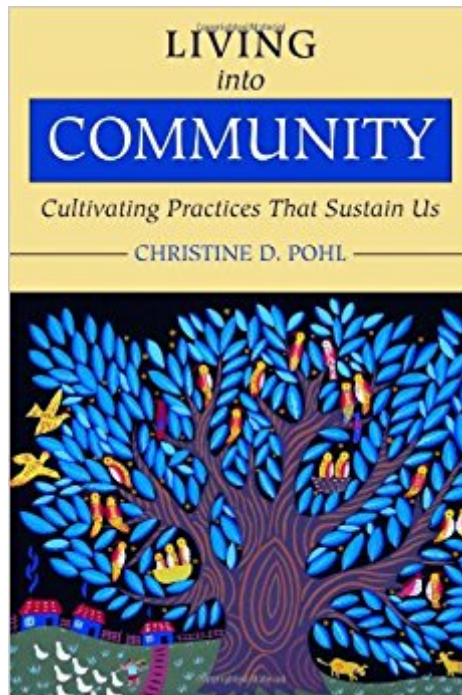




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Living Into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us



Synopsis

Every church, every organization, has experienced them: betrayal, deception, grumbling, envy, exclusion. They make life together difficult and prevent congregations from developing the skills, virtues, and practices they need to nurture sturdy, life-giving communities. In *Living into Community* Christine Pohl explores four specific Christian practices -- gratitude, promise-keeping, truth-telling, and hospitality -- that can counteract those destructive forces and help churches and individuals build and sustain vibrant communities. Drawing on a wealth of personal and professional experience and interacting with the biblical, historical, and moral traditions, Pohl thoughtfully discusses each practice, including its possible complications and deformations, and points to how these essential practices can be better cultivated within communities and families.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Marva J. Dawn -- author of *Truly the Community* "Every Christian should read this provocative book! Christine thoroughly delineates the interlocking relationships and dangerous deformities of practices that could deepen our communities but often destroy them. This volume is pertinent to our families, churches, even places of work." *Spirit & Life* "Pohl draws together the experiences, study, and reflection of twenty pastors, leaders, and professors on building community. . . . This is a book to be read slowly and pondered." *Mennonite Brethren Herald* "I recommend this book. . . . Pohl's principles make sense, and are a worthwhile challenge to anyone who desires to create, live in, and maintain better community. This book would be a valuable resource

for church leaders, pastors, and church planters. —• —

Christine D. Pohl is associate provost and professor of Christian social ethics at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Kentucky, and the author of *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*.

Christine Pohl has rendered a beautiful accomplishment. This book is lucidly written, and, at the same time, is very deep in scope, all while being a very convicting treatise on Christian practices. What impressed me most about this book was Prof. Pohl's ability to explain the spiritual and practical importance of each practice she outlines, root each practice in the authority of the text, and give short, but clear-eyed, analysis of how our current culture is lacking and could benefit from each practice. This is no small order and is quite an accomplishment. I consider this book seminal on where the Western church needs to go next. Now all we need to do is actually do it. Prof. Pohl gives us her sympathies and some narratives from her own experiences, both success and failures, about how hard this work really is. This brings me to my final praise of the book, Prof. Pohl has actually been in the trenches and tried to do this stuff, so she knows how hard it is. If you are currently trying to build authentic Christian community, read this book (with others, if you can)!

We love the book. I am leading two Missional community groups at our church and our people are loving the lessons we are learning. It's also a perfect text for Discipleship and Spiritual Formation. The first chapter seemed a bit technical, which was needed to set the foundation, but the following chapters were much more accessible and insightful. One woman said the book has changed her prayer life. Another said its bringing changes deep to her soul, something she's been longing for. Would definitely recommend for any church that seeks to lead its people to honest, meaningful relationships building and community serving.

This is a beautifully written (poetic at times) book about the practices of community that should be integral to every Christian's life, and a featured part of every church's mission statement. In an increasingly fragmented, individualistic, consumer oriented society, it's pretty easy to forget the call to community that is at the foundation of Christian living, but the author gently and beautifully reminds us of the importance of this calling.

this book is an excellent summary of a recent study of how to make communities healthy and

nurturing. it applies to Church communities, religious communities and even families. i believe some of it would apply to non profit groups like neighborhood associations... since it describes such "practices" as truth telling, promise keeping, gratitude and hospitality.it's worth the read.

I've been part of different congregations and have worked in a para-church organization and wondered at times how things can go so wrong. This book helped me to better understand behaviors that deconstruct community. I now understand community to be a great gift. One worth working hard to guard and maintain. I think this book would be helpful to anyone in a leadership role.

This is an encouraging yet honest exploration of Christian practices that genuinely help build and sustain community in the body of Christ. I especially appreciated her attention to the essential need for truth in relationship.

Thank you, Prof. Pohl for this outstanding book. The lessons learned truly forge a seminarian's path to becoming a better pastor, but more importantly, a better image bearer of the God who indeed loves beyond measure.

Could book to be bringing awareness to issues in community. Can bring out strong responses in a group discussion. A good read and reread. Brings up food for thought and brings about change.

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