

Two Global Mission Saints Reunite



Both Pris Crow and Priscilla Heidorn grew up in Buffalo NY, went to nursing school, and then midwifery training at Frontier Nursing University in Kentucky. From there, their lives took different courses.

Pris recalls that the “missionary bug” hit her early in her youth with her grandfather as President of the English District of the LCMS in Buffalo. “We used to have missionaries on furlough in the states stay with us all the time. Their stories inspired me to think about doing mission work.” She received her Bachelor’s degree in nursing from Hartwick College and worked and lived at home for a year following graduation to get more clinical experience. “I soon realized that regular hospital nursing was not for me. I needed something more.” She went to Frontier – initially working for 9 months “doing district work” before being enrolled in the midwifery class – which at the time took only 6 months to finish. While there, she met other nurses who

had been serving as medical missionaries in Nigeria but had been evacuated back to the states for training during the Biafran War (1967- 1970).

When it was finally safe to return, Pris made the decision to go with them. She recalls “I worked under several different international Red Cross agencies at these medical clinics and feeding stations where we would see thousands of people a day. I did just about everything *except* deliver babies!” Pris stayed for 5 years and eventually had to return home due to illness. She returned to Frontier to get back her midwifery skills and ended up in Thomasville, Georgia where she worked as a midwife. Pris has been to Haiti 5 times to do midwifery training.

Attending the installation of a pastor was the last place Priscilla Heidorn and her husband, Mark, expected to run into her childhood friend from Buffalo. Priscilla says her interest in the medical field came from her father, who was a physician. She received her nursing degree from the University of Buffalo and then she went to Frontier for her midwifery training. She was assigned to Papua New Guinea (PNG) through the Medical Missions of the LCMS. While there, she met and married her husband, Mark, who was there, also through LCMS, as a teacher. They stayed a total of ten years in PNG. They returned to the states and moved to Tallahassee for Mark to continue his education, and then to Thomasville, Georgia.

They remained active in the church and so it was natural for them to think of attending the installation of a new pastor. It was a joyful surprise to meet up again with Pris and catch up on their experiences. Pris and Priscilla ended up working together as midwives in Thomasville for 22 years. They even went to Haiti together to teach local midwives there – using a program of pictures and demonstrations that was developed by a coworker of Pris in Nigeria.

Priscilla and Mark celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this year in a special way. In April they returned to Papua New Guinea – “for the first time in 42 years”. While there, Priscilla said “We spent time with the General Secretary of the Gutnius Lutheran Church, a man whose father was someone I trained to work with us in the clinics. I attended this church official’s mother while she gave birth to him. He holds me in great esteem – as if I was the one who had to work so hard to give him life! It was such an honor and joy to spend time with him on our return trip. It made the trip so worthwhile and we are so glad we went.”

Currently, Pris, Mark and Priscilla, are active members of Grace Lutheran Church in Tallahassee where Pastor Jennifer Kopacz has been serving as pastor for just over a year. Last year the congregation donated over \$800 on Global Mission Sunday.

They hope the quilt banner with its colorful depictions of the FB Synod's companion relationships provides the inspiration to give even more this year!