

JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS

August Newsletter

Update about the Annual Gathering

Heaven must be like what the JTD gathering was this year. It was a special time that we all longed for, to see each other face to face, to worship together, feast together, to hear beautiful music and to be inspired by three wonderful talks. The delighted smiles of seeing our (in real life) friends, the tears we shared and the laughter was like warm water and lovely smelling soap for our souls. We have all been through so much over these many months that it has become very easy for us to lose hope, hope that we can navigate through these hard times and hope that the future will be better. But the Gathering made it abundantly clear that the Lord was truly present and the message was that He truly does have plans for a hope and a future of the JTD. Our JTD community is strong and ready to take on the challenges the future holds.

Interwoven through each talk was the message – God needs us and we really need each other! God is counting on us (AND we are counting on Him!) to participate more fully in bringing Christ into our world. Reunion Groups are still the most important way for us to stay in touch with each other, and many groups are meeting the present challenges with zoom, conference calls and safe face to face meetings. We can't let our social distancing turn into Spiritual Distancing. Reach out to anyone on the board if you need help finding a group. It's never too late to join one. If you missed the Gathering this year – it's ok we will have another, but don't wait too long to get involved again in the JTD community – we truly are better together!

Melissa Ricard

Notes from the Board of Directors

For Journey information and applications visit our website:

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

New Email address for the Board of Directors:

journeybod@gmail.com

Candlelight Committee

SAVE THE DATES

All of the weekends have been moved to 2022 and these are the dates we have scheduled with the Pax Christi.

Corpus Christi Men's
March 24 - 27, 2022
Shane Beckwith

Corpus Christi Women's
April 21 - 24, 2022
Marivel Caro Garza

Corpus Christi Men's
June 16 - 19, 2022
Joe Willisden

Corpus Christi Women's
July 28 - 31, 2022
Edna Lopez Alonso

Corpus Christi Men's
September 15 - 18, 2022
Rick Oliveira

Corpus Christi Women's
October 27 - 30, 2022
Janie Riojas

The Board is looking for volunteers from the community to help with our Candlelight Committee. Please contact anyone on the Board or send an email to our general mail box journeybod@gmail.com or contact Rebecca Esparza @ rebeccaesparza2@gmail.com. Rebecca is our new Committee Chair to the Board for the Candlelight Committee.



Reunion Groups

Contact us at:

Journeybod@gmail.com

Everyone will experience something different in their personal Journey to Damascus experience. The Parable of Sower (Matt 13) is particularly relevant to your own personal experience. Where did your spiritual seed fall? What have you done with the spiritual gift from God? Through this pandemic period of 2020-21, the JTD Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, the various committees, and the community have continued to prayerfully reach out and sow seeds on good soil.

Every day after your JTD experience is the 4th day, with an opportunity to plant the seed “where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown”. This is a primary goal of the Reunion Groups. Just as in past years, the 4th Day Committee reaches out the reunion groups to update our rosters and contacts for each upcoming Journey weekend preparing a place for pilgrims to plant their seeds and continue to grow in spirit producing a great yield. The 4th Day Committee – Delfina (Dale) Hernandez, Theresa Arzimendi, Doug Walker, Allen Daehne and me – have reached out the local reunion groups for updates. We will have an update “active” reunion group list by mid-August.

Though gathering has been difficult and more so now with the sudden resurgence. There has been more concern for the health and well-being of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We cannot shut ourselves off. Dr. Charles Stanley of *In-Touch Ministry* stated, “The Christian life is not one of isolation and independence but of relationship and interconnection...God wants to use each of us at various times and in different ways to encourage others.” **“To encourage someone is simply to let them know they’re not alone, to go to their side and walk with them on their journey.”** We must continue to gather in our small groups. Reunion Groups were created to support and sustain our spiritual and emotional growth.

The following was posted in a devotional (Source: <https://dailyverse.knowing-jesus.com/hebrews-10-24>) “As believers we are also instructed to be concerned about our brothers and sisters in Christ and to stir up one another unto love and good deeds. We are to care for each other and consider how to stimulate one another to love as Christ loved us, and to produce good deeds that God has prepared for us to do. We as believers are instructed: to provoke others unto love and to good works.”

We need to find new avenues to reach the Body of Christ, to provide loving support as we face the challenges of our 4th day. We encourage you to start new reunion groups to reach others in the community. Contact those from your table, contact team members, reach out to others in your church community, encourage churches and businesses to provide a quiet and safe environment allowing the love of Christ to sprout like the seed planted in rich soil. If you have updates for your reunion group, please contact one of the 4th day committee members. There are opportunities through group meeting platforms, conference calls, and group text as well as face to face meetings. Christ is counting on you!

DeColores,
Steve Tagliabue

Reunion Group Card



CHRIST IS COUNTING ON YOU

We have no words to express how heartbreaking it has been to have experienced two straight years without Journey Weekends due to a global pandemic. However, our saving grace has been our Reunion Groups. Some groups have not stopped meeting, while others have gone to virtual meetings. We realize many groups stopped meeting altogether, which is understandable considering CDC guidelines, mask mandates and the lack of a vaccine. However, we have persevered through all of these obstacles and now need to refocus on getting back on track and resume regular Reunion Group meetings. Think back to your 4th Day experience and how important it is to preserve the feeling of your Journey experience every day. Reunion Groups are meant to help you stay focused on your faith and help you understand how you can continually strive to be better.

Here are some tips to getting back on track with a Reunion Group:

- If you've lost touch with your group or never found a group, click [here](#) for a current list of all Reunion Groups (men and women).
- If you are forming a new group or reestablishing a former group, pick a day and time each week and stick to it. Regular attendance is important and will eventually develop into a habit.
- What is said at Reunion Group, stays at Reunion Group. We are a prayer group seeking support in keeping the fire of God lit in our hearts, not a gossip circle.
- Use the Reunion Group cards given to you at the end of your Journey Weekend to keep your meetings focused on sharing about your experiences with your Holy life. We know it's easy to get off topic but keeping group meetings the same length of time consistently will keep members coming back.

If you need help with your Reunion Group, need more Order of Reunion Group cards or have any specific questions regarding this topic, please feel free to reach out to any Board Member. We are here to help you succeed and thrive with your Reunion Group! Remember, once we start having Journeys again, our pilgrims will need Reunion Groups to attend. Now is the time to start up again with regular attendance. God bless and De Colores!

Some Words from the Wise

From the desk of Billy Storms

The centerpiece of both the Walk and Journey experience is the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Communion, the Lord's Table. When I am honored to experience a Journey weekend, there is a moment during Mass that is full of grace for me. I'm one of those present who has my face pressed up against the window watching the feast inside, but I get to hear and say with my brothers and sisters those words of faith: "I am not worthy, but only say the words...and I will be

healed." Those may not be the exact wording (it's been almost 2 years since my last Mass: probably need to go to confession), but that moment summons the image of the frequent meals Jesus shared during His ministry. The religious leadership were constantly offended with the company He kept. He ate with sinners! He's still eating with sinners. He is the healing meal for most underserving. And, I get to watch Christ come alive in the faces of the community. My communion is with you, the face and presence of Jesus for me. I no longer feel excluded. It's as if many of you go out of your way to come by my window and make me feel that I am more than window dressing. There are moments that the window pain gets removed and I get the embrace of the Body of Christ. Thanks for letting me come, but more importantly, I get to see sinners like me being fed. The picture at Mass is worth a thousand words. Keep making Christ known in the breaking of bread, the drinking of the cup. You're my family.

Billy

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.

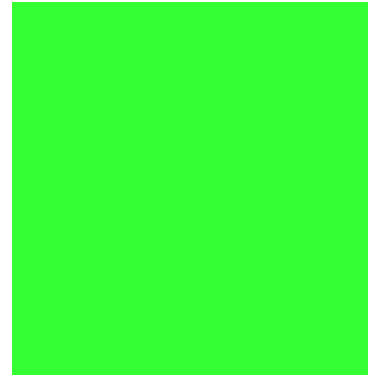
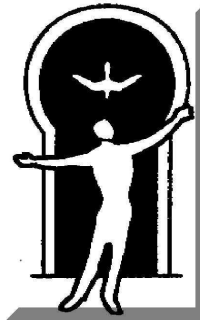
You may send it to **JTD Appeal**, P.O. Box 948, Corpus Christi, TX 78403.

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

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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