

JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS

October Newsletter

Message from the Board

Greetings to you my Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Spirit of the Living God is alive in our community and our world today, just as we all have experienced Him during a Journey weekend.

While we have not been meeting as a community, the beauty of our Almighty God is all around us in the trees, the grass, our coast, our lakes, our countryside, our hill country, our sunrises, our sunsets, and the people – our family, our friends, those we work with, those we meet and those that we see on TV from around the world. God's beautiful creations are all around us. While some may say it is difficult to have a relationship with a God that I cannot see, my response is, He has given us everything all around us to enjoy and love, and if we are enjoying all of these things and loving all of these people, that is having a relationship with our Creator. It is really pretty simple when you think of it in this way.

I was meditating on this past Sunday's Gospel reading from Matthew 22:33-40, and it discussed the greatest two commandments – the first and greatest of which is to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. In this short message, we have the focus of our salvation & our Christian ministry: to know God, to love God, to serve God in this life and the next. Within this context, doing God's will in our lives means we must love and protect all of God's beautiful creations, both living and the unborn, and our friends and our foes.

In these times of injustice and upheaval in our country, we must all look for the good in people, we must have faith, & pray for a renewal of spirit.

As in Ephesians 4:32-5:8, it says brothers and sisters, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ. Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love....Immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be mentioned among you...no obscenity or silly or suggestive talk,

SAVE THE DATES!

All of the weekends have been moved to 2021 and these are the dates we have scheduled with Pax Christi:

2021 Weekends

**Corpus Christi
Men's
March 4 - 7**

**Corpus Christi
Women's
April 22 - 25**

**Corpus Christi
Men's
June 17 - 20**

**Corpus Christi
Women's
July 22 - 25**

**Corpus Christi
Men's**

which is out of place, but instead, thanksgiving....Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the disobedient. It goes on to say, we must pray for evildoers to turn from their dark & wicked ways, for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

As we approach the election of our country's leaders next week, let us reflect on the message to know, love & serve our God, and treat our neighbor as we would care for and treat ourselves. Choose life and not violence. Ask yourself, how would God want you to vote?

De Colores!

Paul Pilarczyk
President
Board of Directors - JTD Corpus Christi

J2damascus@yahoo.com

General mailbox for JTD Board of Directors

Website & Pilgrim/Team Applications

The New JTD website is up and running!! If you haven't seen it yet, go take a look, it is much more user friendly from both a computer as well as your phone.

<https://www.journeytodamascus.org/>

Updates from the Lay Directors

After careful review of an August 2020 guidance document from the Diocese of Corpus Christi (DoCC), the Board of Directors has approved for 2021 Teams to resume planning meetings in person, should they so choose, but with the understanding that they must exercise COVID-19 safeguards including social distancing, masks, sanitizers, temperature checks, etc., as is detailed in guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), State & local authorities, and the guidelines from the Diocese of Corpus Christi (DoCC). As an alternative to in person

September 16 - 19

Corpus Christi
Women's
October 21 - 24

2021 Weekends
JTD - Austin

Check back for more
information!

meetings, the Teams can also elect to meet via electronic social platforms including Facetime, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Webex, etc. Keep in mind though, that as of the August 2020 guidance from the DoCC, overnight stays are currently not permitted, which means that this DoCC guideline will need to be lifted in order to permit Journey weekends to occur. Hopefully later this year or even early in 2021, we are hopeful for a change to allow it. As we move toward 2021 with the anticipation of resuming Journey Weekends, the JTD Board will continue working to develop additional guidelines as new directives are received from the CDC and DoCC. In the meantime, please keep our community in your prayers especially for the end of this pandemic.

Reunion Groups

Please continue to meet with your reunion groups! If you are not sure about the HOW and WHERE reach out to your reunion group leader or reach out to the Board of Directors and we will be happy to help you find an active reunion group to join.

Some Words from the Wise

Brought to you this month by Rev. Ceil C. McKinney

To my Fourth Day Community:

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10 NIV)

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:36-40)

My husband and I live at a Senior Residential Facility. We have been locked down since February. Until a few weeks ago that meant NO ONE LEFT THE GROUNDS OF THE PROPERTY. If you did several things could happen. At first we would have to stay with family or in a motel. Later it was changed to being quarantined for 14 days in your apartment. Now things are looser still, with masks and gloves, we can go get gas for our cars, go to the doctors – some 'non-essential' treatments become



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essential after 8 months, and we are allowed to go to the drive through window of eating establishments. And with a mask and social distancing we are allowed to socialize with our friends who live in other apartments. It has been difficult, 24 hours a day, even with the love of my life, has proved stressful. Then I realized that I serve God by loving and caring for Joe. So loving Joe became an offering to God during those times when neither of us were very lovable or loving.

Out of this forced mindfulness our Viera community has discovered several ways to minister to those who have a need we can supply. The daughter of a resident teaches at a State Prison. She discovered that women being released from prison have only the clothes on their backs when they leave. The Chaplain began giving each parolee several sets of clothing to work, interview and begin their new lives. We have been able to clear out our closets and provide clothes for these women. We also have plans to 'adopt' two families through the Salvation Army for a Thanksgiving Feast. Both of these actions have given us a sense of being A PART OF rather than being APART FROM people outside our property.

Look back over the last 8 months what ministries have deepened your walk with Christ. Have you begun to study scripture, or prayed at a different time? Maybe you helped your children with their studies? Perhaps you mowed an elderly neighbor's lawn? You became much more dedicated to attending reunion group meetings online. You get the idea. All actions for which God calls you are ministries. Salvation is not earned by doing good works...good works come out of being saved by Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

November 2020 we have an election. (I know you are all surprised by this news!) We are guided by God, each person individually, to vote as directed by the ballot for that person or persons God tells us to vote for. Your guidance is no more or less valid than my guidance even if we vote for different people. Each side says the other one will destroy our nation. 'Me thinks' that they leave God out entirely. Our nation will cease to exist not by the works of man, but by the love of God who has better plans for us.

"Perseverance is continuing to do something in the face of difficulty – to preserve in the life of grace." (2019 JTD Spiritual Director's manual, p71.) We have been persevering for 8 months and will continue for as long as we are guided to do so. Look around see how you can FIRST LOVE GOD, then LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, FAMILY MEMBERS, or FRIENDS in such a way that God recognizes your loving actions.

With all my prayerful love,

Rev. Ceil C. McKinney
Assistant Spiritual Director

Agape Appeal

GOAL

Due to an increase in food and lodging costs over the last few years, the Annual Agape Appeal will be used to off-set these increased expenses for the Team and Pilgrims.

The Annual Agape Appeal's goal is to:

- Never turn anyone away by making the weekend affordable for **ALL**.
- Provide a sustainable, annual fund to insure the continuation of JTD for **ALL**.

The intent of this appeal is to assist those who need monetary support in order to attend this Christian weekend. No one should be turned away due to financial need.

By joining our resources, we can insure JTD's continuation for friends, family and strangers.

AGAPE DONATION

Suggested donations:

- \$5.00 each month
- \$60.00 Annually
- \$30.00 Semi-annually
- \$15.00 Quarterly
- \$100.00 Husband and wife

Or... Whatever you can GIVE

It's not about how **MUCH** each one can give.
It's about how **MANY** will give.

Only \$5.00 a month folks!

UNITY

With God all things are possible.
And by uniting together, we can change the world!

Please sign up for the JTD News Letter at:
www.journeytodamascus.org
All the information on how to send your Annual Agape Appeal will be available.

Please make checks Payable to Journey to Damascus and write **JTD Appeal** in note section of check. Please include your name, address, email address and phone number.

You may send it to **JTD Appeal**, P.O. Box 948, Corpus Christi, TX 78403.

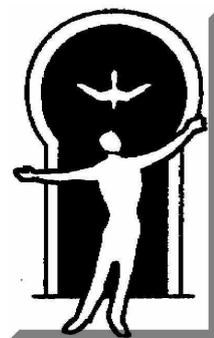
Please help spread this opportunity by word of mouth or social media to encourage **all** the JTD community members to participate in this appeal.

De Colores

[Click here to view the PDF version of Annual Agape Appeal](#)

Sr. Angela Murdaugh Scholarship Fund

We are also very pleased to announce the establishment of the Sister Angela Murdaugh Scholarship Fund. The goal is to be able to pay the weekend fee for one pilgrim per JTD weekend from this scholarship. To raise money to fund this endeavor we are selling JTD car emblems. The cost of the emblems is \$10. If you would like to order emblems for yourself, as gifts for your Reunion group please contact Dale Hernandez at dale_hernandez@yahoo.com.



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