

“Hands do the bidding of the mind and the soul.”

**I never had the opportunity to meet Sandy...the Rev. Paul Sanders.
Sandy was a Methodist Minister who, with his wife Elizabeth,
founded the Center back in 1932.**

**I wonder sometimes, if they really understood the full scope and
impact of what they were about...**

**Sandy and Elizabeth had a vision and a dream
to establish a house of healing,
a house by the side of the road...
a house of love
where all would be welcome.**

**Sandy and Elizabeth also knew that this house
needed to be nestled in nature.**

They knew the importance of land and sky.

**They knew the healing power of trees,
and fields and open space...**

**They understood the critical role that fresh air,
decent food, good companionship and hard work could play
a role in the healing of the whole person.**

**They understood that in order to be
physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually healthy
a human being absolutely needed a connection to God and
a connection to the beauty and wonder of Creation**

Sandy and Elizabeth and countless others worked hard

**to build their dream...
they scrimped and they saved,
they hammered and nailed,
they laughed and they cried and they prayed...
and then they got up and to help those who were down
and they sought out those where lonely to let them know that they belonged
and they were ever ready to offer a smile, a meal and a hug, ...**

Sandy and Elizabeth knew that:

**“Work with the hands without love is drudgery.
It achieves only ugliness and disharmony.
Work done with love becomes a thing of beauty and
expresses the great soul of God.**

**and so they did it all with Love and For Love...
the love of their fellow human beings and the love of God...**

**And today...80+years later...we are living inside this original dream..
We are gifted with the fruits of Sandy and Elizabeth’s vision and all of their hard work.**

**Today is the third day of May...temperatures are starting to warm,
spring flowers are beginning to make way for summer blooms...
and birds are leaving or coming...and it is beautiful, here at The Center...**

**Today, we are the blessed recipients of all the love and the hard work of
Sandy and Elizabeth.**

**Today, we too received the gift of Peace and healing because of their willingness to work
with their hands with and for Love....**

And so, as we have received, so we must give...

Today is the day to do our work so that future generations may have a place and a space to receive healing and love...Today...we must use our hands for the work of Love...

Right now I would like to invite you to close your eyes and allow your hands to be palm up resting on your lap and become aware of your breathing...

Become aware of the air at your fingertips, and between your fingers, and on the palm of your hand. Experience the fullness, strength and maturity of your hands.

Think of your hands...think of the most unforgettable hands you have known—the hands of your father your mother, your grandparents.

Remember the oldest hands that have rested in your hands. Think of the hands of a new born child, of the incredible perfection, delicacy of the hands of a child.

Once upon a time your hands were the same size.

Think of all that your hands have done since then.

Think of all the learning your hands have done and how many activities they have mastered, the things that they have made. Remember the day you could tie your own shoes?

Our hands were not just made for themselves but for others.

How often were they given to help another?

Remember all the kinds of work they have done, the tiredness and aching they have known, the cold and the heat, the soreness and the bruises.

Remember the tears they have wiped away, our own or another's.

Remember the blood they have bled, the healing they have experienced.

Remember how much hurt, anger and even violence have they expressed and how much gentleness, tenderness and love they have given.

Remember how often they have been folded in prayer; both a sign of their powerlessness and of their power.

Now raise your right hand slowly and gently place it over your heart.

Press more firmly until your hand picks up the beat of your heart that most mysterious of all human sounds, one's own heartbeat, a rhythm learned in the womb from the heartbeat of one's own mother.

Press more firmly for a moment than release your hand and hold it just a fraction from your clothing. Experience the warmth between your hand and your heart.

Now lower your hand to your lap very carefully as if you were carrying your heart. For it does. When you extend your hand to another, its not just bone and skin, it is your heart.

A handshake is a real heart transplant.

Think of all the hands that have left their imprint on you. Fingerprints and hands that have left their imprint on you. Fingerprints and handprints are heartprints that can never be erased. The hand has its own memory. Think of all the places that carry your handprints and all the people who bear your heartprint. They are indelible and will last forever.

Sandy and Elizabeth Sanders used their hands and their hearts for the good of all...

Now...it is our turn! What do you think? Amen....