

Paul Rains

Paul Rains is a 1967 graduate of Northwest High School. His life story begins with the remarkable story of his parents' meeting at the end of World War II. His father was serving as an Army chaplain, and his mother was living in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation. During those difficult years, she bicycled into the countryside to trade dresses with farmers' wives in exchange for food.

When the war ended, a friend invited her to travel to Switzerland. On a crowded train filled with American soldiers heading home, she found herself the only woman on board and understandably uneasy. She noticed one soldier wearing a cross on his lapel and, sensing he would be safe, chose to sit beside him. That soldier would become her husband.

After months of exchanging letters, she flew across the Atlantic on a propeller plane to New York, where Paul's father welcomed her. The couple eventually settled in High Ridge, Missouri, where he founded a Methodist church that remains active today.

Paul attended Northwest High School in House Springs, where he received a strong educational foundation. Teachers such as Mrs. Tims (English), Mr. Davenport (science), and Mr. Priest (physics) made a lasting impact on his life. During high school, he served as president of both the science and drama clubs and worked as the school photographer, even developing black-and-white film in his bathroom at home. His passion for photography continued beyond high school, and several of his photographs were later published.

After graduating in 1967, Paul studied chemistry at Jefferson College and the University of Missouri–St. Louis. He felt called to both ministry and medicine and ultimately pursued both paths. At age 21, his father invited him to pastor three churches in southern Missouri for a summer—an experience that deeply shaped his future.

Around the Fourth of July in 1970, Paul met Julie at a family gathering near a spring. Their courtship moved quickly: they dated for three months, were engaged for three weeks, and were married on July 4, 1972. He often jokes that he “lost his independence on Independence Day.”

After completing seminary at Emory University, Paul served as a pastor in Arkansas. Still feeling drawn to medicine, he entered medical school at age

33, surrounded by classmates more than a decade younger. Following medical training and practice in Oklahoma, he and Julie moved to Reynolds County, Missouri. For 36 years, Paul has been the only physician living in the county, operating a clinic, covering the emergency room, and serving as medical director for a local nursing home.

Beginning in 1997, Paul participated in medical mission work around the world, including Kyrgyzstan, Africa, and India. In Kyrgyzstan, medical organizations invited him to hold clinics, and the United Nations requested his assistance in meeting medical needs within a refugee camp. Escorted by blue-and-white UN vehicles, he traveled to remote areas to serve vulnerable populations. During missions in Africa and India, he also helped local individuals establish small businesses to support their families.

Over time, his focus gradually shifted from primarily medical care to spiritual support. Today, he and Julie lead a small mission that works mainly with persecuted pastors in India. Through these efforts, more than 6,800 individuals came to faith in 2025 alone.

Paul and Julie have been blessed with five children and ten grandchildren. Both remain in good health and look forward to many more years of service, family, and faith—perhaps even enough time for Paul to update this story once again.