



# Pentecost Formation Resources

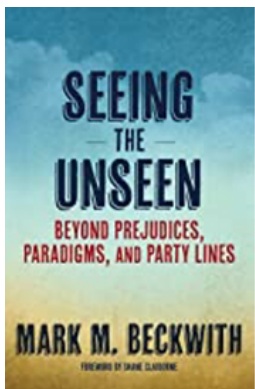
## The Spiritual Practice of Joy

This exercise can help you experience God's joy, and your joy in God and in God's creation.

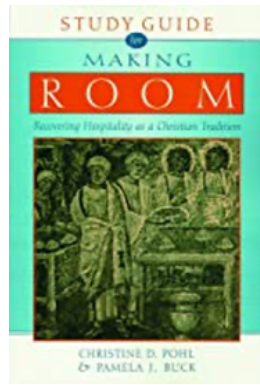
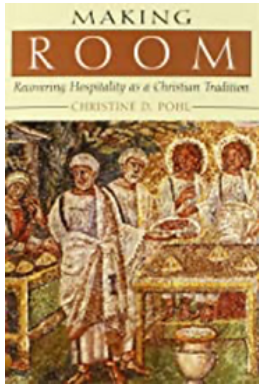
1. Try to relax whatever your body and mind might be holding onto. Let these thoughts and emotions be replaced by a sense of simple trust in God.
2. You may want to read a brief scriptural passage such as John 15:11 or Psalm 18:19.
3. Pray for openness to embody God's joy in you, and your joy in God. See if you can be in touch with God's yearning for you to experience joy, and your yearning for God's fullness in you and in creation.
4. Invite that joy through your breath for the next five minutes.  
*Breathe in* God's joy in creating you, a joy that fills every dimension of your being.  
*Breathe out* your joy in God.
5. Now broaden your horizon for the next five minutes.  
*Breathe in* God's joy in all of creation.  
*Breathe out* your joy in God's creation.

A practice revised and simplified from Tilden Edwards' *Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Oneself to the Awareness of God*.

## Books for Small Group Discussion

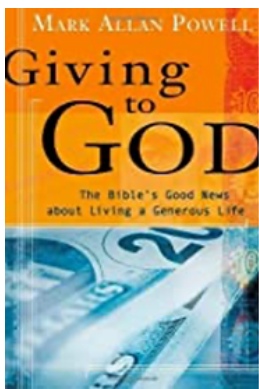


Are you concerned about the political polarization in your community and in our country? The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith, former Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, has a new book out, *Seeing the Unseen: Beyond Prejudices, Paradigms, and Party Lines*. Bishop Beckwith is part of the Braver Angels leadership team, a movement seeking to depolarize our country. He shares stories from his life and ministry, and how his commitment to bringing greater understanding and healing is part of his Christian faith. If your church is interested in learning more about or participating in the Braver Angels movement their website may be found at [braverangels.org](http://braverangels.org).



Now that we are beginning to open up our homes and lives again, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* by Christine Pohl is a helpful and challenging read. Pohl takes the reader through a short history of the ways ancient Christians practiced hospitality, and then examines the major opportunities and challenges followers of Jesus face as they seek to offer hospitality in which Jesus is both guest and host.

She includes stories and learnings from many different Christian communities practicing radical hospitality. The study guide is a helpful resource.



Mark Allen Powell's book *Giving to God: The Bible's Good News About Living a Generous Life* is an excellent, readable book about stewardship. It's not just about money, but stewardship as a way of life. As Powell notes in the introduction, "stewardship is about taking seriously the words that we so easily pray: 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.'" Imagine studying the important spiritual practice of stewardship at a time other than the fall. When you read a book like this in the fall people think you are trying to get them to give more money, period.

Reading *Giving to God* at a different time of year might help them engage more fully with Powell's main points: stewardship is a joy-filled aspect of our relationship with God, and faithful stewardship involves giving to God as an act of worship, an expression of our faith, and as a discipline for our spiritual growth. There are helpful quotes and discussion questions at the end of each chapter.