

The Impact of Church of the Saviour

By Kate Lasso

This year marks 77 years of our existence as Church of the Saviour (1947-2024). I'm wondering what difference Church of the Saviour (CofS) has made in the lives of people inside and outside of the church? Would Washington DC be a different place if CofS had not been called into being? Is there something we have to offer our troubled world today?



Church of the Saviour was born out of the desire to reclaim the legacy of commitment and joy evident in the early Christian Church. Our approach to spiritual life is threefold. The inward journey is an ongoing dialogue with oneself, God, and others to recognize God's guiding presence in the world. The outward journey is an active, embodied response to God's call to service, often with particular attention to poor and marginalized people. And community demands connection and accountability. It is the seedbed for learning how to love one another as Jesus loved his disciples.

While CofS communities embrace a Christianity that proclaims liberation from oppression in our daily and spiritual lives, we also understand that a more traditional Christianity has long been employed as a tool for domination. Do we have good news to offer this weary world?

- What are the universal truths and practices that CofS has to offer to liberation movements today?
- How can we, as followers of Christ, redeem the reputation of Christianity and restore its original vision?
- How can we live into the CofS experience as an example of a Christian community following Jesus Christ into discipleship?
- What is different because CofS was called into existence? Let's find out and share that good news with others.

We will begin with a brief questionnaire asking about YOUR EXPERIENCE. These responses will point the way toward deeper inquiry through interviews, discussions and other forms of research. As the wisdom that CofS has to offer becomes clear, we will share that wisdom with others, to enter more fully into today's conversations about moving towards justice as an expression of Christian faith.

If you are willing to participate, please contact me at klasso@aol.com

A long-time member of 8th Day Faith Community, Kate has supported social justice organizations through capacity building and organizational development work for 20+ years. Because of her interest in transformational change, Kate recently became certified as a coach to serve individuals seeking more satisfaction in their daily lives. Kate holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and lives in Washington DC with her family. her email is: klasso@aol.com



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This year marks a sabbath-cycle birthday for Church of the Saviour. It's been 77 years since three couples joined Gordon and Mary Cosby to form the nucleus of Church of the Saviour with a radical commitment *"regardless of the expenditure of time, energy and money to become an informed, mature Christian."* What that would mean emerged over time. We'll highlight those turning points this year.

Elizabeth O'Connor said that we could expect a change in our primary call every seven years – like the cells in a living body constantly renewing. In *Cry Pain, Cry Hope*, Elizabeth admitted to avoiding her call to low-income housing for seniors because she didn't want to spend her remaining years raising money, but in the end, she said "yes" to that call and found that her health improved as others joined her to make that final mission a reality. Sarah's Circle is one of the stories we will feature in the coming year.

As the modern world shifts to 24/7 online availability and the alternative universe of virtual reality, our commitment to address the real-world problems of racial injustice and environmental destruction demand deep roots in the reality of God's presence here and now – what we know as the inward/outward journey in community. Deepening our faith "in community" requires something more than personal piety - something deeper and more practical. Learning to love one another as a living member of Christ's body is a lifelong process. Although the form of Church of the Saviour is different from what it was in the beginning, the essence remains. How that has happened and what difference it has made in the wider world will be our theme for 2024.

To celebrate 77 years as Church of the Saviour, we're planning an interview with one of the early members and a look at the current form of the mission to which that person was called in each of these quarterly issues. In this one, we have an interview with Ann Barnet and the mission that she started in 1980 as DC's first family support organization, The Family Place. FLOC and Fred Taylor are featured in the centerfold.

The other thread that we will be following is how Church of the Saviour has made an impact on Washington, DC through the many missions that grew out of our call and commitment. Our charism has been to create new models of ministry rather than joining existing organizations. If you have a story to share, please let us know at callingseditor@gmail.com or contact Kate Lasso directly for her project described on the cover page.

With care,

Marjory

Marjory Bankson
Chair, Church of the Saviour Council
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The Church of the Saviour is an ecumenical Christian community, made up of seven small churches, rooted in the radically inclusive life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We believe that in our diversity, each of us is an image-bearer of God, equally valued and loved. We welcome all individuals to join in the life of worship, fellowship and ministry in any of our small faith communities. All of us have an essential role in bringing God's love, justice and mercy to our world.

Interview With Ann Barnet



By Jennie Gosché

Ann Barnet learned from an early age that her family were “people who served” others. Ann said that when she was seven or eight, a settlement house nurse visited her father to learn Yiddish. The nurse asked her, “Would you like to be a nurse like me?” Ann replied, “No, I want to be a doctor.” Always a trail blazer, Ann recently turned 94 years old and is a doctor, an author, and has been a member of the 8th Day Faith Community for decades.

Born Esther Ann Birnbaum on January 18, 1930, in Elmhurst, Illinois, Ann was the second of four children born to John Solomon and Rosalie Birnbaum. The DC peace activist, Eve Tetaz, was Ann’s younger sister.

John and Rosalie Birnbaum converted from Judaism and Ann’s father became a Presbyterian minister. Ann said she always knew she was Jewish and a Christian, but she did not often tell people because she knew about antisemitism. When Ann was 10 years old, the family moved to Brooklyn, NY. Fleeing the pogroms against Jews during WW II, refugees began arriving at the Birnbaum home from Germany and Eastern Europe. Ann remembers that her first piano lessons were taught by a refugee staying with her family.

After graduating from Sarah Lawrence College, Ann attended medical school at Harvard. She was the first woman from Sarah Lawrence and one of six women in her Harvard Medical School class.

Harvard was also where Ann met her husband, Dick Barnet, who was a Harvard law school student. Dick and Ann were supposed to meet at a Valentine’s Day party but one arrived early and the other arrived late. However, Dick was persistent, and their first date was to the opera, *Rigoletto*, in Boston. They were married on April 10, 1953, a partnership that lasted 50 years.

In keeping with her penchant as a trail blazer, Ann said she was pregnant during her second year at Harvard Medical School, so Pediatrics seemed like the perfect specialty. Dick graduated from law school and was drafted and commissioned into the Army’s JAG Corp, stationed in Charlottesville, Va. To complete her residency requirements, Ann worked in Obstetrics, delivering babies. Then, while stationed in Heidelberg, Germany, Ann completed an “unorthodox” residency in Neurology. When Dick was discharged from the military, he joined the State Department and the family moved to Washington, DC.

While Ann worked at Walter Reed Hospital and Washington Children’s Hospital, the Barnets heard about the Church of the Saviour (CoS) from a friend who had read the article Elizabeth

O’Connor wrote for Reader’s Digest. Ann believes they first visited the CoS headquarters at 2025 Mass. Avenue, sometime around 1964. Over dinner and in the School of Christian Living classes, Ann and Dick were drawn into the CoS community. Ann’s first mission group was one assisting children injured in the war in Viet Nam who were brought to the US for medical treatment.

Family Place

During our interview, Ann talked about an encounter she had with Gordon Cosby, co-founder of Church of the Saviour. During a class, Gordon asked her about the “call you have been hearing.” Ann said she realized ‘call’ described the worry and grief she felt while providing medical services to children amidst a lack of assistance for parents. In 1978, Ann, along with Betty Price, Barbara Quist, Dot Cresswell, and Nona Beth Cresswell, formed a new mission group, focused on helping Washington’s low-income parents and their children. Envisioned as “a place young parents go for resources and friendship, and where their children have a safe place to play,” The Family Place opened in 1980.

Today, Family Place is a thriving non-profit community center and school serving mostly immigrant children and families in DC. If you want to know more about The Family Place, go to their web site at www.thefamilyplacedc.org. If you are able, please donate by clicking on the Donate Now button in the top right corner of their home page.

Currently, Ann is a member of the Inward Journey mission group, formed to support the inward journey of the members of the 8th Day Faith Community.

Jennie Gosché has been a part of 8th Day Faith Community for over 40 years. She is the Pastoral Care coordinator on the 8th Day Leadership Council. Jennie is a polar bear photographer, writer, and community educator.

Fred Taylor and FLOC (For Love of Children)

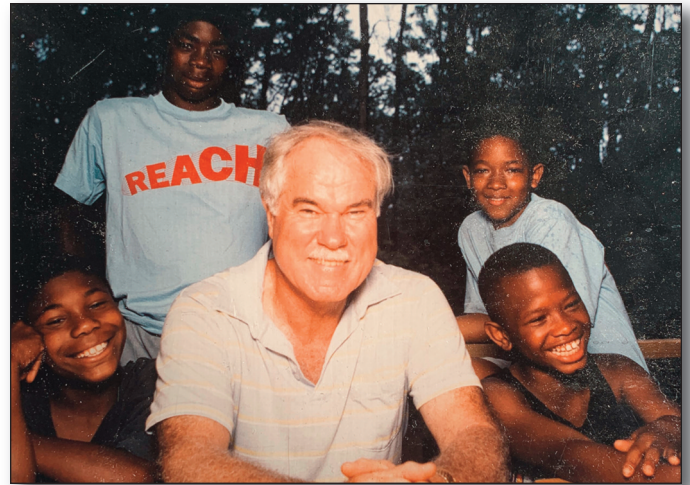
by Paul Holmes

"I've based my life on a call rather than a career." (Fred Taylor)

Fred Taylor (1932-2019) was born in the small town of Princeton, Kentucky into a prominent business family grounded in Southern Baptist traditions, in the era of Jim Crow. Fred graduated from a then-segregated boys prep school and a then-segregated Vanderbilt University before earning his master of divinity degree from Yale Divinity School in 1957. He then served Baptist churches in Branchville and McLean, VA. From those roots, Fred's call led him to embrace progressive Christianity, commit to social and racial justice, co-found Seekers Church and, for decades, serve as a guardian of child welfare in Washington, DC.

As America wrestled with civil rights and its national future in the mid-1960's, Fred was too. He heard a call to step away from being a church pastor, took a job with President Johnson's War on Poverty, and began attending services at the Church of the Saviour (CofS). In 1965, following a trip to Selma, AL, Rev. Gordon Cosby, founding minister of C of S, formed FLOC (For Love of Children) with the support of Fred and other volunteers. A year later, Fred was named FLOC's first Executive Director, a position he held until his retirement in 2003 – a tenure of 37 years.

FLOC's first objective was to help shut down a warehouse-like children's institution in Washington, DC called Junior Village. That was accomplished in 1973. During his decades at FLOC, Fred also expanded FLOC's programs to include shelter and housing, counseling and crisis intervention, foster care, financial literacy, tutoring, training and after-school activities that benefitted thousands of poor and disadvantaged children of the District. One of FLOC's strengths was its ability to recruit and retain dedicated staff and volunteers, including many from Seekers.



In 1976, during the Church of the Saviour's New Lands process, Sonya Dyer and Fred Taylor led the envisioning and birth of Seekers Church. As parents themselves, Fred and Sonya helped Seekers also confirm its call to be an intergenerational church, with children and youth being as valued as adults. Together with others, they also conceived of a congregation that considered members' jobs as callings and missions within the meaning of the C of S. Rather than organizing around a single corporate mission as other of C of S "scattered churches" did, Seekers supported the numerous missions of its members as well as the mission of parenthood itself.

Female leadership was not the norm in churches in the 1970s and was sometimes a growing edge for Fred. Still, Fred and Sonya led the Seekers commitment to shared leadership, to inclusive language for hymns and scripture, and to welcoming all without regard for sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnicity, income, or religious creed.

Fred's faith was scriptural and Christ-centered and also unapologetically activist and political. During his years at Seekers,

Related Ministries

The following ministries have grown from churches and mission groups of The Church of the Saviour. Each is independently organized.

Academy of Hope • Becoming Church • Bethany, Inc. • Bokamoso Foundation • Caroll Café • Christ House • Columbia Road Health Service • Cornelius Corps • Cornerstone • Dayspring Earth Ministry • Dayspring Retreat Center • Dunamis Peace Institute • Earthen Hands at Dayspring • Faith & Money Network • Family Place • Festival Center • For Love of Children • Good Shepherd Ministries • Hope and a Home • Institute of Radical Reconciliation • Inward/outward • Joseph's House • Jubilee Housing • Jubilee Jobs • Jubilee JumpStart • Kairos House • L'Arche • Liberation School • Life Asset Credit Union • Life Pathways • Manna, Inc. • New Community ArtSpace • New Community for Children • O.N.E.DC • Overlook Retreat House • Potter's House • Recovery Café DC • Samaritan Inns • Sarah's Circle • Sign of Jonah • Sitar Arts Center • Wellspring Conference Center

he did much of the preaching and his sermons were always intellectually and theologically challenging. Fred saw Jesus as a change agent and disrupter and invariably he related his sermons to the news of the day, frequently challenging what today we call white privilege. He challenged the local and national policies, systems and programs that were/are stacked against Black and Brown people, especially those with limited incomes. He challenged Seekers to not only acknowledge those failures, but to recognize our obligation and capacity to confront and address them, collectively and as individuals. He challenged us as Christians to follow the disciplines of scripture, prayer, journaling and community life and to use those foundations as springboards to action, empowerment, change and social justice.

In 1999, Fred published *Roll Away the Stone: Saving America's Children* which promoted empowerment as a tool for change needed to alleviate persistent poverty and its effect on children. Fred's life exemplified the power of call. When he left Seekers Church in 1988, he moved on to the 8th Day Faith Community and was active in the Festival Center and other C of S missions, thereby fulfilling the original C of S Commitment, "When I move from this place, I will join another expression of Christ's church."

Paul Holmes, is active in the movement for racial and ethnic justice and is a member of Seekers Church.

In their tribute to Fred's leadership, FLOC's website added this statement:

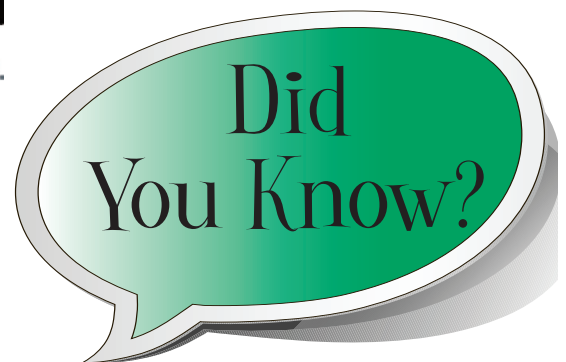
It is safe to say that without Fred, FLOC would not be the organization it is today – a nonprofit that provides education and career development for nearly 600 students annually. What began as a movement spurred partly by passion and partly on impulse to save a thousand children from an abusive orphanage quickly evolved into an advocacy and support organization that has withstood for more than 50 years and helped more than 10 thousand children. A man of vision and faith, Fred left behind a legacy of service and dedication to Washington D.C.'s children and youth.



For Love of Children
Teach. Empower. Transform.

Reading Proficiency by the end of 3rd grade and math proficiency by the end of 8th grade are key markers in a child's development and academic success.

Today, FLOC is one of only a handful of DC educational nonprofits that still offers a one-on-one tutoring model. With this approach, our students are provided the individualized support they need to find success and confidence both in and outside of the classroom. Through our interventions, we help students develop the skills and capabilities they need so that they can significantly improve their math



and reading proficiencies.

Since its founding in 1965, FLOC has served more than 10,000 DC students. Through intervention tutoring, we work with each student one on one to bring them to grade level proficiency in reading or math, as well as coach middle school, high school, and postsecondary students on college and career readiness.

An Invitation to Wednesdays at “the Well”

If you were present at Wellspring’s 50th Anniversary Celebration in November – we are grateful! You may remember singing a piece from MaMuse that gives voice to Wellspring’s new vision:

We shall be known by the company we keep
By the ones who circle round to tend these fires
We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
The seeds of change, alive from deep within the earth
It is time now, it is time now that we thrive
It is time we lead ourselves into the well
It is time now, and what a time to be alive
In this Great Turning we shall learn to lead in love
In this Great Turning we shall learn to lead in love

Rest, mutually nourishing relationships, joy, justice, peace, healing.

What if these words are possible with a simple act of gathering at “the well” of non-sentimental love that we know as Wellspring?

The Healing, Arts and Nature mission group of Dayspring Church at Wellspring invites you to gather with us from **4:30-6:30 pm on the third Wednesday** of each month – to wander in quiet, gentle ways for an hour on this beautiful land amidst the wild community of all life. We will conclude with a simple meal and conversation around what is welling up in you at this time. We begin March 20th.

The seeds of this offering began as our Peace Walks. They have blossomed into these monthly gatherings on the land, with the land, for mutual listening to the wisdom embodied in the earth. It can be a time to witness pain within and around us as well as to nourish and heal us – all of us who share this island home we call earth. One gentle step at a time.....

And, there’s more!

Gather round the Potter’s Wheel on Wednesdays from 2:00-4:30 pm. Try your hand at the wheel or circle round for conversation.



Join Dayspring's Earth Ministry Mission Group & Overlook Retreat House for

Ceremony & Celebration of the Seasons at Dayspring!



Spring Equinox
Tuesday, March 19

*

Summer Solstice
Thursday, June 20

*

Fall Equinox
Sunday, September 22

*

Winter Solstice
Saturday, December 21



**Here's a general flow, but
times may vary and will be
announced closer to the date.**

5:00 pm You are invited to an outdoor prayer ceremony to welcome in the change of seasons. Meet at the Farmhouse to walk together to a particular place on the land.

6:00 pm Gather indoors at Overlook for a simple supper.

7:00 pm We will circle for creative sharing time around the seasonal theme. Please bring a poem or a story ... share a favorite work of art or image ... bring your musical instrument and play a song ... guide us in singing or sacred dance ...

NOTE PLEASE:

For planning for the outdoor ceremony and for seating and food at Overlook, RSVP to Jim or Cheryl at jimhallmd@yahoo.com or 301-916-4827.

To inquire about the possibility of staying overnight in the Overlook retreat space, contact Trish at stefanik.trish@gmail.com or 240-357-3551.

To be on the mailing list to receive more information prior to each event, contact
jimhallmd@yahoo.com

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Church of the Saviour
1640 Columbia Road, NW
Washington DC 20009

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Special Events

Also see Pottershousedc.org and FestivalCenter.org

Wed, Mar 13 | Self-guided retreat. 9-5pm. No leader, bring lunch, \$30. Limit: 6 persons. Pre-Register at dayspringretreat.org.

Mar 15-17 | "Deep Listening: Ancestral Connection as a Contemplative Path" led by Rani and Anjuli George, Family and Nature Constellation facilitators. \$275, 2 nights & 6 meals. Pre-register

Third Wednesdays at "the Well" (Mar 20, Ap 17, May 15) 4:30-6:30pm. The Healing, Arts and Nature mission group of Dayspring Church at Wellspring invites you to gather with us (page 7).

Fri, Mar 29 | GOOD FRIDAY QUIET DAY led by Peter Bankson. 10-4pm, \$30, bring lunch. Pre-register.

Sun, March 31 | EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE, 6:30am at Wellspring Center. Speaker: Marjory Bankson, CoS Council Chair. Refreshments afterward.

ALL are welcome.

Wed, Ap 3 | "EarthSpirit: Seasons of Transformation," 10-3pm, led by Ann Dean. \$50, bring lunch. Pre-register.

Ap 12-14 | "Touching the Earth: Clay and Contemplation," weekend retreat led by Marjory Bankson, potter, teacher and seasoned spiritual guide. \$275.

Pre-register.

May 10-12 | "The Necessities of Our Peace," weekend led by Ridgeway Addison, Baptist minister, musician, and Thurman scholar. \$275. Pre-register.

Sun-Tues, June 2-4 | "I Will Give You Peace," led by Becca Vargas—a sabbath offering for those with ministerial responsibilities. \$275. Pre-register.

