



## Testimonials



**Creating a Culture of Renewal** has changed the way I see and do ministry, giving me tools to explore in-depth who I am as a pastor and a leader, discern how to best listen and communicate with those I serve, and practical steps for boldly leading the church into God's future.

Rev. McKenzie Sefa, Central UMC, Spencer, North Carolina

For 20 years, I played with a vision to create a congregational financial stewardship resource. But I never moved on it. Within 12 months in Creating a Culture of Renewal, it went from an idea to a draft to a book contract! I have never experienced accountability and action like this before in our denominational system. Creating a Culture of Renewal empowered me to fulfill my dream!

Bonnie Marden, Director, MYTE Ministries, New England Conference



Having my leadership know their DiSC dimensions helped me in my own learning process as part of Rebekah's Track 1 of Creating a Culture of Renewal program. One of the benefits of this process for our church was particularly seen when my Church Council voted unanimously to tackle a new initiative; we approved a new Spanish-Speaking Ministries for St. Paul's UMC. Creating new possibilities of ministry is a result of knowing who we are and what we are made of as we fulfill our vision of Transforming the World from the Heart of Las Cruces.

Rev. Eddie Rivera, DS, New Mexico Annual Conference

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Other programs *talk* about leadership development. Creating a Culture of Renewal is the **only one** I know of that *actually* delivers!

Rev. Margaret Gillikin, District Superintendent, Rocky Mountain Conference  
- Certified in Congregational Renewal, June 2015

**Creating a Culture of Renewal** was the best thing I have ever done for myself and my church. It has helped in handling conflicts, problem solving, understanding who would get the job done and who would not, who would be the best leaders in certain areas and ministries, and how to direct my sermons to different personalities in the church. If one is serious about ministry, Rebekah's course and teaching will open up a whole vista of new ideas and formulas for reaching your congregations. Do it for yourself and your congregation.



Rev. Bill Taylor, Bess Chapel UMC, Cherryville, North Carolina



I have an increased understanding of me and how to work with people different from me. I have forever lost the ability to say to someone: "How can you say/think/do that?" Now I know. Here's what I'd say to others about Creating a Culture of Renewal: You will grow as a leader, friend and family member. You will be set free from hang ups to minister in Christ's name.

Rev. Michael McKay, Butler UMC, Butler, New Jersey

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I believe so strongly in this work. In just a short time I have learned to take a step back so that I don't get hooked into the emotion of a situation as much. I'm learning how to play to people's strengths by observing their interactions, body language and styles. I'm having more positive interactions and participating more in group activities like going to lunch with my co-workers, which is not my style! I find I don't take things as personally anymore. I've been able to salvage situations where I might have given up in the past.

Rev. Martha Taylor, EquiDiscovery LLC  
Faculty, Creating a Culture of Renewal

I am half way through **Track 1 of Creating a Culture of Renewal** and cannot sing its praises high enough! For one, it takes things step by step; I'm not inundated with everything all at once. Secondly, the insights we gain from the study have helped me be better at church. For instance, I am able to look at people and adjust my pace to match theirs. I understand who's a good fit for our outreach programs and nurturing ministries. We are also identifying brand new people we can plug into different projects. I am even able to relate to young people in a better way! I can't wait for Track 2.



Kathy Jewell, Certified Lay Minister, St. Paul's UMC, El Paso, Texas



Thank you so much for introducing me to the **Creating a Culture of Renewal** program. It has turned out to be a big eye opener into dimensions of my own personality and other's personality types, as well. Now I see that we are all wired differently. This has defused a great deal of tension between people in the congregation. The program made an **amazing difference** in my leadership ability where I am now able to work with conflict and disagreement from a more assertive and positive position. I will be able to use the tools I've gained for the rest of my life in ministry. Thank you!

Rev. Les Huseby, Sargent UMC and Mosca UMC, Colorado

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I am working with Rebekah in a special version of **Creating a Culture of Renewal** Track 1 geared to young clergy. I started out a little (okay, as Rebekah will tell you, a lot) skeptical about working so intensively with the DiSC resources. I didn't really see how one more personality assessment was going to help me hear and follow God's call with my congregations. The value of the work is not in having one more set of letters to describe my personality. The value is in reflecting deeply on my own strengths and motivations and in better understanding the strengths and motivations of the leaders I am working with. Rebekah and her team invited us to find the graced intersections of God's call and our existing strengths. And they are helping us figure out what, concretely, to do about them.

Rev. Elaine Hall, St. Matthews UMC, Morganton, North Carolina

When I first became Executive Director of the Wyoming Association of Churches, I thought this would be my retirement job. Then I enrolled in the Creating a Culture of Renewal program. Now I have reinvested myself in my work and truly feel I'm bringing a renewed energy to what I'm doing. I don't even see retirement on the horizon!



Chesie Lee, Wyoming Interfaith Network

Great insights combined with immediate application for both our church and personal settings help make **Creating a Culture of Renewal extremely valuable**. I have rethought my approaches to various components of my work in ministry, in light of the needs and perspectives of those different from mine. This outlook has helped me to expand the influence, and effectiveness, of my ministry. **I'm an old dog, but I've learned new tricks**. Thanks Rebekah!



Rev. Mark Heiss, First UMC, Mead, Colorado

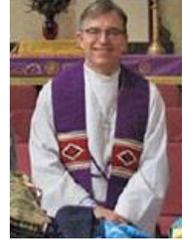
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Track 1 of Creating a Culture of Renewal has enabled me to ask my congregation the question, "What is our next transformational ministry?" That question has sparked new conversations about where God is calling us to take a risk. As a result, we are exploring becoming a Reconciling Congregation. This is something we could not have talked about or done before.

Rev. Greg Kennedy, First UMC of Hobbs, Hobbs, New Mexico



Through **Creating a Culture of Renewal**, I learned so much about human behavior, and about churches, and how behavior plays into how decisions are made. And how changes can, and sometimes cannot happen, in congregations. I quickly realized that what I learned was the missing link in the Healthy Church Initiative.

Jeff Lust, Director of Religious Life at McMurry University, Abilene, Texas

**I don't think it's an exaggeration to say the church wouldn't be here if it wasn't for this program.** It's helped me recognize the mission of the church, and deal with conflicts. The number of ministries has skyrocketed here. We used to do **1** hands-on ministry event **per year**. Now we do **3 per month**. That's a **3600%** increase in ministries! We've also seen a **300%** increase in the number of people engaged in ministry. Not bad for a church with 20 people in worship. Even though we have less in worship than we used to have, **almost 100%** of our worshipping congregation is engaged in a hands on ministry. **We have shifted the culture of this congregation."**



Rev. Karen Gibson, Conesville and New Moscow UMC, Conesville, Ohio

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Through the Creating a Culture of Renewal process, I've gained the confidence to know what I'm good at and how I can become a better resource for others. As I've become a better and more effective leader, I've been able to quickly help those in my congregation to recognize that what they have to offer to others and to themselves has value and purpose. I've been able to help them achieve success with projects and outreach programs, both within the walls of our church and throughout the community. Helping others and making a difference are extremely important to me, and Rebekah's program has given me the tools and the skills needed to use them to help me make the world a better place.



Fr. Doug Wasinger, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Buffalo, Wyoming  
- Certified in Congregational Renewal, June 2015



I am so grateful to have the training offered by Creating a Culture of Renewal. It is reshaping the way I understand leadership and giving me language to discern the personality types of the people I serve in churches. I highly recommend engaging in this program!

Rev. Paul B. Thompson, Huntersville UMC, Huntersville, North Carolina

As the Creating a Culture of Renewal program has unfolded, my ability to trust God is unfolding too. A deeper understanding of styles and culture of church gives me more insight for the ministry. I'm able to not worry about having to figure things out and just trust God. As I embrace aspects of my style, I experience the glass as half full. Doing this the way it's structured, knowing there are others in the program, not feeling so alone in ministry, has been wonderful. It's been a great, great experience!



Rev. Kristin White, Green Street UMC, Augusta, Maine

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I've seen a lot of **growth** in the missional worship service I'm in charge of (The Third). The band has grown by **25%**, the kitchen crew has **doubled**, worship has grown by **over 50%**, and we now have a set-up and clean-up crew. It's all about knowing how to get things done, how to work with people. I directly attribute it to my growth as a leader from the **Creating a Culture of Renewal** program.

Rev. Brian Oliver, First UMC, Casper, Wyoming

If you're looking to be a **more effective and confident leader**, then understand your congregation through the lens of the Creating a Culture of Renewal program.

Personally, it has helped me understand the differences between my approach to life and how others approach life. And in understanding those differences, **I'm able to shape how I communicate with people who are different from me.** Rather than alienating people who function differently, I am able to communicate in ways that appeal to their way of being in the world. As a result, we hear each other, we discover common ground and we find ways to move into the future together. I used these learnings to help me **shape a visioning retreat for our congregation.** It was very successful. The exercise brought our congregational culture into clearer focus for me. I now have a much better feel for their motivations and concerns. **I'm a lot more comfortable moving forward.**



Rev. Trudy Robinson, Littleton UMC, Littleton, Colorado



I've found Creating a Culture of Renewal to be the most effective and life changing source of positive renewal for our clergy, churches, and conferences I've experienced in almost 30 years in our annual conference.

Rev. Ralph Lepley, Rose Chapel, Statesville, North Carolina

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Through Rebekah's program, we tripled the number of leaders in our international missions area. Also, as a direct result of Creating a Culture of Renewal, we launched our missional outreach to young adults called Open Space. The other leaders told me, "We couldn't have done this without you, your vision, or your learning!" I directly attribute this growth and success to my work with Rebekah and the Creating a Culture of Renewal program. I wholeheartedly recommend this program for real transformation in your church!



Rev. Mary Beth Taylor, Open Space, Littleton, Colorado  
Faculty, Creating a Culture of Renewal



This process has really helped me understand the connection between my strengths and weaknesses; it's not random. I'm learning how to go with my strengths and deal with my weaknesses. Not only that, I'm better at understanding others who are different. If I can understand what their fears are, then we can move forward. I'm real pleased with having a Buddy and a Mentor in the program. It's extremely helpful. Especially since, geographically, we're all over creation.

Rev. Mark Marston, First UMC, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Creating a Culture of Renewal has been transformational for me and for my congregation. We have improved in our inter-personal relationships and therefore have more effective meetings which lead to more effective ministry. Our process for visioning and goal-setting to achieve our vision helps us fulfill our mission of "Following Jesus, Making Disciples, and Transforming the World."



Rev. Marilyn Weiler, Pine Grove UMC, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

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Embracing and implementing Track 1 of **Creating a Culture of Renewal** gave me a whole new way to view and discern what was happening in our church life and ministry. I was able to have transformational conversations with leaders resulting in deeper understanding and clearer insight. The DiSC assessment helped me to be more aware of my own way of communicating and relating to those who are different from myself. Now THAT affected me deeply. I am still learning to stretch myself into unfamiliar territory and take more risks.

Working through Track 2 Leadership Smarts has enabled me to delve deeper into facing my self-limiting fears, confronting them courageously, and taking bolder action steps to shape our vision and empower our leaders. It has already been life changing in so many excellent ways! There is more to come . . . I can hardly wait!

Rev. Michael Pike, Portsmouth UMC, Rhode Island

I keep having AHA! moments as I think about situations that occurred in the churches I've been in. Now I have the tools and the ability to look at things from a different mindset. We ALL need the **Creating a Culture of Renewal program**. It will continually open your eyes and minds so you can work together in ways that get things done without destroying people's relationships.



Rev. Kelly Harvell, New Harbor UMC, New Harbor, Maine

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