

New

TIMES

The UCC...*New* Ideas for *New* Churches

Fall / Winter 2011 ■ Issue 2

New Leaders

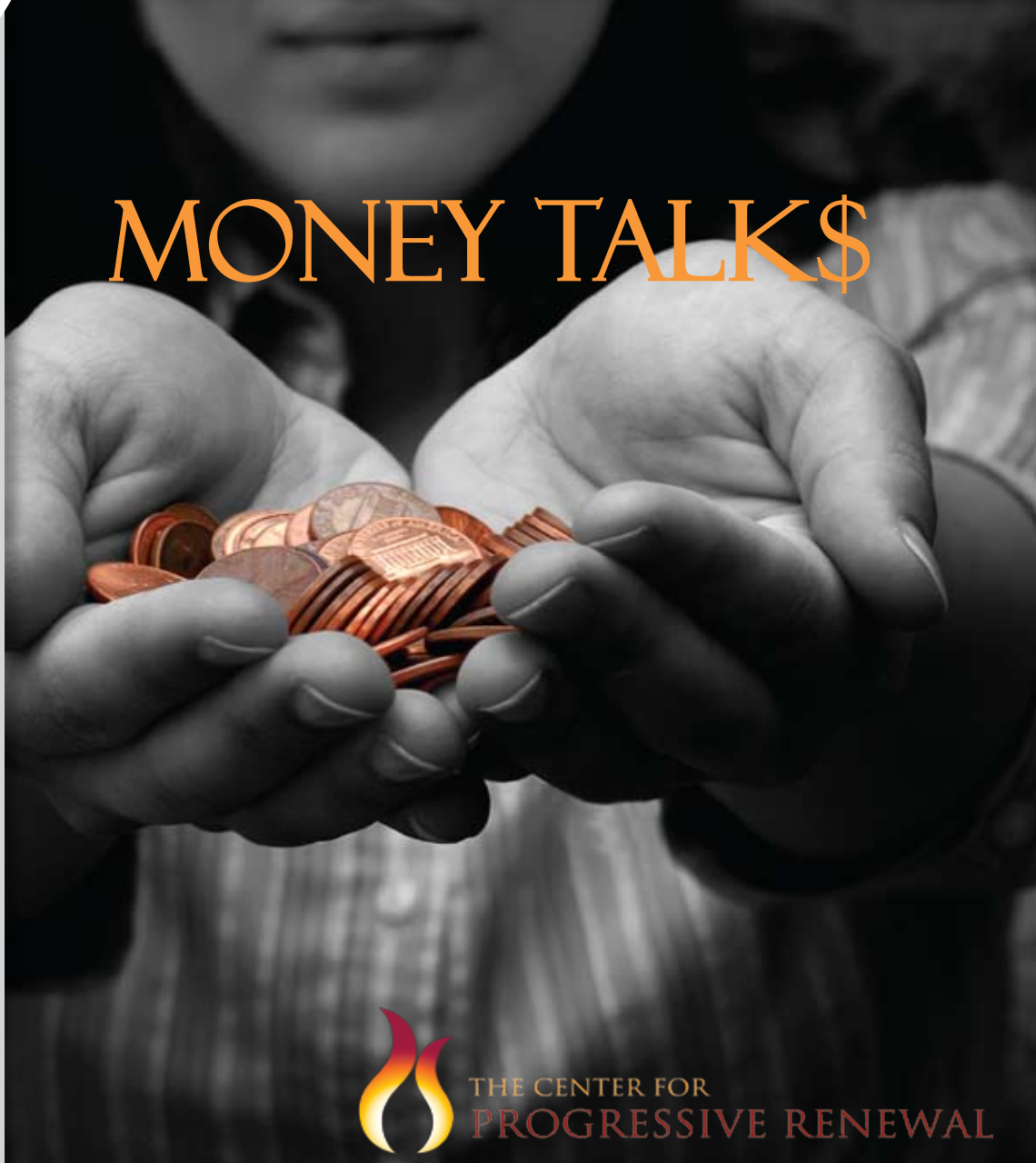
New Churches

New Hope



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MONEY TALKS



THE CENTER FOR
PROGRESSIVE RENEWAL



Who Wants Some Free Money?

By Bill Eure, Virginia-Highlands Church | Atlanta, GA



couple hands go up hesitantly. Those in the room look confused at this rather odd question in a church fellowship hall on a Saturday morning.

“HELLO! Does ANYONE want some free MONEY?”

Now completely alert, every hand in the room shoots up. So begins the stewardship section of our membership class.

Having taught more than 4,000 new members at the Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, Texas, I have tried a range of approaches to introduce the subject of generosity to prospective members. I've tried subtle and indirect appeals, cost-benefit analysis, intimidation, guilt-inducing stories, and just about everything else. What finally seemed to work was my own testimony and a reframing of what giving in a Christian context is all about.

I grew up in church and sat through countless stewardship sermons and lessons, yet remained comfortably detached from the spiritual principles involved. After finally coming back to faith in my late 20s, I started thinking about giving in general and tithing in particular. I reread the famous passage in Malachi that calls the faithful to bring the full tithe to God, which then will result in an outpouring of heaven's blessings:

Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.

I wondered if this promise could be trusted. Being underemployed at the time, with an annual salary of \$12,000, I thought I'd give it a try. Frankly, I didn't have much to lose at that point in my life. So, for the month of March 1982, I tried tithing. After being paid each Friday, I wrote a check to the church for 10 percent of my gross paycheck. Surprisingly, at the end of March, I had managed to pay my rent, car payment, and other bills, all with just 90 percent of my

pay. Frankly, I was surprised that it wasn't all that difficult. I didn't feel like I was really sacrificing, yet I managed to give away 10 percent. Maybe there was something to this scriptural principle after all.

I continued my tithing experiment through April, with similar results. Having tested this principle, I have continued tithing ever since. During the past 30 years, I have found the promise to be true: the windows of heaven have opened up and blessed me in numerous ways. No, I haven't won the lottery, and my dream of retiring early has evaporated with the stock market insanity of the past decade. However, I do feel blessed in my life—emotionally, physically, and even financially. Tithing has taught me some important truths:

- **All that I have is a gift from God.**

My finances, my job, my family, life itself. God is the ultimate source, and I am not.

- **The value of money.**

Yes, money is necessary, useful, and quite enjoyable, but it's not the source of happiness.

- **The value of sharing.**

Since everything really belongs to God, I'm not nearly as possessive with what I have as I fear I would have been.

After presenting the scriptural basis for tithing and a recounting of my own story, I reframe the entire issue. Most Christians think of tithing as an unattainable ideal, right up there with forgiving

God give us EVERYTHING, and our only responsibility is to share a tenth of that.

NEW TIMES: *New Ideas for New Churches*

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your enemies and turning the other cheek. So many of us live paycheck to paycheck, that the possibility of getting by on only 90 percent seems impossible, but that's not what tithing is all about.

At this point, I would pick one of the raised hands and invite the volunteer to enter into a business deal with me. I'll give them \$50 if they agree to give \$5 of that amount away to someone else in the room. Realizing this is a great deal, they agree eagerly. Taking my wallet, I count out \$50 and hand it to them. They, in turn, share \$5 with someone else. This was my personal money, by the way, not the church's, and it's not merely an illustration. I insist they keep the money. It's a gift, no strings attached.

THAT is what tithing is all about. God give us EVERYTHING, and our only responsibility is to share a tenth of that. Is this a great deal or what? Not a burden, not a responsibility, not a rule to be followed, not even a formula to achieve prosperity. Instead, tithing is a powerful spiritual principle that orients us towards an extravagant and generous God. It allows us to practice the loving and generous nature of God.

The challenge I leave with the class is simply to try tithing. Try it for a month or a season. See what God can teach you through this discipline. See what changes in your life. Are your values reshaped? Does your attitude toward money change? Are you a different person? What blessings are showing up in your life?

| For more information contact Bill Eure, billeure@aol.com

CPR | CoachShare

CoachShare is group coaching at its best. CoachShare allows you access not only to the expertise of a trained coach but also connects you to a peer-learning group of people who are working towards similar goals. CPR CoachShare groups are around 5-10 people and meet online once or twice a month over the web and on the phone. Our groups are formed around carefully chosen topics or challenges leaders are facing in the progressive church. We use only the best national facilitators to guide the sessions and then encourage the sharing of best practices within the group. We believe that every pastor and church leader should be a part of this kind of group - these experiences are invaluable.

| For more information about CoachShare, go to <http://progressiverenewal.org/coach>



Money Talks | Did You Know?

- 90% of all contributions comes from individuals.
- 82% comes from families earning less than \$60,000.
- People who pledge give three times as much as those who don't.
- Electronic gifts from 2005 to 2010 grew by 37% a year, from \$880.7 million to \$4.2 billion.
- Online donors tend to be young, with a median age of 38. The average age of offline donors is more than 60.
- More than half of online donors are female, and most have given to a charity before.
- Women are three times more likely to give than men.

Consistent Persistence...

- 44% of fundraisers give up after the first objection.
- 22% after the second objection.
- 16% after the third objection.
- 10% after the fourth objection.
- 92% are defeated by 4 objections.
- 73% of donors offer at least FIVE objections before they give a gift.

Money Talks

By Coy James, Cathedral of Hope UCC | Dallas, TX

Don't You Believe . . .

MI

Money talks. If you don't believe that's true, think about this question:

What do you believe comes to mind

for most people around the world when the word "Christian" is mentioned? It's no accident that most people think of a conservative religious-political evangelical version of Christianity. Could it be that this prevailing impression of Christianity—versus a more progressive vision of a God that loves and welcomes all, regardless of nationality, religious affiliation, political persuasion, or sexual orientation—is due in no small degree to the passionate generosity of evangelical congregants and supporters?

Surveys continue to support the fact that the people most likely to give 10 percent or more of their income to a church or other nonprofit organization are evangelical Christians, while those least likely to give generously include atheists, agnostics, and liberals. I don't know about you, but I don't like being lumped in with that crowd. The truth is, it takes money to do ministry, and it takes lots of money to bring a message of hope to the world.

I'm sure there are people in your church, as in mine, that complain: "All they ever talk about is money!" My answer to that is, "No, all we talk about is ministry. The more money we contribute, the more ministry we can do." Generosity is learned behavior. No one is born generous, but we all can be taught to live generous lives. Jesus tried during the entirety of his ministry to teach this important core principle. We must carry on that teaching with the same courage and enthusiasm.

Here are some stewardship program ideas that have worked in my church setting. They are ideas that have been effective in small churches as well as large ones. These are the principles that caused a church of 250 members with a budget of just over \$180,000 to grow during the past 25 years to one with more than 4,000 members and an annual budget of more than \$3 million.

All they ever talk about is money!

No, all we talk about is ministry.

The more money we contribute, the more ministry we can do.



1. Dream Big!

Even in difficult economic times people will give to a compelling vision or mission. Set the impossible as a goal. God's only limits are the ones we impose by our lack of faith. When it comes to achieving a Holy purpose, "No" is never an acceptable answer.

2. Start a New Ministry Every Six Months.

Everyone should have a ministry. Those who are personally involved in achieving the church's mission/vision by participating in a ministry that excites them are more likely to support the church financially. Never allow the lack of funding to stop a great ministry idea. There always is a first step that costs very little. Money follows ministry, not the opposite.

3. Teach the Joy of Giving Dangerously.

Living generously is a core Christian value that Jesus tried constantly to teach. We should follow that example and incorporate what it means to live a generous life in all our spiritual formation programs.

4. Lead By Example.

Key leaders of the church must be committed to its financial support. Members of a governing body who tithe make more visionary decisions about the use of contributions. In addition, those key leaders who make financial decisions should have the opportunity to share the vision/mission of the church and the required funding needed to achieve the vision/mission with congregants.

5. Know Your Congregation.

All fundraising is less about money and more about establishing trusting relationships. A good database tool will facilitate that relationship by keeping track of certain attributes that will allow the communication of a specific message to people who are most interested. For small churches, even a simple spreadsheet that includes congregation contact information, volunteer ministry, and past participation in financial appeals will help leaders craft communication materials that are more meaningful for specific audiences.

6. Have a Plan.

Plan in advance for how stewardship will be included in the annual church calendar, and follow a good project management planning cycle for each appeal.

7. Use all the tools.

Create a clear, concise stewardship message regarding what funds are needed and how they will be used. Then incorporate that message throughout the year using every communication tool you can afford. Remember: you must communicate successfully any idea at least seven times before the message is heard.

8. Give 'Til it Feels Good.

Allow congregants to give in a way that is most convenient for them. That means, in addition to the offering each Sunday, people should be able to choose to give online or make regular recurring gifts using credit/debit cards or bank drafts.

9. Give From All the Pockets.

Congregants should have the option to support specific ministries in addition to the general fund. In today's culture, most people "give" less and "buy" more. That is some prefer to know that their gift is going to fund a specific ministry rather than to a fund that supports ministry in general.

10. Say "Thank You!"

Everyone deserves to be thanked for their gifts. There is nothing more important than to establish a written response plan that identifies every means of receiving a gift or commitment and defines who will write a thank-you note. The note should be personal, hand-written, and, if possible, sent within 24 hours of the gift, but it definitely should be received before the next opportunity to give.

11. Rinse and Repeat.

After every appeal or campaign, take time to review the data or results of your efforts. Look for things that could have been done better or more cost effectively and make adjustments to your plans in order to make the next appeal even more successful.

12. Celebrate Your Success.

The least effective way to present the new church budget each year is to distribute a

spreadsheet of proposed expenses and expect the congregation to be excited about funding new ministry. Instead, throw a party. Celebrate your successes. Talk about the great things accomplished in the past year, let volunteers share their experiences, share comments from those being ministered to, and then inspire the congregation with what ministry could be done with the additional funding in the new budget. People don't give because you need the money; they give because, together with God's help, they are changing the world.

For more information contact Coy James, CJames@cathedralofhope.com

So You Have "BIG DREAMS!"

But you are questioning how you will make them a "Reality."

The UCC
Church Building &
Loan Fund (CB&LF)



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Church Building
& Loan Fund

Capital Campaign Services can show you how!
Big Dreams begin with Big Visions!

Through our faith based, spirit filled and lay led capital campaign process, the UCC CB&LF Capital Campaign Services can assist your congregation with raising revenue to make your ministry dreams become a reality.

Our mission is to assist congregations younger than 30 years, as well as renewing congregations, who are planning to buy either a first house of worship or a land site or want to build or renovate their building.

For more information, please contact:
Rosario Ibarra | ibarrra@ucc.org | 216-736-3833

Stewardship Resources

► **Donor Centered Fundraising: How to hold on to your donors and raise much more money**
| Penelope Burk

► **Fundraising on the Internet, the ePhilanthropyFoundation.org Guide to Success Online**
| Mal Warwick; Ted Hart, and Nick Allen

► **Liberating Hope!: Daring to Renew the Mainline Church**
| Michael Piazza; Cameron Trimble

► **People to People Fundraising, Social Networking and Web 2.0 for Charities**
| Ted Hart; James Greenfield, and Sheeraz Haji

► **Asking: A 59-Minute Guide to Everything Board Members, Volunteers and Staff Must Know to Secure the Gift**
| Jerold Panas

► **The Generosity Factor: Discover the Joy of Giving Your Time, Talent and Treasure**
| Ken Blanchard and S. Truett Cathy

From Birthing to Building

SOCIAL MEDIA

RAISING FUNDS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networking is changing the way churches and non-profits connect with their constituents and raise money, and your church needs to be ahead of the curve.

To help, *Kimberly Knight*, a CPR consultant is hosting a number of Social Media Intensives in 2012 to train church leaders in how to use tools like Facebook and Twitter to expand the impact of your ministry.

Make plans to participate today, go to progressiverenewal.org/train



Churches to Watch | 2012

► Veritas UCC

| Hagerstown, MD

Rob Appgar-Taylor, Pastor

► Footsteps UCC

| Phoenix, AZ

Jeffrey Dirrim, Pastor

► New Covenant Community Church

| Baltimore, MD

Brian Murray, Pastor

► Parker UCC

| Parker, CO

Malcolm Himschoot, Pastor

► North Congregational UCC

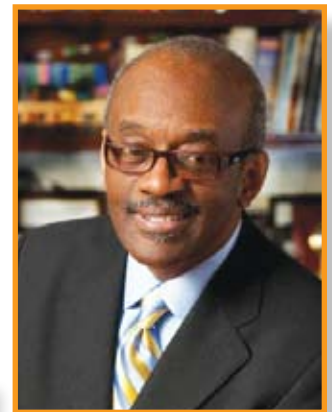
| Middletown, NY

David Gregory, Pastor



By **Ozzie Smith**, Pastor of Covenant United Church of Christ, South Holland, Illinois

Admittedly, as an organizing pastor, I came loaded with ideas about stewardship, none of which involved fundraising. It was as though I was allergic to the word “fundraising.” My naiveté was legion in this area when it came to birthing and building a church. In the days of building, I preached about tithing as I remembered it from the church in which I met and married my late wife. There, tithing was forced and micro-managed, right down to a weekly review of individual giving. However, I chose not to force tith-



ing as much as to preach and teach tithing. I believe that all people have been blessed with first fruits from their labors. Not unlike the woman who dropped two copper coins in the temple treasury, ALL have something to give. People will invest in that which they believe.

Consequently, I adopted and adapted a three-pronged approach to membership development from Trinity United Church of Christ Chicago, where I served as an associate pastor for six years. This three-pronged approach involves **membership**, **discipleship**, and **stewardship**. Each of these areas points to the other in that order. In other words, membership begins the process that is expressed through discipleship and stewardship. Had the early disciples of Jesus remained on the banks, their attention and intention never would have been impacted by Jesus to become disciples or stewards. Discipleship and stewardship involve what Jaco Hamman calls “enfleshment” or “skin-in-the-church” (my sense of that term). I believe that discipleship and stewardship are “caught” rather than “taught.” When discipleship and stewardship are caught, people rise from the pews much like the original disciples arose from the banks from fishing. They rise because desire from within has been stirred to rise rather than forced to rise.

I believe that involvement is a sign of church vitality. We know stewardship to involve three areas of a person’s life: time, talent, and treasure. I have found that the first two are much easier to notice than the third. Treasure remains a reluctant partner of this trinity. It is when the people begin to treasure the treasure that is the church, that birthing/building happens.

Always God is doing a new thing when the eyes of disciples and stewards can see it. As we would like to believe and see persons evolve from member, to disciple, to steward—some never do, but some will! I have seen God through the clay feet of those proclaiming the Gospel cause members to rise from the pew to become disciples and stewards. It is not a matter of proof-texting as much as preaching the Word of God, in and out of season, transforms a visiting crowd into a vital congregation. The model that I have adopted and adapted may not work for every situation, but is what has worked for me during the past 15 years. I have proclaimed God’s vision as best I can. Some have doubted, but some have believed the report and serve!

For more information contact Rev. Ozzie Smith, jr4111@sbcglobal.net

Be A Certified New Church Leader

The Center for Progressive Renewal

New Church in the UCC

The United Church of Christ is serious about starting new churches. As an investment in our common future, the United Church of Christ is partnering with the Center for Progressive Renewal to offer certificates in Church Planting and Church Renewal.

Working with church specialists across the nation, the Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR) built a robust program designed to equip our brightest leaders with the skills and support needed to successfully start and grow churches in the 21st century. The program is flexible, allowing for the nuances of our multicultural diversity and the busy lives of leaders, while also giving new structure to the intentional equipping of church leaders.

To become a Certified New Church Start Leader in the United Church of Christ, you must:

- 1. Complete the Gallup Assessment** for New Church Leaders (online assessment tool with a follow-up phone call).
- 2. Complete the following Online Courses (Required):**
 - a. Church Planting 1.0** – This course will equip you and your team with the basic tools you need to start a new church. This five-week course will walk you step-by-step into building a ministry plan.
 - b. Church Planting 2.0** – This five-week course will lead you and your team through the next steps of new church development, to build a self-sustaining congregation. (Pre-requisite: 1.0 and leadership of a new church start).
 - c. Electives (choose two):**
 1. Spiritual Formation – Through Spiritual Practices
 2. 21st century Preaching
 3. Developing a Stewardship plan
 4. Socially Networked Ministry
 5. Independent Study
- 3. Attend the New Church Leadership Institute**
- 4. Participate in a year long New Church Coachshare cohort:**

New church leaders will participate in a content-rich coaching group led by an experienced new church pastor. This includes an opening one-on-one coaching call, monthly group coaching call, a closed interactive forum and individual coach responses.
- 5. Completion of 12 webinars focused on church planting sustainability.**

6. Assemble a comprehensive Mission In Site Report of community demographics.

7. Complete end of year assessment call with one of our certified church planting consultants where you will co-assess your New Church Start Portfolio.

8. During certification process you will receive a 10% discount on qualifying national or regional CPR Training Events and CPR Resources necessary for program completion.

Invest in your own leadership potential for one year and position yourself to succeed in starting a sustainable UCC church!

For \$179 per month (or a one-time fee of \$1,999) and satisfactory completion of the requirements of this program, you will receive an official certification by the United Church of Christ as a trained church developer.

For more information, go to www.progressiverenewal.org.

Doctor of Ministry in Church Renewal

United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio has invited Cameron Trimble and Michael Piazza to teach a new Doctor of Ministry program beginning in January 2012.



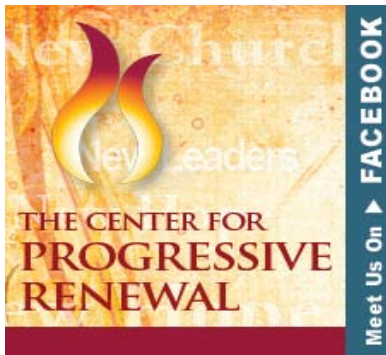
The Rev. Dr. Jo Hudson will be the mentor for the class. The course is offered in two one-week intensives a year for three years. These intensives are in January (23 - 27 in 2012) and August (20 - 24 in 2012). In addition there will be another gathering at one of the many church

renewal events offered by CPR. This course is targeted to discovering specific skills to renew mainline churches.

For more information on program go to: www.united.edu/Doctor-of-ministry/Doctor-of-Ministry/menu-id-467.html

| Cameron Trimble, Co-Executive Director, CEO
| Michael Piazza, Co-Executive Director





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Resources for Church Leaders

Visit progressiverenewal.org today and sign up to receive monthly e-news information from CPR. Additional ministry resources direct to your email.

WEBSITE

• www.Progressiverenewal.org

The mission of the Center for Progressive Renewal is to renew progressive christianity by training new entrepreneurial leaders, supporting the birth of new liberal/progressive congregations, and by renewing and strengthening existing progressive churches. You can find information about the New Church Leadership Institute and upcoming church vitality events, including webinars and conferences.



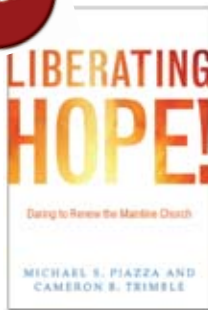
BOOKS

• **Liberating Hope:**

Daring to Renew the Mainline Church

by co-authors, Michael Piazza & Cameron Trimble, released globally July 1 by The Pilgrim Press.

Just Released



This book provides concrete and tangible 21st-century insight to those churches looking to renew their congregations through hope and optimism rooted in the resurrection. Based on the successful work that Piazza and Trimble have done through The Center for Progressive Renewal, the book provides accurate and strategic evidence that the decline of the mainline, progressive church can be slowed and even reversed, despite the challenges it is facing.

This is Piazza's and Trimble's first book together, but not their last. Visit the CPR website to find other publications by both of these authors.

View the book on The Center for Progressive Renewal website. www.progressiverenewal.org
To purchase Liberating Hope visit The Pilgrim Press: www.ucc.org/liberatinghope Use Promo Code: CPR

CPRU | ONLINE LEARNING

Online learning courses at the Center for Progressive Renewal are centered on interaction and idea exchange. Our courses connect you to training that is both practical and cutting edge. We have developed this learning environment with the aim of being "the Place where Leaders go to learn" While every course includes opportunities for live interaction, much of the work takes place on your schedule. You can do the coursework anytime day or night.

JANUARY 2012 | Courses

- **4 – Basic Coaching /** Val Hastings of Coaching 4 Clergy
- **9 – Social Networked Ministry 1.0 Effective use of Facebook and Websites in your Ministry /** Kimberly Knight
- **19 – Developing Great Small Church Worship /** Dr. Bruce Epperly & Dr. Daryl Hollinger
- **24 – Spiritual Practices for Faith Formation /** Cathy Anderson
- **31 – Church Planting 1.0 /** Cameron Trimble & Teresa Angle-Young

FEBRUARY 2012 | Courses

- **1 – Church Planting 2.0 /** Cameron Trimble & Teresa Angle-Young
- **8 – UCC History & Polity /** Rev. Tim Downs
- **13 – Social Networked Ministry 2.0 /** Kimberly Knight
- **20 – Church Renewal 1.0 /** Mike Piazza
- **25 – Effective Part-Time Pastoring /** Rev. Bob LaRochelle

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www.progressiverenewal.org

CPR webinars are one-time web learning events. They are opportunities to learn about new resources and hear from leading practitioners.



JANUARY 2012 | Webinars

- **5 – Digital Storytelling /** Kimberly Knight
- **11 – From a Mustard Seed /** Dr. Bruce Epperly & Daryl Hollinger
- **17 – Ancient-Future Disciples /** Becky Garrison
- **26 – 52 Ways to Ignite Your Congregation...Worship /** Paul Hobson Sadler, Sr.

FEBRUARY 2012 | Webinars

- **2 – Sign Posts of Church Renewal /** Michael Piazza
- **7 – Preaching God's Transformative Justice /** Ron Allen
- **16 – The Hyphenated's /** Carol Howard Merritt
- **21 – The Small, Progressive, Alive Church /** Bob LaRochelle

New Courses | New Speakers | New Leaders
www.progressiverenewal.org

**YES WE CAN
TOGETHER!**

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