

July, 2025



Journey to Damascus Community News

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Journey to Damascus #233 July 24-July 27, 2025

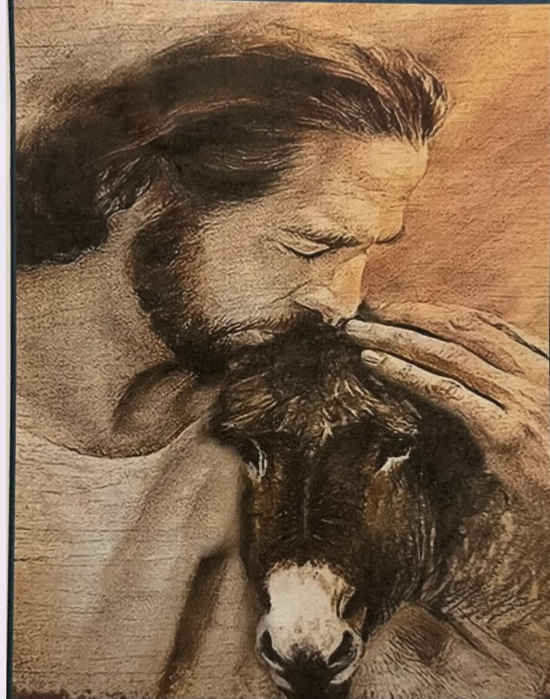
**Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God, and the peace of God will guard your heart and mind.
Philippians 4:6-7**

Dear Journey to Damascus
Community,

After a year of preparation, we have felt the Holy Spirit guiding us every step of the way from our team meetings to every conversation leading to this incredible weekend. His presence has been undeniable, and our hearts are overflowing with the love, peace, grace, and joy God has poured out on our pilgrims and

team.

I am deeply grateful to the entire Journey to Damascus community for generously sharing your time, talents, and hearts, especially Kelly, Jessica and Marivel . Your outpouring of agape and faithful prayers has been overwhelming, and I cannot thank you enough. Please join us at Candlelight, so the pilgrims will feel the deep love of Christ as the community sings “Jesus, Jesus” with one voice.



To my St. Elsewhere family, Tess, Kera, Marlena, Flory, Mary Jessie, and Marila, and our incredible board rep., Michele, thank you for standing beside me, encouraging me and pouring into this weekend. To those who helped with sponsor hour, ice cream social, prayer chapel, our spiritual team, cook team and every member of Team 233, your servants hearts, your joy, and your unwavering commitment will make this weekend everything we prayed it would be. You will create a space where our pilgrims can meet Jesus.

This weekend has been a prayer in my heart since I walked as a pilgrim ten years ago. Thank you, Lord, and thank you to our greater Journey to Damascus community for making JTD #233 more beautiful and unforgettable than I could imagine.

De Colores,
Cindy Garcia, Lay Director #233

Team

Lay Director

Cindy Garcia

“Fourth Day/ Perseverance”

Spiritual Director

Fr. Scott Braathen

“Sacraments”

Spiritual Team

Rev. Ceil McKinney

“Obstacles to Grace”

Kathy Campbell

“Faith”

Rev. Gwen Perkins

“Grace”

Pilgrims

Elvira Alaniz

Karah Albert

Yolanda Almaguer

Christie Batey

Coly Beeson

LeeAnn Castellano

Jennifer Castillo

Sandra De Leon

Ophelia De Los Santos

Evelynn DeKoch

Mariela Elizondo

Laurie Elizondo

Sonia Garcia

Erica Garcia

Eva Hammer

Board Representative

Michele Hoelscher

Observing Lay Director

Liz Yzaguirre

Assistant Lay Director

Marlena Boatright

"Priorities"

Kera Steward

"Growth through Study"

Tess Gonzales

"Life in Piety"

Co-Head Angel

Mary Jessie Quiroz

Flory Rivera

Music Team

Marila Colunga

Katelijne Acker

Magda Madla

Terri-Lynne Schofield

Table Leaders

Evie Tello

Cynthia Adrian

Allyson Kroeger

"Changing our World"

Katrina Albert

Hilary Alaniz

Tracy Atchinson

Kris Soliz

Tracey Ritchie

Soila Whitaker

Ninfa Hippensteal

Tiffany Almaguer

Lauren Solis

Angels

Marivel Garza

Delma Edge

Jessica Moya

Kim Guzman

Norma Martinez

Brittany Navarro

Ashley Perez

Heather Sanchez

"Discipleship"

Krystle Tovar

Lucy Montalvo

"Body of Christ"

Rachel Unterbrink

Leah Kaestner

Yolanda Lewis

Mary Helen Lopez-Mireles

Melissa Lugo

K'Lynn Martinez

Priscilla Martinez

Katie McBride

Moni Melo

Kacey Mueller

Sr. Mediatix Patterson

Norma Perez

Kendra Riebschleager

Abby Sacky

Annika Sacky

Grace Sanchez

Eileen Standlee

Liz Steele

Kelsey Thomas

Jessica Torres

Michelle Uresti

Elsa Villa

Liz Bodiford

Traci Pogue

Kelly Hoelscher

Ruby Guerrero

Angie Garza

Roxy Ybarra

“Christian Action”

April Garza

Megan Llewellyn

“Priesthood of all Believers”

Cindi Rose



A Thank you From Lay Director of JTD #232:

Dear Journey to Damascus Community,

What a transformative weekend it was! As we close JTD #232 – The Best Journey Ever, I am overwhelmed with gratitude and praise for the incredible work God did through each



of you.

From the outset, our guiding scripture - Matthew 4:19 *"Come, follow me... and I will make you fishers of men"*, inspired every decision and moment of preparation. Together, we witnessed hearts opened, lives touched, and Christ glorified through this powerful weekend.

This journey wasn't just a retreat; it was a three-day renewal and a chance for us to release our burdens and embrace God's unconditional love. Your prayers, encouragement, and devotion made that possible.

Special thanks:

- To my St. Elsewhere team & spiritual leadership: Your unwavering guidance and spiritual oversight grounded this weekend in deep faith.
- To the Journey to Damascus Board: Your wisdom and partnership shaped our mission and mission's integrity.
- To every community member, prayer partners, sponsors, and pilgrims: Your presence and participation made this journey deeply meaningful.
- To my wife, Marivel, my kids Arissa and Marcos, and my family: Your steadfast love, patience, and support made being Lay Director possible. I couldn't have done it without you.

We've grown in unity, faith, and clarity of purpose. May this experience continue to propel us forward in bold discipleship, helping others discover a transformative relationship with Christ.

It has been the greatest honor to serve as Lay Director for JTD #232. Thank you for your heart, your hands, and your hope. May we continue to follow Jesus faithfully, and to lead others to do the same.

In Christ and deep gratitude,

Journey to Damascus #235

September 18-21, 2025



I have called you friends for all that I have heard from my father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you.

John 15:16

About a year ago a friend asked if I'd consider serving as a Lay Director and, given how busy life is I immediately said, "not right now". However, as we all know God's timing is better than our own. After an email from the JTD board, many thoughts, prayers, and encouragement I decided to answer the call. I was concerned that I would fall short, doubt filled my mind, and I felt ill prepared and not qualified.

As my St. Elsewhere team and spiritual team began coming together those feelings started to fade, God knew exactly who I needed to fill me with encouragement, hope, and excitement. I am grateful for their constant reassurance, direction, and servant hearts. There have been a few bumps along the way but with God as our pilot we have been able to fly above the storms. We understand this calling is bigger than us and that God is leading those in most need to the Best Journey Ever.

We have witnessed the love of Christ from the community, and we are thankful for the outpouring of agape, and prayers. It's amazing to see and experience the amount of love and support that the journey community is always so willing to give. As the weekend gets closer, we become more excited to see all pilgrims' faces and watch the remarkable transformations as we all grow closer to Christ together. We have all been fishing for men and praying over those who are as reluctant as I was to say yes to God's call. Our team is excited for September to

be here so we can share Gods love, grace, and mercy. We look forward to seeing everyone at candlelight and closing ceremonies. Let's keep praying that JTD # 235 will be the best journey ever!

De Colores
Mitchell Hippensteal
Lay Director JTD 235

Dates to Remember

UP Coming Journey To Damascus Weekends for 2025:

September 18 - September 21st
Men's JTD #235 - LD, Mitch
Hippensteal

October 16 - October 19th
Women's JTD #236 - LD, Liz Yzaquirre

The Lay Directors or a St. Elsewhere representative from each team will present updated status for each weekend at every candlelight.

Please plan to attend candlelight for the weekends listed below.
Candlelight begins at 8:00 p.m. each Saturday of a Journey weekend at OLCC, St. Teresa Hall, 1252 Lantana St., Corpus Christi, Tx.

Lastly, if you would like to fill out a team application or sign up a pilgrim for any of the up coming Journey weekends please click the link below.

2026 Updated Team Application will be available soon on the website.

[Applications](#)



*Sign the
72-Hour
Prayer Vigil*

Each JTD weekend has a 72 hour prayer vigil
PLEASE CLICK THE "SIGNUP" LINK to help out:

*access code (for all) De Colores

**Men's JTD #235 –
Sept 18 - 21**

**Women's JTD #236 –
Oct 16 - 19**

**Prayer Vigil Sign
Up**



**2026 Journey to Damascus
Lay Directors & Up Coming Weekend Dates**

March 19-22, 2026 Corpus Christi
Men's JTD #239

Lay Director- John Porche

April 23-26, 2026 Corpus Christi
Women's JTD #240,

Lay Director- Missy Socha

June 18-21, 2026 Corpus Christi
Men's JTD #242

Lay Director- Daniel Bluntzer

July 30- Aug. 2, 2026 Corpus Christi
Women's JTD #243

Lay Director- Bea Martinez

September 17-20, 2026 Corpus Christi

Men's JTD #245

Lay Director- Phil Gagnon

October 15-18, 2026 Corpus Christi

Men's JTD #246

Lay Director- Sonya Rodriguez



The JTD Community would like to Welcome
Christina Purnell
as our newest Board Member!



The community is invited to join any of the following JTD committees listed below:

Please contact Marivel Garza, President
or Javier Flores, Vice President with any questions.

Board representatives for each committee are listed below.

1. 4th Day Committee: Liz Yzaguirre
2. Board of Trustees: Javier Flores & Marivel Garza
3. Candlelight/Closing Committee: Jenny Sehy & Liz Yzaguirre
4. Fundraising: Owen Gallagher
5. Historian Report: Rick Svetlik

6. Music Report: Owen Gallagher & Rick Svetlik
7. Newsletter: Marivel Garza
8. Registrar Report: Jenny Sehy
9. Spiritual Director: Rev. Billy Storms & Father Joseph Lopez
10. Spiritual Team: Owen Gallagher
11. Team Selection: Lori Green
12. St. Elsewhere: Javier Flores
13. Manual Committee: Bud Colwell
14. OLCC Timeline: Rick Svetlik



We would like to inform the JTD community that, beginning with the first team and Journey of 2026, the fee for both pilgrims and team members will increase from \$190 to \$225.

This change reflects the rising costs associated with hosting the weekends and ensures we can continue to provide a meaningful, well-supported experience for all involved.

We appreciate your understanding and continued support of the Journey to Damascus ministry.

Journey to Damascus | P.O. Box 945 | Corpus Christi, TX 78403 US

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