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

micro-community
An all-around better way to live

- Cheaper
- Closer to visible
- Shared micicles
- MORE VISIBLE
- Shared Spaces
- ISOLATION
- See friends often
- More Fun
- Family Lunch
- A.M. Prayer
-微宏: cars, tools, yards, porches, chores
- Old: young
- Growth: young
- Used lunch to evangelize
- Do not afraid to start small micro
- To get short front yard!

- Spend most productive hours together 8:00-5:00
- Kids play together
- Spend evenings with coworkers and mission work
- Close = new normal

- Micro com is better for moms
- More walking
- Community
- Spent most productive hours together
- Spend evenings with coworkers and mission work
- Close = new normal

- MON: Knobs on doors, talk to neighbors
- TUES: Go home, family lunch
- WED: More door knocking
- THUR: Men's group lunch
- FRI: Fast feed

- Cars
- Tools
- Yards
- Porches
- Chores
“Micro” matters.
Micro-loans earned a Nobel Peace Prize last October for Bangladeshi banker Muhammad Yunis and his program of offering low-interest advances to third-world entrepreneurs and craftsmen, the vast majority of them women.

Micro-sized Internet companies that were launched in garages and basements with fewer employees than you have fingers are now growing and selling like hotcakes to tech giants willing to pay prices in the hundreds of millions.

Here in the People of Praise, a call for micro-community is matching the resonant frequencies of young families, empty-nesters and mobile singles alike.

Micro-community?
It arrives on your doorstep with the morning paper, comes in your house with the pitter-patter of little feet, plops down on your couch, opens up a songbook and picks out a song for morning prayer.

It grabs you with a side hug over the back picket fence, then politely suggests that ripping out the fence will allow more running-around space and more room for outdoor prayer meetings.

It catches your neighbors’ attention. And how can they help but notice when 28 people arrive at your house for Monday night dinner . . . when you use your lunch break (you walk or bike or drive just a few minutes to your job) to knock on their doors and invite them over?

Micro-community—the idea, but not the name—has its origins in Craig Lent’s PowerPoint presentation at the Leaders’ Conference for Men in 2005 and the Pastoral Training Institute in 2007. On those occasions Craig spoke memorably about our big-time goals, building 200 cities in 40 years and growing to 200,000 members, but he also sketched a much smaller scene, life in tightly packed groups of homes and businesses where spontaneous gatherings and business deals in the backyard amount to a new normal.

Micro-community is the personal side of city-building, a natural first step toward the complex and teeming life of a full-fledged People of Praise city. Micro-community taps into personal desires for more contact, more common life and more collaborative commerce, desires for a new quickening of the Spirit-filled and rich Christian community life we experience already, desires that are rising to the surface over and over again around the community—as the stories in this article reveal. Call it a groundswell, call it a touched nerve, call it an inspiration from the Holy Spirit, but mostly call it a bona fide micro-community movement.

Servant Branch
Last October principal branch coordinator Joel Kibler delivered a talk entitled “What God Is Up to in Our
Branch,” following it up with a one-question survey. “As you think about Christ, as you think of our community life,” the survey asked, “what does it occur to you to want to do?” Here are a few of the responses: “God is asking us to move.” “I want to build a city near the new River Ridge building.” “Let’s work to find a way for young and old to live together next door.” “I want to start a roofing business to employ young men and draw them into our life.” These brothers and sisters want micro-community.

After the survey, the branch created a housing committee to discover neighborhoods suitable for sharing breakfasts and backyards, and a business committee to explore new ventures brothers and sisters might pursue together. This past summer a few branch members bought a small coffee shop in St. Paul, near a neighborhood occupied by some community members and near another coffee shop owned by brothers and sisters, White Rock Coffee Roasters. The new business is renting the White Rock name and logo and has hired White Rock co-owner Greg Schiffer as an advisor and Andy Grams as manager, while another branch member’s business helps with payroll processing.

Micro-community means we design and create businesses that suit our needs, businesses where community life infuses the heart of the workday . . . and the hearts of our customers, too. “Coffee shops are places for gathering, socialization, meeting and reaching out,” notes Greg. Last Thanksgiving, he invited an 83-year-old White Rock regular named Harold to join his family for the holiday festivities. Then, at Christmas, co-owner Bruce Olson invited Harold to join his family’s celebrations. With no family of his own, Harold now counts the Schiffers and Olson as adopted relations, even bringing souvenirs back for their children after a recent cruise vacation. “This is just one example of the community-building potential of a neighborhood coffee shop,” Greg says.

Colorado Springs
Two married couples with young children, the Hall and Hrbacek families, have formed a single household under their two adjacent rooftops in the Colorado Springs Cragmor neighborhood. “There’s no blueprint for two families trying to share life this way, so we’ve been mapping it out, decision by decision,” Mary Faith Hall says. While the families aren’t sharing a mortgage, they do share a pantry, a garden, a Sam’s Club account, dinners and morning prayer. They’re learning how to create a single standard of living for their homes, a single discipline plan for their children and a single culture for their household . . . a micro-community household.

When Eric Hall left town on a recent weekend, Mary Faith says that though she missed him she quickly realized she wasn’t alone. “It made me regret how many of my years as a stay-at-home mom had made me feel isolated—even in community—before sharing life this way.” Eric adds, “Before living in household with the Hrbaceks, I used to come home from work and Mary Faith would be so tired from being with the kids all day that we could barely have a conversation. Now I come home and all the kids are playing in the basement and Mary Faith and Kara Hrbacek are upstairs talking and relaxing.” Micro-community means better lives for Moms.

Vancouver/Portland
Only a handful of community members lived in North Portland in the summer of 2005 when a few Vancouver/Portland branch members began talking about moving closer to one another and sharing their lives more intimately. Two years later, 43 adults and 30 children are living in North Portland, with more looking for the right real estate. “People moved faster than we anticipated,” admits branch leader Charlie Fraga. Micro-community markets itself.

Two businesses—Direct Development and Rhododendron Enterprises—moved as well. The companies share office space on a major commercial strip, and some of the men who work there have agreed to spend two lunch-breaks per week talking to neighbors about the community.
One afternoon she came over, asking Justen and Martinez children and her own children.

Mary Gaffney

with the Shreves, Justen and Martinez children and her own children. They wound up meeting Byron, a 20-something gas station attendant whom they helped change the price numbers on the gas station sign. They learned that Byron and his girlfriend had a baby on the way and that he was worried about money. Luke and Dan prayed with him on the busiest corner in North Portland, and since then they’ve visited him at work and home, bringing over gifts for the baby. Micro-community is a mission field right outside your office door.

Right outside the front door of your house, too. Every Monday night 28 people show up for dinner at the home of Eric and Hilary Shreves. Their Jewish neighbor couldn’t help but notice. She could see two beautifully set tables through the big front window, and before dinner she watched adult-led football games with the Shreves, Justen and Martinez children and her own children. One afternoon she came over, asking Hilary if she had any tips on good babysitters. They got to talking about the People of Praise and the woman commented on all the sharing. “I want that in my family,” she said. Micro-community is great for kids . . . just ask the neighbors.

Ramona Castro is now providing regular childcare for the woman’s family. The woman feels so blessed she can’t talk about Ramona without tearing up. The Castros feel blessed with the chance to send some extra income to help Ramona’s family in Mexico. That’s micro-economics.

Tampa

Roughly half the Tampa branch already lives close together in South Tampa, while the other half live 15 miles east in Brandon. But after last spring’s PTI, branch members began discussions about moving closer still. Elizabeth Brookman observed that it was difficult to find affordable housing in South Tampa. While branch leader Jim Ganther acknowledged the difficulty, he said it wasn’t impossible. She said, Prove it. A few days later, Jim forwarded several listings of homes that were for sale. By week’s end Elizabeth and her husband David had closed on a condo less than a block away from another community family, where they’re living now. Micro-community may face obstacles . . . but they don’t stand up to a good, solid shove.

Indianapolis

Donna Mazanowski came back from last September’s branch women’s retreat scratching her head. “For several years I had been sitting back in cruise control and just letting People of Praise life happen to me,” she says. “I kept hoping that something dramatic would happen to make our community life more exciting and rewarding.

But at the retreat I was reminded that building God’s kingdom really takes a lot of active work. It takes thought, planning, time, commitment, radical love, forgiveness and so many more things. I had allowed Satan to convince me that the cost of investing in the life of the People of Praise wasn’t really worth it. But he was wrong. So I made a deliberate decision to stop waiting and to live our life more fully.”

Since the retreat, Donna has been trying to share as much life as possible with her brothers and sisters. She has organized meals after prayer meetings and scheduled women’s get-togethers for brunch. Now she and the rest of the Indianapolis branch have begun a three-month period of intense study, prayer, conversation and fasting about city-building. “I’ve switched into high gear,” she says. Micro-community may mean changing your mind.

Craig observed at the PTI . . . and why should he be? In its tiny, intimate concreteness, micro-community makes for happy kids, happier Moms and more happening meals and morning prayers. Micro-community is good for growth, a great way to do business, and it’s versatile. It can arise as the first, strategic step in a long-range branch city-building plan, or it can come about suddenly and spontaneously—sketches on a whiteboard squeaked in by a few families and singles after a Lord’s Day meal. It grows richer with time and planning (building on everything we’ve learned about basic Christian community life over the years), but it also rewards even the smallest of moves in its direction, returning results immediately. Like micro-loans and micro-sized Internet companies, micro-community is an idea whose hour has arrived.

It’s time for a micro-community revolution and an all-around better way to live.

Servant Branch member Greg Schiffer is a co-owner of the White Rock coffee shop in St. Paul, Minnesota.
When Clara Thibeau moved from Boston to South Bend in 1981, she left her secretarial job with a physician and her volunteer work persuading prostitutes to quit the streets. She came instead to care for her elderly mother and to live in a small brown house on Notre Dame Avenue that had been in her family since 1914.

Clara’s move to the Midwest blessed her a few years later when she heard about and quickly joined the People of Praise. She first learned of our life from Celia Monges (South Bend) and Mary Lou Carey (now Corvallis) at the Catholic church just a few blocks away from her house. Clara enjoyed praising “the Good Lord” with us and did so in a thick Boston accent until her death on July 5, 2005.

Two years later, Clara’s three-bedroom house was a blessing again in a way she had never anticipated. In May, 2007, 735 N. Notre Dame Avenue became the first successfully sold investment property for Gabriel Real Estate Management, one of the community’s newest businesses. Gabriel manages the Greenlawn property in South Bend, the Meadow View property in northern Virginia and others owned by the community, but the new company was also on the look-out for an opportunity to break into the home renovation and resale trade.

It is doubtful that Clara knew anything about that interest, when, with her own age rising, the prospect of selling her house and moving to an apartment stirred a great mental debate. Clara was a lifelong walker who valued simplicity, frugality and independence. She traveled on foot to the grocery store, the launderette and the bank, accompanied always by her trusty dog, Zach. She held her money in a single checking account and steered clear of doctors and medications (except when her wrist broke). As she grew older, brothers and sisters in her area helped her clean, paint and maintain her house. But she worried that the upkeep was a burden to them, while she simultaneously prized the independence that came with home ownership—a debate still unresolved the day her heart gave out.

After the wake and funeral, Clara’s relatives put her house up for sale. Gabriel heard about it, made a competitive offer and bought it.

In typical community-business fashion, Gabriel’s eight South Bend employees, managers included, rolled up their sleeves to paint, clean and update the house. Gabriel president Clem Walters trimmed bushes, scraped and painted doors, taking up a broom and mop to spiff it up for a showing. With a bright new yellow coat of paint, polished wood floors and freshly refinished kitchen cabinets, the house sold at a profit, leaving Gabriel with a solid boost into the home renovation business.

After Clara’s death, her niece Mary Gurlacz wrote a letter to the South Bend branch. “You were there for her when she most needed friends, financial help and someone to pray with. Aunt Clara would be pleased to be able to give something back to the community that gave her so much.” What could be more pleasing than the unexpected way our Lord turned Clara’s last worry into a blessing for the people she loved?

This house at 735 N. Notre Dame Avenue in South Bend, once owned by Clara Thibeau (d. 2005), became the first successfully sold investment property for community business Gabriel Real Estate Management in 2007.
Man Wakes Up From Coma

Jim and Rozann Schenkel (Muncie) found Mitch Emerson, 32, in a 10-day-old coma in a Toledo, Ohio, Intensive Care Unit. He was tethered to a ventilator, heart monitors and a tangle of IVs. His doctors expected him to die or spend the rest of his life unconscious, and had even recommended removing him from life support, his mother, Mary Kay Emerson, says.

Mitch is the nephew of Tim and Cindy Predieri of the Muncie branch. The Predieris live on assignment in Watonga, Oklahoma, and couldn’t visit Mitch, so the Schenkels decided to go. They spent about 45 minutes chatting with Mary Kay (they had met her years earlier). Then they laid their hands on Mitch’s limp body and said a healing prayer, together with Mary Kay and Mitch’s 11-year-old niece, Kierstin. They left without noticing any change in his condition.

Later that day, Kierstin was holding Mitch’s hand and felt a squeeze. It was the first in a string of jerks and twitches that Mitch’s family took as signs of his healing. Soon Mitch began wiggling his nose and raising an eyebrow, which reminded family members of games he used to play as a child. Mitch’s doctors and nurses considered all these movements to be involuntary reflexes and still expected him to die, Mary Kay says.

“We didn’t believe them,” she recalls. “We were confident we were witnessing a miracle, and frankly, my eyes had been washed so many times by tears of grief that I could clearly see the Lord at work.”

Many other people were praying for Mitch, too.

About a week after the Schenkels’ visit, Cindy flew from Oklahoma to Toledo, using a ticket that she had bought—and expected to use—for Mitch’s funeral. Instead she got to watch Mitch open his eyes.

Soon Mitch began speaking, although incoherently. (For example, he indicated he wanted water by requesting a car wash!) Little by little, his consciousness and his memory returned. He even began walking himself to the bathroom. His prognosis changed. Instead of sending him to a nursing home for long-term care, his doctors directed him to St. Charles Hospital for physical therapy and rehab.

Upon his arrival at St. Charles, Mitch was already ahead of his rehab targets for the month, confounding doctors and his family. He stayed there about two weeks. Today, he lives at home with his wife. (They were married this summer.)

“The Lord saved my life,” Mitch says, “along with everyone that prayed with me.”

Repeat Opportunity

As one of their favorite camping traditions, Ed and Janice Mertz (Servant Branch) rolled out of their sleeping bags to greet the sunrise over coffee at a nearby Mom & Pop breakfast joint.

At 6:15 a.m., service was slow, with only one worker on hand: Kelly, a blonde woman in her
thirties with red, bloodshot eyes.

“She looked like she’d been up all night crying,” Janice remembers.

When they finished their breakfast and paid the bill at the front counter, Kelly apologized for the slow service, admitting that she’d had a rough night. “My husband left me last night,” she told them.

“What do you say to that?” Janice recalls. “It caught us so off-guard that at first it didn’t even occur to us to pray.” They told her how sorry they were and quickly left the restaurant in a state of awkward shock.

“Ed had the nudge to pray with her,” Janice says, “but we were already on the way back to our campsite and thought we had missed our chance.”

After they spent some time separately in personal prayer, however, Kelly was still on both their minds. Reconvening at their car, one glance between them said it all: “We need to go back and pray with her.”

At 7:30, they arrived back at the restaurant parking lot and asked Kelly if they could pray with her. She held out her arms and eagerly said yes. Ed led a prayer asking the Lord to bring peace to the situation. When they finished, Kelly told them that her husband had just phoned her, asking if she could meet him that evening to try to work things out.

“We were inspired by the missionary stories from Indianapolis,” says Janice. “We’d spoken with Naomi Caniff in June, and she told us how they were strengthened by our missionary efforts just as we were strengthened from theirs. So all summer we’ve been praying for opportunities to pray with people, and God answered our prayer.”

Eyedrop Brigade

After double cataract surgery, Gini Chaput (Tampa) needed to use eyedrops five times a day to help her recovery. But as a retired woman with back trouble and weak wrists, tilting her neck and squeezing the eyedropper proved impossible to do on her own.

Pat Benito and Linda Scrofani jumped at the opportunity to serve, organizing a schedule for women in the branch to drive to Ginny’s apartment and help her with the eyedrops. So every day for two weeks, Gini received a visitor at 8:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. —visits which included more than eyedrops.

“Sometimes they brought food and would stay for over an hour,” Ginny recalls. “The best part for me was getting to know some of the women on a level that I hadn’t before.”

The biggest blessing of all, Gini says, was when Elizabeth Brookman, a nurse in the branch, did some research and found a medical device which enabled Gini to put in the eyedrops herself, pain-free.
JAMAICA
Building brotherhood

Above: Campers learn map-reading as part of their wilderness survival training.
Left: Locksley Robinson (Kingston) watches as Alvin Joseph (Grenada) aims.
Below: Locksley and Francis Mutidjo prepare yellow jack fruit.
Bottom: Brothers enjoy rocks and rapids.

Location: Annotto Bay on the northeast coast of Jamaica
Number of campers: 26, ages 10 to 66
Branches in attendance: Grenada, Kingston
Breakfast foods: Ackee (a red-shaped fruit) and salt fish with callaloo (greens), baked beans and sausage with fried dumplings, Blue Mountain coffee, cocoa and tea.

Photos by Kevin Rodriguez
Above: Sarah Slowiak scrubs dishes.
Top right, from left: Pierre Byrne, Alex Healy, Anthony Murphy and John Linczer present colors.
Above right, from left: Lydia Thomas, Jane Pingel, Jenni Slowiak and Francie Fink show off their bandanas.
Right: Alex Healy gets tubular.
Below, from left: Tyler Shruck, Greg DeLee, Daniel Couch and William Feeks inspect a local frog.

Photos by Amber Gunby, Beth Pingel and Tim Pingel

Location: Camp Tannadoonah near Vandalia, Michigan

Number of campers: 105

Number of staff: 63 full-time and 10 part-time

Branches in attendance: South Bend, Indianapolis, Muncie

Favorite Camp Songs: “You Are My All in All,” “Shine, Jesus, Shine,” “The Horse and the Rider”

Obstacle course winners: Tim Pingel and Katie Was
BUFFALO
Called to build, sent to gather.

Right: Space alien Alex Eng (northern Virginia)
Far right: Claire Mysliwiec (South Bend) paints the dining hall.
Below: Outdoor prayer meeting
Below right: Thomas Horlander (Indianapolis) shows off his catch.
Bottom: Mary Madeline Cassell (northern Virginia) paddles a short kayak.

Number of campers: 160
Number of staff: 46, including 18 junior counselors
Branches in attendance: Buffalo, Grenada, Indianapolis, New Orleans, northern Virginia, Shreveport, Servant Branch, Tampa
Favorite Meal: Buffalo chicken wing pizza served with ranch dressing

Photos by Alex Eng and Lee Smith
“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.” Psalm 105:1

SERVANT CAMP

Number of campers: 235 full-time, 29 part-time (first- and second-graders)

Number of staff: 60

Branches in attendance: Rockford, Saskatoon, Servant Branch, South Bend

George Simones Award: Meg McManmon, Paul Zenker. This award is given to staff members who demonstrate a strong love of the Lord, a love of nature and children, plus George’s spirit of fun and creativity.

Longest Serving Staff Member: Carmen Lee (30 years)

Servant Camp celebrated its 30th anniversary this year!

Photos by T.J. Ryan, Tony Schmitz and Hugh Springer, Jr.
Problem solved.

Multiplying meals

By V&B Staff

The solution involved 15 pounds of chicken, dozens of large plastic freezer bags, several garlic presses and a box of hairnets, all playing their parts in a militarily coordinated, hyperproductive meal preparation and distribution machine for Bill Flynn’s area in the South Bend branch.

The problem was a shortage of people available to cook on the fly for sick area members. “Most of our area women work outside the home, so we have only four women available when calls for help with meals come in,” explains Bill, the area coordinator. “People would have to drop everything to get meals ready,” adds Matt Urbanski. “It was stressful.” The situation also had an undesirable upshot: brothers and sisters with needs were reluctant to call for help. “We didn’t want that situation to continue,” Bill says.

Area leaders and handmaids pondered the problem, taking inspiration from former area member Ruthanne Seitz (now in Allendale) who said she liked to keep a couple of meals in her freezer, “just in case.” Now, twice a year, during a normal area meeting time slot, 25 to 30 area members and children gather in the large kitchen in the branch’s community center. They prepare 30 to 40 family-sized portions of manicotti (three different kinds), chicken stew, southwestern lasagna, chicken pot pie or corn and potato chowder—all for freezing, all with detailed heating instructions, all “just in case.”

Matt Urbanski, Pat Mooney and Rich DeClercq comprise the planning team for the operation. They choose the menus and purchase groceries, using dedicated area funds and counting on a $5 contribution from each area family. They set up stations for cutting vegetables and meat, for prepping trays, for labeling food and for writing out instructions, so that no one, no matter the age or level of culinary expertise, is left untapped.

During one recent session, Carrie Urbanski led a manicotti group. All the ingredients and supplies were rolled out on a cart. Her team measured out sauce, chopped onions and grated cheese. Some people, like 18-year-old Evan DeClercq, were great cooks who knew exactly what they were doing. Others were quick studies, learning the proper way to peel and chop garlic on the fly. After the blitz, the Seals, DeClercq and Engles families carried the meals home to store in their freezers. Linda Mooney manages distribution.

“Now, people don’t hesitate to ask for a meal when they need one,” Bill says. The area has used their new system to provide food for Larry and Katy Connor during Katy’s recovery from surgery, for Pete and Megan Sgroi when their new baby arrived, for dads and kids marooned at home while Mom is out of town. “When Rich DeClercq hurt himself clearing ice off his roof last winter, we were there with a meal,” says Matt. “It’s easier to provide meals more often, because we always have things ready.”

The cooking sessions themselves are a hit. “Everyone has a good time and all of us really look forward to our next one,” Carrie says. Lynda Seasly adds, “My favorite part is talking to people in the area and catching up. It’s great for my children to work with and get to know the older folks in our area. If there are food packages left in the freezers at the end of six months, we just get together for an area dinner and eat them.”

“Now,” says Bill, “in addition to caring for brothers and sisters in need, we are shopping together, cooking together, organizing together, having fun together, and sometimes eating the leftovers together. Like the multiplication of the loaves, the result is more life all the way around.”

The planning team is always on the lookout for ways to improve the process. Next time, they intend to prepare smaller portions and store everything in microwavable containers. But for now the area is armed and ready with the one thing sick children, babies and all of life’s unpredictable ups and downs are sure to require: supper.
Bill Flynn’s area in the South Bend branch uses some area meeting time to prepare freezable meals for brothers and sisters who will need them because of sickness or other reasons. The food prep sessions are highly organized. Top: Peggy Blauvelt and Rosie Rowland. Second from top: Julie and Art Wang. Third from top: Fred Smith. Bottom: Donna Stowe and Wendy Heinrich.
Three hundred eleven miles of flat prairie patterned with soybean and sugar beet fields and slowly rolling hills lie between Grand Forks, North Dakota, and Minneapolis/St. Paul. In 1977—the same year 97 adults moved from San Francisco to South Bend to join the People of Praise—127 adult members of the Body of Christ community in Grand Forks caravanned across the plains to the Twin Cities to join the Servants of the Lord community. The very first vehicle to arrive (the whole move took more than a year) carried a 22-year-old recent college grad named Hugh Springer.

Hugh, hailing from the small Minnesota resort town of Detroit Lakes, had gone to Grand Forks in 1972 to attend the University of North Dakota. Two months into his freshman year, the sound of strumming guitars drew him to the weekly prayer meeting of Body of Christ, where he also got his first earful of the gift of tongues. Five minutes into the next week’s meeting, he prayed, “Lord, I want what these people have,” and then he, too, began praying in tongues.

He joined Body of Christ at a time when membership meant moving into a household. Hugh lived in at least five. Phyllis Varevice (Servant Branch), a year behind him in school, remembers those days, when households shuffled constantly to accommodate incoming students.

“We all made being a student our daytime job,” Phyllis says. “We’d walk to campus around 7 a.m. and come home around 4:00 in the afternoon after spending the whole day studying.” Prayer meetings, household meetings, singles’ gatherings and music practices filled the evenings. “We were so grass-roots that everyone was involved in three different ministries at a time. Hugh was one of the few single men giving teachings. He was really busy. At one point he kind of pulled back for four or five months to study for the admissions test for med school.”

After the move to the Twin Cities, Hugh, like many of the new arrivals from Grand Forks, benefited from temporary housing and employment provided by brothers and sisters in Servants of the Lord. He worked in a print shop and added two more households to his long list, before eventually moving in with Jim and Carol Rolland, their young children and six or seven other young singles.

Hugh met Joni Sheehan at a community weekend and they married in 1980. They have three children—Hugh Jr. (Servant Branch), Rosie and Bill—and have hosted several household members over the years. Karen Franzwa (d. 2004) lived with them for 18 years, and Bev Herman has lived with them since 1995.

You may recognize Hugh as the composer of “Great Is the Glory of the Lord,” his only published song. (“I’m a one-hit guy,” he quips.) He started singing with the music ministry in Grand Forks, getting to know music ministry head Jim Rolland through charismatic conferences in the early 1970s. The two still work together on music for the branch. “Hugh brought a healthy manliness to music ministry,” Jim says. “He has a great voice and he just picked up the guitar on his own. He and I kind of hit it off. We’ve traveled together and done retreats and music conferences. It’s been one of the many blessings of community for me.”

Hugh holds an MBA in marketing from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, and has worked in the pharmaceutical and medical device industry since the early 1980s. Currently he helps market a drug that

“We’re part of a story that the Lord is constantly rewriting. The Lord is constantly shifting his plans as we plan with him.”
LifeNotes

- **Mark and Maria DeMicoli** (Springfield, VA) are very happy to announce that Monica Sophia joined their family on August 8.

- Congratulations to **Mark and Louise Doherty** (Rockford), who celebrated the 25th anniversary of their marriage on August 14.

- **John and Jeanne Stauble** (St. Paul) opened their hearts and home to Luke Xavier on July 1.

- **Vince and Julie Willenbring** (Little Canada, MN) are celebrating the birth of Tracy Marie on July 2.

- Congratulations to **Gary Luzar** and Christine Althoff, who were married at Brooklyn Park Lutheran Church on August 4. They are now living in Champlin, MN.

- **Stephen and Jennifer Busk** (Niles, MI) are spreading the glad news of the arrival of Maximilian Xavier on July 31.

- Congratulations to **Nathan Barrett** and Genevieve DeCelles (both Allendale), who were married at Holy Cross Catholic Church in South Bend on September 29. They are now living in Allendale.

From the Executive Office

- Ralph Whittenburg stepped down in August as comptroller of the People of Praise. Ralph was always steady at the helm of the community’s financial accounts ever since the position was created (and even before that), and he will continue offering his expertise in this area. Jim Sgroi, Ralph’s assistant for several years, has been hired as the community’s comptroller.

**Buffalo:**

Tom Dunning was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on September 25, 2007.

**Colorado Springs:**

Congratulations to Richard Dale Everett, who made the covenant of the People of Praise on September 9, 2007.

**Mobile:**

Tim Burgess was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on August 27, 2007.

**Servant Branch:**


**South Bend:**

Paul Kane has been appointed division coordinator for the campus division of the South Bend branch, effective August 22, 2007.

Matt Urbanski has been appointed division coordinator for the Action division of the South Bend branch, effective September 9, 2007.

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What we can

SHARE

entertainment  childcare  pantries
chores  meals  backyards
A.M. prayer  car pools  shopping trips

Do good to one another (1 Thess. 5:15)
Be subject to one another (Eph. 5:21)
Comfort one another (1 Thess. 5:13)
Bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)

Love one another from the heart (1 Pt. 1:22)