

Stacie Gregorio

April 2,2023

SOC147

Dr.Nathaniel Perez

CHURCH VISIT

1. How did the Ministry begin? How did it come to be a place in the community? Does the history of the ministry influenced the goals of the ministry today? What is the mission of the ministry?

The Journey Church plant began in 2001-2002 when the founding pastors moved to New York City to begin a church with the goal of reaching the people of Metro New York City with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The mission is: The Journey exists to give the people of NYC the best opportunity to become fully developing followers of Jesus.

2. What is the faith tradition or denomination of this ministry? What are some aspects of their beliefs that distinguish it from other fake traditions? If a Christian Church, is it Eastern Orthodox,Roman Catholic, or Protestant? If Protestant, what denomination and what makes it different from any other?

The Journey is a non denominational Christian church that falls within the Protestant tradition. The Journey's theology and polity closely aligns with Baptist theology.

3. What role does the ministry play in the community currently? How are people impacted by its presence?

The Journey impacts the community by actively trying to share the gospel of Jesus through outreach events, training members to share their faith and public worship services every Sunday. The Journey Also tries to impact the community by serving “the least of these” through community service to the less fortunate.

4. How do the beliefs of this ministry impact their perspective on the needs of their community? What does their faith say about their responsibility to their community?

The Journey Church takes Matthew 25 seriously and actively tries to serve the less fortunate in the community through community service and to assist those in need in the church through our Benevolence Ministry.

5. What does this faith tradition have to say about economic disparity, race, ethnicity and racial tension, and the exploitation of women? Victimization of sexual minorities? What perspectives derived from the tradition specifically are used to answer these questions?

Genesis 1.27 says we are created in God’s image. So every person has value given by God no matter where at NYCity, economic status, gender or background. Galatians 3.28 Says that we are all one in Christ Jesus - so the church is not a place of division, pride or classification - but one of love and service.

6. What are the student's own faith traditions or lack thereof? What sequences of events led to the student being involved with this tradition or lack of one?

Today I practiced the Christian faith (Protestant). Growing up my mother didn't teach us/me about God, or religion. As far as I can remember religion wasn't a thing in our family, we may have followed Catholic traditions/roots but as for my grandmother/mother we didn't practice religion nor did we go to church or read the Bible. As a child I always felt led to want to go to church (Catholic). My friends in elementary school would leave on Tuesdays/Wednesdays to religious instructions and I can still remember the desire I had to join them. One day, I asked my mother to sign me up for classes but she said no. My desire was so great I remember sneaking in the church lower level during class time. I don't remember how I got there but, I remember I snuck into St. Mary's Star of the Sea Church; to see what the kids were being taught/or doing there. I can laugh now knowing how far I've come to know God and how much I've always loved Him! Miraculously, I was always drawn to God! Fast forward I had a baby at 16 years old and was so lost without any real guidance, no father in the home or positive role models, losing the majority of my family from the ages of 18 to 30, I suffer from PTSD. My daughter's dad was murdered on Christmas Day 1993. He was only 23 years old, leaving my daughter an orphan at the age of two years old, and I a single parent at 18 years old! I was beyond broken; no words to describe other than "fight or flight mode" ,living in the fast lane, going nowhere quickly. I have experienced a life of sex drugs and rock 'n' roll trying to fill the void only God can fill during this time of grief.

After losing my daughters father I lost seven more relatives back to back, my little brother was murdered, two of my uncles, my niece, both grandparents and the man who I thought was my biological father (I just found out “ two yrs ago the man I thought was my dad IS NOT my real dad my mother died 5 years ago and never told me, but that’s another traumatic issue I am struggling with today) ran from the mob leaving me to fend for myself.and my child! My life was in shambles to say the least, all I knew was “LOVE LOSS” - BROKENNESS!

May 26, 2001, after a night of partying, I was in a major car accident and almost died. The accident was so severe, firemen had to cut me out of the vehicle with the jaws of life. My whole right side was mangled, my right arm hanging off, broken pelvic bone, and ribs. I have all the scars to prove it, I was told afterwards “ I can not bear children anymore.” This was a \$1 million case, but the driver only had liability and so I am now permanently disabled I was left with bare minimum from the lawsuit. After receiving a few thousand dollars I was still living in the fast lane , months went by and I went on a shopping spree. Later that night when I got home I felt as if I lost something or did not buy it. I sat on my couch, exhaustingly saying I needed God. I didn't know who to turn to or where to start but I knew I felt a void and was being led to search for God. (I’m very emotional writing this), I started to backtrack what I knew and so I went to a Catholic church and asked to sign up for religious catechism instructions for adults (RCIA). I studied with them for a few months and was kicked out by the nun who stated I am no longer welcome here and I need spiritual guidance- I am thankful to say the least I know that was God’s plan. So I left the Catholic Church and continued to search for God. I studied with Jehovah witnesses, Buddhist going as far as joining the headquarters in Florida, Scientology, the church of Zion in New Jersey who believed in mother God. Until one day at work a pastor walked into

my job and noticed I was reading the Bible and asked what I was reading, he introduced himself and his wife and invited me to their home for Bible study. I told them a little bit about my life/testimony and search for God. They were more than glad to open their doors for me. I learned after a few cell group meetings and church services that they were Baptist Christians and what it means to be at a born-again Baptist. Long story short, Today I can proudly say “I believe in the resurrection of Christ; He died for my sins, he lives in me and I and him as a Baptist Christian once saved always saved my salvation is in Christ and I am redeemed forevermore!

7. What are the basics of the students' beliefs? How do those beliefs inform the students about economic disparity, race, ethnicity, and racial tension? Using their faith traditions, how does the student evaluate the exploitation of women and victimization of sexual minorities?

Growing up in a low income home/neighborhood,I wasn't as fortunate to learn much about economics and so I suffered from lack in many areas. Race was not an issue, poverty affected the majority around me. There was not any real racial tension, to be honest, knowing the people I grew up with and around as family; made life feel as if we were all wealthy. We had enough and we shared everything from food to shelter. Another special memory was when my best friend Hazel's mother brought me to their church. It was a Pentecostal church, and I believe God recognized and saw me then as well! I have not experienced any personal exploitation nor did I ever witness it growing up. To my knowledge/understanding and acceptance, witnessing a man lead the home/church was/is something I agree with and believe this is how God's plans were written. I believe women/people should submit and honor higher authority especially at home/church/government. (Respectfully)

8. Based on the students' faith tradition, what is their responsibility to their community?

My faith tradition/responsibility is to walk in the truth and light as a follower of Christ, be the salt of the earth spreading the love of God, sharing the gospel, help people in need, be a true disciple, evangelize, pay my tithes, do my part in the world/church and my community!