

101 Ways to Create Spiritual Energy

General Ideas

- 1 – Hold a spirituality retreat at Dogwood Acres. Contact Kevin Veldhuisen or Jean Silva for ideas & resources to plan your retreat.
- 2 – Attend South Alabama Cursillo (www.alpresbyteriancursillo.com)
- 3 – Have your Session and church leaders study the *Unbinding the Gospel* series
- 4 – Create and set up a spirituality center to introduce exercises and practices that can deepen the spiritual lives of people.
- 5 – Conduct an interreligious dialog using 5 principles of interreligious conversation found in *Hungry Hearts* newsletter Fall/Winter 2009 available at www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/hungryhearts.
- 6 – Provide hands-on mission opportunities in conjunction with a Bible study before/afterwards.
- 7 – Conduct a spiritual gifts inventory with your congregation. Go to www.buildingchurch.net or www.churchgrowth.org or www.kodachrome.org. See bibliography for more resources.
- 8 – Interview each potential member or new member and find out what led them to their decision to reconnect with the church and/or find out their passion/calling and share it with the congregation in some way.
- 9 – Hold a time of renewal/revival for your congregation. Ask someone in our presbytery to lead your church in a time of spiritual renewal (Mark Broadhead, pastor of 1st Crestview or Huw Christopher, pastor of 1st Marianna).
- 10 - Do the exercise, "Finding Our Biblical Story", Resource D from the book, *Holy Conversations*, by Gil Rendle & Alice Mann.

Deepening Prayer Life Alone or In Groups

- 11 – Start a weekly prayer group. Use the resource, "Lord, Teach Us to Pray" available to order at www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation.
- 12 – Have the Session form prayer/accountability partners using the questions/guidelines found in the book, *High Voltage Spirituality* by Bill Tenny-Brittain.
- 13 - Hold a prayer retreat at Dogwood Acres. Contact the Jean Silva (jean@presbyteryofflorida.com) for people and material resources.
- 14 – Make a prayer wall where your congregation can add post-it notes under various types of prayer (ACTS Prayer) or for general prayers. Hold these prayers up in worship.
- 15 – Do silent, contemplative prayer or centering prayer. Have someone conduct a centering prayer workshop. Go to www.centeringprayer.com or www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices.
- 16 – Say the Jesus Prayer – "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Go to www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices to learn the origin of this prayer.

17 - Breath prayers – Focus on praying as you breath, breathing in you think, “Come Lord Jesus,” and when exhaling, “hear our prayer”. www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices.

18 - Pray the prayers of others using those found in Perspective newsletter at www.renovare.us/whatwedo/Perspectivearchive October 1996.

19 – Pray the psalms. Read it through, then say them out loud and make it your own prayer.

20 – When experiencing pain, suffering, agitation, etc., stop and be still. God knows what you need before you think it. Words are not always necessary.

For use in corporate worship

21 – Hold a Taize worship service. Have the worship leader explain the service just prior to the actual service to explain the rich meaning and symbolism involved for maximum effect and edification.

22 – Plan a prayer and healing service for anointment of the sick and bereaved. Invite people who might need this special worship service due to illness or death of loved ones.

23 – Hold a brief devotional/worship time in your home and invite neighbors and friends, especially at Christmas and Easter.

24 – Encourage your congregants to prepare for worship starting Saturday evening with reading the Scripture lessons for the following Sunday, bathing and performing certain hygiene that symbolizes purification and aesthetics for presenting one’s best at worship the next day.

25 – Conduct all church meetings in the context of worship, using the movements of worship: gathering, praising, confessing, the word, sealing, dedicating, sending

26 – Hold a worship service that develops the theme that all of life is worship. Include a bulletin insert that lists the movements of worship, encouraging people to reflect on the coming week, listing routines, schedules, events, etc., under each movement of worship. Dedicate these “lives of worship” the next week in church.

27 – Worship outdoors in God’s beautiful creation!

28 – Worship using multiple intelligences hands-on worship – “work of the people”.

29 – Use multi-media in worship to engage younger generations and the unchurched and to draw upon the richness of media to enhance the worship experience for all.

30 – Hold a 5-minute worship service at home or work in the middle of the afternoon by lighting a candle and/or putting flowers in a vase and reading Scripture and saying a prayer, perhaps listen to worshipful music to remind you that all of life is worship.

Small Group Ministry

31 – Start a small group ministry (3-12 people) for Bible study that builds community through sharing personal lives, personal connections with Scripture and accountability for living for what is learned. See the book, *Biblical Equipping*, by David Paap for a model of effective small groups.

32 – Form a small group around a common interest, hobby or situation that becomes the basis for your shared community. Then hold a Bible study using the process in *Biblical Equipping*.

33 – Hold a church-wide Bible study during Lent or Advent or some other time of the year to encourage people to study the Bible and be involved in adult education. Study a series that follows a sermon series preached during Lent or another time of the year to reinforce the learning and to gain insight from the sermon and during the study.

34 – Study the small group resource, “Growing the Church Deep & Wide” put out by the PC(USA). It is available free for download at www.pcusa.org/goodnews.

35 – Form a dream group. Participants journal their dreams, then meet and discuss & reflect on dreams that are shared with the group. Begin with a brief discussion on a scripture passage on dreams. For example, use Joseph in Genesis, Jacob’s ladder, Joseph, Jesus’ father’s dream. Help each other see God working through that dream. Begin & end with prayer.

Media/TV/Film

36 - View your favorite movie and tell everyone why it is your favorite & how it ties into your faith.

37 – View your favorite tv show and tell everyone why it is your favorite & how it ties into your faith.

38 – Use the book, *Finding God in the Dark: Taking the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius to the Movies* by John Pungente and Monty Williams.

39 – Pray during each commercial while watching tv.

40 – Hold a movie night at the church and discuss how it relates to faith. *Watch The Village, Places in the Heart or Forrest Gump* or another movie that involves a lot of the faith issues or Christian symbolism in it.

Writing

41 – Make an acrostic puzzle using words from faith – Jesus, disciple, cross, etc.

42 - Write a poem that reflects your faith. Publish it in your church’s newsletter.

43 - Write your faith journey and share it with your loved ones and with others.

44 - Write your own prayer using the ACTS model – adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication.

45 - Write a letter to God. Thank him for your creative gifts, and for the gift of your faith.

47 - Write a brief history of your childhood memories of coming to know God. Can you remember an idea about God that you have outgrown?

48 - Begin a journal. Choose a fresh composition book and plan to write an entry every day for a week. Make sketches, too, if you like. Read your journal over to yourself or to friends and decide at the end of the week whether to continue.

49 – Read a book about journaling, such as *Journal-ism To Be Told: Know Your Story, Shape Your Future*, by Dan B. Allender or *A Pen and A Path: Writing as a Spiritual Practice*, by Sarah Stockton.

50 – Journal your dreams. Look for how God may be using your dreams to communicate with you about what it is you need to work on or what God is calling you to be and do.

Faith-Reflection with Art/Visual Creativity

- 51 - Draw a picture of your workplace and reflect on what it may reveal to you about your daily work. Rearrange your desk to make it more attractive or spacious. Get rid of the clutter. Add a picture, a vase of flowers, or lamp. Incorporate artwork that reflects your faith in some way. Enjoy your handiwork.
- 52 - Arrange a centerpiece of flowers for the day your spiritual formation group meets. Reflect on the beauty and color of the flowers.
- 53 - Decorate year round by setting the table creatively with symbols of faith.
- 54 - Set out a new row of plants in your garden, or arrange potted plants on an indoor shelf.
- 55 - Hold an art show at your church along a Scripture passage or Christian theme. See how the people of God use their talents to express their faith in different ways.
- 56 - Search out a painting or another work of art that has special meaning for you. Spend some time in appreciation of the work. Then consider writing, or explaining to another person, why this work is so meaningful for you. The late Henri Nouwen did this with Rembrandt's painting, "The Return of the Prodigal Son." Or try Stanley Spencer's painting, "The Resurrection: Cookham," which depicts the resurrection at the end times as it might occur in Spencer's home village in England.
- 57 - Draw a picture of something or someone you find beautiful: a flower, a tree, a person. Give thanks to God for it.
- 58 - Draw a family coat of arms, reflecting your faith, values & character in some way. Display it in your home.
- 59 - Hold an arts & crafts/hobbies camp where church members share their creative talents with the church by teaching their craft and sharing how their art is reflected in the creativity, tying in scripture to their craft.
- 60 - Create a flower arrangement for worship that reflects the theme of the sermon or worship in general. Include in the church bulletin a write up the meaning/symbolism behind the arrangement.

Storytelling

- 61 - Tell simple, familiar stories from the Bible and enjoy the storytelling.
- 62 - Tell a modern day Bible story, giving an example of biblical truth using the language of the people.
- 63 - Share a story of a "God sighting". Share in a small group, in church, with a friend or neighbor a story of where you've seen God at work in your life or someone else's life. Or tell a good news story with your loved ones at the dinner table. Give thanks to God for it.
- 64 - Go to www.pcusa.org/smallchurch/stories for inspiring stories of how small churches are reaching out with God's love in their communities. Share these stories with others.
- 65 - Set aside a time to practice sharing good news stories in your congregation as a time to practice talking about our faith, practicing verbal evangelism. Include a testimony in worship each week, faith boxes with faith

questions for families to share at dinner, faith questions at every church meal, and a sermon series with small groups studying the scripture used for the series. It can be done during advent, lent or some other time.

Money

66 - Find a person in genuine need, get to know this person, and invest money in that person in a way that the person will work toward self development and self sustainability and that honors their God-given talents.

67 - Write out a "money autobiography." This exercise originates with Elizabeth O'Connor and is expanded in greater detail in her book, *Letters to Scattered Pilgrims*. The idea is to write a three-page autobiography which deals with the subject of your life as it is related to money. Give special attention to feelings and relationships as well as reflecting on factual accounts.

68 – Household economics - Consider carefully what you buy. Do you need or want it? Is it the best use of the resources God has entrusted to you? Find ways to cut waste and promote fair trade. Buy locally when able and avoid buying goods made in sweatshops.

69 – Give 2-cents at every meal. Pray for those who are hungry.

70 – Give generously. If not currently tithing, work toward a level of tithing incrementally until it comes naturally.

Spiritual Disciplines

71 – Healing/Honoring the Body

72 - Strengthening our saying “yes” and “no” –

73 - Dying well – Go to www.renovare.us

74 –Contemplative Silence Meditation - Do the exercise, “A Time of Centering at the Start of a Meeting”, Resource Y.

75 - Forgiveness –Read what Jesus said about forgiveness. Then pray for a heart of forgiveness. Journal those people are events that you need to let go of. Remember those things for which you need to ask forgiveness and forgive yourself. Reflect on how you feel about the things you have done for which you are sorry, then think about those that you need to forgive, remembering that they may have similar feelings. Give thanks to God for forgiveness. Take communion at the soonest opportunity.

76 – Sabbath Keeping – set aside one day or weekend to do nothing but rest, read the Bible and pray and journal. Set aside chores, errands except very simple food preparation (make food the day before or simply warm it up). Go to www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices.

77 – Lectio divina – Do the exercise, “A Short Guide to Lectio Divina”, Resource W in or go to www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices.

78 – Develop Spiritual Friendships by forming prayer partners, having an accountability group/partner, working with a Spiritual Director or Spiritual community (small group). Go to www.renovare.us/spiritualrenewal/relationships/spiritualfriendship.

79 – Hospitality – Invite someone in your neighborhood or a new acquaintance to eat dinner with you or go to church with you. Be welcoming at all times to newcomers wherever you may be.

80 – Discernment – Go to www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/discernment. Be intentional daily through prayer, Bible reading, devotional time in listening for God’s “still small voice”. Journal your thoughts, insights, and share with a spiritual friend or small group. Do this process with your group to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. See the bibliography for discernment resources.

81 – Solitude - Leave radio, TV, stereo, CD off while cleaning the house or basement or garage or working on a hobby. View this time of quiet as a special gift from God during which you can listen for his whisperings. OR take a predawn walk, limit speech to an absolute minimum for one day, or have an experience of “watching” by lighting a candle and holding a mini-retreat wherever you are, sitting listening, watching people and reading and praying. Go to www.renovare.us/spiritualrenewal/practicinglikeJesus/solitude.

82 – Examen – Use these questions to review your day to discover www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices

83 – Walk the Labyrinth or use a finger labyrinth. Go to www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/practices

84 – Fasting - Go to www.renovare.us/spiritualdisciplines/practicinglikeJesus/fasting.

85 – Study. Read the Bible, read archives of *Perspective* at www.renovare.us/whatwedo/Perspectivearchive, or read one of the books from the creating spiritual energy bibliography found on this website.

Acts of Compassion & Social Justice

86 - Go to the inner city for a social justice retreat. Talk with the homeless, learning from them rather than preaching to them. Fast so that in a small way you may enter into the gnawing hunger of those who live an eternal, compulsory fast. Walk the streets, listening to the whimpering "songs from the slums." Consider what it would mean to live without hope. Without trying to solve every problem, listen for any divine guidance you may be given for action.

87 – Serve food at a soup kitchen. Make eye contact and speak to the people. Pray for them afterwards by name if you can.

88 – Read the newspaper and watch the news each week with a focus on a particular problem that touches your heart and moves you to action. Reflect on what action you will take.

89 – Form a group of concerned people in your church or neighborhood to address poverty. Join your community’s hunger & homeless coalition and get to know the people affected by poverty and justice firsthand, mentoring one person whom you have met during your justice retreat or working with your concerned group. Walk with them weekly to find ways to help this person attain success in pulling themselves out of poverty.

90 – Go on a mission trip away from home. Hold a Bible study prior to leaving and end each day on the trip with a time of devotion and reflection on how the group has seen God at work.

Using Music

91 - Do the exercise, "Favorite Hymn Exercise", Resource L.

92 -Share a favorite contemporary music CD with friends. Reflect with them on why it pleases you.

93 - Try a similar encounter with great musical works of faith. A CD of great Christian hymns might offer such an opportunity. Handel's "Messiah" in performance or on CD can offer a glimpse of the resurrected life.

94 –Sing your life. Write the lyrics of your life, and set it to your own music or to a hymn or other familiar tune. Use "O My Darling Clementine" is a good melody if you can't think of one.

95 – Write/compose your own theme music or use a song that reflects your faith and core values. Use this theme song as a daily motivator to be who God made you to be; in other words, be the best person you can be!

General

96 – Ask God for spiritual energy for you and your congregation. Make this request without ceasing.

97 – Time – Instead of watching tv, read a devotional, journal or read Scripture. Reflect on how God has blessed you. Spend time with loved ones. Give them the gift of your presence and set aside one on one time with each member of your family weekly.

98 –Hobbies –Spend time on hobbies that honor your God-given talents and develops skills that can be used for God's purposes.

99 – Vacation – Plan a vacation time that allows you to focus on God's goodness, the beauty of God's creation and/or promotes thanksgiving for what God is doing. Consider doing mission work as a part of your vacation.

100 – Perform a service or mission project with a small group, one that you all agree upon and that furthers the mission of your congregation.

Last, but not least ...

101 – Give thanks to God for your life. Live your life as if you truly believe that you are a child of God and you are well-loved.

