



FELLOWSHIP OF THE
BURNING HEART
a community expression of **Renovaré**

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*, its beliefs, and its values?

Please reference Who We Are, Core Beliefs, and Core Values.

What is *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*'s connection with the local church?

Fellowship of the Burning Heart seeks to meet an unmet need in Renovaré. We do not intend to be a substitute for the local church. People often express the depth of companionship and community they experience in Renovaré is not readily accessible in their current church context. The sense of support and encouragement which spiritual companions or a community offers may be absent for a number of reasons. In addressing the self-identified needs of the Renovaré constituency, *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* seeks to serve and renew the local church as the effects trickle down to the local church of each participant.

What is *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*'s relationship to Renovaré?

Fellowship of the Burning Heart is Renovaré. *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* provides the opportunity for people in Renovaré to experience the community of the with-God life of the Trinity and with each other in a long-term community expression.

Why is Renovaré creating the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*?

As part of the Renovaré history, calling, and efforts to renew the church, *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* seeks to support people who long to experience the with-God life. A growing number of people in Renovaré express a sense of longing and a desire for a shared community of companions that encourages experience in the with-God life. They seek other Christ followers who have a similar vision of life in the Kingdom of God. The *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* will connect, guide, and encourage participants to cooperate with, and experience the Kingdom of God, wherever they live out life within their local context of relationships, local church and community. "God's calls to *caritas* [love] and *communitas* [community] exist interdependently."¹ The potential impact when this need for community is met can be powerfully transformational, reaching deep into relationships and culture.

Is *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* an order?

Yes, in the sense that an order is a group of people who, with some level of commitment, based on belief, devotion, and practice, join with one another to live these out in daily life.

¹ Susan Phillips, *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2008), 243.



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Who is *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* intended for?

The *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* is for the people of Renovaré and their friends, persons who have a longing for God, spiritual companions, and community in the context of the with-God life.

Why are retreats central to *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*?

The word *retreat*—it's a good word! Why a retreat? We need it—people need it. There is time to decompress, space for reflection. It's a place to bond with God and each other, clarify one's vision, and strengthening intentions. Retreats allow you to truly be present to one another.

Coming together as a community once a year is valuable for relationships to develop, to live through the ups and downs of life – it is a way to do the with-God life...together with people. Same place, same people, same time of year. Building trust and connection are more conducive to happening while disconnected from day-to-day life. One-day gatherings lack this component.

What happens at the retreats?

The retreat begins with dinner on Thursday evening. In *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* Gathering Retreats, the founding core documents will be read. This practice will serve as a sort of liturgy, a reminder of who God is and who we are. Thursday evening will launch with the “laying of the altar” exercise (which will be explained), the liturgy of the core documents, signing of the Renovaré covenant, worship and fellowship.

Friday and Saturday include worship, prayer, communion, guided solitude, teaching/sharing on themes to be explored during the year, group spiritual practices, group companioning/spiritual direction, silence and solitude, and small group sessions. Enjoying nature, each other, play and laughter are intentional retreat practices as well. On Sunday, the retreat ends with debriefing, a launch, and worship on Sunday morning; some locations (like the Leadership Pilot in Cincinnati) will include lunch on Sunday.

Why do we not use wine for communion or serve alcohol at the meals?

In the creation of a safe and welcoming environment for all, we are intent on being respectful of the history and brokenness of each person in our community (see value # 4). Being alcohol free is one way we choose to live out this value.



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What happens at the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* small group online/in person?

The small group is a confidential, safe place, to know and be known, to pray for one another, to share life, encourage, and support one another. Small groups will form and meet at the retreat. These same groups will plan and commit to meet for 60-90 minutes monthly (depending on the size of the group), either in person (if practical), or online with video throughout the year. The format for the pilot small groups will be modeled and taught at the retreat; the Leadership Team will provide support and any needed resources.

What is my time commitment to be a part of *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*?

- Attend the annual retreat, held generally at the same time of year and in the same place. (The pilot is a one-year commitment including the beginning and ending retreat.)
- Participate in a monthly small group.
- Commit to live out a personal rule of life based on the Renovaré covenant.
- Seek to live the Core Beliefs and Values of *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*.

What is my role in the gathering?

Each individual brings a unique contribution of Christ's indwelling presence that matters and makes a difference to the community's good. You matter. You bring your heart and your gifting. Your role in community is reflected in the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* values entailing an active and honest attention to your vulnerability and availability to the Holy Spirit in you.

- Bring yourself, and contribute to making the group a safe place, confident that we belong to Christ and so we belong to each other.
- Be present, attentive, and authentic, and seek to live in the values of the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*.
- Nurture and pursue your relationship with God. Trust yourself and others in your community to God who is present and at work in us and around us.
- Honor the sacredness, mystery, individuality and pace of your own and each one's unique experiences with God.
- Resist image management, fixing, resolving, or correcting of others.
- Celebrate uniqueness and differences in each other's experience, prayer and understanding; these are gifts of God's goodness.
- Avoid the temptation to compare, judge, or envy.
- Confidentially hold all that is shared within your fellowship.
- Commit to regular attendance and to the process of the fellowship, to pray for one another when together and when apart, and to timely resolutions of potential conflict.
- Trust the Holy Spirit to guide deepening intimacy with God through your fellowship.



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Why a pilot?

A pilot provides participants an opportunity to offer feedback and speak into the development and quality of a new idea before the opportunity is launched to a broader audience.

What happens after a pilot?

Participants of each pilot will be released from their commitment to *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* at the close of the second retreat. At that time each person in the local Colorado pilot group will be given opportunity to recommit to an ongoing Colorado chapter of *Fellowship of the Burning Heart*. The leadership pilot participants will be invited into a mutual discernment process to launch a *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* chapter in their city with the support of the *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* leadership team.

What does the pilot cost cover?

The total cost to participate in the pilot is \$1200 for both retreats. The fee covers all room and board at a retreat center for three nights, programming costs, as well as monthly facilitation and support. The first \$600 is due by June 30, 2018 to meet financial commitments with the retreat centers. The second \$600 is due by June 30, 2019 or paid via monthly installments which begin at latest after first retreat.

Will there be an ongoing cost after the pilot?

After the one-year pilot, those who continue in a *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* local chapter will pay ongoing membership fees to their chapter, which cover each year's retreat, support, and operating costs.

May I bring my spouse?

Spouses are welcome to apply and submit an application. If both spouses apply please indicate this on each of your applications. There may be a slight room discount for the annual retreat if you share a room.

What is the application process?

Complete and submit the online application with a \$25 processing fee. The next step is a video meeting with someone from the leadership team. This is a relaxed and relational way to engage in dialogue and to assist the mutual discernment process.



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Where did the name *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* come from?

The disciples on the road to Emmaus experienced a burning heart in the presence of Jesus (Luke 24:32). Jesus' presence is in his Church today, in each of his followers.

The *Renovaré Fellowship of the Burning Heart* offers a context for individual burning hearts to come together within a covenant community apart from each person's ordinary context to fan into flames their burning hearts and carry that love back to their context in each person's home, relationships, local church congregation, and community. This is the with-God Life each person is created for and invited to live and enjoy in the intimacy of relationship, with the power of God's grace at work in and through each person as members of the body of Christ. *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* serves the local church, fanning the flame of the love of God, igniting love for the world. After Dallas Willard's death, correspondence was found between Dallas and Richard Foster signed with the salutation, "In the fellowship of the burning heart."

What is a "Rule of Life"?

The idea of a rule of life dates back to antiquity. Communities and individuals who seek to live out a purpose in life make intentional decisions about how life is lived. Dallas Willard proposed that a rule of life for Christians serves to enthrall the mind with God and acquire habits for goodness. An apprentice of Jesus engages in intentional practices to "dearly love and constantly delight in the heavenly Father," with additional practices undertaken to remove one's "automatic responses against the Kingdom of God."² *Fellowship of the Burning Heart* participants build an individual rule of life with these goals in mind and centered on the shared *Renovaré* Covenant.

Comments or questions can be directed to *Renovaré* at Judy@renovare.org.

² Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Recovering Our Hidden Life In God*, (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1998), 321-322.