



CHURCH IMPROVEMENT

by **Barbara Vanderkay**

The final result for the November 2012 Holly Days Bazaar, \$15,457, is almost the same as in 2011, \$15,782. This is very gratifying. Many events have not been able to keep up with their recent profits. We must be doing something right.

Now it's time to gear up for the Step-Above-Rummage Sale, to be presented as usual in Fellowship Hall, the Covered Patio, and the Courtyard. Although our new Holly House seems wonderfully commodious, Fellowship Hall is still the best venue for the sale. Even there, we must limit the number of buyers allowed at a time in order to follow the rules of the Fire Department.

On Wednesday, February 6th, from 1 to 3 p.m., a Presale for church members, regular church attendees, church staff members and Holly House workers will provide an easier, uncrowded shopping experience for our loyal supporters. Of course, you are all welcome to come from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, February 7th, Friday, February 8th, and Saturday, February 9th when we are open to the public.

If you would like to be a real part of this great church event, there are many different jobs to be done. Please fill out one of the sign-up sheets included in the Bulletins, remembering to write in your preferred work area or the particular job you would like. There are many spots for those who need to be sedentary.

This year it seems that there are a lot of people who worked loyally for a long time but who are not able to help now for health reasons, or because they have left the area. Please rally around and help to fill in the gaps. You will enjoy getting better acquainted with other church members and friends.

What donations do we want? We can use all kinds and sizes of good, CLEAN clothes, linens, shoes, bedding and draperies, dishes, kitchen wares, small WORKING appliances and electronics, sports equipment and anything for children and babies, except cribs and mattresses. Please bring us things small enough to fit in your car. If you have furniture for us, please plan your delivery with Regie Moorcroft (495-5376), Edna Fisher (637-0624), Shirley Kay (392-2697), or Helen Antal (276-5419). It will be displayed at 39 Gleason Street (the old Holly House) and arrangements for receiving furniture must be pre-planned. Other donations may be brought to Fellowship Hall weekday and Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. through Saturday, February 2nd.

The always popular costume jewelry will be accepted in the office, or may be given to one of the workers. During the sale, the jewelry will be in the Covered Patio with the Antiques and Collectibles area. Our Step-Above-Rummage Sale is justly famous for the quality of our merchandise as well as for our too-good-to-be-true prices.

Come and see!

Ash Wednesday Service

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten Season when we ready ourselves for Easter. Join us on Wednesday, February 13th at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We will read scripture, raise our voices in song, and consider the gift of God's grace.

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From My Heart to Yours

by **Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.**

Senior Pastor



“His purpose was to equip God’s people for the work of serving and building up the body of Christ until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God’s Son. God’s goal is for us to become mature adults – to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ.”

Ephesians 4: 12, 13. (Common English Bible)

God’s goal for us is that we become mature adults, fully grown in the faith. Jesus is the standard – the bench mark that God uses to measure our growth. There is not a hint in the entire Bible that God settles for anything less. God desires that we obtain full maturity in the faith. Here, in Ephesians, God tells us how that is done: service in the church. In other places in the Bible, particularly First Corinthians 12, God tells us that our service must be appropriate to our natural talent and ability. Nonetheless, every follower of Jesus, regardless of economic ability or age, is purposed by God for some work in the church. Simply, that is how we will grow up in spiritual maturity.

The passage from Ephesians tells us something else about God’s purpose. As more and more people accept some responsibility in the church, some act of service, the church is “built up.” The church becomes stronger and more capable of serving the world in Jesus’ Name as church members become “movement participants.” Paid staff in a church is important when employed in strategic positions. But the church is “built up” only when members become part of a movement of “servers.” God’s idea of the church is not the many (church members) being served by the few (church paid staff). God’s idea of the church is that everyone who is a member is serving in some capacity.

Some may ask, what constitutes “strategic positions” for placing someone on the church’s payroll? Ephesians answers that as well, beginning in verse 11 of this same chapter and continuing into the first half of the 12th verse: paid professional staff is not to “do” the work of the church but, rather, “equip” church members for doing the work of the church. Think of professional staff as “coaches” and church members as “team players.” Coaches lead the players to win the game. Coaches don’t play, but few games are won without them. Naturally, coaches need support staff and so do professional church staff. They are paid to “do” administrative work so that coaches can spend time and energy “coaching, equipping, leading.”

This brief Bible Study is the first you will receive this year that calls you to service in the church. Other studies will come in a variety of forms, sermons, blogs and mediations written for the weekly worship bulletin. Along with this ongoing teaching, I will identify specific opportunities for you to consider for service. Not every opportunity will be right for you. Remember, the Bible teaches that your service must be appropriate to your ability. However, it is my expectation that in the course of the year, everyone will find God’s specific call for service. And your “yes” will result in a stronger church. ❖

Church Staff

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Senior Pastor

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Pastor Emeritus

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Associate for Senior Ministries

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The Spire

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If you or a family member are hospitalized, please notify the church office. Even if you give the name of the church upon admission, the hospital will NOT notify us.

DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS

Five Minutes for Christian Formation

by Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.
Senior Pastor

“Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the sake of the world.”

Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis

How is your spiritual life going these days? Another way of asking is do you feel that God is as real and close to you as a spouse, a life partner or close friend? Do you speak with God regularly? Do you spend quiet time alone making an effort to listen to God in the deep places of your heart? Do you confer with God about important decisions by searching the Holy Bible for guidance and wisdom? When was the last time your behavior was directed in a particular manner because you wanted to honor God’s expectations and claim upon you? Each of these questions has to do with Christian formation. More simply, Christian formation is intentional effort in daily practices to provide a satisfactory answer to the above questions.

Another way of asking is, “Am I growing in love for God and people?” Christian formation is all about taking the love quotient, love for God and love for people, to a higher place. Increasing in one’s expressions of love for another always demands intentional thought, effort and practice. Growing love for another is never automatic. The same is true for our love for God. If we intend to love God more tomorrow than we do today it will require that we do something. It does not simply happen. The “do something” is another way of speaking about Christian formation. What are you doing now to love God and people more tomorrow than you do today?

Most agree that as greater effort is made to “love more deeply” there is a return on the investment; we experience greater love coming back. The promise of the Holy Bible is that our investment to love God more deeply (which, again, is Christian formation) results in

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A Basic Approach to Christian Formation & Discipleship



Formative Practices

Formative practices, intentional disciplines or habits, are how we make our home in Christ rather than in the world. They are lifestyle routines that help us keep on track in living into the life and character of Jesus. Five formative practices that are generally considered fundamental are, worship regularly, pray daily, learn and apply God’s Word, participate in a ministry and give financially to the work of the church.



Time in Solitude with God

Christian formation and growth require a growing attentiveness to God, to where God is active in our lives, and to where we are being led. This attentiveness requires that we regularly make a place in our lives to sense God’s presence and to hear God speak. This is a time for reading the Bible, prayer and sitting before God in silence.



Time in Community of a Small Group

The Kingdom of God is relational. A decision to follow Jesus and grow in His likeness cannot be accomplished alone. The Apostle Paul teaches in his letter of Romans that, though Christian discipleship is intensely personal, it is corporate in character (Romans 12: 3-5). Regularly meet with a small group and commit to the study of the Bible using this basic structure: Read, Reflect and Respond. Additionally, small group members hold one another accountable for spiritual growth and offer encouragement.



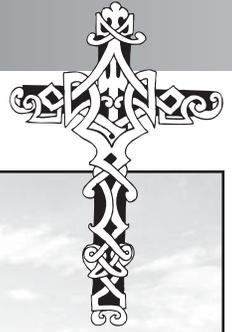
Time Sharing Your Faith with Another

Our daily conversations do more than provide a running narrative of our lives; such conversations shape our experiences, practices and life with one another. Ultimately, Christian formation is the quality of life we live. That life develops positively in the manner of Jesus as we regularly make time to share with another our personal growth in faith.

© W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

Deacons' Corner

by Siena Del Mastro



This month, we are showcasing Rev. Aaron Janklow and how he is progressing in Scotland. I know we all miss him dearly, but rest assured, he is continuing to succeed and to touch others' lives in a foreign country. Aaron wants to let everyone know that he is constantly praying and thinking about everyone here at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach.

Currently in Scotland, Aaron is a Ph.D. student, mastering in Divinity and working at St. Giles' Cathedral. As part of the natural college experience, reading and writing never end, so he is surrounded by the Word of God and others, while writing and gaining information for his thesis and sermons. Aaron is blessed with yet another church community who has welcomed him into their arms. He is truly thankful for all of the wonderful church communities that he has been a part of.

One of Aaron's favorite cities in Scotland is Edinburgh because of its beauty. In his spare time, Aaron enjoys hill-walking and exploring, as well as reading and writing in as many coffee shops as possible. He also helps out with Best Buddies, which is an organization that helps people with Down Syndrome and he has made many friends from volunteering there. Aaron also said that through this organization he's



gotten to practice bowling and said, "I was able to show off my bowling skills."

Very recently, Aaron's brother Dave visited him and Aaron got to act as tour guide and show his brother around Scotland. It was also a unique experience because Dave had never been to the United Kingdom before. Also, since arriving, Aaron has not driven a car. He also has to look every way before crossing the street because the drivers drive on the left instead of the right. He said, "I've never done so much walking in my life."

While continuing his religious education, Aaron also continues to study Spanish. When in Florida, Aaron got to practice the language

with people from Latin America. While in Scotland, he gets to practice with the people from Spain.

Throughout this experience, Aaron has always felt God's presence and continues in his walk of faith with Him. We, as a congregation, miss him, think about how many wonderful things he has done for us and how many wonderful things he is going to do for others in the future. He made a great impact on our congregation in his short time with us. I hope he will continue to feel a part of our church family. Let us go on praying for Aaron while he is in Scotland.



Five Minutes for Christian Formation

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experiencing greater love and intimacy from God. Make no mistake, this is not a negotiated agreement that if we love God more, God loves us more. God's love is constant and equal at all times for all. It's just that a lack of effort on our part equals a lack of recognizing and experiencing God's love. There is another promise of the Bible. The effort made to love God more intentionally not only increases the experience of the reality and love of God. It leads us into a new quality of life; an increase in confidence, trust and security in the storms of life.

Each month this News Magazine of the church, The Spire, provides a basic approach to Christian formation and discipleship. This isn't the only approach to Christian formation but is one found effective by several hundred people in three congregations in the Philadelphia area. This approach asks for intentional activity in four arenas, each equally important: Formative Practices, Time in Solitude with God, Time in Community of a Small Group and Time Sharing Your Faith with Another. Each arena is identified with a simple icon. Develop a weekly rhythm of placing these four arenas beneath you, like four legs of a stool, and you will be lifted into a greater experience of God. ❖

A Blessed Christmas

by Jeanne Heavilin, Mission Outreach Co-Chair

We hope you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and will enjoy a New Year full of wonder!

Once again, your generosity is overwhelming! Thank you for your support for the Logan family, members of our congregation. Conner was in a major automobile accident last spring and suffered a traumatic brain injury. Conner's father has taken a leave of absence from his job as a teacher and coach at Atlantic High School to care for Conner at home. His mother is still working as a teacher, also at Atlantic High School. They had used up their insurance money and were having to cut back on Conner's physical therapy. The more than \$12,000 you contributed on Christmas Eve and the gifts that are still coming in will be a big help to the Logans.

Thank you for the car that was donated to a young mother referred to us by Adopt-A-Family. She had to take Tri-Rail to work and could not find a better paying job due to lack of a car. Her car had broken down and was beyond repair. Now she can look for that job and be better able to provide for her young son.

Thank you for the Christmas dinner that was provided to one of the families in the Family Promise program, making their Holiday a brighter one.

Thank you for touching lives in our community through your gifts!

Holly House Dedication

by Barbara Vanderkay

It seems as if everything is leading up to our Step-Above-Rummage Sale, but church life does go on afterwards. We are happy to extend an invitation to anyone who would like to join us on Sunday, February 24th, immediately following the second worship service, at our gala housewarming at the new Holly House. Please come and enjoy the usual patio punch and cookies with us. The Holly House ladies are very pleased with our long-awaited building. We hope you will approve and be inspired to join us when we meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays to work on crafts for the November bazaar. When you see Bob Teninga there, please remember the many, many hours he has worked on the house for us, and give him a pat on the back. Thank you, Bob!



Habitat for Humanity Workday

By Cliff Roberson

It was so easy!

Our team leader signed us up for a 4-hour Saturday morning shift last November. We checked out the on-line Habitat for Humanity of South Palm Beach County web-site for orientation. 16 of us from First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach showed up at the work-site in Boynton at 8 a.m. We had a short prayer session with the local Pastor thanking God for the beautiful day and for being able to help Rhonda the homeowner. And then, away we went to work raising her roof.

With direction and help from the Habitat of Humanity volunteer leaders, we installed over half of her roof trusses by noon! Teens to retirees found ways to help the progress, each at their own pace. It was wonderful; a great feeling of doing a little bit of God's work in our Community! But it wasn't the work we accomplished, it was Rhonda's tears and hugs that made it great. Hopefully we'll do it again soon and you'll be there with us!



Vacation Bible School – Save the Date!

Save the date (June 10th through June 14th) for this year's Vacation Bible School.



The spectacular piano duo of David Troy Francis and Daniel Weiser will take you on One Wild Ride! With One Magical Piano on **Sunday, February 17th at 4 p.m.** in our Sanctuary. Formidable technique, exquisite musicianship and poetic piano artistry define these stunning, critically acclaimed pianists. This performance offers an exciting, jubilant journey exploring the rhythms and sounds of four hand music by such composers as Beethoven, Barber, and Mozart, along with arrangements of American folk music. The concert is free and a free-will offering will be collected. ❖

Another Opening, Another Show

by Jim Poch,

Associate Director of Music

On Palm Sunday (March 24th), the children of our Sunday Church School will open our 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services with a short Chancel drama, culminating in the waving of palm branches during our opening hymn. Rehearsals will be from 10:30-10:55 a.m. each Sunday morning, starting February 17th. Please let Mr. Poch know NOW if your child will participate! Telephone: 276-6338, ext. 24, or email to: fpcmusicdept@covad.net. ❖

Faith Story

We received the following correspondence in early January.

We thought you would be interested in this story about how one family was served by this church during a very stressful time. We appreciate their willingness to share their experience but we honor their privacy by not sharing their name and any identifying particulars.

“I am in the middle of a very difficult time in my life, and I was in Florida for a vacation with my parents. I have always gone to a Christmas Eve candle light service, and cannot feel ‘in the Christmas spirit’ without it. My (child) also appreciates that this is a part of our family tradition. We don’t have many. (Child’s) father and I have decided to divorce and although we haven’t told (child), it’s clear that there is and will continue to be a lot of change and upheaval.

December 24th was a very hectic day; we arrived at the church very early, as my mother had read the sign wrong. Walking into the church, I turned to her and said, ‘Mom, pray for me, because I’m so ugly inside right now.’ She stopped right there and prayed.

My husband was staying in the Residence Inn right there, and on impulse I called him and told him where we were and invited him to come. He’s NEVER (bold letters are by the author of the letter) attended a Christmas Eve service with me, and rarely goes to church at all. I just knew it would be really important to my (child) if he were there. But I had no expectations. He came.

When the music started, I was transformed. It was so beautiful, I shut my eyes, listened to the music and prayed that God would remove all of the turmoil in my head and bless me with His words and the music.

The entire service was so well planned and I was so blessed with the entire evening. From the greeting at the door to the farewell, I felt so welcome.

We returned to (state outside of Florida) yesterday, and I wanted to make sure that I sent a special Thank you to First Presbyterian of Delray. My Christmas this year was the best that I’ve had in many. I know it is not the building (with the awesome acoustics), the choir (with their amazing voices) or the minister (with his insightful words) but it is God working through all of you. God bless you and thank you for all that you do.” ❖

Celebration of Eternal Life...

Our Deepest Sympathies as a congregation is extended to the family of the following member upon the death of their loved one:

– Peter Dorschel –
January 6, 2013



Remember the Church When Estate Planning

Our Endowment and Remembrance Funds are two excellent opportunities for your giving consideration, be it your will, stocks, or as a named beneficiary of an insurance policy. This financially wise method of stewardship helps ensure the long-term financial stability of the church and provides a planned means for the church to continue its role in the lives of our members and those to whom we reach out, in our community and beyond. For more information on long-term giving, call the church office (276-6338). ❖

December 9, 2012

A Sermon Preached by
The Reverend Dr. W. Douglas Hood, Jr.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DELRAY BEACH

The Community Church by the Sea

33 Gleason Street Delray Beach, FL 33483
administrator@firstdelray.com Phone: 561-276-6338 Fax: 561-272-8505

This Incomplete Christmas

Matthew 2:13-18

Will You Pray With Me?
Gracious and loving God, we pray that the Holy Spirit will move in such a way that our minds may be opened to hear something fresh this morning and our hearts receptive to a deeper obedience to Your Word. This we ask in the certain Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

As I studied this lesson from Matthew, I was reminded of a story I once read of a surgeon who operated on a young woman to remove a tumor. The procedure required that a facial nerve be cut. The result was the loss of muscle support on one side of her mouth. This young woman's beautiful smile now drooped on that side as if she suffered from palsy.

When her young husband was permitted to see her, he studied her condition, smiled and said, "It's kind of cute." As he bent to kiss her he twisted his lips to accommodate hers to show that their kiss still works. Here was a husband who had

eyes to see goodness and joy in the midst of loss.

Do you have eyes to see truth, goodness, hope and joy, particularly in the midst of loss?

Matthew's Gospel presents three dramatic stories in succession: the star over Bethlehem, the death of children and the weeping of Rachel, and heaven breaking open and the voice of God thundering down, "This is My Son." The tragedy, the death of children and the tears of Rachel is framed between hope and certainty. The star represents the hope that God will do something and God's voice announces with certainty that God has done something.

This year Christmas comes to many who live in the middle story – the loss, the weeping and fear that there is little left. Some have lost loved ones and there is an empty chair at the holiday table. Some fear the loss of someone dear who now

suffers a serious illness. Others are estranged from family or friends and don't know how to bring healing. And the lonely, some are simply lonely. Theirs will be an incomplete Christmas. Jingle Bells will not console them.

Margaret Huffman writes of a young woman who suffered a difficult year. In just one calendar year she suffers a serious illness, the loss of a remaining parent and the end of a relationship. She could not even imagine celebrating Christmas. Early in December she received a brightly wrapped package from a friend. The gift was a tiny gold Christmas tree lapel pin. The card read, "Wishing you even a little Christmas."

That woman later said to someone that the gift was all the Christmas she could celebrate that year. But she now realized that a little Christmas is better than no Christmas.

Friends, there is something deeply profound in that. A little Christmas is better than no Christmas. A little celebration is better than no celebration. A little hope is better than no hope. Faith the size of a mustard seed is better than no faith. And our scriptures

teach that from something small, something large can grow.

In a year that some have experienced loss, Matthew points back to the star and forward to God's voice. The star doesn't eliminate all loss. The star doesn't eliminate all tragedy. The star and voice does make loss more bearable. The star and voice announces that loss is not the final word in our lives, that the goodness of God is still present and there is hope for our tomorrow.

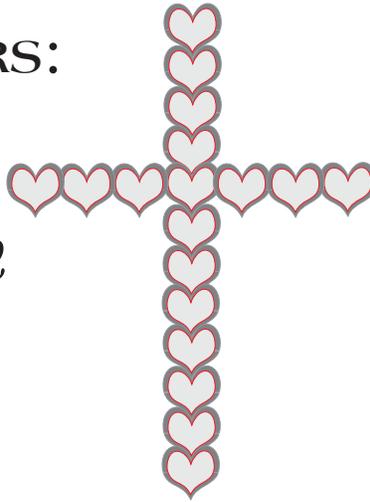
Friends, this Christmas I invite you to look back to the star and forward to the voice. Look, in all things, we live in the embrace of God.

Glória in excélsis Deo, Glory to God in the highest. Amen.

STEPHEN MINISTERS:

by David Fellows

“Valentine from God”



I Am There

Do you need Me?

I am there.

*You cannot see Me, yet I am the light you see by.
You cannot hear Me, yet I speak through your voice.
You cannot feel Me, yet I am the power at work
in your hands.*

*I am at work, though you do not understand My ways.
I am at work, though you do not understand My works.
I am not strange visions. I am not mysteries.*

*Only in absolute stillness, beyond self,
can you know Me
As I AM, and then but as a feeling and a faith.*

*Yet I am here. Yet I hear. Yet I answer.
When you need Me, I am there.
Even if you deny Me, I am there.
Even when you feel most alone, I am there.
Even in your fears, I am there.
Even in your pain, I am there.*

*I am there when you pray and when you do not pray.
I am in you, and you are in Me.*

*Only in your mind can you feel separate from Me,
For only in your mind are the mists of “yours” and
“mine”.*

*Yet only with your mind can you know Me
and experience Me.*

*Empty your heart of empty fears.
When you get yourself out of the way, I am there.
You can of yourself do nothing, but I can do all.
And I AM in all.*

*Though you may not see the good, good is there, for I
am there.*

I am there because I have to be, because I AM.

*Only in Me does the world have meaning;
Only out of Me does the world take form;
Only because of Me does the world go forward.
I am the law on which the movement of the stars
And the growth of living cells are founded.*

*I am the love that is the law’s fulfilling. I am assur-
ance.*

*I am peace. I am oneness. I am the law that you can
live by.*

*I am the love that you can cling to. I am your assur-
ance.*

I am your peace. I am ONE with you. I am.

*Though you fail to find Me, I do not fail you.
Though your faith in Me is unsure, My faith in you
never wavers,*

Because I know you, because I love you.

Beloved, I AM there.

(James Dillet Freeman)

This poem was given to Col. James B. Irwin by his mother shortly before his Apollo 15 mission in 1971. He took it with him and left a microfilm copy of it on the moon.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH OF DELRAY BEACH

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The Community Church by the Sea

33 Gleason Street, Delray Beach, Florida 33483

This newsletter is available online at www.firstdelray.com. If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email Nancy Fine at nancyfine@covad.net.

Sunday Morning Worship Services

9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

Please join us on Sunday mornings as we worship the Living God together.

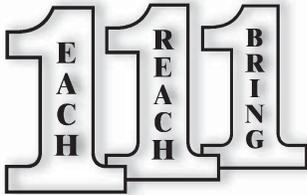
Church School

Adult Church School 10 a.m.

Education Hour Sunday School 10 a.m.

Worship Hour Sunday School 11 a.m.

Youth Fellowship 5 p.m.



This is our ministry of connecting people with Jesus Christ and the church. Jesus' priority for the church is to share the Christian faith in such a way that people place their trust in Jesus and participate with Jesus in His ongoing work through the local church.



We were never intended to remain the same. Through this ministry, we engage people in intentional processes for growing in the character of Jesus.



Implanted deep within the nature of men and women is the hunger to serve others. Through this ministry, we engage people in a process that helps them discover, develop and deploy their God given gifts for service to Jesus in the local church and community.



One of the distinctive teachings of the Christian faith is that we are called to live in community. In community, we support, encourage, hold accountable and care for one another so that no one has to make the journey of life alone.