

## Rev. Thomas Janssen



Thomas Janssen graduated high school in Decatur, MI. He studied Electrical Engineering Technology at ITT Technical Institute and Electrical Engineering at Indiana Institute of Technology, in Ft. Wayne, IN. For most of the first 20 years in his Electronics career was for military contractors. In his late 20's he worked in Saudi Arabia for 5 years – a pivotal time in shaping his life view. Leaving military contract work in 1992 he has mostly made his living with his computer skills. In 2015 he retired and still does free lance computer work part time.

He married and started a family very young and now has an extended immediate family which includes his three sons, 4 Grandchildren, 1 Step-Grandchild, and 3 Great-Grandchildren. He is also blessed to still have 4 of his 6 siblings; a brother and 3 sisters all living near him in Michigan. They lost their mother in February 2017 after several years of strokes, recovery then another stroke. It was a most difficult time that brought his family closer together and to experience the rewards of giving freely without expectation. *“Mom gave us opportunities to practice unconditional Love. Even in her most helpless times she continued to teach us, he says.”* He is blessed to have his Father, who turned 96 in 2019, in good health, driving and engaged in his community. They walk for a couple of miles each Monday night at the running club that started him jogging. He has served as president of the *Monday Night Running Club* since 2001.

He loves to travel and experience other cultures, their language and their history. In 1999 at age 49 he was surprised to get the bug to start jogging. In 2000 he joined an 8 month class and in December that year, just after turning 51, he ran Honolulu Marathon. Since then he has finished 3 other marathons. He didn't discover the spiritual rewards of this physical training until he began hiking. It also takes 8 months to prepare for a marathon-like hike. 2004 was the transition year for his last marathon run in the Spring and his first hike across Grand Canyon in the Fall. That day-hike would give him a profound experience with the Creative Force we most often call, God. Since then he has made 9 more day-hikes crossing the Colorado River a mile deep in Grand Canyon and back to the rim. These hiking adventures have become an annual pilgrimage important to his Spiritual growth.

In his Spiritual life, Rev. Thomas Janssen was raised Roman Catholic. Always the *doubting Thomas* he often asked questions that challenged church doctrine. Not finding fairness in any Christian doctrine he was agnostic (*is there a God?*) for a time in his early 20's. The Edgar Cayce readings introduced him to the concept of the continuity of life through rebirth – birth from Spirit into human form and then back to Spirit, with each life building on the previous experiences. For him this was the missing piece to bring fairness to Christian doctrine. Since then he has explored many philosophies and religions before discovering Spiritualism. Hungry for knowing more he joined 11 others in a ministerial training class in 1988 taught by Rev. Jeannette Fisher. She was tough but had an angelic energy, was a gifted Medium and Pastor of the *Temple of Love and Healing* in St. Petersburg, FL, (A Spiritualist church chartered through UCM - Universal Church of the Master).

Thomas was ordained UCM licentiate minister in 1991 and as full minister in 1992 after three years study and apprenticeship serving in that church twice a week. His studies and interests have been varied to include: science, philosophy, all religious beliefs, Native American Spirituality, Shamanism, Theosophy, Meditation, Reiki Healing (he became a Reiki Master teacher in 1995 training 100's students in North Carolina and Virginia), Shin Ju Jyutsu, Hermetic Philosophy (5 years), Silva Method, World Leadership Training (Coptic Fellowship), Course In Miracles, The Book Of Enoch, Channeling, Out Of Body Travel, Past Life Regression, and 12 Step Recovery.

In 2001 he was invited to attend First Church of Prayer in South Bend. There he met Rev. Nellie Vardaman and was invited to speak. He was not looking for a group or church as he had felt his move back to Michigan after 30 years away was a time of integration for him. This following several years of intense study and intentional personal growth. Much like after a very full meal one needs to simply be still and digest it all. His hour drive to South Bend was reason enough to pull away from that church but each time he tried Spirit would say, "stay!" When he resisted membership, Spirit said, "do it!" When he was asked to join the board and before he could say no, Spirit said, "do it!" He accepted invitations to present workshops at a few ISA events and after some time was asked to join the ISA, but before he could type a polite but negative reply Spirit said, "do it!" Each time he complied with this direction from Spirit and in 2011 he completed requirements and transferred his credentials to ISA. He continues to serve First Church of Prayer as co-pastor with Rev. Vardaman and as board Secretary. He was elected to the ISA board in 2018 as Education Trustee. He presents classes each month at *Center For Spiritual Growth* in South Bend as part of their outreach program.

He says, "*My eclectic journey has caused me to see the Oneness of Creation and see through the illusion of separation. Everywhere I look I find Creative Source; in scripture, in science, in nature, in all living things. Evidence is everywhere – I learn from it all. I am an eternal Spiritual Being having this temporary Human Experience.*"



Rev. Thomas is available as guest speaker and/or for classes at all ISA churches. He and his wife Beth reside in rural Marcellus, Michigan close to his immediate family.