

The Ron Heinrich Story

I met Ron through an altar response when I shared at the Tabernacle in Orchard Park, New York in 2000. At that time, Pastor Reid shared that Ron was a contractor, a man of God and someone to always be depended upon. Ron began “stopping by” the Bailey Avenue site in late 2001, watching Mike Renzi and I and others work tirelessly, attempting to renovate “Grace House.” After several months of stopping by and lending a hand, Ron asked whether he could take over the renovation project... The Lord had seen our struggle...the Lord had sent a blessing...

Ron was determined to see “Grace House” renovated, calling vendors, securing donations from drywall to carpet to boilers, furnaces, paint, etc. and work, work, work, hour after hour, organizing, directing and laboring for one goal...to see “Grace House” open. Ron became my friend, he became a friend to others, to Mike Renzi and to the men he never met who years later would come to know the Love of Christ through the ministry of “Grace House.” Ron had a family, a career, a life rich in Godliness, yet never missed opportunity to share Christ alive.

One of my final memories of Ron was the first week we opened our offices, with no hot water. One day at 8:00am, I heard a noise in the basement, a banging. I called out to see who was there, and it was Ron, who called back “I’m connecting the hot water tank.” Minutes later I hear a baby’s cry. I headed downstairs to see what was going on, only to find in 25 degree weather a newborn baby swaddled in a baby carrier, laying on the ground next to his father. Ron had a torch and plumbing wrenches in his hands; he looked up at me said “good morning,” then told me to take the baby upstairs and feed him a bottle, saying that the baby would quiet down and Ron would be done in a few minutes.

As Ron labored, I fed the baby in my office, deeply moved by that moment and recognizing the cost Ron paid to love the Lord... A week later, “Grace House” had just opened and received our first resident when Ron stopped by, wanting me to see his new expedition with two car seats securely fastened in for his two new baby twins. We hugged and I said good-bye; minutes later Ron died in a tragic auto accident.

And so it is fitting that we honor Ron. We honor his memory, we honor the foundation that he established. So when you are called, will you respond? Will you pay the cost? The legacy of Ron’s life lives on.

Rev. Terry King, Executive Director
Saving Grace Ministries, Inc.

When God Calls...A Tribute to a Friend and Servant, Ron Heinrich by Mike Renzi



Ron and his wife, Jean, at the dedication of “Grace House” (above).



Ron, above, hard at work as a volunteer.

Below, with Mike Renzi and a men’s group from Rochester, building the fence around “Grace House.”



Jesus said to His disciples in Matt 9:37,38 “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

What will your response be when God calls for you to go? Where will you be and what will you be doing when you first hear His voice? I was sitting in a Sunday school class trying to mind my own business, but this day was different. Pastor Terry King was sharing with passion the vision for Saving Grace Ministries and Grace House. Although I really had little desire for this ministry, God spoke to me to get involved. After taking a step of faith and becoming involved in

the harvest, God brought many blessings.

One of the greatest blessings came when I met a man named Ron Heinrich. God brought us together in ministry: called from separate church families and introduced by Rev. Terry. It felt as though I knew Ron before. We would joke about it and say that the Lord must make us feel this way. Our work relationship quickly became a lasting friendship. One day, Ron told his father about me and my occupation as a pile driver. It turned out that Ron’s dad and my grandfather worked together doing the same thing and that our cousins were married to each other. We always missed meeting at family functions, but God ordained that we meet while laboring at Grace House. Ron was the glue that kept Grace House construction together. Volunteers would come and go. Contractors and churches would pledge and then not follow through. Yet, Ron kept focused.

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