



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

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Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

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

Newsletter

We have seen His star in the east

Dearhearts,

They had been searching the skies. When it appeared, they were snared by its possibilities. Perhaps many who were not searching that night noted the celestial object that tracked strangely through the sky but did not seek to know what it meant. Only for those who had been seeking did it become a quest.

It was the coldest Christmas on record that winter of 1983. Five degrees above zero for days. Ice domes wrapped like white skirts around the trees jutting from Lake Ray Hubbard. The kids were 8 and 10. Our old car had no heat. It was Christmas Eve and we were bound and determined to get home to Mom and Dad's for Christmas. Heading down an icy, somewhat lonesome Northwest Highway, a muffled explosion was followed by steam billowing from beneath the hood. Limping into a deserted looking Texaco station we were buoyed by movement inside. The owner had stopped by to get something. The station was closed...but he fixed our car anyway and an hour later we were heading home to pack, reassured of the road-worthiness of our car. We prayed protection and threw in emergency supplies of every sort and enough blankets for survival in the Yukon. Icy roads. Frigid weather. Old car. Young stupidity. Yet something drew us east to Arkansas and home.

What is important to us summonses our soul...snares us...bids us come.

It was 8:30 and five degrees below zero when we pulled into Mom and Dad's. The night sky was as sharp and vivid as any I had ever seen. It's almost as though the stars could shatter the frigid dome of night with their light. Orion hung majestically over head as a dazzling Sirius trailed to the east, a hint of the eastern star that so long ago drew men to a child's bed. "Oh holy night, the stars are brightly shining." The words reverberated as worship in my soul. The longing that had been so strong through the day was no more. We were home.

What we long for is home, that place we have come from. What snares us with mystery is a distant voice we do not understand but seek after nonetheless. "We have seen His star in the east and are come." Christ bids us follow His Mystery...an adventure into uncharted realms...on a course known only to Him.

How like that distant night our own quest was. Starting out on an improbable course fraught with unknowns, even risk. In looking back, I think how foolish we were to have braved such elements. I would not do so today. Perhaps that is why so few followed His star, opting instead for safer climes, they slept through a holy night. We must not lose the stirring in our soul that dares the unknown seeking the Mystery beyond us. How like that distant night our own quest was. Because it took us to Him.

In those days before internet and cell phones, we did not really know what the road conditions up to Mena were like or how long it would take. Before we turned north at New Boston, we stopped to use a pay phone to let my parents know where we were. As I waited for the lady in front of me to finish her call, I became aware of her conversation. She was headed to Mt. Pleasant. "We left Rich Mountain 3 hours ago...no, the roads weren't bad, just a few icy patches." My parents lived at the foot of Rich Mountain. As we drove off into a falling dusk, we knew what to expect and Mom and Dad knew when to expect us. A Star was guiding us.

So they saw his star in the east, these wise men...and they followed...and their quest brought them to Him.

We must not lose our stirrings for sacred quest. It is what writes our story and ordains our discoveries; it infuses our faith with life. It is what leads us to Him over and over in ways both grand and small, but ways – all – that bring us to him and renew the stories of home...stories of our birth in Him and of His in us.

We have seen the Eastern Star...and have come.

I love you,

Brenda



*Christmas Caroling
Gift Bags Hay Ride
Hot Cider and Hot Chocolate
Other Goodies*

Thursday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.

Dayspring Office / Parking Lot

Next Classics Book Club

Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ

By

Jeanne Guyon

Tuesday, January 25, at 7:00 p.m.

Our Christian Classics Book Club starts the year with a landmark book by a seminal figure in Christian history. Eighteenth century French Catholic mystic, Jeanne Guyon, wrote this book to give the unlearned French peasantry an opportunity to understand the ways of prayer and experience Christ as surely as the gentry elite had. Originally titled "A Short and Simple Method of Prayer," it has since been renamed to reflect the larger breadth and scope of the book, toward a life of relationship and intimacy with Christ.

Upon its completion, one hundred thousand copies were circulated in France. It is credited by Will Durant in his massive, multi-volume work on the history of civilization with changing the spiritual climate of France for a century. Born in 1648, Guyon's life overlapped by about 15 years the lives of the great spiritual movers of the 18th century: Charles and John Wesley (who called Guyon "the greatest Christian to rise since the first century"), Jonathan Edwards and Nicolas Zinzendorf. All were directly influenced by this book, and thus all of Christianity at that time felt its impact. The Wesley's were central figures in the Great European Awakening of the 18th century as was Jonathan Edwards of the American Awakening. Zinzendorf began the great Moravian prayer vigil which continued without lapse from 1727-1827. Guyon's book continued to impact the great leaders of the 19th century including Hudson Taylor of the Great Inland China Mission in which 800 Christian missions were established in China, and Watchman Nee, product of Taylor's missionary work in China. Upon reading her book, Nee had it translated into Chinese and distributed throughout all the churches of his China ministry at the turn of the 20th century.

This book eventually led to her imprisonment at the hands of the Catholic church in the Bastille for several years, from which she wrote some of the most powerful works in Christian literature.

"A Short and Simple Method of Prayer" is much more than a book on prayer. It is a classic discourse on the true essence of what it means to follow Christ. It may be one of the most important books, outside the Bible, in all of



Christian literature. It may be a book you need to discover for yourself and see what so many of the greats of our faith have discovered in its pages.

We invite you to join us as we begin our discussion the **fourth Tuesday** in January at 7:00 p.m. Though it is not a large book, it is not a book to be quickly read, and we encourage you to get your book as soon as possible to have time to read and reflect upon its richness.

The **preferred edition: 1975 translation by Gene Edwards, SeedSowers Christian Books Publishing House.**

The Classics Club meets in a home the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. ***Please call the office to register. Let us know if you need help finding the book.***

Blessed by Response to Chapel Chairs

An out-pouring of response to our need to replace the chapel chairs has provided more than enough to purchase fifty chairs. Additional donations make possible the purchase of a new aisle runner and rug at the front of the chapel that will coordinate with the color of the new chairs. Depending on this cost, we may also be able to purchase additional incidentals needed for chapel weddings.

Sue Almond and Caroline Doyle have worked tirelessly to find the chairs, select color and design and otherwise get the chapel ready for small weddings.

We are so blessed by your generosity and are deeply grateful to all who have contributed to this effort.

Does Anyone Need Blue-Gray Stackable Chairs?

Consider the Gifts of Dayspring

This year we offer for your consideration gifts from Dayspring that combine a spiritual focus, a ministry outreach and a unique depiction of our area in the winter of 2010.

Our **picture wall Calendar** showcases the Dayspring Prayer Garden and chapel and includes Scripture references for each month.

The **Notecards** come in two sets: 12 different local snow and bird scenes from the dramatic snows of 2010 and a variety of 12 seasonal prayer garden scenes. All will be captioned with scripture. These are excellent pictures taken primarily by Sarah Merritt and Sue Almond who has created the calendar for us.

Proceeds from these two items go directly to meet expenses of the ministry.

Brenda's book, "Song of Christ – Reflections on a Sacred Journey" is also offered.

See order page for details.