



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

505 E. Boydston, Rockwall, Texas 75087
972-722-1905

www.dayspringdiscipleship.org

“...the ministry of the Word” – Acts 6:4

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

August 2014 “...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness...” – Luke 1:78-79 Newsletter

The Smell of Decay

Dearhearts,

Walking down the lane near my house has turned into an adventure this spring and summer. I have seen more snakes – alive and dead – than I knew we had here. Copperheads for sure. And then there are the yellow bellied racers, the blue racers and Texas brown snakes smushed on the road and the intimidating rat snake slithering into the brush. All of these made their way to the lane this year. There may have been other kinds as well, but these are the ones I know.

And the smells of the lane have changed. You get a whiff of something dead. I can always tell the snakes. There is something particularly pungent about a decomposing snake. There are others as well, as I walk; somewhere in the foliage that lines the lane. An armadillo? A rabbit... maybe? But the snakes you can tell.

After 4 days in the grave, Lazarus' body was decomposing. “It stinks,” they told Jesus when he asked where his body was laid. Everybody knows life does not return to what is decaying. Jewish tradition believed that the spirit of the deceased hung around for three days (and therefore might decide to re-occupy the body). But four days? Four days was way beyond the reach of miracle. The smell was proof.

The need in the midst of her grief – the requirement for her comfort - when Martha ran to Christ with cries of “If only,” was belief. “If only you had been here...if only you had come sooner... our brother would not have died!” *Your brother will rise. I am the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this, Martha?* Christ asked. *Of course, I know that he will rise in the resurrection at the last day,* her triumphant cry of faith rang out from her grief. *But do you believe it for NOW. Resurrection is not just at the end of the age, it is here... now...do you believe this, Martha?”* The Lord seemed to be saying. She needed present, resurrection faith to rise up to the circumstances of her life. It was not cosmic faith that was needed for the moment. Was Resurrection in her very presence and a force in this present day, not just in the last day?

So Christ called forth Lazarus from the grave. A distant voice piercing a decaying sleep. And a body

beyond the reach of miracle, began to move, to struggle... then stand. And hobble, somehow, to the mouth of the tomb. Someone else had to roll away the stone. And friends had to remove his grave clothes. But it was the Word that spoke life into humus.

Where are the dying places in your world? The losses you are grieving? The disillusionments or betrayals? The unmet expectations? The critical moments in which someone dropped the ball...with enormous consequence? Those places in us cry “if only” to a God who showed up late...or not at all. *Oh, he'll show up at Armageddon, but he missed **this** war.*

There are entombed places in our lives that have not dared to believe in resurrection. That have not believed it is possible to recover from the damage. That have lain buried for so long tissue in the soul is decomposing. And what is the smell of decay in a human soul? It is resentment and bitterness... despair. It is grief that has lodged in a depressed and hopeless cave. It is the numbness of an un-lived life. It is the arrogance that all the world revolves around me...a life-approach of condemnation and ridicule. Decay takes time. It begins when something in the soul has settled in as a state of being.

But even these are not beyond the voice of Resurrection...if we want it. Mary and Martha deeply wanted it. They just believed in it as a cosmic truth, not personal to their present life. Do I believe that what has been taken from me by another's hand can be healed? Do I believe that what has been taken from another by my own hand can be redeemed?

He is the resurrection and the life. He has come to call us forth from our graves...to heal our broken and bruised places...to set our captive places free. To make all things new.

Do I believe this?

Is there anything more dead in me than Lazarus?

I love you,

Generous Gift for Prayer Garden

In memory of their unborn children, a couple has offered up to \$2,500 in matching funds toward the purchase of a sprinkler system that will allow us to adequately water the pocket areas of the garden that presently require hand watering. We have been unable to generate enough volunteer assistance to adequately maintain the fringe areas of the garden and have found ourselves scrambling to keep much of these places alive and well.



We are thrilled at the prospect that these issues might be resolved by the generosity of this couple who wish to remain anonymous and by contributions that may come for matching funds.

We ask your prayerful consideration of any donation, small or large, that you might give to this endeavor. Donations will be totaled and matched up to the amount of \$2500.

This is an opportunity to resolve some of the challenges of maintaining the garden with a small team and we are indebted to this couple and to all who respond to their offer.

Thank you in advance.

Pine Ridge Trip in Early September

Two teams of men and women will travel to Pine Ridge September 5-12 for a women's retreat and for horse care. Leanne Vlk and Rebecca Drummond will accompany Brenda to lead a women's retreat at Sharps Corner Baptist Church in the middle of the reservation. Three other ladies are also trying to arrange things so they may go as well.

Woman at the Well will look at who this man was who met the woman at the well in noonday heat. What was the water He offered to her, and what was the thirst she brought with her that day to the well? These are some of the questions that will be posed, and discussed and hopefully answered at our retreat there. Many of these women will not be Christians, and we cherish the opportunity to meet them at their wells and speak to them of the thirst of their soul and of the water Christ offers to them where they are.

If You Would Like to Help...

Our hope is to provide a crockpot to each participant as the gift basket that is traditional to most retreats of this kind. In those crock pots we hope to place Bear Creek (or other) dried soup mixes, some spices and dried onion soup packets and bacon bits...items ideal for many crock pot recipes. We expect to need around 10-12 pots. If you would like to include one of your favorite crock pot recipes as a personal touch, please get it, or other crock pot items to us by Monday, August 25, if at all possible.

We are grateful for any help you bring to this endeavor.

Blankets for Pine Ridge

Shirley Montanye continues to collect blankets to be taken to the reservation when we go. Several have come in, but she is looking for a hundred new or gently used blankets to give to those on the reservation! So, check your closets or thrift shops or Walmart or your crocheting basket and let's see how close we can get to her goal!



Prayer in Entrenched Places

As we consider the magnitude of need and of systemic failures on the Pine Ridge reservation, I am seeing more and more need for a Pine Ridge prayer team that will pray in specific ways regarding the strongholds that clearly exist on the reservation. Something is entrenched in the culture here that seems to counter all the efforts of more than a century, both from within and without, to improve life on the reservation. Without persistent, prevailing prayer, real change seems impossible.

If you want to be part of this prayer team to commit to faithful prayer and attend an initial meeting in which I will cover the prayer steps involved (or if you want to know more about it) please let us know. Brenda

Prayer Garden Note Cards

have finally arrived and we will be letting you know soon when to pick them up. If you haven't ordered but would like to please call us.

Set of 12 different Scenes: \$15

Ministry Overview: A New Season?

There are signs of spring, and there are signs of new growth...in the cycles of the year. And in the cycles of a life. In the life of Dayspring, there are signs as well that we are entering a season of new growth in ministry and outreach. We would like to lay out some of the vision and some of what is already at hand. We do this not only so you may be informed but so you may join us in any of these areas should you feel nudged to do so.

“Where there is no vision the people perish”

When Solomon spoke these words above, he was speaking of the prophetic vision his people lived by. When God’s voice fell silent, the children of Israel languished. The word vision carries a different meaning today...that of something before us that draws us to a journey...a quest. Paul’s words in Philippians 3:13 allude to this vision: *this one thing I do; forgetting those things that are behind I press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of Christ.* Pressing on toward the prize of a high calling...toward Christ...is vision. But where there is no vision...our walk perishes.

Recently a pastor from Egypt spoke at Lake Pointe Church about the revival of the church in Egypt and spoke of the absence in the American church of vision. We have, indeed, lost something...we have lost sight of Christ...lost sight of heroic figures of our faith...lost, therefore, our passion for Christ. We still have passion for our *idea* of Christ...but in the American church today the Christ we see is not the Christ that beckons us.

Christian Antiquities Library

After many months, we are poised to offer a collection of books dating from the infancy of printing (early 1500’s) to the 20th century, writings and biographies of signal figures of our faith from St. Augustine, Ignatius of Antioch and of Loyola, St. Teresa of Avila and Jeanne Guyon to figures of the Great Awakening to Andrew Murray and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. These will be displayed – and in some cases available for reading – in our Christian Antiquities Library to open around late September.

There has been a strong sense of God’s hand upon this endeavor; perhaps that is because these are those who carried the torch of faith and vision not just for their generation but for all generations, men and women who inspire us to reach toward Christ in new ways that are, in reality, ancient paths. Brenda has also felt strongly that funds for this center not be taken from our general budget. So presently it is funded by one person. Should

this center be something that draws you, we would welcome any contribution of time, service or money you feel prompted to give.

Teaching Center. As a center for learning and teaching, the library will host our courses on the history of the church and on the great figures of our faith with its books as key elements in these classes.

Guided Visits (Tours). Both public and private visits will be offered (with private by appointment). Public, teaching events will be held on a bi-monthly basis on Sunday afternoons with a focus on one of the books, the author, and the historical setting.

Personal Study and Research will be available and will combine with special training for those who would like to be able to read some of these rare books on site.

If the American church is lacking a vision of Christ it is because we let our gaze rest upon the array of insignificant accessories our culture is adorned in. Our library offers the opportunity to discover the vibrant faith that has sustained the church through the darkest times and draws us toward Christ.

The Dayspring antiquities library is unique in bringing together in one place rare books scattered throughout the world written by men and women who pressed on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of Christ. It is these devoted figures of our faith that cast a vision for us...if we let them.

Chronicles of the Revolution Course to Focus on the Revolutionaries

The fall emphasis for our Institute offerings will continue to trace the church time line through to the 20th century. Picking up in the 17th century with those key figures who fed the leaders of the Great Awakening in the 1700s, we will also explore their key role in the creation of the new nation of America.

Our fall classes will be broken down into 3-5 week offerings with short breaks between teachings. Other adjustments have also been made to make our fall study less packed with information and more “user friendly.”

We are excited about this content and emphasis and the impact these biographical portraits can have in how we see our own lives and our fellowship of Christ.

Classes will start later in September than usual due to the timing of the mission trip to Pine Ridge.

Look for details in next month’s newsletter for items on this page.

Pine Ridge Mission Outreach

What we Hope to Do

We are into our second year on the reservation of the Lakota Sioux of South Dakota and it's probably a good time to talk about where we have been and are, and where we need to go from here.

The first phase of our outreach has been to develop relationships and find the best places for ministering to the needs there. We have done that in three areas.

Village of Pine Ridge Education. Education is one of the systemic failures on the reservation and it is there that we are seeking ways to make a difference both within the Bureau of Indian Affairs educational system and perhaps, at some point, outside of it.

Lynette Cuny, principal of the upper elementary school there, is a quality educator and it now appears that a new "superintendent" is also very good and innovative. This may be a miracle in itself because the previous 5 or 6 have been disastrous. This new leadership potentially opens new possibilities for making a difference *within* the system.

Grapevine Colleyville academic coach, Rebecca Drummond, has been working closely with Lynette in several capacities. With the new administrator, she sees renewed possibilities of working with them on teacher development which had seemed a closed door last year.

"I have had the privilege of developing a friendship with Lynette. She has been hugely instrumental in the implementation of the volleyball camp since its inception two years ago. We have often discussed the need for teacher growth within the school system and have landed on a program I am a part of called VALOR that enhances and supports teacher growth through observation and reflection. We are working together on this venture to implement the program in Pine Ridge in some fashion next year."

Plans are for Lynette and another administrator to come down later this year to look at programs in GCISD that could be used in Pine Ridge.

Tribal Council/Dental Care. As the governing agency on the reservation, the tribal council brings its own dysfunction to the table. So the chance meeting of



tribal council member Jackie Sears when Brenda dropped in at the tribal council offices on her most recent trip, seemed ordained. Jackie is young and innovative and well aware of the problems within the council. She served as director of the Pine Ridge board of education for 12 years before running for tribal council. She carries the same sense of understanding of the educational challenges on the reservation as does Lynette Cuny. She also is working with us to secure space for the dental office equipment we can deliver and install for free.

The vacated dialysis treatment center adjacent to the Porcupine Medical Clinic had originally been offered to us...and may still be available though there are complications. In a recent text Jackie informed us that a tornado had taken the roof off the dialysis center. There is a roofer on our horse care team that will be in Pine Ridge September 8-10. Brenda told Jackie that whether we can use that space or not, Jack can go down and assess what would be needed in order to restore the roof.

Obviously, there are many possibilities here, none of which may materialize. But after several communications from Jackie it really does feel as though the dental care center will happen, but probably on a much slower timeframe than any of us would like.

If that occurs... then we will begin pulling together teams of dentists and dental hygienists willing to devote 1-2 weeks a year to minister there. Others who would greet people in a "receptionist" role and be Christ to them would also be needed for each team.

Sharp's Corner Baptist Church.

Our relationship with Pastor Michael Brennan and others at the church continues to grow.

The retreat Brenda and 3 or 4 other ladies will be leading there in early September seems an important step in opening spiritual avenues for us. If it goes well, possibilities emerge for other ways to have an on-going imprint in their lives such as scattered retreat follow-up events focusing on scriptural principles, coping skills, relationship/parenting skills etc.

There are other areas and organizations we continue to work with as we can, but these three seem to hold the greatest possibilities for long-term impact.

If you are feeling drawn to any of these areas of Ministry Overview, please consider the possibility that it is God calling you to be part of His work as we walk by faith in unknown places.

