



New Theme Series

The Alleluia Community's Rule of Life

The Pastoral Team

As we finish the thirty days of September, we will be opening a new theme for the next several months. Many people have begun to use their new Prayer Watch booklet, and they have gained a new appreciation for the Rule of Life as it is interwoven into the Ten Words of the community. We want to begin writing about our various rules, what they mean to us, and how we are to live them out. From time to time, we will have some personal testimonies that will appear as Dove articles regarding how a particular rule has impacted the life of one of our members.

Many people may not remember how our Foundational Documents came about and how we decided on the Rule of Life that we now have. They came out of a discussion of the old Governmental Council and had to do with writing down some of the agreements we had as a community. From the very beginning of Community, Alleluia used an oral tradition to pass on those agreements relating to our government. As early as 1997, after a number of years had gone by, our recollections of the agreements

were all over the map. Some thought it was this way, while others had the opposite opinion. In January of 1998, we called the whole Community to fast and pray that God would give us the wisdom we needed in that critical time and the courage and unity to do what He would show us that we must do.

When the time came to write all of the agreements down, the Holy Spirit arranged that the Governmental Council would be on retreat at the beach in 1999. The Holy Spirit showed us how we would pull this all together. We had asked the Community prior to the retreat to send in feedback for our retreat deliberations. Literally hundreds of pages of feedback were received from people in Alleluia. I remember clearly that Dennis McBride broke us up into three groups based on his discernment of our gifts and tasked us to begin to write down a certain part of our life together. It was totally the Holy Spirit, because it flowed together so well and there was such peace as we did it, that we all recognized God's hand in the work. The entire retreat was

devoted to pulling this together so that we could present it to the entire community.

Later that week, the Council wives and the Handmaids came to help us with the first step of the revision. The process of sorting out what we wanted to say in the documents and how the Rule of Life should be written and what it should contain took a number of months to finally pull together. This whole process concluded with a full Community consultation that overwhelmingly approved all of the documents.

The Rule of Life is a critical part of the Foundational Documents. It is the glue that holds our daily life together. It defines what it means to be an Alleluia member. It is meant to bring specificity to the call on our life as a community that is described in the other documents. It gives guidance to us in how the Lord wants us to live out our daily lives in Community. In a sense, it is a rule but it is not meant to be the Law as we determine how to live it out. We are meant

All the Way With Jesus!

By the late Dennis McBride

We are closing the theme of Being an Alternate Society with the personal testimony of a Full Covenant member 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.

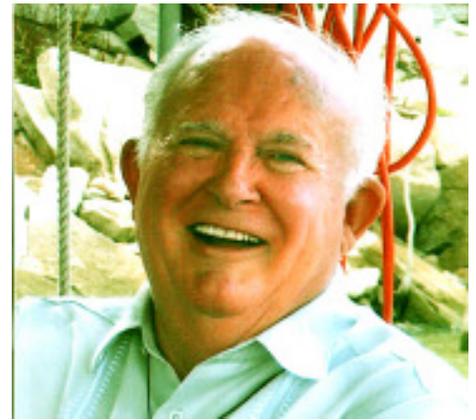
Born in Laredo, Texas, to an Irish family that raised cattle, I came to know life from that cradle. It was an unpolished cradle, hewn out of common wood. Grandpa often said, "Life is hard." He got up at 4:00 a.m., worked until a mid-day break for dinner, took a siesta from 12:30 until 3:00, and went back to work.

I was deeply loved by my mama, sisters and aunts. The men in my life didn't express love, at least not in the terms of endearment used in the '90s. They loved me by making me strong, by training me to be prepared. They knew that people failed or died because of weakness, and they wanted

to insure that I "made it." So love was well intended, but hard.

My response was to be hard myself, and tough and wild. I loved God, my family, life, the ranch. I didn't understand much about Jesus or the church, and I wasn't too fond of life after death because I was too busy having fun and working hard. Like the western movies I went to see every weekend, the good guy wore a white hat, rode a white horse and always helped the underdog, while the bad guy wore a black hat, rode a black horse and was a bully. The good guy always won and the bad always died—life was simple.

I met my wife Harriett during my senior year at Texas A&I, and we married in May just before I graduated in 1961. I received a commission as an Army Signal Corps officer and began a 14 year career that led me around the continent and around the globe: Alaska, Texas, two tours in Vietnam, Kansas, Georgia. The Army



both challenged and thrilled me. It tested my mettle and my character again and again.

By my thirties, I was going full steam ahead. In the early '70s, I had made a definite decision to make the Army my career. I decided to begin doing whatever it took to succeed. In July 1972, we were sent to Fort Gordon, Georgia. I began to travel to accomplish my new career goals.

I loved partying, flying airplanes and playing golf. Serious things escaped me. I was focused on what made me feel good. I loved my wife and my children, but I did not know how to express that love except by providing for them. At the time, I thought of myself as a success. I didn't recognize that I was on the verge of disaster. Alcoholism, lung cancer, heart problems, and divorce were staring me in the face. Nearly every male family member of my generation fell victim to these, and it seemed clear that I, too, was in their clutches.

In October 1972, Harriett convinced me to attend a charismatic conference. I did not even know how to spell charismatic and surely did not understand what was going to take place. I thought that it was some kind of radical group in the church that was opposed to the Vietnam War. Our parish priest told me it was good. So, to please Harriett, I decided to go.

It was at that conference that our lives were to turn upside down, and we were to be radically and perma-

Rule of Life

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to live in the Spirit not in the law of the Rule of Life.

Over the next several months, the Pastoral Team will attempt to take each one of the Rules of Life and talk about how we as a people are living that Rule out today. There may be a wide spectrum of ways people in Community approach each Rule, and we will give various versions of how "we" do it. We have 28 guidelines or rules to cover, and we may only spend a short time on one of them, but may take several weeks of articles on another. So starting in October, we will

begin going through the Rule of Life and expounding on the "living" document that so wonderfully guides our life together. A brief outline of the Rule of Life follows on page 3.

The Pastoral Team consists of Elders Bob Nestor and Dan Almeter, Pastoral Coordinator Chuck Hornsby, Handmaids Carolyn Clark, Kelly Dolin and Joanne Paulos, Support Group Head Tod Densmore, and Full Covenant members Kevin King and Vanessa Milligan. Their mission is to develop the monthly teaching themes for the prayer meetings, men's and women's meetings, retreats and the Alleluia Dove Newsletter to aid community members in living out their call to growth in holiness in covenant, charismatic, Christian and multi-denominational community.

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Alleluia Community's Rule of Life

(A brief outline of the Alleluia Rule of Life)

Lord, You have given us a Rule of Life to help us be faithful members of Alleluia. Empower us to live faithfully the heart and substance of our call as we read our Rule of Life below.

1. Have a daily prayer time
2. Have a daily family prayer time
3. Be punctual in attendance at Alleluia gatherings, unless released from commitment
4. Be on a service team
5. Have ongoing spiritual study & Scripture reading
6. Spend time with Alleluia members outside of meetings; live in close proximity
7. Share Jesus: hospitality, evangelism, good works
8. Have a headship relationship of care & accountability
9. Lead children into participation in the Community's life & educate them as God's sons & daughters
10. Fast weekly
11. Be Christ-like in every thought, radiate joy & peace
12. Be dedicated to holiness, seeking highest standards of morality & cultural expression: media, modesty, fashion, dating & courtship
13. Complete, assent to, review regularly & live out the teachings
14. Have an Alleluia prayer watch
15. Prepare a monthly budget, plan time, live within means, live a life of Christian simplicity
16. Keep financial agreements
17. Have a personal relationship with Jesus, filled with & open to the Holy Spirit's gifts
18. Be a faithful member in good standing with own church denomination; respect other's denominational differences
19. Acknowledge the beginning & end of the Lord's Day; limit business activity & travel
20. Avoid gossip, slander, divisiveness, or party spirit; live out Mt. 18:15-17
21. Honor others in speech & outward expressions of love, deference & respect
22. Live by agreements of the Alleluia government & make them my own; offer correction, input & prayer for Community leaders.
23. Live out scriptural models of men, women & family
24. War against the devil, flesh & errors of worldly wisdom; seek ministry where hindered in living a holy life or common life
25. Read & respond to Alleluia communications
26. Each woman will seek an older woman relationship
27. Live by our Covenant by understanding & living the Rule of Life
28. This is the way God has chosen for my sanctification; I am called to the highest standard of Community life.

All the Way

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nently changed. God reached into my life and asked me several questions: "Was I sure of my eternal destiny? Did I know that He required something of me in order to be saved? Did I

know that He called me to be holy as my Father in heaven is holy?"

I faced these questions, and they scared the "hell" out of me! I realized that I wasn't sure about my salvation. I heard the Lord challenge me. I accepted the challenge and made some of the deepest decisions of my life. I

decided to go "all the way with Jesus." If nothing happened, I could just walk away from religion. Well, He showed up that afternoon, and I've never been tempted to turn back.

My consuming zeal and drive for my career were instantly replaced

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Jesus is Appearing to Muslims!

By Karen Murrell

Yes, He is!!! Recently I ran across a book titled *Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World?* by Tom Boyle. Could this be true? It was a seminary student's Facebook site. I quickly checked out the title and found three others, one even written in 2014. So, I read it. Perfect timing, because I was seething inside

All the Way

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with a deep, burning fire to follow Jesus at all cost. My ambition evaporated. My need for nicotine and alcohol instantly left. These changes were actual; they were scary; they were exciting! My sinful state became an abomination in my eyes. It broke my heart because Jesus was standing there with me viewing my sin. I asked Jesus to baptize me in His Holy Spirit, and I left with a new focus on life. I wanted to live each moment for Jesus alone.

On February 11, 1973, 113 days after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, Harriett and I knelt down at a coffee table in the Beatty's living room on a Sunday evening and signed a covenant with Jesus and some of His brothers and sisters to live out the rest of our lives together. Alleluia Community was born! It was a wonderful moment made so sweet by God's love that we were compelled to fling our arms around the Covenant, for it was Him and it was for Him. He asked us to make a covenant, and at that moment we could not deny him anything. Our belief in Jesus had become experiential; we seemed to know *Him* rather than just to know *about* Him. Prayer became a conversation, and we were able to truly know what He wanted.

every time I saw a Muslim, which reminded me of the atrocities being committed in the Middle East. Being a bit interested in mysteries, I was interested.

Isaiah 65:1 says, "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me, I was found by those who did not seek me." Prophets appearing to Muslims in dreams throughout history is not unusual. When Jesus appears to them in Saudi, Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, Afghanistan, Iraq, etc., they know Him as Jesus and feel His love and peace. He rocks their world. Often He connects them to other followers

When I signed the Covenant that evening, I understood the radical nature of my actions. While I was shaking in my boots, I knew I could trust Jesus with my very life. We intentionally sought the most radical course of action, and then we took it! When we agreed that Jesus wanted something, we did it without further question.

As a body, we decided to live out Acts 4:32, putting all things in common. Harriett and I sold our new home in Montclair and moved into Faith Village. We sold everything to make a down payment on Faith Village. I chose to leave the Army with 14 years in service to take the job of maintenance man for Faith Village. We decided to have more children, ending up with ten at last count. Through all of this, we learned the value, or lack thereof, of material things, the importance of others and the role of the Holy Spirit in day-to-day existence.

By seeking Jesus for the past twenty-five years, we have experienced a revolution in our personal lives. We have found a deepening of our love for the church. We have found a new love for the unity Jesus

through dreams, too.

My faith was SO built up by reading this book! AND, we are encouraged to evangelize any Muslim we run into by our LOVE for them. We might even ask, "Have you had any interesting dreams lately?" Amazingly, Jesus finds a way to love his people, even behind the "Muslim curtain!"

Karen Murrell is an Alleluia Community Handmaid, one of 21 women who provide overall insight to the Community government from a womanly perspective, and a Community Elder's wife. She is retired from teaching 4th grade in the Alleluia Community School. Karen and her husband, Kevin, were two of the original signers of the Alleluia Covenant in 1973. They have five children and 15 grandchildren and attend the Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Augusta, Georgia.

described in John 17. We have come to see the reality of the existence of Satan as an evil being. We have experienced physical healing through prayer. We have seen God change hearts and heal relationships. We have seen restorations of marriages, children to their families and people to a vibrant love for Jesus, some after a sad, sinful existence.

Along the way, others have joined us in this radical call to a covenant life. Today, God's transformation continues in the 900 souls currently affected by our community life. While we don't usually ride white horses or wear white hats, we're always working to be the "good guys" the Lord is calling us to be.

Dennis McBride was an Elder and Overall Coordinator of the Alleluia Community, responsible for day-to-day coordination of Community activities. He and his wife Harriett were two of the original signers of the Alleluia Covenant in 1973. They had ten children, 30 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild and attended St. Joseph Catholic Church in Augusta. Dennis went to be with Jesus in 2012.