

# Alleluia

## Dove

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ALLELUIA COMMUNITY  
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## Building Community is an Exciting Challenge

By Judy Hartney  
from "By the Word of Their Testimony"

*We are continuing the theme of Being an Alternate Society with a series of personal testimonies of Full Covenant members of Alleluia taken from the book "By the Word of Their Testimony" published by the Alleluia Community in 1998 on the occasion of the community's 25th anniversary. Each issue in September will have a testimony taken from the book which will precede a testimony by a Full Covenant member of Alleluia who has signed covenant since that date.*

As a little girl, I always wanted to become a wife and mother and medical doctor. I also wanted to become a singer, a ballerina and movie star. At times, I wanted to be a missionary. I knew God could do anything, so I wasn't worried about the outcome.

In looking back over my life, I remember my parents admitting to me that their faith was the reason for their approach to living. I was born in Dayton, Ohio, third in a family of seven and was raised by two cradle Catholics. We were all sent to Catho-

lic schools, grades 1-12, first in Ohio, then in Macon, Georgia.

Within our Catholic schools, Protestant friends questioned us about our relationship with Jesus. I admired those classmates for their boldness and envied their relationship with Christ. My understanding of living as a committed Christian was that of attending Mass regularly, and of being faithful to say meal-time and night-time prayers. I hoped that if this faith in which I was being reared was true, I would eventually end up on the right side of the fence when I died. Still, in my heart I knew there was more to living the committed Christian life.

While attending the University of Georgia in January of 1973, it became desperately important for me to find my niche. I knew that God should be the first priority in my life, but in practice He was not. Then I befriended a Lutheran girl who shared with me about her relationship with the Lord. She and her Methodist friend convinced me that I needed to repent of my sins and make a wholehearted commitment to Christ. They assured



me that the Holy Spirit would guide me. In my heart, I knew they were right. They prayed with me to receive the Lord and I heard praying in tongues for the first time. I trusted them wholeheartedly and responded to their urging by asking the Lord to fill me with His Holy Spirit on January 29, 1973.

From that day forward, I was filled with a spiritual hunger for God's word, fellowship with His body, and a deeper understanding of the Christian faith. I sought out priests and Christian fellowships. I attended Bible studies and visited churches of other denominations. The worship and singing filled me with a blissful feeling of closeness to God. I realized that I was beginning to know Jesus better through knowing the body of Christ. I was beginning to wonder if the Lord's plan for my life was consistent with my childhood dreams.

In the midst of my zeal and hunger for spiritual formation, my college

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# Building Community

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prayer group informed me of the fledgling Alleluia Community in Augusta. I believe God also used vocational testing to have me consider a career in nursing. I was attracted to the Medical College of Georgia where I could finish my baccalaureate degree in two years. I transferred to continue my studies and immediately sought out fellowship in the Alleluia Community. It took me only six weeks to realize that the Lord was leading me to join this group of committed Christians. There I found acceptance as a Catholic and many opportunities to grow in all aspects of life.

Over the next 12 years, the Lord allowed me to remain single and be a member of seven different households. I embraced household living, which challenged me in every area of life. I lived out the Christian principles of deference, appreciation and total sharing of goods. I realized I was participating in the foundation of the Community. I poured myself into the life of the Community through household service, music ministry and liturgical dance.

The relationships I formed with adults and children through my household living became precious to me. The praise and worship and personal prayer times were my greatest joy. I grew in my understanding of the Word of God, the practice of my Catholic faith, my participation in the sacraments and my love of our Blessed Mother. Household living challenged me to embrace deference, selflessness and service. I learned I could never out-give God. Service given willingly leads to joy beyond measure. Building community was then and remains today an exciting challenge.

In January 1987, I married Tom

Hartney. Since that memorable day my ministries have changed. My 11 years of working as a registered nurse have prepared me to be "nurse" to our own seven children. My 12 years in music and dance ministries have led to my teaching our children to do the same, in praising God with their whole being. Even the drama schooling of earlier years has helped me to create spontaneous neighborhood passion plays. My present involvement with youth ministry challenges me to draw from all my previous life experiences. Jesus has realized my every dream and made my life richer than I could have imagined.

As a married woman in Alleluia I desire to serve my husband, my children, other sisters and the community at large. The relationships our Lord has given me are priceless. He has been faithful to teach me that I can depend on Him for my every need. His rewards of joy and peace are unsurpassed. I pray I will be faithful to His call on my life as He continues to unfold this adventure before me.

**Judy Hartney** is an Alleluia Community School music teacher and one of twenty-two women who provide overall insight to the Community Elders from a womanly perspective as an Alleluia Handmaid. Judy has been a Full Covenant member of Alleluia since 1975. She and her husband Tom have seven children and attend Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Augusta, Georgia.

## Correction

In the printed September 8 issue of the Alleluia Dove, on page 4, the date of the opening assembly should have read "...the 2014-15 school year." The electronic copy was correct. We hope everyone had a good chuckle over the misprint.

## *Thirty Days of September The Plan*

Each household to begin each day (or end each day) with a meditation from the book, *31 Days of Praise, Enjoying God Anew*.

At SG meetings, read aloud the meditation for that day and then discuss what the Lord is saying.

ACS to use the meditations in homerooms, school prayers, etc.

Each person to set aside a daily time to pray in tongues for at least 10 minutes.

Each family or single household to limit their use of media.

Those who use social media are to fast from the use of the computer, smart phone, I-pad, etc. for a good portion of the day.

Each household to do Lord's Day/Sabbath meals, especially inviting singles and/or guests to join them.

Each person to be a "thousand points of light" (do kind or loving acts for others).

*Anyone who has a "point of light" to share, please send it in to Barbara Harshman at [barbarah@yeslord.com](mailto:barbarah@yeslord.com).*

# Groundwater of the Holy Spirit

By Kevin King



I grew up in a nominally Christian home. My mother would consistently take my brother and me to the local Baptist church on Sunday and Wednesday, although it never translated into how we lived our lives. As I became a teenager, I exercised my independence by feigning sleep to stay home and watch *Lost in Space* reruns. For my mom, the stress of my dad's failing health and making ends meet meant that church fell off the radar and eventually *Lost in Space* won out.

By my teenage years, I was codependent on my brother. I existed a lot through his friends and experiences. My brother was going to youth camp, and I agreed to go. That first night, the camp pastor gave an altar call. He first asked for folks who had never had God change them on the inside to raise their hand. So I did. He then asked for those who had come forward before, but continued in their life of sin and may need to be "born again, again" to raise their hands. I raised my hand again, because I had gone forward several times in the past not knowing what I was doing. Finally, he called for those who had unsaved friends and relatives that needed to hear Jesus. I ran to the front with tears saying, "I need to do all three!"

That night I experienced some heart changes. First, the youth group came around me and celebrated the decision I had made. I had never before experienced the love and friendship that I felt that night. Second, my brother had given me a Bible six months before. When he gave it to me, I couldn't understand it at all. Now I understood it, and I LOVED it! I couldn't stop reading it. I read through the gospels, but decided I didn't like starting in the middle of a book, so I began reading from Genesis and got through Deuteronomy in a week. Thirdly, after that night, I felt sorrow for my sin. Before that night, I was able to sin freely, because my heart was dead. After that night, it was awakened, and I

began a struggle against sin.

After a few years, through some divine action, God led me to the Vineyard Church. Here I met Carolyn, who as much as I pursued her, she continually kept me at arm's length. She did, however, help me to understand the enigmatic Holy Spirit. While my emotions were awakened through the personal style of the worship music, I was having difficulty when the pastor would pray for the Holy Spirit, give prophetic words, or share words of knowledge.

On one occasion, Carolyn agreed to ride with me up to Washington, DC, on a whirlwind trip to pick up my brother and return him home for Christmas the next day. On this trip, I quizzed her about the Holy Spirit, and she told me about her experiences. In the middle of a story about how John Wimber prayed that his car wouldn't give out of gas on a ministry trip, our car broke down on the far side of Columbia. Inspired by our conversation, I tried praying that our car would make it to Washington, DC. It didn't. We got out to walk to the next exit, and without going two steps, a car pulled over and gave us a lift to the next exit. I realized that God works in different ways, but that His Holy Spirit works for those who seek Him. It was also on that trip that I realized how much I loved Carolyn, and pursued her even more. Within the year, we were married.

Several times over the next few years, God continued to show his faithfulness to me by miraculously giving me jobs. He also gave us both of our children after we struggled so hard to get pregnant. I had opportunities to go into full-time ministry, but honestly, I had trouble giving up a good paying job. It was always too much of a leap for me... we had debt and were newly married, then a child on the way, then another. So I tried to ride the fence by getting the best of both worlds: first, by working in technology at a Christian ministry in Colorado Springs called Compassion In-

ternational, and then by helping with a church plant in Charlotte, NC., where I worked as a web developer by day and children's pastor by night. These misadventures whittled away our stuff, our income and our pride. So much so, that we found ourselves living in an old rodent-infested apartment in a college suburb outside Charlotte.

At about this time, David and Vanessa Milligan, whom we had known since our days in the Vineyard, were discerning whether they should go underway in Alleluia Community. I questioned whether this was really a good thing, because it seemed a little "cultish" to me. But after visiting on and off for several years, camping out on the floor of their den or pitching a tent in their yard, Carolyn said that she thought we should go underway too. Even though our standard of living in Charlotte wasn't the same as it had been, I had seen some of the houses in community! I wasn't sure if that was the best move for our family, but Carolyn persisted.

I received a prophetic word from a lady visiting our church that said that I had gone down several blind alleys in the past, but that God was going to turn that all around. He was going to make a change in my workplace and give me new relationships. Even still I struggled with, on one hand, the improved spiritual life of Community, and on the other, the wonderful job with Bank of America in Charlotte. I laid out the pros and cons for community on paper, and while asking God to help me make the decision, he reminded me of Psalm 1 where it says that the person who is committed to God "whatever they do prospers." I felt like God was saying that He was

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# Planted by Streams of Water

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behind me 100% in either choice. I could stay or go, but if we went to community, God would take care of me. After only a few weeks, I found a job in Augusta, but at a sizeable pay cut. While attempting to resign at Bank of America, my manager asked me instead to work for the bank from my home in Augusta. Not only did God give me the spiritual benefits of community, but also the financial benefits of my job.

One of the things I noticed when I came to Community, was the feel of the Holy Spirit was different. It wasn't pray

and – WHAM – the Holy Spirit does some miraculous thing, like I had seen on different occasions. It was like a groundwater of the Holy Spirit exists underneath Community, which permeates everything we do. Of course, God does WHAM us sometimes too, but in Community that groundwater of the Holy Spirit is like the streams of water mentioned in Psalm 1 which says, I am "like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever [I do] prospers." When I lost my job last

year, I wasn't concerned. I knew that because I had made a covenant commitment to Community, God would be faithful to keep me here. I pray that, for those who plant themselves by this stream of water, they drink deep in what Alleluia offers, so they do not wither, but prosper.

Kevin King is a web developer and serves on the Children's Prayer Meeting team and the Pastoral Team in Alleluia Community. He and his wife, Carolyn, are also youth ministers at Burns Memorial UMC. They have been Full Covenant members of Alleluia since 2011. Kevin and Carolyn have two children and attend Burns Memorial United Methodist Church in Augusta, Georgia.

## Serving in Jenkins – Part 2

By Tom Hartney



One of the challenges of serving in Jenkins is that the service does not end at the end of camp. Throughout the day, the sisters or Father request assistance in an area of need. Our women worked several afternoons packing bags of groceries for the indigent families in the mountains — 170 packages in all! These girls also put together bags of school supplies to give away. There were plumbing repairs to be done in the guest house where our young ladies slept. Fr. Santosh has long recognized our young men's skills with grounds keeping. He has recurrently requested assistance in mowing the church property or the parish cemetery, not an easy task in the hills of Kentucky! A large trash pile also needed to be burned.

The MC's requested assistance in constructing a garden terrace that would allow hanging vegetables to be grown. A moderate sized boulder lay adjacent to the garden. The sisters asked if we could devise a way so that a statue of the Blessed Mary could be moved from the ground and placed atop the boulder. We were quick to identify that the top of

the boulder was sloped so there was no way the statue would stay erect. We thought of the Scripture of being "clay in the potters hands" and tried to mold/chisel the boulder to create a flat surface. Didn't work.... We prayed for wisdom and Jim Dresser acted on a leading to call Don Small. Learning of our situation, Don "educated" us by explaining that we could purchase cement glue that could be placed on the sloping surface of the rock allowing us to then pour cement into the glue so a flat service could be achieved. With Jim's engineering mind and the assistance of our young men, we were able to successfully accomplish our mission by the morning of our scheduled departure!!!

Serving in Jenkins is no easy task. You are taken out of your comfort zone and live each day for the Glory of God, relying on His daily provision. Never did we hear of a complaint from our seniors. Yet we recurrently heard the compliments from those we served. As that young mother shared with us all at the end of camp, "You never forget what they teach you!" Day in and day out, our

seniors served with energy and a strength that only comes from the Lord during our time in prayer.

Perhaps the greatest witness came as we gathered to say our final farewell to the Missionaries of Charity. Sister Imeldina had learned of her new assignment to Jenkins at a large annual gathering of the Missionaries of Charity. She did not know anything about Jenkins or the area in which she was called to serve. Yet many, many other MC's came over to her with smiles on their faces and said, "You get to have the Alleluia people." Sister Imeldina stated that she was puzzled and did not know what that meant. As she said her goodbyes and conveyed her gratitude, she confided to us, "Now I know...."

It was an honor to be a part of the witness our Alleluia Missionaries were to Father Santosh, the Missionaries of Charity and the people of Jenkins, KY. All Praise and Glory be to our God!!!



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