

## Tending Ancient Paths

### The Paradigms, Posture, and Practices of Jesus

This newsletter is a little different in format than our regular writings. As you know, in January 2023 we announced a change of our 'public' ministry name from IHOP of Greater Fort Wayne to Tending Ancient Paths. In the January newsletter we included an explanation of our hearts behind the shift and we are excited for the changes we are experiencing as we follow the Lord's leading. Our labor has been, and will continue to be, based in the Love of the Father revealed in Christ. For us, this transition is in answer to a call to bring clarity to the body of Christ through writing, teaching, small groups, mentoring, and of course prayer. Tending Ancient Paths is very much aligned with our passion to invite the Beloved of God to a fresh understanding and application of the paradigms, posture, and practices of Jesus!



Today we want to share what has transpired over the past several months. For all of our married and ministry years (one and the same) we had never even an inkling of desire to go to the 'Holy Land'. Denise did want to at least 'go' to Israel as a bucket list item. We actually had a trip planned at one point that would have included a 'one day' sojourn into Israel but it was unexpectedly canceled. It was during this time we asked each other again, spending some time in prayer with the question, should we make the trek to Israel. During this time we each had the opportunity to go through Prayer School with Pastor Brian Zahnd. We learned that Brian and his wife Peri take groups to Israel every year and we both agreed that *'if we ever did go'* to Israel we would like to go with them because of their heart and passion for truth as well as their deep understanding of the history of the church and of the ways of Jesus. Looking at the price of their trip it seemed utterly unreachable. Around the first of March Denise said *'Ben if we could get the finances put together would you want to go next year with Brian and Peri Zahnd'* to which I replied *'Yes'*.

This is where the story gets interesting - about two weeks after this conversation Denise was contacted by an individual she had done a fair amount of counseling and mentoring with over the last several years. He and his wife said - we feel like we are to give a gift to you and Ben- is there anything your ministry has need of? Denise replied that support to the ministry account is always welcomed as, especially since covid, we have lost supporters— sadly, some to death and others who simply no longer have the financial ability to partner with us including several of our anchor congregations but, she added, we have been considering a trip with Pastor Brian to Israel and if they would like to contribute to that we would see it as a real gift. He said, let me call you back. Their immediate response was that they would like to partner with our journey to the 'Holy Land'. Their reply stunned us! They had already had an amount in mind which ended up being enough to almost cover one of registrations for the trip. What a generous gift from these friends. We sensed this was God affirming the journey! Two days later we received a letter from a couple who live in California and have supported us over the years. They wrote a beautiful letter sharing the impact that our meetings, writings, and counsel, have had on their family. Their words were a gift and came with a \$1000 check! Oh my goodness, this hasn't often happened to us! It felt like a visible affirmation. At our final Friday night IHOP prayer gathering we received cherished words of affirmation along with another \$1000 gift from very dear friends who have walked the path of prayer and leadership with us for years!

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And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips

We have been encouraged by our closest friends and IHOP partners to at least make this sojourn known so folks who desired could join in being a part of the sending. So, we shared this story with our board, asking for their thoughts as well as their consideration about putting this request in our newsletter. They were completely in sync and have given their blessing. In fact, one of our board members was so excited she jumped with delight. She sees this as her 'chance to go' as she cannot make the journey herself.

It seems so fitting to make this trek to Israel as we are in the first year of our transition to Tending Ancient Paths. We were included in an early invite to register for spots with the Zahnd's. We took some time in prayer and contemplation as well as talking it through with several leaders we are in relationship with and have made the decision to accompany Brian and Peri to the 'Holy Land' in the Fall of next year.

Our children's director, Debi Shinn, wrote the following:

*Nineteen + years ago Ben and Denise said yes to a new adventure in ministry and began inviting people to the Desire More service in their home on Friday nights. As the season of this part of their ministry transitions, we want to take a moment to honor and recognize them for faithfully tending the fire on the altar in this forum for almost two decades. We also want to sow into their lives as they move into a new season of ministry. An exciting opportunity has been presented to them to travel to the Holy Land, which feels perfectly fitting for the foundation of the ministry -Tending Ancient Paths. Would you be willing to participate in sending them on this journey for fresh bread and new wine in an Ancient land?*

We have so appreciated your friendship and partnership over the past twenty years as we have led and participated in IHOP FW. We hope you will continue your partnership as we continue to follow the Lord's leading in what we believe He is calling us to do, as the labor of our hands, with Tending Ancient Paths. Because of your financial giving we can continue to give ourselves to full time ministry. We do not/will not take your choice to support us lightly. It is a kind expression of God's grace over our lives.

Checks for monthly support can continue to be made to IHOP FW. If you would like to give a one time gift towards our sojourn to the 'Holy Land' you can also make the check out to IHOP FW with a note in the memo line- 'Israel'. Gifts will go towards airfare, paying the second registration, travel insurance, and other costs associated with the trip. We know there are many places that are in need of resource and we are thankful for your heart to give and for your consideration of this request.

We are excited at the prospect of what we will learn and see but, more importantly, we are anticipating a deep revelation of truths from our Father's heart as we embark on this pilgrimage. We are taking this seriously- we have already purchased the four books Brian and Peri have recommended to read before the trip and will soon begin a fresh read of the Gospels. We look forward to the impact this will have on our hearts, minds, and bodies and what it will mean for the future writings, teachings, and sharing as we all learn together to Tend the Ancient Paths of our Beloved Triune God. Happy trekking fellow sojourners.

With gratitude and integrity we steward your gifts. Thank you for partnering with the mission the Lord has given us in this hour as we partner with Him for His kingdom to expand.

Please make your **tax deductible** contribution to:

**IHOP Fort Wayne**  
**5907 West Wallen Road,**  
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Ben and Denise, Please agree with us over these prayer needs for the next month...

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