

The Healing Place

A Ministry of First Shiloh Baptist Church
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Healing Care Small Group Program

The Healing Care Small Group Program is a ministry of *The Healing Place*, A ministry of Christian Counseling and Healing Prayer of the First Shiloh Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, Virginia.

Purpose: Based on the concepts of Formational Counseling, a ministry of Christian caregiving that integrates pastoral care, spiritual direction, and spirit-directed counseling with a view to bringing hope, healing, and spiritual well-being to broken people. Participants will explore the process of formational prayer and the relationship past woundings and traumatic events have upon dysfunctional behavior and emotional upheaval.

Formational Prayer is a process of deep emotional healing that positions people to meet Jesus in the memories of past wounding experiences. It is a Christ-centered, Spirit directed process of prayer that seeks to bring the presence of Jesus into the place of deep emotional wounds. Such wounds often generate destructive false beliefs, debilitating emotional turmoil, and countless dysfunctional behaviors in the lives of God's people. Through formational prayer, hurting people are able to experience the transforming power of Christ that brings freedom and release.

Format: In a small group modality, participants will experience and learn how to position broken people before the Lord for deep emotional healing and freedom. Students will explore the biblical, historical, and practical aspects of healing and well being, as well as learn to integrate the Spirit-directed ministry of formational prayer into their commitment to helping the broken person. The groups are led by experienced caregiver/facilitators who have been trained in the ministry of Formational Prayer.

The Groups meet in 2 ½ - 3 hour sessions for sixteen weeks, for a minimum of forty hours. Participants will consider the transformational elements of Christian community as expressed in small groups that gather for inner healing. Built upon biblical and historical principles, students will learn to lead small groups of broken people through the process of inner healing. The Sixteen Week, Healing Care Small Group Curriculum, developed by Dr. Terry Wardle, Ashland University, is the basis for the small group experience.

In addition to the tremendous “hands on” learning experience for individuals pursuing training in Formational Prayer, each group participant receives specialized attention in formational prayer that positions them for deep personal healing. Under the supervision of Dr. R. Neal

Not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, Zechariah 4:6

Siler, Pastor of First Shiloh and a professional counselor the groups are led by a team of highly gifted and professionally trained caregivers who help the participants work through the wounds that compromise their life and ministry.

Content: There are three foci of the small group ministry:

- A **teaching component** which focuses on the objectives of the session relative to the topic,
- An **experiential component** which focuses on spiritual disciplines and limbic exercises designed to connect with the affective response relative to the topic, and
- A **spiritual component** that engages a specific text or theological concept relative to the topic

Each week, participants will engage all three components through addressing the teaching topic of the week through small group process, weekly assignments, experiential spiritual disciplines and formational prayer ministry.

The following is a description of the Three Levels of Small Group Ministry that is currently offered:

Level 1: Sixteen Week Healing Care Small Group Program

Week One: The Journey Begins - To introduce students to each other, to the process, and to their own need for God's healing grace.

Week Two: Experiencing the God of Love - To help students identify destructive caricatures of God and then, by the Father's grace, replace them with the truth of His love and care.

Week Three: Trust - To help students identify and step away from unhealthy forms of trust and mistrust into a healthy perceptive trust. To help them establish healing trust with God and thereby be able to lead others into healthier relationships

Week Four: The Structures of Healing - To teach students the structures of healing model in order that they may see the cause and effect relationship between wounds, lies, dysfunctional behavior and life situation. The rest of the class will be addressed from this model.

Week Five: Dealing with Dysfunction - To define and identify dysfunctional behaviors. Students will begin to address their own dysfunctional behaviors and will thereby be able to help others identify and define behaviors that interrupt their capacity to live a maximized life.

Week Six: The Power of the Cross as an agent of healing - To continue to address the themes of dysfunctional behavior with focus and attention will be given to the Cross of Christ as the provision for deliverance and healing.

Week Seven: Emotions, Can you trust them?- To help students learn to identify feelings, express them appropriately, and look beneath them to the underlying beliefs that generate emotional upheaval.

Week Eight: Learning to Lament - To understand the power of biblical lament as a way of expressing healthy emotions before the Lord, relative to deep seated issues of the past of disappointment, betrayal and loss.

Week Nine: Core Longings - To help students learn about core longings and the relationship such

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longings have to God and how deficits can erupt into dysfunctional behavior that can adversely impact one's life situation.

Week Ten: The Truth Will Set You Free - Students will learn to identify destructive false beliefs and by the power of the Holy Spirit, discover and embrace the truth of one's identity in Jesus Christ.

Week Eleven: Teaching the Body Outline - Continuing the theme of lesson 10, using a silhouette of one's body this experiential lesson will help students identify false beliefs and the cost of those beliefs. They will learn how to renounce such beliefs and declare the truth of Jesus Christ.

Week Twelve: Going Deeper Into the Truth - Continuing the themes of lessons 10 and 11, students will learn how to look deeper into truth as well as learn about the healing power of genuine Christian community.

Week Thirteen: Healing Deep Wounds - Introduce the students to the process of healing deep wounds. The steps taught in this lesson will be used to address deep wounds in the context of groups. Attention will also be given to the importance of having a "Self-care" plan.

Week Fourteen: Hearing the Word of Truth - Reviewing the steps to inner healing students will learn how to apply principles of God's word relative to emotional wounds and trauma. Students will also engage this process through a group experiential activity.

Week Fifteen: Focusing On Forgiveness – Reviewing the biblical admonitions to forgive, participants will consider how forgiveness impacts those who have been wounded. Participants will also have an opportunity to extend forgiveness to others.

Week Sixteen: Celebrating the Victory of the Cross – Helping participants enter and embrace the victory Christ won for every person at the cross, and to help them continue along the pathway of increasing maturity and well-being.

The primary texts for level I:

Healing Care, Healing Prayer, Terry Wardle

The Soul's Journey into God's Embrace, Terry Wardle

Whispers of Love in Seasons of Fear, Terry Wardle

Cry of the Soul, Tremper Longman III and Dan Allender

Trusting: The Issue at the Heart of Every Relationship, Pat Springle

Leading Life-Changing Small Groups, Bill Donahue

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Level 2: Twelve Week Healing Care Small Group Program

Week 1: Soul Care and Attachment in the Early Stages of Development - Looking at Ericson's early stages of development the focus will be on attachment in early development; the security of the attachment bond through the stages of development and the value of attachment theory in understanding adult relationships.

Week 2: Soul Care and Attachment in Later Stages of Development - The impact of childhood attachment on behavior and social adjustment; Impact of insecure attachment relative to social and emotional problems that plague many individuals who tend towards approval seeking, performance,

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perfectionism and low self esteem, and other dysfunctional behaviors. This session also looks at Ericson's later developmental stages and identifying one's on attachment style.

Week 3: Soul Care and Attachment in Relationships - Looking at cognitive models about themselves and significant others this session focuses on attachment issues and the way people think and act in their intimate relationships. Attention is given to understanding a broader definition of attachment as disorder of mood, behavior and social relationships that stem from a failure to form normal attachments to primary care giving figures in early childhood.

Week 4: Soul Care and Speaking to False Beliefs - All behavior is based on a belief and behind every sin is a lie that you believe. At the root of every wounding in your life is a lie that you believe. The Formational Prayer Model is the paradigm of approach for helping individuals discover the places of lies and false beliefs born of wounding experiences. Our goal in this session is to "dislodge" those lies and false beliefs – to uncover them and expose them for what they are and thereby, in the power of the Holy Spirit find healing and freedom.

Week 5: Soul Care and the Reality of Who I Am - The Bible tells us that "as a man thinks, so is he." The aphorism, "As a man thinks in his heart so is he," not only embraces the whole of a man's being, but is so comprehensive as to reach out to every condition and circumstance of his life. The truth is, who I am is clearly defined by the God of truth who created me, this session explores the implications of this reality for spiritual maturity.

Week 6: Soul Care and Healing Guilt and Shame – Part 1 - The goal of this session is clear – God wants to heal us of shame. The message of guilt is simply this... "I did something bad". The message of shame is... "I am bad". All too often we confuse the two. I can make a mistake – be maturely guilty of that, but I must understand, in that same maturity – I am not a mistake.

Week 7: Soul Care and Dealing with Guilt and Shame – Part 2 - In this session attention is devoted to analyzing the issues that surface in the life of the shame bound person. Shame-bound persons, believing themselves to be seriously flawed, without worth, and hardly belonging in the world inevitably have the consequences of their shame-consciousness show up very negatively in many areas of their life. Participants will discover that at the core of the shame-bound person is a failure of self-esteem.

Week 8: Soul Care and the Problem of Sin - From a biblical perspective, it is clear that God desires wholeness in His creatures. God's original intent was thwarted in the tragic events of the Fall. This was a mortal, self-inflicted wound when Adam and Eve abused the freedom God had given them. The perennial problem of brokenness as a direct result of willful sin is explored in this session.

Week 9: Soul Care and the Word of God - God is a revealing God and His revelation is clearest in His Word – the Bible. The intentionality of the Word, both "rhema and logos" culminating with an understanding of the powerful significance and implications for physical and spiritual health through Jesus Christ is the aim of this session.

Week 10: Soul Care and the Issues of Life - Life is riddled with many complexities for most people. Yet, when we talk about African American life these complexities heighten and escalate into compounded historical and systemic issues that are most often out of our realm of control. Historically, many of the issues that we face, otherwise normal issues that everyone faces, have been complicated by

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both, the diaspora and the assimilation of African Americans into a westernized cultural context. How this reality impacts our spiritual development and relationships are the themes of this session.

Week 11: Soul Care and Wholeness in the Image of God - In our brokenness and emptiness the soul hungers for wholeness. In Christ's love we are made fully whole. How to come alive to this truth is the challenge of loving God wholly. To integrate an understanding of who I am as the image of God is the key to wholeness. There are key realities that are true about every child of God. These truths are not altered by one's circumstances, experiences in life or judgments of others. On your worst day you are God's beloved. How to live into this reality is the goal of this session.

Week 12: Soul Care and Spiritual Formation - Christian spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit and grounded in Scripture and a faith community. In this session we will focus on spiritual formation as a discipleship process that focuses on the ordinary maturing of one's relationship with God. The intention is to become more "Christ-like". The process of becoming Christ-like involves three interwoven processes that we will explore:

1. **Orthodoxy** – Right thinking about Christ and the Christian faith
2. **Orthopraxy** – Right action/piety and devotional living
3. **Orthopathy** – Right feeling toward God, self, and others

The primary texts for level II:

Healing for the African – American Soul, R. Neal Siler

Shaped by the Word, Robert Mulholland

Released from Shame, Sandra Wilson

Why You Do What You Do, Clinton & Sibley

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Level 3: Spiritual Direction in the African – American Community

Weekend Retreat: Entering an ongoing Spiritual Direction relationship with individuals through formational prayer.

Spiritual direction is the practice of accompanying and assisting people to deepen their relationship with God as they learn and grow in their spirituality. Spiritual direction encourages you to explore your relationship with God. The person seeking direction shares stories of his or her encounters in life, with God or their experience of spiritual issues. The director listens and asks questions to assist the directee in his or her process of reflection and spiritual growth. Spiritual direction develops a deeper relationship with the spiritual aspect of being human. It is not psychotherapy, counseling, or financial planning.

The Goal of Spiritual Direction

Discerning God's Presence in the sacrament of the present moment:

Reflecting deeply on the experiences, you will learn to recognize God's presence and grace in your daily life.

Discovering the value of Spiritual Disciplines

Spiritual disciplines help to keep our relationship with God in good working order, and even help develop intimacy. Spiritual disciplines are not the essence of your relationship with God, Christ did that already. Spiritual disciplines are not a means to greater grace or favor, rather, they are

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exercises, tools, and devotional aids that help us cooperate with the Holy Spirit in conforming to the image of Christ – becoming more and more of what God wants us to be. Some helpful disciplines that may be explored:

- Prayer practices
- Meditation
- Exploring spiritual experiences
- Lectio-Divina (Sacred Readings)
- Journaling
- Fasting

Exploring the Gift of Spiritual Direction to help you:

You might come to Spiritual Direction for a variety of reasons, include to:

- Identify and trust your own experiences of God
- Integrate spirituality into your daily life
- Discern and make difficult choices
- Share your hopes, struggles and losses
- Develop a sensitivity for justice and compassion
- Live the essence of your relationship to God with integrity

The privilege and responsibility of a spiritual director is to journey with an individual in a one-on-one relationship. Spiritual direction can also occur in an on-going group setting or in an intensive retreat. What is shared between an individual and a spiritual director is held in strict confidence. There is no time limit to how long an individual may engage a spiritual director

In this weekend Retreat (Friday & Saturday), we will:

- Learn how to identify formational needs for shaping a personal plan of spiritual direction
- Look at Type in spiritual development
- Complete a Formational Assessment for prescribing spiritual disciplines
- Explore identity as conforming to the image of Christ: leading others into a deeper level of trust and love for God.

The primary texts for level III:

God's Gifted People, Gary Harbaugh

Invitation to a Journey, Robert Mulholland

Personality Type in Congregations, Lynn Baab

Knowing Me, Knowing God, Malcolm Goldsmith

Looking at Type and Spirituality, Sandra Hirsh

Who we are is How we Pray, Charles Keating