



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

## Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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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

### *Making Visible What is Invisible*

Dearhearts,

Heaven spilled over into earth that moment so long ago when a young woman bowed her heart to a sacred Word. In one invisible encounter Salvation for the world planted itself in a human womb. A King stole in on cat paws like a thief in the night to take back what had been His so long before. And no one knew...save one. The maid who answered the knock at earth's door...and opened. He entered only through the consent of the gatekeeper. Not a thief here...but a submitted Sovereign...yielding to the human will. Gaining entry to earth by permission, He needed only one willing heart to gain access to the hearts of millions.

And the yeast of heaven hid itself in the dough of Bethlehem...and made Bread.

Taking what is common of earth and transforming it into something that saves it. He did it in the womb. He did it in the tomb. In the tomb it was His own will submitted once more; in the womb it was Mary's. And nothing was made easy with the yielding of her will. Mary's world changed dramatically. Her life was not her own. Her world gyrated enormously from that moment on. Yet in her consent all the world changed for all time.

At conversion, Christ knocked on our door and we opened. Coming like a thief in our night to take our captivity captive; to steal our darkness and hopelessness...to wrest it from another's grip. And transform it. And yet...unless the invisible is made visible in us...no one will know. Unless the embryo of Christ is birthed – not from us, but within us, no one will guess what lies hidden there in the womb of our soul. As He would not birth in Mary's world without her permission, He will not grow in us without ours.

What sacred word has been spoken to our heart? What quiet knock on the door has our heart heard? What message has been whispered there? What moment of insight or light? And what has our heart done with it?

Have we harbored it there or have we resisted something miraculous? Have we aborted a new birth?

A yielded heart has the power of heaven hidden in its folds. The power to transform the common of earth into something life breathing. To transform pain into triumph, hurts into healing...losses into redemption. The power to take the stuff of earth...its pain and rubs and challenges and reconstitute them into something new.

An unyielded heart holds the power of hell in its folds. What is harbored in our heart is what will become visible.

So what is being formed there? What is being birthed from the womb of our heart? \*Is it a negative, critical spirit that is manifesting? Places where our heart did not yield to the knock but locked and bolted the door? From these hidden places what becomes visible reflects what we have resisted. What we have grieved far too long. The realities we have been unable – or unwilling - to accept.

The human heart transforms all that it harbors. \*What are we making visible of the things that have happened? An event...transformed into bitterness or grace? Into regret or redemption? Hurts transformed into hatred and anger or forgiveness and love?

The invisible suddenly became visible that lonely, dark night in a tiny village in Judea.

We, too, are asked to make visible the invisible Christ within. To make visible what of God the world cannot otherwise see. The human heart is a transforming instrument. What it births depends upon our consent.

I love you,

**Who Is My Brother and Who Does He Say I Am?**  
**First Thursday Conversation**  
**December 5, 7:00**



**Christmas Caroling**  
**Thursday December 19**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Director of Love in Action International, Rae England, brings her passion and compassion, her experience and experiences to the Dayspring Chapel this month. With stories of wartime Bosnia and her experiences ministering to Muslim refugees that fled to our area from that conflict Rae opens a window for us to look past cultural caricatures and see them differently and, perhaps, see ourselves differently as well.

Emerging from the brutalities of war and prejudice, her questions ask us to consider who is our brother and challenge us with an indicting message that we be who we have been saved to be. *“If people are not moved by their encounter with us, then the question is what are we doing?”* We are asked to examine ourselves and consider how others are impacted by how we live. *“Who is my brother?”* is one question. *“How does he see me?”* is quite another. *“Who do they think I am?”* is the more fundamental question,” she says. Our witness for Christ is not so much in the words we say but in how we live Him out in our lives. She concludes, *“We can know how people see us...who they say we are...by what they say when we walk away.”*

Please join us for a dynamic evening in the Dayspring chapel Thursday, **December 5**, at 7:00 p.m. It will be an opportunity to be informed, to be challenged and stretched, and, perhaps even to be uncomfortable.

Opportunities will be available for ministering to the needs of some of these families in our area should you want to. One such opportunity at Christmas is spotlighted below.

**An Iraqi Family**

A mother and four children live in an apartment in east Dallas on just two part-time incomes. The family fled Iraq for Jordan when the father refused to build bombs for terrorist type groups. With the family in danger they fled to Jordan, living there for 6 years before coming to Ft. Worth under refugee status 4 years ago. Due to family conflict the mother and children now live in Dallas.

The three oldest children (21, 16 and 14) have been in counseling with Brenda. She has been struck by the sweet spirit that animates them and yet the underlying strength that sustains their effort to survive here. Though Muslim, they love Christmas and Christmas trees and the festivity that surrounds this season.

We have an opportunity to carry to them the Christ of Christmas, to breathe love and compassion into their

Preparation for our annual caroling night in the Dayspring neighborhood is under way as Teresa Jacks pulls together the contents of the 20 gift bags to be given to those who grace us with their audience.

If you would like to help supply the items for our gift bags, that would be a great help since each bag costs approximately \$30. We have always had a gift certificate for a free bone-in ham from Brookshires in addition to the other items above. With Brookshire’s closing, we’re hoping the neighborhood WalMart will help us out.

It is always an evening filled with fun and fellowship, with singing and hot chocolate, cider and dessert; and we hope you will join us for a special night!

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***“There’s a story in ‘My Grandfather’s Blessing’ about a woman who was so grief stricken when her husband died that she could not function. Her family finally convinced her to see a counselor. Months after her counseling had ended, she sent her counselor a note that said simply:***

*I pull up anchor.....and catch the wind*

***“Anthony De Mello writes at length of our false belief that has been put in our head by tradition, culture, society and religion...the belief that we cannot be happy without the things that we are attached to and consider precious. Happiness is in the future - it will come if we can manage to change our situation and the people around us.***

***“The truth is we have within us everything we need to be happy. It’s the ‘pearl of great price’ but we must give up everything to possess it. It’s this giving up that is the pulling up anchor so that we catch the wind. And so we live, not clinging to attachments - not stumbling blindly through life. But rather we walk freely, seeing God in all things, as one born of the Spirit.”*** (Rae England, Love-in-Action Newsletter 2013)

world. We have the opportunity to live out the true meaning of Christmas for this family.

If you would like to help provide Christmas and to be an instrument of Christ’s love for them, please let us hear from you as we coordinate clothing and other items (including, perhaps, a Christmas tree).

## The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse Revelation Study Moves into Chapters 4 and 5



Our 8:00 Sunday morning chapel study on Revelation continues to be faithfully attended with 16-20 people typically present. We invite you to come to consider Christ's message to the church then and to the church now. Revelation is not just a book of cosmic implications of the "unveiling of Christ" but of personal application of His "unveiling" within.

In Revelation we see Christ seeking to comfort and encourage the suffering church at the close of the first century – and that of all the church ages - as the Christ who no longer is the suffering Crucified but conquering King. A Sovereign who knows the details of the ages and the aspirations of the human heart.

This is the mystery that unfolds in this ultimate book of Mystery, revealed in sacred timing...when the moment is at hand.

*"Brenda's study on Revelation has opened my eyes to the mysteries of God...I am beginning to understand more of what a loving Father we have and how complex and wonderful His plans are for His children...I have never looked at Revelation the way I have in the last few weeks. I can't wait to see what is unveiled next week!"* Karen

*"This study is having such a deep impact on my life. After this I will be prepared to go into the future, as a Christian, with my eyes, heart and mind wide open as to God's purpose and His provision for my life..."* Patty

Listen to  
"The Unveiling of Christ"  
Sunday Morning Teaching on Revelation  
on-line or download to your Smart Phone  
from  
[www.dayspringdiscipleship.org](http://www.dayspringdiscipleship.org)  
teachings/downloads page

## Exciting Spring Semester Planned Mark Your Calendar for Thursdays Beginning January 16

If you would like to stretch your mind, expand your knowledge and challenge yourself to better understand your faith and God's movement in history, this spring semester affords a great opportunity for you through an array of classes on **the history of the church**.

Pat Townsend introduces this series on **January 16 and 23** with two classes that set the stage for the world that Christ confronted and the world His church engaged. In *The Rise of Paganism*, Pat traces its beginnings following the flood of Noah and draws fascinating correlations and understandings you will find nowhere else.

Brenda will follow up with a third class on the last Thursday evening in January on **the "fullness of time"** – a look at the convergence of historical conditions that made His coming perfectly timed for God's purposes to be most fully accomplished. *Why didn't Christ come sooner? Why did He wait until that precise moment in human history?* The "fullness of time" is God's answer to these questions. **See page 4 for more details on the spring semester of continuing discovery.**

## First Thursday Historical Conversations

Beginning in February our **"Historical Conversations"** continue with a 2-part discussion of the book *Saving Leonardo*. Written by Nancy Pearcey, it is a thoughtful, provocative examination of the secularization of our culture in literature, art, movies and music and of our response as a people of impact.

*"It's time for the church to regroup, rethink, and recast its strategy for social and political engagement... Armed with God-given spiritual discernment and a compassion for those who are trapped by destructive ideas, the church is to become a living work of art, conveying the drama and excitement of the gospel to the world around us in word and deed...Ideas are very difficult to accept if they are solely abstract and theoretical. We need to see them lived out practically - - made visible and tangible. Christians must back up their message with authentic living before a watching world."* (excerpted)

**If you would like to participate**, please contact Becky Elliston or the Dayspring office to secure a book. Since it is a thick book, you will need time to read it before our first meeting in February.

## Dayspring's Institute in Continuing Religious Education

*It is our belief there is a need to offer opportunities for people to explore the great treasures of information regarding our faith and the intersection of God in human history without the expense that often prohibits people from pursuing these treasures via college courses. This next step in the ministry of Dayspring comes from this belief. Our goal is to offer classes ranging from basic, foundational offerings for those who are curious to more advanced offerings for those who are serious. Our commitment is to bring to you through these courses, unique perspectives and information not generally known but which will enhance understanding and insight into God in the midst of human events.*

*Though more details will be available in January's newsletter, we want to give you advance information so you may better know what to expect next year and to invite others to participate in these classes.*

A smorgasbord of fascinating insight, little known facts about little known, or greatly known, events and people and movements in church history awaits you in the studies of 2014 with Dayspring's Institute of Continuing Religious Education.

Though others will be brought in as occasional guest teachers and lecturers, we are excited to introduce to you our permanent development and instructional staff who will be working with Brenda in establishing this part of our ministry.

### Becky Elliston

You have already met Becky, but as you know, she is a retired history teacher from Rockwall High School who brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to developing the menu and teaching some of the courses offered this coming year. Becky will offer historical perspective on the Imperial Church and other movements in church history. As we move from these initial offerings, she will be taking some of these courses down to more advanced levels for those who wish to go there. She will be spearheading the discussion venue as with *Saving Leonardo* in February and March.

Becky's energy and expertise and spiritual passion bring a valuable package to the development and implementation of this new aspect of our ministry.



### Brenda Cox

You already know Brenda so no further information is needed except that she will be teaching occasional classes as supplement to those of Pat and Melvin and Becky.

No  
decent  
photo is  
available

### Melvin Merritt



Though he doesn't look like it in this picture, Melvin is a very sophisticated, no-nonsense man of God. Actually...the only thing that is true about this statement is that he is a man of God.

His life-long devotion to the Lord is evident in his demeanor, his spirit of kindness and gentleness and in his quiet strength. A minister for many years, he has an understanding of the Bible that is rich in insight and wisdom. His appetite for reading and knowledge takes him to places of discovery his friends hope he will share with them. We are blessed to have him do that with us this coming semester as he leads an expedition that explores the role of Irish monks in saving civilization in the Dark Ages. Most of what we know that pre-dates this period is because of these obscure figures.

### Pat Townsend



As a student of the Bible and a Bible teacher at Lake Pointe for many years, Pat brings unique gifts and perspectives to the courses she will be teaching for us as well as a vision for the larger program. She not only is a student of the Bible but is a student of learning and has a rare ability to see connections and correlations that others miss. These gifts come to the ministry this year as she will be teaching not only the rise of Paganism and its framing of the world that awaited Christ but classes on figures of the Reformation and of the Suffering Church. Her teachings will fan a flame of excitement and learning for those who attend.