



Baby Jesus Came for Those Who Are Hurting Not Just Those Who are Celebrating

The year my dad, who was a pastor at the time, was caught in his addiction, the Church leadership asked him and my mom to not attend the Christmas Eve service. The investigation was ongoing and they wanted him to step back while it happened. What they didn't count on, I don't think, was for me to show up at the service. I have a deep commitment to tradition so when my parents said we weren't going to the service, I resolved to go by myself. Under the weight of uncertainty and the fear of what I had suspected might just be a true accusation, I showed up to the candlelight service. Families were there to celebrate, it was Christmas after all. I found my usual spot at the front and as the first carols rang out, my tears began to fall. I felt like an imposter. I was a cloud of grief and darkness amidst a cheerful celebration. I felt guilty for dampening the time of rejoicing. As I sat I found myself talking to Jesus. "I'm ruining your party," I told him. It was his response in that moment that changed

Christmas for me forever. **He told me, Cassie, I came to that manger as a baby not for those in celebration, but for those in mourning. I came for you.** In this moment. Right here. For the first time in my relatively easy life, I was tasting heartache (and oh if only I knew how much more would come). And it was there that Jesus showed me the heart of Christmas. Jesus stepped down to pursue the broken and the hurting and the lost. If this year broke you down. Isolated you. Left you grieving or fearful or hurt. I want you to know that you don't have to muster up cheer. You don't have to feel like a downer in the midst of celebration. You can sit at the feet of a savior who came for you where you're at right now. That's how Immanuel works. It's God with us in the dirt giving us hope in the face of despair.

"Those who walk in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in spaces of deepest darkness a light has dawned." - Isaiah 9:2

~ Cassie Lynch Facebook Post



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Upcoming Classes

LEVEL ONE—JOURNEY TO UNDERSTANDING

These classes will help bring clarity and validation to what you are experiencing.

Online Only: 10—11:30 am, Wednesdays
Online and In-person: 7-8:30 pm, Wednesdays
Online link for LEVEL ONE ONLY is in the body of the email with this newsletter.

AM Classes

Dec. 6: Charact. of Abusers-II
Dec. 13: TBD

Dec. 20: Boundaries
Dec. 27: No Class
Jan. 3: No Class

PM Classes

Karpman Drama Triangle
Christmas Dinner/Special Holiday Class Combined (6:30 pm start)
Boundaries
No Class
No Class

FACILITATORS



Vicki Williams



Carol Bosch, LMSW



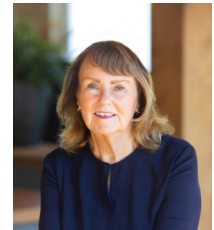
Shari Murdock



Misty LaFree, LLPC



Shirley Ritsema



Marge Lucas, MSW

Childcare



Elisabeth Richards

More Info

LEVEL TWO —STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY

These classes focus on finding the strength needed as you make decisions for your situation.

This week we will dig into Chapter Five, Our Mothers, Ourselves, Part II. In this chapter the author looks at other roles mothering can take and helps us understand where we find healing from any ‘mother wounds’ we may still carry. Looking forward to working through this with each of you. Hope to see you Wednesday!

If you need a book or want to join in please reach out to Shirley Ritsema at shirleyr@selah-empowers.org.

Online and In person: 7-8:30 pm, the same dates as Level One.
Online link for LEVEL TWO is in the body of the email with this newsletter.



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Group Agreement: We ask that everyone read the Group Agreement attached to the email. Attending the classes means you have read and agreed to the group agreement.

Childcare: Please let us know ahead of time if you will need childcare, however, we know schedules change, so if you don't get a chance to let us know before class that will be fine, too.

Safe Environment: We want to provide a confidential and safe environment for everyone to share and receive support. We also recognize that some material covered in this group is sensitive and can be triggering. Please practice healthy self-care and let us know if you are feeling overwhelmed or need to speak privately.

How Can We be in Prayer For You?

In Selah online and in person classes, facilitators often extend the opportunity for participants to share a prayer request. These are anonymously passed along to a team of individuals who are committed to praying over Selah, it's leaders and most especially for Selah participants. If you have a prayer request you would like to submit, please feel free to do so by dropping an email to shirleyr@selah-empowers.org. Your email will be handled with confidentiality, care, and covered in prayer!



Selah is grateful to be partnering with these local counseling centers:





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COMMUNITY RESOURCES



HYGIENE PANTRY

3500 Byron Center Ave (616)528-4014
Wyoming, MI 49509 lighthousewy@gmail.com

To locate a food pantry near you search:
<https://www.feedwm.org/findfood/>



Serving Hudsonville, Jenison & Grandville
Search <https://lovewm.org/>
to learn more.



Also known as "Love Inc."
To find one near you search:
<https://www.loveinc.org/find-your-love-inc/>

SAFETY



Search "Addalock" portable door lock on Amazon



Search Monsin Wedge Alarm on Amazon

If one of these items would help ensure your safety but you cannot afford one, please reach out to Selah!



mi.gov/agacp ag-acp@mi.gov 313-456-0190



- selah.empowers@gmail.com
- (616) 510-6305
- selah-empowers.org