



Dayspring Discipleship Institute

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

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

December 2011 “...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness...” --Luke 1:78-79

Newsletter

Harbor Light

Dearhearts,

As children it somehow made us feel special when someone whispered a secret in our ear. We had been singled out. No one knew in that moment what we knew. We would keep that secret hidden in our heart until we heard someone else talking about it and the illusion of specialness dissipated. God slipped into earth in a whisper once...tucking Himself in the folds of a human womb. And in that moment, an angel whispered the secrets of heaven to a young woman no mortal had ever heard. “...Highly favored...the Lord is with you...you shall conceive in your womb...that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God.” And she kept all these things – and more - and pondered them in her heart. And they illumined the rest of her life with strength and grace in the most arduous of places...reassurance of the secrets of heaven that go with us even there.

What is harbored in the heart guides us and creates the life of the soul. The bitter woman or angry man...a critical or controlling spirit...harbors unfinished grief or hurt and the heart is swaddled in un-forgiveness. Those who micromanage everything and everyone have become their own god and carry within their heart paradoxical messages of power and fear or doubt. Things beyond their control once gouged the soul and they're not going to cede control of their lives to anyone or anything ever again, perhaps not even to God.

But there are others. The man whose career path was ended and a later career dramatically altered by others' decisions, yet softness and life endure in his soul. There is the woman whose face was scarred through the negligence of childhood caretakers and her life was forever homebound because of it...yet beauty and joy and peace illumine her being. Their hearts have birthed forgiveness and healing because the heaven's Word was pondered there.

What the heart holds onto creates the life we live. Messages of heaven and earth both abound, but it is we who decide if it will be heaven's blessing or earth's curse that lodges in the cleft of our hearts. When my

heart has been broken, hurt will grieve there. But will my heart pursue the promise of healing or embrace the despair of pain and fear? We decide what whispers our heart will hear and harbor. I choose which light will guide my path, which message my world bends to.

And what has heaven whispered to us? Down deep in the hidden regions of our being, God whispers Mary's secret to us all. For there has been placed within the womb of our soul an ember of holy fire. The embryo of Christ. *You are blessed...and that holy thing which shall be born within you is the son of God...the Savior of your world...A light to the Gentiles.* But this may not be the message your heart ponders. Earth's voice may be speaking there. What we harbor in our hearts casts its light upon our soul and upon those about us.

The message of Christ is that of the heart. The hope and promise, both, of its brokenness is that of healing. What we do with the messages of the heart...which we choose to harbor there...determines the light by which we live.

I love you,

2012 Dayspring Calendars/Notecards

Because of the response to last year's Prayer Garden calendar we have decided to offer another calendar with new photos of the prayer garden for 2012. Though we have not yet sent it to the printer, it should be available by mid-December at a cost of \$15. This is a few dollars above the cost to us and helps with ministry expenses.

Prayer Garden note cards will also be offered in packets of 12 different cards for \$15 as well.

Place your orders as soon as possible so we may better know the number to order.

An Evening of Tradition: Christmas Caroling

Please join us
Thursday December 15
at 7:00 p.m.



as we go caroling in the Dayspring neighborhood and give Christmas bags to those homes where people come to their doors to listen. Though this may look like a bribe, it is our way of passing on the spirit of Gift that changed our world 2,000 years ago.

Caroling has long been a tradition of Christmas handed down through the generations until recent times when we have become so busy it has fallen by the wayside. Consider reviving the tradition in your own life as well as in our community. Gather with us afterwards for hot chocolate and cider and other refreshments in the Dayspring office.

Please let us know if you plan to join us in this festive time of blessing.

Christmas Gift Bags

If you would like to help with the items for our Christmas bags this year, Teresa Box has compiled a list of things we normally include. The gift certificates for a free ham from Brookshire's usually run around \$17.00 per ham if you would like to help defray some of the expense.

If you would like to help with the caroling bags:

- Votive candles
- Coffee mugs
- Candy – regular and sugar free
- Packets of hot chocolate and apple cider
- Medium size (8"wide/10" tall) gift sacks and tissue paper
- Lotions
- Socks
- Small flashlights
- Microwave-able popcorn
- Donations for hams

Nursing Home Caroling

Sunday, December 18, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Last month's newsletter carried the incorrect time of 3:00. Please let us know if you can join us!

**Look in Next Month's Newsletter for the
Scheduling of Brenda's teaching
of**

The Road to Emmaus Bible Study

It has not yet been determined if it will be on

**Tuesday mornings
or
Thursday evenings**

Please Remember Us...

This time of year as you consider where the Lord would have you place any extra funds. End-of-year donations have traditionally sustained us throughout the following year.

We are grateful to you and to the Lord for this faithful provision.

The Ministries of Dayspring

For you to better know the niche Dayspring occupies we provide this year-end summary of our offerings for 2011 and 2012.

- **Christian Classics Book Club**
- **Conversations on Mysteries of the Kingdom** (monthly)
- **Nursing Home "Touch" Ministry**
- **Nursing Home Art Class**
- **Art Therapy Workshops**
- **Roundtable** (spiritual formation/growth)
- **Sojourner** (one-on-one discipling)
- **Dinner Book Club**
- **Home Christian Book Club**
- **Support Group**
- **Bible Study**
- **Monday Evening Growth Study Group**
- **Sunday Morning Chapel Study**
- **Prayer Teaching/Saturday Prayer Garden Retreats**
- **Emmaus studies**

*Dayspring is a non-profit ministry
wholly supported by your tax-deductible
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