

# Alleluia

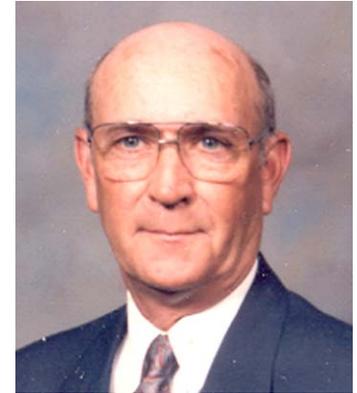
## Dove

A Weekly Publication of the  
ALLELUIA COMMUNITY  
Augusta, Georgia



## Vision of Alleluia

By the late Dale Clark



*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.*

Most people will testify to a time in their life where Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. However in my case He actually brought the Holy Spirit.

I was kneeling beside my bed and Jesus walked into my bedroom and began to speak to me. His first words were, "I love you, Dale." He was still ten feet away, but with the words came the capturing feelings and emotions that proved what He said was true—true for all eternity.

His next words were, "I'll never leave you!"

Since He had decided to come to

me in human form, I related accordingly and responded, "You don't understand, I'm a salesman and travel around all day."

"I know, I'll ride with you," He responded. Then as quickly as He appeared, He no longer was in human form. He left me still kneeling and crying, but never to be alone or without Him.

His promise has held true since that day in April of 1970. Any and every time I choose to look for Him, He is right there beside me.

I don't actually see Him with my eyes like I did that first time, but His presence is no less real. Whether praying, driving or even riding in a boat, that promise has always been kept. But now, I experience Him in His Holy Spirit which He left me.

His visit to me that day was preceded by an hour of uncontrollable repentance; deep, sincere repentance, where I was not only made aware of sin and how it is not compatible with God, but how and where I had offended. My first tears that day were tears of sorrow—deep sorrow for each and every time I rejected right

and chose evil. The repentance was deeper than anything I could produce. I was being guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit in a supernatural way.

I was reasonably successful in business. I had a wonderful wife and two adopted children that I deeply loved. But there was that hole in my heart that I had tried to fill with many things, though nothing I tried really satisfied.

What had sent me to my room in an empty house on a day when I should have been out selling cash registers? It was a visit to a priest friend where Carolyn went to church. I liked this guy because we both enjoyed good Scotch. Little did I know that he had been baptized in the Holy Spirit a few days earlier. The last thing I expected was that he would grab my hands and pray with me before I left his study. He had been a good and sympathetic listener as I told him of my dissatisfaction with myself and as I complained, "There must be more to life than this."

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# A Vision

(Continued from page 1 - DALE CLARK)

To this day I cannot remember a word of what he prayed. What I can remember is wondering if he might be a little *sweet* because men don't hold hands, at least not my kind of men. However, God was listening.

Two hours later I burst into his living room without even stopping at the secretary. The bologna sandwich seemed to dangle from his lips as he listened to me exclaim the reality of Jesus and how He had just been over at my house to see me.

He eventually managed to get a few words into the conversation. He invited me to join a few people who had been gathering for about 3 or 4 weeks. He explained that they would understand what had happened to me.

A couple of nights later, with shell-shocked Carolyn in tow, I found the meeting. I joined right in with that early group of Catholic Pentecostals in Augusta. Forty to fifty people were packed into the living room and dining room of Eddy's house. All who came that night were breaking a curfew. The curfew had been imposed because that was the week known nationally as the "Augusta Riots." The National Guard had been called in to stop the fighting and looting and enforce the curfew.

Some people were amazed, bewildered and maybe even a little scared. But not me. From the moment I came through the door, I was fully in tune with the singing, Bible reading and personal testimonies that told of the experiential love of Jesus. I knew the prophecies and words of knowledge were straight from God. No matter how extreme those people seemed, I was one of them. Before the night was over, I was praying in tongues over a nun from Statesboro who also wanted to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

# Be Quiet and Listen!

By Sarah Dooley



Until recently, I didn't think I had a testimony. There was no flash of light, no booming voice from above, no divine vision. I remember my first Alleluia Underway retreat where I desperately prayed for some big sign, some deep encounter, and while I was pleading for this, I watched my husband be slain in the spirit. I got the whole "two become one" thing, but I meant THIS half of us, Lord!!

But, I digress. Let me go back to the beginning. I was baptized as an infant in a Protestant church, and then again at the age of three in the Catholic church. My mother had decided that she wanted to raise us Catholic as she was raised, and wanted me baptized in the [Catholic] Church at the same time as my little brother. I think that was the beginning of my calling to be eccumenical.

We went to church most every Sunday, and attended Sunday School,

I had my ideas as to why God wanted to join us together. Others had a different emphasis, but there was enough of a common call and vision that we could decide to do "it" together, forever.

My vision was for a place, or a group of people where those newly baptized in the Spirit could come and share Jesus and what he was doing and saying in their life. This surely came in part from my own need, a need that lasts to this day. Even on days when it is difficult to turn and see or hear Him, one of you will keep my faith alive through *your* experience.

My vision of Alleluia has come true. Maybe even thousands have come—some for a short time, some for a long time, some for lifetime. All

but that was as far as it went for me. I would look at a few fellow classmates with "wwjd" bracelets and "Jesus" T-shirts and think, "Why do they have to bring Jesus into the rest of the week? He belongs at church on Sundays." Eventually I saw many of my friends at church be hypocrites, so I stopped going. The only savior I had ever given much thought to was my future husband. I would look out my bedroom window for hours, dreaming of the day that I would find the love of my life. Once I found him, life would be perfect. Once I found him, everything would be ok. Once I found him, this aching in my heart would finally go away.

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have brought a piece of the kingdom. All have taken a piece of kingdom. And we continue to build this part of His kingdom together here.

Four of us from that night would continue walking in the Spirit and after sharing our experience with many, would be in the group of twelve to be founders of Alleluia.

Dale Clark, a retired salesman, was an original Elder and a Pastoral Coordinator of the Alleluia Community. He and his wife, Carolyn, were two of the original signers of the Alleluia Covenant in 1973. They had two children and lived in Augusta, Georgia, where they attended Church of the Most Holy Trinity and later, St. Joseph Catholic Church. Dale went to be with Jesus in September of 1998. Carolyn continues to live and serve in Alleluia.

# A Series of Gentle Leadings

(Continued from page 2 - SARAH DOOLEY)

That's a tall order for any man to fill. The month before I turned 16, I "met" a very nice boy online. He happened to be looking for Catholic friends, saw my profile, and liked one of my quotes. He was sweet, respectful, generous, kind, and wanted nothing more than my friendship. He was also 700 miles away. I fell in love fast. He was part of some Christian community thing that sounded kind of weird, but I didn't think about it too much. Through a series of events that can only be from God, I eventually moved to Augusta and married that boy (now a man). But as I said, he had a tall order to fill.

We were very surprised to find that I was pregnant. Shortly after we had adjusted to the news, I woke up one night in severe pain. I was alone, scared, and in pain for a very long time that night, and when it was all over, I knew that I had lost the baby. I didn't wake Josh... I didn't think... I just started walking. I walked for a long time, deep in grief. It was cold and dark when I started, and I finally stopped and looked toward the sky. I said unspoken words of anger to God, asking why He wasn't there. Just as I finished formulating the words in my head, the sun started to rise. It was glorious and I felt the warmth permeate my soul. It was the beginning of my personal relationship with Jesus and my desire to live fully for Him through Alleluia Community. That baby brought me to Jesus. My heart still ached, but it began to ache with a desire to love Jesus more.

My love for Community grew quickly, but my relationship with the Lord was brand new, and my marriage was failing fast. We built our marriage on rocky ground to begin with, with serious wounds, some poor forma-

tion, and plenty of mismatched expectations. We quickly added major stresses, and the pain of each fight began to pile on top of the others. Every new issue was a knot; not an isolated knot, but one that was connected with multiple other knots—deeper knots. Everything was so intertwined that there was no conflict resolution. We had no hope of ever sorting through it all.

One night, I was in anguish, railing at God one minute, and then pleading for His help the next. I finally stopped for half a second and I heard, very distinctly in my head, "Be quiet and listen." That stopped me! That was the first time that I heard God "speak" to me. It wasn't a booming voice from above, more like a thought dropped into my head that wasn't my own. I knew it was Him.

I have heard Him speak to me that way many times, when I finally learned to shut up long enough to listen. I heard Him tell me that we were to sign Covenant the following year, when it was almost laughably impossible considering where we were at the time. But we did! He told me not to lose hope in my marriage when it was so close to divorce, but He worked with us to heal it! He told me to start making our home out of an old duplex in the Village, when we had no money and hadn't yet found a way to get a loan for it. We started work anyway, and He eventually gave us a way!

My testimony is a series of gentle leadings. I've never heard a booming voice or seen a flash of light, and I don't know that I ever will. He speaks to me quietly, and not always directly, through trusted friends, words of Scripture, devotionals, songs on the radio, Community teachings, words of wisdom from my young chil-

## Day 29 of "31 Days of Praise"

*Thank You that  
Christ is my  
Life...that I am a  
member of His  
body and a  
dwelling place of  
His Spirit. How  
privileged I am to  
be indwelt by Your  
glorious presence  
(by the whole  
Trinity: Father,  
Son, and Holy  
Spirit!) so that You  
can display Your  
excellence to those  
around me.*

(An excerpt from "31 Days of Praise" by Ruth Myers with Warren Myers, pg. 104.)

dren, or a soft breeze at my back. As I look back, He always has! I've only recently learned to pay attention.

Sarah Dooley is a stay-at-home mom and serves on the decorations, special events, facebook, publishing and clothes closet teams for Alleluia Community. She and her husband, Josh, have been Full Covenant members of Alleluia since 2011. They are the parents of three boys and a girl and attend St. Joseph Catholic Church in Augusta, Georgia.

# Alleluia School of Spiritual Direction

By Mike and Bev Firmin

Just a note to let you know.... How often we begin emails or letters with these words. When asked to write this article, these are the words that came to our mind. It is important that you know that there is a leading of the Holy Spirit in the Body, expressed by the Elders, to begin an Alleluia School of Spiritual Direction. This is in response to a need in the Body of Christ for faithful teaching for Christians in the spiritual life and mentoring of souls in their journey to the Father.

Spiritual direction is "a relationship through which we come to better know, love and follow Christ through the help of a kind of spiritual coach." (Dan Burke, *Navigating the Interior Life*) There is a deepening hunger among God's people to draw nearer to Him; to become holy as He has directed we become. The Lord has been leading us as a people to a deeper prayer, a deeper walk with Him. As we rely on one another, we see more clearly and understand more deeply the journey we are on. This is a wisdom and a clarity which the

world is aching for. The Holy Spirit wants this gift He has given us shared with the wider Body of Christ.

Several years ago, we became aware of a school of spiritual direction in Clearwater, Florida. It has been functioning for 20 years under the academic auspices of Franciscan University in Steubenville. It is their "School of Spiritual Direction." The school is run by a group who are a charismatic community whose primary goal is providing retreats and spiritual direction in parishes. Their school of spiritual direction now has a waiting list for enrollment into 2017!

We were led to enroll in this school four years ago. We applied, and it took a year and a half before we could begin the first session in January of 2013. It is a three-year program consisting of three two-week sessions. We will finish in January, 2015. This is something that we felt the Lord was calling us to do in our retirement years, and we wanted to equip ourselves more completely for this call.

The Elders, in their listening to the Lord, feel that this gift that we have received in the Body of experiencing the call to deeper discipleship is meant to be shared with the larger Body of Christ. They have asked us to begin to develop an "Alleluia School of Spiritual Direction" where we can train more people to fill this critically needed role for God's peo-

ple. It is a gift that Alleluia could offer and which the world needs so desperately.

After seeking the discernment of our own spiritual director, and much prayer, we have begun to develop a curriculum, seek teachers and gain support. Our own teachers in Florida are fully supportive and have offered their counsel as we begin this endeavor. We will begin the first class in June of 2015 and will follow the same format of three two-week sessions. The first class will consist of 12 invited members of Alleluia (unknown at present), who will then help in the future classes, which will be open to the wider Christian community. Our School of Spiritual Direction will be open to all Christian faiths because of our nature as an interdenominational/ecumenical community and because the thirst for God is the same for all of us, across all Christian traditions. Because Satan is busy plying his trades in myriads of disguises in New Age and other unscriptural paths to God, it is our desire to provide a place of truth and solid teaching so that the "Way" will not be obscured by false teachers.

And so, we ask your prayers that the Holy Spirit will continue to light the way and direct this work, always in accord with His will. Thank you!



Mike and Bev Firmin

Mike and Bev Firmin have been Full Covenant members of Alleluia Community since 1983. Mike serves as a Support Group Head while Bev serves as a Handmaid for Alleluia, providing insight to the community Elders from a womanly perspective. Mike has a degree in philosophy and is the former CEO of Golden Harvest Food Bank. Bev is a Licensed Social Worker. Both have extensive religious training and have devoted their lives to serving the poor. They are the parents of seven adult children and six grandchildren and attend Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Augusta, Georgia.

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