History of Blue Mountain Community Church, Part 1a January 3, 1981 to 2000

1979 - Rick and Nancy moved back to PA from CA

- Graduated Fuller Seminary in Pasadena CA
- Pastored denominational church for one year in triple parish Lehighton, Parryville and Bowmanstown
- Denomination and Rick mutually agreed he didn't fit



1980 - 81

- Rick and Nancy lived in a camper and tent while building a log house in the woods
- They started a Bible study in a neighbors home July 1980
- Nov. 1980 God told Rick to start a church - disbanded bible study
- Put ad in paper for first service January 3, 1981

Log cabin home 'do-it-yourself' project

By Pattie Mihalik

Rev. Rick Collins t was like in days of old to

id the same thin



INIQUE LOG CABIN HOME — A light, airy greenhouse, solar heat and effective ilization of space combine to make this log cabin home outstanding. The home

One of his b 's paycheck was all

'Wing and a Prayer'

I prayed a lot, and, I had that if building the me was what God wanted r me. He would show me e way to do it," said Rev. ollins, the young, en usiastic pastor of Sonlife llowship Full Gospel

No Experience

In addition to facing an ev Collins was faced with ad never built anything ept a bookcase — not g house, not a bird feede othing!" admitted Rick

His seemingly monumer l project was further com cated by the fact that he in't own any pressing problem, he had to be as resourceful in obtaining tools and equipment as he was in planning his log cabin home.

Although he didn't have tools or money to spare, he did have plenty of friends lend a helping hand. "It seemed that whenever needed help, someone ap-



and parishioners willing to COZY COMFORT - Relaxing inside their 11-room log cabin home are Rick and paneling, all made with Nancy Collins, their daughters, Kristi and Courtney, and Rick's parents, Donald perty, add to the charming and Anna Mae Collins. Although it is not quite finished, the home is already exterior of the fourdrawing many visitors who marvel at the unusual construction.

how much w oft-spoken Nancy

After they acquired 2 acres of wooded land in **Fowamensing Township a** public auction, Rick and wanted to build Vancy nome They had neithe monev

difficult as most. We got th hat we bought on sale for ' said Rick, who credi teaching me a lot that didn't know.

Working with the origina Rodale plan, Rick modified it to fit his family's individual needs. They built the log cabin home with the "open space concept" so that one room flows into the other. Large, wooden ceilbeams and wooden ing

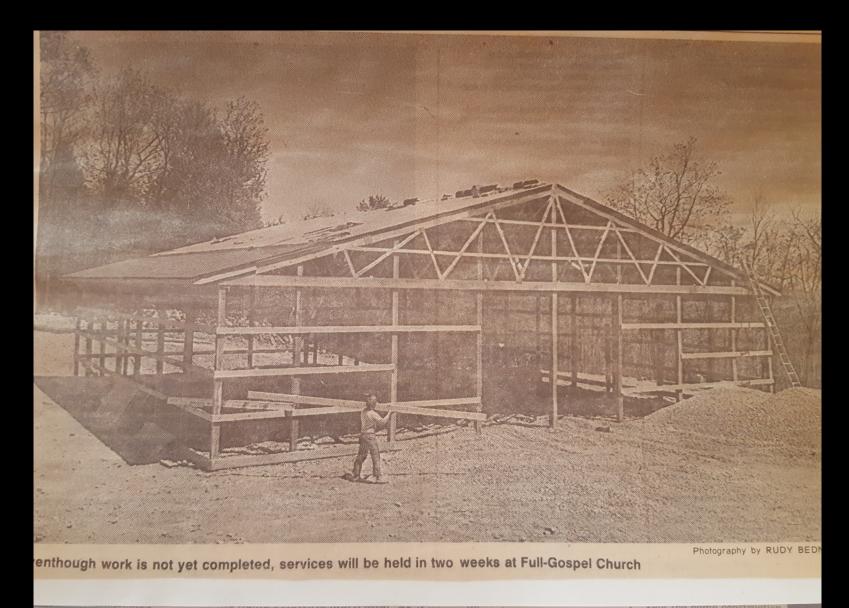
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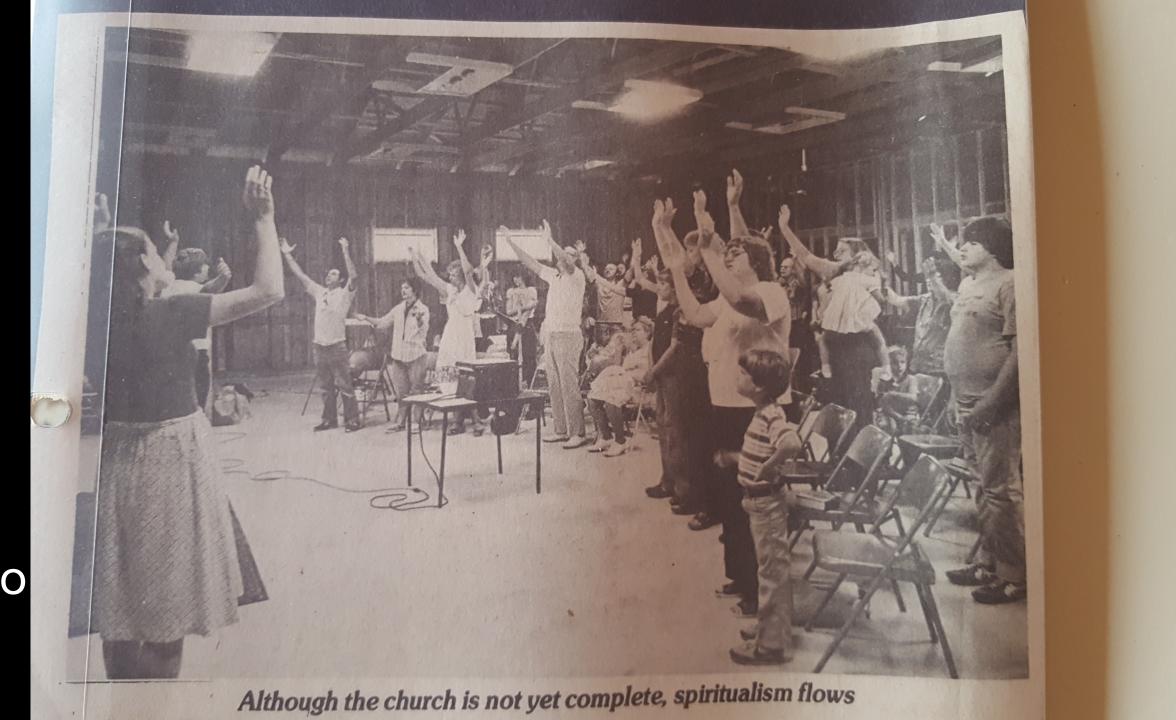
1981 - 82

- First service held in Bowmanstown cottage - 18 adults and 11 children
- Outgrew cottage quickly went to Palmerton Borough Hall -
- Moved to Hutz's bar on Lehigh Street
- Built first church building on Rick and Nancy's property summer of 1982 - now our lobby, offices, kitchen, welcome room & bathrooms

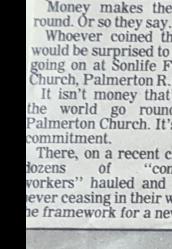


1982 - 85

- Church grew to 150 in attendance, three services
- 1985
 - Rick & Nancy gift land to the church
 - Started Christian school church broke up - went down to 50
 - Pastor Rick did a 30 day fast and came back with direction from the Lord to build a bigger sanctuary







- New sanctuary built debt free by congregation
- Jen Blose baptized
- Cliff Eckhart baptized



936-89 With faith and commitment, a church rises

By PATTIE MIHALIK

Money makes the world go

Whoever coined that maxim would be surprised to see what's oing on at Sonlife Full Gospel hurch, Palmerton R.1. It isn't money that's making

he world go round at the almerton Church. It's love and

There, on a recent chilly day, "construction orkers" hauled and pounded, ever ceasing in their work until e framework for a new church

building stood silhouetted against the autumn sky.

A crane operator who watched a lot of construction crews," he Sonlife a little over five hour. said. "but I never see workers as efficient as this."

Indeed, the scene at Sonlife looked like an Amish barnraising. There was an intensity about the work, but there was also a singleness of purpose and a comradery that was reminiscent of the spirit that surrounds an Amish barnraising

According to the crane their attitude as well. operator, it would normally take a professional building crew at the workers was impressed with least 11 hours to raise the their speed and diligence. "I see trusses. It took the crew at

"I've been working on construction crews for 12 years. I've never worked on one like this,' said Walter T. Stenger, as he worked along with the others.

What impressed the crane operator, Stenger, and the other tradesmen who delivered supplies was not only the speed and efficiency of workers - it was

"I never saw a group of peopl work together so well have fun at the same time, Stenger observed.

highly-motivated crev The motivated by money wasn't They weren't pushing for over time pay or incentive bonuses. No one on the work crew was paid for their labor. In fact, many had to take time off from their regular jobs to be there.

According to the crane operator, he was surprised to learn the highly efficient

"crew" was made up of people from all walks of life.

"Of the dozens of people work ing on the building project, only a few are trained in construct tion," said the Rev. Rick Colling pastor of Sonlife Church.

How then, did they set record for the time it took t erect the framework of the church?

"Their motivation," said Rev Collins, "is their love for God They are working with one min

See CHURCH Page 10



OF LOVE — It looked like an Amish barnraising recently at Sonlife Full urch, Palmerton R.1. In record breaking time, dozens of volunteers erec-

ted the trusses for a new missionary building. The church facility is being built by faith, free of mortgage or debt. (Pattie Mihalik/TN)

CHURCH Continued from Page 1

d one heart for an important

That goal is the building of a by 96' structure that will erve as a sanctuary, misonary training facility, gymasium and all purpose room.

The "old church" - if one can all a five year old building old is too small to accommodate ne crowds that come each week. "Each week, it's a case of standing room only. We've been averaging at least 132 people ach week in a church that can ld a maximum of 130 people,' aid the pastor

The new church, with seating r around 300 people, will solve he overcrowding problem. When Rev. Collins started Sonlife Church in 1981 in his mall Bowmanstown cottage, here were 16 adults and 11 hildren

"We asked the Lord to pro-ide," said Rev. Collins, who vatched his congregation utgrow the cottage, a meeting oom at Palmerton Borough all, and later, a small facility Palmerton

Involved at the time in ilding a log cabin for his fami-, Rev. Collins wasn't anxious tackle a church building proect at the same time

"I told the Lord, if a church vas to be built. He would have to o it, if that was His will," said kev. Collins. "Ever since, he's rought people.

So many people, in fact, that he church soon had standing oom only for each Sunday ser-

But, Rev. Collins wasn't inerested in "numbers." He wasn't concerned with how many people came to church. His concern was about the comnitment of those who came.

"Church membership means more than paying dues and gong to church on Sunday. It inolves a total commitment. Peole with a true love for God want

to serve God," A requiremen ship at Sonlife lemonstrate "cr coming part 'Ministry other people," who has an or course to train

church to worl ministries. Some work some have ministry; othe

milies. Ever in some way,' who believes p ind fulfillmen others. While others

they see people life anxious pleting the n Collins said he the commitment It's the Lor do His work,' what you see

rogram nov tone. Three expect the c school and mi acility to k doesn't surpri Lord's work ge Others are who visited h

was an unh ouilding with surprised at w they now retu having the c the same b Christian scl three years ag

Thirty-five from five cou all-day schoo Christian ec dividualed of attention for "I guess

members themselves complished amazed now church going easy," said Lord is leadi



