

Callings

in Church of the Saviour

Vol 14, Issue 1 • Spring 2025



D.C.'s First Aquaponics Farm Tied to Workforce Development and Reentry

One of Jubilee's most ambitious initiatives yet, Jubilee Farms is an aquaponics farm in our new Ontario Place building that demonstrates our Justice Housing® model by providing a place where residents can thrive. Jubilee Farms will produce fresh, locally grown vegetables for residents, will be a workforce training location for residents returning from incarceration, will sell produce as a generating-income venture, and will provide a place for beauty and meaning-making in our rooftop urban greenhouses.

Jubilee Farm's Impact

Jubilee Farms is an innovative solution for sustainable food production that is good for the environment. By providing food for the Communal Kitchen for Jubilee's nearby KEB building, the Farm

will foster **food security** and access to **healthy meals**.

The development is anticipated to generate approximately \$900,000 per year in cost savings for the District in **reduced recidivism** and **health emergencies**.

As the Managing Director of Jubilee Farms, what excites me the most outside of the fresh crops we will produce, is that in the midst of the rooftop greenhouse there will be space that can be used for yoga, classes, and more!

Please explore the Jubilee Farms webpage and join us on this journey!

Jubilee Farms brings a creative, forward-thinking, and hyper-local approach to addressing the needs of our neighbors. It is a vibrant and vital workforce solution for residents returning from incarceration, while simultaneously providing an abundance of fresh produce for the community.

Tim Tutt, Managing Director, Jubilee Farms

- Tim Tutt
Jubilee Farms Managing Director

See more on page 6

Council Chair | Kate Lasso

Don't you know there is a limitless flow of life – a superabundance of love and caring? You simply cannot exhaust it. It may be tough learning how to touch that current, how to get into that stream, to feel the flow and power of it, to be carried by it, but one thing is certain: the stream is there. And it is limitless.

-- N. Gordon Cosby



This is one of my favorite quotes from Gordon Cosby. His words evoke images of cool, rushing waters that lift me up and carry me onwards. In moments of uncertainty, Gordon reminds me that my role is not to force the flow but to learn how to enter it—to trust that it will carry me toward the work I am being called to do in the communities I serve. We have all chosen this path in our commitment to follow God's call, both individually and communally. We seek God's presence in the unknown, learning to sit with uncertainty and discern where we are being led next. Even as turbulent as life may become, the stream remains available to us. Our task is simply to step in.

It seems we are standing at an inflection point in our society. How can communities of faith move us towards justice and mercy? How are we, as followers of Christ, holding ourselves and others accountable to use our creative gifts in God's service? No matter the external circumstances that surround us, God's invitation remains constant and unwavering—to join in the great work of reconciliation. We mend the broken world not by grasping for certainty but by stepping into the stream with faith—allowing it to move us toward wholeness and healing, toward restorative connection with all of God's creation.

– Kate Lasso is the new President of Church of the Saviour, and Chair of our Governing Board

Editor's Note | Marjory Bankson



After 13 years as the CoS Council Chair, I have recently “retired” to serve our wider community as Editor of CALLINGS and our weekly scripture reflection at InwardOutward.org. It's time, although my health and commitment remain strong. For now, I will continue to support the Council as the secretary in order to provide some continuity and institutional memory.

In the pages of this edition of CALLINGS, you will find stories of faithful responses to God's continuing call ranging from the life-saving work of Jubilee Housing, the life-giving invitation of Vita Poetica, the story of how the Wellspring mission group formed and finally set down its call, and the remarkable work of Recovery Café DC. Each of these is a testament to ways we can step into the stream of new life, trusting in God's leading.

For your comments and suggestions, you can reach me at: callingseditor@gmail.com.

Marjory

Marjory Bankson
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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 • Dunamis Peace Institute • Earthen Hands at Dayspring • Faith & Money Network • Family Place • Festival Center • For Love of Children • Good Shepherd Ministries • 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 DC • Samaritan Inns • Sarah's Circle • Sign of Jonah • Sitar Arts Center • Wellspring Conference Center

Vita Poetica

By Julie Wan

Our arts and faith collective, Vita Poetica, turns five this year. And with this milestone, I've been reflecting a lot on how this project came to be. For a long time, co-founder Lisa Shirk and I had no name for this project. We'd simply been calling this idea of ours an "art and faith group." But there came a point in this journey when it was starting to become real, and we needed to move beyond the generic. We were coming up against a real deadline, too, because we needed to send out invitations for our launch party.

Some people say not to get stuck on a name, because the most important thing is simply to get started. But as a writer, I know how important a title can be, and I know because I'm terrible with titles. And so one afternoon I tasked myself with simply picking a name, any kind of a name at all, by the end of the day.

I found myself sitting in my living room, surrounded by books and magazines, scouring tables of contents. In desperation, I began looking for patterns. There's the two words joined with "and" pattern, like War and Peace or Of Mice and Men. There's the verbal gerund pattern, like Waiting for Godot or Braiding Sweetgrass. Or there's the verbal imperative, like Nabokov's Speak, Memory or James Agee's Let Us Now Praise Famous Men. Just plug some words into one of these formulas, I told myself.

I actually still have the page in my notebook where I was brainstorming. And I thought it would be amusing, if somewhat embarrassing, to share some of these failed names, which I've never shared with anyone before because, well, you'll see...

Some of the words and images I was tossing around were: roots, epiphany, spark, ember, terroir (what was I thinking?), resonance, echo. I had a list of words for our group, like collaborative or guild or society. I was even looking at literary terms like anaphora or pantoum (I can't even tell you what those mean). Somewhere in that list, though, was "ars poetica," which is a poetic form and a common title, referring to a poem about writing poetry.

Life of Making

It didn't quite make sense to call our group Ars Poetica, and I don't know how I moved from that to Vita Poetica, but I do remember that once the idea of vita came about, I was trying to figure out if it should be Poetica Vita, taking after Latin, or Vita Poetica, which follows the grammar of Italian. Coming from a linguistics background, I felt that the name ought to be grammatical in some language. I ultimately settled on the latter because it had a



better flow and didn't feel cut short when ending with "vita." So instead of "art of poetry," the name now meant "life of poetry." Which I came to really like because it really means "life of making."

Many people don't realize that the word poetry, whether in English or Italian or Latin, all derive from Greek poieo—meaning, "to make or create; to practice or do." It's the same word used in the Bible referring to God's workmanship—which is, us.

Making and creating is something that we share with our Maker. And it's something that living beings innately do, whether it's making art, making community, making meaning. I've found that in times of crisis or despair or, admittedly, procrastination, making something with my hands is not only a comfort and a necessity, it is a generative act, resulting in something that wasn't there before. It is redemptive. When I was avoiding my master's thesis, I started knitting intricate patterns of socks with thin, sharp needles. Although my pages were blank, at least my feet would be warm. When my family and I stayed in Montana last semester, away from my garden and my home, I started collecting long pine needles on hikes and weaving little baskets, now one of my most-treasured souvenirs.

In the world right now, we can't underestimate the power that making has to bring about hope and healing and simply living out our humanity. I hope that together we can inspire each other to keep living a life of making, making art of life.

Learn more about Vita Poetica at www.vitapoetica.org, where you can read our archive of creative works explored through a spiritual lens, as well as purchase our anniversary print issue, published in Winter 2025.

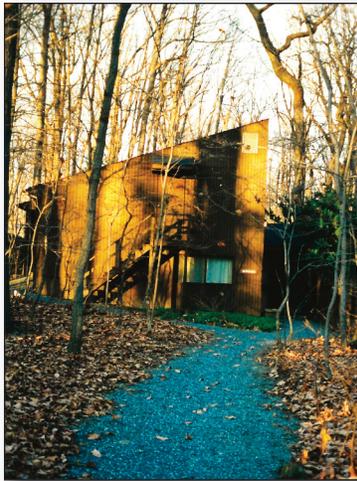
--Julie Wan is a member of Seekers Church.

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And it's something that living beings innately do, whether it's making art,
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THE WELLSPRING STORY

By Myra Flood

In 1983, folks gathered for the Wellspring event titled, 'Encounter with Self and Others.' All had attended at least two Wellspring events. As individuals shared their expectations for the experience, almost all said it didn't really matter what was to be offered. They wanted to be at Dayspring on a Wellspring event because they felt accepted, loved, challenged and encouraged in ways that were extremely important to their own lives and to their churches. Together as ordinary people, they met the Holy One in this place!



Wellspring's Call

In February, 1973, Don McClanen, David Dorsey, and Pat Davis shared a vision during worship at Church of the Saviour. Don had carried the seed of this vision from the time he and his wife, Gloria, first came to the community years before. Those years were spent holding the seed while human resources were prepared and the timing of God and persons converged.

God's call on our lives seems to come as we witness or experience suffering in one way or another. The suffering Don, David and Pat were speaking to that morning concerned people who had been awakened to their need of growing relationship with God and had sought to respond to that need and to their love for God through churches, only to find that in many instances the felt experience seemed stagnant – not life giving. Their hope was to experience the God of love and too many times it seemed to be more about preserving a building of stone and tradition that was stale rather than a vibrant life as the people of a loving God.

Somehow, by the Grace of God and through the response of faithful people, folks at The Church of the Saviour were experiencing life and vibrancy as church that was alive and exciting! The Wellspring Call was to bring new life and vitality to the church universal through sharing the ways of being church lived out in The Church of the Saviour with anyone who wanted to hear.

My response was loud and clear. I had discovered this church full of life about three years before and experienced this vibrancy coming into my own life in amazing ways. So when the call was sounded my heart leapt! I knew this was my call too.

When Wellspring's call was sounded, ten of us gathered after the worship service with a common response. This was good news indeed! We were in various C of S mission groups, meeting at different times, and would need to continue our commitments until this new Wellspring Mission Group could become an official group. Finding a meeting time was a challenge so we decided to gather at C of S Headquarters at 5 a.m. the next Tuesday – to wait on the Holy One in silence.

Mission Group Formation

There are no words to convey how those early days felt – unknowing – mystery – wonder! The Holy One calling us to new levels of our own lives. But it wasn't all joyous. Part of the new life was to feel the pain of difficult questions. For whatever reasons, this new Wellspring Mission which felt like uncovering treasure to those in the group seemed unwelcome to a few C of S folks on whom the mission would depend.

One factor was the gift of a large grant from Lilly Foundation almost before we got going as a mission group. Don and Dave had gone fund-raising for Washington Lift which was a ministry to inner city youth. The hope was to build a center at Dayspring to house workshops. Almost as an afterthought Don shared a bit about the Wellspring vision. Lilly responded with enthusiasm and granted a \$450,000 amount to Lift and Wellspring to build these facilities to be shared. Unfortunately, the Lift mission ran its course soon after that so Wellspring carried on with Lilly's blessing.

I think, at that time in the history of C of S, such a large grant had never come this easily and it seemed to raise a lot of questions. It felt like we were simply not trusted to use this money wisely. How would Dayspring be changed by all these new buildings?

Money as a Spiritual Matter

This was also the last time money came so easily to Wellspring. After that there came a time when we had to personally pledge to cover what seemed like impossible debt. No other money came from foundations but rather from the modest fees we charged for our events and rentals to C of S groups and other non-profit groups and generous gifts from individuals who came to events at Wellspring and felt blessed.

Also, we never approach change at Dayspring without deep passionate feeling and often resistance! Dayspring has always carried levels of feeling that are beyond anyone's understanding. This is a special place of meeting with the Holy. We want to build tabernacles there – not literally but in our hearts. In some ways, those internal tabernacles are more permanent than brick and mortar. It was a painful sacrifice for many to lose trees on the hill to these new buildings.

It was also a painful exercise to work out plans – furnishings and all the details of building in this new mission group! I remember many meetings where it seemed we were caught in





exercises as meaningless as the Sadduces debates! Thank God for the architects and for the Grace given to keep plugging along. Don found the architect, James Hilleary, who later on won an award for the Wellspring Center building.

Of course, the buildings did not come right away. The building of our life together and forming the strategy for our mission was uppermost. We knew we had to be faithful to keeping the disciplines, calling out the gift of each member and exercising those gifts to build our little body. If we were to share with others what made C of S special, our life together needed to reflect those things.

Orientation

By October of 1973, we felt ready. We offered the first Wellspring Orientation. Betty O (as we called our dear Elizabeth O'Connor then) generously gave us a list of those who had written in response to her Call to Commitment and Inward Journey/Outward Journey and we sent invitations to those folks. We required applicants to read both of Betty O's books if they had not already done so and write a spiritual autobiography. This was serious business requiring a level of commitment!

A group of 12 participants gathered in the Farmhouse with the entire mission group facilitating. We had put as many single beds as could be crammed into 3 bedrooms and the basement with only 1 ½ bathrooms. (What were we thinking?) We were very apprehensive! We were very richly blessed! At the end of that event we knew our call was affirmed!

We began on Friday with dinner and then Mission group members briefly shared our experience of C of S. Then hearing from each participant – usually with a question such as “What is a joy in your life now?” and “What is a challenge in your life now?” Then the Inward Journey would be introduced and Silence would be kept through the night. On Saturday, there would be sharing their experience of Silence. Then we moved to the Outward Journey with someone from an inner city mission sharing about that ministry. In the evening, there would be a party! An experience of community and fun together. On Sunday, a worship service, lunch and goodbyes.

Very soon we found those weekends were simply not enough time so we lengthened Orientations by another day. Time was needed to have an overnight and a good part of the next day in Silence at The Lodge of the Carpenter. Then into the city to visit a ministry there and spend time with Gordon Cosby or Elizabeth O'Connor or sometimes Mary Cosby. Afterward, we returned to

Wellspring and talked together about the 3-pronged journey of inward/outward/together life. Also to be in small groups where conversations could be more personal regarding these three aspects of being church.

We continued to have Orientations in the Farmhouse while the Center was constructed. And people came despite the close quarters! Finally, in September of 1974, the Center was completed! On a Sunday afternoon, we hosted a gathering with many C of S folks coming to celebrate this beautiful, welcoming space. The very first event held in the Center was a wedding! Karin Granberg married Wes Michaelson. It was a beautiful beginning!

Buildings and Program

Actually, the first Wellspring building constructed was the cottage attached to the Farmhouse. We knew there was a need for Wellspring staff and places for them to live. The cottage was complete that first summer in 1973. At that time, Don was director for Wellspring and I acted as his secretary and moved into that beautiful little cottage. Then after the Center, came the cabins – Jacobs Well, Bethsaida and Siloam (named for profound encounters with Jesus). Also the Wellspring residence for the caretaker of the buildings. When the Center was completed, Dave Dorsey became the Administrator but after maybe a year, he went on to another position and I became the Administrator.

Through the '70's, 80's, and 90's word spread and the mission group could hardly keep up with enough offerings – sometimes 2 or 3 a month. We quickly found that after the Orientation folks wanted to come back for more, so we developed an 8-day workshop and other events focused on particular areas of ministry. We also offered spiritual direction by mail to support those who had come and were working in their churches back home to deepen life together.

And there were “Team Visits.” Churches would invite a Wellspring team to come and hold an event for their community in a retreat facility near them. We always went in teams of 3 to try to demonstrate community in our leadership.

In 1998, we were invited to England to have a 4-day event on “Answering Call” and then 3 weekend events in 3 different parts of the country. Janet Hudson, Susan Morely, and I felt called to this adventure! We developed what we called “Becoming the Gospel” and squeezed covering Inward/ Outward/Community experiences in that short time. We had learned that exercises along with simply talking about the three aspects – inward/outward/community – were more helpful than simply doing lectures.

Through these years, our mission group membership changed. Folks left and new ones came but always our life together really formed the basis of doing this ministry to which we were called. Our lives were changed and deepened.

There was a map on the wall in my office in the Center with pins in almost every state in the US and pins in Canada, England, South Africa, and Australia. People had come from all those places. Around five thousand people came to Wellspring events through the years. Many sent their friends and also came back several times for various events.

There are so many stories that could be told of Wellspring participants and how they lived out what had been shared with them on events. Churches were born and new missions formed. Some people came on Wellspring events and ended up moving to be part of C of S.

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Jubilee, continued from page 1

Jubilee Farms will be located on top of Ontario Place, with fish tanks in the basement, water and fish-fertilizer piped up to the aquaponics farm on the roof.

On March 11, a jubilant crowd of city officials, Jubilee Housing funders, and other invited guests gathered for the groundbreaking to incorporate King Emmanuel Baptist Church into this exciting Jubilee Housing project. Programs will include transitional housing and services for citizens returning from incarceration. In addition to low-income housing, there will be workforce development programs at an onsite commercial kitchen as well as farming fruits and vegetables there.

For more information and a video of this event, visit the website: jubileehousing.org



Wellspring, continued from page 5

Wellspring Mission Group Ends

Sometime in after the year 2000, attendance began to fall away slowly. I'm sure there were a number of factors for that. Also, the mission group grew smaller. We did continue to hear from folks who had come, even in the early years, who were living out what they had experienced at Wellspring. In 2006, I felt my own call shift and with very mixed feelings left the Wellspring mission group but

continued as Administrator for another year before retiring in 2007.

Susan Quass came to be in the mission group and became Administrator and the mission continued until 2010 when, with great sadness the little group remaining realized the call had been answered and fulfilled and it was time to let go.

There was a gathering to celebrate what had been and I was part of that group that filled the Center to remember and give thanks. I know that many, many lives and a good number of churches were changed through Wellspring's ministry! As Resurrection people, we trust that new life will be raised up when we have the courage to set down a call that touched so many.

Myra Flood was a member of Church of the Saviour for 35 years, 33 of those at Wellspring. She now lives in Missouri near her daughter and family, and continues to stay in touch with Dayspring Church through Zoom worship. Her email is mflood7@att.net.



Update: Recovery Café DC

Recovery Café is a proven addiction recovery and stabilizing model that operates successfully in 77 cities across the US. Our new building in Anacostia, currently under construction, will also have 42 units of much needed affordable housing on the top floors.

We are in the final stage of our \$33.21M capital campaign for this project. To date, we've raised 94% (\$31.5M) of the needed total and need to raise \$1.05M of our remaining gap by the end of December 2025 to complete construction on schedule, so we're reaching out to friends and family for help. Here's a bit of recent background on this project:

- Our co-founders (Jacqueline and Donald Conerly) were just selected as 2024 Washingtonians of the Year... so proud!
- Our new building is now under construction in the heart of Anacostia/Ward 8 at 1337 Marian Barry Ave, SE.
- Recovery Café DC will be 8,000 square feet of café-style space on the

- ground floor of the new building with 42 units of affordable housing on top.
- We are partnering with the Anacostia Economic Development Corps to execute the design and construction of the energy efficient, 4-story building.
- Site demolition and construction began in August 2024 and is slated to open in early 2026.
- Most of the financing came through Federal and DC Low Income Housing Tax Credits.
- Most of our philanthropic grants came from W.S. Abell Foundation, Diane & Norman Bernstein Foundation, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation and Margaret Willard Harrington Trust.
- We expect to raise our remaining gap through individuals (50%), foundations (25%), and corporations (25%).
- We have also secured a construction loan that will help bridge fundraising proceeds, if necessary.

-- Eric Letsinger, Board Member

Leadership Team – 2024 Washingtonians of the Year!

Jacqueline Conerly, CEO

A DC native, she brings 30+ years of leadership in the public and nonprofit sectors. Served 20 years in US Marine Corps, often as the first African American woman in her roles. She worked 5+ years in the US State Department before joining Jubilee Jobs as Deputy Director of DC Office in Ward 8. She is a volunteer DC Jail Chaplain and member of Leadership Greater Washington.



[Link to Washingtonian Award](#)

Donald Conerly, Program Director

Donald brings 30+ years lived experience of incarceration and addiction for to this role. 16 years ago, he found the depth of healing community that he needed and dedicated his life to helping others in Ward 8 find the same. Donald has 20+ years of experience in Building Maintenance, Construction, and Engineering. He is highly skilled at training new workers on complex projects requiring multiple subcontractors and vendors.



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Special Events

Also see Pottershousedc.org and FestivalCenter.org for their current listings

Ap 20 | Church of the Saviour Easter Sunrise Service, Wellspring Conference Center (Check website for time)
Check community websites (Dayspring, Eighth Day, New Community and Seekers).

Ap 23 [Wed] | Self-guided Silent Retreat. 9-5pm/ \$30. BYO lunch. Pre-register

May 7 [Wed] | “Waking Up to Wonder” led by Ann Dean. 9-5pm/ \$50. Pre-register.

May 16-18 | “Incline the Ear of Your Heart” led by Robin Seiler Jr. Weekend/\$300. Dayspringretreat.org.

May 21 [Wed] | Quiet Day. 10-2pm/ \$30. BYO lunch/ Pre-register.

Jun 11 [Wed] | Quiet Day.

June 20-22 | “Biomimicry” led by Judy Walsh-Mellett. Weekend/\$300. Dayspringretreat.org.

June 25 [Wed] | Ember Day. 10-4pm/\$30/ BYO lunch. Dayspringretreat.org.



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