

Dear Friends,

♪ **Light one candle for the strength that we need to never become our own foe.
And light one candle for those who are suffering pain we learned so long ago.
Light one candle for all we believe in let anger not tear us apart!
Light one candle to bind us together with peace as the song in our heart
Don't let the light go out! It's lasted for so many years!
Don't let the light go out! Let it shine through our love & our tears.** ♪

[Peter, Paul and Mary - Light One Candle \(25th Anniversary Concert\) - Bing video](#)

We heard that song at a celebration of the Winter Solstice (Dec 21) at Proctor's in Schenectady. It was sung by our friends, Kim & Reggie Harris & Magpie (Terry Leonino & Greg Artzner). It was originally performed by Peter, Paul & Mary in 1987. As we begin the 28th year of Bethany Ministries, we look back at the light that has blessed us in so many ways- the Parish Missions, Retreats & Services we have led, the Prayer we have shared with others, the funerals we have celebrated, & the guests we have welcomed. As we begin 2023, we are no longer travelling all over the country but the light has not gone out.

Ministry of Prayer

We are beginning to understand our Ministry of Prayer as a ministry of presence to God, both alone & with others. Our personal prayer continues to grow in quality & duration, even as our age & health limit our ability to travel. Mornings in particular are dedicated to prayer for individuals & groups. Peter regularly prays with the **Schoharie County Peacemakers** who have been keeping vigil on a corner in Cobleskill every Saturday for many years, even before we arrived in the area. He spends the hour from 11-12 in prayer as they are witnessing to peace & justice, & occasionally is able to go in person to stand with them for at least a half hour of that time.

We continue to host a weekly Prayer Meeting, even as several people join by Zoom, one via speakerphone & a few others in person. That meeting began in April, 1996, after Peter moved to Middleburgh & before Anna lived in the Village. It was begun at the invitation of **Jerry Marten**, who asked us if we could host an 11th step meeting. We still repeat this step: *"Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us & the power to carry that out."*



Peter & David at Thursday Prayer

The group has evolved over the years, & has met on different days & in different places. Today, **Cathy Saccento**, **David Nidey**, **Darlene Rinaldo** & often **Angela Chirico** come in person when possible. **Zarko Levak** zooms from Berne, NY a little farther away. **Kathy Walsh** zooms from Fort Plain, NY & **Joyce Buonfiglio** from New Windsor, NY. **Bonnie Martin** zooms from Ransomville, near Niagara Falls & **Deborah Keller** from Long Island or Florida. **Janet Stanley** prays from Dushore, PA. **Don Quinn** calls in & shares by phone from a nursing home in Niskayuna, NY. **Angela Mione** recently joined the zooming group from Canada, so now we're international.

Ministry of Hospitality

Our Ministry of Hospitality has evolved into a ministry of presence to the local church, to the sick & the dying, to the parish & community in Middleburgh & to individual people. We attend community dinners twice a month, sponsored by the Catholic & Lutheran Congregations in the Village of Middleburgh. We are part of the local group of pastors that meets once a month: **Fr. Tom Zelker** from Our Lady of the Valley [OLV] Catholic Church, **Pastor Dave Houck** & **Cheryl Cater** from St. Mark's Lutheran Church, **Pastor Maryellen Moore** from the United Methodist Church & **Pastor Jeff Kelley** from the Middleburgh Reformed Church.

Peter is present to the Friars at Siena College by praying in the morning at the same time they pray. We both just drop in for lunch or visit there on special occasions. He went there in March for a Fraternal Gathering sponsored by his Province. His main fraternal connection, however, continues to be with the **Emmaus Fraternity**, which began in 2000 as a group of Friars who live singly. After being interrupted by covid & illness, the group began to meet by zoom once a month in March, 2022. Besides Peter, there are 5 Friars who are part of the Emmaus Group. **David Bossman, Richard Mucowski, Chris Keenan, Fran Pompei & Jack Clark Robinson**. They are from Charleston SC, North Wildwood NJ, Butler NJ, Syracuse NY, & Santa Barbara CA. At this time the Friars are working to organize the transition from 6 US Provinces to one in October 2023. It will be called Our Lady of Guadalupe Province.

Anna is present to her IHM Congregation by phone, zoom & visits to Scranton for meetings & Jubilee Celebrations. She also keeps in touch with family, especially **Sr Gerardine Tantsits SCC**, & friends from her past ministries. She has supported & walked with several people, keeping contact in person, by phone, email & text.

Peter also served as a spiritual companion to 8 people this past year, in person & by zoom. On occasion, both of us were contacted to assist together with discernment, healing & spiritual growth.

Ministry of Proclamation

Peter was able to preside & preach at **Helen Vedder's** funeral in **January**, even while preparing for his surgery on Feb 4th. We were also able to participate in a zoom launch of a book by our friend, **Lyn Barrett**, entitled, *Crazy, Reclaiming Life from the Shadow of Traumatic Memory*. During **February**, we created & sent out our Newsletter with our Story of 2021, while going to various follow-up Dr appointments. In **March** we participated in a communal service of Reconciliation at OLV, Middleburgh & an Ecumenical Prayer for Ukraine at the Schoharie Reformed Church.

We were part of a Seder Meal at OLV on Holy Thursday in **April**. After the meal, we celebrated Eucharist at Peter's apartment with Darlene Rinaldo & Cathy Saccento. The local Christian churches did a walk through town on Good Friday, but we were only able to pray with them as they went through town because Peter was having issues with his legs & couldn't walk on that day. We participated in the Easter Vigil at OLV & Peter played his violin with the music ministry as he regularly plays at Sunday Mass when our schedule allows. We participated in an Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service in the Coltrain Funeral Home's parking lot. [\(44\) Easter Sunrise Service April 17, 2022 - YouTube](#) During **May** we attended the funeral of **Sena Monaco's** brother in Ballston Spa as well as a Synod Listening Session for the Religious of Albany.



View from Easter Sunrise Service 2022

Sue Trendell died in **June**, on the day we were going to Siena College to attend Peter's **55th Reunion** of his graduation. We adjusted our travel to stop at her home on our way to the reunion. The family was comforted by our presence & prayer & the person who was going to take the body arrived just as we were leaving. We did her funeral on June 10. In between we were able to travel to visit **Norman Varin** on the 8th to Anoint him, celebrate Reconciliation & bring Communion to him & his wife, **Evelyn**. Locally, we were part of the Middleburgh High School Ecumenical Baccalaureate service on the 12th. We also attended, our friend, **Mary Inghrim's** 80th birthday party in Woodbourne, NY on the 18th.



Peter & Anna with Levak family

In **July**, we celebrated Mass on Zarko Levak's lawn for his wife Milena's death anniversary. On July 24 we participated in the Middleburgh Summer Ecumenical Service with **Kim & Reggie Harris** leading the music. We travelled to Scranton PA to celebrate Anna's 60th Profession Anniversary with her IHM Congregation -July 31. In Schoharie in **August** we attended the 90th birthday of **Charlotte Marks**. July 7th in Middleburgh we preached at St. Mark's Lutheran Church. There are two videos of that service:

Part 1 [\(44\) Service at St. Mark's Lutheran Church August 7, 2022-](#)

Part 2 [YouTube \(44\) Service at St. Mark's Lutheran Church Aug 7, 2022, part 2 - YouTube](#) .

On August 21st we gave a talk at the Beard's Hollow Church for one of the ecumenical services that are held there each summer in August. We capped off the month with a Mass & celebration at OLV of Peter's 50th Ordination & Anna's 60th Profession Anniversaries at the invitation of the pastor, **Fr. Tom Zelker**. [Jubilee Mass for Peter & Anna - Bing video](#)



Beard's Hollow Church

In **September**, after some vacation time, we travelled to Utica so Anna could preach for the IHM mission in Peru. [\(44\) Anna preaching for Peru in Utica 2 - YouTube](#) They asked Peter to preside at the 3 Masses she spoke at. It was tiring, but we did it. We stayed in Mohawk on Sat-Mon with our friends **Lou & Anna Ferreira** then continued home.

We took part in the Transitus (A celebration of Francis' death) on **Oct 3rd** at Siena & led a special evening prayer for the Feast of St. Francis at OLV on the Oct 4th. On the 8th, we travelled to Syracuse for the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Peter's cousins, **Larry & Barb Craft**. Theirs was the 1st wedding Peter had done after being ordained. It was a wonderful party & we were unexpectedly asked to celebrate Mass in the park on Saturday because those who were at the party wanted to be present for the Mass.

Jim Moore, a Methodist Bishop who had sung Gilbert & Sullivan with Peter years ago, visited Middleburgh & had lunch with us on the 20th of October. We ended the month by travelling to Ft. Plain, NY to do a Sunday Mass on October 23rd:

[30th Sunday of the year, Our Lady of Hope, Ft. Plain - Bing video](#). **November** found us travelling to the Wappingers Falls, NY area to visit Peter's aging relatives, all in their 90's. First we stopped to see **Lorraine Campilli**, his mom's sister-in-law along with her son, **Paul**. The next day we stopped to see his aunt, **Linda Giancarlo**, along with her daughter, **Monica**. It rained the following day, but we were able to visit **Rudy**, his uncle, along with his daughter, **Anita** & her husband, **Mike**. We stayed with the Poor Clare nuns & celebrated the morning Mass with them while there. On the 21st, Peter met a college classmate for Reconciliation & spiritual direction at Siena, halfway between where he lived & Middleburgh. We participated in the Middleburgh Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service on the 23rd held at OLV this year.

We sang at the Reformed Church on **Dec 11th** for the Town wide Carol-Sing-a-long. Peter played Schubert's *Ave Maria* in its original key & had to practice to do it right. He was able to preach and preside at the 8PM Christmas Eve Mass at Our Lady of the Valley & Anna recorded it so others could participate even though they were unable to attend.

[\(44\) Christmas Eve Mass in Middleburgh - YouTube](#) **Bill Trendell** & his daughter, **Crystal**, also attended & brought a meat pie, which became the entrée for our Christmas dinner.

Peter continues our Ministry of Proclamation online by sending out reflections on the Sunday readings by email. Anna usually listens to them before & adds her "suggestions". **If you do not receive them & would like to, please send an email to bethmin@midtel.net requesting them & you will then receive each week's reflection.**



Nativity Scene at Our Lady of the Valley

Family, Vacation, Health

We have been part of Peter's family celebrations for many years. In the past year, hosting has mostly moved to the next generation. On July 9th, we attended a wonderful summer party at the home of **Sean Casey**, son of Peter's sister Marita. On October 2nd, we travelled to Schodack Landing for a party at the home of Peter's sister, **Norma**, to welcome a visit from her son, **Anthony** & his wife **Amanda** from Chicago. On Thanksgiving Day we went to the home of Marita's daughter, **Margaret** & her husband **Jackie Sprinkle** near Catskill, NY. We met **Marita** & her husband, **Rod**, at Red's Restaurant to celebrate Anna's birthday Feb 24 & for Christmas dinner on Dec. 29.

Once more we spent time in Sept in Bolton Landing & went to the Lake George Jazz Festival. After Peter's prostate surgery, we both had follow ups with many doctors. Anna developed issues with her thyroid in April, but that seems to be resolving presently. Peter had to have some physical therapy for his legs & in June began to go to a gym, just down the block, once a week. He now works with a personal trainer there because of a donation from a supporter of Bethany Ministries.

God's Providential Care

We don't know how long we will be able to continue with Bethany Ministries as we get older. We have many appointments with medical, dental & optical professionals - most of them just to maintain our health & energy. Your donations have made it possible for us to pay our bills even though we are not able to go on the road very often any more. Your continued financial support enables us to continue our ministry in the coming year.

Particularly, we are thankful to all of you who walked with us through the beginning of 2022 when Peter was sick, especially the members of Our Lady of the Valley Parish. Your support has blessed us in so many ways, especially when we were experiencing medical challenges. We pray for you & your families every day, please remember us in your prayers.

May your days & nights be filled with joy & light throughout the coming year, remembering that:

"Joy is not the absence of sorrow, it is the presence of God."

Fr. Peter & Sr. Anna

Our **website** has - our [schedule](#) / most newsletters [with pictures], / our homilies & talks [on the 'Resources Page'] / other information.

You can find **all** of our contact information below.

THE FRANCISCAN MINISTRY OF THE WORD AT BETHANY MINISTRIES is
how **Friar Peter Chepaitis, OFM** & **Sister Anna Tantsits, IHM** earn their living

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TO LEAVE A MESSAGE

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Jubilee Cake at Our Lady of the Valley



Dinner for Peter's 50th Anniversary of Ordination & Anna's 60th of Profession