

2021 Impact Report

Sometimes people ask why the Transforming Center is so focused on the transformational journey of pastors and leaders rather than pursuing a more general audience. The answer is simple: because **leadership matters**.

Over the past several years, we have endured wave after wave of disturbing revelations about leadership that was deforming rather than transforming—in churches and Christian ministries, in business and in politics. In addition, the pandemic has pushed pastors and leaders to their limits due to intractable conflict, exhaustion from working outside their gifting, low pay, lack of appreciation, and simply not being able to do what they know how to do effectively. Data shows 38 percent of Protestant senior pastors have considered leaving ministry over the past year and among pastors under age 45, that number is 46 percent! (source Barna poll data November 2021)

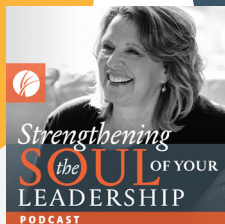
Over and over again pastors and leaders tell us that they would not have made it through this difficult season if it wasn't for the Transforming Center. And that is precisely why we exist—to create space for God to strengthen the souls of pastors and leaders for long-term sustainability. *You* are a valued partner in this crucial ministry and your participation with God and with us is truly making a difference.



On the journey together,

Ruth Haley Barton
Founder

Our podcast celebrates **1 million downloads** in December. We've completed 14 seasons and averaged 900 downloads a day in 2021!



Sychofarm, 09/21/2021

Gratitude

In this world of much uncertainty and disillusionment around the church and leadership, I find Ruth's voice courageous, authentic, and unique. I love that she is bold about tackling issues of the day as well as always leading us to deep spiritual practices that draw us near to God in all of it. Ruth continues to be an important mentor to me from afar through her books and podcasts. I am grateful for her voice and how she continues to deepen my intimacy with God through her work.

Transforming Community 15 concluded in April with **106 transforming leaders**

After launching with a hybrid model, *Transforming Community 17* resumed fully in person in July with **89 leaders**.

Transforming Community 16 concluded with **83 transforming leaders** in September

Becoming a Transforming Church Retreat, held in November with 215 attendees—our largest retreat.



“Our team is on fire for the vision that was cast. We weren't sure how the virtual experience would work out, but it was fabulous! Your work is changing the world one heart at a time.”

Christine O'Brien
Executive Director
Venice Presbyterian Church

This was really a “coming of age” event with more presenters than ever before—and they were all *Transforming Community* alumni speaking from their years of experience leading transforming churches.

With 140 in person attendees and 85 virtual attendees, the work of the Holy Spirit was evident in the room and over the online connections across the country!

The whole event was highly interactive providing rich opportunities to learn from one another and also to open ourselves to God in solitude, silence and fixed hour prayer. God met us in the most amazing ways.

Retiring from my old way of pastoring

Pastor
Joe Nieves (TC16)



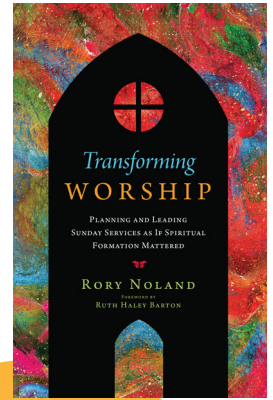
Scan QR code to listen. This was recorded during the sharing time at the final retreat for those who could not attend. Used with permission.



Each *Transforming Community* retreat felt like I was going into a Holy Spirit operating room where the Great Physician would do a deep work beneath the surface of my life. It was a sacred time and a holy time as my soul began experiencing healing and strength.

As I grew healthier and spiritually stronger, I did contemplate retiring. It wasn't because I was at the age of retirement, but because I was tired. I had pastored three turnaround churches by the age of 46. I discussed this with my counselor, spiritual director, close friends and my wife and everyone felt that it was not the right time. Entering my last retreat,

I carried this with me until Ruth began to teach on crafting a Rule of Life. That's when the Holy Spirit spoke to me like a bolt of lightning and said, "Joe, I don't want you to retire from being a pastor, I want you to retire from the way you pastor." That's exactly what I did. On that day, I retired from my old way of pastoring, and rearranged my life, my schedule and my job description around union and communion with Christ, spiritual practices that open me up to God's transforming presence and my calling to preach, teach and pastor.



New Transforming Resource by Rory Noland
Transforming Worship: Planning and Leading Sunday Services as if Spiritual Formation Mattered (IVP)



42 Spiritual Directors now in our our online directory with **inquiries everyday**



Financial update from our new Executive Director

With all the challenges of 2021, we give thanks to God for his incredible provision to the ministry of the Transforming Center. Through your financial support, we were able to reach out and into the lives of over 15,000 people this past year! Your faithful giving enabled us to reach several important financial milestones in our organization!

We have established a healthy cash savings that provides stability to our organization, we passed our first financial audit with flying colors, and officially **became certified members of the ECFA** (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability). Our membership within the ECFA assures you that we are undertaking our governance and financial policies and controls with the utmost integrity consistent with the standards set forth by the ECFA. Not only have we recovered financially from the challenges of the past two years, we have stabilized and now look forward to a strong ministry season ahead.



Our website averages over **12,000 users a month** and we launched a new free 4-week practice-based journey



We want to thank you for supporting us through all of the ups and downs of the past two years. We wouldn't be here without you!



Cole Griffin
Executive Director



Barry Jones @barrydjones · Dec 7, 2021

Five years ago today I was at one of the loneliest, most discouraged points in my ministry career and a version of this article from @RuthHaleyBarton popped up in my Twitter feed. It kept me from quitting that night. Maybe today it's for you.



transformingcenter.org
The Loneliness of Leadership
Any leader who cannot endure profound levels of loneliness will not last long. None of us escapes it.

