



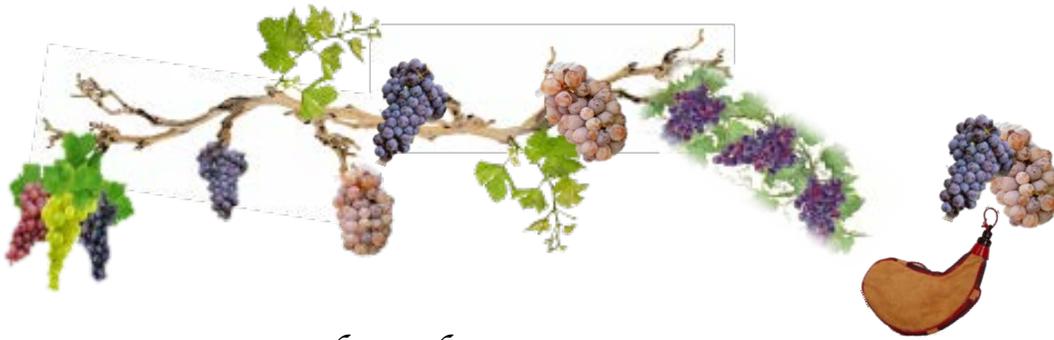
NEW WINE AND NEW WINESKINS

Issue No.: Vol. 2 Summer 2020

Mission Field

From the Editor
Why Community?
Strengthening Community Culture
Call to Service - address by Cardinal Farrell
Our Lives in Community
Mutually Supporting other Communities
Artzy Ladies
Meet Two More NAN Communities
Books We are Reading

*Newsletter of the North American Network of Charismatic Covenant
Communities (NAN)*



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From the Editor

Welcome to the second edition of New Wine and New Wineskins. Let us together stir afresh our call to Charismatic Covenant Community; continue to strengthen our fraternal bonds and encourage each other in holiness and good works.

The theme of this edition is “Why Covenant Community?” Bob Garrett’s input is a direct answer to that question. We want to show Jesus to the world in an intentional and particular way. Peter Poppleton offers help on “Forming a Strong Foundation” as we strengthen our communities through mutual support and living a unique lifestyle that builds community culture. Cardinal Kevin Farrell, in an address to Charismatic Community leaders, invites us to mission, to serve in specific ways within the church and in the world.

Testimony of an inter-community gathering, “Three-Community wine and cheese meet and greet” is an example of that mutual support and how we can help strengthen each other. One member of City of the Lord started “Artzy Ladies”. In using her artistic gifts and interest, she has begun an outreach to women that has built relationships, both inside and outside the community. We also offer a couple of exciting books that are circulating in our communities. Finally, in getting to know each other, we introduce two more communities.

This newsletter belongs to all of us in NAN (North American Network of Charismatic Covenant Communities). We welcome you to contribute articles to it! - Happenings in your community, outreaches, ministries, anything you think will build Charismatic Community life and add to the culture of community. Please submit to mawmaw4july@gmail.com

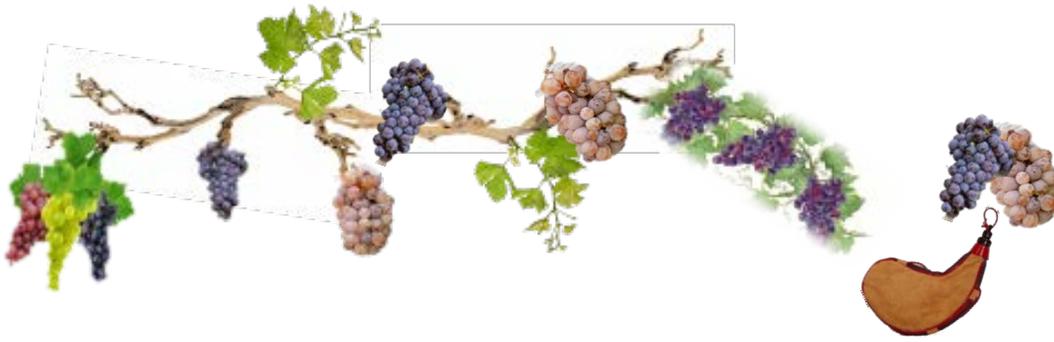
God bless,

Mary Ann West



Important Announcement!

Two men have answered the prayer to reach out to our younger generations: Robert (Bert) Funsch and Bill Marcotte. Robert is a member of the Alleluia Community and Bill is a member of the City of the Lord Community. More will be shared about them and about the work they will be doing in the next newsletter.



Why Covenant Community?

By Bob Garrett

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“Why Community—Where are We Headed” is the talk prepared, but mostly not given, by Bob Garrett, Moderator of Alleluia Community, at the Communities’ gathering this past February 2020, in Augusta, GA. Instead, he followed the lead of the Holy Spirit. However, here are some unused notes from that talk for our edification, meditation, and practice.

Why Covenant Community?

We want to live in the present-day the Acts of the Apostles. What we are attempting is not new, but rather new in our day. Covenant Communities are a present means by which God has chosen to deliver a relevant demonstration of committed, Gospel-living today.

What are some of the qualities of covenant communities that make them different, but supplemental to normal church or parish life?

Covenant communities represent Jesus to the world. We aim to do the things that Jesus did and He only did what He saw the Father doing. This is covenant community reality. We are living called and committed lives that offer a sustainable answer to the dissatisfaction in life in our culture. This is the goal of covenant community life.

The **voluntary agreements** for our community lifestyle standards are a **major defense against spiritual oppression and worldly standards.**

Covenant communities are living examples of those who practice the active Agape love of God. Though diverse, we genuinely accept and care for each other. We desire to maintain healthy personal relationships through forgiveness, reconciliation, and

outdoing one another in doing good. Covenant life is an invitation for God and others to reshape us into the image of Jesus and reflect the unity that God desires.

Proverbs 27:17 – “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.” In relationship with each other, we **grow in our self-knowledge and learn from one another through our agreed upon teachings, our conflicts, our differences, and our successes.** Living in community together we try to see ourselves through the eyes of our covenant brothers and sisters, and to adapt, learn, and grow from each other.

Community life is sacrificial as anything of value requires sacrifice. In community our isolation is destroyed, and we are learning to take off our masks and stop pretending to be something we are not. At times, everyone must occasionally defer to the needs of the individual. At other times, the individual defers to the needs of the many.

We are headed into an uncertain future where there are as many hidden dangers as there are obvious ones. **Our love for one another and our unity** together are the best preparation we could have for moving successfully into the future. **By living with secure relationships in community together we do not imitate the world’s self-centered and isolating standards.** Our love and unity are the most effective means by which we can share the believable gospel and do the work of Christ.





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Communities, Forming a Strong Foundation for Service



Peter Poppleton, NAN Moderator

None of us would be surprised if I started this article by saying: “We live in incredibly intense times. Some are even saying we are entering an apocalyptic era.” So, what does this mean for the North American Network of Charismatic Covenant Communities (NAN)? To what is the Lord calling us? Many of us are just trying to strengthen our communities and work through the puzzlement of figuring out how to reach young families and young adults.

In May of 2016 I attended the International Coordinators Conference (ICM) for the Sword of the Spirit. These occur every four years. I have never forgotten one of the prophetic senses shared with us: “The next time we gather the battle will be fully raging.” Well, the battle is raging so much that the ICM was canceled in May 2020. What does this tell us? The Lord totally knows all that is going on at this time of history. He doesn’t have to discern its meaning. His knowledge of what is happening doesn’t remove the challenges we face but we can count on the fact that He is with us.

Community leaders recently received an action item from what is now labeled the Council Service Team. The team encourages all of us to get to know each other, support one another, and, where we can, serve one another. This is part of the path we are to take in order to strengthen the cultures of our communities.

Also, here is a list of some key cultural patterns that will help build up our communities as we move forward. They were shared with City of the Lord by Dan Keating, a member of the Servants of the Word.

- We need a *deeply religious culture that clarifies our identity* and we need to pursue *holiness as a mandate for mission*.
- We need a Christian *rhythm of life* built around celebration, prayer, and liturgy with personal, familial, and communal expressions done weekly and seasonally. “*Building a Christian sense of time and grace in the midst of the world.*” – Keating
- We need Christian simplicity to remove the clutter of our lives to travel lightly.
- We need to bring mercy, wisdom, and hope to the culture around us.
- We need to offer the world a contrast culture that does not seek ‘to get along,’ but seeks to convert.
- We must be accountable to one another in living every aspect of our covenants.

Let us remember that the Lord knows the incredibly intense times in which we are living. He has called us to work with one another and to strengthen our communities in order to fulfill His purposes for these times. 



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Call to Service as Charismatic Communities in the Church

From the Vatican:

Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life

Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, addressed the First International Meeting of Leaders of Charismatic Communities in Brazil, in January 2020.

While he spoke on the nature, structure, and functioning of CHARIS, he underscored clearly services that we can uniquely provide as Charismatic Communities, services that Pope Francis has emphasized we can provide the Church and the World.



These services are: 1. to spread the Baptism in the Holy Spirit to all the baptized, 2. to work for Christian unity through relational and practical ecumenism, 3. to give compassionate service to the poor, 4. to widely promote the exercise of charisms, 5. to nurture holiness in those who live lives in the Holy Spirit, 6. to evangelize, especially young people. Following are the parts of his address that speak to each of these six areas.

1. "The first request of the Holy Father, reiterated on various occasions, is **to spread baptism in the Holy Spirit throughout the Catholic Church and, more broadly even, to all the baptized.** In making this request, the Pope does not explain how to proceed. It gives you a blank slate to seek the means, methods and ways to offer baptism in the Holy Spirit to the greatest number of baptized people. It seems to me that, as communities of the Renewal, you have a particular responsibility in this area because you often have greater resources than other structures of the Renewal. I invite you to pray to the Holy Spirit and to discern how to respond to this call of the Church. What is the place of baptism in the Holy Spirit in your community? What is its place in your apostolate? How can this experience be offered in a new way to the greatest number of people? These are questions that I invite you to ask yourself in prayer in each of

your communities. The Church expects a lot from you in this area: The Renewal must be missionary!

2. The Holy Father considers the ecumenical roots of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to be an opportunity to work for Christian unity. He proposes **to live a "relational ecumenism"**, that is to say: learning to live in friendship with other Christians while respecting our differences. In this field, it is undeniable that some charismatic communities have had, and still have, a pioneering role, a true prophetic role. The fact that Christians of different denominations come together in the same fraternal life and that this fraternal life lasts over time is a sign of hope. It demonstrates that what brings us together is more important than what divides us. It also shows that baptism in the Holy Spirit is really a bridge that brings Catholics, Pentecostals and Evangelicals together through the same experience. It also indicates that the reality of this "fraternal ecumenism" is a confirmation for all of us to follow the Holy Father in this direction.

I would also like to encourage you, as communities, **to live a practical ecumenism** that is, to work in certain areas in unity with other Christians. I think in particular of evangelization together. Experience shows that when Christians of different traditions evangelize together, it makes their witness much more powerful and credible. In our world, the scandal of our divisions is an obstacle to evangelization. Jesus' prayer "...that all may be one so that the world may believe" (Jn 17, 21) is more relevant than ever. Our world expects us to evangelize in unity, respecting our differences, as underlined in Cardinal Suenens' Malines document. Here too, I know that many charismatic communities are involved in this type of action. It is a sign of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who wants us to unite in order to hasten the coming of the Kingdom.

I encourage you to look for other areas of cooperation



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Cardinal Kevin Farrell (Cont'd)

between your communities and Christians of other denominations. The defense of life, from conception to natural death, could perhaps be one of these areas.

3. The Church is enriched by the importance that many of your communities give to **compassion and service of the poorest**... In particular, it must be noted that this attention to the poor is experienced by many of your communities, often since their foundation. This is a sign of the fruitfulness of your charism. This is a sign of the fecundity of the Renewal. It is also a sign of the authenticity of the action of the Holy Spirit among you: the Holy Spirit is love and urges us to live this love, this charity in a concrete way, by serving all those who suffer...

4... Your communities, it seems to me, have a leading role in (**promoting the exercise of charisms** not only in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal but also in the whole Church) Do not be afraid to exercise charisms. Do not suffocate them. On the contrary, encourage them among your members. Ask the Holy Spirit to renew his gifts in your communities. They are privileged places where, among brothers and sisters, you can exercise charisms, discern them, encourage them, and correct them, for the good of the whole Church. The evangelization of today's world needs you to be open to charisms. Contemporary Man is in search of signs as were the Jews in Jesus' time. Charisms are those signs, those gifts of the Holy Spirit that are given to you for the evangelization of our world. They are part of the promise that Jesus made: " *Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and he will do even greater ones, because I go to the Father* " (Jn 14:12).

5. (Another) important aspect is "**to encourage the spiritual deepening and holiness of persons who live the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit**" (Art 3 § c of the CHARIS Statutes). Here too, the communities that emerged from the Renewal have a special role to play. If the Holy Spirit

raises communities in the Church - charismatic or not - it is to help their members to advance towards holiness. The founders and moderators of these communities have a great responsibility: they are chosen by God to lead a people to Him... and their first duty is to lead a holy life themselves. ...

6. I cannot encourage you enough to **evangelize**. The fruit of Pentecost was the first evangelization, with conversions by the thousands, and the birth of the Church. Everything I have just said in this intervention about baptism in the Holy Spirit, Christian unity, love in serving the poor, the exercise of charisms and the life of holiness is directed towards a single objective: evangelization. Your communities have been fully engaged in evangelization since their foundation. It is a gift for the whole Church. I encourage you to **continue and intensify your missionary effort, especially with young people**. I remind you of the Pope's encouragement during the Pentecost vigil meeting in Rome: "*Young people are the present and the future of the Church. I am pleased that you have given them a high profile and a chance to exercise the responsibility that is theirs.*" The evangelization of young people is a priority for the Church, and I thank you for having already committed yourself to it. The Church is counting on you to reach young people where they are and to proclaim Christ to them: in schools, universities, on the streets, in bars, wherever they are. Feel free to help each other... by sharing your experiences on evangelization."





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Three-Community “Wine and Cheese Meet and Greet” Originated and Sponsored by Community of God’s Love

By Anne Hamrick

On Friday, July 10, 2020, members from Community of God’s Love (Steubenville, OH), Mother of God Community (Gaithersburg, MD), and New Creation Community (Virginia Beach, VA) held three concurrent zoom meetings for their members to meet each other. These three communities had originally planned an in-person gathering in July, but that was postponed due to Covid-19. Tony Madrid, a member of New Creation, remarked that we could get together with other communities via zoom! And so, the meetings were planned and labeled “Wine and Cheese Meet and Greet—Bring your own wine and cheese!” There was great feedback from the meetings:

“I think our Meet and Greet was a lot of fun and the hour and fifteen minutes for my group flew by!”

“For me it was important to know that I am not alone in this endeavor but are part of a larger move of the Spirit.”

“I think this is a great opportunity to widen our scope and vision and to hear what the Spirit is saying to others!”



Cartoon by Sharon Poppleton



NEW WINE AND NEW WINE SKINS



Leader & Co-Founder
Eileen Spenla

Artzy Ladies- Ministering to the Creative Spirit through Beauty

“Beauty is a key to mystery and a call to transcendence.” Pope Saint John-Paul II

By Eileen Spenla
With Sharron Poppleton

Artzy Ladies is a spirit-filled, lay-driven, Catholic ministry of a group of artistic and creative women who are inspired to come together to celebrate, encourage one another, and grow in their creative gifts. From its beginnings, the women recognized the healing and balm-like effects of the arts, in particular, beauty (considered one of God’s attributes). His beauty, truth and goodness provide the framework for the gatherings.

“These concepts are found in John-Paul II’s *Letter to the Artist*,” says Eileen Spenla, the leader and co-founder of Artzy Ladies, and member of City of the Lord.

Artzy Ladies have gathered monthly for the last 6 years, usually in Eileen’s home. The women who come are under no obligation. There are about 35 on the roster, with about 12 coming each time. “This keeps it small and accommodating with just enough to fit around the table,” says Eileen. Each gathering has a theme, often inspired by the Church calendar. Every guest brings a dish according to the chosen “cuisine du jour”. Place settings at table often include a Scripture or a word of encouragement, which help guide the discussion. After dinner, conversation is theme directed and, time permitting, there is an art activity.

“The Holy Spirit always shows up,” says Eileen, “and we all leave with our hearts full and enriched.”

The Artzy Ladies themselves come from numerous local Catholic parishes, Christian denominations, age groups, walks of life, and have varying levels and kinds of artistic talents. The common bond is a love for the Lord and recognition of the impact of arts on culture, as well as an awareness of the healing aspect of art and

beauty. The arts may be a personal quest or a means of evangelization depending on each individual. Regardless of artistic bent or ability, attendees find love, encouragement, prayer support, and camaraderie.

“We have witnessed some wonderful fruits since gathering as Artzy Ladies, shares Eileen. “Most importantly, friendships have blossomed and deepened. Some of our women have made a career change or renewed their focus in the arts in their life,” she adds.

For example, one woman has become an iconographer and icon retreat master. Another is now a sales representative at a Catholic fine arts gallery. Several have become art teachers in either Catholic or public schools. Some are engaged in parish ministries that utilize their artistic talents. The group, however, is not limited to the visual and fine arts. There are vocalists, songwriters, creative seamstresses, a playwright, and a professional dancer.

Eileen was inspired to form Arzy Ladies from creative efforts of her friends Diane Saunders and Nancy Mills. She wanted to provide a place for women to focus on arts and culture with the truth of the Lord and His Church as foundational. While not an official outreach of City of the Lord, the ministry is born out of its experience, with a good balance of members and non-members.

Besides its artistic focus, the group has also been a place of emotional and spiritual healing for many. “The arts can be a conduit to personal healing,” states Eileen. “Beauty lifts the soul to heaven. Beauty heals, and as we have heard, beauty will save the world.”





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Come and meet:

Alleluia Community of Augusta, Georgia



By Dan Almeter

Alleluia Community was founded on Feb. 11, 1973, when 12 adults, all Catholic, made a life time commitment to God and one another. Within a month, the leadership went on retreat and heard the Lord say, “Be ecumenical”. And within that same year, the community bought a piece of property that was re-named “Faith Village”. It is an intentional residential neighborhood where about 75% of the community resides.



The community now consists of 700+ men, women and children. It is about 89% Catholic in make-up with about ten other Christian Traditions represented, including Orthodox and Messianic Jewish believers. We have three different levels of membership: full covenant, underway and associate. Associate has three different subsets: Alleluia alumni, locals who cannot go underway due to an impediment, and mission members who live in other far away locations.

At this point, over 50% of our membership is over age 60, although we have still a significant population of young families with about 125 currently enrolled in our K-12 school. We devote much of our time and resources to our children through their formation in the Alleluia Community School. We are very actively bringing our young adults into leadership. Our biggest area of concern is trying to engage more of our large college age population into intentional involvement with the community.

We have always seen our main charism as “being a people”—living out covenant love in everyday life—enabling others to experience the unconditional love of God.

Out of this covenant love flows other charisms. Promoting ecumenism and reconciliation within the Body of Christ locally, nationally and internationally, is one of the calls God has placed upon us. We also see as a primary charism, to help promote and build covenant life in other places. Our ministries within the community may involve only one or two people, or 50, depending on the ministry. Currently, some of the more vibrant ministries within Alleluia include: healing room ministry, spiritual direction, prison ministry, service to the poor through our neighborhood apartments, inner healing and deliverance, pro-life ministry, uniting the local pastors and city leaders through monthly prayer breakfasts, sponsoring conferences of various types, weekly open prayer meeting, life in the Spirit/Alpha, retreats, and more.....

We see our covenant as a primary means to grow in holiness—essentially growing in deeper prayer as a constant goal, loving one another more fully, striving to build unity and growing in our use of the charismatic gifts as a way to evangelize others.

Alleluia Community has always highly valued relationships with other communities. We have gained invaluable insights and clear direction from other communities over the years. We feel we are “protected” by having the wisdom and discernment from so many holy men and women leaders in other communities. We are thrilled to be part of the new North American Network and look forward to the days ahead, building the Kingdom of God with all of you—our covenant brothers and sisters.





NEW WINE AND NEW WINESKINS



Come and meet:

New Creation Community of Southeastern Virginia and Knoxville, Tennessee

By Anne Hamrick



New Creation Community was formed by two charismatic prayer groups which came together in obedience to the prophecy “band yourselves together around me,” given at the International Catholic

charismatic conference in Rome in 1975. The union of the two prayer groups evolved into Covenant Community, with the first members entering into our Covenant in February of 1982. Most of our members live in Virginia Beach, VA, but we own a facility on five acres in the adjacent city of Chesapeake, VA.

One of the words from the Lord which directs our life came from a member Sandy May in a prophetic dream. She died, went to heaven, sat at Jesus’ feet and, asked, “I got it right, didn’t I? It was about relationships, right?” She knew Jesus was saying, “yes.” Our members are involved in many ministries, but for us, it always comes back to “It’s about relationships.” We strive for our relationships to reflect the truth that God has made us family, His family. We lean into the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit to live our community life and reflect God’s love to others.



We have about 30 committed members with two levels of commitment, initially committed members and covenant members. The majority of our members are age 50 or older; about 20% are younger, single adults. At one time most members lived in townhomes within two

blocks of each other, but over time, members moved to larger homes in the same part of town. We have two covenant members who recently felt a call to move to Knoxville, Tennessee to begin community there. That work is still in the infancy stage.

New Creation Community is a private association within the Diocese of Richmond, with a heart for unity in Christ’s body. We have a relationship with Hope Charitable Services, a ministry of Sanctuary of Hope Church (of the Pentecostal Church of God) which ministers to the poor in the inner city of Portsmouth, VA. We help with meals to the poor they serve, assistance with their all-summer all-day vacation Bible school, and pastoral leadership to the women of the ministry, and a weekly men’s breakfast— “Iron Sharpening Iron”.

Other of our ministries include formation for those ministering Transformation Prayer Ministry and Unbound Ministry. We work with one of our parishes to co-sponsor women’s prayer breakfasts and supply prayer teams whenever needed. A few members delight in Treasure Hunts. We support the Greater Hampton Roads Diaper Banks which has space on our property.

Since we are in Virginia Beach and close to Regent University and CBN (Christian Broadcasting Network) which sponsor conferences, fellow community brothers and sisters sometimes come to the area. We love to offer hospitality!



Come visit us!





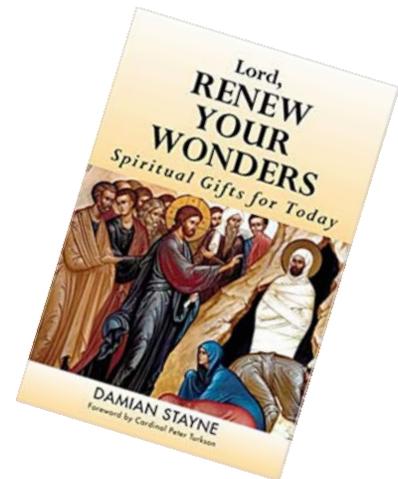
NEW WINE AND NEW WINE SKINS



Some Great Reads that are Circulating in Communities:

Lord, Renew Your Wonders by Damien Stayne, The Word Among Us Press

From the publisher – “At the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, Blessed Pope John XXIII offered a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to ‘Renew your wonders in our time, as though for a new Pentecost.’ The rediscovery of the charismatic gifts by ordinary Catholics throughout the world was an answer to that prayer. Damien Stayne, who is known internationally for his healing ministry, shows readers how spiritual gifts such as prophecy and healing were used by Jesus, the early Church, and the saints—and why we need them operating in the Church today. He provides not only amazing stories of God's presence and work in our time but also a host of practical instructions on how to grow in these gifts.”



Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, Peter Scazzero, Zondervan

From the publisher – “Peter Scazzero outlines a roadmap for discipleship with Jesus that is powerfully transformative. He unveils what's wrong with our current definition of "spiritual growth" and offers not only a model of spirituality that actually works, but seven steps to change that will help you experience authentic faith and hunger for God.”

Peter Scazzero learned the hard way: you can't be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature. Even though he was the pastor of a growing church, he did what most people do:

- Avoid conflict in the name of Christianity
- Ignore his anger, sadness, and fear
- Use God to run from God
- Live without boundaries

Eventually God awakened him to a biblical integration of emotional health and the spiritual practice of slowing down and quieting your life for to experience a firsthand relationship with Jesus

