



When Words Aren't Enough: The Pilgrimage Process

Nancy McKay has been sharing techniques for healing with members of FCCB and beyond for a number of years now. She and other members of the Healing Team will be demonstrating and teaching the Pilgrimage Process on the four Sundays in March.

Nancy learned the Pilgrimage Process almost by accident, perhaps by providence. This is how she tells the story:

“Several years ago I received a phone call from a student at the Chaplaincy Institute for the Arts and Interfaith Ministries, where



I was teaching a class. She said a friend of a friend was at Alta Bates and wanting laying on of hands and prayer. Would I go? I replied that I would go if she did also. We discovered a lovely and very sick woman.

She had been traveling and suffered a relapse in her cancer. She had experienced prayer and touch in Florida where she lived. Now she wanted some in California.

“We did pray with her and touched her ever so gently. She told me about the process she had received in the Tampa area and had the phone number with her. I was intrigued and felt a real pull to find out more.

I phoned and liked what I heard from the founder of the process. Tanya Beck is an Episcopal priest and developed this sequence, with a laywoman, Marilyn Gaitlin. To

make a long story short, I flew to Tampa for a training, stayed a week and a half, and found another piece of my call to ministry.”

The process is fairly simple and direct, and carried out in an atmosphere of loving support and re-

spect. Normally two healing partners do the process with an individual wishing to receive it. Another healing team partner leads the sequence of prayer and touch verbally.

The sequence takes about 20 minutes. Other than removing shoes, the “receiver” remains fully clothed. The touch is respectful and safe. The entire process is considered to be prayer. If an area of the body is painful, it is not touched. If someone does not want a part of the body to be touched, it is not.

How does this all work? According to Nancy, they both know and don't know: “Love is what heals and the love remains with the person receiving. We do not know how long the work of love continues; we trust it will last long enough. We have experienced shifts in body and in emotions and in one's spirit. God knows what to address. After receiving this healing process, one person said, ‘I wish everyone could feel so loved.’”

She also makes it clear that this is a “healing” process rather than one that promises a

**First Congregational
Church of Berkeley
United Church of Christ**

**2345 Channing Way
Berkeley CA 94704
510/848-3696**

info@fccb.org

www.fccb.org

One in a series of longer articles illuminating the life of FCCB. These stories will be attached to the email version of the Carillon, added to www.fccb.org, and will be available in print at the church.

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“cure.” There are many aspects to our experience of wellbeing. When we are ailing for whatever reason, we can still find comfort, strength, support, and perhaps even surrender. Any and all of these can be good for us in a variety of ways, sometimes quite profoundly.

The reasons for seeking out this healing process are varied, Nancy says. “People come because they are curious or hopeful. Sometimes hope is mixed with doubt. A physical ailment or sensation may bring them. An emotional situation or a spiritual dilemma may bring them. The team trusts God to sort it all out.”

Nancy is convinced that the process can have a powerful effect, and she and other members of the team are excited about sharing what they have learned with others. She adds, “This truly is a ministry of love made visible and sensible. The Healing Team always prays to be used by God, to be the instrument of God’s love and healing.”

The current Healing Team includes Charlotte Gustafson, Annis Kukulan, Kathy Helliesen, Carolyn Martin, Chinh Nguyen, John Wadman, Sufi Riley, Jan Stecher, Rebecca Suzanne, Cheryl Scott, and Andrew Metcalfe.

The Pilgrimage Process will be demonstrated on four Sundays in March at 11:30 a.m. in the Durant House Meditation Room. There will be opportunities to both receive and prayerfully observe.