

## **SENT Seminar Was a Map When I Was Lost**

Amber Mattingly, 2020 SENT Seminar Attendee  
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Hi! My name is Amber Mattingly and I live in Kingwood, Texas. I've just completed my Doctor of Ministry degree at Claremont School of Theology, where I began teaching [Satsang Yoga](#), a practice for people from any or no religious background that offers safe space for conversations about the Divine. We offer Satsang and other yoga classes through my organization, Sacred Flow Yoga. I am married to Chad Mattingly and have a 16-year-old son who loves animals and 14-year-old daughter who sings like an angel.

On the opening day of the SENT Seminar, I felt inspired by the words of General Minister and President, [Terri Hord Owens](#): "Jesus is always making pivots...moving from familiar bondage to foreign freedom."

As I reflected on my experience during SENT Seminar, I found myself thinking about a bike ride I took recently with my daughter in our community. On this particular day, I asked her if she wanted to take a familiar path or if she wanted to get lost with me! She felt inspired to go crazy and get lost, winding and wandering down unfamiliar paths. Two hours into the bike ride, we realized we were lost. It was hot and sunny outside, we had water, but there were some essentials that we left home without. We didn't think ahead about some of the important tools we needed to safely get lost! We did not have a cell phone to call for help or to look at a map. We did not have sunscreen. We did not have any food.

Sometimes, this is how I feel navigating ministry in the church and in a social enterprise, especially during the past seven months of the pandemic. Bishop Flunder talked about this being a struggle like giving birth. She said new life is messy, stinky, and scary when you are between breathing fluid and breathing air. For me, the leaders at the SENT Seminar gave me all the essential tools I needed before heading out into "foreign freedom." The speakers gave inspiration for the journey.

The evening practices were like water for the soul. The speakers offered us guidance like a map to help us navigate through knowing ourselves, in defining our values, and leading us to find our vision in our sacred text. Seminars on fundraising and

marketing through social media felt like sustenance, the bread and butter basic to survival.

What I took away from attending the SENT Seminar is that we do not have to leave “familiar bondage” and enter “foreign freedom” alone and ill-equipped. The SENT Seminar thoughtfully provided all that we need to be successful in our journey and confident that the God of Love is with us every step of the way.

*Rev. Dr. Amber Mattingly is the founder and owner of Sacred Flow, an online yoga community and blog. Check out her blog, [ambermattinglylivefree.com](http://ambermattinglylivefree.com) for free meditations, yoga videos, and to hear about her next creative project.*

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