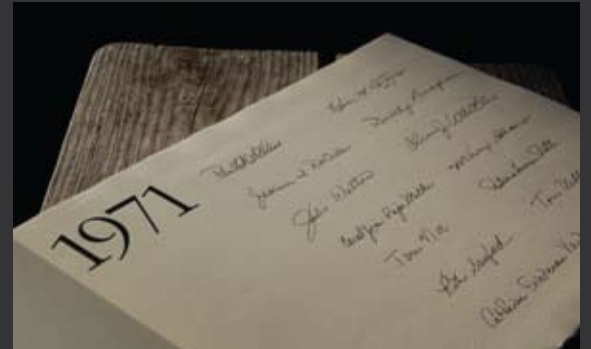


Fall 2011

Vine & Branches

THE PEOPLE OF PRAISE • "CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY."



40
years
of
covenant love



Becoming the People of Praise: Remembering Our Roots



Cursillo

South Bend Indiana 1963

An undated photo from a *Cursillo* retreat. Paul DeCelles (front row, left); Fr. Charlie Harris (second row, second from left); Andrew Plodowski (second row, fifth from left); Clem Walters (back row, fourth from left).

At first, it's a trickle—a few people experiencing big, life-changing encounters with the Lord. It starts on retreats put on by the *Cursillo* movement, but it doesn't stop there. Soon there is new fire for evangelism and a stream of hundreds coming to know God. Lives that had once been separate begin flowing together, creating relationships that one day become the bedrock for the People of Praise.

Kerry Koller: *"The Cursillo weekend I attended in 1964 was the first moment in my life that I really knew I had a personal relationship with the Lord, that he really was my personal Lord and Savior, that there was a real person there interacting with me and speaking with me, a person I could interact with."*

Paul DeCelles: *"The Cursillo focused on evangelizing leaders in the towns and among the university students. That gave us a lot of leadership for starting community. When the charismatic renewal hit the area in 1967, it really did take off like a rocket and that was because there was so much leadership involved from the very beginning. They had been trained and had worked together. There was a lot of teamwork. It was natural for us."*

TESTIMONY



Baptism in the Holy Spirit

March
1967

In houses and dorm rooms around South Bend and Notre Dame, a faint whirring, a humming, like audio speakers that first crackle, then start pumping out a new sound. Some call it “tongues of angels.” Others just call it “noise pollution.” But for Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan and thousands of others, when baptism in the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts come into their lives, their lives change for good.

Kevin Ranaghan: *“That night [March 5, 1967] everything changed. I felt the presence of Christ so intensely, and a whole newness of Christian life that I had never experienced before. My whole body felt like it was on fire. My head and my hands were on fire. And I just knew, from that moment on, everything was different. I was ready to tell everybody about it.”*

Dorothy Ranaghan: *“There was a very calm sense of excitement. It felt secure, real and firm, and I wanted more. It was especially exciting for both of us to wake up the next day and still feel that something had changed, that there was a firm anchor in our lives with the Lord.”*

Pat Rath: *“I got prayed with for baptism in the Spirit on my birthday, a day or two after moving from Los Angeles to South Bend to live with Paul and Jeanne. It was at Paul and Jeanne’s house, after the prayer meeting and after the after-meeting-prayer-meeting. Everyone had left, and we’d cleaned up. Then Paul said, ‘Well, you didn’t come 2,000 miles for nothing. Let’s pray with you for baptism in the Holy Spirit.’ So they prayed with me, but it seemed to me that nothing happened. The next day, I was really concerned because nothing happened, and so I knelt down by my bed and I said, ‘Lord, nothing happened.’ And he said, well, you didn’t give me your life. So, I turned my life over to him and began praying in tongues.”*

In 1969, a Pentecostal magazine featured the story of the Catholic Pentecostal movement, including personal testimonies from the Ranaghans. Kevin, Dorothy and their daughter, Anne (South Bend), graced the front cover.



covenant

**October 15
1971**

From left: Clem and Julie Walters,
Paul DeCelles, Jeanne DeCelles,
Dorothy Ranaghan, Kevin
Ranaghan, Bob Oleson, Andrew
Plodowski, Ruth Sanford, and
Tom Noe.



**A physicist, a Catholic liturgist,
some college students, and
become the People of Providence.**





**urgist, a Polish lawyer, two bankers, a priest, a Presbyterian,
ome young mothers—29 people make a covenant and
aise.**

Ruth Sanford: *"In our first community meetings we were hashing things out—what does the Lord want our life to look like? It took a lot of talking and arguing and then stopping and seeking the Lord to figure it out. And then we would have these great breaks, where we would talk to each other, or someone would start playing the guitar or some of the women would go in the kitchen to talk. It was like a party every week. It was very exciting. It was very messy. It was very wonderful."*

Ruth Sanford: *"When we made the covenant, it was very exciting to me that these were the people I was going to spend the rest of my life with, that these people were going to be there, that they weren't going to leave."*

Kevin Ranaghan: *"My personal experience was one of having a permanent family, which I think has to do with my being an only child. I can remember looking up after making the covenant, and the first person I saw across the room was Clem Walters, and I remember thinking that Clem was going to be my brother for the rest of our lives."*

charismatic conferences



Left: An office in Kansas City for conference workers. Paul Go (South Bend) is front and center, seated at a desk. Chris Meehan (South Bend) is in the back, third from left. Right: Dan DeCelles (South Bend) directed the Kansas City conference.



In the summer of 1973, the People of Praise, then a community of about 100 people, begins to talk and pray together about taking responsibility for the book-distribution and conference operations of Charismatic Renewal Services (CRS). Within a year, we are shipping books to India, Pakistan, Australia and all parts of North America.

John Boughton on the 1973 conference at Notre Dame: *"I was entering the stadium late because I had been working in the book ministry. I went in, not even thinking about what gate I was at. I went up the aisle and I saw an empty seat, so I sat down and looked over at the seat next to me. There was my mother! Out of twenty or thirty thousand people in the stadium, I sat down right next to my own mother!"*

Dan DeCelles on the 1976 conference: *"At the previous Notre Dame conference we had used up all the available housing in the local area, including hotels, and we had people staying almost 50 miles away. So for the 1976 conference the leaders asked us to put together a tent city for 5,000 people. It required a lot of volunteers, and the Servants of the Lord community (now Servant Branch) was very helpful in taking care of all those people. They had a real gift for hospitality, and that gift really touched the hearts of all those who stayed in the tent city."*



And in the summer of 1974 the community puts on an international charismatic conference for 25,000 people at Notre Dame. Other conferences follow: Rome (1975), Detroit (1975), and more Notre Dame conferences. Fifty thousand Christians attend the 1977 conference in Kansas City. Some called it the largest ecumenical gathering since the Reformation.

Louis Grams (Servant Branch) on the Kansas City conference in 1977: *"Nancy and I had just joined an ecumenical community, and it was still a new and uncertain experience for us. Going to this profoundly ecumenical conference was life-changing. It brought to the fore things that I had held on to as points of difference, and let me put those in their proper place and take hold of the much greater things that we held in common with all these people."*



Left: Kansas City conference. Right: Joel Kibler (Servant Branch, on right) with Ed Sylvia at a charismatic conference at Notre Dame.



Left: The Walters household in the mid-1970s. Back row, from left: Tom Uebbing, Christine Walters, Terri Walters (now Porter, Indianapolis), Ruth Witherspoon (now Hanlon, Oahu), Linda Porto (South Bend), Monica Walters (now Sklorenko, Indianapolis). Front: Clem Walters, Julie Walters, Peter Walters. Right: A Walters household vacation to Mt. Mitchell in North Carolina in 1980. From left, Brian Gaffney (Servant Branch), Bill Brophy (northern Virginia), Terri Walters (now Porter, Indianapolis) and Ellen Reed (Mission Division, Evansville).



household

The People of Praise became a sharing people, and they cleared out basements and spare bedrooms to make room for people not related by blood. By 1974, most community members were a sister who is not a blood relative. They call these living

Clem Walters: "We had so many wonderful vacations, because we took all our vacations together as a household. We did things we could never have afforded to do as a family, since we were all in common. At our household meetings, we started planning next year's vacation a week after we had gotten back from the last one."

Julie Walters: "Each person brought their own gift to the house, and it was fun. Bill Brophy (northern Virginia) brought a lot of interests into the house. Someone would say something at dinner and Bill would say, "Now, what's the root of that word in Latin?" We would also start talking about different locations in the US or in the world, and I finally ended up buying this huge world map and putting it on the wall where we could get up from the table and point to it."



Left: The Heintzelman household, December, 1978. Back row, from left: Ed Feltes, Joe Heintzelman (South Bend), Chris Meehan (South Bend), Phil McLane. Front row: Margaret Kelly (now Crimmins, northern Virginia) holds Eric Heintzelman (South Bend). Betty Raven (South Bend) holds Paul Heintzelman, Karen Heintzelman (South Bend) holds Monica Heintzelman, Sandy Bare (now Rodts, South Bend) holds Joe Heintzelman, Gael Bowler. Right: Joe Heintzelman, Paul Heintzelman, Kay Frey, Cindy Hesch, Chris Meehan, Chris Rowland (South Bend).

he sharing began at home. Community members
 om for brothers and sisters in Christ, for family, but
 bers share their house with at least one brother or
 ng arrangements “households.”

Pat Rath, on moving from Los Angeles to live with Paul and Jeanne DeCelles in 1968: *“It was our first household experience, and it was pretty chaotic. We ate together. We prayed together. We went on adventures together. We learned to do new things, like pray with people for deliverance. We learned how to be part of something that was bigger than ourselves and we learned how to trust the Lord to do new things in our lives. In Los Angeles, I had all kinds of power and money available to me, but I was miserable. When I moved to South Bend I didn’t have a job or even a prospect of a job, but I became joyful and hopeful.”*



Top left: Making the covenant in South Bend. From left: Paul Hommes, Joe Gleason, Collin Anderson. Colleen Murray, Lisa Ficker, Gianna Priolo, Melissa Rader, Rachel Osterhouse, Catherine Bulger, Mary Grams, Margaret DeCelles, Angie Hass.

Top right: Making the covenant in Corvallis. Garth Rose, Karen Ross. Bottom left: Martin and Ann Martinez make the covenant in Vancouver-Portland with Charlie Fraga (right) looking on. Bottom right: Ken Haen, Revocate Niyizonkiza, Dorothy Gedemer, Fred Gedemer, Egide Nimubona and Emily Siebers make the covenant in Appleton with David Sklorenko (fourth from left) looking on. Below: Collin Anderson (South Bend) with parents Kathleen and Kurt.

Below: Collin Anderson (South Bend) with parents Kathleen and Kurt.



Evan Lent

Covenant Sharings

Collected by Chris Meehan

Editor's Note: Twenty-five people made the covenant of the People of Praise in 2011. This article contains some background information and a brief quotation from each of them. Many of the quotations come from sharings given at branch meetings the same day the person made the covenant.

Collin Anderson (South Bend)

Collin works as a web site developer for one:ten communications. He grew up in Minneapolis, graduated from Trinity School at River Ridge and has a degree in computer science from the University of Minnesota.

"When I met the People of Praise, I saw a group of people working together and supporting one another, fully committed to God's mission of saving the world. Then, after I joined the community, I was blown away by our teachings. We studied the Community Formation Series talks during my time in the Dinkytown campus division, and I was amazed to see

a vision for the kingdom of God captured in writing.

"The People of Praise has taught me how to be a better Christian. In Romans 12, Paul asks the Romans to offer themselves as a 'living sacrifice' to God. That's what I want to do, and I am excited to keep building the kingdom of God with you all."

Martin Martinez (Vancouver-Portland)

Martin moved to Portland from Oaxaca City in Mexico seven years ago so that he could attend college. He came along with his parents and his two brothers. The whole family met Charlie and Carmen Fraga (Vancouver-Portland) at church and his parents soon joined the People of Praise. Martin took a job as a graphic designer at Direct Development, a business that Charlie runs, but he had little interest in the community until Dan Kabele gave him a personal invitation.

"I was really moved that Dan would step out and make a direct invitation to

me. Little by little I started to come over for dinner and get to know his wife and kids. When I came underway in 2005, Dan became my head and I joined his men's group. I made the covenant because, after several years of life in the People of Praise, with family, household and men's group, I am very comfortable with joining for the rest of my life. We share life, struggles and finances. It just makes sense. I can't conceive of my life without the People of Praise."

Ann Martinez (Vancouver-Portland)

Ann grew up in the Corvallis branch and moved to Portland for college. She works as the activities director at a nursing home. Her parents, John and Mary Lou Carey, are members of the Corvallis branch.

"Before Martin and I became engaged we spent much time in prayer. We discerned separately and then together that there was no way we could live out our Christian calling without the framework and bond of Christian community. Our first year of marriage only solidified this knowledge and our desire to make our commitment official. So here we are! We feel incredibly blessed by the People of Praise and are delighted to be able to spend our lives building the kingdom of God with our brothers and sisters in Christ."

Jim Hinkle (Biloxi)

Jim is one of five members of the Biloxi branch. The branch meets together weekly in one of their homes, splitting their time between a general gathering and men's and women's group meetings. He is a retired mechanical engineer who loves golf,

target shooting and flying—he has a pilot's license. He made the covenant last Easter in New Orleans.

"The People of Praise got to be important to me because I saw how it nurtured the growth of my wife, Mary. She was in the community for 20 years before we were married. I like the camaraderie of community life, getting to know people, the friendships. I would recommend the People of Praise to others even though our branch is very small. We are always looking for new members!"

Angie Hass (Mission Division, Indianapolis)

Angie Hass lives on the South Side of Indianapolis as part of the Christians in Mission team. She works for the Indianapolis Housing Authority. Her parents, Mike and Jeannie Hass, live in Servant Branch, but originally joined the community in South Bend.

"I am so blessed and honored to be asked by the Lord and all of you to make the covenant. I experience God's love personally through community, through all of you. Through loving all of you in return, I have a tangible, concrete way to love Jesus. So I can say yes: Yes, Jesus, I want to accept your invitation to covenant myself to the People of Praise. For the sake of you, Jesus, for the sake of you, my brothers and sisters, for the sake of the South Side and the rest of the world, I say YES!"

Fred Gedemer (Appleton)

Fred made the covenant at age 86, together with his wife, Dorothy. Like Ken Haen (see below), Fred and Dorothy first heard about the People

of Praise from branch members on a trip to Israel.

"Three years ago I heard that David Lee was part of a group trip to Israel. We had a planning meeting at the community center in Appleton and that was my first encounter with the People of Praise. I liked the people! Since then, we have found that the People of Praise encompasses all the things we are doing and believe in. We have found that the way the community thinks about the importance of serving others is a good fit with our perspective on serving. We're like-minded in that way. We feel very honored to join this group."

Dorothy Gedemer (Appleton)

Dorothy married Fred Gedemer 10 years ago, following the deaths of their spouses. (They had been neighbors for 35 years.) Branch members jokingly call them "the newlyweds"—between them they have 10 children, 17 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. Dorothy spends her free time knitting scarves and hats for children in need.

"I just wanted to say that this is a really blessed day. God let us know about the People of Praise and now we feel closer to him. We enjoy the community, we understand the full meaning of covenant community and we agree with it."

Colleen Murray (Mission Division, Shreveport)

Colleen is a high school math and science teacher and a member of the Allendale Christians in Mission team. Her parents, Kevin and Margaret Murray, originally joined the community in northern Virginia and are now members of Servant Branch.

Left to right: Mike Coney (New Orleans) and Jim Hinkle (Biloxi), Angie Hass (Mission Division, Indianapolis), Martin and Ann Martinez (Vancouver-Portland), Colleen Murray (Mission Division, Allendale).





Above, left to right: Marcia Kam and Tom Duddy (Oahu). Egide Nimubona and Revocate Nijizonkiza (Appleton). David Sklorenko (South Bend) and Revocate Margaret DeCelles (South Bend). Opposite page: Marcia Kam (Oahu), Joe Gleason (South Bend), Lisa Ficker (South Bend), Catherine Bulger (South Bend), Karen Ross (Corvallis), Rachel Osterhouse (Campus Division, Indianapolis).

“In the last couple of months I was thinking about all the things that God is doing in the world, and where else I have seen him and heard him. Nowhere else have I seen or experienced the oneness I have in my household and with my brothers and sisters in the People of Praise. Nowhere else have I seen our teachings on right speech, reconciliation and forgiveness, authority and obedience. At one point the Lord said to me clearly, What do you want? I thought about the People of Praise and I thought about what else is out there, and I knew that what I wanted was life with you in the People of Praise. So here I am!”

Egide Nimubona (Appleton)

Egide (pronounced Ah-jeed) emigrated to the US from Canada in 1994, where he met his wife Revocate Nijizonkiza. They first encountered the People of Praise at the airport in Appleton, where many branch members had gathered to welcome the children of fellow African immigrants Peter and Ana Vakunta (Appleton), who were coming to America from Cameroon for the first time. Egide was impressed with the enthusiasm community members displayed at the airport, and soon joined the community. He teaches mechanical engineering at a technical college in Appleton and recently founded a charity to help Burundian children attend middle school and high school.

“I knew right away that this was the group for me. When I saw tears in the eyes of some of you waiting

for those children from Cameroon, I thought, this is not a normal group. My heart was a part of this group from day one. Deciding to make the covenant was a simple equation. Once you find your family, you don’t leave it.”

Revocate Nijizonkiza (Appleton)

Revocate (pronounced Re-vo-caht) works as a computer programmer. She and her husband, Egide, have two children: a 15-year-old daughter, Belinda, and a 12-year-old son, Masabo.

“When we had to leave Canada to come to the US for Egide’s job, I wasn’t looking forward to starting over again. But two months later we met you. We came to some public meetings and noticed the joy of the People of Praise. You call each other ‘brother’ and ‘sister,’ like family, and you are my family. It reminds me of my biological family. My brothers and sisters in the community have embraced me and accepted me the same way my biological brothers and sisters do. Today, I want to be fully in this family.”

Margaret DeCelles (South Bend)

Margaret works as a graphic designer for one:ten communications and for *Vine & Branches*. Her parents, Dan and Linda DeCelles, are members of the South Bend branch.

“I have lived my entire life in the middle of the glory of God. I grew up living in a household and experiencing friendship with adults who were not members of my family. I witnessed

the new creation as I saw people serving one another, relying on the Lord and moving with the Spirit. The favors and graces I received from growing up this way are abundant: the gift of tongues when I was four, baptism in the Spirit and teachings that enabled close and good friendships. I received forgiveness, mercy, education, training in knowing and following the Lord, encouragement to love him and to act boldly out of love for him.

“Most precious of all these favors and graces—and I really think it’s the pearl—is your very lives: the friendships I’ve had, have, and will have, covenant love and a life together with one goal, bringing everything into unity in Christ. With that pearl before me, I am stunned. I want nothing more than to give everything I have and to enter into this covenant love with you.”

Marcia Kam (Oahu)

Marcia and her husband, Chris, have been married for 25 years. They have one daughter, Heather, 21, and a newborn granddaughter. Marcia, a transplant to Hawaii from the East Coast, is an artist and a book-lover.

“I am so grateful to have finally made the covenant. The People of Praise has made my life so complete. It’s been about 10 years since Ruth Hanlon and Mary Dohrman invited me to a People of Praise meeting. I felt from the very first meeting that the community was for me. I made the covenant because I love the People of Praise and all the community stands for.”



Joe Gleason (South Bend)

Joe is a videographer for the People of Praise communications office. He lives in household with Sean and Gretchen Connolly, Mary Seale and the Connollys' two children. His parents, Dan and Mary Kay Gleason, are members of Servant Branch.

"All I want to do with my life is proclaim to the world all that God has done for me. It's a creative challenge that could seem daunting, but luckily I work for the People of Praise as a videographer. The truth is, when I'm surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses, it sometimes seems that I hardly need to be creative at all. I could take out my video camera, point it in any direction, and I couldn't help capturing stunningly profound instances of the Lord at work."



"I found out about the People of Praise through my husband's friends, John and Mary Lou Carey. The People of Praise is a safe haven that has helped me to move ahead in life. It's a place where I can change and grow. Community members give me positive feedback and encourage me. I am learning a lot from the community."

Lisa Ficker (South Bend)

Lisa Ficker is a web site developer for one:ten communications in South Bend. She is a member of a large household of 10 singles who live together in two houses on the Greenlawn property. Her parents, Pat and Patricia Ficker, are members of Servant Branch.

"Like a lot of us making the covenant today, I've had the blessing of living my whole life in the People of Praise. My parents raised me well with the help of our area, with the help of Servant Branch and, especially, with the help of Trinity School. As a result of my childhood in the People of Praise, I always knew the Lord. I don't remember a time in my life when I didn't actively talk to the Lord and hear his voice clearly in response. Hearing the voice of the Lord has enabled a personal friendship to grow between me and the Lord. You taught me about that. You have taught me so much and I am so thankful."

Catherine Bulger (South Bend)

As an administrator for the Action program office, Catherine arranges travel, housing and food for volunteers traveling to Allendale and Indianapolis. She lives in a household with Mike and Nora Zusi, Chris Meehan and five Zusi children. Catherine's parents, Jim and Beth Bulger, are members of Servant Branch.

"There has never been a time in my life when the People of Praise was not fundamental to my identity and to my understanding and experience of the world. You raised me, you taught me, you cared for me, you lived with me in college, you welcomed me to South Bend, you opened your homes to me and invited me to live in a household. You taught me how to do purposeful work for the kingdom and inspired me to want to work hard to build the kingdom of God.

"I can honestly say that there is nothing I've ever wanted or desired or known apart from you, and that you are my life. It is with great joy and deep gratitude that I can today formally and definitively commit my life to yours."



Rachel Osterhouse (Campus Division, Indianapolis)

Rachel lives in the Triangle neighborhood of Indianapolis. She has a degree in violin performance and she works teaching private violin lessons. Her brother, Jeremy, is a member of the South Bend branch.

"As I thought about making the covenant and all that the Lord had done to get me here, I saw the covenant as a gift the Lord had been waiting to give me for a long time. The Lord was saying to me, I want you to have this life. I want you to be loved this much. I want to work with you to bring about my new creation. I want you to have this gift for the rest of your life. It's not going anywhere. I won't take it away.

"I am really thrilled to accept this gift from the Lord."

Karen Ross (Corvallis)

A baker, Karen rises early in the morning so she can open the supermarket bakery at 4:00 a.m. She enjoys her job and also likes gardening and all kinds of needlework.





Above, left to right: Ken Haen, Egide Nimubona and Revocate Niyizonkiza, Fred and Dorothy Gedemer, Emily Siebers (all Appleton), David Sklorenko (South Bend). Ellen Putzier with parents Veronica and Paul (Servant Branch). Below: Gianna Priolo (Mission Division, Evansville), Paul Hommes (Mission Division, Indianapolis), Emily Siebers (Appleton).



Ken Haen (Appleton)

Ken has retired from a career in heavy equipment that had him digging lakes in Florida, mining in Kentucky and building coal ships that travel the Great Lakes. He got to know several Appleton branch members on a group tour to Israel.

“I moved to Appleton from Milwaukee in 2005 and I was looking for a prayer group. Then I read about a group trip to Israel on a church bulletin board. I had always wanted to go to Israel, so I signed up and met quite a few Appleton branch members on the trip. Then, three months later, David Lee told me his family was going to Israel and asked if I wanted to go along. I thought it would be interesting, so I went again. When we got back we had a party at the Appleton community center for all the people who had gone on the tour. I saw that this was what I had been looking for, a group where everybody looked out for everybody and you all had Jesus in your hearts, so I joined.”

Gianna Priolo (Mission Division, Evansville)

Gianna is a member of the missionary company and is based in Evansville, Indiana. Her parents, Rich and Marie Priolo, are members of Servant Branch.

“I was praying about how the People of Praise is a body, and I started coming up with all these ideas about how a body works, and how the People of Praise works, and noticing how many parallels there are. I asked the Lord about it and he said to me [about the community], This is my body!

I was speechless for a moment, so struck by thinking of us as Jesus, as the Lord’s body. I was moved by how united Jesus wants to be with us that he would share with us the very fiber of his being, so that the things that move us, move

him, and the things that move him can move us. I am overjoyed and grateful to be Christ with all of you today as I make the covenant.”

Paul Hommes (Mission Division, Indianapolis)

Paul works renovating houses for the community on the South Side of Indianapolis. He grew up in Corvallis, Oregon, and joined the community during his college years at the University of Notre Dame.

“At age 17, I moved to Notre Dame to study engineering, and also to find the group of men that I hoped would be my friends for four years of college and beyond. As it turned out, the men who found me lived in Chris Meehan’s household: Chris, David Salmon, Sean Connolly, Joe Gleason and Ed Preuss. They answered my questions, invited me to meetings, baptized me in the Holy Spirit and talked me through coming underway. I joined the South Bend branch campus division my junior year and was given friendships, support in my studies, lots of pastoral care and a bunkbed seven squeaky feet above the floor. I joined Christians in Mission a year ago in response to the Lord’s call to build community on the South Side.”

Ellen Putzier (Servant Branch)

Ellen is a member of the Servant Branch campus division and lives in Dinkytown. She works part-time as a nanny and part-time for the community, serving branch youth and college students. Her parents, Paul and Veronica Putzier, joined the community in Tampa before moving to Servant Branch.

“As I was considering making the covenant, I thought about how I had experienced so much growth in prayer and friendship in the community that I never



wanted to leave. I grew up in the People of Praise but I wanted to say personally 'you are my people.' Making the covenant is how I did that.

"I have no specific career goals outside of helping the community save the Mississippi River Valley!"

Emily Siebers (Appleton)

Emily Siebers works packing books at R.R. Donnelley, a nationally known printer. She enjoys looking at new books when they come down the assembly line towards her and also likes to fish and water ski. She heard about the community through her church choir, which some Appleton branch members participated in.

"My favorite part of community life is simply going to the weekly meeting and talking to my friends. Actually, everyone in the group is a friend of mine! I always enjoy spending time with them. I have a lot of people who will help me if I ever need help."

Melissa Rader (Mission Division, Indianapolis)

Melissa Rader is a member of the Christians in Mission team on the South Side of Indianapolis. She grew up in South Bend and graduated from Trinity School at Greenlawn. She has a degree in molecular cell biology and currently works in musculoskeletal research for Eli Lilly and Company.

"In high school I went on an Action trip to Grenada. I remember walking through the streets in St. Georges with Linda Porto (South Bend). There were drainage ditches on either side of the main walkways and we saw a man lying in one of those ditches, passed out. The next thing I knew, Linda was crawling down into the ditch, putting her hands on the man and praying with him. I thought, Wow!

"It was a real moment of freedom for me. I saw that life isn't just about me and my own happiness. It is really about seeing the world, the mess that it's in, and knowing that the Lord wants to do something about that mess. It's about joining him, even if it means literally crawling down into ditches."

Garth Rose (Corvallis)

Garth discovered the community after Betty Johnson, a member of his church, invited him to a public meeting. He works tutoring college students in technical subjects like math, chemistry, physics, statistics and engineering.

"When I was invited to a public meeting eight years ago, I was excited by what I experienced, so I attended a Pentecost Seminar and then a Community Weekend. There, I saw what I was looking for: love. I saw people who genuinely loved one another. How could I not want to be part of that?"

"The love that I've seen is real. I think of getting shanghaied to bake bread with Colette Taylor and the books I've discussed with Connie Hackenbruck; of all the dinners and pun-fighting I've had at the Careys'; of all the domino games at the Johnsons'; all the laughter I've shared in my men's group.

"Our life together is too good for us to keep to ourselves. I believe the Lord is calling us to share it more and more with the people of Corvallis and the wider Willamette Valley. What that looks like, I don't yet know. I do know it will be glorious, because our God is glorious, and our life is glorious in him."

Mary Grams (Mission Division, Evansville)

Mary Grams is part of the People of Praise missionary company based in Evansville, Indiana. She grew up in Servant Branch and moved with her parents, Louis and Nancy Grams, to Colorado Springs. Her parents now live in Servant Branch.

"You might be the ones sending me as a missionary to catch people in the Mississippi Valley, but it was your net that first caught me. It's a big victory that the Lord has me standing here today. I would love to say that I've always loved you as much as you've shown me love, but that's not the case. Still, as a new creation, I can say today that I love you, my brothers and sisters. I want to share this life with everyone that I meet. I want everyone to know what a gift our Lord is." ■



Top right: Melissa Rader (Mission Division, Indianapolis), Garth Rose (Corvallis), Mary Grams (Mission Division, Evansville). Bottom: Ellen Putzier (Servant Branch), Colleen Murray (Mission Division, Shreveport), Lisa Ficker (South Bend), Gianna Priolo (Mission Division, Evansville) and Angie Hass (Mission Division, Indianapolis).





Abbie Teeter (South Bend)

By Barbara Sahut

In 1977, Abbie Teeter and I both moved from San Francisco to South Bend to join the People of Praise. We left behind the people and places that we loved, discovering God's new plan for us.

In 1981, I purchased a home and invited Abbie and Luiza Freitas to move in with me and share household life. Abbie was

an inspiration, because she had her personal prayer time around 5 a.m., before our 6 a.m. household prayer. She did my mending and I balanced her checking account, a win/win situation.

Abbie started the branch's intercessory prayer vigil for widows and older single women. "Intercessory prayer was a passion for her," said Jackie Curran at Abbie's memorial service. "She was a magnet for prayer intentions. She collected them from divisions, areas and all the branches, and kept them in a large box in alphabetical order."

Jackie was Abbie's head when she was housebound because of health problems. During that time, Jackie would ask Abbie how she could serve her. "Abbie didn't want things for herself," Jackie recalls. "She wanted me to visit Ethel Chalk at Providence House, and she was very concerned about Jo Geissler and so she asked me to go visit her. I felt privileged to be an extension of this marvelous woman in Christ."

Betty Cerrentano (Rockford)

By Jennifer Ambrose

Betty Cerrentano died on October 16, 2010, at the age of 59. Her death seemed to come far too early, especially



for those of us who had known and appreciated Betty's melodious laughter and had seen her unconditional love.

Betty was born in Chicago on September 3, 1951. She and Len (Pudge) were married October 26, 1974, and together raised six children.

Pudge and Betty were among a group of about 100 people who attended a Life in the Spirit Seminar at St. Peter Catholic Church about 17 years ago. My husband Stu and I got to pray with them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. After not being involved in church for many years, they had just recently had their marriage blessed. Then within a very short time they were also baptized in the Holy Spirit, then started going to prayer meetings and then to community meetings. They were

Harold Roland (Servant Branch)

By Jack Weiland

Looking back on Harold Roland's 94 years, it's crystal clear that serving the Lord with joy was one of his mightiest gifts.

He was born in 1916 and raised in Minneapolis. After his return from service in World War II, Dayton's department store hired him as an interior designer, and he worked there until his retirement in 1982. Harold and Dolores raised four daughters (including Patricia Ficker of Servant Branch).

Harold found a new relationship with God in his late 50s that changed his life. He went from being a shy and reserved man to one who wanted to hug everyone. After Harold and Dolores started attending Thursday night prayer meetings, they joined Servants of the Light Community in 1975. They worked in the bookstores together at the Notre Dame conferences and at the Kansas City conference. Both were long-time members of the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit team, and when the public meetings started they often invited guests.

In 2010, Harold spent a wonderful Christmas with his family. He drove himself to church on December 26, and went into the emergency room the next day because he wasn't feeling well. He died with family members by his side on December 28.



really hungry for God.

Betty was always making lists, so she could keep information organized and available. It seemed to be part of her character, getting interested in things down to the most specific details. But nothing was ever so detailed as her research into how to live a provident and resourceful life, as described in the People of Praise teachings. She did an enormous amount of research on how long food can be preserved, how to store things in the basement, how many canned goods are needed to feed people for a week or a month, etc. Her research and her lists benefited all of us in the branch.

Betty died knowing that she was truly loved by her family and friends, many of whom surrounded her in her final days.



Dick Dudek (Buffalo)

By Arlene Meyerhofer

Dick Dudek's weathered appearance and callused hands gave him a gruff appearance, but the twinkle in his eye and the generosity of his spirit revealed a tender-hearted man.

He was born in Buffalo in 1936 and served in the Army as a medic. After a blind date with Mary Ann Tarnowski, they were almost inseparable. Mary Ann says that since the day they were married there was never a time when Dick didn't thank her for whatever food she served and tell her how good it was.

Dick had no religious upbringing. He always attended Mass with the family, but that was about it. He never joined Mary Ann when she attended intercessory prayer meetings with the People of Praise, but Mary Ann prayed for him. It was years before Dick finally attended a Buffalo branch picnic, but once he came he never stopped. He repeatedly commented on how evident the love of Christ was among the people in the community.

A lifelong mechanic, he could fix anything. With any kind of engine problem—people's cars, lawn mowers, etc., but especially with boat engines—Dick would always know exactly what the issue was and how to fix it, then he'd check back later and make sure everything was working.

He died January 6, 2011.



Leonard Beskar (Servant Branch)

By Ed Mertz

After a long battle with ill health and chronic pain, our Servant Branch brother Leonard Beskar died October 4, 2010, a few weeks shy of his 76th birthday.

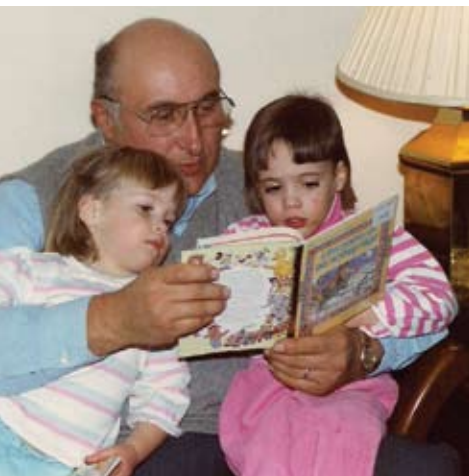
He was born in River Falls, Wisconsin, in 1934, and after high school took over the family farm near Big River. He was a terrific farmer, always eager to tackle new ideas and employ better methods such as contour farming and crop rotation. He was also a wizard with a wrench, able to fix the most complex pieces of farm machinery. He and Judy were married in 1960 and they were blessed with seven children.

Leonard was fond of a good joke, but often he couldn't keep from breaking up long enough to finish telling it. Somehow his infectious laughter still got everybody else laughing, too.

He was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1974 and started attending prayer meetings. A year or two later, the Beskars were in the first group

from Wisconsin to join Servants of the Light community. Throughout the 1980s, Leonard played a key pastoral role in area life, serving for a time as an area coordinator. Jim Jacoby remembers his former head as a very good listener and a man with whom he could discuss anything.

Extended illness late in life sapped the strength from a once rugged frame, but was unable to rob this good man of his faith, generosity and good humor.



Beryl Plodowski (South Bend)

By Tom Noe

Beryl Plodowski, an energetic and outgoing wife, mother and covenanted sister, died on April 20, 2011. The details of her life spanned nations and continents.

She was born in 1922 in Liverpool, England, and was working for the Royal Insurance Company in 1942 when she met a young Polish member of the RAF, Andrew Plodowski. They were married in 1943, and after the war they and their two young daughters, Krys and Barb, moved to the US, where their son Andrew John was born.

Andrew was a founding member of the People of Praise, and Beryl made the covenant November 1, 1974. Starting in 1977, the community sent them to spearhead the growth and development of the charismatic renewal throughout Poland. There, Andrew and Beryl shared People of Praise teachings and fostered Christian community while constantly under observation by the Communist authorities, in daily need of necessities like food and sleep, and despite Andrew's heart condition and several other ailments.

They moved to Venice, Florida, in 1985. It wasn't quite a retirement, because both continued serving the Lord and the church, in addition to making more trips to Poland.

Andrew's death in 1995 hit Beryl very hard, but she bravely continued to stay active. She expanded her volunteer work at Epiphany Cathedral's gift shop and volunteered almost daily at the second-hand clothing center run by St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

In addition to their three children, she also leaves behind six grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren, and many thousands of renewed Christian brothers and sisters in Poland. ■

LifeNotes



Liana and Marissa.



Rick, Ricky, Richie and Dick Thomas.

- Congratulations to **Tom Shriver** (Buffalo), who was named 2011 Educator of the Year by the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce.
- Congratulations to **Dave Hrbacek** (St. Paul), who received National Right to Life's 14th Annual Journalism Award for his story "Electrician Sparks Life Commitment by Turning Down Abortion Clinic Job."
- Congratulations to **J-T Kelly** and **Hannah Brummer** (both Indianapolis), who were married July 30 at Mary, Mother of the Church in Burnsville, Minnesota.
- Congratulations to **Mike Feeks** (South Bend), who was named president of the community's LaSalle Company on August 25.
- Although **Colette Angele** was part of her parents' lives for only a very short time, **Marcus and Becca Nayo** (South Bend) thank God for his gift of life to her. She died September 26, just a few days before her expected delivery.
- Congratulations to **Peter and Sheila Timler** (both South Bend), who have happily announced the birth of their daughter, **Margaret Joy (Maggie)**, born September 24.
- Congratulations to **David Salmon** and **Laura Ficker** (both South Bend), who were married November 5 at Holy Cross Church in South Bend.
- **Mike and Sarah Niedbalski** (South Bend) are sharing some very good news: the arrival of their son **Michael Paul**, born September 6.
- Congratulations to **Mike Seidle** (Muncie), who received the National Human Rights Award from Church Women United of Delaware County on March 4 for his outstanding work informing the community about the needs of those with disabilities.

- **Dennis and Alice Staffebach** (South Bend) celebrated the Easter arrival of their two new daughters **Marissa Mapendo** (Swahili for "love") and **Liana Mariamu** (Swahili for "dedicated to Mary"). They were born May 13, 2007, in Kaziba, Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Congratulations to **Jill Boughton** and **Julie Walters** (both South Bend), whose new book, *God's Icebreaker: The Life and Adventures of Father Ted Hesburgh of Notre Dame*, was published in December by Corby Publishing.
- Congratulations to **Dorothy Ranaghan** (South Bend), whose new book, *Blind Spot: War and Christian Identity*, has been published by New City Press.
- Congratulations to **Pete Gaffney** (South Bend) and **Christine Long** (Servant Branch), who were married in Mendota, Minnesota, at the Church of St. Peter on July 11.
- Congratulations to **Michael Busk** and **Gina Massa** (both South Bend), who were married September 3 at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Elkhart, Indiana.
- Congratulations to **Justin Walters** and **Cathy Grill** (both Mission Division, Indianapolis), who were married February 5 in Burnsville, MN, at Mary Mother of the Church.
- Congratulations to **Tom Noe** (South Bend), whose play *Talk about God, Five Cents* had a four-performance run at a theater in Chicago starting November 28. He also wrote the words to *Eros and Psyche*, an opera that premiered in May in Virginia.
- **Eric and Kristin Heintzelman** are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter **Maria Karynn** on June 10. Congratulations!
- **Ricky and Allesha Thomas** (South

- Bend) are thanking God for the arrival of **Richard David Thomas IV** on February 20. With his arrival, there are now men in four generations of the same family in the same area of the South Bend branch—and all four are named Richard David Thomas!
 - Congratulations to **Eric Bomkamp** and **Liz Brewer** (both South Bend), who were married at Holy Cross Church in South Bend on August 20.
 - **Sean and Gretchen Connolly** (South Bend) are praising God for their new baby son, **John James**, who arrived on May 15.
- Since our last regular issue, the following covenanted members have gone ahead of us to see the Lord Jesus face to face. We offer our sincere prayers, support and condolences to their families and friends at this time of loss.
- Jeanette Krause, Servant Branch, died on May 31, 2011.
 - Jan Sweere, Servant Branch, died on June 9, 2011.
 - Al Masterman, Servant Branch, died on June 21, 2011.
 - George Henneberger, Biloxi, died on July 21, 2011.
 - Richard Gaworski, Servant Branch, died on August 14, 2011.
 - Pat Harrington, Servant Branch, died on October 10, 2011.
 - Della Burns, Rockford, died on October 13, 2011.
 - Marilyn Boydston, South Bend, died on October 16, 2011.
 - Debbie Vaughan, Shreveport, died on October 20, 2011.
 - Ann Pinc, Servant Branch, died on November 11, 2011.
- Congratulations to these brothers and sisters, who have earned advanced degrees since our last regular issue:

Amy DeCelles (Elkhart, IN), University of Minnesota, Ph.D. in mathematics.

Larry Lamanna (northern Virginia), University of Georgia, Ph.D. in political science and international affairs.

Libby Grondin (Shreveport), University of Minnesota, Master of Music in violin performance and Suzuki pedagogy.

Mike Kueber (St. Paul), Pontifical Liturgical Institute of Saint Anselm (Rome), licentiate in sacred liturgy (STL).

Steve Pable (Neenah, WI), University of Notre Dame, M.A. in Catholic theology.

From the Executive Office:

Appleton:

Steve Pable is now the head of the branch leaders team.

Corvallis:

John Carey has been appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator, effective January 24, 2012.

Gail Hein was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on May 9, 2011.

Kingston:

Carol Bell was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on February 10, 2011.

Muncie:

Mike Oxley has been appointed to a second three-year term of office as an area coordinator, beginning February 2, 2011.

Jim Schenkel has been appointed to a second six-year term of office as principal branch coordinator, beginning October 26, 2011.

Tom Schmitt has been appointed to a second three-year term of office as an area coordinator, beginning February 2, 2011.

New Orleans:

Lloyd Mehaffey has been appointed to a six-year term of office as principal branch coordinator, beginning June 15, 2011.

Brian Weber has been appointed to a three-year term of office as an area coordinator, beginning September 13, 2011.

Northern Virginia:

Bob Magill has been appointed to a three-year term of office as an area coordinator, beginning June 16, 2011.

Oahu:

Don Busekrus has been appointed to a second three-year term of office as an area coordinator, beginning October 1, 2011.

Harlan Klein has been appointed to a one-year term as a nonvoting coordinator for purposes of training, beginning October 1, 2011.

Servant Branch:

Jon Balsbaugh was granted tenure as a coordinator on March 23, 2011.

Bill Wacker was granted tenure as a coordinator on October 21, 2011.

Mike Wacker was granted tenure as a coordinator on May 21, 2011.

Paul Frenz has been appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator, effective January 26, 2012.

Jim Grill has been appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator, effective January 24, 2012.

Philip Lynch was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on April 18, 2011.

Kathleen Muench was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on April 7, 2011.

Shreveport:

Jack Lynch is now the head of the branch leaders team.

South Bend:

Paul Barrett has been appointed as an area coordinator to fill out the remainder of Patrick Pingel's term so that Patrick can lead music ministry in the branch. Paul's term began February 6, 2011, and will end January 17, 2014.

Mark Havard has been appointed to a one-year term as a nonvoting coordinator for purposes of training, beginning February 6, 2011.

Mike Zusi has been appointed as division coordinator for Action, beginning June 1, 2011.

John Lee has been appointed a division coordinator for Trinity School in the South Bend branch, effective November 28, 2011.

Jim Pingel was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on July 1, 2011.

Tampa:

Carl and Nancy Bergman were released from the covenant of the People of Praise on February 9, 2011.

Vancouver-Portland:

Dan Kabele has been appointed to a second three-year term as area coordinator, effective December 1, 2011. ■

People of Praise Vine & Branches is published by the People of Praise community for its members. Reprint permission must be obtained before use.

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For subscription information or to purchase additional copies, please contact Margaret DeCelles at mdecelles@peopleofpraise.org.

Read more at www.peopleofpraise.org/news.

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Front Cover Top left: A household supper in South Bend in 1977. From left: Kay Frey, Sandy Bare (now Rodts), Karen Heintzelman, Joe Heintzelman (holding his son Joe), Cindy Hesch, Paul Heintzelman. Photo by Barb Grodzicki. Bottom left: A household supper in Colorado Springs in 2011: From left, Marty Mertz, Mary Faith Hall, Eric Hall, Beatrice, Brigitte Mysliwiec and Ann. Photo by Abby Olson. Top right: South Bend Covenant book, courtesy of Gretchen Connolly. Bottom right: South Bend covenant book 2011, photo by Margaret DeCelles.

First Section photos from People of Praise archives, courtesy of Linda Finke, Barb Grodzicki, Dorothy Ranaghan and Julie Walters.

Covenant Section photos by Cathy Walters, Ruth Schmelzer, Bev Linczer, Beth Kabele, Mary Seale, Angela Pingel, Evan Lent and Karen Coleman.

“And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you these 40 years” (Dt. 8:2).



Top left: Dancing at a wedding reception in the LaSalle Building, 1978. Top right: Dancing at the conference in Rome, 1975. Left and right: Dancing in South Bend, 1977, following a covenant ceremony for brothers and sisters who had just moved from San Francisco to join the People of Praise.



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