formation through personal and corporate practices for the working out of our salvation and sanctification within a safe, redemptive environment.

Rationale for the Proposal

Loneragan's three components of a retreat point to the retreat's primary focuses of prayer and Scripture. "Prayer is at the heart of our relationship with God. Therefore, it is also at the heart of the retreat experience." Personal prayers during solitude and corporate prayer gatherings of the Daily Office are intended (1) to facilitate encounters in God's presence through glimpses of His glory, (2) to hear Him speak into our life, to discern His will, and (3) to express our thoughts and feeling for adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, supplications, and commitment to Him and His will in our life. Initially, the scheduled prayer times might seem restrictive or stifling of spontaneous prayer; however, Christian history has demonstrated that through a deep understanding of the sacredness of time for

prayer, work, study, and leisure frees those who practice the Daily Office to live each part of each day fully. Practices of meditation, contemplation, and *lectio Divina* can focus one's mind, heart, and spirit on Scripture as a source of the Holy Spirit for new understanding and transformative application in one's life.

Benedict's Rule created a schedule of prayer and scripture recitation to lift people's minds and hearts from the mundane of life for focus on God. Establishing a rhythm of prayer in life is consistent with Wesley's focus on prayer as a regular means of grace to develop and maintain communion with God and to nurture a Christlike character in life. Directed Christian spiritual retreats offer a way to introduce and practice this rhythm of prayer in daily life.

The practice of meditation and contemplation from Ignatian spirituality align with Wesley's focuses of prayer and Scripture reading as means of grace. These emphases blend with the components of *lectio Divina* for discerning the transformative purpose of Scripture. Directed Christian spiritual retreats provide opportunities in solitude for intentional listening to God through prayer and Scripture and through individual and small group spiritual direction to work out our understanding of faith together within the body of Christ.

Foster, Mulholland, and Willard emphasize personal and corporate spiritual disciplines as tools to shape our heart, mind, body, and spirit to the will and way of Christ. Mulholland and Barton point to a special significance for the disciplines of silence and solitude. Mulholland also emphasized holistic spirituality that celebrates one's unique individuality and how to utilize our uniqueness effectively in our interactions with others. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is the tool that Mulholland promoted; however, other

resources that also can be beneficial are positive psychology's Clifton StrengthFinders and Alan Hirsch's APEST (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd, Teacher) for a fivefold typology of ministry. Through all those instruments, ministers can improve their understanding of their unique personality, graces, and gifts for personal and relational spiritual health. Wesley and Dow emphasized development of character virtues, through prayer and intellectual practices. Directed Christian spiritual retreats provide opportunities to explore, discuss, and practice the above issues and many other themes related to holistic Christian spirituality in a cooperative, collaborative, safe, and supportive environment.

During retreats, the inner spiritual life often comes to the surface. Foster discusses a similar response when fasting, hunger produces thoughts and feelings related to deeper issues than the physical craving for food. For those who are not experienced retreat participants, and even those who become frequent retreatants, the effectiveness of retreats can be facilitated by periodic consultation with a spiritual director, a mentor, an anamchara, soul friend, or spiritual friend; this is a practice evident in John Wesley's writings, the early Celtic church and beyond to the Desert Fathers and Mothers. This will be a new concept to many, even met with resistance, so it will necessitate clear communication of its purpose and process. The history and practice of providing spiritual direction is rooted in two basic convictions. The first is that our relationship with God is our primary and fundamental importance. Without a sense of connection with God, all other relationships are impoverished. The second is that our relationship with God is bound up with one another and with the whole created order. Thus, spiritual direction is more than social friendship and it is not pastoral care and counseling, which addresses

problems through advising; spiritual direction is an effort to join minds and hearts together in prayerful discernment and to listen to and trust in the Holy Spirit for wisdom and guidance. The spiritual director is a servant of the Holy Spirit for probing, clarifying, verifying, and accountability. There are two primary ways that spiritual direction occurs. The first is through one-to-one relationship and the second is through small groups. Both ways are evident in the ministry of John Wesley as he provided individual Christian conferencing and letter writing to ‘preachers’ and spiritual friends; his structure of the class-meeting system, particularly the classes and bands, provided small group edification, support, and accountability.

Since the Church of the Nazarene charges each District to oversee lifelong learning of the ministers on that District, it is important that the spiritual retreats and process of spiritual direction have the support and encouragement of the District’s leadership. Thus, the proposal is that the spiritual retreats and its related component of spiritual direction be sponsored by the District and placed on the District calendar; this ensures that no other District ministerial events are scheduled at the same time. Also, spiritual formation is a lifelong process, so the spiritual retreats should be an annual event with a different focus on spiritual formation each year. The spiritual direction component presented and modeled within the retreats will have opportunities for continued engagement or follow-up in spiritual direction throughout the year as desired and determined by retreatants.

Summary Statement

In summary, the thesis is that District-sponsored annual Christian spiritual directed retreats with a component of individual and small group spiritual direction will

improve lifelong spiritual formation in the lives of ministers on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene. The methodology for a pattern of retreats and spiritual direction will be present in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: PROPOSED SOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT

There is no single solution to ensure that every believer's spiritual health continues to mature throughout their lifetime or any single preventative to spiritual-character and moral failure within Christians lives, even among those called and ordained as ministers for the Church. Each person must live a life-long process of constant and intentional regard for their spiritual formation into Christlikeness through a dynamic relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as their Lord, Savior, and Guide. In addition to each one's personal responsibility, corporate engagement has historical merit in introducing, exploring, supporting, and reinforcing concepts and practices relevant to spiritual formation. This proposal presents a particular revision to the East Ohio District's strategies to promote the lifelong spiritual health of its ministers. In past years, the EOD has blended a preaching or casual devotional component with focus on fellowship and relaxation on two annual retreats: *Ministers' and their Spouse Retreat* and *Pastors' Breakaway Retreat*. In the first chapter, Rev. David B. Lutz, East Ohio District Superintendent, proposed several changes on the district at the 2019 District Assembly. In addition to those announced changes, he granted permission to this author for revising the *Pastors' Breakaway Retreat*, which was a pilot of this proposal. Conversation with Rev. Lutz confirmed that the EOD had offered multiple opportunities for lifelong learning in areas of content, context, and competency; however, there had not been an intentional focus on character development. Rev. Lutz also agreed that participation in the *Pastors' Breakaway Retreat* had significantly declined over the past few years to less than nineteen

percent (19%) of the District's ministers participating. There are several reasons for the decline, which supported that it was time for change of its format. Therefore, the focus of this project is to create Christian spiritual retreats with a spiritual direction component to facilitate ongoing spiritual formation for EOD's clergy. This chapter will present the development of the pilot project and an artifact that can serve as a model for lifelong spiritual formation of clergy on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene.

The East Ohio District, is a district of the Global Church of the Nazarene's USA/Canada Region and the Mount Vernon University Educational Field. It is geographically located in eastern Ohio. Its western border is the Interstate-77 corridor and the eastern border is the Ohio state line on the east; its northern border is a line above the cities of Akron and Warren, and the southern border is a line between Nobel and Monroe Counties to the north and Washington county to the south. The District has sixty-seven (67) active churches with one hundred and nineteen active ministers: one District Superintendent, one hundred and five (105) ordained elders (eleven unassigned), five (5) ordained deacons, and twenty (20) licensed ministers (one full-time student).

General Considerations

Before discussing the specific format of the pilot conducted in January of 2020 and future implementation of the proposal for subsequent retreats and spiritual direction, four general aspects will be highlighted. First, the proposed retreats will be Christian spiritual retreats. Secondly, the retreats will be guided and an opportunity for spiritual direction will be through one-to-one interaction with a spiritual director and participation in small group spiritual direction. Thirdly, retreats will provide three daily times for

corporate prayer utilizing customized liturgies. And fourthly, the proposal includes post-retreat opportunities for on-going spiritual direction.

The primary focus of the retreats is personal spiritual encounter with God, rather than hearing biblical preaching, receiving information or in-depth training, engaging in peer dialogue and fellowship, or having time for recreational relaxation. Preaching, training, dialogue, fellowship, and recreation are important to on-going self-care and well-being, spiritually, intellectually, and physically. Other District and General Church events and personal activities for lifelong learning that focus on content, context, and competency address many of those areas; and personal self-care of emotional and physical health should not be ignored. However, spiritual encounter with God is the primary focus of a spiritual retreat and every aspect of the retreat will be designed with that intent. Retreatants will be directed to make that their personal priority by separation from potential outside interference and internal openness to God through every aspect of the retreat. This will be promoted in two specific ways. First, retreats will be “technology-free” events and retreatants will be asked to turn off, ideally leaving at home or in locked vehicles, all cell phones, computers, and WIFI - SMART devices. Secondly, it will be expressed that even the scheduled corporate events are secondary to each retreatant’s pursuit and engagement with God as God directs; if retreatants sense the need for more time in solitude for prayerful conversation with God then they may exercise that freedom.

The second general consideration is that the retreats will be directed or guided by the retreats’ leader(s) and spiritual director(s). The retreat will have a schedule of offerings: gatherings for presented meditations, personal time for reflection and prayer, corporate prayer times, small group spiritual direction, and gatherings for meals. Each

retreat will have series of five meditations presented by a retreat leader or spiritual director with suggestions for personal reflection and prayer. The meditations will be not an open time for discussion or debate of ideas and personal views and experiences between the retreatants and the presenter or the other retreatants. The intent of the guided meditations is to prompt thoughts and questions for personal reflection and prayer, to elicit encounter with God regarding one's own spiritual formation. The spiritual director(s) will be available for individual spiritual conferencing, guidance and prayer, upon request. In addition, there will be times for small group spiritual direction following the times of solitude. However, as mentioned previously, the primary engagement is to be between the retreatant and God; thus, the meditations, personal spiritual direction, small group direction, and corporate times of prayer are intentional means of facilitating personal spiritual formation rather than function as principle activities.

Thirdly, the retreat will utilize customized liturgies for corporate prayer of the Daily Office, the Wesley Covenant Service, and celebration of Holy Communion. The liturgies will be adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer*, patterns developed by John Wesley, other liturgical sources, and less formal practices. The intent is to provide retreatants with several examples of liturgies for corporate prayer and worship across six scheduled opportunities during each retreat. For some retreatants on the EOD, using formal liturgies for prayer and worship will be a new experience; however, the explicit intent is to open the mind and heart of retreatants for the Holy Spirit to guide an encounter with God through the Scriptures, prayer, classical/historical Christian, and Wesleyan practices. Thus, the liturgies serve as spiritual guides, directors, in this process.

The fourth general consideration relates to what happens between retreats. A

retreat is not the end or culmination of retreatants spiritual formation; it should not be regarded as a one-and-done event. Christian spiritual formation is a lifelong journey. Therefore, this proposal includes a follow-up process, referred to as “Fourth Day” engagements. “Fourth Day” is an expression related to the subsequent days of an encounter with the presence of God, specifically Jesus Christ. It is derived from the story of two disciples encountering Jesus after His Resurrection as they were walking to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). Several spiritual renewal ministries, such as the *Cursillo Movement*, *Tres Dias*, and *The Walk to Emmaus*, utilize the expression “Fourth Day” for on-going discipleship and small group spiritual direction after an encounter retreat. A key component in the Fourth Day is perpetual deepening of one’s relationship with Jesus Christ through participation in periodic, every two weeks or monthly, meetings with a group of two to four other peers for mutual support and accountability. The aspect of “Fourth Day” engagements will be practiced through participation in small group spiritual direction during the retreats and retreatants will be encouraged to continue meeting periodically, in-person or remotely, throughout the year at whatever frequency is best or needed by the group. In addition, one-to-one spiritual direction will be available through the year with a spiritual director from the retreat or assistance in finding another person to serve as a spiritual director, a mentor, or anamchara will be provided upon request.

In summary, these general considerations for Christian spiritual retreats with a guided, directed format including a spiritual director’s leading with meditation, times for personal reflection and prayer, corporate gatherings for prayer, small group spiritual direction, and worship, fellowship at the meal table, and Fourth Day groups are the core of this proposal to facilitate personal encounter with God and support lifelong Christian

spirituality through spiritual formation. This combination of Christian spiritual retreats and spiritual direction will intentionally focus on matters of spiritual health, character, and manner of life in ministers on the East Ohio District and facilitate ministers in fulfilling the lifelong expectations and needs for ministers in Church of the Nazarene.

Christian Spiritual Retreats and Spiritual Direction

The dissertation artifact or details of the proposed Christian spiritual retreats and spiritual direction components are in Appendix 1 through 7; Appendix 8 contains supplemental resource handouts provided at the pilot retreat. The following narrative will discuss the development and implementation of the information in those appendices.

Development of the Christian Spiritual Retreats

In planning for the pilot retreat, it was determined with the input of the District Superintendent that January would be the best month for the District Calendar; the new year also fit the theme of the retreat of *Pastor's Getaway: A Time for Spiritual Renewal and Refreshing*. In consultation with the District Superintendent, it was decided that the pilot retreat's duration would match that of prior EOD retreats; the schedule would be planned for approximately forty-six (46) hours, from Monday afternoon to Wednesday early afternoon. The object was to acquire a retreat location that would be central to the District boundaries or close to it. The prior Breakaway retreat had been conducted at a 4H camp in central West Virginia, which was two hours south of the District and a four to six-hour drive for most pastors. If the desired location could be obtained, it would enable travel to and from the retreat to be within a few hours for the furthest pastor on the District. Also, it would accommodate pastors getting home to conduct their Wednesday

night service, if necessary.

Lodging at the former *Pastor's Breakaway Retreat* had a limited number of two person rooms, at a higher cost and a first-come basis, and the remainder slept in 'bunk house' rooms of ten to twelve persons. An objective for the *Getaway Retreat* was to have a maximum of two persons per rooms for solitude and equality of space for everyone. Other considerations in finding a facility were that it had quiet surroundings, easy accessibility to the location, and easy accessibility around the facility with short walking distance between lodging, meals, and meeting areas.

The pilot retreat was booked at the Sandscrest Conference and Retreat Center, a facility operated by the Wheeling, West Virginia Episcopal Diocese, (see photos in Appendix 1). The Retreat Center is in a rural setting immediately outside of Wheeling, West Virginia, which is on Interstate-70 across the Ohio-West Virginia state line. This location is on the east edge of the southern two-thirds of the District, within two and a half hours of the northern edges of the District. The facility is a large historical home with a Bishop's Quarters, which includes a separate meeting room for the retreat leader/spiritual director to provide one-to-one conferencing, five additional sleeping rooms, two large living room style meeting rooms, a double room dining area, and a chapel. Also, it has a separate quest house with nine sleeping rooms and a separate conference hall building. Most of the sleeping rooms have either two single or two full beds; four rooms have only one full bed. The center accommodates lodging for a retreat leader and twenty-seven (27) retreatants with all linens provided; six family-style meals would be prepared by an on-site chef. The retreat, all-inclusive of lodging, meals, meeting areas, and materials was planned for one hundred and eighty dollars (\$180.00) per person,

without requiring District financial support. The author (retreat coordinator and spiritual director for the retreat) waived the District's retreat speaker honorarium of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to provide a scholarship reduction for any who needed financial assistance and a fifty percent (50%) reduction for the second person of any pastoral couple (co-pastors) attending.

The pilot retreat was promoted through an advertisement flyer (see Appendix 1) in the Assembly notebook. At the *Ministers' and their Spouse Retreat* in the Fall of 2019, attendees heard a five-minute presentation about the *Getaway Retreat's* intent and basic format and were invited to contact the presenter about any questions. Later in that Fall, an email announcement about the pilot retreat went to all lead pastors and a copy of the flyer was mailed to every church on the District. The author had several personal phone conversations with pastors who had specific questions about the difference between *Breakaway* and the *Getaway Retreat* to encourage their participation.

The basic schedule for the retreat is outlined in Appendix Two (2). There was one difference between the pilot retreat and the model presented in the appendix. The pilot retreat did not include 'small group spiritual direction.' The spiritual direction component of this proposal expanded from what was introduced during the pilot retreat. Discussion on the development of the expanded focus will be addressed later as Appendix Seven (7): Spiritual Direction. Arrival for the retreat was after two o'clock (2:00) on Monday afternoon with the first scheduled gathering at five-thirty (5:30pm) for general orientation. The time between arrival and orientation allowed retreatants to settle into their rooms and explore the facility and grounds, read, fellowships with others, or take a nap.

During the general orientation (see Appendix 3), the emphasis was on three main points. First, the rationale and value for having a “technology-free” retreat for solitude from the world’s distractions to focus on encountering God. Retreatants has been advised about this prior to the retreat; however, the in-person explanation was to reinforce it. Although, the facility had WIFI, the code would only be given if deemed necessary. Cell service was poor on-site, but the facility had landline phone service in the facility director’s office; that number had been provided to retreatants in advance for family members to use in case of an emergency. The second emphasis was overview of the retreat folder’s contents: schedule of the retreat offerings (Appendix 2), the pattern of meditation and personal reflection (Appendix 4), and the liturgies for corporate prayer, and the Wesley Covenant Service (Appendix 6). The order of items in the retreatant’s folder aligned with the sequence of the retreat activities, interspersing note pages with questions for the meditations and the liturgies for the different prayer and worship times. The third main point focused on opportunity and function of one-to-one “spiritual conferencing” or “spiritual direction.” The retreat leader was available for spiritual direction; retreatants were not limited to meeting with the retreat leader, another retreatant could function as a “soul friend” for discussion and prayer together.

The pilot retreat had five (5) meditations present by the retreat leader / spiritual director. In future retreats, the meditations could be presented by someone other than the spiritual director or could be by a combination of people working together on the theme. The function of the meditations was not to teach, preach, or train. The focus is to prompt the minds and hearts of retreatants with thoughts or questions that fuel their personal reflections and prayers, that they might evaluate aspects of their spiritual health, and that

the Holy Spirit might engage them in the transformative process of their spiritual health. The theme and topics for the meditations in the pilot retreat came out of the retreat leader's spiritual journey in personal devotional and academic reading for the Doctor of Ministry courses in Spiritual Formation and Discipleship at Nazarene Theological Seminary during the previous year. The ideas and questions were drawn primarily from Scripture and four reading resources, listed in alphabetical order:

- deSilva, David A., *Praying with John Wesley*, (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2001).
- O'Brien, Kevin, *The Ignatian Adventure: Exploring the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius in Daily Life*, (Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2011).
- Root, Andrew, *The Pastor in a Secular Age: Ministry to People Who No Longer Need a God*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019).
- Smith, James K. A., *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazo Press, 2016).

The retreatant's folder had a page with the basic questions asked in each meditation, followed by a page for personal notes during their time of reflection and prayer. Each meditation also had a visual metaphor to illustrate the topic's focus, e.g. a framed silhouette of a face with "Who Am I?" printed on it, a brain model, a three dimensional red heart, a day planner, and a two-wick clay lantern. The presentation notes are provided in the appendix for each meditation.

As stated previously, this proposal is for creating a pattern of annual Christian spiritual retreats. These annual retreats may follow the model in Appendix Two (2), yet the overall theme and meditation topics would be different each year. A list of potential themes, resources, and topics for ten retreats are outlined in Appendix Five (5). The list is not in a prescribed order and the themes and topics are not definitive, other themes and

topics may arise over time that should be addressed. The purpose of the list is to illustrate that there are variety of themes that will support the pattern of retreats for many years.

After the pilot retreat, a Survey Monkey Questionnaire (Appendix 9, Question 9) sent to all retreatants queried a list of potential future retreat themes. The list of proposed themes and the number indicating interest in that theme were:

<u>Theme</u>	<u># Interested</u>
Henri Nouwen’s <i>The Return of the Prodigal Son</i>	3
Paths to Sacred Listening and Reading	2
Developing a Contemplative Life	2
Reading Scripture for Transformation	3
Developing a Life of Virtuous Temperaments	1
Creating a “Rule of Life”	1
Living in and through the Christian Calendar	3
LifeShapes for a Passionate Life & Disciple-making	3
Francis DeSales’ <i>Introduction to a Devout Life</i>	1
Living the Spiritual Disciplines	5

Appendix Five (5) incorporated some of the queried themes, modified the focus of some, and created some themes not in the survey. Some overlap of topics exists across the nine proposed themes as it may be beneficial to consider topics from multiple perspectives and to revisit them occasionally along the lifelong process of spiritual formation.

The next section, Appendix Six (6), details the varied liturgies used throughout the retreat. As previously stated, we all use liturgies in worship even if we do not call recognize it. The creation of and following an order of service, printing a bulletin, and responsive readings from the hymnal are common forms of liturgy. Each liturgy for the retreat is different, even when the time reoccurs; there are two Morning Prayer (Lauds) times and two Evening Prayer (Compline), yet the liturgy provided is unique for each of those repeated times. The purpose, as stated earlier, is for retreatants to experience ways that the liturgies can vary and still accomplish the same purpose. Admittedly, there is

value in following a repetitive pattern as familiarity opens the mind to experience God's presence without cerebral focus on what to do and say at each moment. Most ministers and laity have learned and committed *The Lord's Prayer* to memory; frequent use of *The Lord's Prayer* allows us to focus on the meaning, the intent, and the application of each aspect in the prayer rather than concentrate on reading each word. This is also true for those who frequently use the liturgies of the Divine Office, Hours of Prayer, as presented in the *Book of Common Prayer* and other liturgy sources. However, there are differences across liturgy sources and there are creative new liturgies being produced. All of these have merit. The intent of these retreats is not to produce mono-typical Christians, everyone doing the same thing, the same way all the time. This is not possible since each person is uniquely created with unique graces, gifts, and talents to minister in unique ways to other uniquely created people. Therefore, the liturgies presented in Appendix 6 were the ones used at the pilot retreat. Future retreats will continue to use some of these liturgies and addition liturgies will be introduced from other sources and even created for the corporate prayer and worship times.

Since the focus of the retreats is for a time of renewal and refreshing in the process of spiritual formation, the Wesley Covenant Service was the final corporate prayer and worship service. John Wesley created such a service as an annual expression of renewal and recommitment of our covenant with God. The intent for this service at this point in the retreat is to provide a means for each person to commit to God whatever was revealed through the Holy Spirit during the retreat and to covenant to walk continually in that truth with the help of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Immediately following the covenant service is participation in the means of grace, as Wesley characterized Holy

Communion, the Eucharist, which compels us and feeds us in our journey of Christian Faith. Although the liturgies for the covenant service and Eucharist may vary across retreats, these two parts forming a service of Word and Table are intended to remain as the culminating acts of worship on the retreats.

Spiritual Direction: During and Post Retreat

The pilot retreat introduced the concept of spiritual direction or “spiritual conferencing” as a tool in spiritual formation with the assistance of a spiritual director or an *anamchara*, soul friend. However, this aspect of the proposal needed further expansion, which the components of Appendix Seven (7) provide. The expansion is of this aspect is in three parts: one-to-one spiritual direction, small group spiritual direction during the retreat, and Fourth Days. Although retreatants and ministers on the East Ohio District are not required to participate in any or all these aspects of spiritual direction, the hope is that ministers will avail themselves to each aspect and that the expanded explanation of the nature of these components and promotion of them through the retreat will encourage them to participate in it. Appendix Seven (7) provides a description of the general principles in spiritual direction and gives guidelines for interacting with a spiritual director one-to-one and engaging in the small group spiritual direction during the retreat. The retreat schedule was modified, as stated earlier, to include time for the small groups following personal solitude for reflection and prayer. A reading list of resources on spiritual direction, with a couple written by Nazarene authors, are provided for retreatants to discover more about spiritual direction through their own study.

The final component of Appendix Seven (7) is a description of Fourth Days. The retreats provide opportunity to introduce concepts related to spiritual formation and to

reflect and pray about what God is saying to the retreatant personally. However, a critical aspect of formations is what happens in daily life after encounters with God. This was an essential and vital aspect of the early Wesleyan movement, which led to profound changes in individuals and society as it spread. Wesley's sobering challenge in a letter to Alexander Mather on August 16, 1777 remains with us today:

Our preachers, many of them, are fallen. They are not spiritual. They are not alive to God. They are soft, enervated, fearful of shame, toil, hardship. ... Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth.

The East Ohio District has 131 ministers today and the District's churches are on a twenty-year attendance decline. God can and will do amazingly, wonderful things, more than we can imagine, when we are spiritually healthy, fearing only sin and desiring only God.

Appendix Eight (8) is an assortment of supplemental handouts that were provided at the pilot retreat, which could be used during personal times during or post-retreat. Two of the handouts relate to historical means of self-examination, one by John Wesley and one associated with Jesuit spirituality, the Examen. Two focus on prayer, one provides a variety of resources and Scriptures on prayer and the other is a pattern for an hour of prayer, which can be used for a personal or corporate prayer time. The final handout is a guideline for creating a 'Rule of Life.' The 'Rule of Life' is a helpful tool for outlining how one will continue to live a spiritually healthy life; this would also be useful for accountability with others.

Pilot Retreat Survey

Following the pilot retreat, retreatants received a survey through Survey Monkey. The survey did not solicit identifying information about the retreatants, so all responses were anonymous. The survey had ten (10) questions, with force choice responses and opportunity to add a comment on each question. Of the thirteen (13) retreatants, nine (9) responded to the retreat; however, not all answered each question. The data for each question, i.e. choices, number of responses, and percentages for each choice, are in Appendix Nine (9). The comments are presented here as they were entered on Survey Monkey without editing. The questions ranged from evaluation of the facility, evaluation of the mediations, impact of the personal and gathered times of prayer, response to the liturgies, impact of the Wesley Covenant Service, applicability of the retreat to their lives and others, and future retreat topics.

Chapter Summary

The narrative presented in this chapter and artifact in the Appendices One (1) through Nine (9) have focused on a method of fostering the spiritual health of ministers on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene. This proposal is two-pronged. The first component is annual Christian spiritual retreats using a guided or directed format to introduce and reinforce topics of spiritual formation through mediation presentation and personal reflection and prayer. The second component is a ministry of spiritual direction during the retreats and throughout the year between retreats through one-to-one spiritual directors, mentors, or an anamchara (soul friend) and small group spiritual direction for on-going support and accountability in the Fourth Days.

A pilot retreat of this proposal was conducted in January 2020. Some modifications to this proposal followed that retreat, specifically an expansion of the

spiritual direction component during the retreat and development of a Fourth Days emphasis. Also, the artifact was expanded with ideas for nine subsequent retreats. Conclusions from the post-pilot survey and other considerations and recommendations will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Research on the spiritual health of pastors in the United States report significant rates of attrition across all denominations, including the Church of the Nazarene. Ken Crow noted that their investment in preparation and then early withdrawal from minister is an important loss to the person and the Church. Even those who continue in ministry report that an overwhelming majority have considered leaving the ministry and less than one quarter are happy in their relationship with Christ. These findings indicated that concern for the spiritual health of those in ministry is critical. Research within the Church of Nazarene by Ireland and Selvidge showed that significant percentages of pastors spend fifteen or less minutes reading Scripture for personal enrichment and five minutes or less in prayer daily, do not participate in support and accountability groups, do not have a mentor or spiritual director, and do not attend personal spiritual retreats. Impact of spiritual health illness carries over to emotional, physical, and moral health and is essential to recovery in those areas of life. One of the results of this issue is that thirty-two persons surrendered their credentials during the past forty-nine years on the East Ohio District, of which three were in the 2018-19 District Year.

The Church of the Nazarene depends upon the spiritual health of its ministers and requires that ministers complete twenty (20) lifelong learning hours annually following ordination in the areas of content, context, competency, and character. However, the Church has not established a requirement or guideline for a balance of those hours that would ensure that ministers maintain a focus on their character, i.e. spiritual health. In 2019, the Church of the Nazarene developed an implementation guide for restoration of

clergy and East Ohio District Superintendent, Rev. David B. Lutz, presented several changes: (1) assigning a mentor to those preparing for ordination, (2) changes to the Ministers' and their Spouse Retreat, (3) revamping of the Zones and TEAM meetings for ministers. In addition to those changes, he granted permission change the *Pastors' Breakaway Retreat* to *Pastors' Getaway Retreat: A Time for Spiritual Renewal and Refreshing*, which was a pilot for the proposal presented in this dissertation.

The thesis was that district-sponsored directed spiritual retreats and on-going spiritual direction for guidance, support, and accountability will foster spiritual formation and thus improve spiritual health in the lives of clergy on the East Ohio District of the Church of the Nazarene. The premise was that directed Christian spiritual retreats create a vehicle for engaging with classical and Wesleyan spirituality that is intentionally focused on spiritual formation through personal and corporate practices. In addition, periodic participation in spiritual direction with a one-to-one spiritual director, mentor, and *anamchara*, and in small group spiritual direction for support and accountability within a safe, redemptive environment will facilitate the working out of our salvation and sanctification in the Fourth Days of ministers' lives.

A narrative of the artifact was presented in chapter four (4) and in appendices one (1) through seven (7). These included discussion on the promotion of the pilot retreat and the facility, the schedule during the retreat, the resources used to develop the five (5) retreat meditations and the meditation presentation notes, the liturgies used for corporate prayer and worship, principles and procedures for one-to-one and small group spiritual direction and Fourth Days follow-up post-retreat. To support the proposal for annual future retreats, an outline for nine themes, resources, and the meditation topics is in

Appendix Five (5). The narrative on the pilot retreat noted that the schedule in Appendix Two (2) was revised from what occurred during the pilot retreat by the addition of times for small group spiritual direction. This reflected a post-retreat re-development in the proposal for increased emphasis of on-going spiritual direction, which John Wesley promoted through class and band meetings. Supplemental handouts provided at the pilot retreat, Appendix Eight (8), reflect the intent to continue to resource retreatants and participants in spiritual direction with ideas and materials to facilitate personal and small group support and accountability.

The survey data following the pilot retreat in Appendix Nine (9) warrants some additional discussion. Although this dissertation was not a quantitative or qualitative empirical research study, a brief survey of retreatants at the pilot project provided information that is useful in evaluating this proposal, even with the small sampling size. Over seventy-seven percent (77.78%) reported that they received moderate to significant benefit from the retreat. At least seventy percent (70%) ranked the impact of each meditation as a four (4) or five (5), with five as the highest possible; the range of ranking at that level was seventy-one percent (71.43%) to eighty-six percent (86.72%). One retreatant repeatedly rated every mediation with a one (1) and commented that the reason for the low rating was that discussion between the retreatants was not allowed. Even though it was stated by the presenter that the intent was for each retreatant to use the meditation for personal reflection and encounter with God rather than conduct group discussion and debate about the information. This was a change from past retreats and pastors' meetings that provide information followed by dialogue instead of prompting for personal transformation. This issue reappeared in the evaluation of the presenter, in which

seventy-seven percent (77.78%) indicated that the retreat director was prepared and engaging, thirty-three percent (33.33%) marked that the retreat director was well prepared and presentations were clear and thought-provoking, yet fifty-five percent (55.56%) clicked the box for 'not engaging or open to others' thoughts/opinions.' It is hoped that revision of the schedule for small group spiritual direction, which should provide cross-feedback between retreatants on their personal reflections, will remedy a significant aspect of this concern. Also, this change in style will required continued explanation and participation in the retreat format to become understanding of the intent. At least sixty-six percent (66.67%) found the personal time for reflection and prayer to be an adequate amount of time and fifty-five percent (55.56%) learned to appreciate aspects of the liturgy in corporate prayer and sensed God's presence through it. Regarding the Wesley Covenant Service, sixty-six percent (66.67%) stated that it was the first time to participate in that service and the same percentage indicated that it was an appropriate closing service to the retreat. The following comments showed recognition of the retreat's intent:

- Back home, I defined it as a 48-hour guided prayer meeting. It was good to revisit that kind of experience to augment my normal devotional experience.
- Helped me to refocus and to re-center my heart, mind, and soul on Christ. Our daily life, including church, often times turns louder than focus from Christ and what can be through him.
- I thought the intentionality of spiritual disciplines from Wesley helped with a practical guide!
- It allowed me to pursue the Lord in a variety of ways.
- It was great to expand the various types of prayer.
- I enjoyed my personal time. Just God and me. It was a very special time with nothing to distract me. Let's have another one.
- I had a wonderful time. Great to getaway.

Overall, the pilot retreat supported continued development of this proposal, especially

with expansion of the spiritual direction component during the retreat and post-retreat.

During and following the pilot retreat, it became apparent that there are some who will resist formats, principles, and concepts presented through retreats; they may even deny the value of classical spirituality and the role of spiritual direction in Wesleyan-Nazarene spirituality. One retreatant commented, “I left the Catholic environment because of sheer boredom in it” and another said, “This is not who we are as Nazarenes in this date and time,” even though nothing in the retreat was taken from Catholic sources and several aspects were drawn from works of John Wesley. However, the majority found benefits through the retreat and there were several pastors on the District who had expressed strong support for what was being created, but because of personal circumstances they were not able to participate in the pilot retreat, which indicate that this spiritual formation practice is beneficial to promoting spiritual health.

With one hundred and thirty-one ministers on the East Ohio District, it will be improbable for one offering of a retreat annually to accommodate the need. To meet this need, it will be necessary to offer a retreat at two or three different times of each year. Formation of a retreat team for planning, developing addition leaders for presenting the meditations, recruiting multiple persons who can serve as spiritual directors and mentors on the East Ohio District, would be an appropriate consideration for the District. The District Superintendent already announced a plan for assigning mentors to those in the ordination process, so this aspect could be coordinated with that work of the District Ministerial Studies and Credentials Board. Since the Manual charges that Board with oversight of lifelong learning by District ministers, it would be an appropriate approach.

As others assist in the process of planning and directing the retreats, there are

several aspects that are considered as key components to ensuring perseverance of the model presented in this proposal. First, the retreat's focus is to be an encounter with God, thus setting aside time and space away from normal activities is important. This includes detachment from outside disturbances, i.e. powering off technology for cell phone communication and internet connections to digital media and email. Another key concept is the importance of silence to listen to God through Scripture and prayer. The scheduled meditations are suggestive presentations of Scripture and spiritual ideas for personal reflection; these are not preaching, teaching, or a group discussion on a sub-theme of the retreat. The meditation is intended to be a launching point for retreatants to engage with God about it, to enable the Holy Spirit to speak into it, and to provide a reference point for further spiritual conversations and direction on a personal level. The corporate prayer times are another means of presenting Scripture and prayer for connecting with God, listening to The Living Word, and communing with the body of Christ in word and spirit. The liturgies are means to guiding and facilitating this practice. The final critical component of this proposal is engagement in the practice of spiritual direction. This should be offered during and between retreats through one-on-one conversations with a spiritual director and peer-group spiritual direction, i.e. the small group discussions during the retreat and the follow-up groups between retreats. These key components of solitude, silence, and spiritual direction provide the primary practices to facilitate on-going spiritual health as discussed in this proposal.

This past year's challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic on churches, as with other entities in society, which has led to restrictions, curtailment, and in some cases prohibition of in-person gatherings. This situation has prompted the consideration of

alternative means of promoting spiritual health. For example, the viability of developing a remote retreat format through remote technologies would not have been considered previously. However, retreatants could gather online for the meditations and corporate prayer and worship, be discharged to spend time in personal reflection and prayer off-line, meet again for small group spiritual direction in online room, and one-to-one spiritual direction could be arranged online, also. Dissemination of materials either through email, DropBox, or postal mail would be in advance of the retreat so retreatants could print, receive hard-copy, or use electronic copy of the materials throughout the retreat. A missing component would be fellowship around the table at mealtimes and in free time, yet some creative ways of connecting could be developed.

A final consideration is in the question, “If this is an appropriate and viable recommendation for spiritual health in ministers on the East Ohio District, why not elsewhere also?” It is the personal view of this author that the Church of the Nazarene should examine its role in the lifelong development of spiritual formation of its ministers. The requirement of a minimum of twenty (20) lifelong learning hours annually is an appropriate foundation that need further consideration. However, without a guideline for a focus on spiritual health, it risks ignoring the importance of continued spiritual qualifications and manner of life in its ministers. It would seem appropriate to create a recommendation that at least five (5) hours annual be related to spiritual health development, i.e. the character category. Those hours could be accomplished through participation in retreats or personal reading for spiritual formation, meeting with a spiritual director, meeting with a small group for study, support, and accountability, or a combination of all the above.

In conclusion, spiritual health should be a significant concern of everyone who has accepted the call of God to serve as ministers for the building of the kingdom of God. Our spiritual health will be a lifelong intentional pursuit of transformation into a manner of life characterized by godliness and Christlikeness. Scripture instructs us and it has been the practice throughout the history of the Church, and emphasized in Wesleyan spirituality, that the Christian journey is not lived as a solo venture; in fact, nobody can do on their own. We are called to work together, with the grace of God, as the body of Christ for the salvation and sanctification of each other. In doing so, we bring glory to God. The Church who has recognized our call, granted us authority to serve, and opportunities to serve in ministry is a partner with us in our continued development as ministers and as Christians. The proposal presented through the previous pages has outlined issues in the spiritual health of clergy, the meaning and nature of spiritual formation, and a means to facilitate a transformation in spiritual health through specific practices in spiritual formation. The specific proposal has developed of an artifact for the East Ohio District to utilize for district sponsored annual Christian spiritual retreats and spiritual direction for support and accountability to facilitate the spiritual health of its clergy. This proposal does not, nor can it, ensure that ministers' lives will be transformed into Christlikeness; however, the East Ohio District can improve its role in the on-going spiritual formation of its clergy by providing avenues and promoting practices for ministers to connect with the Holy Spirit in the ongoing transformative work of God's grace toward Christlikeness. This proposal is one means to accomplish that objective.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Pilot Retreat Flyer

EOD Pastors' Getaway:

A Time for Spiritual Renewal and Refreshing

January 27 – 29, 2020

*Start the New Year
with a fresh view on
life & ministry!*



Sandscrest Conference & Retreat Center – 143 Sandscrest Dr., White Plains, NY



Check-in: Monday, January 27, 2:00 – 4:00pm

Check-out: Wednesday, January 29, 1:00pm

All lodging (2 person/room), 6 meals, and activities for \$1,000

(Clergy couples serving the same church, 50% discount on 2nd person)

Limited financial assistance available upon written request to the coordinator

For more information/questions, contact Rev. William Coker, Jr. (Powder Mill Church)

Send Registration by Dec. 15, 2019 to Rev. Michael Adkins, EOD '19

----- (cut) -----

EOD Pastors' Getaway Registration

Name: _____ Roommate: _____

100

(Other person must list title)

Special dietary needs: _____

Any special accommodations needed: _____

Appendix 2: A Retreat Schedule Model

Monday

<u>Time</u>	<u>Retreat Offering*</u>	<u>Location</u>
2-4:00pm	Arrival: Check-in, settle into room, explore	Main House Foyer
5:30pm	Retreat Orientation	Main House Living Room
6:00pm	Dinner	Dining Area
7:00pm	1st Meditation	Main House Living Room
7:30pm	Personal Quiet Reflection Time	Anywhere
8:00pm	Evening Prayer	Chapel
8:30pm	Small Group Spiritual Direction	Group Consensus

Tuesday

7:00am	Morning Prayer	Chapel
8:00am	Breakfast	Dining Area
9:00am	2nd Meditation	Main House Living Room
9:30am	Personal time (<i>spiritual conferencing**</i>)	Anywhere
11:30am	Small Group Spiritual Direction	Group Consensus
12:00pm	Lunch	Dining Area
1:00pm	Midday Prayer	Chapel
1:30pm	Personal Quiet Reflection Time	Anywhere
2:00pm	3rd Meditation	Main House Living Room
2:30pm	Personal Time (<i>spiritual conferencing**</i>)	Anywhere
5:00pm	Small Group Spiritual Direction	Group Consensus
6:00pm	Dinner	Dining Area
7:00pm	4th Meditation	Main House Living Room
7:30pm	Personal Quiet Reflection Time	Anywhere
8:00pm	Evening Prayer	Chapel
8:30pm	Bonfire: Shedding/Discarding & Sharing	Outside Bonfire Pit

Wednesday

7:00am	Morning Prayer	Chapel
8:00am	Breakfast	Dining Area
9:00am	5th Meditation	Main House Living Room
9:30am	Personal Quiet Reflection Time	Anywhere
10:30am	Wesley Covenant Service and Eucharist	Chapel
12:00pm	Small Group Spiritual Direction	Group Consensus
1:00pm	Lunch	Dining Area
1:30pm	Check-out	Main House Foyer

***Bold Retreat Offerings** are the significant gathering times and the other offerings are provided to enhance your retreat experience. No offering is mandatory attendance; however, maximum participation is encouraged for the fullest retreat experience.

**Retreat Director is available for private spiritual direction/conferencing or prayer on any matter. You may schedule a time or check the schedule on the Director's door for availability. You may also coordinate to meet during the Personal Times with any other retreator whom you have or desire to have as a spiritual mentor. The Small Groups are assigned to provide diversity of experiences and perspectives; changing groups requires consultation with the Retreat Director. There is a guide on spiritual direction in the folder.

If you plan to fast any meal, please inform the kitchen as soon as possible to allow for adaptation of the meal preparations.

Appendix 3: Pilot Retreat's Orientation Notes

- Any issues with anyone's accommodations?
- Note the schedule of the "Retreat Offerings" – Attendance is not "required" to anything; however, all the offerings, including the meditations, are intentionally designed for personal spiritual deepening and renewal. The schedule notes:
 - Gathering times for devotional meditations, corporate prayer, discussion, and meals.
 - Personal time for rest and self-directed activity. Using the time for reflection and prayer is the heart of a spiritual retreat.
- We encourage everyone to be "tech-free" during the retreat for solitude from the world so we can be dedicated and focused on God's presence.
- Our folder has details for all gathered spiritual activities, plus extra resources at the back that you may explore at your leisure.
 - The "liturgy" or structure for each of our corporate prayer services is intentionally different to provide us with a variety of experiences.
 - If you would be willing to be an Officiant for any prayer service or reader of Scripture (Tuesday/Wednesday morning prayer and *Wesley Covenant Service*), just let me know beforehand.
 - You may want to familiarize yourself with liturgy of the adapted *Wesley Covenant Service* prior to Wednesday morning.

- Immediately after the *Wesley Covenant Service* we will celebrate the Eucharist; Intinction will be the method of serving the elements.
- Final comment: “spiritual conferencing” was the term used by John Wesley for “spiritual mentoring” or “spiritual direction.” The concept behind is different than discipleship or counseling; it is combination of spiritual listening, joint reflection, prayer-partnering, and suggestive guidance. A related term in the Celtic language is an ‘*anamchara*,’ which means ‘soul friend.’ I offer myself to be available for “spiritual conference” or an ‘*anamchara*,’ there are times in the schedule for that purpose. Also, you are free to connect during those times with any other retreatant who has been or will be that kind of person in your life.

PS: I welcome anyone’s comments during or after the retreat about any aspect of the Getaway Retreat’s format or content. The EOD’s DS did not approve in advance anything that I created or say during the retreat, so he is exempt of liability. LOL!

Appendix 4: Pilot Retreat Meditation Notes

1st Meditation – Presentation Notes

Who Am I?

- What is the story of my life?
- What has shaped / formed me?
- How do I define / describe myself?

Illustration: Silhouette image

Jn. 1:19, 22 – Priests and Levites from Jerusalem ask John the Baptist – **“Who are you?”**

How do we respond to that question when asked: **“Who are you?”**

- William Baggett Coker, Jr. – how do I identify myself?
- A son/daughter – a husband/wife – a parent – a citizen – a pastor/professional
- How Peculiar, MO determined its name as a town
- We are called to be a “peculiar people”

The movie: “Force Majeur” by Swedish director, Ruben Ostlund? – deals with stereotypic family protection expectations of males & females in response to an external threat.

People have expectations of how we are “supposed to be” based our identity – and their “norms” for that identity

When living in TN & MS, my wife would frequently hear – you are not from around here, are you? She frequently responded: “my husband is from MS”

Ways to identify yourself:

- Tools like Meyers-Briggs, StrengthsFinder, Temperament Scales, & other forms are used to “identify” a person’s personality, talents, & other traits
- Life stories – individual experiences – influence one’s character profile
- Reflections on biblical characters can be used to describe our life patterns

Henri Nouwen’s *The Return of the Prodigal Son* looked at ways he saw himself in the younger son, elder son, & eventually the father (we can too)

As we go into our personal time of reflection, scripture reading, & prayer - one of the things you might do is spend some time thinking about the questions listed above and consider how you define yourself – in the ways you live out each day and react to circumstances in your daily life – what “stories” of your past are hidden within your perspectives, biases, attitudes, and practices?

You may not even be cognizant of their presence or their significance; however, God helps us if we are patient to listen not only about our past but also about our present identity.

2nd Meditation – Presentation Notes

What Do I Desire Most?

- What do I ‘think’ that I love?
- What are my habits and dispositions?
- What are the rituals of my life?

Illustration – Brain model

Two of John the Baptist’s disciples left him when he saw Jesus and said “Look, here is the Lamb of God!” and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned & said to them, **“What are you looking for?”** (Jn. 1:36-38 NRSV)

This is a fundamental question that Jesus poses to those who follow Him, though sometimes asked in diverse ways: “Are you going to follow My way of thinking and living?” and “Do you love Me?”

Contrary to Descartes proposition – “I think, therefore I am” which implies that “You are what you think.” Thus, one would be limited by what they think or deluded by false mental projections.

However, the primary evidence of what we want most in life is NOT reflected by our thinking, but by our actions – by our patterns of activity!

Movie: “Stalker” - a 1979 Soviet science fiction art film directed by Andrei Tarkovsky with a screenplay written by Boris and Arkady Strugatsky. The film tells of an illegal expedition led by a figure known as the "Stalker" (a guide) who takes two clients—a melancholic ‘Writer’ seeking inspiration, and a ‘Professor’ seeking scientific discovery—to a mysterious restricted site, the "Zone," and to “The Room” that grants a

one's innermost desires.

Standing in front of “The Room” – they are afraid to enter => what if what they think they desire, isn't what they truly desire?

How can we know what we truly desire – if it is not what we “think” we desire?

- What are the evidences of our lives? What activities fill our time / energies?
- What do we invest ourselves in? Jesus' asks again: **What are you seeking?**

3rd Meditation – Presentation Notes

What Do I Want to Love Most?

- What rhythms of life might help promote it?
- Who might help hold me accountable to it?

Illustration – Heart (Philip. 1:9-11)

Augustine – the “heart” is the seat of longings & desires -> not mushy sentimentalism of our current culture, BUT the “gut” hungers / appetites that compel one in life’s actions

John Wesley – “*orthokardia*” (right heart) => loving God with whole being & loving others is the essence of holiness, true Christianity

- Love is a choice – a pattern of intentional action
- John Wesley – contrasted virtues (temperaments of *orthokardia*) with vices

How does one develop a virtuous life?

- Imitation (1 Cor. 11:1; Philip. 3:7)
- Practice – intentional rhythms, routines, & rituals enacted over & over
- Wesley – daily prayer focus (see *Praying with John Wesley*)

1914 – Congress, shortly after the *Titantic* sinking, investigated a nautical tragedy of the merchant vessel *Nantucket* ramming & eventually sinking of the steamship *Monroe*. They charged the *Nantucket*’s captain with 41 sailors losing their lives in the frigid waters. Then the *NY Times* discovered that the *Monroe*’s captain used a steering

compass that deviated by 2 ° from the standard magnetic compass. The captain had not adjusted his compass in his year as captain of the *Monroe*. That slight difference was critical – life ‘Δ’ changing!

What are the rhythms, routines, & rituals that keep our heart calibrated?

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and work with Me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace” – (Mt. 11:28-29, [The Message]).

Sondra Wheeler - “The greatest risk in ministry is not burnout or moral failure in itself; it’s cynicism, loss of faith.”

A. Root – We arrived in a secular age not b/c people don’t see church attendance as necessary, but b/c the idea of a personal God who orders & acts in the cosmos has become unbelievable. Until modernity, people saw the Xian calendar’s holy days as “wormholes” to access/bend time backward to sacred events. Pastors were ushers through the wormholes of sacred space & time. Gradually the Church allowed the ‘open wormholes’ to be paved over.

4th Meditation – Presentation Notes

What Rival Patterns / Practices Exist in My Life?

- What needs to be discarded / eliminated?
- What needs to be limited / minimized?
- What needs to be adjusted / adapted?

(Write or draw on next page to put in the bonfire later tonight)

Illustration – Day Planner (yes... I use this non-tech system)

A lesson learned from piano, typing, & sports → **form matters**

Paul – “Do not be conformed to this world, but 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” (Rom. 12:2 NRSV).

Spiritual trans-formation requires an intentional heart & intentional practices

Destin Sandlin’s video: “The Backwards Brain Bicycle” – when you turn the handlebars to the left, the front wheel turns right, and vis-a-versa. He proves the point – **Old habits die hard!** – it took 8 months of practicing to retrain his brain; in fact, he then could not ride a standard bicycle. However, his 6-y/o son learned to do it in two weeks.

- For every discipline that we want to learn => something must be “unlearned”
- Col. 3 – Paul contrasts “putting to death” with “putting on the new self”
- Spiritual disciplines are a workout of for the ‘spiritual heart’ – unless practiced, they are NOT our natural patterns of daily activity.

You have heard people brag about being “multi-taskers;” however, that is a misnomer – one can alternate quickly between tasks, but the same part of the brain CANNOT do two tasks simultaneously, you must prioritize.

- Might “shift gears” quickly but cannot be in 1st & 2nd simultaneously
- SOMETHING MUST GIVE – may have 2nd priority – but the brain & body cannot serve 2 masters!
- Having committed to our true love – determine what to do with “other loves.”

•

5th Meditation – Presentation Notes

What is Christian Community?

- Do I live in Christian community?
- How do I experience community?
- How do I demonstrate community?

Illustration: 2-wick lantern (one side is love for God, the other love of others; the fuel is God's love (the Trinitarian example))

African Proverb: *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*

The Trinity is the biblical model of "community" – where each is equal and supportive of each other.

Imagine prior to creation, they said to each other: "Our life together is so good; why don't we create a universe where we can invite others to share it."

This "community" is one of love – love for God & each other

There is no self-centered ambition because: *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear"* (1 Jn. 4:18 NRSV).

We work out ways of living & working together

2 Pet. 1:3-4 => invitation for us to be "partakers of the divine nature" → community

The motivation of community = love → promotes fellowship, one body in Christ

(Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-26; Eph. 4:4-6)

Believe / trust in God => community where the Spirit dwells in our heart

“the Church of God ... sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together will all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 1:2)

A community of love transcends family & local community => global fellowship

The Church is local, District, global, & universal – across all denominations.

Intention community requires attention & effort

It's the Christian way to be caring friends in the Lord & let God overcome all fears so mutual love prevails.

Appendix 5: Working Themes for Subsequent Retreats

Spiritual life is a lifelong journey of continual transformation, listening and adapting to the Holy Spirit in new and deeper ways. Below are potential, working themes for future retreats and meditations. They are not arranged in any sequence of importance. The purpose of the retreats should continue to be a time for retreatants to getaway and encounter God. To this end, the themes and meditations will not attempt to be intense educational or training sessions, but brief presentations of basic concepts and questions to provide retreatants with potential ideas for reflection and prayerful consideration of the applications for their own life. Retreatants will be informed of the suggested resources that they may examine them prior to or after the retreat for more in-depth processing of the information.

- Prayer and Wesley's Life of Virtue

Retreat resources:

- deSilva, David A., *Praying with John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2001).
- Whaling, Frank, ed., "John Wesley's Spirituality: A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week (first printed in 1733)," 77-84. *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1981).

Meditation topics:

- Love for God
- Love for Neighbor
- Humility and Submission
- Self-denial and Fasting
- Gratitude

- A Sacred Rhythm of Life

Retreat Resources:

- Ruth Haley Barton, *Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010).
- Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006).
- Jean-Pierre De Caussade, *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* translated by Kitty Muggeridge from the 1741 text of *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1981).
- Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York, NY: The Noonday Press, 1951).

Meditation topics:

- Why Solitude and Silence?
 - Sacramental Living in the Present
 - Rhythm of the Christian Calendar
 - The Pendulum of Personal Life
 - Living Sabbath
- Living the Spiritual Disciplines

Retreat Resource:

- Richard J. Foster and Emilie Griffin, *Spiritual Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups on the Twelve Spiritual Disciplines* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2000).
- Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, 20th Anniversary Edition (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998).
- Richard J. Foster and Kathryn A. Yanni, *Celebrating the Disciplines: A Journal Workbook to Accompany Celebration of Discipline* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992).

- Maxie Dunnam, *The Workbook on Spiritual Disciplines* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1984).
- Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988).
- Joseph D. Driskill, *Protestant Spiritual Exercises: Theology, History, and Practice* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999).

Meditation topics:

- Freedom of Order
 - Internal Patterns for Living
 - Outward Practices of Life
 - Living in the Community of Faith
 - Living from the Community of Faith
- LifeShapes for a Passionate Life

Retreat Resources:

- Mike Breen and Walt Kallestad, *A Passionate Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NexGen, 2005).
- Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture*, Third Edition (Greenville, SC: 3dmPublishing, 2017).

Meditation topics:

- Kairos Circle of Learning
 - Three-Dimensional Deeper Living
 - My Personal Calling
 - A Definitive of Prayer Life
 - Spiritual Health
- Visual Scripture Reading: Rembrandt's Return of the Prodigal Son

Retreat resources:

- print of Rembrandt's "Return of the Prodigal Son"

- Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (New York, NY: Image Books, 1994). (Recommend reading the book prior to the retreat.)

Meditation topics:

- Visio Divina: Encountering Rembrandt's Painting
- The Younger Son
- The Elder Son
- The Father
- Ministry's Call – Becoming the Father
- Uniquely Created by God

Retreat Resources:

- Alan Hirsch, *5Q: Reactivating the Original Intelligence and Capacity of the Body of Christ* (Atlanta, GA: 100Movements Publishing, 2017).
- Albert L. Winseman and Donald O. Clifton and Curt Liesveld, *Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-Given Talents and Inspire Your Community*, Third Edition (New York, NY: Gallup Press, 2008).
- M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation, expanded by Ruth Haley Barton* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016).
- Maria Beesing and Robert j. Nogosek and Patrick H. OLeary, *The Enneagram: A Journey of Self Discovery* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, Inc., 1984).
- Todd Wilson, *The Enneagram Goes to Church: Wisdom for Leadership, Worship, and Congregational Life* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2021).

Meditation topics:

- My Call and Gift(s) of Grace
- My Unique Strengths
- My Unique Personality

- Interacting with Uniquely Different People
- Putting It All Together
- Prayer: Communing with our Father

Retreat Resources:

- Robert Benson, *In Constant Prayer* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008).
- Richard J. Foster, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992).
- Richard J. Foster, *Sanctuary of the Soul: Journey into Meditative Prayer* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011).
- Walter Wangerin Jr., *Whole Prayer: Speaking and Listening to God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1998).

Meditation topics:

- Daily Prayer in The Divine Office
- A Prayer Cycle: We Speak, God Listens, God Speaks, We Listen
- Praying Inward, Upward, and Outward
- Meditative/Contemplative Prayer
- Practices in Prayer
- Reading for Transformation

Resources:

- Michael J. Christensen, *C.S. Lewis on Scripture: His Thoughts on the Nature of Biblical Inspiration, the Role of Revelation and the Question of Inerrancy* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1979).
- Joel B. Green and David F. Watson, eds., *Wesley, Wesleyans, and Reading Bible as Scripture* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012).
- M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2001).

- Richard P. Thompson and Thomas Jay Oord, eds., *The Bible Tells Me So: Reading the Bible as Scripture* (Nampa, ID: SacraSage Press, 2011)

Meditation topics:

- John Wesley on Scripture
- C.S. Lewis on Scripture
- Lectio Divina: Information v. Transformation
- Contemplative Reading of Scripture
- Sacred “Non-Scripture” Reading

- The Devout Life

Retreat resource:

- Wendy M. Wright, *A Retreat with Frances de Sales, Jane de Chantal & Aelred of Rievaulx: Befriending Each Other in God* (Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1996).
- St. Francis De Sales, *Philothea, or An Introduction to the Devout Life* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1923).

Meditation topics:

- Purifying the Soul
- Means of Grace: Prayer, Scripture, and Holy Communion
- Practice of Virtue
- Spiritual Friendship
- Spiritual Examination

- Additional resources for developing retreats:

A series by St. Anthony Messenger Press called: *A Retreat with ...*

- Leslie J. Hoppe, *A Retreat with Matthew: Going Beyond the Law*
- Stephen C. Doyle, *A Retreat with Mark: Embracing Discipleship*
- Barbara E. Reid, *A Retreat with Luke: Stepping Out on the Word of God.*
- Raymond E. Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist: That You May*

Have Life.

- Linus Mundy, *A Retreat with Desert Mystics: Thirsting for the Reign of God.*
- Robert Durback, *A Retreat with Henri Nouwen: Reclaiming Our Humanity.*
- Anthony T. Padovano, *A Retreat with Thomas Merton: Becoming Who We Are.*
- Murray Bodo & Susan Saint Sing, *A Retreat with Francis & Clare of Assisi: Following Our Pilgrim Hearts.*
- and others ...

Resources from retreats led by Evelyn Underhill:

- *Light of Christ* (London, UK: Longmans, Green and Co., 1944).
- *Abba: Meditations based on the Lord's Prayer* (London, UK: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940).
- *The School of Charity: Meditations on the Christian Creed* (Harrisburg, PH: Morehouse Publishing, 1991).
- *The Spiritual Life* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse Barlow, 1955).

Others:

- Nancy Ferguson, *Retreats for Renewal: 5 models for intergenerational weekends* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2008).
- Rueben P. Job, *A Guide to Retreat for All God's Sheperds* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994).
- Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck, *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1983).
- Ben Campbell Johnson and Paul H. Lang, *Time Away: A Guide to Personal Retreat* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2010).
- Penny Roker, *At Home with God: How to go on retreat without going away – a programme and guide* (Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press, 2009).

- Norman Shawchuck and Rueben Job, *A Guide to Prayer for All Who Seek God* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2003).

Appendix 6: Liturgies on Retreat

These liturgies are adapted from several sources, which are referenced when the text is taken from a specific source. If not designated, then the order of the liturgy has been adapted to provide participants with a diverse range of ordered prayer services that may be used personally or corporately within their ministries. Throughout the liturgies, the normal type designates that which is read by the Officiant and the **bold** type is spoken by all worshippers. Instructions are in *(parentheses and italic type)*; small caps type indicates sections of a liturgy. Readings from the Psalms utilize The New Coverdale Psalter translation, all other Scripture readings are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

Monday Compline – Evening Prayer

Call to Prayer

The Lord Almighty grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end. **Amen.**

Our help is in the name of the Lord, **the Maker of heaven and earth.**

Psalm 134 – Ecce nunc

Behold now, praise the Lord, **all you servants of the Lord,**

You that stand by night in the house of the Lord, **even in the courts of the house of our
God.**

Lift Your hands to the sanctuary **and sing praises unto the Lord.**

The Lord who made heaven and earth **give you blessing out of Zion.**

Gloria Patri

(Sing the Gloria Patri)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen, Amen.

Holy Scripture Reading

(Read one or both of the following verses)

“Yet You, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by Your name; do not forsake us” (Jer. 14:9).

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and

work with Me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I will not lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matt. 11:28-30, The Message).

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

(A period of silence my follow.)

Lord, have mercy upon us. **Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. AMEN.

O Lord, hear our prayer; **and let our cry come to You.**

Let us pray.

(Worshippers may lift their petitions and thanksgivings, ending each with "Lord, hear our prayer." After individual prayers have concluded:)

A Collect

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we who are wearied by the changes and challenges of this life may rest in Your eternal changelessness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Nunc Dimittis – The Song of Simeon

**Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
according to Your word.**

For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples;

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to Your people Israel (Luke 2:29-32, ESV).

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Benediction

Almighty and merciful Lord God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us and keep us, this night and evermore. **Amen.**

Tuesday Lauds – Morning Prayer

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Philip. 1:2).

Dearly beloved, the Scriptures teach us to acknowledge our many sins and offenses, not concealing them from our heavenly Father, but confessing them with humble and obedient hearts that we may obtain forgiveness by His infinite goodness and mercy. We ought always humbly to acknowledge our sins before Almighty God, but especially when we come together in His presence to give thanks for the great benefits we have received at His hands, to declare His most worth praise, to hear His holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves on behalf of others, those things which are necessary for our life and our salvation. Therefore, draw near with me to the throne of heavenly grace.

O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare all those who confess their faults. Restore all those who are penitent, according to Your promises declared to all people in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake, that we may now live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of Your holy Name. AMEN.

O Lord, we beseech You, absolve Your people from their offenses; that through Your bountiful goodness, we may be delivered from the band of those sins, which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Savior. **AMEN.**

Invitatory

O Lord, open our lips, **and our mouth shall show forth Your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us; **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and every shall be, world without end. Amen.

Praise you the Lord. **The Lord's name be praise.**

The Psalm or Psalms Appointed

Psalm 71

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and every shall be, world without end. AMEN.

The Lessons

The first lesson, a reading from Genesis 27: 1-13, 18-36, 39-40

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The second lesson, a reading from the Gospel according to John 14:15-31

The Gospel of the Lord. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

He descended into hades;

the third day He rose from the dead;

**He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Church universal,
the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. AMEN.**

The Prayers

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

Let us pray: Lord, have mercy upon us. **Christ have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name;
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven;
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgives us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil;
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. AMEN.**

Suffrages

O Lord, show Your mercy upon us; **and grant us Your salvation.**

O Lord, guide those who govern us; **and lead us in the way of justice and truth.**

Clothe Your ministers with righteousness; **and let Your people sing with joy.**

O Lord, save Your people; **and bless your inheritance.**

Give peace in our time, O Lord; **and defend us by Your mighty power.**

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten; **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Create in us clean hearts, O God; **and take not Your holy Spirit from us.**

The Collect

O God, You know that we are set amid many grave dangers, and because of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant that Your strength and protection may support us in all dangers and carry us through every temptation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

(Worshippers may offer intercessions and thanksgivings, ending each with: "Lord, hear our prayer." After the prayers conclude:)

A Prayer of John Chrysostom

Almighty God, who has given us grace at this time with one accord, to make our common supplications unto You, and does promise that when two or three are gathered together in Your name, You will grant their requests; fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Your servants, as may be most expedient for them: granting us in this world knowledge of Your truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. **AMEN.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all evermore. **AMEN.**

Tuesday Sext – Midday Prayer

O God, make speed to save us; **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

AMEN. Alleluia!

(A song may be sung.)

The Psalms (Read responsively by half-verse)

Psalm 119:105-112

Your word is a lantern to my feet **and a light upon my path.**

I have sworn and am steadfastly purposed **to keep Your righteous judgments.**

I am troubled above measure; **revive me, O Lord, according to Your word.**

Let the freewill offerings of my mouth please you, O Lord; **and teach me Your judgments.**

My life is always in my hand, **yet I do not forget Your law.**

The ungodly have laid a snare for me, **yet I have not strayed from Your commandments.**

Your testimonies have I claimed as my heritage forever, **and why? They are the very joy of my heart.**

I have applied my heart to fulfill Your statutes always, **even unto the end.**

Psalm 121: A Song of Ascents

I will lift up my eyes unto the hills; **from whence comes my help?**

My help comes from the Lord, **who has made heaven and earth.**

He will not let your food be moved, **and He who keeps you will not sleep.**

Behold, He who keeps Israel **shall neither slumber nor sleep.**

The Lord Himself is your keeper; **the Lord is your defense upon your right hand,**
so that the sun shall not burn you by day, **neither the moon by night.**

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; **indeed, it is He who shall keep your soul.**

The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in, **from this time forth**
forevermore.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the
beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

Holy Scripture

(Read one or more of the following, or another appropriate text.)

“For from the rising of the sun to its setting My name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to My name, and a pure offering; for My name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts” (Mal. 1:11).

“Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself” (Jn. 12:31-32).

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:17-18).

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Collect

Father of all mercies: Forgive our unbelief, we pray, and so strengthen our hearts and enkindle our zeal, that we may fervently desire the salvation of all people, and diligently labor in the extension of Your kingdom; through Him who gave Himself for the life of the world, Your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **AMEN.**

The Prayers

I will bless the Lord at all times. **His praise will continually be in my mouth.**

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy.

O Lord, hear our prayer; **and let our cry come to You.**

Let us pray.

Silent Listening to God

(Conclude the time:) Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you. **AMEN** (2 Cor. 13:13).

Tuesday Compline – Evening Prayer

The Lord Almighty grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end. **Amen.**

O Lord, hear our prayer; **and let our cry come to You.**

Let us pray.

Following each guided prayer focus, lift your personal prayers in silence or aloud in response to the focus. If aloud, conclude your prayer with “Lord, hear our prayer.” I conclude each time of personal prayers with “Lord, hear our prayer,” pause briefly, and then introduce the next guided focus.

- We lift our hearts in adoration of who God is in our lives and the world around us

... (allow time for personal prayers; after a few minutes, conclude with:)

Lord, hear our prayer.

- We lift our hearts in confession of our shortcomings, our sins, and our need for

God’s presence in wisdom and strength *... (personal prayers, then:)*

Lord, hear our prayer.

- We lift our hearts in thanksgiving for what God has done and is doing in our lives,

the lives of our loved ones, and in and through our congregations *... (personal prayers, then:)*

Lord, hear our prayer.

- We lift our hearts in supplication for the specific needs in our lives and in

intercession for our loved ones, our congregations, and our communities *...*

(personal prayers, then:)

Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us join in praying as Jesus taught His disciples to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name;

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven;

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgives us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil;

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. AMEN.

Closing Prayer

Be present, O merciful God, and protect us through the hours of this night, so that we may rest in Your eternal changelessness from the circumstances of this life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Benediction

Almighty and merciful Lord God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us and keep us, this night and evermore. **Amen.**

Wednesday Lauds – Morning Prayer

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be always acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer” (Ps. 19:14).

The Prayers

Lord, have mercy upon us. **Christ have mercy upon us.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

(Silence for listening to God)

Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name;

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven;

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgives us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil;

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. AMEN.

(People offer prayers of intercession and thanksgiving, each ending with: “Lord, hear our prayer.” Close the prayer time with the following prayer or a spontaneous prayer.)

A General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we Your unworthy servants give You humble thanks for all Your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom

You have made.

We bless You for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the mans of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of Your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth Your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Your service, and by walking before You in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. AMEN.

Benediction

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all evermore. AMEN.

Wesley Covenant Service

Call to Worship

Let us pray: Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy Name, through Christ Jesus our Lord. **AMEN.**

Welcome – Introduction to the Service

Dearly beloved: Of old time the people called of God dedicated themselves to Him in a Covenant of law and promise, the shadow of better things to come. Christ calls us a life in Him, in whom we are redeemed from sin and consecration to God, having been admitted into the New Covenant of love which our Lord instituted and sealed with His own blood, that it might remain forever.

On the one side, this Covenant is the gracious promise of God in Christ that He will fulfill in us, and for us, and through us, all that He has declared in Him who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?” We know that our God is faithful, and He repeatedly proves that His grace is enough for us.

On our part, the Covenant means that we willingly engage ourselves to live no more unto ourselves, but to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship”

(Rom. 12:1). “For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one died for all; therefore all have died. And He died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and was raised for them” (2 Cor. 5:14-15).

We know well that in the past we have not fulfilled all our part in this Covenant. We have been more willing to claim its promises than for its bonds to hold us. We are unknowing and frail; at times, we have been wayward and willfully disobedient. Yet God has long patience with us; His mercy endures forever.

From time to time we renew our vows of consecration, especially when we gather at the Table of the Lord; but on this day we meet expressly, as generations before us have met, that we may sacredly and earnestly renew that Covenant which bound them and binds us to God.

Let us then draw near to God, thankfully remembering His mercies and examining ourselves by the light of His Spirit, that we may see wherein we have transgressed or fallen short. Then, having considered what is the hope of our calling, let us give ourselves anew to Him.

(One or more songs may be sung.)

Adoration of God (kneeling, or other reverent posture)

Let us adore the Father, the God of love who created us; who every moment preserves and sustains us; who has loved us with an everlasting love and given us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

We praise You, O God, we acknowledge that You are the Lord.

Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; who went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the

Kingdom; who was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; who was dead, and lives forevermore; who opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; who sits at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

You are the King of glory, O Christ.

Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life by whom we are born into the family of God and made members of the Body of Christ; whose wisdom teaches us; whose power enables us; who waits to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

All praise to You, the breath of our hearts, O Holy Spirit. Amen.

Reading of the First Lesson

Reading from Jeremiah 32:31-34

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Thanksgiving *(All stand)*

Let us give thanks to God for His manifold mercies.

O God our Father, the fountain of all goodness, who has been gracious to us through all the years of our life: We give You thanks for Your loving kindness that has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

We give thanks in Your holy Name, O Lord God.

You have given us life and reason and have set us in a world that is full of Your glory. You have comforted us with family and friends and ministered to us through the hands and minds of our associates.

We praise Your holy Name, O Lord God.

You have set in our hearts a hunger for You and given us Your peace. You have redeemed us and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given the fellowship of Your Spirit and a role as Your witness in the world.

We worship in Your holy Name, O Lord God.

In darkness You have been our light, in adversity our rock of strength, in our joys the very spirit of joy, and in our labors the all-sufficient reward.

We magnify Your holy Name, O Lord God.

You have remembered us when we have forgotten You, followed us even when we fled from You, met us with forgiveness when we turned back to You. For all Your longsuffering and the abundance of Your grace,

We lift Your holy Name, O Lord God.

For these and all Your mercies, known or unknown, remembered or forgotten.

We praise Your holy Name, O Lord God.

Reading of the Second Lesson (*All may be seated.*)

A reading from Ephesians 1:3-14

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer of Confession

We come to Christ as our priest. By this we renounce our own righteousness. Do you deeply sense your need of God's grace in Christ?

We acknowledge a deep sense of our need. We have seen ourselves as sinners in need of a savior. The Spirit of God has awakened us; we cry, "Lord, who am I?"

Lord, where am I? Lord, I know that I am but dead, if I continue as I am. Lord, what do I do?"

Let us now examine ourselves before God, humbly confessing our sins and looking for His promised forgiveness, watching our hearts, lest by self-deceit we shut ourselves out from His presence.

(All kneel, or other reverent posture) O God our Father, who has set forth the way of life for us in Your beloved Son: we confess our slowness to learn of Him, our reluctance to follow Him. You have spoken and called, and we have not given heed; Your beauty has shone forth and we have been blind; You have stretched Your hands to us through our colleagues and we have passed by. We have taken great benefits with little thanks; we have been unworthy of Your changeless love.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Forgive us, we beseech You, the poverty of our worship, the formality and selfishness of our prayers, our inconstancy and little faith, our neglect of fellowship, our hesitating witness for Christ, our false pretenses, and our willful ignorance of Your ways.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Forgive us wherein we have wasted our time or abused our gifts. Forgive us if we have excused our evil doing or evaded our responsibilities. Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good, that we have drawn back from the cross.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Forgive us that so little of Your love has reached others through us. We have borne too easily wrongs and sufferings that were not our own. We have been thoughtless in our judgments, hasty in condemnation, grudging in forgiveness.

Have mercy upon us and forgive us, O Lord.

Most holy Father, our sins are such as sent our Lord to His cross. We have no ground where we can stand before You save the greatness of the mercy revealed in that cross.

Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me.

As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **Amen.**

(A song may be sung.)

The Holy Gospel *(All stand.)*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to You, Lord Christ.

John 15:1-17 – *(after the reading)* The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, Lord Christ. *(All may be seated.)*

Message (*A homily based on the Gospel text*)

Supplication

Lord, be merciful to me. I am weary of trying to do it alone. What am I to do?

We must stop remembering our sins and admit that we are not righteous. Christ cannot call the righteous to repentance. He came to seek and to save the lost. Aware of our sin and its danger, we look for help and deliverance, but we often look everywhere else before looking to Christ. Nothing will bring us to Christ but absolute necessity. We try to forsake our sins through prayers and sermons and sacraments, searching for salvation. But all of these, though needed in their places, cannot deliver in and of themselves. Our determination cannot help us; in fact, it may reflect the source of our sin. Ritual alone cannot help; these are but empty vessels. They tell us, “You knock at a wrong door; salvation is not in us.” Can we now utterly despair of our own goodness, or do we trust in anything but Christ?

God gave this threefold assurance: First, His ordination: God the Father appointed and sent Jesus, His Son, into the world to save sinners. God the Father sealed Jesus as the Christ, the Savior, to redeem and reconcile the world to Himself.

Second, His command: We must believe on the name of His Son, Jesus the Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and has provided everything needed for our forgiveness.

Third, His promise: “Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he who believes on Him will not perish.” Now, having this threefold assurance of Jesus’ ordination, command, and promise, we boldly rely on Christ and give ourselves to Him.

Let us pray together. *(All kneel, or reverent posture.)*

Lord Jesus, here I am, a lost creature in need of You. Lord Jesus, represent me before God the Father, reconcile and save me. I come at the command of God the Father. Lord, help me. Lord, save me. I come believing in You, Lord Jesus. I place myself at Your grace and mercy. I realize that I need Your sacrifice at Calvary so I will trust and rest in You. You are my hope for forgiveness, for life, and for salvation forever. AMEN. (All may be seated.)

The Covenant

To be the people of God, we give the control of ourselves to Christ. We can pledge ourselves to someone; however, the reality of our commitment is revealed by whose will we obey. In giving ourselves to the Lord, we affirm that we will accept that He assigns us our work. Christ has many tasks to be done; some are easier and honorable; others difficult and menial. Some are consistent with our talents and interests; others are contrary to both. Indeed, there are some spiritual duties that are more pleasing than others; as to rejoice in the Lord, to be blessing and praising God. These are the sweet works of a Christian. Then there are other works, in which we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves, sailing against the wind, swimming against the tide, or parting with our freedoms for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Within our commitment to Christ is the essence of Christianity. It is not until we choose Christ as our happiness, lay all our hopes upon Christ, cast ourselves wholly upon the merits of His righteousness, heartily give ourselves to Him that we are truly Christians. Christ will only be Savior of those who serve Him. Christ is the Author of

eternal salvation to those who live in obedience to Him. Christ will only have people who consent to His leading. His people are a willing people and Christ requires full consent. He will be all in all, or He will be nothing. Let each of us pause and search our heart as to whether we either have already, or can now, freely make this commitment to God in Christ.

First, consider God's way, which is holy, strict, and spiritual. Will we choose it as the rule of our whole life?

Second, get into the most serious frame of mind as possible, suitable to a commitment of highest importance.

Third, focus on the covenant of God and rely upon His promise to give us the grace and strength to perform our pledge.

Fourth, let us resolve to be faithful. We resolve in His strength that having engaged our hearts, opened our mouths, and subscribed with our hands to the Lord, we will never go back.

Finally, by His grace and strength, in the most solemn attitude possible, mindful that the Lord is present with us, let us open our hearts to the Lord through this prayer. Let us commune with God in silent prayer and then pray together our covenant to God.

(Silent prayer, concluded by:) Now let us pray together our covenant:

O most holy God, I earnestly call to You and admit that I need Your grace now and always. You have promised forgiveness and grace if I turn to You with all my heart. Through Christ, I submit to You and renounce all that has kept me from loving and serving You completely. Almighty God, Searcher of hearts, I ask that if You see any flaw or falsehood in me, You will reveal it to me and help me to put it

right. I take You, the Lord God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for my portion and I give myself: body, mind, and soul, as Yours, promising to live in Your holiness and righteousness from this day forward.

In so giving ourselves to the Lord, we affirm that we will heartily embrace what God has appointed us to do, both corporately and personally. We give ourselves totally to His will, without bargaining or reservation.

I am no longer my own, but Yours, O Lord!

Make us what You will, Lord, and send us where You want us to go:

To exalted places or humble places.

Use us or lay us aside according to Your will, Lord.

Let me be filled; let me be empty.

Provide us with all things that we need or let us depend entirely on You.

Lord, I freely and gladly embrace my place in Your kingdom.

O most glorious and blessed God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are mine and I am Yours.

So be it.

May the Lord God ratify the covenant that I have made this day. AMEN.

Affirmation of Faith: The Nicene Creed (*in unison*)

I believe in one God the Father Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,

the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds,

God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made,

**being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made;
who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,
and crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried, the third day He rose again according to the
Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father;
and He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom shall have not end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy universal and apostolic church;
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Service of Table - Holy Communion - Eucharist

The Lord be with you. **And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is a right, good, and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to our Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. In the mystery of the Word made flesh, You have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of Your glory in the face of Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore, we praise You, joining our voices with all the company of heaven, who forever proclaim the glory of Your name.

Holy, holy, holy, LORD God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious Father, we acclaim You glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal Your wisdom and love. You formed us in Your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that we might serve You in Your creation and worship You. When our disobedience took us far from You, You did not abandon us to the power of earth. In Your mercy, You came to our help, so that in seeking You we might find You.

Through the prophets, You taught us to hope for salvation. You sent Your only Son to be our Savior, so that we might no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died and was raised for us.

You sent the Holy Spirit, Christ's first gift for those who believe, to complete His work in the world and bring us to entire sanctification.

We are reminded that in the same night that our Lord was betrayed, (*hands over the Body*) He took bread and, when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is My Body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Likewise, after supper, (*hands over the Cup*) He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My Blood, which is poured out for you; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who out of Your tender mercy gave Your only Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption: hear us, we most humbly beseech You. (*Hands outward to the people*) Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and (*hands over the Cup and Body*) upon these gifts of bread and wine, and grant that, as we receive them according to the holy institution of Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, in remembrance of His passion and death, we may become partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood. Let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught His disciples:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Christ, our Passover, (*break the Body*) is sacrificed for us.

Let us keep the feast. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Behold the Lamb of God! (*Lift the Cup and Body*) Behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul will be healed.

All who will proclaim Jesus as their Savior are welcome at His table.

(Celebrant partakes of the Elements by Intinction, serves to all assistants, then worshippers are served as they come forward to receive.)

(After all are service, all stand and pray:)

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Commitment

Heavenly Father, we thank You for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of Your Son, and heirs of Your eternal kingdom.

And now, Father, send us out into the world to do the work You have given us to do, to love and serve You as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.

To Him, to You, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from falling, to make you stand without blemish in the presence of His glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now

and forever. Amen” (Jude 24-25).

Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen!

Appendix 7: Spiritual Direction – Principles & Practices

Spiritual direction is a relative new term with modern Wesleyan circles, although the concept of spiritual companionship and guidance is not new and Christian spiritual direction has been a practice since the Desert Fathers and Mothers. Spiritual direction is a meeting of two or more people who prayerfully listen to God for the movements of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of a person's life. It is understood as a three-way relationship in which the Holy Spirit is true director; the human spiritual director aids the third person of the relationship in recognizing and hearing the Holy Spirit's leading. Spiritual direction is not pastoral or psychological counseling or advice-giving.

General Principles

- Create and maintain a safe environment for strong emotions, tough questions, sincere curiosity.
- Listen without attempting to resolve others' journey. Encourage others to listen to themselves.
- Ask questions only if it is necessary to clarify understanding of what the person is seeking to discover or feels that they have discovered without responding with critic, opinion, or advice.
- Strive for appropriate self-disclosing without comparing yourself to another's situation or feelings.
- Maintain a focus on transformation, not information-seeking.
- Pay attention to the times and ways that God is moving and affirm other's self-

insights, growth, and transformation.

- Honor confidentiality! Anything shared by others remains in the group; any disclosure of information, attitudes, struggles, and successes is the sole responsibility of that person to whom it belongs.
- Pray and Scripture are the foundational resources.

Guidelines for Individual Spiritual Direction

- After greetings, the spiritual director may open with prayer or a time of silence before God in seeking illumination and receptivity to the Holy Spirit's leading.
- Examples of initial questions by the spiritual director:
 - How is God moving in your life lately?
 - What are you and God talking about these days?
 - How is your relationship with God (with others) lately?
 - Tell me how your intentional prayer life and Scripture reading are going?
 - How have you experienced or practiced the Presence of God recently?
- Directee briefly shares thoughts, feelings, questions about what is happening in their life, responds to the opening questions, or introduces any specific current concerns regarding their relationship with God or others.
- Spiritual director may seek clarification or ask a probing question that focuses thoughts toward what God may be saying or doing. A passage of Scripture, particularly from the life of Jesus Christ, may be offered for consideration.
- Directee responds directly or through prayer. There may be a cycle of responses,

questions, silence, and prayer between the directee and spiritual director.

- The time concludes with prayer by each person or the spiritual director.
- Follow-up is scheduled as appropriate.

Guidelines for Small Group Spiritual Direction

The purpose of small groups (four to six people) for spiritual direction is to be supportive group of peer listeners, a sounding board for the expression of each one's thoughts, issues, and confessions in their spiritual journey of learning to listen to God.

- Take turns sharing a thought or feeling regarding faith, prayer, struggles, fears, and hopes about each one's relationship with God.
- Listen for what the Holy Spirit prompts as important for you and the presenter to hear.
- Take turns offering a word of encouragement or a prayer a presenter's journey.
- At any point, someone can call for a moment of silence when they feel that the group's focus shifted to information seeking, problem-solving, or not listening for God's presence.
- Close a time of silence or a prayer by one person for the group.

Recommend Reading Resources

- Rhonda L. Carrim, "Walking the Journey Together: Spiritual Direction and Mentoring," in Diane Leclerc and Mark A. Maddix, *Spiritual Formation: A Wesleyan Paradigm* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2011).
- Tilden Edwards, *Spiritual Director, Spiritual Companion: Guide to Tending the Soul* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2001).
- Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston, MA: Cowley Publications, 1992).
- Douglas S. Hardy, "Spiritual Direction within a Wesleyan Ecclesiology: The Pursuit of Holiness from the Periphery," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 41, no. 1

(2006):148-161.

- Akira Shinohara, “Spiritual Formation and Mentoring: An Approach from the Christian Tradition of Spiritual Direction,” *Christian Education Journal* 6NS (2002): 105-118.
- Wesley D. Tracy, “Spiritual Direction in the Wesleyan-Holiness Tradition,” in Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, eds., *Spiritual Direction and Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

Fourth Days – Follow-Up

Fourth Day or Reunion Groups are a follow-up extension of small group discipleship after a retreat. The concept is that every day following encounter with Jesus after His Resurrection ‘on the Third Day’ is then a ‘Fourth Day.’ The purpose of these Fourth Day Groups is to be a source of on-going support and accountability in the lives of retreatants, much like John Wesley used ‘Bands’ for leaders and devout believers.

The meetings of the groups may be guided by a set of questions, as simple as those used by the Reunion Groups or those developed for Bands by John Wesley in 1738. Fourth Day groups may also meet to discuss a book or texts from Scripture for personal spiritual formation. A lectionary discussion for preaching or teaching would be a different purpose entirely.

Reunion Group Questions

- What have you done since we met to further your spiritual life?
- What have you done since we met to further your study in the spiritual life?
- What have you done since we met to further your Christian action in the world?
- When did you feel closest to Christ during this past week?
- How is your relationship with God currently?

- How can we pray for you?

Wesley's Rules for Band-Societies

The design of our meeting is, to obey that command of God, confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed, to this end, we intend:

- To meet once a week, at the least.
- To come punctually at the hour appointed, without some extraordinary reason.
- To begin (those of us who are present) exactly at the hour, with singing or prayer.
- To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt, since our last meeting.
- To end every meeting with prayer, suited to the state of each person present.
- To desire some person among us to speak one's own state first, and then to ask the rest, in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

Some questions posed to everyone before they are admitted to the band may be to this effect.

- Have you received the forgiveness of your sins?
- Do you have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ?
- Do you have the witness of God's Spirit with your spirit, that you are a child of God?
- Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart?
- Does any sin, inward or outward, have dominion over you?
- Do you desire to be told of your faults?
- Do you desire to be told of all your faults, and that plain and home?
- Do you desire that every one of us should tell you, from time to time, whatsoever

is in our heart concerning you?

- Consider! Do you desire that we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear, concerning you?
- Do you desire that, in doing this, we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom?
- Is it your desire and design to be on this, and all other occasions, entirely open, to speak everything that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve?

Any of the preceding questions may be asked as often as occasion offers; the four following at every meeting.

- What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
- What temptations have you met with?
- How were you delivered?
- What have you thought, said, or done, of which you question whether it is sin or not?

Discipleship/Spiritual Formation Study Resources

- Ruth Haley Barton, *Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence, Expanded Edition with a Guide for Groups* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010).
- Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*, (2006) with *Sacred Rhythms: Spiritual Practices that Nourish your Soul and Transform Your Life, Participant's Guide (six sessions)* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011).
- Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership: Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry, Expanded Edition* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books 2018).
- Mike Breen, *Building a Discipling Culture: How to Release a Missional Movement by Discipling People Like Jesus Did*, 3rd Edition, and *Building a Discipling Culture, Study Guide* (Greenville, SC: 3DMPublishing, 2017).
- David A. deSilva, *Praying with John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship

Resources, 2001).

- Philip E. Dow, *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development, for students, educators, and parents* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013).
- Richard J. Foster and Emilie Griffin, *Spiritual Classics: Selected Readings for Individuals and Groups on the Twelve Spiritual Disciplines* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2000).
- M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation, Expanded by Ruth Haley Barton* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016).
- Henri Nouwen with Michael J. Christensen and Rebecca J. Laird, *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2010).
- Henri J.M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1989).
- Henri J.M. Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1992).
- Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1981).
- Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: How transforming your inner life will deeply transform your church, team, and the world*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan (2015).
- Dallas Willard. *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002).

Scripture Texts for Spiritual Formation Discussion

- The Decalogue
- The Beatitudes
- The Sermon on the Mount
- The kingdom parables in the Gospel according to Matthew
- The “I am” passages in the Gospel according to John

- The “Fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians
- Virtues in the Pauline corpus of 1 Corinthians, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians

Appendix 8: Supplemental Handouts

Wesley's Scheme of Self-Examination

- Love God and simplicity through prayer and meditation
 - Have I been simple and recollected in everything I said or did? Simple refers to looking to God as one's Good, Pattern, one Desire, Disposer, source of Good; and acted wholly for God. Recollected refers to being distinct and focused without interruption on the will of God and virtue.
 - Have I prayed with fervor? Have always I been in constant prayer in places?
 - Have I duly prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day, in consideration of my actions each hour, with whom I have been, and in consideration of my next hour in the same respect, offering up all I do to my Redeemer, begged for His assistance, and commended my soul to His keeping? Have I done this deliberately and without haste?
 - Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day deliberately, seriously, and fervently?
 - Have I daily prayed a Collect, grace before and after eating, and aloud in my room, deliberately, seriously, fervently?
 - Have I duly meditated every day?
- Love of Others
 - Have I been zealous and active in doing good? Wesley lists fourteen aspects of

thoroughly examining one's actions and attitudes toward others.

- Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbor in virtue or pleasure, grieve with them in pain, and for them in sin?
- Have I received my neighbor's infirmities with pity, not anger?
- Have I thought or spoken unkindly of or to my neighbor, or approved of others doing it?
- Has good-will been, and appeared to be, the source of all my actions toward others?
- Have I duly used intercession before and speaking with everyone, including the family in which I am, every day?

Examen

The *Examen* is a common exercise promoted by Ignatius of Loyola in the process of the spiritual life. There are two basic types of usage: first, when one comes to a stage of life that makes you think about where you have been and where you are going, and secondly, as a daily (or multiple times per day) practice of reflection, self-examination, and planning. *Psalms 139* is a good example of the *Examen* in Scripture. The *Examen* is not a formula that one must follow, but it has some basic components.

1st – Acknowledge God’s presence in every moment. Pray for understanding to see God’s activity in our life and His constant grace toward us.

2nd – Celebrate who you are in God. He created you and gifted you with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:3), so that you lack no spiritual gift (1 Cor. 1:7). Express thanks to God for everything that you have. The practice of gratitude is an invaluable exercise; as Paul wrote, we should rejoice in all things that the peace of God might be in us (Philip. 4:1-9).

3rd – Ask God to search through your day and bring to mind any activity that He wants to address with you. Pay attention to your feelings, both positive and negative, that emerge through the *Examen*. Do not push them down, simply ask God to help you understand their source and how they relate to your spiritual life.

4th – Focus on one of your feelings as the intention of your prayer. What is it? How does it impact you? How does it relate to your thoughts and attitudes toward God and others? Allow the feeling to be the target of conversation with God.

5th – Begin to think about how your feeling will affect your decisions/actions in

the future. As God to guide you in preparing for what will happen in the next day(s).

6th – Close with a prayer of response to God. You may even use a standard prayer, like The Lord’s Prayer, as model. If necessary, ask God for forgiveness and mercy for your past actions and for grace to discern His will for the future and the courage to do it.

Some practical questions to consider during your *Examen*.

- What was the most important thing I did today (this week, this month)?
- How was I an instrument of God’s love toward others?
- Who showed God’s love toward me? In what ways?
- Did I hurt anyone today (this week, this month)?
- Did I treat anyone as a means to fulfill my desires rather than as a person created in God’s image?

Discipline of Prayer

Five Misconceptions of Prayer

- *It is about asking things for things from God.* The primary purpose of prayer is to grow in perpetual communion with God.
- *Prayer must a burden and struggle.* Although there are times of intensity and difficulty in prayer, and there should be a sense of awe and at times ‘terror’ in the presence of the Sovereign God of all creation; however, the most frequent experience during prayer is one of joy, love, comfort, peace, and serenity. Prayer builds a loving relationship of companionship with God, who is our heavenly Father, ‘Abba.’
- *We lived in a closed, fixed universe.* If we think everything is set and known by God, then why pray? Paul states that “we are God’s fellow workers;” therefore, we are co-laborers with God to advance His kingdom upon earth. God not only listens to our prayers, when are prayers are in accord with His will, they make a difference. Jesus said: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be open to you.”
- *Unanswered prayers will cause our faith to crumble.* Faith means trusting completely in God, believing that God’s timing and ways are best. When there does not seem to be an answer from God or if the answer is different than what we requested, we should examine our heart and prayer side of the relationship. God may be asking us to be patient, that the time is not right yet and He is still at work

beyond our awareness, or we may be asking from selfish desire rather than from His will and He is working for a great purpose. “We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.”

- *Pray once, anything more is a lack of faith.* Nothing draws us closer to the heart of God than prayer. Prayer is a growing process of faith; like an infant learning to walk, it requires repeated practice. With each step, God meets us where we are and slowly moves us deeper into understanding, faith, and action.

Jesus created the platform/foundation for Christian prayer

- He revealed the Father
- He brings us to the Father through His death, resurrection, & ascension
- He presents us to the Holy Spirit, who abides with & in us, to accomplish His work

Learning to Pray

- Prayer is a fine, delicate instrument. To use it right is a great art, a holy art. ...It requires neither great natural ability, nor much knowledge, nor money. ...However, certain requirements must be met if the art of prayer is to be acquired... they are two: practice and perseverance.
- Foster notes that when Jesus or the Apostles prayed for others, they never concluded by saying “If it be Thy will.” They believed that they knew God’s will and prayed by faith. There is a proper time and place to pray, “If it is Thy will.”

- Prayers for guidance
- Prayers of relinquishment – committing to let go of our will
- Preparation for prayer is the life lived in harmony with the truth. How can we pray “Thy kingdom come,” if we are rebelling against the King?
- To pray is to let Jesus come into our hearts... it is not our prayer which moves the Lord Jesus. It is Jesus who moves us to pray. ...To pray is nothing more involved than to let Jesus into our needs... to give Jesus permission to employ His powers.... The results of prayer are, therefore, not dependent upon the powers of the one who prays.
- Praying effectively for others begins by quieting our life/mind/heart and listening to the Lord for guidance. Søren Kierkegaard observed: “A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet until in the end he realized that prayer is listening.”
- Never make prayer too complicated – openness, honesty, and trust are keys for children in communicating with their father.

Two Prayer Practices in the New Testament

- *Personal* – Mt. 6:5-6 => this is to be without recognition/notice of others
- *Collective* – Mt. 18:20 => “prayer meeting” by those gathered in Jesus’ name.

When Jesus is enthroned, obeyed, & consulted, the Spirit creates desire & prayer in harmony with God’s will.

Three Keys to Prevailing/Effective Personal & Collective Prayer

- Definiteness rather than vague, general prayers
- Persistence – don't ask & forget or knock on the door & run away
- Submission to the method & time of God's answer rather than self-will

Models of Intercessory Prayer in the Bible

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10 & Luke 1:46-55
- Ephesians 1:16-19
- Philippians 1:3-6
- 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

How-to Passages on Prayer

- Psalm 62:8 – how to be honest in prayer
- Psalm 136:1-3, 26 – how to pray
- Matthew 6:5-14 – how and what to pray
- John 15:7 – the proper context for expecting answers to prayer
- Ephesians 6:18 – when and how to pray
- Philippians 4:4-7 – how to experience joy & peace through prayer
- Hebrews 4:14-16 & James 1:5-8 – how to approach God in prayer
- James 4:3 – how not to pray & an explanation for unanswered prayer
- 1 John 3:19-24 – how to be confident in prayer

The Results of Prayer

- Isaiah 30:19-22; Jeremiah 29:12-13 – God’s responsiveness, divine guidance
- 1 John 1:9 – the prayer of confession

Scripture Readings on Prayer

- *Matthew 6:5-15* – The pattern of prayer
- *Psalms 103* – The prayer of worship
- *Psalms 51* – The prayer of repentance
- *Psalms 150* – The prayer of thanksgiving
- *Matthew 26:36-46* – The prayer of guidance
- *James 5:17-18* – The prayer of faith
- *Mark 9:14-29* – The prayer of command

Suggested Resources on Prayer

- Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Meaning of Prayer* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1949).
- Norman Grubb, *Rees Howells: Intercessor* (Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth Press, 1952).
- O. Hallesby, *Prayer* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1931).
- G. Campbell Morgan, *The Practice of Prayer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1960).
- George Müller, *How God Answers Prayer* (Salem, OH: Schmuel Publisher, undated).
- Andrew Murray, *Teach Me to Pray* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1982). (Originally published under titles of *With Christ in the School of Prayer* and *Believer’s School of Prayer* in the mid/late 1800’s.)

A Delightful Hour with God

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.”

Adoration of God’s Glorious Names and Attributes (5 minutes)

“Our Father in heaven”

- Abba - Father (Mt. 6:9a)
- YHWH (*yah-way*) – I Am Who I Am (Ex. 3:14; Deut. 6:4; Dan. 9:14)
- Elohim – God: Creator, Mighty and Strong (Gen. 1:1; 17:7; Jer. 31:33)
- El Shaddai - God Almighty, All Sufficient One (Gen 49:24; Ps. 132:2, 5)
- El Elyon - God Most High (Deut. 26:19)
- El Roi – God of Seeing (Gen. 16:13)
- El Olam – Everlasting God (Ps. 90:1-3)
- El Gibhor – Mighty God (Is. 9:6)
- Adonai - Master and Lord (Gen. 15:2; Judg. 6:15)
- YHWH Elohim – Lord God (Gen. 2:4; Ps. 59:5)
- YHWH Sabaoth - Lord of Hosts (Is. 1:24; Ps. 46:7)
- YHWH Shalom - Lord of Peace (Judg. 6:24)
- YHWH Shammah – The Lord is There (Ez. 48:35)
- YHWH Nissi – Lord, My Victorious Banner (Ex. 17:15)
- YHWH Rohi – Lord, My Shepherd (Ps. 23:1)
- YHWH Jireh – Lord, My Provider (Gen. 22:14)
- YHWH Tsidkenu – Lord, My Righteousness (Jer. 33:16)
- YHWH M’Kaddesh – The Lord Who Sanctifies, Makes Holy (Lev. 20:8)
- YHWH Rapha – Lord, My Glorious Healer (Ex. 15:26)
- Ancient of Days. Our Dwelling Place. Eternal Creator God. Wisdom. Holy One. All Consuming Fire. My Refuge, My Rock.
- Lord Jesus Christ / Savior / Messiah: Bright Morning Star. Wonderful. Counselor. Prince of Peace. Lamb of God. My Sacrifice. Beautiful. Bridegroom. Friend. The Way, The Truth, The Life. Redeemer. Wisdom. Hope of Glory. Anchor of my soul. Light. Good Shepherd. Bread of life.

Approach His Throne of Holiness with Repentance (5 minutes)

“Hallowed be Your name”

- Do I have any unconfessed sin or doubtful practices?
- Are there any obstacles keeping me from God?
- Have I been following the leadership of the Holy Spirit?
- Ask God for genuine life change and cleansing from sin.

“If we confess our sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness”

Prayer for God’s Purposes to be Fulfilled in Others

“Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”

- *Prayer for the salvation of lost people (5 minutes)*

List 5 unsaved friends, family members, or people you know

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers...”

- *Bring your personal needs & requests before God (5 minutes)*

“Give us this day our daily bread”

- _____
- _____

- _____
- _____
- _____

- *Prayer for Reconciliation and Healing Relationships (5 minutes)*

“Forgive our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”

- Pray for forgiveness and healing of broken relationships
- Repentance for every fragment of racial prejudice
- Repentance for denominational – church divisions
- Pray for unprecedented biblical unity of the church
- Pray God would raise up multi-racial unity in the Church
- Ask God - what can I do personally to reconcile and heal?

- *Prayer for God to Breakdown Strongholds of Evil (5 minutes)*

“And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one”

- Confess and seek deliverance from self-centeredness, materialism, greed, cheating, lying, arrogance, pride, bitterness, envy, prejudice, racism, idolatry, depression, anxiety, sexual immorality, abortion, physical or emotional abuse, & addictions: pornography, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, food,
- Seek God’s mercy for the global injustice & suffering
- Pray against dullness, lethargy, & unbelief in the Church, and compromise & shallowness in personal faith
- Trust in the power of the Christ through the Holy Spirit!
- Put on the full armor of God and pray for protection

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil”

- *Prayer for Local Congregations (5 minutes)*

- For presence saturated houses of prayer
- For repentance, revival, and spiritual awakening

- For leaders to downshift to deeper intimacy with Jesus
- For fulfillment of the Great Commission
- For unified citywide prayer movements
- *Prayer for the Nations to come to Christ (5 minutes)*
 - For nations to know Jesus as the Way, Truth and Life.
 - For missions to unreached-unengaged people groups
 - For kings, tribal leaders, governments to know Jesus
 - For the spirit of prayer and revival to be poured out
- *Prayer for God's Work in our Youth Generation (5 minutes)*
 - For radically committed young disciples for Jesus
 - For relevant ministries to reach youth
 - For young people to come to deeper intimacy with God
 - For God to raise up young leaders for the nations
 - For revival in local and national schools/colleges
 - For the fire of God in youth ministries

Spend time in Quiet Wonder Waiting in His Presence (5 minutes)

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued My faithfulness to you."

Receive God's love, meditate on His Fatherly heart and Shepherd-care over your life.

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

- God longs to be with me – what does that mean to me?
- I am God's beloved child – He is for me!
- God is my Father and knows everything about me.
- Pray: "Abba Father, what are You saying to me today?"

"He delivered me, because He delighted in me."

"How precious is Your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the

shadow of Your wings. They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.”

Creating a Rule of Life

“Life is what happens to us while we are making other plans.”

—Allen Saunders

If you don't set your own priorities, others will set your priorities for you. Nowhere is this truer than with our spiritual life. If you don't set your own agenda, life will overtake you, even in doing the work of ministry, and leave no time for God. One way to set your priorities is to create, and in time modify, a rule of life. Ruth Haley Barton prefers the idea of 'a rhythm of life,' so do not think of it as a rigid set of “do's and don'ts.” A rule of life sets out priorities. While a rule can include guidance on family and work life, this brochure will restrict itself to a spiritual rule of life.

The Basics

The basic idea is to note the principal elements of your own spiritual life along with some plan for how you will carry it out. For example, any spiritual rule of life should include worship. “I will attend church on Sundays and Wednesdays when I am well.” You may want to expand this idea to the concept of Sabbath and what it means to honor the Sabbath as a holy time in your life. For the rule of life to work, it should be written down, kept handy, and reviewed from time to time. Keep what you it simple and specific. Do not use permissive language such as “I will try” as all of us try to do things; instead, write “I will” or “I promise.”

Some of the primary areas to consider in addition to worship are confession, your offerings, prayer, scripture readings and other reading, sharing your faith, ministry, and retreats. Consider John Wesley's 'means of grace' and 'acts of mercy' as a guide. We will

briefly look at some of these items in turn.

Confession

Make time for a daily confession of sin. The practice of Examen is a useful exercise to address this idea. This is not to beat yourself up, but to have a real time with God to consider the ways in which you have fallen short of the mark set by Jesus. Turn from the behaviors you know to be wrong, confess your sins, and ask for God's forgiveness each day.

Offering

Consider how much you give to your church and other charitable organizations. Think not only of finances, but also your talents. What does your giving say about your relationship with God? Do you pay more in greens fees or movie rentals? Did you spend more on Christmas gifts over the last couple of months than what you gave to God over the previous year? These are ways to consider your giving back to God in comparison to the other ways you spend your money and time.

Prayerfully consider what you give. It should never be because of the needs of your church. Instead we give in response God's love, because God asks us to do so. Revisit your giving at least annually to reconsider if your giving to support the work of Christ's church is in line with your own beliefs.

Prayer

This means more than having a structured time with God. Obviously, God hears us whenever we speak to him. Consider how to best fit dedicated times of prayer into your schedule and develop an attitude toward prayer so that you are "praying constantly." Select times that work for you, while being mindful that God is listening always and may

Speak to you at any time. This could be while commuting or in the quiet time before others in the house awake. Remember that prayer is a two-way communication, so take time to be silent and listen for God speaking to you.

Scripture

The Bible is not a dose of medicine and one does not need a seminary degree in theology to gain from reading it. What is your approach to Scripture reading, beyond studying to teach or preach? Do you have a set time, place, and pattern for reading? When you are ready to dig deeper into the scripture, your rule of life will guide you by including a reading plan for transformation rather than to only gain information.

Other Reading

Who are you reading along with the Bible? In addition to the Bible, you should consider finding other good books to read. Do not limit yourself to Christian books; it is important to understand what is happening in our culture and we can find biblical themes and questions addressed in secular writings, so look for ways to alternate spiritual reading with other books.

Sharing Faith

Add sharing your faith to your rule of life; we should all consider how we go about this important part of our own faith journeys. Talking about how you are using a rule of life can be an avenue for sharing your faith. Look for opportunities throughout your day to mention God's presence in your life to others. It is not just about the good things in life, share how God is present in the struggles of life, too. Keep your faith journey real, do not gloss over anything that could become an obstacle in others' lives as they strive to live in faith with God.

The best way to add this to your rule of life is to pray that God will lay on your heart a few friends and family members who you can pray for. Then if God opens opportunities to speak to those people about your faith do so. If not, continue to hold them in prayer. In time, God will provide a natural way for faith to come into the conversation. Just be open to those opportunities.

Ministry

Each Christian, by virtue of baptism, is a minister of the Gospel. For most of us, this means being the sort of accountant, teacher, secretary, etc. that God calls you to be. It also means being the sort of husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, friend that God calls you to be. In addition, it will include ministries in or out of the church such as working with scouting or building houses with Habitat for Humanity. Consider what areas of your life are ministries. Consider what ministry God might be calling you into.

Retreat

Finally, add retreats to a rule of life. In most cases, this may be an annual event, but others may to plan shorter retreats periodically throughout the year. Some churches or districts offer times during the year to go for a several days to be more intentional about spiritual development. Consider making it a regular part of your life.

Take It Easy!

When creating a rule of life, do not overdo it. You are not creating a blueprint for being a spiritual superhero. The goal is to set out some spiritual priorities you can keep. You will be better off to start too small. In time you can revisit your rule and make changes. You don't want to overwhelm yourself with too much to do. Time spent on your

spiritual journey is not meant to be one more list of chores in a busy life. Tending to your faith is more akin to giving yourself a source of rest and refreshment in a world too short on both.

Appendix 9: Pilot Retreat Survey Results

This survey was sent to the retreatants via Survey Monkey without soliciting identifying personal identifying information; thus, all responses were anonymous. There were thirteen (13) retreatants; nine (9) responded, a sixty-nine percent (69.23%) rate of response. However, not every question was answered by every respondent, even though a ‘not applicable’ (N/A) option was provided. The survey had ten (10) questions, with force choice responses and opportunity to add comments. The questions, number of responses to each answer, and percentages for each choice are below. The comments are given as entered on Survey Monkey without editing for spelling or grammar.

- How was the retreat facility and accommodations? Mark all that apply.
 - Rooms were satisfactory. – 8 (88.89%)
 - Rooms were not satisfactory. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Food was good and sufficient. – 8 (88.89%)
 - Prefer to have choices of entrée at dinner. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Did not like meals. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Would come to this facility for a retreat again. – 8 (88.89%)
 - Prefer a retreat setting with more resources to access during personal time. – 1 (11.11%)
 - Would not recommend using this facility again. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Total respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - It was great...just a little hot (76*).
 - Very nice facility, great staff and food.

- The food was fantastic. The site was very nice. Internet turned on would have been beneficial.
- Rate the impact of each of the Meditations on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 as low and 5 as high.
 - #1 – Who am I?
 - 1 – 1 (14.29%)
 - 2 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 3 – 1 (14.29%)
 - 4 – 2 (28.57%)
 - 5 – 3 (42.86%)
 - N/A – 0 (0.0%)
 - Total respondents: 7
 - Comments:
 - I think it is always desirable to consider “who am I.” By doing so, I believe most would find out that they are more than they thought.
 - The low rating comes from the fact that there was no group discussion on each of the questions asked in the session handout. We could not relate to how that question impacted the ones attending the retreat.
 - #2 – What do I desire most?
 - 1 – 1 (14.29%)
 - 2 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 3 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 4 – 4 (57.14%)
 - 5 – 2 (28.57%)

- N/A – 0 (0.0%)
- Total respondents; 7
- Comments:
 - The low rating comes from the fact that there was no group discussion on each of the questions asked in the session handout. We could not relate to how that question impacted the ones attending the retreat.

- #3 – What do I want to love most?
 - 1 – 1 (20.0%)
 - 2 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 3 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 4 – 1 (20.0%)
 - 5 – 3 (60.0%)
 - N/A – 0 (0.0%)
 - Total respondents: 5
 - Comments:
 - Helps to refocus on Christ.
 - The low rating comes from the fact that there was no group discussion on each of the questions asked in the session handout. We could not relate to how that question impacted the ones attending the retreat.

- #4 – What rival patterns/practices exist in my life?
 - 1 – 1 (14.98%)
 - 2 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 3 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 4 – 3 (43.86%)

- 5 – 3 (43.86%)
- N/A – 0 (0.0%)
- Total respondents: 7
- Comments:
 - It's easy to get distracted from Christ to other things that we enjoy.
 - The low rating comes from the fact that there was no group discussion on each of the questions asked in the session handout. We could not relate to how that question impacted the ones attending the retreat.

- #5 – What is Christian community?
 - 1 – 1 (14.29%)
 - 2 – 0 (0.0%)
 - 3 – 1 (14.29%)
 - 4 – 4 (57.14%)
 - 5 – 0 (0.0%)
 - N/A – 0 (0.0%)
 - Total respondents: 7
 - Comments:
 - Bill set up things very well.
 - Helps to put into perspective that Christian community is so much more than what we tend to focus on.
 - The low rating comes from the fact that there was no group discussion on each of the questions asked in the session handout. We could not relate to how that question impacted the ones attending the retreat.

- Do you feel that Getaway2020 made an impact on your ongoing personal spiritual journey?
 - A great deal – 0 (0.0%)
 - A lot – 5 (55.56%)
 - A moderate amount – 2 (22.22%)
 - A little – 1 (11.11%)
 - None at all – 1 (11.11%)
 - Total Respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - Back home, I defined it as a 48-hour guided prayer meeting. It was good to revisit that kind of experience to augment my normal devotional experience.
 - Helped me to refocus and to re-center my heart, mind, and soul on Christ. Our daily life, including church, often times turns louder focus from Christ and what can be through him.
 - I thought the intentionality of spiritual disciplines from Wesley helped with a practical guide!
 - I left the catholic environment because of sheer boardom in it. Liturgy does not make me feel the least bit spiritual. Now, reading my bible, oh yea, I been set on fire by it.

- How did your experience the times of personal reflection? Mark all applicable.
 - Too short – 0 (0.0%)
 - Too long – 0 (0.0%)
 - Generally adequate time – 6 (66.67%)
 - Too loosely structured – 0 (0.0%)
 - Challenging but helpful – 2 (22.22%)

- Difficult initially to quiet myself, but became easier with each opportunity – 2 (22.22%)
- Not beneficial – 1 (11.11%)
- Total respondents: 9
- Comments:
 - It allowed me to pursue the Lord in a variety of ways.
 - I would rather have had some more one-on-one fellowship with my fellow pastors.

- How did you experience the times of gathered prayer? Mark all applicable boxes.
 - Too formal and I did not experience anything spiritual during them. – 0 (0.0%)
 - I was unfamiliar with the structure, yet experienced some spiritual benefits. – 2 (22.22%)
 - They were informative, yet experience little spiritual benefit through them. – 3 (33.33%)
 - Did not fee freedom to hear God or speak to God during liturgy. – 1 (11.11%)
 - I learned to appreciate aspects of the liturgy and sense God’s presence through it. – 5 (55.56%)
 - Not enough variety between the different times of prayer. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Too much variety or change between the different times of prayer. – 0 (0.0%)
 - Too many times of gathered prayer, I would have preferred only twice on Tuesday. – 1 (11.11%)
 - Total respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - It was great to expand the various types of prayer.

- I appreciated the gathered prayer.
 - Formal prayers and responsive readings just don't do it for me.
- Respond about the Wesley Covenant Service (WCS), mark all appropriate boxes.
 - I have participated in or used this service or one similar to it before. -2 (22.22%)
 - This was my first time to participate in a WCS. – 6 (66.67%)
 - I would use this or a similar WCS with my congregation. – 3 (33.33%)
 - I would not use a WCS with my congregation. – 0 (0.0%)
 - I read or scanned through the WCS liturgy prior to the service. – 5 (55.56%)
 - I did not read or scan through the WCS liturgy prior to the service. – 2 (22.22%)
 - The WCS was an appropriate closing service to the retreat. – 6 (66.67%)
 - The WCS was not a beneficial conclusion to the retreat. – 1 (11.11%)
 - Total respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - I loved it.
 - I might use this as an idea platform for a covenant service with my congregation.
 - I will be taking some elements of the service out and use them in a special service: Remembering the times past, but not as a new format.
 - I really didn't like the readings I felt like a chant for a cult setting.
- How as the retreat speaker/director? Mark all applicable boxes.
 - Adequately prepared and engaging. – 7 (77.78%)

- Inadequately prepared. – 0 (0.0%)
- Well prepared and presentations were clear and thought-provoking. 3 (33.33%)
- Not engaging or open to others' thoughts/opinions. – 5 (55.56%)
- Too formal, rigid, or domineering. – 1 (11.11%)
- I would recommend this speaker. – 3 (33.33%)
- I would not recommend this speaker. 0 (0.0%)
- Total respondents: 9
- Comments:
 - You did a great job, Bill.
 - 4 or 5 times pastors were cut-off or ignored when they tried to give in-put.
 - Answers were too long when a question was asked. Much more info was given than needed. Didn't want to ask anything knowing it would be at least an half hour answer.
- Would you recommend this retreat content to: (Mark all appropriate boxes.)
 - Clergy – 7 (77.78%)
 - Laity (new Christians) – 4 (44.44%)
 - Laity (mature Christians) – 4 (44.44%)
 - I would not recommend this retreat's content. – 2 (22.22%)
 - Total respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - At least clergy.
 - This is not who we are as Nazarenes in this date and time. It would NOT work in my pastoral assignment.

- I would be interested in attending future spiritual life retreats focused on: (Mark all appropriate boxes.)
 - Meditation on “The Return of the Prodigal Son” – 3 (33.33%)
 - Paths to Sacred Listening and Reading – 2 (22.22%)
 - Developing a Contemplative Life – 2 (22.22%)
 - Reading Scripture for Transformation – 3 (33.33%)
 - Developing a Life of Virtuous Temperaments – 1 (11.11%)
 - Creating a ‘Rule of Life’ – 1 (11.11%)
 - Living in and through the Christian Calendar – 3 (33.33%)
 - LifeShapes for a Passionate Life: A model of discipling for disciple-making – 3 (33.33%)
 - Francis deSales’ Introduction to a Devout Life: Purgation & Virtuous Living – 1 (11.11%)
 - Living the Spiritual Disciplines – 5 (55.56%)
 - Total respondents: 9
 - Comments:
 - A retreat on: The Life of Christ or The Prayers of Christ or What does a Christ-like Disciple Look Like and How do I Help Others Become One?
 - Really any of these would be a benefit to me.

- Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?
 - Total respondents: 7
 - Comments:
 - We could have handled a few more pastors, but I question its effectiveness with a large group.
 - Having an agenda and the articles ahead of time would have

allowed adequate mental preparation.

- The food was great, the fellowship inspiring, and the staff was helpful and kind. Good choice! I felt the meditation topics were very good!
- Not my cup of tea. On the whole I did not enjoy it. I did enjoy what little fellowship there was with my fellow pastors. If future retreats are like one this I will not be attending.
- I want to say Thank You. I only attended two of the Meditations, but both were very beneficial to me. I enjoyed the personal time. Just God and I. It was a very special time with nothing to distract me. Let's have another one.
- I had a wonderful time. Great to getaway.
- No

