



# DAWNINGS

WELCOMING A NEW DAY IN YOUR CHURCH'S MISSIONAL JOURNEY

## *Retreat Journal*

Exploratory Conversation Retreat





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Exploratory Conversation Retreat

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The following passage will provide the framework  
for our retreat experience.

*May God bless you*  
as you read and relax into these words...

### **Acts 9:1-20**

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup>and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup>He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” <sup>5</sup>He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup>But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” <sup>7</sup>The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. <sup>8</sup>Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

<sup>10</sup>Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” He answered, “Here I am, Lord.” <sup>11</sup>The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, <sup>12</sup>and he has seen in a vision[a] a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.”

<sup>13</sup>But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; <sup>14</sup>and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.” <sup>15</sup>But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; <sup>16</sup>I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” <sup>17</sup>So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul[b] and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>18</sup>And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, <sup>19</sup>and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, <sup>20</sup>and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”

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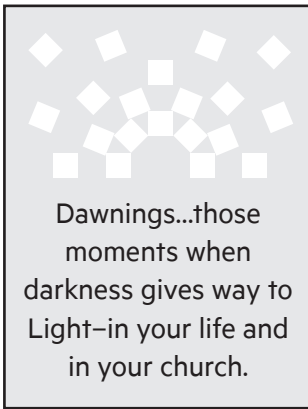
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# Introduction

## WELCOME

**Dawn.** What comes to mind when you hear this word? Take a moment to think and then share with a couple of friends.

Dawn is that miraculous morning moment when darkness gives way to light. Some sleep through it. Some work through it. Others choose to wait in the quiet hints and colorful hues of sunrise to experience it.



There is nothing we can do to make dawn happen. At best, we can be present, orient ourselves toward the horizon, and wait with our eyes wide open. Dawn always illuminates, always surprises!

This miraculous movement from darkness to light is familiar to the human heart as well. Things dawn upon us. We can spend hours, days, even years floundering in some dark cavern of uncertainty. We can study the struggle from every angle...explore our

options until exhausted...all to no avail. And then, with seemingly no effort of our own...in an unexpected moment...darkness gives way to light. Something 'dawns' on us. We did little more than be present, orient ourselves toward the horizon, and wait with our eyes open.

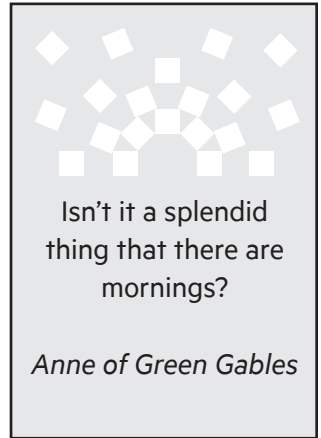
We are not the first to need the fresh light of a new day. The Apostle Paul is somewhat of a hero in the annals of Christian faith. The majority of the New Testament is attributed to Paul. Much of the early church's growth was a result of the relentless ministry of Paul. Paul's ministry, however, was not the product of some well-fashioned program of church development. Paul experienced a dawning in his life, a powerful moment of awakening. This dawning provided a new way of seeing in his life. In fact, Paul experienced multiple dawnings.



Paul never knew what the next day would hold, was never quite sure where the next journey would lead. Paul, however, learned a dependence on God's Spirit and God's people. Each 'next step' was provided with clarity and direction.

The sun rises on a new day in Acts 9. This text will serve as our source of prayer and learning during this retreat. It is a dawn worth exploring and experiencing!

Each new day begins with a dawn. As the the old hymn says, "...morning by morning new mercies I see...great is thy faithfulness..." Whether moving through life as an individual or as a church, we learn to see the dawn as a time of new beginning. Like the dawn of each new day, so our life with God provides new dawns over and over again. We can live a lifetime of fresh new days.



*Dawnings* introduces you to a new way of seeing. The spiritual word for this is "discernment." This is more than decision making! This is seeing as God would have us see through a combination of

**Prayer** – **Preparation** – **Discovery**

There is NO singular way of seeing. While the visions may be similar, the way you and I respond to the leadership of God will be different. *Dawnings* helps us move beyond predicting, planning, inventing and selling to really live into discerning God's leadership.

Your church faces new challenges every day. Congregations want to move faithfully, but sometimes the familiar methods of the past become less and less useful. Perhaps it's time to keep the best of what we have and reach to what is also now available to us. A new orientation will provide new vision to experience the dawn. Instead of a future driven exclusively by steps and goals and objectives, we can learn to be present to God's Spirit, keeping our eyes open for the light that comes.

## **Welcome to retreat. Welcome to Acts 9. Welcome to *Dawnings*.**

This experience is a “Stand Alone” retreat to help you focus on your church and your own spiritual life. Take a moment to reflect...

### **What do you hope “dawns” on you during this retreat?**

Write your hopes for your life and for your church.

### **What new ways of “seeing” do you hope for on this retreat?**

Write your hopes for seeing new sights, dreaming new dreams.

## **The Church Is a Blob!**

After your journey, write down your thoughts...

- 1) What did you experience while moving together?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) What did you feel as a group member while moving together?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) What thoughts do you NOW have about church?

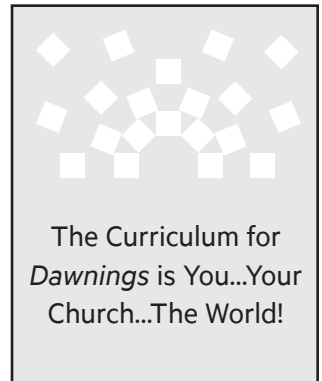
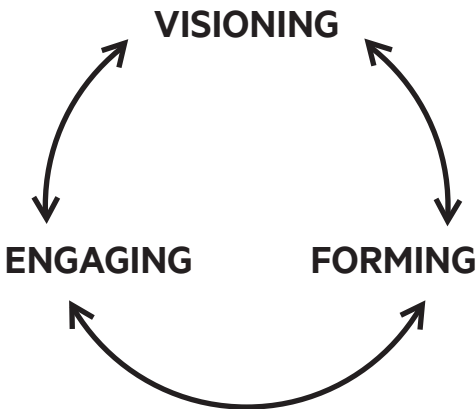
## ***Dawnings*: A Process Not a Program**

*Dawnings* is not a program. It is a process—a way of becoming. As you and your church move toward your next new chapter, *Dawnings* provides a faithful, dynamic way to move.

This process does not offer ‘quick and easy steps’ to a determined end. It is not prescriptive in any way. *Dawnings* is not about return on investment. *Dawnings* IS about return on engagement!

What *Dawnings* offers is an authentic and intimate way of determining and moving in the direction God is leading you.

Here’s what *Dawnings* actually looks like:



*Dawnings* helps you as a church leader...

Clarify Vision - Deepen Formation - Focus Engagement

*Dawnings* is contextual. You discern ways to relate directly to your community and the world.

*Dawnings* is organic. The Holy Spirit will help you pay attention to ideas that will have meaning in your church right now.

*Dawnings* is not THE vision for your church.

*Dawnings* is **A vision** for your church right now!

## THE DAWNINGS PRAYER

Lord, what would you have me to do and to be? AND Lord, what would have me to be and to do?

During this Exploratory Retreat, it is our prayer that you will:

- 1) **Invite** God into a conversation concerning your life and the life of your church.
- 2) **Learn** the elements of the *Dawnings* process.
- 3) **Experience** the dynamics of the *Dawnings* process.
- 4) **Discern** your church's involvement in the *Dawnings* process.

During this retreat you will be encouraged to provide space for God's presence through several classic spiritual practices. These practices will be part of your ongoing journey in knowing and following God's direction. These practices will help you hear the heart of God and your own heart as you seek God's guidance. (See Appendix A for further explanations.)

**Praying the Scriptures:** Read - Listen - Reflect - Relate - Rest

**Colloquy:** Interact – Reflect – Relate

**Journaling:** Reflect – Write – Clarify

**Group Discernment:** Discuss – Consensus - Direction

How do you hope to be transformed by the end of this retreat?

What question do you come praying?

## Session One

# *The Way of Discernment*

**Framing Question: How do we listen TOGETHER  
to the God who is present among us?**

### **Inviting God into the Process**

We begin this session with the sacred reading of Acts 9:1-9.

Now, take a moment to journal a few thoughts...

What ONE WORD jumps out at you as you hear these verses?

Why that word?

**We believe all that we know and all that we will discover.  
Lord, help me to remember...  
that all the truth I know is NOT all the truth.**

# Experiencing the Dynamics of *Dawnings*

How do Prayer, Preparation, and Discovery lead us to discernment?  
How do Vision, Formation, and Engagement lead us to a new Dawn?

## It's Puzzling!


What did you learn about Church in this experience?

Where did you SEE discernment?

What did you learn about YOURSELF in this experience?

## Discernment

Everyone has a discernment process. Every organization has a discernment process. Yet, we've made decisions and set our course in a particular manner for so long, we hardly know why we operate in such a fashion. In Acts 9:1-20, Saul and others no doubt employed every previously successful procedure for making decisions. They trusted what had worked before. They trusted what had worked for others.



Not knowing when  
the dawn will come,  
I open every door.

Emily Dickinson



**Discernment undergirds every element of the *Dawnings* process.**

When the pathways and procedures of our past are no longer fruitful, discernment is the current that carries each of us toward new and exciting destinations.

**Journal:**

How would you describe your decision-making process?

How would you describe your church's decision-making process?

# **The Art of Spiritual Discernment within Community**

(adapted from St. Ignatius discernment model)

**Silent Prayer**

**Holy Indifference to the Outcome**

**Practical Considerations**

**Consider Intuition & Felt Senses**

**Use Your Imagination**

**Make a Choice**

**Take Action & Evaluate**



# Spiritual Discernment

As you muse about the art of spiritual discernment, use the space below to record answers to the following questions:

What is discernment?

As St. Ignatius described the process of personal discernment, what aspect most spoke to you?

How might discernment be practiced in the church today?

How might discernment be integrated into the decision-making process of your church?



# *Reflecting*

*Find a place where you can be alone with God. Read Acts 15. Answer the following questions:*

1. What elements of group discernment do you see in the story?

2. How do you feel about the decision reached by the early church?

# *Reflecting*

continued

3. What do you think verse 28 means with reference to the Holy Spirit?

4. How does your church model this process or differ from this process?

## Session Two

# *Exploring Vision*

**Framing Question: How do we learn to SEE what the God who is present among us is doing?**

### **Inviting God into the Process**

We begin this session with the sacred reading of Acts 9:1-9.

Now, take a moment to journal a few thoughts....

What thoughts emerge as you contemplate the ideas of vision, sight, and blindness?

What truth is God wanting you to SEE today?

What is a question you'd like to ask Paul? Why?

## Understanding the Elements of *Dawnings*

Visioning is the first of Dawning's three movements: Visioning, Formation, and Engagement. While there will seem to be a natural sequence to these movements (and we will address them sequentially), they are just as likely—even more likely—to be experienced concurrently in the life of the individual and the church.

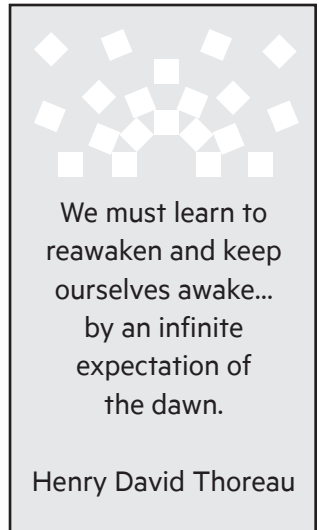
Visioning is openness to hearing and seeing the dreams of God for the church and God's world. Our plans—short range and long range—are often the product of our dreams. We conjure—often with great cognition and compassion—outcomes for the challenges that face our church and world. While these outcomes are not inherently wrong, they may or may not concur with the desires of God.

### **Visioning simply asks the question, “What are God’s dreams for us and for the world?”**

And if we are present, still, and awake, we will find that darkness eventually gives way to light. God's dreams will dawn on us.

Discerning God's dreams in the present is often made easier by reflecting on God's presence and leadership in the past. In biblical literature, the story of the Exodus is told over and over again. When Israel as a nation (or the Israelite as an individual) felt oppressed by the circumstances of life, recalling God's actions in the past enabled them to better see God's hand in the present. Knowing God had been faithful in the past helped establish a foundation of trust for the future.

In our sacred reading of Acts 9, the printed words prompted thoughts concerning vision, sight, and blindness. I wonder in what ways are we blind? How do we receive sight? How must we trust God and others in our blindness?



# Experiencing the Dynamics of *Dawnings*

The Way you look at things...determines what you see!

## Missional Descriptors

- Participating with God in the world.
- Working in God's world with God's Spirit.
- Organizing for mission while doing mission.
- Being Missional is in reaction to Being Institutional. Once we define "missional", the energy of the word is neutralized and the church returns to its institutional normal!
- Being Missional is about empowering people to use their passions on purpose to be the presence of Christ in the world

-----  
(Prosser's Postulate)

## The Vision Matrix (Appendix B)

Now, take a few minutes and take a look at YOUR church.

See what you see...and what you don't see...and what you'd like to see!



What does this say about visioning within your church?

# Looking Back

As a group, divide your church's history into five chapters. Label the major movements of your church's history as you desire – by pastors, by decades, by major events etc.

**Step 1.** Label these movements reflecting what you decided.

**Step 2.** In the space provided underneath each “chapter,” list significant events that occurred in the life of your church during that era: a “shake up” by the Holy Spirit, God’s call for the church to revive, a Jesus moment, a challenge or a conflict.

Chapter One \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Two \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Three \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Four \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Five \_\_\_\_\_





# *Event*

continued

4) How did you feel during this event?

5) How did church feel during this event?

6) Where did you see glimpses of God and grace in this event?

7) How does this event help you to see God NOW?

## **Future Story Reflection**

Find a quiet place where you can be alone with God to think and reflect. On the pages that follow, imagine how your church - 20 years from now - might describe this current period in your church's history.

Now respond...

1) Write down what you hope is happening 20 years from now...

2) Twenty years from now, what are people saying most often...

3) Twenty years from now, what are the 3 most important characteristics of your church?

# *Reflecting*

continued

4. Twenty years from now, what three things are your church known for in your community?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
5. Now SHARE with your group, your reflections.  
Keep track of what is mentioned most often. The things you talk about the most have meaning for you as you discern!

Now, write a prayer for TODAY that God will guide you in the direction you've outlined for 20 years from now and pray this with your group.

**The *Dawnings* Curriculum is You – Your Church – Your Community**

## Session Three

# *Exploring Formation*

**Framing Question: How do we invite the God who is present among us to FORM us together?**

### **A Holy Conversation with Paul of the Scripture**

A colloquy is a prayerful, spiritual conversation between you and a specified, unseen partner.

Read Acts 9:1-20.

Now, write a dialogue of ten exchanges between yourself and Paul. Talk with Paul about his current situation. What is he thinking? What is he saying to you? Where can you relate with Paul's situation? What is Paul saying to advise, comfort, encourage or challenge you?

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL



ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

ME

PAUL

After each person in your small group has completed the colloquy, address the following questions together:

1) What did you discover about Paul?

2) What did you discover about yourself?

3) What did you discover about God?

## **Experiencing the Dynamics of *Dawnings***

### ***Houston, We have a Problem! – Lessons on Leadership!***

- A leader exhibits a “less anxious” presence than others.
- A leader learns from his/her mistakes.
- A leader plans and discovers and knows both are valuable.
- A leader is open to options and others’ opinions.
- A leader is a listener.
- A leader identifies resources within.
- A leader seeks a common vision.
- A leader celebrates the successes of others.
- A leader values everyone as contributors.
- A leader can work beyond the “flight plan!”

**What are some of your thoughts about how a leader is formed?**

## Understanding the Elements of *Dawnings*

God has the unique ability to gather all the ‘stuff’ of our lives and assemble it into a sacred and purposeful whole. The assembling of this ‘stuff’ is only possible when space is created for God to do God’s formative work.



The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship describes Christian spiritual formation as:

- the process of being formed in the image of Christ
- by the gracious working of the Holy Spirit
- in community
- for the transformation of the world.

Formation is the second movement in the *Dawnings* process. Again, we deal with these movements sequentially, but they may all happen concurrently.

Formation has been defined different ways. It might be described as the process of allowing God to shape us—and the stuff of our lives—so that we might be prepared to participate in accomplishing God’s dreams in our lives and in the life of God’s world.

The practices of our faith—prayer, silence, reading, listening, holy conversation, worship, journaling and more—help us create a space where God’s voice can be heard. They are arenas of discovery. They open

us to mystery. They grant God attention and a place in which to work. Otherwise, our lives may be so filled with actions and distractions that spiritual formation and the seeking of God’s will is almost relegated to an afterthought or hobby.

Throughout the retreat and the entire *Dawnings* experience, you will be invited to practice silence, prayer, reading, listening, discussing, journaling, discerning and more, both individually and in community. These practices will create a space for God to do God’s work in you and your church and prepare you to participate in the accomplishment of God’s dreams in the world. They will assist in the orienting of our lives toward the horizon and give us the patience to wait...so that we might recognize God’s dawn when it comes.

## Reflecting Colloquy

Having acquainted yourself with the spiritual practice of colloquy, write a dialogue with Jesus about the present and future of your church? What practices might Jesus encourage in you for forming together towards a new dawn for your church? What might Jesus be seeing and hoping for you and your church? Listen and then respond...

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

JESUS

ME

## Session Four

# *Exploring Engagement*

**Framing Question: How do we join with the God who is present among us to DO on Earth as it is in Heaven?**

### **Inviting God into the Conversation**

In Acts 9:17-20, God speaks to Ananias during a time of prayer, directing Ananias to be and to do.

Breath Prayer: Still yourself and pay attention to your breathing.  
As you inhale...pray, "God, what would you have me to do?"  
As you exhale...pray, "God, what would you have me to be?"

After a few moments, journal some thoughts and then share with your group.

- 1) What are a couple of things God is calling you to do?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) What might God be calling you to be?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) Who is a person or persons to whom God might be calling you?



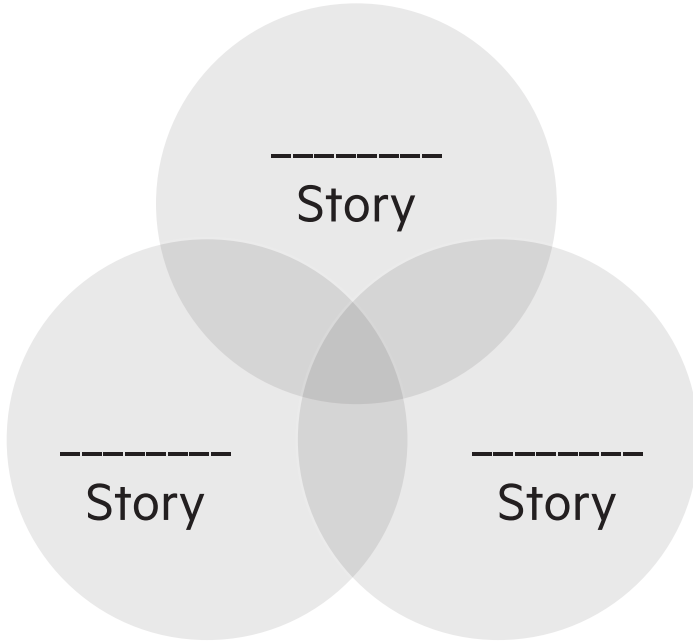
## **It's Time to Change! – The Change Game!**

- 1) How does change feel?
  
- 2) What makes change “feel” hard?
  
- 3) What makes change more comfortable?
  
- 4) What does this say to us about how to affect change in yourself, your community, your world?

## **Nothing NEVER Happens! (John Hendrix)**

- We don't have to do this all by ourselves.
- We need to be comfortable with ourselves.
- We need to be comfortable with others.
- We have more resources than we realize.
- We have to collaborate not compete.
- We have to live into Abundance and Generosity.
- We have assets all around us that we are ignoring.
- We give to build up Dignity! We don't help to hurt!

# *Three Stories of Engaging*



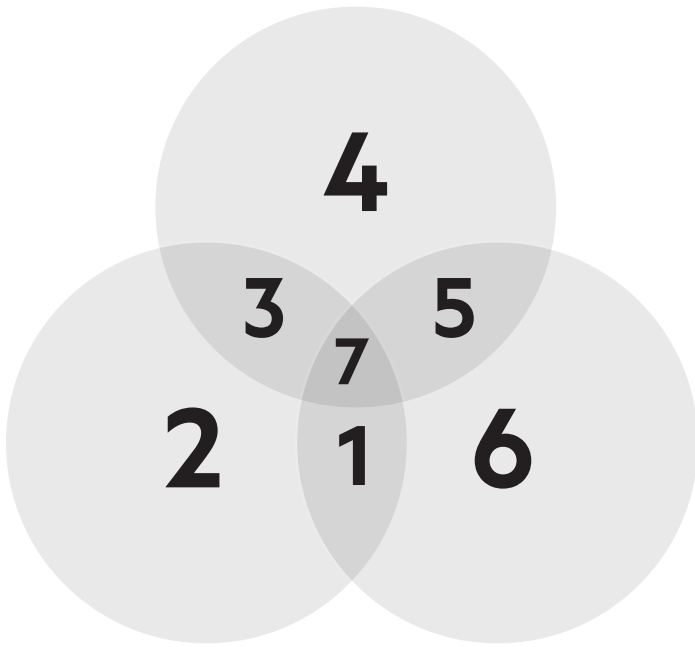
## **Three Postures for Three Stories**

God's Story \_\_\_\_\_

Church's Story \_\_\_\_\_

Community's Story \_\_\_\_\_

# *Three Stories of Engaging*



- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ into the Community
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ to the Stories of the Community
- 3) Read the \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Seek a \_\_\_\_\_ Perspective
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ a New Call
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_ God's Mission and Vision
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_ with God and Community

## **Pre-Retreat Email**

In a pre-retreat email, you were asked to drive home from your church by an alternate route. Journal around these questions...

What did you notice about your community?

Why do you think these things captured your attention?

Share as a group, pay attention to the new awareness that emerges as well as the consistent responses shared.

## **Making Connections – Group Discussion**

How is your church connecting to or engaging with the needs of your community and the world? (List all that apply.)

Who else (agencies, entities, individuals) is engaging in your community - doing good and needed work?

With what community agencies can your church collaborate and support?  
What resources can be shared as you all form together to be the presence of Christ in the world?

# Engagement

After all that has happened in the life of Paul, in verse 20 we see Paul at work in God's world. Paul engages the world with the Gospel!



Engagement is the final movement of the *Dawnings* process. Again, the sequence is only minimally significant. Oftentimes, in the middle of engaging God's world, we gain God's vision. We can quite naturally have formative experiences while living and working in God's world.

At first glance, engagement may seem more focused on God desires the world. The truth, however, is engagement has the capacity to shape us and shape the world.

Engagement is an integral part of discovering who we are to be and what we are to do in God's world.

## HOW? A Shift to Missional Engagement...

- Embrace a more missional lifestyle.
- Deepen your cultural awareness and acceptance.
- Cultivate a beloved community of hospitality.
- Bear witness to Jesus Christ.
- Serve to help not hurt.
- Seek transformational development.
- Broaden your vision of God's vision.
- Expand your use of prayer practices.
- Share generously of your resources.

Take some time to journal and then discuss with your group.

Thinking about your church...

What might you need to START doing?

What might you need to STOP doing?

What might you need to do BETTER?

With whom might you need to PARTNER?

## Global Missions Engagement Opportunities

CBF Global Missions seeks to serve Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission. The mission distinctives offer a common language for a common witness to the God of all. Over 120 field personnel share in 30 countries and covet your prayers and generosity.

**Global Poverty** – 1 in 8 persons suffers hunger, 2.8 billion persons live on less than \$2 a day, and 1 billion persons lack access to clean water. We work for sustainable responses to systems of poverty.

**Global Migration** – There are more than 232 million migrants in the world, including 16.7 million refugees. We extend hope and hospitality to those who are driven from their homes.

**Global Church** – Today, no one tradition or culture can claim to be the center of Christianity. We want to share generously with brothers and sisters in Christ and to engage in God’s mission together.

### Opportunities for your engaging:

- Short Term Mission Work
- Encourager Church
- Mission Collective
- Student.Go
- Offering for Global Missions
- Together for Hope

*See Appendix C for Mission Portfolio Ideas*



## Ministries Engagement Opportunities

CBF Ministries seeks to form together with Christians and churches to share Christ-like, innovative ministries to grow disciples and respond to the rich diversity of God's world.

**Strengthen Congregations** – The local church faces daunting challenges. Strong, healthy churches are the cornerstone of the Fellowship. Healthy churches impact their communities in vital ways.

**Strengthen Leaders** – Pastoral leaders are seeking God-honoring responses to the changing dynamics of the local congregation. Programs, training events, and peer learning opportunities give pastoral leaders vast resources for congregational leadership.

**Strengthen Relationships** – Through all the programs and initiatives, CBF Ministries connects people to people and congregations to congregations so we might both live out and share a Christ Witness in the world.

### Opportunities for your engaging:

- Church Starting
- Peer Learning Groups
- Student.Church
- Advocacy
- Theological Education
- Chaplains & Pastoral Counselors
- Young Baptist Ecosystem
- The *Dawnings* Initiative

## Session Five

# *Embracing the Dawn*

**Framing Question: How might we embrace and FOLLOW the God who is present among us toward new opportunities?**

### **Inviting God into the Conversation**

We begin this session with the sacred reading and sacred seeing of Acts 9:10-20.

Take a moment to journal the thoughts and insights you would like to hold and remember.

## A Journey of Visioning – Forming - Engaging

*Dawnings* is an \_\_\_\_\_ process to help you get  
from \_\_\_\_\_ you are to \_\_\_\_\_ God desires you to be.

*Dawnings* is not the \_\_\_\_\_.

*Dawnings* is A \_\_\_\_\_ for right now!

Spiritual Vision is \_\_\_\_\_ before God –  
not \_\_\_\_\_ by us.

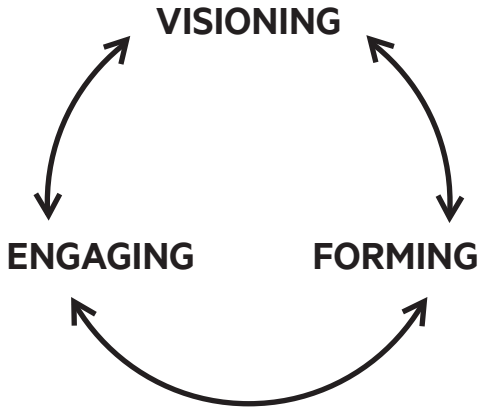
*Dawnings* is:

- Intentional
- Contextual
- Organic
- Dynamic
- Prayer – Preparation – Discovery - Engage  
*rather than*  
Predict – Plan – Invent – Sell

### The Undergirding Principles

- Process not Program
- Collaborative Discernment not Dictated Decisions
- Intentional Leadership not Formulaic Work
- Prayer and Spiritual Conversations not Business Meetings

## The Rhythm



## The *Dawnings* Shift:

Becoming a Mission (of God) Shaped Church  
*rather than*  
Doing a Church Shaped Mission

## Readiness for *Dawnings*

A. Create a holy space at your table. First journal independently and then share the following with your small group:

1) One hope

2) One question

3) One takeaway

B. As you reflect upon this weekend, discuss these questions with your fellow church members:

- How well do I understand the process of *Dawnings*?
- How comfortable am I with the elements of *Dawnings*?
- Where have I experienced a 'growing edge' during this retreat?
- How might the *Dawnings* experience nurture the life of our church?
- What challenges might be faced if we introduced *Dawnings* to our church?
- How willing are we to move forward?
- See also Frequently Asked Questions (Appendix E)

# *The next step*

of this journey is between you and God.

## *Be blessed*

as you discern God's dream for your future,

as you allow God to shape you for that future,

and as you live into that future secure in God's care.

## APPENDIX A

During this retreat you have been encouraged to provide space for God's presence through several classic spiritual disciplines. These disciplines will be part of your ongoing journey in knowing and following God's direction.

### Praying the Scriptures

This sacred reading of scripture is typically engaged in four movements:

**Read** – Read the biblical text aloud. What phrase or word captures your attention? Repeat that word or phrase over and over to yourself for several minutes.

**Reflect** – Meditate upon the selected word or phrase. Ponder why this word or phrase captivated you. What part of your life does it comfort or challenge? What questions does it raise?

**Relate** – Jesus is sitting next to you. Converse with the living Lord about the word or phrase. What do you need to say to him? What do you need to ask him? Allow time to listen. What do you imagine the living Lord is saying in response?

**Rest** – As a baby rests in its mother's arms after nursing, relax and rest in the arms of Christ. You have been fed ...

### Colloquy

An integral part of the Ignatian Exercises, the colloquy is a prayerful and imaginative conversational exchange with a Bible person.

### Journaling

Journaling is your opportunity to privately share with God. These are often written in the form of prayer, poetry, drawings or some other creative expression. Honestly respond to God's voice in your heart.

### Group Discernment

Group discernment is a process of decision-making that relies upon prayerful, open conversation, a respect for time and the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

## APPENDIX B

### VISION MATRIX

**Directions:** Choose ONE response from each line of descriptors that BEST categorizes your congregation. Then total responses in each column.

1. programs	ministries	projects	passions
2. worship	Sunday school	ministry groups	small groups
3. procedures	spiritual leader	task force	collaboration
4. Bible Knowledge	Bible Application	Bible Commands	Spirituality
5. sermons	studies	activities	sharing
6. doing	being	going	servicing
7. The Church	The Lost	The Congregation	The Body
8. The Deacons	The Soul Winners	The Called	The People
9. protect	persevere	preserve	participate
10. rules	results	response	reality
11. Institutional	Supernatural	Participatory	Post-Modern
12. Divinity	Humanity	Community	Congregation
13. permission	persistence	praxis	process
14. trail	highway	sidewalk	journey
15. traditions	destination	involvement	cooperation
16. influencing	seeking	servicing	experiencing
17. pledging	praying	participating	permeating
18. reserved	respite	responsible	reactionary
19. listening	living	action	loving
20. duty	destiny	calling	discerning
21. commitment	compassion	commission	consensus
22. directed	discovering	determined	developing
23. activities	fellowship	missions	everyday life
24. certainty	orthodoxy	intentionality	ambiguity
25. choirs	choruses	hymns	chants

I \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_

E \_\_\_\_\_

M \_\_\_\_\_



# VISION MATRIX EXPLANATION

## an Overview of the Markers

### **Institutional Church**

The Institutional Church tends to put great emphasis on church programs, policies and procedures. Often, the way things have always been done are the way things remain. These often unwritten rules of the congregation are to be followed closely with heavy emphasis given to traditions, committee structures, budgets and organization. The church constitution and bylaws are operational guides. In this congregation, spiritual maturity and transformation tend to come through duty, including following the church “rules” and supporting the institution of the church in all aspects.

### **Seeking Church**

The Seeking Church prioritizes and finds energy in spiritual activity and involvement. Christian community results from church members meeting together for spiritual growth. This is a church heavy on praying and studying, “being may lead to doing.” This congregation wants members to be spiritually mature, though they often don’t know exactly what that looks like or how to achieve it. In this congregation, spiritual activity and transformation tend to come by taking steps to be spiritually mature through more praying and more study.

### **Engaged Church**

The Engaged Church prioritizes ministry activities and involvement. Christian community results from church members doing ministry together. This church is heavy on projects and work, “doing may lead to being.” This congregation wants members to be active in ministry and mission projects without really knowing why, beyond that the Great Commission has called Christians to action. For this church, spiritual maturity and transformation tend to come by engaging in ministry and missions.

### **Emergent Church**

The Emergent Church is a more recent expression of congregational ministries. Built around passion and energy, this church’s members tend to work on collaboration and consensus and support one another, valuing each person’s perspective and path to know God. The church seeks to support every expression of spirituality and service, with great emphasis on inclusion. Diversity is celebrated and viewed as an opportunity for further learning and growth. For this church, spiritual maturity and transformation tend to come from unity of the body and support of one another.

## APPENDIX C

### A Church Mission Portfolio:

**Offerings** – Outside your church - Offering for Global Missions

**Causes** – Support for specific purpose

**Individuals** – Support for specific missionaries (Field Personnel)

**Local Engagement** – Local soup kitchen etc. – basic needs

**Far-off mission trip** – Support for annual church mission trip (youth/travel)

**Service value** – Volunteer hours at \$22.14/hour

For additional information go to: [www.cbf.net/serve/](http://www.cbf.net/serve/)

## APPENDIX D

### Embracing *Dawnings* – Covenant

If you feel God’s Spirit leading you to continue in the *Dawnings* process, it would be helpful for your group to move forward with a covenant. Because your work at this retreat has been both personal and corporate – as will your work moving forward – a group covenant provides stated expectations, shared values, and commitments that individuals may expect from the group. A covenant also helps to avoid unrealistic expectations and unspoken agendas. Group covenants are invaluable for solving unforeseen conflicts and creating a healthy, safe space for groups to do their work.

If the idea of a written covenant is unfamiliar to you, use the following “areas of agreement” to guide your thoughts:

#### **WE AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING VALUES AND PRACTICES:**

- State the purpose of the group
- State expectations regarding group attendance
- State acceptable and unacceptable forms of conversation (no “fixing,” cross-talk, etc.)
- State understandings with regard to confidentiality
- State any expectations regarding spiritual practice and lifestyle (within and outside the group meetings)
- State the posture of the group relative to the church and community at large. (To whom will the group “answer” and with whom will they cooperate?)

When the tenets of your covenant are agreed upon, have group members sign the document and prayerfully commit themselves to this particular work within the greater Body of Christ.

# APPENDIX E

## Frequently Asked Questions

(For more information, refer to [www.cbfdawnings.org](http://www.cbfdawnings.org))

### **Who serves on the Church *Dawnings* Team?**

You want people with a life wish for the church; people with a visionary desire to make a difference in God's kingdom; people who are supportive of the church and staff, who don't have a personal agenda item that they cannot be non-anxious about; people who have a commitment to group discernment. These may or may not be "position leaders" in your church. You want long-standing members and new members and at least one person from every adult generation in the church.

### **How much does it cost to do *Dawnings* in our church?**

The *Dawnings* congregational process is free thanks in part to generous gifts from donors. Presently the grant pays the coach.

### **How do we keep the larger church informed?**

You cannot re-create experiences for your whole church. You can, however, share some of the activities from your congregational design meetings, like praying together or having spiritual conversations with welcoming groups. Invite the church to prayer for and with the team. Make sure you use worship services, church bulletins, the newsletter, and website to communicate clearly.

### **How do we get buy-in on what we discern?**

Building consensus takes communicating excitement and depth of spiritual conviction. Your *Dawnings* team has to use the normal decision making channels for items that require church action. Tell your *Dawnings* stories in compelling ways to involve others and capture their imagination.

**Does the Pastor have to be the leader of the *Dawnings* experience?**

We recommend that the pastor be on the *Dawnings* team. The pastor has to demonstrate excitement and conviction about this process. The pastor will have to be heavily involved in this process for best results.

**Can we have our own *Dawnings* retreat?**

Learning from other congregations on the front end of *Dawnings* is suggested. However, you can host a church retreat. The cost for a church retreat is around \$1,000 plus expenses for the retreat leader.

**What does the *Dawnings* Coach do?**

The *Dawnings* coach walks with your *Dawnings* Team through the congregational design process. The coach provides strategic leadership and insights into the church process. The coach has phone conversations before and after each meeting with the facilitators of the *Dawnings* Team to evaluate the prior meeting and make adjustments and plans to the upcoming meeting.

**What does CBF provide for the Congregational Design process?**

CBF provides the Congregational Design Curriculum. This is a ten session curriculum with an outline for each session and additional material like sample covenants. CBF also provides the coach who will work with the church's *Dawnings* Team facilitators around the curriculum.







160 Clairemont Ave. Suite 500  
Decatur, GA 30030  
O: 770.220.1600  
F: 770.220.1685  
[www.cbf.net](http://www.cbf.net)