



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

"...the ministry of the Word" - Acts 6:4

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www.dayspringdiscipleship.org

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

July 2010

"...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness..." --Luke 1:78-79

Newsletter

A Sacred Dance

Dearhearts,

It has hung like a dark patch over my years – that prolonged clump of time at the cusp of adulthood when struggle was ever present. Finances were demolished and so were my emotions often. Fear and anxiety were ever-present predators to God's promised peace. We lived in a small apartment, then, with an infant and a toddler and income so inconsistent anxiety and depression do-si-doed across the dance floor of my soul. The only good thing about our apartment was the sizable picture window in the living room that looked out over a parking lot. But between the window and parking lot was a strip of grass with a good-sized tree and some free-form shrubbery that extended above the window sill.

The dark patch followed me into the living room that morning like Pigpen's dust cloud in Peanuts. No one was up but the sun. It streamed in through the window to cast a yellow splash on the gold shag carpet, though I hardly noticed. Fear was oppressive and had greeted me as an anxious knot in the pit of my stomach when I awoke. It was time for self-talk. "Ok, Brenda, bring yourself into the moment. What – in *this* moment - do you have to fear?" In that moment, there was nothing. Tomorrow there might be; but today we had a roof over our head, some food in the pantry and the electricity was on. *Bring yourself into the present*, my thoughts instructed. *What is here, now?* Immediately, my gaze went to the paisled splash of sunshine on the carpet as I walked over and really looked at it. Sunlight and shadows moved in synchronized unison on the floor as the breeze stirred the leaves of the tree outside. As the dark patches moved so did the sun spots...in fluid oneness. Suddenly, the message of that moment seized me. I do not dance alone. As the light moves inseparably with the shadows in the stirring of the breeze, God moves with me here in this night. He is not removed from my shadows. Side by side, He dances with me here.

And beauty welled up from the dappled carpet as I saw the Sacred. Suddenly alive in the moment, I was caught up in His presence...swept up in His arms of peace and joy. And the moment was transfigured.

I've come to believe, over the years, as the sub-text of that message has evolved, that when we can't find joy in our lives, it is because we cannot *see* God in our lives, and we cannot see God, in part, because we do not live fully present to embrace Him there. We are so entangled in the vines of an un-pruned life we skim above the surface of now like a hover craft on its way to somewhere else.

When we do that, joy cannot be found.

Joy lies not in what we do, but in Whom we're with. Joy lies not in where we're going, but in where we are. Joy is not to be found out there, but here. In full embrace of the present moment...fully awake in it...we see what we normally would miss. And in seeing, really seeing, we discover something sacred. The Spirit seizes our heart and enlarges it. Creates a deeper place for love and joy...for peace. He is the great I AM. The eternally Present...Perfect...God. As we walk fully alive to the moment, He meets us there, and all the world is cast in different hues. If we would walk in His Spirit we must train ourselves to be present. Fully awake. Fully here.

The proof of the dance is the arm of peace that braces your back, and the joy that holds your hand. This Divine embrace can only be known as you become fully present in Him.

When the shadows seem to loom in your world, look for the dappled patterns on the floor of your life, and say yes when He comes to you there and asks you for this dance.

I love you,

Friday- Saturday July 23-24

Schedule 1-4 Hours for
Seeking His Presence in Prayer
at the Dayspring Chapel.

***Life is too short, and the days move too quickly,
not to slow down and see Him afresh in our lives.***

972-722-1905

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Making Lemonade in the Prayer Garden

Some misdirected pruning in the prayer garden by a landscaping crew has created an opportunity to make lemonade. As we have considered how best to restore things, we see opportunity for a new look around Riley's Berm and behind the Hibiscus garden by the chapel.

This month the landscapers will create an azalea bed behind the hibiscus garden, using the azaleas along the tabernacle alcoves that have not done well in that location. Covington's nursery has beautiful, large azaleas that will replace those removed from the alcove area.

The greater challenge is the area around Riley's Berm. Brenda has decided to go ahead and convert the berm to a more southwest look which is what we have desired to do for some time. More arid succulents now contrast with a Texas wildflower look of lantana and gaillardia. The strip that runs behind the Antique roses from Riley's Berm to the hibiscus garden will be opened up for memorial trees and other plants honoring loved ones who have died. Four dogwood trees have already been donated and planted for that purpose. One is flourishing. Three have died. Since Lowe's has guaranteed them we will be able to replace them. The two Japanese Maples, purchased at the same time are doing well.

Behind, and to the left, of the berm we have decided to create a small, flagstone sitting area. Though there are some challenges to this, we believe we can create something that



Location of planned flagstone sitting area near Riley's Berm.

will be very appealing as well as usable. The challenges surround the added upkeep of weed control.

The biggest question mark for this area is the two antique rose bushes just to the left of the berm that were pruned while in bloom and in high heat. Approximately 70% of the cut ends are turning brown with the discoloration moving down stem. In consulting with the Antique Rose Center in Brenham, the timing of the pruning has created such stress that their survival is not assured. Additionally, the inner brushy support was removed from these two bushes that have stood 5 feet high and about 8 feet in combined length, leaving the remaining arms pretty much on the ground. Because two garden weddings are scheduled, one in August and one in October, we are seeking to reinforce this area with several pink knock-out rose plants that will compliment the antique roses if they come back. If we are able to prune them in September or in February, these wounded beauties should be bushing out again by next spring.

As a prayer note, Brenda has pretty much lost the consistency of her walk in all this and feels a re-consecration of herself and of the prayer garden is probably in order.

Though the landscaping company is planting the azalea beds and trees, the amount of work for Gay and Teresa, Caroline and Brenda has increased significantly. Though much of the added expense is being covered by the owners of this property, the flagstone, mulch and grass required for this effort is a sizable expense for us. We would welcome any help you might offer, either with the expense or with labor. Even locating items at nurseries or transporting them would be a great help.

We never cease to be amazed by the Kaufmanns, and remain deeply grateful for their generosity and support for the garden.

Chapel Used for Small Weddings

Increasingly, the Dayspring chapel is being used for small weddings and vow renewals. It can comfortably hold 50 people. We ask you to keep this in mind as you know of people desiring an intimate, affordable place. The prayer garden has also been used for weddings and receptions.

We have two people available to assist in the arrangements and coordination. Refer people to our office for further details. (972-722-1905)

"Person of Impact" Course

Plans are currently being finalized for "Becoming a Person of Impact" – a course Brenda originally developed as lay-counseling training. Though it is valuable in providing a spiritual and scriptural base for those seeking to become counselors, its purpose is to equip Christians to use God's principles and ways not only in the practical demands of their own lives but in helping others who may be facing daunting challenges.

The primary elements of this course include:

- The basic scriptural and spiritual principles for personal freedom and healing
- How to recognize the lies and find the truth
- Christ's example in dealing with the wounded and with controllers both
- The grief process
- Listening skills

We are considering scheduling the course in evening or weekend blocks to make it available to those who work. A likely scenario would be a Friday evening and all-day Saturday event, repeated in some fashion over the course of a couple of months. Start-up is targeted toward the end of this month. If you are interested, please contact our office. The final schedule will be determined by the constraints of those who will be participating.