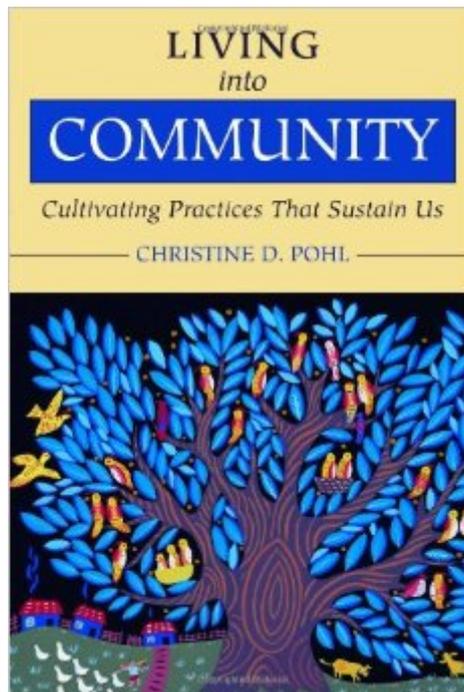


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# Living Into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us



## 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

Paperback: 219 pages

Publisher: Eerdmans; 11/20/11 edition (December 20, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802849857

ISBN-13: 978-0802849854

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #33,490 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Ecclesiology](#) #40 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Pastoral Resources](#) #560 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology](#)

## Customer Reviews

Christine Pohl has written another winning book on practices that nourish Christian (and human) communities and make them healthy and life-giving. She describes four such practices in particular, namely, gratitude (opposite=grumbling), promise-keeping (opposite=betrayal), truth-telling (opposite=deception), and hospitality--one of Pohl's specialties (opposite=exclusion). Everything she writes is alive, thoughtful, rich with implications for Christian life. And everything says, one way or another, that the way Christians live in community is "the most persuasive gospel [they] will ever preach." Bravo.

I heard this author interviewed on Mars Hill Audio Journal and was intrigued by her thoughts about the problems that plague churches and other communities from not paying sufficient attention to such important practices as gratitude, truth-telling, fidelity and hospitality. As I read, I found myself alternatively nodding in agreement with the author and wincing when she touched on areas of my own life where I have failed in an aspect of one of these practices. This would make a great book for a small-group study or book-group discussion.

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.

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 churches mission statement. In a 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.

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)!

Christine Pohl has written a book that gets to the heart of what it means to live in community. Her descriptions and warnings concerning truth-telling, gratitude, promise-keeping and hospitality are sharp and direct. My only complaint is that I wish Pohl had included more scripture in her text;

instead, she relies on interviews and anecdotes to make her points. No matter your situation, this book will certainly challenge you to think of your faith community differently.

This is well worth reading and living! It could be a great study for a small group or in a mentoring relationship (as well as person development). Dr. Pohl addresses key areas of community that can form or deform.

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.

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