Decked Out on the Patio
Common Life in Tampa

Indianapolis
Girls’ Group Matters

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Members of a girls’ group sponsored by the CIM team on Indianapolis’s South Side played Spud at the beginning of their meeting at the end of February.
Netesha Mosley.

A Beautiful City
BY NETESHA MOSLEY

Editor’s note: Netesha Mosley and her husband Savoria met the People of Praise missionaries in 2010, and have been involved in our mission work in Evansville ever since. In 2011, the Mosleys and their children moved to the South Side neighborhood where Netesha grew up. A prophetic word Savoria gave and Netesha’s encouragement were both significant factors in the missionaries’ decision to move to the South Side in 2012, focusing their work there. In this article, Netesha shares her life story and some of her thoughts on what God is doing in Evansville.

My hope for this neighborhood is for it to get back to the way it was when I grew up here. We used to do all kinds of things—making mud pies and climbing trees and playing dolls and sports. Parents watched out for each other’s children. If we acted up on Jefferson Street, by the time we got home my parents knew that we had acted up. We would have Vacation Bible School in the summertime, and the churches had choirs. We went to church every Sunday.

As I got older we stopped doing that. My home life got horrible. There was a church right down the street, and if it got bad at home I would go there and sit. It was a place of peace. After I was 17 or 18, I started drinking and smoking. I would be at my friend’s house and we’d do all that stuff, and then I’d come home and think, I don’t want to live like this. It seemed like everybody else was happy but me. I felt so alone.

I met Savoria at my friend’s house. He was reading the Bible one time and I asked him, “How do you read the Word?” Because I had tried, but of course I had started with Genesis. He said, “I ask God to show me what I should read and bless me with understanding.” That was a stepping stone for me.

At that point I cut off everybody and I just started reading my Bible. I would go to school, go to work, come home and read. One day I was walking down the street and the Lord said, turn here. So I turned and I saw a church sign and it was so bright. I checked out what time the service was and I went. After that I was gung-ho. When the Lord saved me, my whole world changed.

Savoria and I got married in 2001. We had decided we were going to try and have kids. We tried, but we were having trouble conceiving. The doctor said, “We’re going to have you go through surgery.” I was young and newly married. All of this was freaking me out. Then the doctor told me,
“You can’t have kids.” So I got home and I was just bawling. I stood at my back door, and I was like, God, I don’t know what’s wrong, but you can heal it. And it was almost like I could feel it. After that, I was pregnant.

At that point I still considered myself a baby in Christ. I had seen some people around me who went to church, but then they were still doing other stuff. I felt abnormal. I didn’t want to go out to the club, I wanted to stay home with my kids and do what God wanted me to do. Also, some people at church would talk bad about other Christian denominations. I’m like, We all love the Lord. We should be praying for each other. So we went from church to church.

In 2010, when we lived on Kerth Street, I came outside. It was a pretty day, but I was like, Man, I don’t have anybody to talk to. I felt like I was in that same position as before—alone. I said, “Lord, I want to live for you, but I also want to have relationships. I want to be around people that want to live for you.”

I was looking at the block and thought, What would it be like to live with a whole block of people who serve the Lord? My vision was a block of nice houses with white picket fences. People would take care of homes and of each other. When you came onto the block you would feel the presence of the Lord. It was almost like the block was illuminated, that’s how beautiful it was. And I said, “Lord, I want that.”

A few months later we met the People of Praise. The first thing I noticed was that the missionaries were from different denominations but were living in unity. I would do my studies in the Word, and God would give me something, and then when they’d come, they’d share a word from the Lord, and it would be the same! Wow.

Knowing the missionaries has helped me grow. First I learned about the vision of community, then about being a wife.
and mother in the Lord. Sharing about moments when we felt close to Christ in women’s group has helped us be more open about the Lord within our family. The People of Praise helped me to recognize when God is speaking. Women’s group has helped me to look at things differently and not just think, Oh, here comes another trial, but Yes! We gonna make it through this! It has helped me to have real relationships, actually being there for each other to help each other when it seems like the enemy’s attacking. The woman touching the hem of Jesus’ garment, that’s how women’s group is for me.

In 2011, Savoria told me we were gonna move to Jefferson on the South Side. “Really?,” I said. A lot of the people we grew up with, they’d moved, so it wasn’t the same. The crime was worse. And it was scary, because it could be 10:00 at night, and we’d hear gunshots, and I’m like, Kids, get on the floor! I would have to catch the bus home, and my son would see all these people standing out there and smoking on the corner. It was so sad, I felt bad for them. And I’m like, Lord, what is going on? I didn’t want to live here.

Then when the missionaries said, “We’re looking to come to the South Side,” I’m like, Thank you, Jesus! This is what you want for this neighborhood. You want peace. And a lot of people want it, but they don’t know how to obtain it. When the missionaries came here, it was just like, this is how you do it. It was like a blueprint on how to live for the Lord.

A lot of the kids here, they need to know what love is, actual love. It seems like the peer pressure to do bad is so overwhelming for them. My son is 12, and he goes to Washington Middle School. He says, “Mom, they’re calling me whack,” because a lot of his peers are smoking marijuana. “Son, you’re not whack,” I tell him. “Marijuana is an addiction that clouds your mind. That’s how the enemy works. He wants you to fail.” And I tell him to forgive when they hurt him. I say, “Son, you don’t know what they are going through. But pray for them, because you might be the only person praying for them.”

Kids absorb everything around them. If you sow hatred, then that’s what they’re going to give out. But if you start showing them love, it might happen years later, but that seed is sown. That’s what I teach my kids. I really believe that the core of what the Lord is doing in this neighborhood is dealing with children, spending time with them and letting them be children. I’ve heard of kids quoting the Bible to their parents and how it touches their mom or their dad.

I’ve seen the neighborhood change drastically. I mainly look at kids. You can see them change. At the ice cream parties I saw the kids having so much fun—hula-hooping, jumping rope. It was just so beautiful. It’s like the Lord breathed some life into the neighborhood. It’s alive again.
I’m sitting in the living room of Jack and Florence Wright (Servant Branch), in a sunny open-plan apartment in Bloomington, part of a senior living cooperative. Florence is telling me about the moment in 1977 when she and Jack put their home in Kennewick, WA, up for sale. Jack was one of the leaders in the People of Faith prayer group, and several of the members felt called to move to a city with a covenant community. They had seven children, and no certain plan for a job for Jack, but they made the decision that their destination would be the Twin Cities, where they would join the Servants of the Lord community (later Servant Branch), and their house sold within a week.

Seven years after that move, Jack, then 45, suffered a traumatic brain injury in a car accident. When he regained consciousness, he called Florence by her maiden name and was surprised to learn that they had children. Florence remembers Jack’s long process of relearning not just names but how to walk. Despite all this, the Wrights lived relatively independently until the fall of 2015, when Jack’s memory began to worsen. “If he’d start something, he couldn’t finish it because he couldn’t remember what he was doing,” Florence told me. It was time to move.

Things went smoothly during the first winter in the apartment, but when spring came Jack started feeling the urge to get outside. As Florence was getting ready to go to an exercise class, Jack announced, “I’m going for a walk.” Florence tried to convince him not to go, but Jack insisted. He went for a walk and was waiting for Florence in the apartment when she returned from class.

The next week, when it was time for Florence’s exercise class, Jack wanted to go for a walk again. Florence called Ralph Laven, who lives one floor up with his wife, Alice, and has been Jack’s head for many years. After Florence returned from class, she and Ralph watched out windows on opposite sides of the building, anxious for Jack’s return. “We saw him after a while, and he obviously didn’t know where he was going,” says Florence.

Of the 473 covenanted and underway members of Servant Branch, a quarter are over age 70, and three-quarters are older than 50. In light of this, in 2014 Joel Kibler (then our principal branch coordinator), asked Mick Coleman to head a committee on aging. The committee, made up of Mick, Meg Ferber, Nancy Caneff, Beth Fondell, Pat Flynn and Marty Willard, has three goals: to provide a clear picture of the needs of aging members over the next 25 years; to write an assessment of resources in the branch and in the Twin Cities; and to assist the coordinators in plans for caring for the elderly.

In the spring of 2015, their work involved gathering information, collecting suggestions and running a series of forums for branch members about aging. Over the last year, the team has continued their

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Florence notes, “They’re helping me out as much as they’re helping Jack out.”
research, with Mick reporting back to principal branch coordinator Tom Caneff every two or three months.

“What Mick and Meg and others are doing is nothing short of inspirational,” Tom says. “They talk things over, pray, discuss, make a plan, act on it and see what happens. If adjustments need to be made, they can make those happen, too.”

One idea the committee has implemented came out of a seminar for caregivers that Meg Ferber and Pat Flynn attended at a local church. Mick says, “We talked about what they did, and thought we could take some of those principles and do it ourselves.” In January of 2016, Mick, Pat and Meg started a monthly support group for caregivers, and the group is still meeting. Six or seven couples are involved—sometimes both spouses come and sometimes only the caregiver. Says Mick, “We’re putting them in a situation where they’ve got other people in the same situation, and they’re able to talk to one another.”

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Wanting more help with Jack, Florence told the caregivers’ group about her exercise class and Jack’s desire to walk. The exercise was important to her—it greatly reduced pain in both of her legs from pinched nerves. Working with Florence to determine what would help her, Mick organized a schedule of branch members to sit with Jack for an hour three times a week.

“Jack just loves to gab,” says Florence, “and he loves to have People of Praise members come over. He’ll ask, ‘Who’s coming today?’ They’re his friends, see.” Sometimes the visitors just sit and talk with Jack in the apartment, and other times they take him out for a drive or along on an errand. “Jim Cahill took him to a new grocery store where he buys his vegetables,” Florence says. “They have good bargains. One day, Jack brought home a big turkey leg to eat.” Mick recently drove Jack to St. Paul to see the ice castles on display for the city’s yearly Winter Carnival.

Florence notes, “They’re helping me out as much as they’re helping Jack out.”

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Two-thirds of Servant Branch members over age 70 are women. In 2009 Meg Ferber was appointed a handmaid designated to
look out for the needs of seniors and she’s spent lots of time talking one-on-one with older women. “My main action now is with people who, for various reasons, are unable to participate in our life as they used to. Maybe they don’t come to women’s group or can’t make it to as many meetings. My efforts are to keep them connected with our life.”

One method Meg has found helpful over the years is to arrange a schedule of visits for a sister in a nursing home or senior living facility, so that one or two women will visit every week. The women making the visits might come only once a month on a rotating schedule, so the time commitment is doable. Meg recommends keeping the visits short, around 45 minutes. One or two visitors is a good number, because they can concentrate the conversation on the sister being visited, who might have difficulty with hearing or memory.

Meg says, “It’s good to have people who have known them, because they have some history and they can bring things up. It’s good to share about your own life, ask them about their life and pray with them. The elements of a women’s group can be there, just in a more limited amount of time.”

As the branch has put thought into how to care for seniors, a myriad of other little ways to help each other have sprung up. There’s a small group of women created by Connie Schrandt and led by Ruth Jorgenson who get together regularly to spend a morning making soup and freezing it in single servings. These are stored at River Ridge, where any senior who would find a meal helpful can take one home.

There’s also a closet on the second floor of the building filled with donated medical equipment that’s available for anyone who needs it: wheelchairs, walkers, bath chairs, and even a power chair. A live videostream of Servant Branch meetings on the Internet has made it possible for some branch members who can’t be there to participate a bit more fully.

Sometimes the seniors themselves are the ones finding ways to serve. Ralph and Alice Laven are Jack and Florence Wright’s regular ride to branch meetings. When Dawn Whittenburg’s mother moved from South Dakota to the Ebenezer Ridges facility in Burnsville to be near her daughter, Barb Van Natta signed up on the schedule of women visiting her. Barb lives at Ebenezer, too, and she takes her walker and sometimes pictures of her grandchildren down the long hallways to another wing to see Dawn’s mom.

Meg says, “We won’t grow old in the same way that much of society will. We will see one another through to the very end of our lives.”
The branch’s senior luncheon has become a hub for seniors to relate to one another and share ideas. Harold Coulter, the branch’s business manager, organizes eight lunches a year. After a short prayer, everyone shares a meal homemade for every event by Carolin Faytie. (February’s luncheon featured baked stuffed shells, french bread, salad and Amaretto cake.) Then there’s a speaker on a topic of general interest. There’s enough space in the family room at River Ridge for about 40 people to attend each luncheon, and there’s often a waiting list. Presenters have included Peggy Dietzen sharing her knowledge as a docent at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, David O’Hanley, a Trinity science teacher, speaking on fracking and climate change, and Bruce Olson, owner of Truestone Coffee Roasters, giving a demonstration of coffee cupping, which is a little bit like wine tasting for coffee. At the December luncheon, Louis Grams usually plays piano during lunch and leads carol singing afterward.

At one senior luncheon, Claire Pintozzi had an idea—“We ought to have a little thing just for us in the newsletter, things that just concern seniors.” With some computer help from Connie Schrandt, Claire’s “Senior Notes” now gets emailed out along with the branch newsletter. Claire includes updates on branch activities for seniors and gathers ideas about free activities and discounts available in the Twin Cities. She also passes along tips for dealing with such topics as doctors and insurance, starting a garden in the spring, and buying a plot in the People of Praise section of Resurrection Cemetery.

“So many of us were young when we formed a new covenant community in the ’70s,” Meg says, “and now many of us are growing old. We won’t grow old in the same way that much of society will. We will see one another through to the very end of our lives. We will support one another with a lot of care and affection and love.”

Near the end of my conversation with Florence, Jack walks into the living room. Florence introduces me and asks him, “So, Jack, tell her about the People of Praise. Do you remember them?” Florence says Jack isn’t always able to answer this sort of question, but on this day, at this particular moment, his face lights up with joy. “Oh! I love People of Praise! I love serving God. I love following him. And they make it so possible for you to love God and know him and serve him.”

Mick Coleman (left), Meg Ferber and Pat Flynn form part of the backbone of care for the elderly in Servant Branch.
Two couples in the Tampa branch, Fred and Sue Smith and Ed and Josette Konczeski, have created an attractive space for common life between their homes. The curved and meandering 40-foot-long patio is shaded by bending palm trees, surrounded by flowering bromeliads and just a few feet from the waters of Old Tampa Bay. It has become a go-to spot for branch activities and outreach to the neighborhood, with Lord’s Day meals, birthday parties, men’s and women’s gatherings, an Easter brunch and even a root beer float party.

The two homes are located in a prominent place within Regency Cove, a retirement community of narrow streets and tightly spaced manufactured houses on the Interbay Peninsula in south Tampa. “People must pass by to get to the observation point overlooking the bay,” says branch leader Tom Brophy, “and neighbors frequently see us getting together. They hear our music and singing, and the fact that the patio is shared is a conversation starter.”

Branch activities have started shifting to Regency Cove from Fountain Boulevard in Tampa, a street which has been home to several branch families. The Smiths’ house is large enough to accommodate the entire branch, and the branch has been meeting there every other month. That shift will accelerate when Tom and his wife Jackie occupy a new home just down the street from the Konczeski and Smith homes sometime this spring. In addition, Geoff and Sue Kelleher and Jeannie Hopper (all South Bend) rent a home together in the neighborhood during the winter months, and join the Konczeski and Smiths for dinner once each week.

The story of how these couples landed in Regency Cove begins in 2013. That year Fred and Sue, then living 15 miles away from Tampa in Riverview, FL, decided to move closer to the city. They asked Ed to help. He pointed them to Regency Cove, a 75-year-old development with low taxes and shared ownership of all the property. The Smiths found an empty lot they liked, right on the water, but it was too expensive. They were close to buying a different property, but the owner of the first lot contacted them with an offer that was quite a bit...
lower than the initial price. The Smiths accepted the offer and began designing their home.

Meanwhile, Ed and Josette had begun to consider leaving their home on Fountain Boulevard, where the taxes were rising fast as developers bought old houses, tore them down and erected larger, more expensive homes. Sue learned that the house next door to the Smiths’ lot was going onto the market. She called the Konczeskis and said, in a half-joking way, “How badly do you want to be our neighbors?”

A few days later, Sue, Josette and Bonnie Folvarcik were out shopping and Sue invited them to stop by and see their lot. Josette, looking at the house next door, had the feeling that she and Ed needed to act quickly if they were going to buy it, so she made a quick call to Ed. She couldn’t write a check that minute, so Sue and Bonnie got their checkbooks out and covered the $2,000 in earnest money. Josette placed the money in the owner’s hands.

“Not five minutes later, the owner’s phone rang,” Josette recalls. “It was another interested buyer.”

In September of 2013 the Konczeskis moved in and the Smiths moved in two months later, once construction on their home was complete. Fred and Sue’s home is positioned on the lot to create the maximum amount of space for the patio, which is two-thirds on their property and one-third on the Konczeskis’—although Sue is quick to say that they don’t think of it that way. Fred adds, “The layout, pavers, lights and plantings all have Ed’s touch.” The patio can seat 26 people for a dinner and can hold more for a party.

Besides creating the patio, the Smiths and Konczeskis have come up with a variety of ways of meeting and interacting with their neighbors in Regency Cove. Ed’s home renovation business now consists primarily of work for other residents of Regency Cove. Sue has started a quilting group which meets at the Regency Cove clubhouse, and the Smiths take communion to homebound Catholic residents of the neighborhood, often praying with them during their visits. They attend a neighborhood Bible study and drive sick neighbors to doctor visits.

“We have lots of opportunities to be Christ to people,” Sue says. “We just get up in the morning and ask the Lord what he wants us to do.”

Top: Ed and Josette hosted a get-together in their home on the occasion of a visit from John Boughton (South Bend) last fall. Middle: Bill and Peggy Blauvelt (South Bend) enjoy time with Sue Smith (Tampa). Bottom: The patio was the ideal place to celebrate Fred Smith’s 80th birthday in 2014. Fred is in the foreground.
From 1983 to 1986, I made five trips to Poland on behalf of the People of Praise. My trips were part of a broader outreach effort behind the Iron Curtain begun in 1977 by Andrew Plodowski, one of the founding members of the community. Through the efforts of Andrew and his wife Beryl, baptism in the Holy Spirit had spread like wildfire in Poland, earning Andrew the nickname “the apostle of the charismatic renewal.” As winds of the Spirit blew, interest in Christian community also grew, and I had been talking with Polish leaders about joining the People of Praise.

During this period, Poland was a communist police state. In March of 1986, I flew from Chicago to Zurich, then on Lot, the Polish airline, to Warsaw. When I got off the plane, I was greeted at the bottom stair by the cold stares of 20-year-old soldiers holding AK-47s. At the entry to the terminal, four more soldiers stared at me. Inside the terminal, there were four more staring soldiers holding their AK-47s. At immigration, the officer studied me intently for several seconds, then, with a grimace, stamped my American passport. At customs, the officer made a woman in line remove everything from her suitcases. Everything! He searched her eyeglasses case, lipstick container, mint breath box and tiny change purse.

I started to get nervous. I had $10,000 in $50 bills spread throughout my body, briefcase and suitcase. They were a gift for the community of my host, Jacek Reka, a leader whom Andrew had prayed with to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. With the money, Jacek and his friends could smuggle printing equipment into Poland and print Christian literature for distribution in Poland and the Ukraine. I started praying for the Lord’s protection. When my turn came, the officer stared at me for a moment and said in accented English, “Do you have any leather goods?” I said, “None, except my belt.” Without looking at me again, he stamped my customs card, waved me on and said, “Next!”

Outside I met Jacek. He put his finger toward his lips to signal not to talk and motioned me to his car. Finally, 10 minutes from the terminal, out on the highway, he said, “Did my Uncle Piotr send the gift?” “Uncle Piotr” was a code name we used in our correspondence for his anonymous benefactor. In my letter to Jacek, via the notoriously unsafe Polish mail system, I told him that an Uncle Piotr asked me to bring him a small wedding anniversary gift. Uncle Piotr was a Dutch businessman who believed Jesus wanted him to give all his money to the poor and needy, all of it, all $200 million. He wanted to die poor, like Jesus.

Jacek drove me to Krakow, to his apartment building in an area called New Krakow, one of a cluster of 20 buildings—all drab, gray concrete, personality-deprived architecture, imposing and plain. We walked up six floors to his apartment—no elevator. He had wanted a sixth-floor apartment because it meant more stairs for the police to climb if they decided to pay a visit, more time to hide documents in the hidden drawer of his kitchen table, previously owned by a local Solidarity union leader. (Solidarity was the Polish labor union which eventually helped bring down the communist government.)

I greeted his wife, Maria, and learned she had been arrested three years earlier by the secret police on a vague allegation of possessing illegal printed materials. The police had hauled her and her roommate to the station, stripped them naked, and taunted them saying, “So, where’s your Jesus to help you now?” Fortunately, the police, after searching her whole house, had failed to notice the boxes of Bibles, stacked on the floor next to a gas stove, which Maria had hastily covered with a cloth. With no evidence, they released the two women, who went home praising God for their deliverance.
I had seen the secret police before, at a mass for the Solidarity movement that I had attended with Andrew. At the mass, our host had pointed to the men in ties and trench coats, telling us about the hidden tape recorders, revolvers and cameras that such men carried. The secret police were like the FBI, CIA and the police all rolled into one single, oppressive internal military force.

On my trips to Krakow, Jacek would take me to the college student meetings at the Dominikanski, a Catholic church run by Dominican priests and brothers. I remember entering the back door of the church, descending a flight of stairs, turning a corner and opening a door. Suddenly, I found myself in a crowded auditorium with 400 Polish college students, singing at the top of their lungs, “Jezus jest Panem! Alleluia!” (Jesus is Lord!). I spent many days with these 400 students, who met for combined weekly meetings, larger prayer meetings and in cell groups of four to seven people. On weekends they drove to the nearby Carpathian Mountains on the Polish-Czechoslovakian border to participate in or to give Jesus Retreats to fellow students. One young man confided to me, “This movement is my life. This is all I want. If I didn’t have Christ and these friends, I would be hopeless.”

These young men and women were so excited about being part of this movement that they worked every angle to get jobs in Krakow. Some of them stayed after graduation if possible and married one another. Their life together had become home for them. They wanted to talk about Jesus. They didn’t seem bothered by government spying, restrictions on their freedom and the prospect of long workweeks to eke out a living, the scarcity of paper, tea and coffee and shoes. They simply wanted to be together. Their lives had changed for the better. They were full of joy and hope. One young man named Janusz told me he wasn’t an atheist anymore, Jesus had revealed himself to him, and he was so happy! Mariusz, my 24-year-old interpreter, lived simply, like most students, and gave his extra money for the purchase of food for weekend retreats. Ursula, Piotr and their mother had a new set of good friends to comfort them while their father was in Muammar Gaddafi’s Libya for two years working in the oil fields. Andrew Plodowski had successfully prayed for a healing of Michal’s back injury, and he was sleeping well for the first time in five years. Jacek and a few others were smuggling Bibles into the Ukraine. It was dangerous work.

They called their group Nowe Życie, New Life. One night, walking around again in this crowd of 400, I thought to myself, What a great name! These people really are experiencing new life. In the midst of communist Poland, they were a new Poland, growing up like a tiny plant. I prayed, “Father, protect your plant and make it grow! And don’t let the government kill it.”

Want to learn more about the work of the People of Praise in Poland? Check out Into the Lions’ Den, a book by Tom Noe (South Bend), available on Lulu.com and Amazon.com.
South Side girls come from all kinds of families and have all kinds of troubles. There’s Isidora, the nine-year-old Mexican whose mother speaks the tiniest bit of English and whose father isn’t in the picture—probably he’s back in Mexico. There’s Charity, a teenager whose older brother has landed in jail, and who has already run away from home once. There’s Virginia, the girl whose mother broke down in tears as she told one of our missionaries that the family would be evicted.

The girls have relatives in jail, or an unmarried 18-year-old sister who just had a baby, or an older sibling dabbling in Wicca. A few have no bed to call their own, just a sofa or a mattress shared with siblings. Some are shuffled from house to house and relative to relative.

They have questions: What do I say if my brother is mean to me? If another girl hits me at school, what should I do? If God can do anything, why do people sin? Why do people die?

On Monday and Tuesday afternoons about two dozen of these Indianapolis South Side girls, ranging in age from five to twelve, come over to community houses and spaces for girls’ group. They come to be together, to see friends and their older sisters in the Lord—members of the Christians in Mission team, the Indianapolis campus division and the Indianapolis branch. They come to learn about God and find answers to their questions.

Jeff Brummer drives out in his old GMC van with one of the women to pick up the girls. The girls often run out of their houses, eager to hop in. In warmer weather, they sometimes walk to girls’ group singing at the top of their lungs the songs they learned at summer camp.

Once they’ve arrived, they play relay races and tag games in the green space that runs behind several of the CIM houses, or work on crafts in Cornerstone Commons, an apartment building a community member owns. They’ve learned to say the Lord’s Prayer, to turn the other cheek, to use simple table manners, to honor one another, and to say “I’m sorry.” Over a snack they listen to stories from the Bible and talk about what the gospel means for their lives. They pray together.

These tiny spiritual seeds—the friendships planted here—are quietly growing and bearing fruit.

In the fall, Isidora and her mom came to the tent meeting hosted by the CIM team. There, the mother spoke with Vivian Tragesser (Indianapolis), a fluent Spanish speaker, and Vivian laid hands on her and prayed for her. Seeing her mom receive prayer, Isidora and all her friends went up and asked for prayer, too.

One girl, Britney, came to talk with...
Ellen Putzier after her brother threw her prized MP3 player down a drain. It was a gift from their father, who had just gotten out of prison, and Britney was visibly angry. Britney and Ellen talked about what they’d been discussing in girls’ group the previous few weeks—forgiving enemies like Jesus did on the cross. Britney’s face eventually softened. Before she left, she told Ellen, “I want to forgive him.”

Last year the Indianapolis branch covered costs to send one of the girls, Taylor, to Buffalo camp. When Ellen went to ask Taylor’s mom about it (Taylor’s parents were separated), the mom’s eyes welled up with tears. “Of course, she can go,” she said. She was so moved she could hardly speak, as Ellen recalls. Taylor now asks the CIM women regularly if she can come to camp again this year.

Hannah Roth (Indianapolis) recalls a moment when one girl kept lagging behind the others during their walk to girls’ group. Finally, she confronted Hannah in dramatic fashion. “Miss Hannah, just leave me. I’m too slow.” Hannah looked at her and laughed. “I’ll never leave you. If you need to walk slow, that’s fine.”

The next week, the girl approached Hannah. “Miss Hannah, you love me, don’t you?”

“Yes, of course. Why do you say that?”

“Because you wouldn’t leave me last week.”

Naomi Coney senses the high stakes for these girls when she looks at the ones who have entered their teenage years. She prays for Charity, the girl who ran away (she’s home now), each time she walks past her house. She prays also for another teenage girl, once as eager for God as the girls now coming to girls’ group, whose Facebook page reveals the lure of illicit sex and worldly attention-seeking. “These kinds of things move me to want to do all we can to give these girls the tools now,” she says—tools of Christian teaching and, above all, Christian friendship, to anchor them when trials and temptations come.

It’s what girls’ group is all about.
Christian seders have been a tradition among members of the People of Praise since the beginning of the community. Founding member Kevin Ranaghan (South Bend) says that Christians celebrate seders to explore and explain what we think Jesus’ celebration of the Last Supper would have been like, assuming that it was a Jewish Passover meal as is traditionally believed. Therefore, Christian seder prayers typically include passages from the New Testament to highlight Jesus’ actions during the Last Supper.
Kevin adds that often in the community the seder is celebrated on any day during Holy Week, in order to avoid conflicts with church services.

The prayers of the seder involve a number of symbolic foods: haroset, radishes, parsley and unleavened bread (matzo). Here are two recipes for matzo that have a long history of use by households in the South Bend branch.

Linda DeCelles says she adapted the first recipe from one she got from household member Patty (Kaley) Chukinas, and has been using it since 1975. (Patty died in 2007.) This recipe makes a sweet, dense matzo.

Julie Walters and Dorothy Ranaghan have both used the second recipe since at least 1970. It makes a lighter, flaky matzo, which resembles a biscuit in texture.

Dorothy and Linda both sometimes make their matzo in advance and freeze it.

### LINDA’S RECIPE

**Ingredients**
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ cups whole wheat flour
- 6 T canola oil
- 9 T honey
- ¾ cup water

**Directions**
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix all ingredients in a medium bowl. Turn out onto a floured surface. Knead four or five times and roll out to cover an ungreased 12 x 14-inch cookie sheet. It should be about ¼ inch thick.
3. Bake for 13 minutes. Then remove from oven, cut it into four pieces, flip them over and bake for an additional 13 minutes, until edges begin to brown.

### JULIE’S RECIPE

**Ingredients**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 T sugar
- ½ t salt
- ½ cup shortening
- ¼ cup cold water

**Directions**
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix flours, sugar and salt in a medium bowl. Cut in the shortening with a pastry blender or two knives. Add the water one tablespoon at a time and toss with a fork until the mixture comes together. You may have to use more water if the dough is too dry.
3. Turn dough out onto a floured surface and roll out to about ¼ inch thick. Use a biscuit cutter or a glass to cut the dough into circles about 3 inches in diameter. Use a knife to decorate if desired.
4. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet about 10 minutes or until brown, turning once.

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**BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION**

**BY PAUL DECELLES**

Editor’s note: Paul gave this talk in 1971 or 1972 to the Apostolic Institute, a program for training permanent deacons for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne and South Bend. In it, he talks about the role of activities in building Christian community. In particular, he stresses that to build Christian community one shouldn't start with activities. Rather, one should start with a small group who want to gather to share Jesus Christ. In the beginning, activities defocus people from what is essential.

**Building a solid foundation**

But the point is, we're talking about a building-up process now. I'm not talking about the way a full Christian life is lived. I'm talking about, how do you build a Christian community? And the building is different. Laying the foundation is a lot different from having the whole building completed. And the things which are most noticeable about a building are not the things which are most important, in a way. The things which are most important are the foundations. They're hidden from your view and they may not look too pretty or anything like that. They're not for that purpose. The people coming by will not look at the foundations and say, "Wow, what a wonderful building!" They're going to look at the things they can see up above, and marvel about all the beautiful things that can be built on this solid foundation. Unfortunately, when you're talking about beginning Christian community, you have to talk about the foundation. And that's not very attractive necessarily.

And so there is this certain aspect of things where, in the first place, the community doesn't do very much. And you have to make a decision to plow your energy into building up the community. And that is subject to a lot of criticism. People will look at you and say, “That's really a bad thing for you to do. You should be out helping the poor, doing some other things.” Which are things which are obviously extremely important, wonderful things, but they're more the sort of things that Christian communities that are really working well will be doing.

So, I suggest that the activities introduced should be those which will build up the community, and then, as much organization as is needed for all the needs of the people to be met.

To listen to the complete talk, which is just under 13 minutes long, visit [www.peopleofpraise.org/file-library/284/](http://www.peopleofpraise.org/file-library/284/) and log in. It is the third talk on the list. If you need log-in assistance, email directory@peopleofpraise.org.
TRIBUTES

MARGARET CANEFF
By Tom Caneff

In the early 1980s, my parents became curious about what Nancy and I were up to with this charismatic group we were in. They came underway, and on March 31, 1991, they became covenant members.

My mom was a devout Catholic and prayed the Rosary often, but looked back on being baptized in the Holy Spirit and joining the community as defining moments of her long life. At times, when meeting a total stranger, it wasn’t long before she would try to turn the conversation toward the Lord.

My mom was the quintessential grandmother, especially when it came to birthdays, baptisms, weddings, confirmations and Christmases. They were all made much fuller and brighter because of her generosity and presents—and most of all, because of my mom’s presence.

She worked outside the home occasionally as an accountant, but saw her real vocation as a mother. Baking and sewing were particular favorites of hers.

Becky Verwey, a fellow woman’s group member for many years, described her as “feisty and caring.” A good description!

Mom suffered for decades with chronic pain and bore that cross with much grace. Until her last year, she rarely missed any community gathering. That year, in a nursing home, was difficult. Yet, even there, her heart was fixed on God. That is certain.

KAREN ANN MAZANOWSKI
By Zig Mazanowski

Karen was baptized in the Holy Spirit in Muncie soon after she started attending prayer meetings in 1973. It wasn’t long before I and others in our family joined in, and for two years Karen hosted a Tuesday daytime prayer meeting for 30 to 40 women.

In 1979 we bought a large house where Karen could excel in hospitality. Hosting a party for 100 people wasn’t unusual! In 1987, the Indianapolis branch was founded and our two oldest sons, Zig and David, moved there to expand their business. I was asked to lead the branch, so Karen and I also moved. Our home became the site of Life in the Spirit weekends, teachings, and Lessons and Carols. With six of our children still in school, Karen opened her home daycare, serving over 40 children in 13 years.

In our first 15 years of marriage, before Karen was 30, she had given birth to 10 children in seven cities. Loving and infinitely gracious, she made it look easy. She never ran out of energy or love for kids.

Karen had a special appreciation for Mary, the mother of Jesus. She cared for children with an intense love. Even toward the end of her struggle with Alzheimer’s, Karen still loved to have the little children surrounding her.
Left: On February 11, brothers began digging for the foundation of a modular home to be constructed in Evansville. Back row, from left: George Kane, Andrew Pingel, Nick Holovaty, Peter Putzier, Peter Coleman, Evan Lent, Paul Hommes, Dan Sullivan and his sons. Front row: boys from the neighborhood. Right: Members of the Grenada branch gave a group of young singles and married couples a day long introduction to the People of Praise.

LIFENOTES

Births:
Eleanor Annalene, born February 10 to Abe and Trish Olson (Mission division, Indianapolis).

Anniversaries:
Tom and Diane Evans (New Orleans), 50 years on February 4.
Steve and Carolyn Becker (Servant Branch), 50 years on February 18.

Work and Achievements:
Tess Willard (South Bend) has a new job growing the sales effort at the LaSalle Company.
Gerry Deakin (Mission division, Allendale) retired from the LaSalle Company at the end of 2016 after a 21-year career in customer service.

Deb Vernon (Servant Branch) retired February 2 after almost 20 years as a software tester for the State of Minnesota.
Sue Busk (South Bend) retired from the LaSalle Company at the end of January after almost 15 years working primarily as a customer service representative dealing with academic textbooks.
Michael and Ruth Schmelzer (Appleton) spent a month last fall touring Australia and New Zealand with the double goal of vacationing and acting as ambassadors for two Catholic organizations they volunteer for.
John Bowar (Mission division, Allendale) started a new job as an environmental scientist at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality on January 30.
Orox Leather Company, run by John Carey (Corvallis) and members of the Martinez family (José, Jackeline, Martin, Levi and Kevin, all Vancouver-Portland), threw a party on February 6 for the employees of Made Here PDX, a retail store that sells 240 products made in the area. Orox products were their best-selling brand in 2016.
Fred Crowe, 89, a long-time supporter of Trinity Schools who was instrumental in establishing its endowment fund, passed away on February 10. A very successful accountant and the father of eight children, including Rosie Rowland (South Bend), he devoted his retirement to serving the Lord through a variety of Christian ministries.

Death:
Carol Govek (South Bend) died February 24, 2017. Together we pray for her family and friends in this time of grieving. A tribute article will follow in an upcoming issue.

Executive Office Announcements:
Servant Branch: On January 27, 2017, Mike Wacker was appointed program coordinator for the Action Program Office, overseeing Action in all the branches. Mike Zusi (South Bend) had been both the program coordinator for Action and the division coordinator for Action in South Bend, and he continues his service as division coordinator for Action in South Bend.

Muncie: Roy Connor has been appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator, effective February 2, 2017.
Indianapolis: Melissa Rader is no longer covenanted.
“Cast me not off, forsake me not, O God of my salvation” (Ps. 27:9).