

ONE DAY/MINI CHRISTIAN ASHRAM

The One Day or Mini Christian Ashram can become a revitalizing, transforming instrument of grace within the church and community. It may be used as a means of renewing the spiritual vigor within the local church, or an inter-church project used to deepen the spiritual life of an entire community.

The leadership of the One Day/Mini Christian Ashram can be chaired by a local pastor or designated layperson, with the Ashram held in his or her church. Although having a prominent person speak may attract people, such persons are not always available and by no means necessary. Local men or women can give an effective message. The value of the Ashram is in concentrating on one's needs and in sharing with one another. The Ashram encourages everyone to take part.

The same procedures incorporated in the regular Christian Ashram of about six days, or the "Little Ashram" lasting perhaps two days, are utilized in the One Day/Mini Christian Ashram. The following information may serve as a guide for you:

SUGGESTED DAY(S) PROGRAM

Friday Evening (If desirable)

5:30 p.m.	Gathering (Registration)
6:00 p.m.	Meal Together
6:30 p.m.	Music
7:00 p.m.	Open Heart Session
7:40 p.m.	Evangelist Speaks

Saturday

9:00 a.m.	Gathering (Registration)
9:30 a.m.	Music
9:45 a.m.	Pastor (leader) Welcome/Open Heart
10:15 a.m.	Bible Study or Evangelist
11:15 a.m.	Small Groups
12:00 noon	Lunch
12:45 p.m.	Evangelist
1:30 p.m.	Small Groups - prayer and discussion
2:15 p.m.	Bible Study or Evangelist
3:00 p.m.	Consecration and Prayer
3:15 p.m.	Overflowing Heart Session
4:00 p.m.	Communion and Benediction

The Open Heart

This talk, by the leader, should outline the meaning of the Christian Ashram and how to prepare oneself to receive inspiration from it. The talk could include some of the following:

- (1) The Christian Ashram is *a way* to The Way. As such it is unique, something that has been formed and crystallized in the great heart and ministry of E. Stanley Jones in fellowship with countless Christians throughout the world.
- (2) It is *a way* and such does not claim exclusiveness. It does not seek to compare itself with other movements. It has much in common with other ways to The Way, with some features that are distinct which make it an Ashram.
- (3) Two Guiding Principles:
 - a. The affirmation that the Word was made flesh in Jesus Christ. We have but one creed: "JESUS IS LORD!"
 - b. The Commitment that the Word be made flesh in the group. Together, we experience the universal Kingdom of God among us.
- (4) We accept the fact that the Kingdom of Love could invade us. To that end we let down the superficial barriers that separate us, barriers of race,

class, nationality, denomination, between manual laborers and non-manual laborers, teacher and the taught, young and old. In the period of the Open Heart, we let down the barriers within.

In the Hour of the Open Heart, we suddenly will realize that we are a fellowship of needy people and once this awareness comes, then Divine Love will flow. The Christian Ashram is a “healing of love” but it is only to the depth of our expressed need that the healing takes place.

Our focus in the Open Heart is on our own needs, not on the needs of others. We are urged to be willing to open our hearts to confront wrong attitudes, resentments, jealousies, critical spirit, worry, self-centeredness, unforgiving nature, spiritual laziness, materialism, lack of love for God and others, lack of discipline, lack of trust, unsundered self, etc.

Sufficient time is then given to silent prayer, asking God to give the words to say, not to express trivial, superficial needs, but to express the real needs of the day. The leader then goes on with the Hour of the Open Heart, expressing his or her own need first, others follow.

The Overflowing Heart

The overflowing heart is a highlight of the Ashram. It is a time, at the close of the day, given to the participants to express the joys and blessings they have experienced. Again, no one is asked to speak except voluntarily. It is not a time to praise the Ashram or the speakers, but a time to lay our tributes of gratitude at the feet of Christ.

These one-day meetings have proven to be spiritual boons in many countries of the world. In South America, a Presbyterian minister came to a One Day Ashram held in a little Methodist church, feeling that the world was against him. During the Hour of the Overflowing Heart, he expressed that during the day he had come to see that the only real problem he had was his own unsundered self, and that day he had made the great transformation and now was filled with joy and the enthusiasm of the Holy Spirit.

The One Day/Mini Ashram can, for many, be the most important day of their lives. For further details, contact the UCA offices as listed below.

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