

Callings

in Church of the Saviour

Vol 9, Issue 3 • Fall 2020

CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS MENTOR AND PARTNER, FRIEND AND BROTHER



Congressman John Lewis

Before, during, and after our travels, we wrestled with the challenges facing a nation founded on one document that declared all men created equal and endowed by their creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness...and another that counted its enslaved population as only three-fifths men accorded none of those rights.

By Rev. Doug Tanner

This past March, my wife Kathy and I stood on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama with Congressman John Lewis and an impressive delegation of his congressional colleagues. As we huddled around John that Sunday morning, we knew it could be a last opportunity to hear him speak in that revered setting.

"On this bridge, some of us gave a little blood to help redeem the soul of America. Our country is a better country. We are a better people. But we have still a distance to travel, to go before we get there. I want to thank each and every one of you for being here. For not giving up, for not giving in, for keeping the faith, for keeping your eyes on the prize. You're wonderful; you're beautiful; you all look so good! ... We have a lot of work to do. So don't get weary; keep the faith!"

Today we watched John cross that bridge one last time as the horse-drawn carriage bore his flag-draped casket on its way to Montgomery to lie in state in Alabama's Capitol. We couldn't be there in person, but we couldn't have been more there in spirit.

Twenty-three years ago, in March 1997, Congressmen John Lewis (D-GA) and Amo Houghton (R-NY) agreed to co-chair the Board of Directors of The Faith & Politics Institute, an entity I had helped found some years earlier. From deeply different backgrounds and opposite sides of the aisle, John Lewis and Amo Houghton were a dream team. As the Institute's chief executive, I worked with them for seven rich and formative years, and as its senior adviser for another decade. We remained close until their respective passings—Amo's in early March of this year, John's on July 17. My experiences with each were amazingly graced, and many of the times we shared together became hallowed.

Together we created the first Congressional Civil Rights Pilgrimage to Alabama, where we walked through history in Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma with John. Kathy deserves credit for the idea; it leapt from her mind when John told us he went to Selma every year for a reunion with participants in the march he led across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965. Alabama state troopers beat John unconscious and cracked his skull on the day that became known as Bloody Sunday.

The pilgrimage grew every year, with John and his colleagues in the civil rights movement sharing stories and songs that shaped a momentous chapter in our nation's reckoning with racial injustice. In 2003, it led us to South Africa to consider and explore that land's journey toward truth and reconciliation. Before, during, and after our travels, we wrestled with the challenges facing a nation founded on one document that declared all men created equal and endowed by their creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness...and another that counted its enslaved population as only three-

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Church of the Saviour

*(In Memo line put
"Callings")*

1640 Columbia Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20009

There is a quiet transition going on within Church of the Saviour. In almost every community and ministry, younger people are stepping forward to take up the reins of leadership as we shift to more presence on Zoom for worship and mission group meetings. Change is in the air.

Contributions for CALLINGS and InwardOutward are up, and just this week, I got a notice from our internet provider that the number of people signed up for the weekly gospel reflection and weekday meditation quotes had grown into a new tier—above 5,600. As someone who never wanted extra items in my email inbox, it was a surprising notification to get. Matthias Everhope, our CoS webmaster, tells me we also have a growing number of followers on Facebook and Twitter as well.

Even though many activities have been stalled during the pandemic, Potter's House is now open for take-out and book browsing, guided by their new director, Leigh Tivol. At Festival Center, classes at the School for Liberation are beginning again in October (see schedule on page 7.)

In the 8th Day Community, there is a new slate of leaders headed by Kip Dooley, who was drawn to Church of the Saviour by reading InwardOutward online for six years before he arrived at Church of the Saviour, including the time he spent at Wesley Seminary. Among the InwardOutward writers, Jim Marsh (Bread of Life) and Erica Lloyd (Seekers) represent a younger generation of writers who were shaped by Church of the Saviour and seasoned by years of sacrificial work in the world. They bring a fresh perspective and rooted faith to our common life.

One of the things that always struck me about Gordon Cosby was his insistence on not knowing what the future would bring. He considered it a basic element of trust in the Holy Spirit. And yet, the generation of young people who were called into servant leadership by Gordon's preaching and teaching actually did create a range of stable organizations to address the issues of poverty and injustice here in Washington, D.C. I'm thinking here of Christ House, Festival Center, FLOC (For Love of Children), Joseph's House, Jubilee Housing, Jubilee Jobs, Manna, Sarah's Circle and the Sitar Arts Center among others. Each of those organizations has a website where you can check on their current activities.

From the beginning, Gordon urged those organizations to incorporate as separate non-profits so they could receive funds from city and federal sources as well as private contributions. While many of those organizations started with a group of dedicated but inexperienced dreamers, they have become working models for a different way of addressing systemic problems that are become more visible in our political life right now.

Given the warnings about postal service delivery, we have decided to offer our holiday special on BASIC BOOKS from Church of the Saviour (see ad on page 7) on InwardOutward.org. As a bonus, we've included Kayla McClurg's booklet of Advent Reflections.

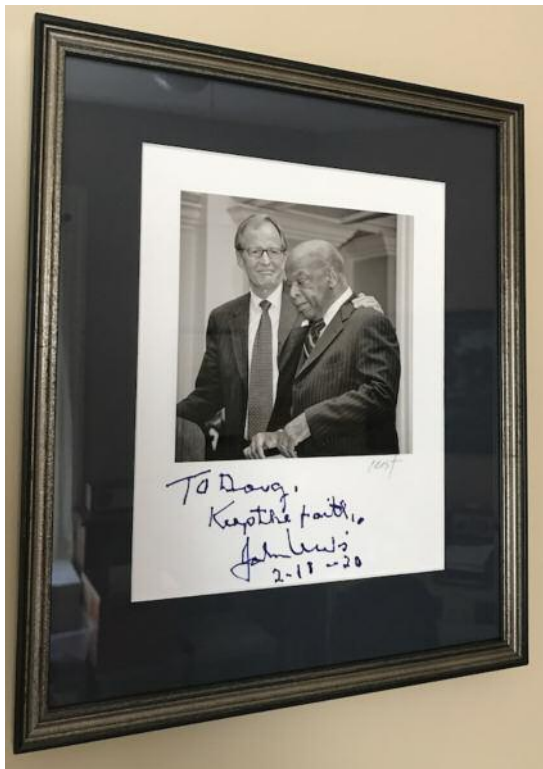
With care,

Marjory

Marjory Bankson
Send address changes to: CALLINGSeditor@gmail.com
Next 2020 CALLINGS deadline: October 31

The Church of the Saviour Council

Bread of Life • Dayspring Church • Eighth Day • Festival Church • Friends of Jesus
Jubilee Church • New Community • Seekers



fifths men accorded none of those rights. Along the way, we saw the qualities in John Lewis's heart, soul and spirit that had endowed his leadership with unbounded love, steadfast courage, and wondrous grace.

Of our pilgrimages to Alabama, I've written earlier in *The Truth Can Set Us Free: Toward a Politics of Grace and Healing*, a lengthy essay published by The Fetzer Institute:

"For many participants, it's a first encounter with the nature and power of nonviolent resistance to evil. John Lewis, Bernard Lafayette, Fred Shuttlesworth, Dorothy Cotton, Bob Zellner, and other civil rights movement leaders who travel with us convey a warmth, clarity and spirit deeply grounded in the philosophy and practice of nonviolence. Some participants at first don't know what to make of this. The very idea of choosing to put yourself in a situation where you're going to be hit and determining you are not going to hit anyone back sounds insane. Then as they listen more closely, it begins to sound wise. It becomes worth learning more about. It becomes worth considering. It merits respect, honor, and—perhaps—even allegiance.

Journalist Ellis Cose describes a comparable encounter with John Lewis in his book, *Bone to Pick: Of Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Reparation, and Revenge*:

'When I asked John Lewis, the congressman from Georgia, how—in his life as a grassroots civil rights leader—he had avoided anger while being beaten, repeatedly, by cops in the Jim Crow South, he answered like the seminary graduate he is: 'If you believe there is a spark of the divine in every human being...you cannot

get to the point where you hate that person, or despise that person...even if that person beats you...You have to have the capacity, the ability to forgive.'

John Lewis believed with Martin Luther King, Jr., that the moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice. Throughout his career, John was called to help bend that arc. He invited everyone into what he and Dr. King called "the beloved community." John and Dr. King and their colleagues sought to form in these United States a truly more perfect union and, as they often said, to redeem the soul of America.

I was blessed for 23 years to watch John Lewis welcome his colleagues in the Congress into circles of trust and warmly invite them into the work of continuing to form a more perfect union. One Senator and former governor of his Southern state had to leave his first pilgrimage early, but not before taking John and me aside to say, "I can't tell you what this has meant to me. I wish I had had this experience twenty years ago. I believe I would have made some decisions differently."

In the past week, treasured friends from across town, across the country, and across the sea have shared their condolences. Many have spoken of the impact of John Lewis and his spirit had on their own lives and work. Roelf Meyer served as F.W. de Klerk's chief negotiator in South Africa's internal peace process; his counterpart representing Nelson Mandela, Cyril Ramaphosa, is now South Africa's President. The message from Roelf reflects John's influence beyond America's borders:

Michèle and I will never forget that extraordinary visit to Selma that you organized. We were reminded so intimately and strongly of the civil rights movement and John's particular role in it. The whole episode in your history left an indelible impression on me from the mid-sixties onwards, and may I say for the better because it influenced my thinking in the decades that followed. I can therefore in that way celebrate with you the life of John Lewis!

Pam Crist is a friend and extraordinary photographer who documented many of our pilgrimages. When Pam learned of John's pancreatic cancer diagnosis, she told me she had a picture for me. Soon afterwards came a print with space for John to sign it. John was undergoing treatments by then and came into his office only occasionally. His scheduler David Bowman generously took the picture to John's home. The inscribed photo was brought back to the office and I promptly picked it up. The pandemic came along, and I delayed taking the picture to my local frame shop until July 10. When told that I sensed the time was near, the framer promised to have it for me the following week. I picked it up Friday afternoon, July 17, and hung it above my desk. John Lewis crossed over the Jordan later that night.

John Lewis rests in peace and power. May his spirit give us grace and strength to not give up, to not give in ... and to keep the faith.

Rev. Doug Tanner is the Founding Director, The Faith & Politics Institute, Washington DC, and a long-time associate of Church of the Saviour.

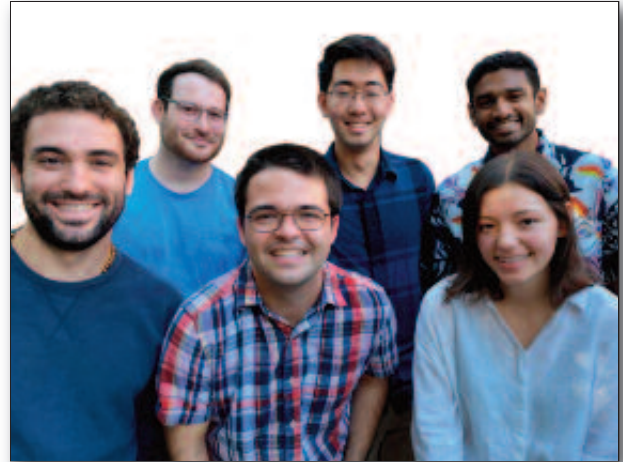
Christ House Welcomes a New Group of Volunteers

The annual welcoming of these individuals, affectionately referred to as Year Long Volunteers or YLVs, has been a part of Christ House's core vision from its very inception. Beginning in 1986, individuals from across the country have come to live and serve among the patients, Kairos program members, and staff. To date, Christ House has welcomed 252 YLVs with an average of six each year.

The presence of YLVs among the community not only shapes the mission and positively impacts the lives of patients, it greatly informs the discernment process of the volunteers and inspires permanent staff members to view the organization with the hopefulness and excitement of these new members.

For many YLVs, Christ House is a pivotal stepping stone that informs their future path. YLVs often finish their year of service and enter into academic programs to become doctors, nurses, or study public health. Anne Feczko, a YLV from 2007-2008 shared, "My entire professional career has been a direct result of my time at Christ House and I have continued to work or volunteer with folks experiencing homelessness ever since. Living at Emmanuel House and being immersed in the communities laid the foundation for how I nurture community and practice hospitality."

YLVs also go on to become chaplains, social workers, and case managers, having been inspired by the faith community and having witnessed the barriers to services many patients face. Other YLVs learn that Christ House is not just a stepping stone, but rather a



longer path in itself. Frequently, YLVs have become full-time permanent staff members hired onto the team at the end of their year of service. In the past 35 years, we have had the honor of regularly having YLVs stay for an additional year or be hired as staff. Currently six permanent staff members were once YLVs.

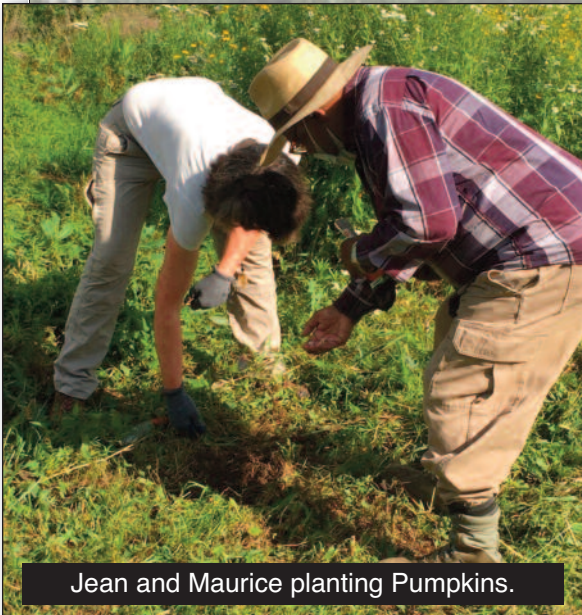
YLVs live together in a rowhome around the corner from Christ House and are called to co-create an intentional community; an integral part of the YLV program. This intentional community offers the gift of space and openness to process the service experience. Through life-giving conversations and relationships, YLVs are reminded of the sacredness of their interactions with each other and with the patients at Christ House.

Related Ministries

The following ministries have grown from churches and mission groups of The Church of the Saviour. Each is independently organized.

Academy of Hope • Becoming Church • Bethany, Inc. • Bokamoso Foundation • Caroll Café • Christ House • Columbia Road Health Service • Cornelius Corps • Cornerstone • Dayspring Earth Ministry • Dayspring Retreat Center • Discipleship Year • Dunamis Peace Institute • Faith & Money Network • Family Place • Festival Center • For Love of Children • Hope and a Home • Institute of Radical Reconciliation • Inward/outward • Joseph's House • Jubilee Housing • Jubilee Jobs • Jubilee JumpStart • Kairos House • L'Arche • Liberation School • Life Asset Credit Union • Life Pathways • Manna, Inc. • New Community ArtSpace • New Community for Children • O.N.E.DC • Overlook Retreat House • Potter's House • Recovery Café • Samaritan Inns • Sarah's Circle • Sign of Jonah • Sitar Arts Center • Sounds of Hope • Wellspring Conference Center

Careful steps toward reopening Dayspring



Jean and Maurice planting Pumpkins.

You can now arrange for individual retreats at
Overlook and Silent Retreat

To make arrangements, contact:

overlook.retreat@gmail.com or

<http://dayspringchurchmd.org/ministries/21>

For individual silent retreats, contact

office@dayspringretreat.org or

www.dayspringretreat.org



Clementine gets her first pottery lesson on
Jean's solar-powered wheel.



Jean Brown at Bud Wilkenson's
old kick wheel with solar-powered
lights turned on.



Earthen Hands potting shed powered by the sun.



Sunflower center for meditation in the Dayspring garden.



3-sister planting of corn,
beans and squash.

Learning Center for Jubilee Housing Youth

Distance learning poses issues for many families. How will parents work while younger children are at home all day? How will students without computers access online classrooms?

A video chat with Audrey Walker, Jubilee Housing Director of Youth Services.

We sat down with Audrey Walker, Jubilee Housing's Director of Youth Services, to talk about equity in education and what Jubilee is doing to address barriers to virtual learning in our community. Audrey described their preparations for learning assistance:

Our students have been missing out on targeted instruction in math, reading and science since last March. They are also missing out on nutritious meals, social development, outside activities and having a safe place to come to Monday through Friday.

Barriers to learning at home include lack of computer access, although by this Fall, DC Public Schools has made a real effort to give access to every student. Another problem is the home environment. Many of our students live in crowded conditions, or they have special needs which require extra help.

We have converted our learning center to a 9 to 3pm model, so students can come to the center. We have scheduled "pods" of students who will come together on a rotating basis. They will have computers, internet access, and a safe place to be so we can help their parents get back to work. We're really excited to provide this service to our community a Jubilee Housing.

Some of the strategies for helping families support their child's learning at home include getting to know your child's learning style; make sure the child has some physical activity before they sit down at the computer (so they can get their wiggles out), and how to minimize distractions (a real barrier to learning).

Jubilee Housing has raised nearly \$10,000 to support the children of families in Jubilee Housing. For information or support of this program, go to the JubileeHousingdc website.

Conversations with Jubilee Housing

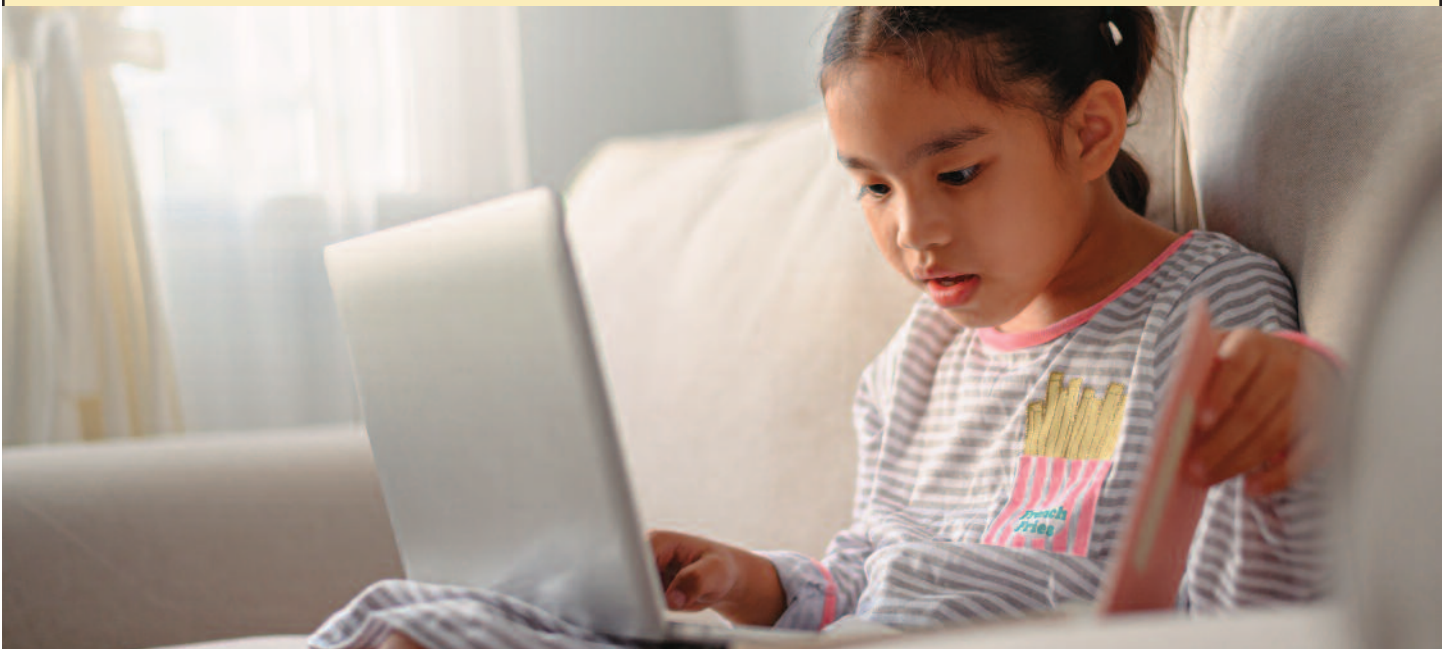
Over the next two months, Jubilee Housing will hold a series of online conversations exploring housing and equity, and how unequal access to housing leads to and perpetuates inequality. Each session will focus on a different aspect - housing & race, housing & education, housing & health, and housing & incarceration / reentry.

Please join us for one or more of these discussions. The conversations will include speakers with a range of perspectives, including industry experts, staff members and community members. Each session will feature a breakout session into small groups so that attendees can engage with each other around each topic.

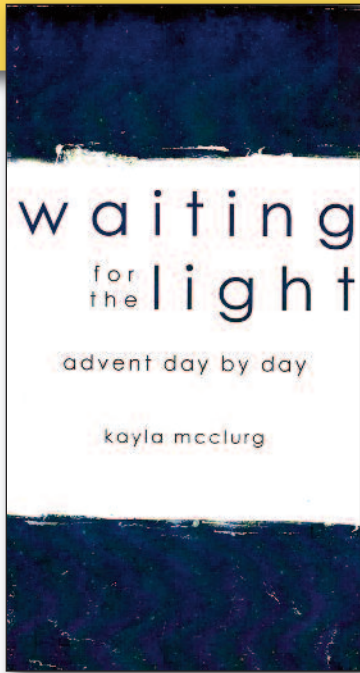
Please RSVP for these dates to join us for necessary conversations about issues critical to our city and this current moment of crisis!

- **September 15 | Housing and Access to Wealth Building**
- **September 22 | Housing and Health**
- **September 29 | Housing and Education**
- **October 14 | Housing, Incarceration, and Reentry**

If you have questions, please reach out to Greg Rockwell, Director of Development, at grockwell@jubileehousing.org.



Holiday Special!



Four Basic Church of the Saviour Books and a Bonus by Kayla McClurg \$30 (includes postage and handling)

- Call to Commitment
- Journey Inward, Journey Outward
- Servant Leader, Servant Structures
- Cry Pain, Cry Hope

Order this Holiday Special on InwardOutward.org / Resources
(No international orders without additional postage)

Zoom Classes at the School for Liberation

Tuesdays from 7-8:30 pm (October 6-27)

- **Community Organizing 201** led by Kristin Kumpf of the American Friends Service Committee. Following up on the class, Community Organizing 101 taught in June, this class will focus on the necessary strategies and action plans in order to take shared passion among teams and turn them into successful campaigns for concrete change.
- **Fierce Vulnerability in Defense of Creation** led by Marla Marcum of the Climate Disobedience Center. This class offers an overview of types of climate direct action (all disruptive, but not all entailing the risk of arrest), opportunities to consider which ones are right for you and your context, and practical approaches to stay grounded and build community while fighting for climate justice. Skills are transferable across movements for justice.



Wednesdays from 7-8:30 pm (October 7-28)

- **From the Doctrine of Discovery to the Monroe Doctrine**, led by Lisbeth Rivera-Melendez. This class will look at the connection between Christianity and Colonization focusing on its development and an aftermath still breathing today.
- **What is My Call Now?** led by Marjory Bankson, Chair of the Church of the Saviour Council. If God "called" Moses and Miriam in biblical times, how can we discern God's call today in our own lives? And is there just one call in a lifetime or might we have a different call in each stage of life? What are the inner and outer dimensions of call? How can we let call be the guiding principle in our lives? These are some of the questions we will address in our four weeks together.

For further information and sign-up, see festivalcenter.org.

Callings

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