

Callings

in the Church of the Saviour

Vol 1, Issue 1 • Spring 2012

Earth Celebration June 3

It's time to celebrate the sacred ground that we share as Church of the Saviour at Dayspring. Plan now to come on Sunday afternoon, June 3, 2012.

In 1957 all CofS communities gathered at Dayspring Farm to celebrate "a time of thanksgiving for our deliverance out of bondage and of renewed commitment to the One in whom we have our freedom." (Call to Commitment, page 65) I read about that festival of faith during my intern membership at Dayspring Church. What a magnificent, spirit-filled event it must have been. It's time to reclaim that heritage.

During one of our Earth Ministry Mission Group meetings, Jim Hall and Cheryl Hellner commented about a retreat day at Dayspring that was part of a class they held for a CofS sister church. Some of the attendees were surprised by the beauty and serenity of the land, never having been here. And someone at an Ember Day shared those same sentiments, amazed by this place of solitude and restoration so rarely found in the midst of suburban Washington. It's time.

Other signs told me it's time. In the fall a representative group from the CofS churches met to discern the future for the Wellspring Center after its closing as a retreat center. Many memories of being on the land were shared: attending workshops and having life changing experiences; family remembrances about Jenny's Tree; children of families growing up here; connecting to creativity.

Taking a walk one evening down the lane toward the pavilion, I heard the woods beckoning me, "Come closer." And so I did. The woods embraced me and "spoke" to me, sharing with me their yearning for people to come, come back, to be refreshed, to be delighted, to be healed. I left knowing the land yearns to be one with us.

From the history of the festival of faith and this call of the land, the Earth Celebration, was born.

So come back and come closer. The sacred land of Dayspring Farm and Dayspring Church will welcome you to Earth Celebration on the

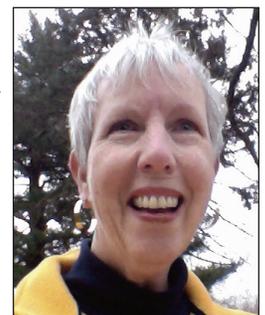


Photo credit: Peter Bankson

afternoon of Sunday, June 3, from 1:30-6:30. The day will be one of community, connecting with the land, and celebration. Activities offered may range from guided hikes, scavenger hunts for children, music jams and tours of facilities and the property, and a festival of faith worship. Each church community will be invited to bring its own gift to offer as part of the day. Dayspring will provide beverages; others are asked to bring their own picnic food. Do read the Call to Commitment chapter on Dayspring to revisit the commitment of the Church of the Saviour to this sacred land and come as the stewards of this particular part of God's creation.

For more information: DayspringChurch.org

Margie Lance is a new member of Dayspring Church who has a passion for our stewardship of this sacred planet earth, organic farming, singing and living with joy.



Next Steps for inward/outward

Late in 2005 I finally surrendered to the idea of hosting an online project on behalf of our extended community. Gentry Underwood had fallen in love with the varied expressions of The Church of the Saviour and our shared commitment to an 'inward/outward/together' way. He insisted people "out there" want this kind of depth community and thought we were uniquely situated to share our learnings. I too felt that people were hungry for a deeper experience of the Christian life, and I saw them turning to this particular collective of churches for guidance and inspiration. However, I was uncertain that an online project was the way to respond or that I was the right person.

After several months of listening and still uncertain that it would catch on, we gave it a try. In 2006, we launched a 'blog' and daily quote subscription service called inward/outward. Along with excerpts from published works and readers' responses, the site hosts a brief introduction to the churches and ministries that make up this segment of God's koinonia. We started out with about 10 subscribers.

Very quickly, by word of mouth and forwarded emails, the site grew to 300 subscribers, then 800, then 2,000. Today the list teeters on the verge of 9,000—more than our current technical capacity can sustain. Each week I receive emails saying how much these little nuggets of wisdom about the inward/outward journey inspire and challenge our readers.

The increase in subscriptions (and subsequent technical prob-

lems), coupled with the hunger people express to learn more about communities that follow Jesus and also engage the world, inspires us to step out in faith and expand inward/outward as a Church of the Saviour website. Tim Kumfer joins me in this effort to listen, as St. Benedict says, "with the ear of our heart."

The expanded site will be a way for people to learn about and connect with our local churches and ministry groups and to see a community calendar of events. The churches' section of the site will have space to grow, and over time could hold photos, sermons, liturgies, artwork, mission group activities, spiritual autobiographies, prayer concerns and the Friendship Directory.

The expanded site should be functioning by the end of March at www.inwardoutward.org or churchofthesaviourdc.org. Tim and I will be project managers, but it will be the wider community who sustains the site going forward. The whole community is invited now to start submitting reflective and informational pieces (300-500 words) for possible inclusion. Email me at churchofthesaviour.office@gmail.com for submission guidelines and writing ideas.



Kayla McClurg is the point-person for The Church of the Saviour, inward/outward, Andrew's House and a core member of Potter's House Church.

Beginning Again ...

Recently a group of pastors visited Seekers Church because they had studied Elizabeth O'Connor's books about Church of the Saviour and found us on the web. Their many questions boiled down to one which we hear often: "Where is Church of the Saviour today?"

This newsletter is part of the answer. Now that the Hubers have set down their call to publish *Diaspora*, it is time to listen for the Spirit again. To that end, the Church of the Saviour Council has decided to sponsor a website (churchofthesaviourdc.org) and this quarterly newsletter, *Callings*.

The Council formed at the time of the New Lands division in 1976. Each of the five original churches (**Dayspring**, **Eighth Day**, **Jubilee**, **Potter's House**, and **Seekers**) had a representative on the Council but there was little energy for common life as each church began to form its own identity. The Council grew as new churches formed within Church of the Saviour. Although others have come and gone in the intervening years, today there are now four more churches for a total of nine on the Council: **Festival Church**, **Friends of Jesus**, **Lazarus House** and **New Community**.

In 2006, there was another major change in the legal

structure of The Church of the Saviour. A new constitution and by-laws shifted membership from individuals to member churches. Now that the headquarters building at 2025 Massachusetts Avenue has been sold, the Council churches are legally responsible for Dayspring Farm, where Wellspring and Dayspring Retreat Center are located, but our common tradition and many shared missions make the possibilities for association much richer than that.

As the new moderator of the Council and part of the paper-generation, I am feeling called to shepherd this newsletter into being. *Callings* will feature a growing-edge for 2-3 of the nine churches in each issue. We will do the same for related ministries which grew out of one of the member churches and have incorporated separately. Kayla, Tim and I hope to make the website and the newsletter a source of inspiration as well as information and your financial contributions will be the sign whether to continue it or not.

Marjory Zoet Bankson is the Moderator of the CoS Council, author of Creative Aging, and a Steward of Seekers Church.

Pruning and Planting at the Potter's House

New Beginnings at the Potter's House Church are like tending an orchard before spring begins. It's much like the patient pruning and grafting done on fruit-bearing trees. In this way, we are attending to the "fruitwood" of our life together so its health and strength can support the church and mission growing plentifully in the season ahead.

Having restored our weekly time of worship together last fall, our circles of prayer, scripture-reading and song are now richly gifted by the rotating leadership of many. We've just begun to wonder aloud how we could best begin to widen the circle of those who come to worship here. These conversations, running with the fresh energy of new explorations are grafted onto the church's rich history of being a "Coffeehouse Church." We expect the first flowerings to be visible soon!

The Potter's House has always been a different kind of church. We've understood ourselves as being church whenever the coffeehouse doors are open. Jean Brown, as Minister-Manager, has been inviting all of us to a more contemplative pace during the sometimes- hectic days, so that we can bring a deeper level of presence to those who come to the Potter's House as customers.

All of us, staff, volunteers or church members, are living from a deeper commitment to building relationships with each other and with all who come in the door. Our dedication to building relationships must begin among ourselves. We know if we are not living that engagement then our attempt to bring that spirit outward toward others will ring with less authenticity.

Our relational commitment is helping to surface new questions about how we want to build bridges to those who rent our space. It also is leading us to re-examine how we want to be in relationship to the hungry or homeless who we currently serve in our *Sopa a Las Dos* program

Structures

The 'central tree trunks' of the Potter's House orchard have been strengthened through the creation of inter-connected circles of communication and accountability. The daily ministries of the Potter's House are now overseen by a Management Team of Jean Brown, Meade Jones Hanna [food services manager], and Tom Taylor [bookstore manager].

Longer-range decision-making for the ministry is now being exercised by the Potter's House Council, a hybrid group made up of the Management Team, joined by Mary Easley (Junior) represent-

ing staff, and by three members of the Potter's House Church—Florence Parkinson, Kayla McClurg, and Shelley Marcus. With dogged determination, growing trust, and a willingness to work out the tangles, we have taken important steps toward putting the Potter's House on firmer foundation.

Vital Conversation about Race

The crucial issue of how racial identities may impact how we are in relationship with each other was explicitly raised by the Potter's House staff after an important decision was seen quite differently when looked at through different racial lenses. Though initially uncomfortable, rich conversations have been springing up as a result. The response has created widespread interest in our holding an anti-racism consciousness together.

In late February, six individuals who are integral to the Potter's House community—either as staff, church members, or volunteers who have been essential members of our community, will travel together to the Damascus Road Anti-Racism Analysis training in Philadelphia. They will join another 15 members of the larger Church of the Saviour community who will also be heading to the Damascus Road training. We expect that it may rock our world.

Other Fruits?

Seedlings of new visions are beginning to spring forth. Meade describes one vision that gives her hope—a Potter's House intentionally claiming itself as a Coffeehouse Church again. She

and others imagine new conversations with people we haven't yet met, deep dialogues that change the consciousness of all those involved. In this vision, the Potter's House is also a center of a network of other communities working with the same questions and longings for transformational church, immensely enriched through a web of connection with others who are, like us, re-imagining church.

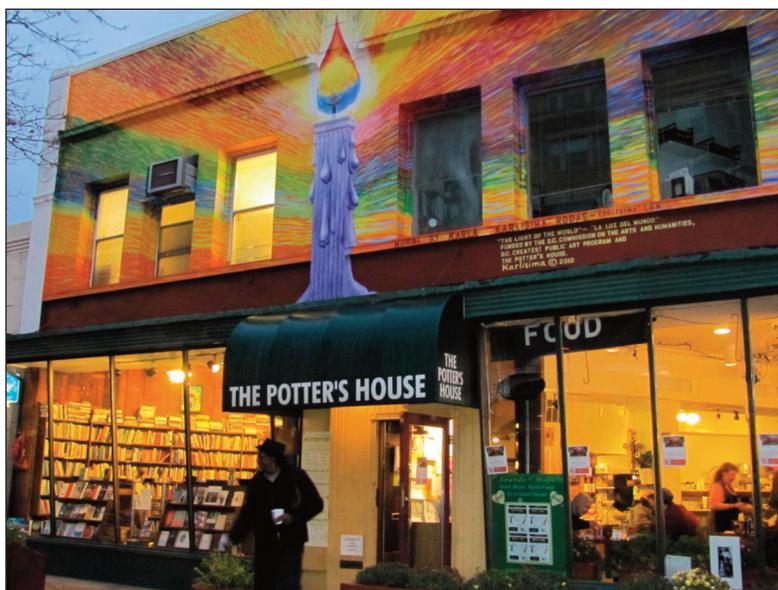


Photo by Michael Smith

Potter's House Church currently meets at the Potter's House on Mondays at 5 p.m. All are welcome.

Shelley Marcus is a mediator and communications coach. She is currently serving as President of the Potter's House Church Board of Directors.

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 • Christ House • Columbia Road Health Service • Cornelius Corps • Cornerstone • Dayspring Earth Ministry • Dayspring Retreat Center • Discipleship Year • Faith & Money Network • Family Place • Festival Center • For Love of Children • Hope and a Home • inward/outward • Joseph's House • Jubilee Housing • Jubilee Jobs • Jubilee JumpStart • Kairos House • L'Arche • Life Asset Credit Union • Life Pathways • Manna, Inc. • Miriam's House • New Community ArtSpace • New Community for Children • O.N.E.DC • Potter's House • Samaritan Inns • Sarah's Circle • Servant Leadership School • Sign of Jonah • Sitar Arts Center • Sounds of Hope • Tell The Word • Wellspring

New Community

This year marks the 13th year that New Community ArtSpace has been engaging youth and adults in community based arts programming in the Shaw neighborhood. ArtSpace is an affordable multicultural gathering place for practicing artists and beginners to express themselves, share and gather skills, create economic opportunities and find fellowship with each other while adding significant value to the renewal of the Shaw neighborhood.

In 1999, soon after graduating from college, I started ArtSpace as an artistic extension of the principles of service that has espoused the virtues of New Community Church for the past 30 years. Today, ArtSpace is a place where people of all ages, faiths and walks of life are welcome to come together and find common ground through art. At ArtSpace we believe that art should be as accessible as the local basketball court or branch library.

In 2011, ArtSpace hired Melissa Matthews. Melissa comes to ArtSpace as a graduate of Howard University and the co-founder, CEO and Curatorial Director of More Black Art whose mission is to nurture talent, facilitate exhibition opportunities, and provide professional development assistance for emerging artists of the African Diaspora. She has quickly acclimated to her role at ArtSpace and created many partnerships within the community in gearing up for classes as well as programs.

In order to stay affordable, our classes and workshops are taught by an amazing group of volunteers who are passionate about their craft and excited to share their talents with others. We welcomed Jean Brown, Manager-Minister of the Potter's House, to our ceramics studio this year. Our beloved, Maybelle Taylor Bennett, Director of Howard University's Community Association, has been volunteering with ArtSpace for nearly 12 years. She has incredible gift in turning a student's disbelief with fibers into beautifully woven, knitted and crocheted works of art.

We hope you will join us in participating in our upcoming exhibition called In Our 'Hood. It explores themes of gentrification in DC – particularly LeDroit Park, Shaw and the U Street neighborhoods. Over the past decade, the face of Northwest D.C. has certainly changed. Neighborhoods once ravaged with violence and drugs have become hipster havens and cultural destinations.

This exhibition will be housed in 3-5 different locations simultaneously and the exhibition will be tied together through a walking tour of the neighborhoods along the Heritage Trail. We invite YOU (artists of all disciplines) to submit work for consideration for this exciting project.

If you would like to support ArtSpace and participate in upcoming events and classes please contact Melissa at dc.artspace@gmail.com or me at rachel.d.brunswick@gmail.com.

We need your support and look forward to your visit!
www.artspacedc.org

Rachel Dickerson Brunswick is a board member of ArtSpace and a member of New Community Church.

Community ArtSpace

In Our 'Hood is a communal exhibition project that will select 100 local artists to participate in a project that will recount, chronicle, bring to life the past, present, and future of these historic neighborhoods through a variety of media.



L-R: Intisar Munir, Jessica Beiber, Maybelle Taylor Bennett

Photo by Maybelle Taylor Bennett



Tara Yglesias

Photo by Kristian Whipple

Photo by Kristian Whipple



Photo by Kristian Whipple



Rachel Dickerson, Tara Yglesias, Jessica Beiber, Sophia Kruszewski

Photo by Maybelle Taylor Bennett

Coming Home Again

Citizens returning from jail are routinely denied jobs, housing, health care, voting rights and more. The Church of Christ, Right Now knows this all too well. Shaped by firsthand experiences of incarceration, our members are called to be a redeemed and redeeming community with those coming home from incarceration. Nowhere is our calling more tangible or visible to those outside our church than in our new house for returning residents.

With 5 bedrooms, The New House will be home to between 6 and 9 men returning from prison. More than a building, The New House will be a community—a family of support, accountability and encouragement for men moving from brokenness toward servant-leadership in the society that rejected them.

Right now, The New House is in disrepair. The kitchen is inadequate. Baths need to be replaced, another needs to be built. The



wiring needs upgrading and the floor needs sanding. While there is no shortage of work to be done, the potential is breathtaking! With a little elbow grease and some teamwork, we will make this house a home.

At our two work parties thus far, a large, diverse crowd of volunteers have come to paint, demolish, scrape, build, and clean! We owe a particular thank you to the volunteers of People's Community Baptist Church in Silver Spring for all of their hard work, enthusiasm, and remarkable spirits.

Before The New House can foster a loving family, it must be raised in one. The New House needs a family of people both excited about what it will be and ready to help in the hard work of getting it there. March will be our busiest month yet at the house. We'd love for you to join us. Interested? Let us know! 202-387-8001.

Martin Saunders is an intern and ministry assistant with *Becoming Church* and the *Church of Christ, Right Now*.

The Family Place: Little but Fierce

“And though she be but little, she is fierce.”

This line from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" aptly describes The Family Place (TFP), a small non-profit where I am volunteering through the Discipleship Year program. Its vision is to empower low-income families to seek the optimal development of their children through educational programs and social services.

The families we serve are Latino. Many are single mothers with two, three, even four children—most here illegally. All of these factors mean that each family faces urgent and complicated situations on a daily basis. Imagine not being able to communicate with your daughter's school teacher because you don't speak English or cramming five people into one room of a dilapidated row house, sharing one bathroom and one kitchen with five other families who live under the same roof. It's all you can afford and you live in fear of being discovered by the police or worse, immigration. These realities make our work at TFP all the more important.

TFP may be small, but we have a big impact on the Latino community in DC. We not only offer a host of classes from ESL to nutrition but we also connect families to much needed social services. We offer a spacious, beautiful place where women and their children can come to play, learn, and develop; a place where they can escape the brutal realities of their lives. TFP is a refuge. It's a safe haven.

I work specifically as a Case Manager, connecting families to DC resources like food stamps and health care. Women come into my office to tell me their worries and I work with them to figure out solutions. Sometimes the problems seem small, like applying

for a passport. Most often they are big and complicated like sharing a bed-bug infested room with a family of five. I've learned to see that even the smallest problems can bear witness to the larger cycle of poverty trapping these women.

Sometimes I begin to lose hope, *esperanza*, for my clients. I find myself thinking that their lives are just too complicated for anything to be truly fixed. But living with the other Discipleship Year volunteers, I am reminded when my vision is too narrow and incomplete. Where I see one individual family, God sees a community made up of many families, both rich and poor, Latino and white; that together we seek the wellbeing of their neighbors, families and children. TFP is not just about improving the lives of people on a family-to-family basis; it's about creating a larger family, one defined by solidarity, reciprocity and above all, hope.



Susan Baker is from Denver, Colorado and holds a degree in International Development and Studio Art from Calvin College. She has spent time in Africa and Central America, loves to cook (and eat), is addicted to good coffee, and enjoys hiking and being active.

Investing in Adult Literacy

Academy of Hope is positioning itself as a thought leader in Washington, DC, by launching a first-ever series of forums: “Invest in Adult Literacy.” The series highlights adult literacy as an underlying factor in many of the social challenges The District faces and, by extension, shows the many ways investing in adult literacy pays off for the city. These forums are directed toward people who have the power to make change in DC, particularly representatives from the business community and policymakers, including both legislative representatives and agency heads.



Upcoming Forums

On April 17, 2012 research experts, program providers, and business and community leaders will convene to examine the critical role that adult literacy plays in workforce development in The District. The last National Assessment of Adult Literacy showed that nearly one in five District adults functions at a below basic literacy level, meaning they have trouble reading simple text and cannot do basic calculations. This forum will address such questions as: How can adults functioning at these below-basic literacy levels access the training they need for better jobs if that training requires at least an eighth-grade level of reading and math skills?



For more information about Academy of Hope and its 27-year history of providing high quality adult education in a manner that changes lives and improves our community, please visit our website at www.aohdc.org.

Patricia DeFerrari, Senior Director of Programs at Academy of Hope and **Helen McConnell**, Senior Director of Development and core member of the Festival Church.

Renewing the Servant Leadership School

Like many other missions of Church of the Saviour, the Servant Leadership School is in a period of transition. Ever aware of Gordon Cosby's wisdom concerning the spiritual life cycle of institutions, we have wondered about our next faithful step into the future.

Following a period of discernment The Festival Center board of directors recently affirmed a bold new mission for the School: to prepare called individuals and communities to “come out of empire and into God's realm, abiding in Christ to sustain them on the way.” Deeply rooted in the biblical story, this renewed sense of direction stems from our conviction that we are entering a wider cultural moment where Christian discipleship may need to be more radical than in the past.

In other words, the wisdom of the inward/outward way is needed now more than ever. We want the School to be a space both for sharing that wisdom and seeking out new ways to embody it together. As such, this 25-year experiment in experiential theological education is really only possible as a community undertaking. Thus we are forming working groups from across the Church of the Saviour collective of churches and ministries to help us envision our offerings.

On March 8, early in Lent, noted author and peace activist, John Dear, will kick-off our Spring Term as we celebrate the changes in the way we develop our curriculum.

In late June, the SLS will host Wes Howard-Brook and Sue Ferguson Johnson for a week of events in partnership with Eighth Day Faith Community. Wes is a biblical scholar and the author of *Come Out My People! God's Call Out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond*. Sue is a spiritual director and retreat leader. Their ‘west coast remix’ of the inward/outward way will challenge us to go deeper and is not to be missed.

See you around the School soon!



Tim Kumfer is the director of the Servant Leadership School. He is an intern member of Eighth Day Faith Community and a graduate of Duke Divinity School.

Special Events

March 8...John Dear, Jesuit peace activist, at the Festival Center (7pm) will speak from his new book *"Lazarus Come Forth! How Jesus Confronts the Culture of Death and Invites Us into the New Life of Peace."* Also guest musician Blair Pettyjohn. RSVP: Servant Leadership School website or call (202) 328-0072. No charge, but people will be asked for financial support of the school

March 21...Joseph's House, fundraising breakfast at the National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, 8-9am. RSVP at (202) 686-5172 or email Judith.riggs@verizon.net

March 29...Ann Randolph, performance artist and writing teacher, is offering a one day workshop, "Telling your life story," 10am - 6 pm, at the Festival Center. Cost \$120. Space limited

April 17...Invest in Adult Literacy: Adult Literacy and Work-force Development Academy of Hope Forum, 8:30am - 10:00am. True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street, NW. Presentation by panel of experts; buffet breakfast. RSVP: Krystal Ramseur at 202.629.6623 or krystal@aohdc.org

May 18...2012 Bee & Bubbly Bash Academy of Hope's gala celebration and spelling bee, 6:00pm - 9:30pm. The Katzen Arts Center at American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW. Tickets: \$150; early bird rate (by May 1) \$125. Sponsorships available. RSVP: Krystal Ramseur at 202.629.6623 or krystal@aohdc.org.

June 3...Earth Celebration at Dayspring. For the whole Church of the Saviour community, 1:30-6:30. See front page article for details.

June 7...Celebration of The Family Place and to Honor Dr. Ann Barnet, MD. Fundraiser for The Family Place, 6:00pm - 9:30pm at The Festival Center, 1640 Columbia Rd., NW. No charge. RSVP: Lorenna Maysonet at 202.265.0149, ext. 111 or lmaysonet@thefamilyplacedc.org

July 14-24...Guatemala Work-Pilgrimage sponsored by Seekers Church and led by Peter & Marjory Bankson. For information and registration, visit www.seekerschurch.org and click on "Guatemala Pilgrimage."

Eighth Day • Dayspring Church • Festival Church • Friends of Jesus • Jubilee Church
Lazarus House • New Community • Potter's House Church • Seekers

Callings

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