

Callings

in Church of the Saviour

Vol 8, Issue 4 • Winter 2019

KAYLA MCCLURG MEMORIAL WRITING RESIDENCY

By Mike Little

Kayla McClurg left some funds earmarked for a writing workshop at Wellspring Retreat Center, which took place over a three-day gathering October 25-27. Themed “Entering Our Own Stories: Creative Writing in, from and for Movements for Social and Spiritual Transformation,” the gathering facilitated explorations of spiritual and social conflict in participant family histories, and how the writing process can facilitate personal and social healing.

The gathering was curated by poet and Sojourners’ columnist Rose Marie Berger from D.C., Philadelphia-based sacred jazz pianist and vocalist Warren Cooper, Restorative Justice and trauma studies practitioner Elaine Enns, biblical and theological animator Ched Myers from southern California, and New Mexican poet and novelist Demetria Martinez.

A line from Leslie Marmon Silko’s novel *Ceremony* provided a theme. She wrote, “I will tell you something about stories. They aren’t just entertainment. Don’t be fooled. They are all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death. You don’t have anything if you don’t have the stories. Their evil is mighty but it can’t stand up to our stories.”



Exploring themes of ancestral stories through creative nonfiction, poetry, theological reflection and oral history, a group of 26 social activists working at the intersections of immigration justice, mass incarceration, immigration and gender justice, climate change, racism, and Indigenous justice movements told powerful stories from the wealth of their own stories. The plenaries focused on “the Untamed Pen and how to write through our silences,” “Making a Scene: Curating Family and Movement Stories” though exploring “landlines, bloodlines, and songlines,” and “Bending the Arch” exploring ethnopoetic documentary writing as a tool for examining the particulars of our own social justice contribution. Warren Cooper’s music wove in an out of the words and oratory.

Twenty-six participants came from around the U.S., Indigenous territories, and beyond and ranged in age from early 20s to mid-70s. A powerful time, with poignant and fruitful essays and poems produced and relationships built to bring sustenance and spirit in these times.

Mike Little, Faith and Money Network.

Editor's Corner | Commitment is the Key



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*(In Memo line put
"Callings")*

1640 Columbia Rd., NW
Washington, DC 20009

On the third Sunday in October, most Church of the Saviour communities celebrated recommitment. This yearly season of recommitment gives everyone a chance to focus on what, why and how we live out our covenant with Christ, the church and one another. It marks 72 years as Church of the Saviour, 30 years as a single body, and now 42 years in several smaller bodies, held together by intentional commitment to an inward and outward journey, and common ownership of Dayspring.

Much of that story is linked to The Potter's House, still a vibrant meeting place on Columbia Road. In a recent 5-hour marathon of story-telling, many threads of our common life were shared. Potter's House began in 1960 as an inter-racial gathering place when DC was still largely segregated. Art, music and drama made it much more than a bookstore and café. It was the seedbed for mission groups at Church of the Saviour, and after the riots in 1968, it became a gathering place for social activists. Countless lunches with Gordon confirmed the Spirit's call for low-income housing, jobs, healthcare, continuing education, and other ministries that grew into independent non-profits. Today, a new wave of younger people attend a wide variety of conversations, presentations and book-signings, overseen by the new executive director, Leigh Tivol. That story is our centerfold feature.

At the Festival Center, the Parr Lecture series will showcase the important issue of institutional reparations. Two professors from Virginia Theological Seminary will be describing the process that VTS has gone through to atone for their slave-holding past, to invite all of us into that conversation.

Meanwhile, out at Dayspring, another transition is taking place. On October 27, we said "farewell" to Gale and Barbara Quist, as they move to a retirement community in Chestertown, MD. Barbara has been active with Interfaith Neighbors, and Gale has been the main steward of the land and buildings at Dayspring. Gale has kept machinery running, fences mended, guided forest management and building upkeep, and he has also accompanied many singing circles there with his guitar. Together, Gale and Barbara built and have been living in one of the two eco-cottages overlooking Lake of the Saints. Now the cottage becomes a major gift to Church of the Saviour.

Our lead story honors Kayla McClurg, Gordon's assistant and last writing partner. She served as our "point person" (her term) and church administrator after Gordon's retirement, but she was much more than that. Her wisdom, her writing and her hospitality at Andrews House drew young and old to this way of following Jesus. Now some of her legacy rests with the young writers who gathered at the Wellspring Conference Center. In this season of harvest, new seeds are forming in these old containers.

As we approach the beginning of a new church year with Advent, we invite your response, input and prayers.

Marjory

Marjory Bankson

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2020 CALLINGS deadlines: Jan 15 Ap 15, Jy 31, Oct 31

The Church of the Saviour Council

Bread of Life • Dayspring Church • Eighth Day • Festival Church • Friends of Jesus
Jubilee Church • New Community • Seekers

The Festival Church is pleased
to announce the
Jerry S. Parr Lecture/Dialogue Series
presenting
“Reparations for Slavery: Closer to Home”

Where: The Festival Center, 1640 Columbia Rd. NW, Washington, DC

When: Thursday, November 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Reception and light hors d'oeuvres at 6:15

The Jerry S. Parr lecture series addresses the intersection of faith and social change. Reparations Closer to Home will feature a dialogue with **Rev. Joseph M. Constant** and **Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Thompson, Jr.**

Virginia Theological Seminary is the first school to create a reparations fund. The Alexandria, Virginia-based Episcopal seminary acknowledged that it once used enslaved labor and supported segregation, citing this history as part of the reason why it wanted to provide restitution.

This will be an interactive evening with an opportunity to discuss the important issue of reparations and why faith-based institutions have begun to look at their responsibility to the descendants of slaves. Come take part in this event with Rev. Constant and Rev. Thompson.



Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Thompson, Jr.
Asst. Professor of Race and Ethnicity
Studies and Director of Multicultural
Ministries at Virginia Theological
Seminary



Rev. Joseph M. Constant
Assistant Dean for Admissions and
Community Life and Director of Ethnic
Ministries at Virginia Theological Seminary;
Pastor of Saint John's Episcopal Church,
Zion Parish in Beltsville, Maryland.

No charge. Come and bring a friend!

The Potter's House Story

1960 The Potter's House opened in rented space on Columbia Road as maybe the first coffeehouse church in the country. Elizabeth O'Connor tells the story in her book, *Inward Journey, Outward Journey*. Adams Morgan was then a posh neighborhood, where "The Sound of Music" played at the local theater for years.

Although DC was still a segregated city, the ethos of Church of the Saviour was embodied by Esther Dorsey, a stately African-American woman, who quit her government job to become the Potter's House "dean." Different mission groups hosted each night at the Potter's House. Basil Buchanan recalled that their charge was to provide "presence, service and dialogue." As Civil Rights and Anti-war activism grew, people lined up to get into the Potter's House, where microphones at every table allowed for public discussion of current issues. A



Mary Cosby & Esther Dorsey, '1974

PBS program, "Live From the Potter's House," originated there.

Sunday services were different from those at 2025. Each table was set with bread, fruit and cheese. Guitars made the music more informal, and someone would offer a message, followed by lively discussion (again using the table mics). Alice Benson, who came from an evangelical background, was shocked at the openness. Betsy Grooms Edmonds recalled the number of famous visitors who came because of an article about the church in *Readers Digest*.

Riots in 1968, after the killing of Martin Luther King Jr., wrecked many businesses and provoked a crisis at the Potter's House. Should they leave or stay? There were gangs roving the streets, preying on pedestrians. Was it too dangerous for white suburbanites to staff the coffeehouse? Basil said the decision to stay was a test and a testament. After that, the Potter's House became an incubator of other missions: first FLOC (For Love of Children), then Jubilee Housing and Jubilee Jobs.

1976 was another turning point for the Potter's House. As people moved into FLOC and Jubilee mission groups, they left the mission groups serving tables at the Potter's House. Excitement for new missions finally led Gordon to propose breaking into several smaller churches. The New Lands group proposed three groupings: one around Dayspring, another around FLOC, and a third around Potter's House. In that time of ferment, Mary Hitchcock stepped forward and called the Potter's House Church into being. Soon there were six small churches:

Dayspring, Dunamis, Eighth Day, Jubilee, Potter's House and Seekers.

Potter's House continued to be open from 10am to 3pm, but turmoil in the neighborhood made it hard to maintain evening hours. Alice Benson became the night manager, opening Thursday through Sunday evenings. "It was really hard to maintain the momentum," she said. Potter's House Church chose to worship on Wednesday night, because people wanted to hear Gordon preach and Mary Cosby could come to play the piano for their midweek services, and Eighth Day began to worship on Sunday mornings at the Potter's House. Both churches identified with the Potter's House ambiance.

1980 As Jubilee Ministries continued to buy distressed properties in Adams Morgan, the Potter's House Church had a chance to buy their building for \$400,000. They also acquired the building next door, which became Columbia Road Health Services,



Marcia Harrington, Carol Bullard Bates, Ken Beduhn, & Basil Buchanan

the precursor of Christ House. In another attempt to draw people out at night, Kerygma formed to bring live theater to Adams Morgan. Alan Goetcheus directed most of the plays and Emmy Lu Daly said she "found her call there." Then, when the Festival

Center center opened, Potter's House was engaged to provide meals, but even more volunteer help was drawn away by the Servant Leadership School. As the streets became more crowded, parking was a problem that plagued both the Festival Center and Potter's House.

In 1987, Mary Hitchcock died and Dot Cresswell took over as the host. Free Thanksgiving dinners became a big draw for participants AND



Emmu Lu Daly, Mary Easley, Meade Hanna & Barbara Moore

volunteers from the wider church community, because people could bring food that was already prepared and serving others on that one day was a way of participating in a church-wide effort.

In the 90s, the Adams Morgan neighborhood had begun to stabilize. Several group homes (Green Door, L'Arche) sent volunteers to "help out" at the Potter's House, and Hispanic refugee families began to flood the streets with children. Family Place was born and Nona Beth Crosswell started a Montessori School in a Jubilee building. Meade Jones Hanna came right out of grad school with her guitar and discovered Potter's House as "a new way of being church." Kent Beduhn was also welcomed by music there. "By the mid-90s," Meade said, "there were lots of young people – both at the midweek Potter's House worship and in Sunday worship with Eighth Day."



Alice Azzuzi & Terry Flood

In 2003, Potter's House decided to build an addition to their building. The mission group became a more formal Board, Kerygma asked for an inside stairwell so actors could dress upstairs and get to the stage without going outside. According to Alice Azzuzi, "Meade made it happen."



Tim Kumfer

Tom Taylor became the bookstore manager, and noted that his prior experience with SOME (So Others Might Eat) gave him the background to tell the story of Church of the Saviour to the many visitors who arrived unexpectedly. Mary Shapiro started Sounds of Hope, scheduling musical events nearly every weekend, and Mary Easley continued to offer a homey menu of southern cooking.

Kayla McClurg, the "point person" for Church of the Saviour after Gordon's retirement, did much of her pastoral work

at the Potter's House. She lived at Andrews House as resident manager, and was a member of the Potter's House Church. As the neighborhood began to gentrify and the church dwindled, Kayla saw that it was time to let it go so that something new could be born. That wrenching process took several years, but with help from Jeanne Marcus, the church relinquished its title to the property and the Eighth Day Church became the new owner. Emily Owsley, a new member of Eighth Day, secured pro bono design help from a well-known architectural firm and Potter's House closed for almost two years while the renovation took place. Many wondered if it would open again.

Tim Kumfer, became the manager in 2015, after the renovation. He arrived as an intern from Duke Divinity School in 2012, working first at Sojourners and then for Kayla. Tim loved being grounded in a place that valued faith AND social action. He saw new possibilities for the Potter's House and was surprised by the fierce resistance to change among people who had been there for years. "Now that I'm older," he said, "I am humbled by the time and money people have given to sustain this place."



Leigh Tivol

When Tim left to pursue graduate work in American studies, the Eighth Day Community agreed to fund Gail Arnall as an Interim Director while a search was made for a new Executive Director.

Leigh Tivol was hired in September, 2019, and her bio was featured on the front page of the last issue of CALLINGS. Leigh was present for the whole five-hour retelling of the Potter's House story, which was structured by Michael Brown of Eighth Day, in an effort to gather material for a book which will be coming out next year.

—From notes taken by Marjory Bankson

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 • Discipleship Year • Dunamis Peace Institute • Faith & Money Network • Family Place • Festival Center • For Love of Children • Hope and a Home • Institute of Radical Reconciliation • Inward/outward • Joseph's House • Jubilee Housing • Jubilee Jobs • Jubilee JumpStart • Kairos House • L'Arche • Life Asset Credit Union • Life Pathways • Manna, Inc. • Miriam's House • New Community ArtSpace • New Community for Children • O.N.E.DC • Overlook Retreat House • Potter's House • Samaritan Inns • Sarah's Circle • Soteria [Servant Leadership School] • Sign of Jonah • Sitar Arts Center • Sounds of Hope • Tell The Word • Wellspring Conference Center

Following the Spiral of Call

By Nona Beth Cresswell

In 1979 Gale and Barbara Quist were living in Conowingo, Maryland. As part of a class they were taking at their church in Rising Sun MD, they read *Call to Commitment and Journey Inward, Journey Outward* by Elizabeth O'Connor.

At the time, Gale was working and staying in Alexandria during the week, and so they thought it possible to explore this Church of the Saviour by signing up for Gordon Cosby's Old Testament class. Barbara and their 5-year-old son Erik would come down for the weekend, go to church on Sunday mornings and attend the class on Monday nights. The assignments were serious, and they took them seriously. "This is a seminary!" Gordon proclaimed.

By Spring, the Quists decided to relocate to the Washington area and moved into a group house with Dottie Bockstiegel and Byron Marsh on Harvard Street. Then they moved to a home in Lorton, Virginia, and continued taking classes at the Potter's House Church School of Christian Living. Soon thereafter, Ann Barnet sounded her call to form the Family Place mission group, and Barbara responded immediately! At that point, the Eighth Day Community became their church home. It wasn't long before Gale became one of the musicians supporting the worship service. He joined the World Peacemakers mission group, and life continued along this path for the next five years.

In January of 1984, Gale left his engineering job, and the Quist family moved to Manidokan, a Methodist camp near Harper's Ferry. After church-shopping in that area for awhile, they began to commute to Dayspring Church. Barbara Nance sounded a call for a new mission, Amigos Juntos, and Barbara Quist was hooked again. Because Gale was working at the camp, he rarely attended Dayspring Church, but when he did he thoroughly enjoyed playing with the musicians.

In the summer of 1986, the stewards of Dayspring began to consider hiring a full-time, live-in caregiver. Gale was immediately drawn to this and wrote up a job description which was really a Call with a capital C. In October of that year, the Quist family moved to Dayspring. They lived in Rehoboth (the house at the end of the Wellspring Road) along with an Amigos Juntos family. Gale joined the Retreat Mission Group and helped found a more formal group of musicians which became the Worship Music Group.

By 1988, the housing development across from Dayspring had gone up, and in order to help provide a kind of buffer, the Quists and the Prices each bought one of the houses. They became more deeply involved in the community and were part of different mission groups, eventually ending with Earthkeepers and InterfaithNeighbors. In time they took on more leadership, each following their own calls and exercising their individual gifts. Gale became a steward, and Barbara an elder.

As the millennium approached, they began thinking about living in an eco-friendly home. Along with Jim Hall and Cheryl Hellner, they dreamed and then designed two such cottages. In 2006, the Quists moved into the West Cottage.

And now they are planning to move to the eastern shore, to Chestertown, Maryland. Gale grew up on the water in New Jersey and loves to sail. For years the Quists have lived at Dayspring but gone to the eastern shore for weekends on the boat. Now they will live on the shore and come to Dayspring to visit, for retreats, and whatever excuses we and they can conjure. Words cannot express the depths of our gratitude for having had them amongst us nor how profoundly we shall miss them!

Gale mused, "We have lived forty years of exploring the mysteries, joys and challenges of life in the Church of the Saviour. Now Dayspring is sending us out to be re-fired, not retired!"

Nona Beth Cresswell is the Farmhouse host at Dayspring.



Honoring Gale and Barbara



Gale Quist

Joe Collier and Jubilee JumpStart

By Deedee Parker Wright

With great sadness, we received the news that Jubilee JumpStart's founder, Joe Collier, passed away on November 18, 2019. Just 10 years ago, Joe's vision of a beloved learning community came to life when Jubilee JumpStart opened its doors to serve young children and their families. But for many years before 2009, Joe was developing and sharing his dreams and ideas for Jubilee JumpStart with his Mission Group, every faith community throughout the Church of the Saviour, and any person or group who would listen. In fact, I was honored that Joe shared several of his sermons he gave over the years and I saw that his very first was delivered on November 12, 2005. He opened it with a few scripture readings, including Mark 10:13-16:

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Joe was called to create a place where young children and vulnerable families would be nurtured to learn and grow and connect with each other. He believed that loving children was one of the most profound ways of experiencing and sharing God's love. He also knew that educating children, particularly those living in poor households and disadvantaged surroundings, could make an impact like no other. Joe's incredible vision was that Jubilee JumpStart would provide a beautiful space, committed caregivers, and enriching daily experiences for entire families throughout a child's years from birth to age 5. He knew that this investment in brain development, deep attachment and community building would change children's lives and futures. And he would not be deterred! He gathered partners and supporters to share his vision and together, by the grace of God, they made Joe's vision a reality.

Joe's background as a minister and leader, his lifelong journey to knowing himself and God's plan for him, and his study and experience of civil rights movement work created a perfect vehicle to found such a place as Jubilee JumpStart. His passion and imprint are fully present throughout our classrooms, in how our children are loved, and how we support teachers and parents. Joe was a disruptor of the highest order and he joyfully, intentionally disrupted early childhood education in DC by making the highest quality care available to those in greatest need and including care for caregivers. This radical notion has powered our work for 10 years and we are eager to expand it to serve more children who need the love and opportunity to grow into exactly who God intends for them to be.



Along with countless others in our community, I was loved, educated, accepted and encouraged by Joe Collier. I am closer to who God intends for me to be thanks to Joe's deep belief and support. The entire Jubilee JumpStart family, is inspired and grateful to continue building the beloved learning community Joe created. We will keep close to our hearts and minds what Joe said in one of his sermons:

So let us hear Jesus' reminder that we too are God's children and can take in God's love only as we come to God with the need, the hunger, the acceptance of our dependence, the openness to trust...of a child. Let us take God's love in, and pass it on.

Dear Joe, we will continue taking in God's love and passing it on with deep gratitude for you and your life. Thanks be to God.



Deedee Parker Wright is executive director of Jubilee Jumpstart.

Callings

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Special Events

Visit The Potter's House (pottershousedc.org) and Festival Center (festivalcenterdc.org) for their event listings.

Nov 14 | "Reparations for Slavery: Closer to Home," Parr lecture series featuring Rev. Joseph Constant and Rev. Joseph Thompson Jr., both of Virginia Theological Seminary. At the Festival Center, Reception at 6:15 and lecture at 7pm.

Nov 15-17 | "Playing With God in the Field of Creation," silent retreat led by Connie Ridgway of 8th Day. \$225. Register: dayspringretreat.org.

Nov 26 | Quiet Day at Dayspring Retreat. 10-2pm. Bring your lunch. No cost.

Dec 3 | Quiet Day at Dayspring Retreat. 10-2pm. Bring your lunch. No cost.

Dec 6-8 | "Awaiting New Birth—From Root to Shoot," silent retreat led by Peter Bankson of Seekers. \$225. Register: dayspringretreat.org.

Dec 10 | Ember Day at Dayspring Retreat. 10-4pm. Bring a bag lunch. No cost.

Dec 13 | Carroll Café with Crys Matthews. Seekers Church Second Friday series. Tickets at CarrollCafe.org.

Jan 10 | Carroll Café with Victoria Vox. Seekers Church. Tickets at CarrollCafe.org.

Mar 21 | 40th Anniversary COSIGN Volunteer & Songkhla Refugee Reunion. Contact Aldenwrite@aol.com for information



Photo by Peter Bankson