

Callings

in the Church of the Saviour

Vol 5, Issue 1 • Spring 2015

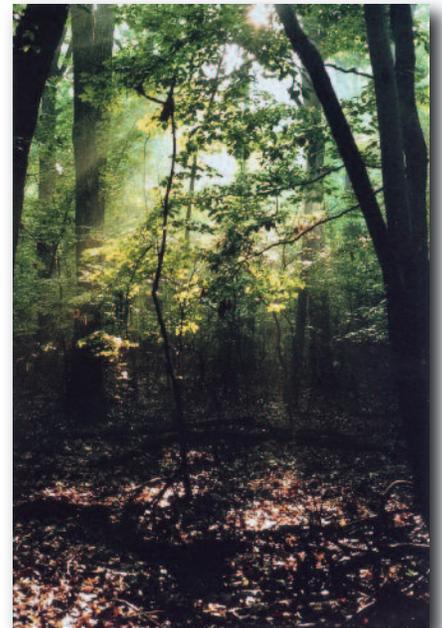
Easter Sunrise Service March 27



There will be a Church of the Saviour sunrise service on the lawn, in front of Wellspring, beginning at 6:30am on Easter morning, March 27. Kayla McClurg is coordinating the service and will be offering “the word.” If you, or members of your community, want to offer some particular part of the service, please contact Kayla at the C of S office. Dress warmly and bring a blanket or low chair to sit on. A flashlight would also be useful.

The service will conclude by 7:15, and Dayspring Church has graciously offered to provide hot coffee and tea before and after the service. In case of rain, we will worship inside the Wellspring Center.

For those who would like to make this an Easter Vigil on Saturday night, Wellspring is available for overnight guests. Starting at 7 pm at the farmhouse we will walk to prayer stations, culminating with a bonfire at the labyrinth and hot cross buns. Contact Kayla at **churchofthesaviour.office@gmail.com** if you wish to stay overnight.



Photos on this page are by Jennie Gosche'

Jennie Gosche' has been a worshipping member of the 8th Day Faith Community since 1984. She had an exhibit of her Dayspring photographs at the Potter's House in 1995. More recently she has been traveling to the Arctic to photograph polar bears and will return to Alaska in September. You can contact her at jenniegosche@netzero.net.



If you'd like to see CALLINGS continue, please make a contribution to:

Callings

Church of the Saviour
1640 Columbia Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20009

Forty years ago, Church of the Saviour gave birth to six new churches. Each had a particular identity, based on its call, mission and leadership. As they were forming, Elizabeth O'Connor wrote about the radical nature of these emerging communities. She called it *The New Community*. That book has just been reissued and will be introduced at a **Potter's House book event on Saturday, April 9** (see Kayla's description on page 3).

Unlike the other churches, which grew out of single-focus mission groups, Seekers Church grew out of FLOC (For Love of Children) and the early worship service at “2025,” the headquarters building on Massachusetts Avenue. By 1976, FLOC was an established non-profit with participation by many people beyond C of S, and the early service was full of families with children, so Seekers became known as “the children's church.” Instead of claiming a singular mission, Seekers focused on creative worship, the School of Christian Living, and multiple mission groups. The founders, Fred Taylor and Sonya Dyer, modeled shared leadership and a focus on ministry in daily life. The story of Seekers as a second-generation C of S community is told in *Stalking the Spirit*. See the **Potter's House book event on March 18** (page 6).

Seekers' focus on worship has also produced another book, *Callings on God*, which will be featured on **March 18** as well. *Callings on God* is a three-year lectionary cycle of inclusive-language prayers which can be used for public worship or personal reflection.

Forty years ago, Gordon Cosby challenged us to claim our new life in Christ. Today we know that creative worship is still a vital component of a faithful community. To celebrate the Good News of the Risen Christ together, the Ecumenical Council invites everyone to join us for the Easter sunrise service out at Well-spring on **March 27, 6:30 – 7:15am**. Hope to see you there!

Marjory

Upcoming deadlines: **May 31; August 31; Nov 30**

Marjory Bankson is Editor of CALLINGS and chair of the Church of the Saviour Council.

Wellspring Update

Kent Klopfenstein

In our first full year since resuming expanded operations, we are blessed that revenue/inflows exceeded expectations by more than \$8,000. We hosted 29 overnight retreats representing 67 nights of occupancy. In addition, we hosted many day events, including a successful 4-week summer camp.

On the down side, we spent more than planned on upgrading our buildings and grounds, and on property/workers compensation insurance, which more than offset the revenue increases. Plus, additional repairs to the main center building are needed.

Most importantly, as we work toward sustainability, we are successfully executing our strategy of securing repeat business from groups who enjoyed their visit. And, thankfully, they all enjoyed their visits. Janet Hudson and Nona Beth Cresswell, along with the other members of our kitchen team, continue to exceed our guests' expectations for wonderful food and hospitality. As a results, bookings in 2016 are well ahead of last year thanks to a balance of new and returning groups. And, the camp is returning for 6 weeks.

Thank you all for your continued prayers and support.

The Church of the Saviour Council

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

The Chance to Pause

By Susanna Bean

The sky was bright and clear as my plane took off from National Airport. I craned my neck eagerly to catch an aerial glimpse of my new home of 6 months. The Mall, the White House, Rock Creek Park, all stretched out in a live map before me. I have always loved flying. It is beautiful to rocket out of the complicated streets, houses, feelings and events of life on earth. Up there, the houses are tiny, the streets ordered and life, with all its happenings, is suspended.

Watching DC slowly fade from view I was thankful for a moment to reflect. The chance to pause, and hold one's life in suspension is rare, but this is one of the gifts that Discipleship Year has given me. I graduated in 2011 and worked for several years in social service. Though good, this work developed in me a desire to understand and address the problems facing my clients from a sociological level, rather than direct service. I cultivated a strong interest in feminism and gender equality, and slowly began to consider a complete shift in my calling, from the individual to the sociopolitical. I decided DC was the place to contemplate this new call. Many applica-



tions, several trips to DC and one and a half years later, I found Discipleship Year (DY). I moved, suspending normal life responsibilities to enter the structures of DY and found a new perspective.

When I fly I spend most of my time looking out the window at the patterns that emerge. My particular favorite is the elegant curves of rivers that flow across the land. Altitude reveals an intricate pattern that is not seen in the zoomed in existence of earth. Like flying, DY gives me a chance to examine the patterns in my life, pondering questions about the roots of my passion for feminism and political work. In the context of these ponderings DY also gives space to dream of the future. Through the people I meet in the Church of Saviour community, and beyond, through conversations in Servant Leadership Classes and house seminars, each interaction has added a piece to the puzzle of what God's calling might be. And finally, my work and friendships at The Potter's House give me the freedom to flesh out my call, even getting my feet wet by designing a feminist series of events launching in the spring. As August looms on the horizon, I already feel life hurtling towards me again. But I find hope and comfort in the patterns that have emerged, the direction I'm sensing and in the tender faithfulness of God.

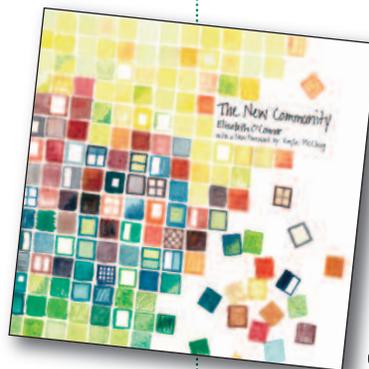
Susanna Bean is a member of the Discipleship Year and serves as an event coordinator at The Potter's House.

Inward Outward | The New Community ... Again

By Kayla McClurg

Once in awhile a favorite "old thing" becomes new again, and we get to have the fun of introducing it to others. This is the case with one of Elizabeth O'Connor's beloved books, *The New Community*, which has been a favorite of many but out-of-print for years. The Potter's House recognized its significance and recently reissued it after 40 years, complete with a new foreword and a colorful new cover.

The New Community was published in 1976, at a time of significant change in the Church of the Saviour, when the congregation was "scattering" into small faith communities, and mission groups started focusing on relationships in the neighborhood around the Potter's House. Today, again, the neighborhoods around the Potter's House are changing fast, bringing new challenges. What looks like economic bounty can mean economic depletion for many long-time residents; what is lifted up as healthy development leaves many on the outside.



What does this era of change mean for our churches and missions? What is its impact on others? On **Saturday, April 9, from 4:00-6:00 pm**, you are invited to a conversation at the Potter's House about the relevance of the book's themes today. Hear from others in DC who care about these issues, and share your own thoughts. You can also sign up for reading groups forming under the guidance of Emily Owsley and Matthias Martin. We hope many will want to explore again, or for the first time, what *The New Community* has to say about the kind of society we need and want and how we might educate ourselves for the work ahead.



Kayla McClurg is the staff person for The Church of the Saviour, and facilitates the website: www.inward-outward.org.

A Web of Relationality

By Tim Kumfer

At the Potter's House, we desire to be a space that "practices non-separable difference" and "greet the unknown with trembling hospitality," to use Catherine Keller's words. On Wednesday, people across the intellectual ability and mental health spectrums came together for intimate and evangelical community as Jubilee Church. On Friday, we welcomed Art Between Us, an interfaith open mic for women. On Saturday, two transgender South Asian poets delivered an avant-garde performance, deconstructing gender as a western colonial imposition. On Sunday, we welcomed the Muslim Writer's Collective, where young and progressive Muslims spoke back to media characterizations and shared their stories of hope.

For some, bringing all these different perspectives and practices together would be crazy making. For us, it is at the core of who we are and how we understand this cultural moment. It is about repenting from a Christian history in which the church enforced conformity on its cultural others, often violently so. Rather than shutting down difference in service to some higher – and typically implicitly white – unity, we want to weave a fabric of relationality across our many cultural differences that will enrich our lives and increase our shared resiliency.

Through our events and bookstore resources, we have been privileged to move closer to the swirling center of DC activism. And to be honest, we've been a little surprised to find so much openness to our spiritual roots and faith convictions amongst this more lefty and seemingly skeptical crowd. Something new is emerging, and some of the old divides that we have inherited are breaking down. People are hungry for something to give their whole lives to, for a durability of purpose that extends beyond the protest action.

We experiment with new and yet unknown forms for exploring faith in community. The Potter's House has always lived in this tension – not exactly a church or a business, or even a ministry in the

traditional sense. This hybrid identity is a real gift, one that enables us to take risks and try out things that others might not be able to. While the rise of the 'nones,' those who identify with no particular faith tradition, and increased religious diversity can be perceived as a threat by the mainline church, we see it as a real opportunity – and one that aligns with The Potter's House's original purpose.

In this regard, Eighth Day has been a real partner, offering the Wisdom Circle and Sacred Space gatherings out of a desire to greet this shifting reality. We recently launched a group that uses Krista Tippett's "On Being" program as a shared ground for discussion, and have received tremendous response. We will be working with the Interfaith Conference to develop dinner dialogues and other opportunities. And given all the creative mystics gathered in this space today, I imagine more possibilities could emerge in the months ahead...

It is an exciting time to be a part of the life of The Potter's House. But I wouldn't be telling the whole truth if I didn't say it can also be tiring and challenging! I've learned a lot this past year about my gifts...and I've learned a lot about areas in which I need to grow or share leadership with others. I want to develop more of a contemplative practice personally and infuse that organizationally, operating out of a deeper center that enables me to express vulnerability alongside a real clarity of purpose. We're really wrestling with how to encourage commitment and accountability at all levels of the organization without relying heavily on the punitive measures found in most workplaces. And we want to find better ways to encourage ownership of the big picture, transformative vision – even if someone's primary duty is making lattes or washing dishes. All of this is part of that great web of relationality.

Tim Kumfer is the Potter's House Director.

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 Conference Center

Honoring Jimilu Mason

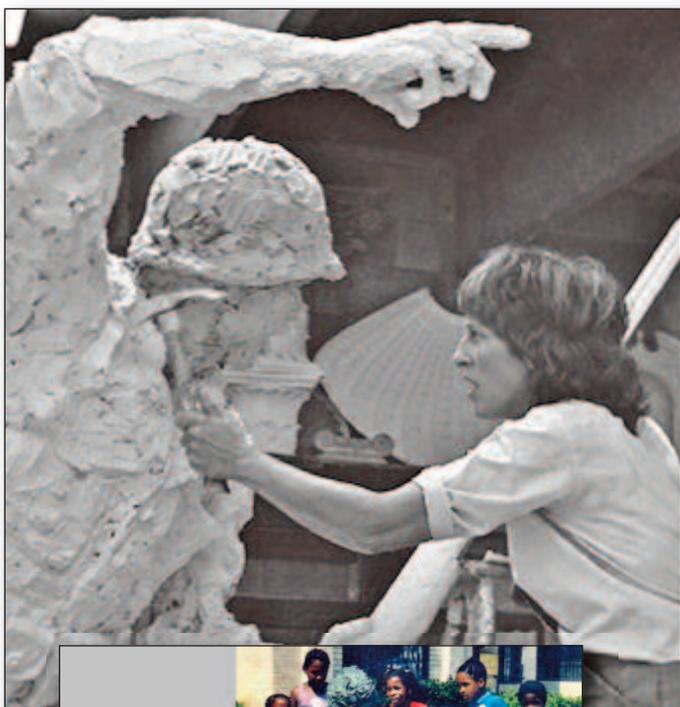
By Bettina Del Sesto

On **March 19, at 2pm**, there will be a gathering at the Festival Center to honor the life and work of Jimilu Mason. She has been living and working in Italy, but is here in Washington, DC right now. Her sculptures of the Servant Jesus in front of Christ House, The Festival Center, and at Wellspring, make Jimilu seem like an old friend – and indeed she is. But most of us do not know that she is also an important American sculptor of wide renown. Her work has been commissioned by governments and collectors, and she has won numerous awards. The list on her website is quite amazing!

Jimilu graduated from George Washington University in 1953, and she arrived at Church of the Saviour in 1957, when she first met Mary Cosby. The two became fast friends, and together they decorated the original Potter's House before it opened in 1960. From the beginning, it was a place to foster creativity through art and drama. As her reputation grew and commissions increased, Jimilu began spending more of her time in Italy, where she could have larger pieces cast at a foundry. Even so, she has remained a loyal and generous supporter of various missions that grew out of Church of the Saviour.

Jimilu's faith is clearly visible in her incredible sculptures of the truths of the life of Jesus, his mother, his carpenter father and his apostles. At the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, her sculpture of mother and child in the elegant Irish chapel in one of the most venerated spots in the shrine of North and South America. In Triangle VA, Jimilu created a stunning triangular altar and a powerful sculpture of Joseph with his young son. Now, in this autumn season of her life, it is time to say THANK YOU!

Bettina Del Sesto loves art and good design. She lives in Adams Morgan, and is part of the Bread of Life community.



Continuing Recovery

By Stephanie Harding

Wow!!! What excitement when I happened into the Potter's House and Marjory Bankson handed me the winter issue of "Callings." Many of you are aware that I came to this community by way of "The Recovery Café" in Seattle, so to see an article about that very special place in my life caused my heart to leap!

I first walked into the Recovery Café sometime in February 2005. I had been sober about 60 days. At that point, I was still a very broken woman. However, this new life had me on a huge high. I did not quite understand my fragility when a man in one of the 12-step meetings said to me that I was a "Twirl Bird," twirling so high with my head in the clouds that when I came out of it, I was in for a huge crash landing. Well my broken, fragile, guarded self was highly insulted and I walked away. I was hurt, so I ran. Off I went back to my life of darkness.

Then, in the summer of 2009, while living in a clean and sober house, a roommate of mine (that I did not like) suggested I try the café. My response to her was harmful and bitter. "I know about that place. I have been there before. Those people are mean and I won't go back." God spoke thru our dislike of each other. She replied "Have you been to the new location? You should try it. They have dinner every day." I replied, "I don't need their dinner. I have my own food. Can't eat white people food." Well God didn't give up. Her next words were, "You should check it out again. They may have changed."

Off I went to see this "new" Recovery Café. The new location was in an area that was unhealthy for me in my broken fragile state. So this second visit hardened my heart in a new way. I WOULD NOT be back. I could and would not go to that area of town again. God,

again in His wisdom, stepped in. The café moved for a third time. Out of excuses, I found that this last location would be just what I needed for my healing.

My first visit to the location on Boren Street was a 12-step meeting. After the meeting, a dinner was served. At this dinner, I found many friends who participated in events daily at the café. Somehow I found myself there the next day. Not only there, but there early, before the doors opened. The staff person on duty was unloading food and asked for help with this task. The next thing I knew, I was in the kitchen preparing lunch for the café members. After lunch, I went to a knitting class. This became a daily event for me - getting to the café early to help with lunch and some type of class later in the day.

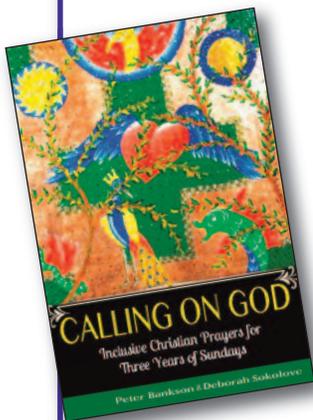
After a week or so, I was asked if I was a member of the café. My fragile self felt very threatened. I finally had found a safe place of belonging and because I was not a "member," I was sure I would have to leave!!! To my surprise, I did not have to leave. No one has to leave the café and membership was very simple. All they required was I become a part of a group that met once a week. There were many groups and times for me to choose from. I chose the women's circle. From there my life changed.

So many changes, so many lessons, so many blessings, so much acceptance. The Recovery Café, which Killian Noe patterned after the Potter's House, is a place of belonging, a place where one can heal and grow, a place where one can learn to be loved, a place where one can love, a place where one can learn to love, and a place where one can be.

Stephanie Harding participates in the C of S racial reconciliation conversations, and is a frequent visitor at the Potter's House.



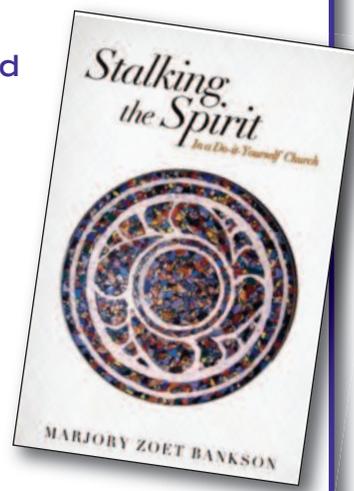
Upcoming Book Events at The Potter's House!



**Stalking The Spirit by Marjory Z. Bankson and
Calling On God by Peter Bankson and
Deborah Sokolove**
Friday, March 18 at 7pm

America's Original Sin by Jim Wallis
Tuesday, March 22 at 7pm

The New Community by Elizabeth O'Connor
Re-release Discussion and Celebration
Saturday, April 9 at 4pm



HOLY HILARITY: Our Merry Menace Don

By Dixcy Bosley-Smith

Don McClanen was a mess. He was reckless, relentless, radical, reactionary and uniquely real. Don was a force of nature, a maverick, an irritant for causes he believed in. He cared and cared deeply— for unchurched athletes, disadvantaged urban youth and countless international poverty missions. Spanning the globe many times to places of enormous suffering, he connected affluent American Christians “ Pilgrims” in an effort to expose and liberate us from our ignorance and greed. Don annoyed us with his persistence to respond and co-create the Realm of God.

In the mid 80s, well after Don had helped to create or raise large sums of money for many ministries like Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), Washington Lift, Wellspring, Christ House, Joseph’s House and Ministry of Money, Don heard a new call. Our friendship began as we shared a passionate concern for persons dying from AIDS and addiction. His generous response changed my life. Our AIDS mission group was amazing. Don was a spiritual lifeline to me as we needed support through those early painful, mercy-less days of the disease.

A few years ago, I had the enormous privilege to escort Don to an FCA Founder event to honor him. He had accompanied me, so now I was able to accompany my old friend to Kansas City. Donnie Dee, a former NFL player and current CFO of FCA, told me how Don changed his life when he was a young athlete. Like me, Mr. Dee treasured his encounter with a man who possessed a natural gift for



kindness, community and service. Later, Mr. Dee told me that FCA would like to contribute to the McClanen’s senior care, which allowed Gloria and Don respectful and safe housing in these later years. Oh my, he was so grateful for God’s provisions.

Don was fully human, and he marveled at what his Creator could do with his broken earthen vessel. Despite, and because of his characters flaws, he knew he was God’s beloved son and a cheerful playmate in creating a more just world. He fiercely loved people, and he absolutely believed that what broke the heart of God, will also break us open into marvelous beings for good.

Christ was important to Don and while he often felt alone, he seemed to believe that God did not abandon him. With an authentic desire to live close the edge, he challenged

himself and others in outrageous yet transforming ways.

Don died on February 16, at the age of 91. “Well done, Don. Well done!” And now, let us all remember his belly laugh. There was nothing quite like it. Holy hilarity, that was Don. No doubt, he is a merry menace in The Great Beyond.

A memorial service is planned for July.

Dixcy Bosley-Smith teaches nursing students, is a member of the 8th Day Community and a board member at the Potter’s House.

SACRED SPACE

Chant, Silence, and Sharing

NEW TIME: Every 2nd Sunday from 5-6pm (previously, it started at 5:30)

WHERE: The Potters House, 1658 Columbia Road NW, Wash DC 20009

By Connie Ridgway

Our mission group, New Creation, began in 2008 as a call to provide music for the 8th Day Faith Community and to support musicians in their journey to create their own music. Over time we also have led workshops on the creative process and on the spiritual path of being a liturgist, and encouraged artists and poets as well as musicians.

Sacred Space, begun in October 2015, arose out of New Creation’s complementary call to be “Mystics in the Modern World.” We seek to be both mystics and prophets through our music and poetry. Sacred Space has a structure similar to Taize services, as three of us in the mission group have been to Taize in France, and have also helped Stefan Waligur in his unique way of offering his own chant/kirtan.

The difference is that we draw from other traditions also: Gospel/Spirituals, chants from the Aramaic words of Jesus, and chants from other religions. Recently we have been in contact with some women from the Muslim Womens’ Coalition to have them teach us some Muslim chants.

In March 2016 we will have led a Sacred Space event in collaboration with Stefan Waligur, a modern mystic who has been affiliated with Church of the Saviour in various ways since the early 2000s. He will be introducing some new chants amidst the silence, bells, readings and sharing.

If you have some music that you would like to introduce to us to be part of a future Sacred Space event, please send it to me at kaniru4@gmail.com

Special Events

Mar 11-13 | Weekend retreat @ Dayspring. "Dying to Self, We Live," led by Kayla McClurg, \$210. Reservations: DayspringRetreat.org/events.

Mar 13 | NCC/CCRN remembrance service, 11-2pm at New Community Church, 614 S St NW, Wash DC.

Mar 18 | PH Book Party for "Calling on God" and "Stalking the Spirit." 7-9pm.

Mar 27 | Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30-7:15am at Dayspring, on the lawn in front of Wellspring

Ap 5 | "Deepening the Spiritual Life in Prayer," led by Ann Dean. 10-3pm @ Dayspring. No cost. Bring bag lunch.

Ap 8 | Carroll Café @ Seekers Church. Local jazz singer, Shirleta Settles. Reservations on CC website.

Ap 8-10 |Weekend retreat @ Dayspring. "Finding Your Way by Standing Still," led by Leah Rampy. \$210. Reservations: DayspringRetreat.org/events.

Ap 14 | Quiet Day @ Dayspring. 10-2pm. No leader, cost or reservation necessary. Bring a bag lunch.

My 10 | Quiet Day @ Dayspring. See details above.

My 13 | Carroll Café @ Seekers Church. "Celtic and Beyond: Cassie and Maggie McDonald." Reservations on CC website.

My 21 |Discipleship Year Fundraiser "A Taste of Discipleship" at the Festival Center, 6-9pm, featuring food and performances by DY volunteers.

Jun 17 | Carroll Café @ Seekers Church. Joe Uehlein and the U-Liners. Reservations on CC website.

Jun 23 | Quiet Day @ Dayspring. See details above.

Jun 24-26 | Weekend retreat @ Dayspring. "Deepening Prayer and Love," led by Terry Flood. \$210. Reservations: DayspringRetreat.org/events.



Photo by Peter Bankson