



# *A Pathway to Spiritual Formation*

Scope and Sequence  
Course Offerings from your  
Spiritual Formation Subcommittee

All courses offered as part of the Adult Education Ministry are intended to support FPCFW's mission statement: "*Inspiring Disciples – Engaging the World.*" Over the last 15 years, with the support of the Adult Christian Nurture Committee, numerous classes, covenant groups, retreats and workshops have been planned and led by members of the Spiritual Formation Sub-Committee, all aimed at encouraging and supporting a participant's journey into a deepening relationship with God.

In an effort to provide an overview of the curriculum offered by the Spiritual Formation Sub-Committee and to impart guidance in choosing a pathway through the formative experiences offered, these opportunities have now been organized into a *Scope and Sequence* intentionally constructed around the mission statement. This new ordering emphasizes two foundational tenets of spiritual formation:

- First, Christian discipleship necessitates personal transformation. Transformation is a growth process that leads us into becoming something new, and for Christians that means growing into ever greater Christlikeness. Such growth happens when we begin where we are and take incremental steps towards this goal.
- Second, Christian transformation requires keeping a balance between our inner and outer expressions of faith. A life of service, not supported by intentional time spent listening to God, can result in misdirected helping and/or burnout due to over-reliance on self; while the over-emphasis on a contemplative life, without active engagement in the world, can only lead to self-absorption.

The courses comprising the *Scope and Sequence* are listed by classification (*Inspiring Disciples* and *Engaging the World*) and courses within each classification are organized along a continuum divided into three categories: Foundational, Enriching, and Deepening. Foundational experiences introduce concepts and skills whereas offerings in the last two categories are intended to move participants into ever deeper contemplation, self-reflection and action. The intention is to offer a range of learning experiences each term thereby allowing each participant to select the opportunity which best meets him where he is and best offers her the next steps towards her own personal growth.

Listening first for the Holy Spirit's guidance, you are invited to consider the course descriptions contained in this booklet and then join in this year's course offerings and covenant opportunities. Until the church is re-opened, classes and covenant groups will be offered over Zoom and you are encouraged, over time, to "keep your balance" by choosing experiences from both the *Inspiring Disciples* and the *Engaging the World* columns.

# *A Sequence of Formational Experiences*

**offered by the Spiritual Formation Committee**

- **Church School** - a church school class, available to existing classes or as a Spiritual Formation Summer Offering
- **Covenant Group** - a covenant group: a small group experience that covenants together for study, dialog, scripture, and prayer around a spiritual practice or social issue, or as part of a “PACKAGED” transformational program
- **Workshop** - an extended time of study, usually including experiential learning.
- **Retreat** - An opportunity for deeper exploration and experiential learning around a particular focus; a retreat is also an opportunity for community building and personal reflection. These are offered in half-day, day, or weekend formats.

## **Inspiring Disciples: Foundational Experiences**

Growing Toward God Through Prayer	1-day Workshop/Retreat
Follow Me	Church school/14 weeks
Companions in Christ	Church school/13 weeks
An Introduction to the Enneagram	Covenant Group/12 weeks
Discernment: Listening for God	Workshop/2 hours/4 weeks

## **Inspiring Disciples: Enriching Experiences**

Journaling: Conversation with God	Covenant Group/1 hour/4 weeks
Lectio: Abiding in God's Word	Covenant Group/1 hour/5 weeks
Examen: Searching for God This Day	Covenant Group/1 hour/6 weeks
Centering Prayer: Resting in God	Covenant Group/1 hour
Enneagram: Growing Beyond Your Number	2 hours/8 weeks
Maturing in Your Faith Journey	Church School/12 weeks

## **Inspiring Disciples: Deepening Experiences**

Newell's Rebirthing of God	Church School/8 weeks
The Universal Christ	various formats
Book Study	Church School/8 weeks
Insight Study: Companion Guide	Covenant Group/8 weeks
Embodiment Study: Companion Guide	Covenant Group/8 weeks
Engagement Study: Companion Guide	Covenant Group/8 weeks
The New Spiritual Exercises: in the Spirit of Teilhard de Chardin	Covenant Group/1 hour/week/9 months
Keeping Sabbath Holy	Weekend Retreat
Reconnecting for Renewal	Weekend Retreat

## **Engaging the World: Foundational Experiences**

Shalom Church School/6 weeks

Just Faith Covenant Group/2.5 hours/8 weeks each phase

Phase 1: Living Compassionately: Caring for the Poor

Phase 2: Living Compassionately: Caring for Each Other

Phase 3: Living Simply: Caring for the Earth

## **Engaging the World: Enriching Experiences**

Jesus and Peacemaking Covenant Group/2 hours/8 weeks

Speak Peace in a World of Conflict Church School/8 weeks

## **Engaging the World: Deepening Experiences**

Enneagram: Using the Enneagram for Spiritual Formation 45 minutes/9 weeks

Boundless Compassion various formats

Creating a Way of Life Book Study Church School/6 weeks

Creating a Way of Life Covenant Group/Retreat

3 hours/5 weeks+ 1-day retreat

Circles of Compassion Covenant Group/2 hours/month/

ongoing

Just Matters Covenant Group/2.5 hours/8 weeks each

Exploring Migration: A Faith Journey

Faith & Racial Equity: Exploring Power & Privilege

Faith & Racial Justice: Changing Systems & Structures

Faith & Racial Healing: Embracing Truth, Justice, & Restoration

Hunger for Change

Prison Reform

Just Engagement: The Power To Change



## Course Descriptions: *Inspiring Disciples*

### *Foundational Experiences*

#### **Growing Toward God Through Prayer**

1-day workshop/retreat, 5 hours

This 5-hour workshop is offered on a Saturday with lunch provided for a fee. The morning is given over to familiarizing yourself with Corrine Ware's *Four Quadrants of Spirituality*, doing an inventory to determine in which quadrants you are naturally open to receiving and responding to God and those in which you are currently closed and in need of growth. Using this information, you will be given the opportunity to prepare a growth plan which best brings you into loving God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength, and all your mind. The afternoon provides an opportunity to learn various contemplative prayer types that encourage growth in each Quadrant.

#### **Follow Me**

class, 45 minutes/ 14 weeks

This course looks at scripture to learn what spiritual disciplines Jesus followed in his own life of faith and how he taught his followers these core practices of a Christian life: Sabbath-keeping, silence/solitude, discernment, obedience, humility, simplicity, compassion, hospitality, service, justice, and discipling. Handouts provide explanations of each practice using *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* by Adele Calhoun as well as suggestions from various spiritual mentors as to how to incorporate these practices into your life.

#### **Companions on the Journey**

class, 45 minutes/13 weeks

The spiritual journey into the heart of God has many signposts along the way and many fellow travelers who have lighted the path for those who follow. In this class we will meet six individuals who have been influential teachers throughout the centuries. By listening to the voices from this Great Cloud of Witnesses and learning something of their lives with God, we can find mentors for deepening our own relationship with the Holy and gain insight into the rich history of spiritual disciplines in the Christian tradition.

#### **An Introduction to the Enneagram**

workshop, 3 hours/ 12 weeks

Using Suzanne Stabile's, *The Enneagram Journey: A DVD Curriculum for Exploration, Growth, and Transformation*, this course provides, an introduction to the Enneagram, an ancient tool for both spiritual and psychological growth. You will learn a brief history of the Enneagram, an overview of how it works, the basics needed to determine your number (or how your personality works habitually to receive, perceive, and respond to the world) and steps to take toward a broader, freer, more intentional range of responses. The class includes the video in which Suzanne teaches the topic, large group discussion of what was learned, and small group break-out sessions for sharing personal experiences of living in your personality. Book: *The Enneagram Journey*.

#### **Discernment: Listening for God**

covenant group, 2 hours/ 4 weeks

This course attempts to help answer a core question in the life of faith, "How do I recognize God's speaking to me?" The first hour will be given over to discussion around Liebert's methodology and the approaches she recommends: using memory, intuition, the

body, imagination, reason, feeling, and nature to become aware. The second hour will be devoted to small group sharing of personal experience with these approaches. The final meeting will explore ways to confirm a discernment. Materials from Ben Campbell Johnson's *Godspeech*, J. Bill Brent's *Sacred Compass*, and Wilke and Noreen Au's *The Discerning Heart* will also be included to give context and to flesh out certain concepts. Book: *The Way of Discernment* by Elizabeth Liebert.

## *Enriching Experiences*

### **Journaling: Conversations with God**

*covenant group, 1 hour/4 weeks*

Participants will explore the difference between a diary and a spiritual journal, reasons for keeping a spiritual journal, and its importance as an integral part of one's spiritual formation. They will delve into issues (such as privacy, honesty, and consistency) surrounding journal keeping and, by reviewing their journals weekly and sharing within the safety of the group what they choose to from them, will discover for themselves its value as a growth tool. Soren Kierkegaard once said, "We live our lives forward, but we understand them backwards," and journaling allows us to do just that.

### **Lectio: Abiding in God's Word**

*covenant group, 1.5 hours/5 weeks*

Lectio, or devotional reading of scripture, is a time-honored way of allowing God to speak to you directly through the words of scripture. All of us have experienced reading the same scripture at different times in our lives and hearing it altogether differently. This is because God's word is an Incarnate Word which meets us where we are. By slowing down and following the four steps of reading/listening, meditating/reflecting, praying, and resting with God, we allow God, through scripture, to touch us in our depths.

### **Examen: Searching for God This Day**

*covenant group, 1 hour/6 weeks*

The Examen is a prayer practice that offers an opportunity for daily reflective prayer and may be done in increments of 10 to 15 minutes or less, or may be expanded as you desire. It offers an invitation to notice and reflect on the movement of God in all the people and events of your day. Participants will learn, and then practice, a new version of the Examen each week and will be given the opportunity to share your experience of praying your day.

### **Centering Prayer: Resting in God**

*covenant group, TBD by group*

Centering Prayer is prayer of the heart. It is waiting before God; it is being still; it is communing with God without words, only with loving presence. The object is not to try to empty your mind; that is impossible, but to rest completely, noticing what arises in your inner being and letting go of distracting thoughts without judgment. It is being with the One you love. Participants will experience rituals of quieting, ways of letting go distraction, a "sit," and a closing spoken prayer.

### **Enneagram: Growing Beyond Your Number**

*covenant group,  
2 hours/ 8 weeks*

Best experienced if follows *Introduction to the Enneagram*. This class is a follow-on to Introduction to the Enneagram for those wanting to gain greater understanding of how

to use the Enneagram, including exploring Wings, Stress and Security numbers, Stance, and movement from unhealth to health within your number. Information is presented in class on these and other topics from the works of Riso & Hudson (*The Wisdom of the Enneagram* and *Understanding the Enneagram*), Hurley & Dobson (*My Best Self*) and more. In exploring the nuances of movement within the circle of numbers and practicing getting out of one's comfort zone to experience the freedom of other numbers, participants will discover the value of the Enneagram as a road map for spiritual growth and a tool for enhancing relationships with self and others. Participants will be offered time to explore and work with the information, as well as opportunities to share their experiences of growth. Book purchases optional.

### **Maturing in Your Faith**

class, 45 minutes/ 12 weeks

Recommended for those 40 years of age or older. Using materials from Richard Rohr's *Falling Upward*, and Jane Thibault's *A Deepening Love Affair: The Gift of God in Later Life and Pilgrimage into the Last Third of Life*, this course delineates the developmental tasks of both the first and second halves of life and focuses on understanding the path to a successful transition between the two, at or around mid-life, to ensure a true "golden-years" experience: a deeper relationship with God and continued meaningful service, even as an "elder," in the fullest sense of the word.

## *Deepening Experiences*

### **Enneagram: Using the Enneagram for Spiritual Transformation**

class,  
45 minutes /9 weeks

Using materials from Enneagram masters such as Sandra Maitre, David Daniels, M.D., and Christopher Heuertz, this course teaches the Enneagram as a growth map for moving beyond Personality into your Essence, or that which you are at your deepest core. In various traditions, Essence is called spirit, Christ nature, Buddha nature or true nature. The Hebrews called it Ruach and the early Christians called it Spiritus. This journey from Personality to Essence is also referred to as moving from the false self (personality) to the true self and is essential for our spiritual maturation and psychological health. It is moving from enslavement to freedom. Book purchases optional.

### **The Universal Christ**

various, 1 hour/8 weeks each

Book Study: *The Universal Christ* by Richard Rohr. Richard Rohr describes in *The Universal Christ* that the Christian should see the spiritual journey as a three-wheel tricycle in which Experience is the center and forward wheel and Scripture and Tradition are the two outward and following wheels that give the rider the universal and communal understanding of each moment rolled through by Experience. Rohr, thus, sees the Christian Life as the intentional effort to give meaning to Experience through Scripture and Tradition so that they can sustain the rider through life's bumps and jolts and give guidance to the path to be taken thereafter.

### **The Companion Guide to *The Universal Christ***

covenant group

This course aims to provide communal and personal understanding of *The Universal Christ* through group sharing in practice sessions and solo consideration while apart. It is divided into three sessions of eight weeks of practice that takes the participant through the stages of Insight, Embodiment, and Engagement. Hence, it is not a one-time endeavor, but a sustained effort to become a Universal (authentic) Christian.



### **An Insight Study of the Companion Guide**

This segment focuses on gaining recognition of why we should study *The Universal Christ*.

### **An Embodiment Study of the Companion Guide**

In this segment one studies the practices of being a Universal Christian.

### **An Engagement Study of the Companion Guide**

In this segment, participants exercise the practices of being a Universal Christian.

**The New Spiritual Exercises:** covenant group, 1 hour/week/36 weeks

#### **In the Spirit of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin**

Best experienced following *Growing Toward God Through Prayer* and *Follow Me. The Universal Christ* and *Boundless Compassion* will also help enrich the experience. "In the Teilhardian spirit, these New Spiritual Exercises do not focus primarily on personal sin and saving one's soul (as did the original Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius), but upon the graces and blessings God gives us for consciously creating a positive difference in our world." This retreat follows a similar structure as the original Spiritual Exercises; however, the individual daily meditations/prayers center around the expression of God's love through the creation of our world, the necessity for us to love and cherish the world God has given us, and the understanding and inclusion of evolution and scientific discoveries as they demonstrate God's continued creative expression of love. Journaling is required of participants in order to keep a record of the gifts and graces experienced, as well as movements of spirit over the course of the retreat. Participants will learn and grow spiritually together from weekly sharing of their experiences (as they feel called to do so) within the confidential group meeting. Book: *The New Spiritual Exercises: In the Spirit of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* by Louis M. Savary. Prayer Journal.

## **Course Descriptions: *Engaging the World***

### *Foundational Experiences*

#### **Shalom**

class, 45 minutes/ 6 weeks

This course traces the theme of shalom as it was introduced in Genesis, fulfilled in Revelation, and developed through God's covenant, the law, the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the early church. It not only clarifies God's intentions for how we live with one another and in Creation, but it also reveals the gravity behind God's persistent message to God's people, then and now.

#### **Just Faith**

covenant group, 2.5 hours/ 8 weeks/ each

Best experienced following *Shalom*. Over the course of 24 weeks, participants study, reflect, and dialogue on critical social issues through the lens of the Gospel and the teachings of our faith. It is encouraged that phases be taken consecutively over the 24 weeks; however, participants can take one each semester over a two-year period. The intent of these phases is to raise awareness, grow compassion, and inspire action to join God's work in righting these social ills. Each phase will involve readings, TED talks, dialog, a guest Speaker, an immersion experience, scripture and prayer.

### **Phase 1: Living Compassionately – Caring for the Poor**

“Caring for the Poor” challenges participants to revisit the relationship between our faith and our responsibility to take care of the poor among us. It invites participants to be open to new and creative choices for living a more compassionate, faith-filled life. Participants will deepen their awareness of the realities of poverty in the U.S. as well as globally and will examine the impact of consumerism on those who have not.

### **Phase 2: Living Justly – Caring for each Other**

This module seeks to deepen awareness of inequalities and various forms of injustice in the U.S. It fosters active listening, dialogue, and prayer in order to create a group experience of trust and compassion. It provides opportunities for new learning from articles, online viewing, and a resource book in order to help participants address the reality of systems of oppression and find ways to dismantle them.

### **Phase 3: Living Simply – Caring for the Earth**

This phase seeks to deepen awareness about environmental concerns and issues related to environmental justice in the U.S. and globally. It empowers participants to address the reality of global warming and reflect on the changes they can make in their relationship with Creation.

## *Enriching Experiences*

### **Jesus and Peacemaking**

*covenant group, 2 hours/ 8 weeks*

Best experienced following *Just Faith*. Participants will explore the words and actions of Jesus as a leader and teacher in the practice of nonviolence and will gain an understanding of these teachings as they apply to justice and mercy for all God’s people and our call to action as Christians. Topics such as peacemaking skills, the church’s role in social justice issues, peacemaking communications skills, learning to love one’s enemies, forgiveness and reconciliation, the risks involved in advocacy for justice and mercy, and the importance of an intentional prayer life to support this Christ-like lifestyle are explored through readings, media and guest presentations, an immersion experience, and group dialog. Book: *Jesus and Nonviolence, A Third Way* by Walter Wink.

### **Speak Peace in a World of Conflict**

*class, 45 minutes/ 8 weeks*

Best experienced following *Jesus and Peacemaking*. “It is through our speech that we are known, for it tells a story of our thought life and essential self. How we speak can open or close doors, heal or hurt, create suffering or joy, and ultimately determine our own degree of happiness.” Dorothy J. Maver, Ph.D, in the foreword to *Speak Peace in a World of Conflict*. Participants will learn and practice the nonviolent communication techniques of Marshall Rosenberg which focus on the life-giving / life-receiving energy available to us when we communicate peacefully. Participants will explore their own communication patterns, as well as learn ways to listen empathically and deal with conflict and confrontation. Skills practiced and learned are practical and useful in a wide range of relationships and encounters. Book: *Speak Peace in a World of Conflict* by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

## *Deepening Experiences*

### **Boundless Compassion Creating a Way of Life**

*various  
covenant group*

*3 hours /5 weeks + one 5-hr day retreat*

Compassion is an essential component in the transformation of a society seeking peace and harmony. Although an innate quality, compassion needs nurturing and development for fuller expression. This program seeks to encourage compassionate living in both one's personal and professional life and to inspire growth into the kind of love that motivated Jesus' life and his mission for his disciples. Objectives will include: to develop a holistic understanding of compassion by incorporating views from science, psychology, sociology and spirituality; to encourage compassionate self-care; to explore the relationship between suffering and compassion; to explore relational approaches needed for compassionate presence; to explore wider dimensions of compassion by acknowledging and addressing marginalization of persons and groups; to develop empathy for creation through embracing our interdependence and oneness; to provide creative resources to nurture and sustain compassion.

### **Creating a Way of Life Book Study**

*class, 45 minutes/ 6 weeks*

Upon completion of the Book Study, a participant may join a Circle of Compassion to keep both their continued learning and their practice of compassion alive.

### **Circles of Compassion**

*covenant group, 2 hours/ month/ongoing*

Follows Boundless Compassion Covenant Group or 6-week Book Study. Participants who have completed the 6-week program or book study may join a Circles of Compassion to keep both their continued learning and their practice of compassion alive. These Circles nurture the bond of kinship among those who value compassion. They also provide encouragement to embody compassion by a study of resources suggested by members of the Circle, and the sharing of personal experiences in living compassionately. Book: *Boundless Compassion* by Joyce Rupp.

### **Just Matters**

*covenant group, 2 hours/8 weeks/each*

Best experienced following Just Faith. Each Just Matters elective delves more deeply into a particular issue raised in the Just Faith curriculum and further prepares participants to get involved in an area that calls them to action. Following the same structure as Just Faith, each session will include readings, TED talks, dialog, scripture, an immersion experience, and prayer.

### **Exploring Migration: A Faith Journey**

The authors assert that immigration is "one of the most critical and controversial issues of our day" and one "that is central to Christian identity." Participants will delve into that complexity by examining public policy on migration, key players and their positions in the debate and moral choices surrounding the issue. They will survey the history of global and US migration, study biblical teachings on the subject, gain new perspective on the root causes of migration, and confront the reality of human slavery and sex trafficking here in the United States.

### **Faith & Racial Equity: Exploring Power & Privilege**

This module awakens groups to the economic systems, public policies, cultural norms, and hidden biases that empower some and oppress others. The first half of the module introduces a framework for understanding and recognizing racial disparities in power and privilege. Sessions 5-8 take a deeper dive into specific issues related to power and privilege: affirmative action, the school-to-prison pipeline, the criminal justice system, and powerful biases in media representation. As with all JustFaith programs, participants will explore how their faith should inform their response to their learning, as well as discern action steps for working toward racial equity in their own communities.

### **Faith and Racial Healing: Embracing Truth, Justice, and Restoration**

This module helps participants tell the truth about our collective history of racism and violence, that we might seek real restoration with God and one another. It is impossible to work toward racial healing without first acknowledging the truth of our history and the historical context behind the racial inequalities we face today, whether in education, the criminal justice system, the workforce, or even in church life. Though focused specifically on African slaves and their descendants, this module will open participants' eyes to patterns of injustice that affect other minority groups across the nation as well. Through the one-day opening retreat, immersion experience, and eight sessions, your group will emerge from Faith and Racial Healing better equipped to work toward restoration.

### **Faith and Racial Justice: Changing Systems and Structures**

Best experienced following either *Faith and Racial Equity* or *Faith and Racial Healing*. This module gives participants the tools they need to address racism at a systemic level — whether they decide to work for criminal justice reform, advocate for fair housing, close the racial wealth gap, or end racism within the church. Participants learn about key obstacles to racial justice that are embedded within our institutions, systems, and structures. They are then equipped to mobilize people and resources to dismantle those obstacles. Through a grounding in prayer, spiritual practice, and a study on the Epistle of St. James, your group will leave the program ready to work for racial justice in your nation, local community, and the churches and institutions of which you are a part.

### **Hunger for Change**

Created in partnership with Bread for the World, this module explores the realities of food insecurity in the United States and around the world and faith-filled action to end hunger.

### **Just Engagement – The Power to Change**

Best experienced following any other *Just Matters* module. Through the lens of the Christian faith, Just Engagement invites you to look at different ways to engage in your own grassroots advocacy efforts. Participants will discern how their gifts, skills and passions are best utilized to create social change. This program includes grounding in Scripture, reflection on past and present social movements, wisdom from community advocates, tools for successful advocacy, and resources to support you and your group for the long haul as you actively impact social change.

# *A Pathway to Spiritual Formation*

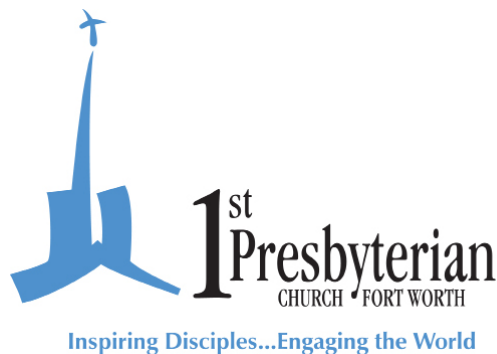
*"Spiritual Formation is a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others."*

(Robert Mulholland, Jr. in *Invitation to a Journey:  
A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*)

*Spiritual formation is the activity of the Holy Spirit which molds our lives into the likeness of Jesus Christ. This likeness is one of deep intimacy with God and genuine compassion for all of creation. The Spirit works not only in the lives of individuals but also in the church, shaping it into the Body of Christ. We cooperate with this work of the Spirit through certain practices that make us more open and responsive to the Spirit's touch, disciplines such as Sabbath keeping, works of compassion and justice, discernment, worship, hospitality, spiritual friendships, and contemplative silence.*  
(Office of Spiritual Formation, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.))

*"Inspiring Disciples – Engaging the World"*

First Presbyterian Fort Worth Mission Statement



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