

The Purpose of the Journey

I have been praying for understanding. Truthfully, I have been crying out for this gift from God. As a person who takes things literally, understanding is key to removing what keeps me from moving forward in my life and doing what God has called me to do.



I believe that true understanding will release me to serve God according to His will and purpose for my life. I have come to realize that there is an interconnection that is necessary in order to receive a clear understanding of God's word: – God, Jesus Christ, His Holy Spirit, fellowship, and an individual relationship with God. We all need to come together as one and allow Him to lead us into a deeper understanding of the season that is to come.

Corporate prayer is key for several reasons: we can learn and grow together collectively during the season of Lent. We can gain a deeper understanding of what Jesus Christ's resurrection means to us as a church family and in our individual walk with God.

As one, we can take time out to seek God, along this journey that we call life. We can ask Him to reveal to us, how to apply what He is teaching us in His word, to our lives. The word of God states that when two or more are in agreement, there He is also. I believe that with the Columbia Baptist Fellowship congregation coming together to seek God's guidance and direction for our lives, we will gain spiritual discipline in our lives that goes beyond a yearly ritual. That is what I seek for my church family, my family, and myself as we "*Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight*" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Life application is key.

Dawn Howard-Davis

Lectio Divina (modified)

The following process helps us with "Strengthening our Relationship with God" and "Spiritual Formation" personally and as a corporate body. The process addresses the whole person and is a process of changing the mind through the heart. We can be changed, as we experience what St. Paul called "the height and depth, the length and breadth of the Love of God that surpasses our understanding."*



Read a selected scripture for the week each day for seven days.

Day 1 through 6 [e.g. Sunday through Friday]

- Read the scripture.
- Notice a word or phrase that resonates with your spirit and write it down. (Each day you read the scripture, you may identify a different word or phrase.)
- Reflect on the word or phrase by repeating it quietly as it sinks into your heart.
- Desire to know the meaning this word/phrase has to your life's circumstance and write it down.
- Feel free to discuss your words/phrases, as well as your reflections with others, up to this point.

Day 7 [e.g. Saturday]

- Review the previous 6 days' words/phrases and your reflections.
- Read the scripture, again, and notice what is resonating with your spirit today and write it down (it may be one that you identified earlier in the week).
- Reflect on today's word or phrase only. Remember to reflect on it by repeating it quietly and letting it sink into your heart.
- Discuss it with God. Enter into a personal conversation with God by conveying the thoughts and feelings the Scripture aroused. Ask God for the meaning this word/phrase has for your life's circumstance. Agree or disagree with God. Ask for clarification. Pray instinctively

from the heart, expressing your feelings of love, sadness, joy irritation, etc. It is helpful to write down your prayer or write about this experience in a journal.

- Rest. The heart and mind should be tranquil and quiet. You merely relax and relish the experience of being in the presence of God. Take pleasure in just being. Yield totally to God.
- Commit to a practical expression of this word/phrase in your life and move into the world with confidence – loving God and neighbor, and serving as an ambassador of God’s light, love, and innovative transformation. You are God’s light. “Let your light shine so that others may see God.” Remember the commitment is between you and God.

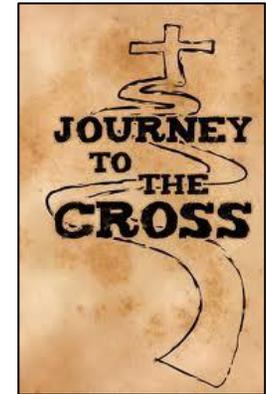
- Sandra Gray

* Keith Beasley – Topliffe, ed., *The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation* (Nashville, TN: The Upper Room Books, 2003), 167.

The members of the WORSHIP Team are: Mary Agee; Phil Clark; Ossie Clay; Janet Davis; Lillian Dove; Sandra Gray; Jenetha Holmes; Dawn Howard-Davis; Danielle Brown Jackson; Margaret Pittman; Donna Townsend; Tim Wisthoff; and Denise Wood; with staff ex-officio.



Ash Wednesday arrives again this week, and our WORSHIP Team has been thinking about our Lenten observance this year, both individually and together, as we make our Journey to the Cross, 2012.



On Ash Wednesday (February 22), we’ll gather for dinner at 5:30 as usual, after which we’ll move to the Chapel for our worship time together. Janet Davis will provide an introduction to the history of Ash Wednesday and the observance of the Lenten Season of the Christian Calendar.

While there will be a number of special events during Holy Week (April 1-8), we also decided to encourage each other to make the seven weeks of Lent a special spiritual journey in another way, historically known as *lectio divina*, or “divine reading.” Dawn Howard-Davis has written a short introduction to how we came to this decision.

Lectio divina doesn’t treat Scripture as a book to be studied, but as God’s Living Word to be experienced (Hebrews 4:12-16). God’s Word, written, is a primary means by which we encounter God’s Word, living (John 1:1). Sandra Gray has written a brief guide to assist us with the process of “divine reading.” The Scripture selections we suggest for the Journey are as follows:

Week One: February 22-25 –

Psalm 139:23-24; Proverbs 3:5-6

Week Two: February 26-March 3 – Jeremiah 9:23-24

Week Three: March 4-10 – Jeremiah 29:11-13

Week Four: March 11-17 – John 3:16-18

Week Five: March 18-24 – 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Week Six: March 25-31 – 2 Peter 1:5-8

Week Seven (Holy Week): April 1-8 – 1 John 4:7-12

Grace to you on the Journey!

Pastor Dave