

The conference center of the Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida

DaySpring Tree DAY

JANUARY 2008

DaySpring Marks 25th Anniversary

DaySpring will reach its Silver Anniversary in 2008. We use the year 1983 as our official birthday even though the Diocese bought the property several years earlier. The reason is the first buildings, Curry Hall and six cabins, were constructed that year. At the time DaySpring was capable of accommodating 90 overnight guests. The first overnight retreat held at DaySpring was Men's Cursillo Weekend #13 on February 16-19, 1984. Team members actually assembled the bunk beds just hours before the arrival of the participants. The original site was 79 acres. Over the years, adjoining property was purchased and new buildings added including the two pavilions, dorms, the youth cabins and St. Thomas Chapel. Today, DaySpring covers 92 acres, has 19 buildings and can accommodate 318 overnight guests. In 2008, DaySpring expects to host over 25,000 guests and serve over 100,000 meals.

Labyrinth A Labor Of Love



Finishing touches, including landscaping and lighting, are being applied to the beautiful labyrinth constructed next to St. Thomas Chapel at DaySpring. Labyrinths have been used since medieval times as a way to practice walking meditation. Volunteer Mike Rivera and several DaySpring employees completed the bulk of the work in mid-December. They hand set over 28,000 bricks to make up the circular design and the pathway leading from the chapel. In addition, Mike built four

benches around the installation. Mike, who served as DaySpring's first Executive Director, donated his design skill and labor to the project, which took about three months to construct. Mike's talent is well evident at DaySpring. In addition to the labyrinth, he built and designed many other projects including the entrance way sign and the dock on the Manatee River. The Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese funded the labyrinth project. Plans to dedicate the installation are underway but no date has been set. Shortly after the project was completed, Mike had shoulder replacement surgery, which he had delayed until the project was finished.

Dome Home Repair

December is typically a slower paced time at DaySpring, which makes it an ideal time to catch up on maintenance and repairs. This December, the Dome House has been getting a lot of attention. The house, originally constructed as a private residence, is now used for small group meetings and by guests who have booked private and semi-private rooms. The house takes its name from the geodesic dome that makes up the center of the structure. Before DaySpring purchased the home, the entertainer Cher reportedly rented it for several months.

Camp Hope

The Hospice of the Florida Suncoast will hold its annual Camp Hope at DaySpring February 15-17. The camp is a special weekend for children and teens that have recently experienced the death of a loved one.

Diocesan Wide Vestry Retreat

Plans are going forward for a Diocesan wide vestry retreat to be held at DaySpring February 29 through March 1. There is no charge for those attending. Please contact the reservations department at 1-888-314-5744. Overnight accommodations are being made on a first call basis. Participants coming for the Saturday session only are also asked to make a reservation so that seating and meals can be planned.

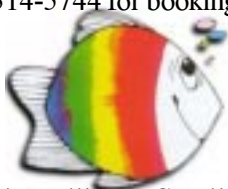


Holey Road to DaySpring

DaySpring's half-mile-long paved access road is showing signs of wear and tear but relief is on the way. All of the pot holes will be filled this month. The ideal solution would be to resurface the entire roadway with a commercial grade asphalt but that would be cost prohibitive. An interim step would be to replace and expand the the section near the planted median. Bids have been received to widen the roadway by two feet in both directions in this area in order to accommodate large trucks and tour buses. Finding the funds to make our holey road holy is another matter. In the meantime, we will continue to patch and pray.

Summer Camp Opportunities

Christmas is barely gone and it seems like summer is a long, long, long way off but in terms of planning for things like summer camp, now is when the work begins. DaySpring hosts a number of camps including the two weeks of camp presented by Youth Ministries of the Diocese of Southwest Florida. This summer, the sessions will be June 15-20 for youth in grades 3-6; and June 22-27 for youth in grades 7-12. The cost is \$360. For more information and registration, you may go to the Youth Ministries section of the Diocesan web site at www.episcopalswfl.org. DaySpring is available to other religious, educational and not-for-profit organizations that would like to have their own summer camps on our campus. We have hosted sports camps, music camps, band camps as well as camps for special needs children. Call the reservations department at 1-888-314-5744 for booking information.



Cursillo #113



DaySpring will host Cursillo Weekend #113 on February 14-17. The theme of the weekend is "I want to walk as a child of the light." Cursillo Weekends are three-day retreats that allow participants to grow spiritually and experience the presence of Christ in community. The purpose of the worldwide Cursillo Movement is to prepare and encourage lay Christian leadership. Attendance is by invitation. All participants are sponsored, generally by members of their home congregation, and must have the endorsement of their priest. Cursillo Weekends in this Diocese have been taking place at DaySpring since 1984. The weekends are currently held twice each year in the spring and fall.

Welcome Eckerd Youth Alternatives

DaySpring is pleased to welcome the staff of the Clearwater-based Eckerd Youth Alternatives. The organization, which conducts programs for at risk youth in nine states, selected DaySpring as the site for its 2008 staff training. EYA plans to hold two, week-long training sessions for its staff each month beginning in January.

SeniorFest

Approximately 300 seniors are expected to attend the Association of Lutheran Older Adults "SeniorFest" at DaySpring on February 19. SeniorFests are a day of learning, food, and fun. The group will hear from theologian and author Dr. Paul Maier and have the opportunity to attend workshops and view exhibits.



2009 Registration

Registration for events in 2009 begins on January 1, 2008. The earlier you book, the better your chances of getting the dates and accommodations you desire. Contact the reservations department at 1-888-314-5744 or visit our web site at www.dayspringfla.org for more information about our rates and reservation policies.

Contact information:

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