

*Goodbye Kansas....*

*“...An Incredible  
Journey”*

*.... Hello Alaska*

*Written by  
Howard W. Marshall*

First Draft

# An Incredible Journey

By

Howard W. Marshall



Forward by:

Introduction:

Greetings from Kansas City, Kansas! We are proof that you can make plans for your retirement, but when you sing "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go" in church, you'd better mean it--because the Lord may call you to unexpected places! As you'll see in the article, "RETIRED" KANSAS MINISTER, WIFE TAKE ON AMERICA'S FINAL FRONTIER\*, we had other plans after our first retirement. After it was written, Prince of Peace Assembly of God in Klawock called Howard as pastor--so he's retired no longer! **Note: He retired "again" in May 2004!**

But there are other churches in Alaska needing pastoral couples. In the most recent issue of the *Alaskan Missionary*, the newsletter of the [Alaska District Council](#), a number of churches were listed as needing pastors. We're trying to reach mature couples who can be used of the Lord "up there."

If you fit the definition, we urge you to contact [Supt. Bill Welch](#) in Anchorage.

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Jim & Nancy Mercer no longer are in Kotzebue; they're now in Anchorage. They read about us on the Internet and we helped them catch the "Alaska fever." We actually met them in Anchorage in May 2000 at the Alaska District Council. Their Home Page was at [gospelroadministries.org](http://gospelroadministries.org).

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Dedicated to:

First and foremost to my wonderful friend, companion, Savior for over 65 years and soon coming, King, the Lord Jesus!

To our friends who have stood with us during our years of ministry throughout the state of Kansas, Ohio and Alaska.

To my family on both sides of our clans:

Marshall

The John and Pearl Marshall; Elmer and Eva Battershell; Melvin and Marcille Hands; Paul Marshall and Vadean (deceased); Ruth (deceased); Barbara and of course our own children Larry, Janet and David.

Grand children:

Larry and Renee: Kari and Andy Davis; Jason and Karissa Marshall;  
Jami Marshall; Miranda Budgher (sp).

Janet Marshall's Anaistos "Tasso" Voutitrus and Micca; Costadina (sp) Voutitrus (deceased)

David and Shannon children: Branin Marshall and Halee and Marshall Holland.

Great grand children:

Jaden; Jaxen; Justen; Jacob; Josie Davis  
Jacey and Hunter Jones; Landen

Foster family:

Charles and Cindy Keeley: Heather; Justin; Brianna; Paul, and their grandchildren: Timothy; Christopher and Sean Kelley. Patrick and Experizna Rhea

Seaton:

To the Walter and Dorothy Seaton, their children Carl E. and Verna Lee (deceased); Marjorie M and Howard; Leon N and Roberta; Norman and Sharon; Patricia and Gary (deceased).

Grandchildren:

Carl and Vernie: Julie and Kenneth Miller; Annie and Benjamin  
Marjorie and Howard: Larry and Renee; Kari, Jason, Jami and Miranda  
Leon and Roberta: Robert, LeAnn, Christopher, and Carla  
Norman and Sharon: No children  
Patricia and Gary: Ingrham and Camila (sp), Sarah and Steven Tharpe

Great grand children:

Robert and \_\_\_\_\_: Chaz and \_\_\_\_\_  
LeAnn and Steve: Andrew and \_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher and Melissa: \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_  
Carla and \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Marge will fill in the blanks....

Especially the Kansas District Council of the Assemblies of God; our home church Northland Cathedral in Kansas City, Missouri and the Great State of Alaska.

Finally, but certainly not last my wife, Marjorie Marie Marshall. Who has stood with me, in the early days of our ministry and now. From Harper to McCracken, Great Bend, Kansas and to Cincinnati, Ohio back to Concordia, Kansas City, Kansas and SE and Western Alaska. Thank you, Marge.

**Acknowledgements:**

**Marjorie M. Marshall, assistant editor and proof reader**  
**Family input**

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## Chapter One

### **The Early Days...My Roots**

Howard William Marshall grew up as a post depression kid, born into a family who by necessity learned to live very simple lives, making do with what they had. There were 6 children born to John William and Pearl Ann Sutton Marshall during their 56

years of married life. I was the 4<sup>th</sup> in the line of children. Eva Irene the oldest, followed by Sylvia Pauline who was 2 years old when she died. Mable Marcille the third, then I came along. Robert Eugene was 4 days old when he died of complications and finally Paul Wesley. I guess we were poor and didn't know it because most everybody who came through the depression had to scrimp to get by!

My Mom and Dad did quite a lot of moving around in their early years of marriage. Their moving around was in Oklahoma and Kansas.

Daddy suffered with asthma all of his life and they learned the altitude in the Colorado mountains would be good for him. I have no idea how they made the move but all I know is my Mom was tired of moving. On their move from Fort Collins, Colorado back to Lyons, Kansas, Mom decided "...no more moving" for her, if Dad wanted to move again it would be by himself. He apparently must have believed her because that was their last long distant move they ever made. One can only imagine the problem of making such a move with small children. I never did hear them talk about how they did it because the automobile and the early trucks were about the most efficient methods of travel.

However, I somehow know it was not by "covered wagon" as those were no longer used following the depression. Horse and wagon, yes, but not covered wagons and the Indians were not chasing them riding bare back on their horses!

Much of what I want to share with you, as a reader, is how Mom and Dad made the best with what they had. When they moved to Lyons, Dad went to work as a "section hand" on what was called a "Section Gang", with the Frisco Railroad Company where he was employed for over 40 years. If I recall correctly he made a grand total of \$0.28 an hour with no overtime and he worked 6 days a week. During the early days my folks lived in what was called a "section house" located near the junction of the Santa Fe and the Frisco railroad tracks crossed and is where I was born! **It was quite primitive not having running water or a bathroom inside but did have electricity, a single light hanging**

down in the middle of the room with an on and off pull chain. Heat was from a wood and coal burning stove in the kitchen and one in the living room, and the outhouse or toilet as it was called was not at all comfortable, especially in the winter. Brushing snow from the crudely cutout seats! Not fun but “exciting” need I make any other comments about “coldness” on some parts of our autonomy? “T” “P” was the old “monkey wards” catalog or any other paper products that was available. Remember as a toddler, there wouldn’t be too much of a memory about those early days of my life.

The Frisco Railroad Company maintained facilities for equipment and supplies were kept in the out buildings supplies. Nearby was the “watering” tank where the steam engines would fill their water tanks, and also coal bins where coal would be loaded into the “coal tender box” which the fireman would keep adding to the fire to provide steam for the engine. **Whenever the trains would come to a stop, the engineer would let off the steam with a hissing sound and billowing black smoke settling down over the area.**

During those early years I remember when the section crew would be called out to fight fires caused by the dumping of the hot coals as the train moved along the tracks. Living in the middle of Kansas all railroads had tumble weeds and wild sunflowers growing near them. During the hot summer days and often the lack of rain caused these to dry turn brown and become tender. The fires became a real threat to the wheat fields ready for harvest, or the stubble fields before farmers plowed it under. **Fighting the fires was very dangerous since they generally had to use wet gunny sacks and shovels to fight the fires; sparks would spread by the wind and threatened anything in their way, generally farm fields along the right-of-way.**

In the black and white movies and some of the old comedy movies, such as Laurel and Hardy, where they try and outrun a train on a small pumper rail car, that the two of them would “pump” the handle to make it go. Well, Dad and the section hands would ride on one of those little “cars” before they became motorized. I vaguely remember them riding it when they would leave the house. It was their method of getting down the track to their jobs. It did not matter whether it was hot or cold there was no covering to

protect them.

(Let's insert a picture of either the old train with Mom and Dad and Eva standing on it)

These are memories of a 4 or 5 year old boy living along the railroad tracks. I do remember one man, his name was John Gunn and they called him "Johnny", I don't think was an engineer but he rode in the "cab" of the engine and would often have treats for my sister and me. What I recall the most are bananas, as well as candy at times. He was a delightful man always had a smile on his face. That guy made a lasting impression on me.

The old section house was painted a "battleship" gray and was a two story building, it was not insulated, a pot bellied wood stove for heat, no running water or no modern facilities. The lights hung down from the middle of the room and had pull strings attached to them so we could turn them on and off. Mom and Dad also had some kerosene lamps they used to save on electricity. One thing I do not remember is when I was born, as I was born at home. I used to tell people I was "born at home so I could be close to my momma!" (Not an original quote so I don't know who to give credit to on it)

I will probably share some thoughts later about my experiences with trains but I must tell how the steam engines would spew out hot steam to relieve pressure. Traveling down the tracks the engines would bellow out puffs of black smoke that would linger long after the train passed and did have its own smell odor. Those were the days...summers were hot and the winters cold. In those days every train had a caboose where the brakeman rode and in one corner was a toilet and on the other end a small office where they did their paperwork. Oh, this is where Mom and we kids would ride whenever we went on vacation using a "pass" that Daddy would get which did not cost us anything. And...I recall the long hours we would just sit on what was called a "siding" which allowed a passing freight train or passenger train to pass. In other words the train we were on would have to get out of the way and then continue when the line was clear. In Kansas during the summer the days were steamy, sweaty and hot since there was very little wind blowing to cool things off!

Makes me wonder why they would want to leave the cool Colorado mountains and move back to Kansas. I really did not know why they decided to return to Kansas and why Lyons? My Dad had a couple of brothers who lived in the Wichita area, one in Augusta and one in Mulvane, Kansas. From what I recall hearing the folks talk about it, when they lived in Lyons, and before moving to Colorado to see if the higher altitude would help my Dad's asthmatic condition.

I do not know just how or when my Mom became a Christian but when she did she became a member the Church of the Nazarene in Lyons shortly after they moved back to Lyons. I do not recall much of our long walks to church but I do know the folks did not have a car so we walked several miles to attend church. The church is still standing and quite active in the community. There are many experiences I had with my family in and around that church. Such as: this is confession time, though at the time I had to confess to what I had done. I remember the time I was rolling marbles from the back of the church to the front and one time a marble bounced up and broke the curved glass door of a china cabinet that belonged to Bro. and Sis. Hands, they were our pastors at the time. I didn't want to admit I had done it, but there was no one else there when it happened. You do know the bible tells us "...confession is good for the soul?"

## Chapter Two

### **Another move...**

After a number of years the folks moved into town, not that we were living out in the country. They rented a small 2 bedroom house on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street which had running water inside but no indoor bathroom facilities. It was at this place I remember when they started installing the sewer lines throughout Lyons. The ditch digger was a giant of a machine with a digger wheel that dug the ditch about 8' deep and about 2' wide. As it moved along digging the ditch it had a spout where the dirt was piled as it went to be used to refill the ditch after the sewer line was laid.

I have no idea if I was by myself or someone with me but do I recall crawling down into it and thinking how deep it was...not even considering the danger of the walls

caving in, but it was fun. We moved before indoor plumbing was put into the house so did not get to enjoy the luxury of an indoor toilet. At this time I was all of 5 years old!

Some of you reading this may remember when people were quarantined and could not leave their houses whenever anyone in that house had a “catching” disease. They would place a red sign on the outside of the door to warn people not to go in. I have not forgotten the three weeks I had “scarlet fever”. Only Daddy could leave to go to work, to get groceries and none of the family could get out until the doctor gave the ok. My sister did not get to go to school or the family to church. I do not remember any of the neighborhood kids, if there we any...

It was while living there that I recall the old horse drawn Fairmont Dairy Ice wagon that made trips around Lyons selling ice cream, milk and cream. In my mind I can still see the colors and the mild chocolate color with script type gold lettering. It was a rather fancy coach style wagon with the driver sitting on the set up front and ice cream cones were single dip \$.05, double dip \$.10 and a triple dip \$.15. Vanilla was my favorite and it was always a temptation to eat the bottom out of the cone before finishing the ice cream and it would leak down our arms and get all sticky, but it was sure good. I often wondered why kids would do that when they knew what would happen next. Did you know kids still do it today?

One of the fondest memories I have is Auntie Vaughn. Auntie Vaughn was a little Negro lady, we called them Negro back then, and whenever we would beat her to Sunday School and Church, I would run down the sidewalk to meet her because she would always have a penny for me to put in the SS offering. She was like a granny to us kids. She loved us and we loved her! Ahhh...SS teachers, there was Sister Brewer; I never knew her first name 'cause we always called older people in our church Brother or Sister. She was about of round as was tall. One of the earliest SS lessons I have never forgotten is about frogs and butterflies...how they both were born again. She showed us a “tadpole” which turned into toad or frog and then she would show us a “cocoon” and how it would change into a beautiful butterfly explaining that is how we are before

coming to Jesus. We are sinners and then He saves us or makes a change in us. So the children's song today "Bullfrogs and Butterflies" goes back a long, long way. Sister Brewer gave piano lessons to anyone who wanted to learn. Someone gave my folks an old heavy upright piano for me to play. I thought I wanted to learn but didn't practice, quit taking lessons so they got rid of that old piano. Oh, Sister Brewer was willing to teach me...but I would not practice and now I know she didn't want to waste her time!

One of my earliest Pastor's was Bro. Hands. Bro. Ward A. Hands. He and wife had 3 children. Their oldest was Lillian who was married to a Presbyterian Minister and they lived in Chase, Kansas where he was pastor. Margaret and Melvin were living at home when they moved to Lyons to become our pastor. As I said before, we always called adult men and women in our church "Brother" or "Sister". So, Bro. Hands wife, **Alva was her name I think**, was crippled. She was confined a wheel chair and had been for many years. She had what was called crippling arthritis. Her arms were "frozen" as if she had folded her arms across her chest and her legs were "frozen" in a sitting position, today we call it being paralyzed. Bro. Hands carried her to and from their car, putting into her wheel chair to their table or their bed, and to take of her personal needs. He was a very gracious man who had an extreme amount of patience.

Bro Hands, our pastor, was quite a builder. Much like the Apostle Paul, who was a tent maker to provide his own income. So following WWII the military closed down Smokey Hill Air Force base in Salina, Kansas. In the process of closing it they were selling many of the old barrack buildings which housed the personnel. He made bids and purchased a number of them and then proceeded in take them apart, move the material to Lyons and began to build rental houses. His son, Melvin would help, as did several of us teen age boys. He paid us to pull nails and straighten them, carry lumber and just be "gophers" but I do not recall how much. He remodeled houses for additional income, as the church did not pay them a full salary that a family of 4 would need to live on. To help with their living expenses, Bro. Hands would buy a pig or a cow and then butcher it in their back yard. I helped on one occasion to butcher a hog and knew right then that I did not want to be a "butcher", although a number of years later I worked in a grocery

store in the butcher shop.

As a teenager one of the things I remember about “fun times” was the annual Halloween Party that was held at one of the families who had older girls who planned it along with my sister. The Granger’s lived on the west side of Lyons and their kids decorated their house up all scary like and we dressed up to fool or try to fool people who we were. We “bobbed” for apples, had a “taffy” pull which was a way of making taffy candy by putting butter on our hands and pulling the candy mixture, folding in many times until it became stiff and brittle, I think! That was the one and only time we ever did that. But it was fun including a few Halloween pranks. My closest friend, who later became my brother-in-law and I enjoyed talking about the different times and things we experienced during the “olden days”.

The Marshall family and the Hands family became much closer, in that my sister, Marcille fell in love with their son, Melvin. They were married and lived in Lyons several years. Melvin was a finish carpenter, having designed and built a dining room table and 6 chairs, which remained in their family many years and finally ended up in his grandson Burton’s home.

Some years latter Pastor Hands and family made a move to Carthage, South Dakota where he had accepted a pastorate of the Church of the Nazarene. Melvin, Marcille and Burton, their only son moved there as well. **Melvin was very short and when he and Marcille were married they had him stand on a stack of song books to make him the same height as his bride. Vanity of vanities!**

### Chapter Three

#### **Bantam Rooster Missing**

Why do you suppose you would think I would have anything to do with this little chicken they couldn’t find? I think I was the typical pre-school age neighborhood bare footed kid running around who might know something about it! Mom was too busy taking care of my baby brother so she probably didn’t have time to keep a watchful eye

on me all the time...you do know how it is when there is a new baby in the house? However, I did have an older sister who was still in junior high school...but again who knows? To this day I have no idea what happened to that little rooster!

While we were living on E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and sometime before making a move out to the east edge of town, we had neighbors who were of German descent lived across the street and on the opposite corner. These folks had a flock of chickens. These were what some people called Banty chickens and one day one of the little roosters came up missing. I still am not sure why they suspected me having to do something about that little chicken. Later it was found with its head chopped off and I do not have the answer. I believe as a small kid one would remember and not forget IF they did such a thing. All I know is that there was a mystery of a missing chicken. I know we didn't have it for chicken soup, as they are too small. 'Nuff said about the chicken!

## Chapter Four

### **Another Move takes place**

The day I started to Park School, my folks made a move to a small 2 bedroom house out on East Virginia Street, on the other side of the tracks. It a much longer walk than I would have had if they had not moved. That house was even in a poorer condition than the one on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. This house had no insulation, only card board tacked on the wall studs and the ceiling. The lights hung from the middle of the room with a bare bulb giving light, no inside plumbin'. It is too far back for me to remember how long we lived in that house before moving farther out where the folks had just bought a small house for little over \$800.00. The monthly payment wasn't but about \$5.00 a month if that much or something small like that but during those years that was a lot of money. But it was home with 4 rooms and a path!

We did have a water hydrant just outside of our back door, which made it a little

easier. During the winter months, Dad would have to shut the water off below ground to keep it from freezing. Mom and Dad had a wash stand just inside the kitchen door and on it the water bucket and a metal dipper that hung on a nail beside it. This cup was a common drinking cup for us all to use. With no sink in the kitchen, we had a wash pan for hand and face washing. If ya wanted hot water ya heated it in the kettle over the flames on the stove. I don't suppose it would pass hygiene inspection!

Mom would buy 36" wall paper on a large roll from "Monkey" Wards as it was called when I was a kid and she would use large tacks to put the paper over the cardboard to make the rooms look a little nicer. To cover the floors the folks bought 9 X 12 linoleum every few years because in the wearing, there would be tears or rips from sliding furniture across the floor. Every Saturday was when Mom and we kids would clean house. Living on a dirt street that was not graveled created a lot of dust anytime a car or truck would go by. Those were BAC days...before air conditioning days when doors and windows would be kept open to have fresh air through the house, so "running" the dust mop and dust rag about every day was necessary.

A major disadvantage of not having a bathroom in the house was taking a bath, once a week, whether we needed it or not. But without question we needed it. Water was heated on the top of the stove in a boiler and then poured into a large galvanized wash tub and was used by every member of the family. By the time the last one got a bath the "scum" would need to be skimmed off of the top. Plus it was not always hot unless more hot water was added to it. It is also embarrassing as a teenager to have to take a bath like that when your friends had showers and tubs in their houses. In reality it was not the most sanitary method of taking a bath! The youngest kid got the last bath...can you really imagine that? One advantage of starting Junior and Senior High School was after phys ed we would have to shower, so I would get stay clean a little more often...yea for showers!

In addition to the Saturday night bath, we had to polish our shoes and get them ready Sunday school and church the next morning. Living on a street that was not graveled or paved, it seemed sorta silly to polish shoes when it was rainy because of the

mud we would have to walk in going to and from the house to the car. But...that was our routine.

On hot summer days we kids looked forward to the horse drawn Ice Delivery wagon would make its rounds in the neighborhoods delivery block ice to people who owned and “ice box”. . Generally the top would open up and the delivery man would add as much ice that was ordered. Later the ice company started using a truck to deliver ice needed. My folks would place a card in the front window indicating their need for a delivery. The driver would know how much ice we wanted by the way the card was put up. Card was marked by numbering: 25/50/75/100 pounds. Whenever the driver would be stop to deliver ice at our house or our neighbors, we kids usually barefooted would be out there picking pieces of ice and sucking on them before it melted. We would do the same with it. A great way to cool off!

One of the last jobs I had before joining the U.S. Navy was working for the ice company. In the freezer I would run the crushed ice machine and sack ice. Help load the delivery trucks and eventually as an ice delivery man. I learned how to carry a block of ice on my shoulders or back just like in the old days. Needless to say delivering ice to businesses and residents was a pretty Cool job!

## Chapter Five

### **Education Deprived**

My parents were both what we would consider “uneducated”. Dad did not finish 1<sup>st</sup> grade and could barely write his own name. However, he did learn some numbers along the way. Mom was schooled through the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and adapted quite well to their way of life.

She would make her own dresses from feed sacks that chicken feed would come in. Mom would make several of the same pattern she would cut from a newspaper and proceed to make a dress. From the remnants she would then piece together quilt tops and

hand sew quilts during the winter months. Someone made her quilting frames and she would quilt during the day and then raise the whole thing up high enough from the ceiling that we wouldn't hit our heads on it. Mom made quilts for all of us kids and she would make and give them away as birthday or wedding presents. We still have one that my sister had and when she died we got it. Great job and pretty to look at!

Being self taught in not only her sewing ability but in canning home grown foods from the plentiful garden they planted every spring. One of the projects she had her new son-in-law do was to dig them a cellar for the canned goods and as a storm shelter as well. This they used for many years and could have been used during tornado season. Dad was willing to go down into it but Mom would not take refuge in it because she was afraid something would blow over the door and they couldn't get out, besides she couldn't see what was going on.

Though she had limited education, Mom would read her Bible every day and our daily news paper, we called the "Dinky Daily". Still doesn't take long to read the Lyons Daily News even today. Dad never did learn to read and I had often wondered why he did not learn each of us kids were learning to read. But...I know that he worked 6 days a week, and for a period of time walked 3 miles one to work and then home, he did not feel like or probably want to take time to learn. Later after a number of families began to buy a car, they would share rides and the expense for the gas. They would take a week at a time providing transportation for 3 or 4 men. Together it would provide gas for their cars. I believe Dad's first car was a stick shift 1934 or 1935 Chevy.

I have told people that I was education deprived because I did not get to go to kindergarten. The year I could have gone they did not have a kindergarten class and when I turned 6 I started the first grade. Our teachers would read to us one of the Psalms and then we would recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag before starting each day's lessons. Mom pressed us kids to study and make the grades. I wasn't really too interested in studying and when in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Mom would tell me "...Howard you are going to fail if you don't study." I would reply "...I don't care!" Need I say any

more? I got to spend a 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and I did make better grades during that year and several years following. I wonder why? It was not at all fun to be “left behind” when my classmates advanced that year. There was one good thing that did take place that has lasted through the years. I became best friends with one of the boys who joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class my 2<sup>nd</sup> year there. He and I have been close friends for many years now. I will share later some experiences he and I had.

## Chapter Six

### **Daddy, the Outdoorsman...**

Johnny, as his close friends would call him, loved to fish, hunt and trap. He loved his garden, his flock of chickens and his dog. Over the years I would watch my Dad prepare to go on a fishing trip out to Cow Creek about 3 miles south of Lyons. He took me fishing with him 1 time. Notice I said 1 time! I am not for sure just old I was but somewhere around 6 or 7 and for some reason I would get bored rather quickly. To pass the time I started throwing anything and everything loose into the water where Dad was fishing. The two didn't go very well together, since he enjoyed the quietness and fish won't bite when there is a lot of noise, or a disturbance in the water and according to him, so I was not invited to go fishing with him again. My Mom did not like to fish anytime, but my little brother enjoyed going with his daddy and the two of them would spend hours on the creek bank. Yes, they did catch fish...some mighty good eatin' them “catfish”. It was many years before Dad ever bought a rod and reel. He used bank lines, and cane fishing poles. Whenever he and one of his fishing buddies would go on an all night fishing trip they would set out trout lines and then early the next morning they would run the lines and collect the fish they caught.

I mentioned Dad loving to hunt. He was one of the best squirrel hunters in the area. We used to kid him that if a squirrel even twitched his tail he was a goner. Dad would spot a squirrel when no one else could see it. He would station himself near the end of a corn field row or close to trees where there was evidence of a feeding place and

just sit down by a tree and wait quietly until one would show itself. It took only one shot, he would gather up his days hunt, bring them home, skin them, cut them up and fry them for us to eat! Delicious! He would bring a rabbit home occasionally but not too often and I am not sure why. Daddy knew exactly how to skin squirrels, rabbits, scale fish and skunks.

At this point I must “fast forward many years” to the time when our youngest son, David, along with his Mom and I were having a meal at some friends of ours who used to live in Arkansas. For the meal, Sis George had stewed squirrel. When she took the lid off, after we were all seated, and passed the food around, David looked at the squirrel that still had the heads on and said “...I ain’t eatin’ nothing’ that is looking at me” and refused to eat any of the stewed squirrel. After getting past the head, the meat was very good. Ok, back to my Dad and his hunting and trapping experiences.

During the winter months, Dad would trap for skunk, raccoon, but mostly skunk and would skin them, place them on a drying board that was shaped for the hide and he would hang them in the hen house to dry out. I am not sure how much our neighbors thought about it but the aroma for skunk would linger for days. After all he got \$.25 a piece for them and it did help pay some of the bills.

If you are gonna hunt you need a gun. Guns became one of the greatest tension builders between my Mom and Dad. It would seem that Dad never had enough money to buy things necessary around the house but always was able to find money to buy a different gun. Not always a new gun but used one he would find for sale. He was a trader as well. He would trade a gun for one he thought he just had to have...and Mom would argue issue with him until he, either changed his mind, got rid of the gun or bought it anyway. Sometimes I wonder if it was out of spite!

The last gun he bought was a little 410 shotgun. He was about 85 years old when it bought it and wanted to go hunting...well his health was failing and I would kid him and tell him “...Daddy that gun will knock you off your feet if you try and shoot it!”

Finally he gave that gun to our youngest son, David. It still had the tag on it and had never been shot.

The years following the depression were difficult years just preceding the outbreak of WWII. My folks were caring people, though they did not have a lot of money they were always willing to share what they had. During those early years I vividly recall when a “Hobo” would knock on our back door seeking a handout of food. Mom would prepare a sandwich and whatever else she might have and give it to, what we would call today a “bum”. My brother and I were cautioned about going down to the hobo camp because people were afraid of them. That was an unrealistic expectation for two barefoot kids, in overalls and no shirt or underwear just overalls because I can still see the abandoned campfire and old cans used for brewing their coffee and never a hobo to be seen in one of their camps.

The hobo camp where the neighborhood kids would hike down to was probably less than a mile from where we lived. We would sneak down the road from our house and down the railroad tracks, then down a path into the brush or small trees where there camp was “hidden”.

There were stories of the Gypsies in their horse drawn wagons moving throughout the country, who would “steal” children and we were told not to go near them because they might grab us. Sure did make us afraid to see them coming. Really, there was no truth behind the stories because to my knowledge there were never any children who were “stolen” by these people who lived out of their wagons. Now, chickens and small livestock were a different story, it was reported they would steal farms animals if they had a chance.

## Chapter Seven

### WWII

December 7, 1941 I was about 10 ½ years old and vividly recall the day that America went to war.

There were some of my class mates whose Dad's were drafted into the Army and some of them enlisted in the Navy, as well as the Air Corp, later became the Air Force.

There are a number of things that comes to my mind. Hoarding was one of them. Such as rationing sugar, gas rationing, 35 mph speed limit, blackouts, soldiers hitch hiking, troop trains traveling through Lyons, scrap metal and paper drives, slogans like "...Uncle Same Needs You" or "Loose Lips Sinks Ships". To save on copper Lead pennies were produce for only 2 years. During the war, posters were distributed about town showing different designs of enemy aircraft. War Bonds, Saving stamps. President Roosevelt had declared war on Japan. Young men would lie about their age to enlist in the armed forces. Women went to work in factories where men worked before going to war. There were very few "draft dodgers" because young men and women were eager to help defend these United States of America.

Our Boy Scout troop 125 would hold paper drives. On Saturdays people would bring their old newspapers, old magazines, old books, cardboard boxes and unload them into a long trailer. I suppose you have heard of the "Esquier Magazine"...of course we would look for the "girlie" pictures. Whenever we got a trailer load it would be taken to Hutchinson, Kansas and then our scout troop received credit for collecting the paper products.

For however many tons we collected. Cans, bottles, any kind of metal we would collect. Why? Uncle Sam needed them to build tanks, bombers and ships. I don't recall ever being scared or fearful of what was taking place during the war. As a pre-teenager, and was not afraid of being drafted.

It was during these times we knew with everybody working together the war could be won. My folks would trade sugar stamps for gas stamps since Dad needed gas

to travel back and forth to work. Dad was a “block captain” to make sure everybody had their windows blackened at night so light would not shine through for the enemy to spot the lights and have a target. People followed the orders carefully. Church groups would wrap gospel tracts in colored cellophane and throw them along the highway for soldiers and sailors hiking would pick them up and read them and hopefully would believe what they were reading and get “saved” before heading off to war.

Around the country USO (United Service Organizations) were opened to provide shelter to our military personnel. Hot meals were provided, game rooms, reading rooms, and some places provided over facilities for them. One story is told of a young lady working in a USO (or café) in Kansas City, Missouri told one of the other workers the next sailor that walks in the door “...I am going to marry him”. Would believe she did and they were married for over 50 years? Unusual story but there were many fast marriages when lovers were to be parted because of the war. Another one is a soldier leaving married his almost 13 year old sweetheart and she travel from Arkansas to Oregon by herself to be with her husband. These folks have been married almost 65 years. So strange things, happen when people are about to be separated.

Most people only read about the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the beach landings in Europe and when that war was over. When President Harry Truman signed the documents ending the war, along with General Douglas McArthur on the battleship U.S.S. Missouri after the A-bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. One of the songs I remember is “...when Johnny comes marching home again, hurrah, hurrah...” Another was “...from the shores of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli...”, the troop trains passing through Lyons with mostly soldiers and some sailors leaning out of the windows and waving at people. A very popular sign was one showing “Uncle Sam” pointing his finger and saying “...Uncle Sam needs you!” **One promise General Douglas McArthur made was the “he would return!” and that he did.**

After the war was over, I was in Junior High School I remember kids whose Dad’s were drafted into the military were getting their discharges, coming home and the

overwhelming excitement of those students when their Daddy's were home!. There some men who are deferred and worked in what was called CCC Camp and WPA, which someone the phrase "We Piddle Around". These were government projects around the country needed men to work on them throughout the war. My brother-in-law worked on one in western Kansas and had to be away from his family for 6 months which was never easy for a family man or his family.

While gas was being rationed my folks took us (my sister, brother and me) along with our Mom and Dad drove 120 miles to visit relatives in Augusta, Kansas. It took us almost all day to make the drive at 35 miles an hour. It was better gas mileage in going slower. It was sorta like a "slow motion" movie, going so slow! Can you imagine that was a fast as you were supposed to go? By the way I haven't mentioned these were the days "BFAC" in cars!

I had several cousins who joined the U.S. Navy when the war started and they all returned home safely. It was for that reason and their influence that put a desire in me to join the Navy upon graduation from high school.

It was during World War II that I landed my first real job. My folks were never had much extra money so when I was 10 or 11 years old I took our "push" mower and started looking for a job. Across from the Park Grade School there was a family who had a very large yard of Bermuda grass and they paid me the sum of \$.50 a week to cut it. It took me several hours to cut. A few houses east of them was another family whose grass I cut as well and it was at this house that I found some puppies that were to be given away. I went home and ask my Mom if I could have one. After talking it over with my Dad they agreed that I could have it but I would have to take care of it. His name was "Pat". He quite the dog, mostly white with some black patches and one his eye and he was part of our family for many years.

It was a the Pool's that working in their back yard around the shed or garage I was cutting tall weeds, and getting hot and sweaty got what was called weed poison. It took

me over 3 weeks to over this poison that I did not know even existed.

After we had lived out east town for a number of years, the folks were sorta distant neighbors to the Walter Seaton family who had bought a “farm” that was almost in Lyons. It was a joy to have my friend now living so close to us. During the war years and the post war years for folks did most anything to help keep their living costs down. One of them was when the Seaton’s would have fresh milk; my folks would send one of us kids, generally me, down to get a gallon of milk. On one occasion, I am told by Carl, that I was knocking two bottles together and one of them broke...now I don’t remember IF they had milk in them or not.

We kids would go to the Seaton’s and read their comic books because our Mom would not let us read them because they were considered to be “worldly”. The Seaton kids had a whole stack of them and we read the covers off of them until they were no longer any use but to throw away. It doesn’t seem that it hindered us kids any...but we sure did have fun reading them...I don’t suppose we fooled our Mom either!

As a kid I didn’t understand why “funny” books could be so sinful and a matter a fact, still don’t!

## Chapter Eight

### **Schooling in Lyons**

School was never my favorite activity and thing to do. I suppose I was like most kids recess was what I liked best. During the winter months the north side of the school had what we thought was a big hill and when it would come a snow kids would bring their sleds to school so before, at recess and at noon and after school out time was spent on that hill. Our custodian (janitor) would spray water on one part of the hill to make it icy for us to slide down standing up at least, that was the objective. In Lyons that was the nearest thing we had to skiing!

Snow ball fights, at least that what we called them. On the level part of the play ground we would make large snow balls as big as we could and making almost a complete circle and stacking one on top of the other until we could stand behind them and hide. I am not sure how we decided who would be on what team but we seemed to have plenty kids who made snowballs and wanted “fight” before, and after school and during the morning and afternoon recess. It didn’t seem to get too cold for these snow ball fights.

At times children can be slow learners and learning never seemed to happen. During my fifth grade year we had a teacher by the name of Clara Bell Snider. On one occasion she was walking back to school after lunch and she heard me calling her “Clara Bell Snider the Billy Goat Rider”. She took me in and had me write her name 500 times on the chalk board. I did this and when she saw it she said “...that is not my name!” I had written Clara Bell Snider 500 times. She said “...my name IS Miss Snider now write it again!” Do you know how long it takes to do that? A long, long time!

Each year when school was dismissed for the summer there would be an all school picnic in the City Park which was adjacent to the Park Grade School grounds. Mom would fix us our lunch and at noon we would all go to the park to eat. Bananas never tasted so good along with cookies and whatever else Mom would put in the lunch sack. One of the chants we would do is “Schools out, schools out, the teacher let the mules out!” And...as we got older and had ink bottles some of us got great delight in throwing the bottles against the curbs and splash the ink all over...not nice but that is what happened and we thought it was fun.

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade was a special year as well. There were 4 boys and 16 girls! Our teacher, Mr. La Rue, we all felt was not a good teacher, as he was very strict so many would be 6<sup>th</sup> grade transferred to Central School on the west part of town. We did not think that was fair but that is the way it was. Most of us were eager to be advanced to the seventh grade.

As a first grader, I had to walk to and from school. The first winter at our new home one day when walking home in blowing snow, very cold, and not really dressed for it, I was about 2 blocks from home and going past Hazel Vaughn's house, she saw me crying and invited me in for hot chocolate and to get warmed up. I never forgot what she did that day in showing kindness to that little kid walking home from school. She was the daughter of Auntie Vaughn who I talked about giving us a penny for Sunday school.

One other experience that I had when I was about a third grader was when taking a "short cut" by crossing a field on a path that was worn out by us kids rather than staying on the streets. One day when I was crossing there was a large yellow cat. I picked it up to carry it and it started clawing me and when I "put" it down it scratched the back of my leg. I was still bleeding when I got to school so the teacher or somebody cleaned the scratch and wrapped a bandage on it and from that time on I never really cared much for cats. Trying to be nice, really I was, and what did I get for it? A scared leg!

Just one more childhood memory...summer was when we got to shed our underwear and wear overalls with the pant legs rolled up and no a shirt. When the summer rains would come and the ditches in front of our house would fill up with water, we'd get out and wade in the water and feeling the mud squishing between our toes was great and just being kids!

As a kid growing up, there was never extra money so IF we got any money we had to earn it or even find it on occasions. On the corner of Highway 56 and Virginia Street there was a little beer joint. Following the weekend "activities", my brother Paul and I discovered in their trash pile, after it cooled down when they burned it, there was "money" that was swept up with the trash and we would find pennies, nickels, dimes and at times quarters and a few times a fifty-cent piece. This became our weekly hunt. It did provide us with money some of the time. Poor kids ya know?

Ya ever been caught smoking? Well, we had a neighbor who would park his

combine on an empty lot east of our house. I wish I could say that I was a perfect kid but just cannot and be honest. One of the things we would do is find cigarette butts and climb up in the grain bin of the combine and smoke them (sanitary I know) but we did. We never thought about anybody being able to see the smoke coming from the grain bin but did and we were caught!

Junior High School, who could ever forget? And... ya...remember my friend that caught up with me in the third grade? Well he and I had somewhat of a difficult time with the mixed glee club or some would call it the choir. We both had a problem with staying interested in what was going on...and were “dismissed” from that part of the musical program. I suppose I should try and explain why. One of our classmates had a white shirt on and one of us took an ink pen and splattered ink across his back. Well Miss Hall didn’t think much of it. Our time in her class was over.

So I joined the Junior High Band and proceeded to learn to play the tuba or sousaphone and I think Carl worked on the drums for awhile, I am not sure. I did stick with the band throughout the remaining school in Junior and Senior school years. However, there were times when my dismissal would have been appropriate. Such as: one winter when snow collected in the north windows of the band room and windows would be opened to cool off the room because of the heat. One day we got the idea to stuff snow down the bell of the horn, you can guess what happened...snow started melting and the sound was somewhat muffled and blubbery sounding and when I turned the tube over the water all went running down between the chairs and feet of the students in front of, not only the tuba section, but all the way down to the front.

And...there was the time when we caught a pigeon and put it in the horn...it didn’t stay in there very long either...wonder why? Really it was great being in the band as it was lots of fun and enjoyable to play an instrument such as a tuba. Parades, football games, the pep band for basketball games, for graduation, Christmas concerts, marching at the annual state fair in Hutchinson and the like...just lots of fun.

## Chapter Nine

### **Boy Scouts of America**

Troop 125 at that time was the oldest scout troop in Lyons and became one of the “building blocks” in developing character qualities in my life. There were so many great experiences I had during my scouting years, which led from the Tenderfoot Badge to the Eagle Scout Badge with two additional Palms. Very few scouts ever went beyond receiving their Eagle Badge.

Reflecting back on those experiences I remember my first “over-night” campout I ever went on. It was at what was known as Taylor’s Grove located on the south side of Cow Creek and east of US highway 81. I did not have a tent, a sleeping bag, any camping gear but build my first “lean to” according to the Boy Scouts Manual. All I had for covering was an ole light blue sheet blanket Mom let me take. I have no idea what I used to put my “gear” into but I am sure it was not a back pack of any kind. From that point on I knew I wanted to be in scouts.

Mr. Marion Tenor was my first scout master and he had just returned from WW II and had been in Troop 125 as a boy. He taught us from the scout manual everything we were supposed to learn to advance to the next level. There are a number of things a scout never forgets. I want to provide space for some of the requirements a boy must learn to become a boy scout. All of them are meant to be helpful in developing a boy to become a man. Like the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout Motto the Slogan. And I quote:

#### **Boy Scout Oath (or Promise)**

On my honor I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country,  
To obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong,

mentally awake, and morally straight.

## **Scout Law**

### **TRUSTWORTHY**

A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is part of his code of conduct. People can depend on him.

### **LOYAL**

A Scout is true to his family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation.

### **HELPFUL**

A Scout is concerned about other people. He does things willingly for others without pay or reward.

### **FRIENDLY**

A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs other than his own.

### **COURTEOUS**

A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows good manners make it easier for people to get along together.

### **KIND**

A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. He does not hurt or kill harmless things without reason.

### **OBEDIENT**

A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them.

### **CHEERFUL**

A Scout looks for the bright side of things. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy.

### **THRIFTY**

A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for unforeseen needs. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property.

**BRAVE**

A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at or threaten him.

**CLEAN**

A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean.

**REVERENT**

A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.

**Scout Motto - Be Prepared****Scout Slogan - Do a Good Turn Daily**

After Mr. Marion Tenor resigned Mr. Gerald McCalla became our Scoutmaster. Mr. McCalla was an electrician, who had lost a portion of one of his arms in an accident but he had an artificial hand and he was not slowed down because of it. All of us loved and appreciated Mr. McCalla. He was a no-nonsense man. Insisting that we do our best in everything we did. He was our Scoutmaster when there was a drive to get a new scout cabin located near downtown and in the City Park. At that time there were two scout troops in Lyons and the other one was Troop 45 led by Mr. Art Adams. There was great competition between the two troops. Of course Troop 125 was the oldest and the best.

We had paper drives when we would have the dad's of some of the scouts who had pickup trucks take us around town and pick up bundled paper people had saved and was on their front porch or sitting by the curb waiting for us to collect it. We filled had many such drives that we would have a semi-truck and trailer to load and deliver to the paper company in Hutchinson. Both scout troops worked together on the drives. It was with dedication of dad's who helped us that a new scout cabin was built. It had a full basement under it, rest rooms for men and women, a kitchen and the activity room big enough for us to have games inside rather than going outside when it was cold. On the

west end of the meeting room there was a stone fireplace where we could have an “indoor campfire” so to speak.

During our Scout meetings, following the business portion and our study time on advancements, we would have a number of different games we would play. Steal the Bacon was a favorite. We had knot typing contests and these were held in area wide scout meetings as well. Not to do any bragging but I held the knot typing championship for a number of years. We had 12 basic knots we would tie. Whoever was calling out the knot to be tied, we held the ropes over our heads and when he said “go” we tied as fast as we could dropping the knot to the floor to be checked on correctness. We then had to learn how to use them on our campouts. During the warmer months we had a campout at least once a month. Leaving on Friday night and returning on Sunday afternoon. We did our own cooking, cleaning up after each meal before we started another activity. Such as: Dividing into two teams and one team would “blaze” a trail and the other would have to follow to find their way to the other team.

The location of our Scout cabin was well located and many nights following our meeting we would go down to the City park and play “Capture the Flag”, again dividing into two teams...another game we often played was called “...Chalk the Corner”. One team would start out with a piece of chalk. The direction they would go would be marked with an arrow. Whatever direction the other team was to go would be indicated to them and when the hiding place for the other team was located could be identified with an X with a circle around it meaning anywhere in that block the team could be hiding. Great fun!

When Mr. Adams passed away the Scout committee in Lyons developed what was called the “Art Adams Award” and was to be presented to an outstanding scout for the year. I do not recall who received it the first year but on the second year I was selected and was given a bronze statue of a boy scout with his hat in his hand and dressed in his scout uniform. This was indeed quite an honor.

I had earned my Eagle Badge by them and was a senior in high school. I still have this statue in my possession and it holds fond memories of my scouting days.

I suppose I really should mention one of the activities that was NOT sanctioned by the Scouts that my good friend and I experienced. One Halloween we were on our way to Scouts when we got side tracked. All we did was push a load of pumpkins that were loaded on a flat bed wagon and got it rolling down the street when car lights came around the corner and we found ourselves trying to hide behind the wheels while it was rolling. This was not too successful and the car belonged to the Night Marshal, who was Mr. George Fox. He took Carl and me to the Sheriff's Office for holding until our parents came. My dad was willing to get us out, but Mr. Seaton was not. He said "...let the boys set" and my Dad seemed to think they should get us out. Well, Mr. Fox kept us until a little after mid night and he let us go home. Carl out of orneriness put a tack in the chair for Mr. Fox to sit on. Well apparently the tack and the rear end of Mr. Fox didn't meet because there was no indication that he got the "point". For some reason he did not believe that we were on our way to a scout meeting. Wonder why?

There is one other thing that we did I believe following one of our scout meetings and before we headed home. Lyons has a water tower that is a challenge to the area towns to paint on a game night. Of course it was watched closely and that is where the challenge came in. One night, Carl and I decided we wanted to climb the water tower, which we did. Around the base of the tank is a walk-way with a waist high railing to keep one from falling off. But...there is a ladder that continues up the side of the tank. After we got to the walkway, I wanted to keep climbing but Carl didn't so I did and to be frank it was quite scary. When we had enough we decided it was time to start down. I started down first and was about half way down and Carl spotted the night marshal but didn't tell me, so he hid while I made my way on down...I got a good "chewing out" but that is all. When the "smoke" cleared Carl made his way down and headed home. It was quite an adventure, dangerous but fun, to say the least.

During my senior year in high school, we learned the Boy Scouts of America were going to have a National Jamboree in Valley Forge, Virginia in late June of 1950. There were several of us scouts would wanted to attend so we had fund raisers to help pay our way. I have forgotten just how much was needed but somewhere around \$300.00. Our two troops worked to raise funds for 8 or 10 of us to attend this Jamboree. We became part of the Kanza Council Scout Troop that would meet at Camp Pawnee near Larned, Kansas to prepare for the train ride. I believe the train was chartered with scout troops from the west all the way to Valley Forge because the train was full of scouts.

This was a momentous occasion since it was the first one to be held following WWII and scouts from all over the world would attend. This was quite an experience because we were able to enjoy a number of side trips. We toured the historic sites in and around Washington, DC including the Smithsonian Institute and Museum in Philadelphia. While touring our nation's capitol, one of the high lights was an opportunity to climb to the top of the Washington Monument which has over 800 steps. Several of us from our troop climbed to the top. We saw the Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island, a tour through Manhattan Island, the Empire State Building, which we got to go the top, in an elevator took 37 seconds from the top to the bottom. Fast huh?

After the Jamboree was over and over 40,000 scouts made their way home, our train made stops in Detroit, Michigan where we toured the Ford Motor Company. In Chicago we visited the Historical Museum before heading home to Kansas. Ending my scouting career, as a member of Troop 125.

Mr. Gerry McCulla and I remained friends for many years and only recently I discovered he was no longer with us. A great guy, Gerry was, he was!.

## Chapter Ten

## High School

(insert a picture of LHS)

A green scared freshman! Scared because of what the upper classmen would make you do things just because you were a freshman! Our class had somewhere around 100 students in it and throughout the year there would be those who moved away and few would be added for some reason as we progressed each year our number declined. Generally most high school students have two or three best friends or buddies they would hang around with and that happened to me. There were four of us and we were able to stay out of trouble most of the time.

For some sports was their desire. For me it wasn't until my junior year that my Mom allowed me to go out for football. I don't know what my Dad thought about it because to my knowledge he never said anything one way or the other. I found out much later the reason Mom decided to let me play football was that she thought I was going to quit school and to keep me from doing that she agreed. To this day I have no idea where she came up with that thought because it never occurred to me to quit.

So during my Junior and Senior years I played right guard on the Lyons High School football team. I thoroughly enjoyed playing and do have some moments that I felt like a star. As our senior progress and the football season nearing a close the Central Prairie FB League coaches voted to league's outstanding players. Two of us on the Lyons squad were elected or voted to be Co-captains of the League. Big Zik and me. That was quite a thrill to have that honor because there were not many other experiences that would call honor. My Mom did attend one football game throughout my football career and I don't think Dad ever attended one.

My Grandma Sutton had her own idea of what football was all about. She lived much of her live in Augusta, Kansas just across from the football field. She would watch them play and when they got in a huddle, she never did think it was fair for them to keep a secret of what they were going to do.

It was during my sophomore year that I was in typing class taught by Miss Gunnarson. We had the manual typewriters to learn on and I remember how if we watched our fingers she would drape a cloth over the typewriter so we could not see the keys but have to look at the chart on the wall for type the right letters. I must admit I did enjoy taking typing.

It was one day just minutes before the noon bell was to ring and she was dismissing the class that Carl and I were set to race out the door. We did this and Carl was ahead of me and the door, with rectangle double glass sections that had wire inside, had a "crash bar" on it. Well when I pushed the bar, I missed it and my hand went through it, cutting two fingers on my right hand and opening a gash in the palm of my hand. With blood dripping from two of my fingers and my hand wrapped in my handkerchief, Carl and I headed to the doctor's office and I still don't know why we picked Dr. Hill but we did I guess because it was the closest. I had wrapped hand to try and stop the bleeding and was somewhat successful.

At the Doctor's office, while waiting for the doctor or just after he put stitches in and wrapped the two fingers that I passed out and Carl and the Doc Hill tried to catch me but didn't quite make it and I landed on the floor but because I had fainted. I didn't injure myself any further. We never did get to lunch that day and went right back to school. When I got the bill from the Doctor for \$12.00 I thought that was outrageous and I wasn't going to pay it and didn't. I will tell you later about the conclusion of this experience. I might add it did hamper my typing ability until my fingers healed.

Math was never a strong point in my schooling and I found that even General Math was beyond my thinking so I never took any additional related subjects...probably because I couldn't even spell them besides learn about them.

You must remember these were the days before most students did not own cars. So, Carl and I rode our bikes almost everywhere even during the winter months through

the snow. There were a few students who did have cars but not many. And...I believe we did walk or run in some cases every day to and from school. Another thing I remember is most of us guys had what was called "duck tails" and "pompadours" to look cool. In the winter I would wet mine down with water and on the way to school my hair would freeze in place and after being in the classroom for a few minutes the thawing would begin and water would drip down and I would have keep wiping it up. When I was in the Navy I would tell my friends about what I used to do and they wouldn't believe me. Then we would buy hair oil and I think the cost was about \$.12 a bottle. We'd oil our hair to the point you would think we could start a factory for refined oil. Another style was the "crew" cut and I wore one much of the time as well. Before I left to join the Navy I went to the barber shop and had the barber give a crew cut and my folks ask why I did that because in the Navy they would cut my hair off and not the crew cut style. It is what we call a "burr" cut now days.

Much earlier I talked about my folks not having very much money and if we wanted anything we had to work for it. So to support my scouting days and keeping myself in school clothes and have spending money I needed to work. The folks used to say work never killed anybody...I am not so sure about that. North of Lyons they were building a new country school and Mom wanted me to ride my bike out there and try to get a job. I did not think much of that idea but did look for work. Throughout high school I worked summer jobs and after school jobs and even some during the night hours.

One of my first jobs was working on the soft water delivery truck for Bleger's Soft Water Company. Our customers had soft water canisters hooked up to their water supply and provided soft water for household uses. We made delivers in Sterling, Nickerson, Hutchinson, Chase and in Lyons. I worked for Mr. Bleger for about a year. Then I washed dishes in a couple of different café's. One was the Lyons Café where I learned to peel potatoes by hand, wash dishes in three large steel sinks. The other was Quivira Café where I learned to do some "fry cooking". I quit the Quivira job because there wasn't anything to do most of the evenings as we stayed opened until 2:00 a.m. and my Mom said she had never heard of anyone quitting a job because there was nothing to

do. I did!

I worked at Safeway Grocery Store for several years as a sacker and then a stock boy which included cleanup. However I need to back up a few years and share some experiences as a paper boy for the Hutchinson Daily News. I was still in Junior High School when working for the Bavington ladies who were the agents for the paper. I had to get up near 4:00 a.m. to be at the office to fold papers and make delivery before school started. There was a little café on the north side of the square in Lyons and on Sunday mornings we would go in a get pancakes for \$.15 and that was a real bargain and they were wonderful.

If you want to feel sorry for me, just think I had walk the route two weeks to earn enough money to buy my first used bicycle and at one time I had two routes. It was during my paper route period that I bought a used trumpet and thought I was going to learn how to play it. There is a story about it I will relate later on in this Journey.

There will be some who are reading this that remember the little café' called Wimp's Lunch and sold hamburgers for \$.15 and 8 oz Pepsi Cola for \$.05. Another hangout for kids was at Jones Bakery on the south side of the square. It was here that one the kids asked the high school girl who worked behind the counter "...Are those Long Johns fresh?" To which he added "...if they get too fresh just slap'em" which brought a good laugh from everyone standing by. While I am thinking about the good places to eat and kids got together, Grave's Drug Store on the NE corner of the square. At the counter you could order grilled ham salad sandwich and drink for \$.15 and the aroma...I can almost smell them cooking now.

I can't remember just how old I was but Lyons used to have parades around the square and in one of the there was a bread company called Pan Dandy Bread. During the parade the driver and helper were throwing our small loaves of Pan Dandy bread and it was so fresh and soft and very good.

In reality there was not much for a kid to do in our town. We did have two picture shows. One was the Star Theatre and the other was the Fox Theatre. Our church did not believe in going to the picture show, so there were many Saturday nights after I got off of work I would go to the Star Theatre and when it was half over there was no charge, so I got in free. My Mom would never allow us to go to a show. When the movie "Lassie Come Home" came out, my sister and I begged her to let us go to that movie. Finally she told us we could go "...but if Jesus comes back when you are in the picture show you will be left." I remember thinking all the way through it, I hope Jesus doesn't come back now, I hope Jesus doesn't come back now." There were people who were crying and you could hear sniffing and blowing their noses because poor Lassie was having her problems. I am thankful that Jesus didn't come back at that time and I don't think we would have been left. Mom was disappointed that we wanted to go. There were ways in which a person could sneak into a show which we did try.

Most of my friends had some sort of job during their high school years and worked in the extra curriculum activities around their working hours. Mine included not only football practice and the games generally played on Friday nights, playing in the Pep Band for the Basketball games played on Tuesday and Friday nights during the winter months, working on Saturdays and scouts on Thursday nights but also my church activities. At times our pastor would conduct what was called "cottage prayer meetings" on Wednesday nights and many times it would be at our house. I have not mentioned the extended revival meetings which lasted at least two weeks and sometimes longer.

Whenever an evangelist would come to the Church of the Nazarene in Lyons, I remember many times he would preach about the "Second Coming of Christ" and about being left behind when He came and during these meetings there were many times I made it to the altar because I did not want to be left behind. Along with the evangelist there would be what were known as Song Evangelist who led the singing and the rendered the special music. One summer at a tent meeting held in Hutchinson, I do not remember what the camp meeting preacher spoke about but what I do remember is it made me want to ask forgiveness of anyone who was around me including my older

sister, Marcille. She me for I was to forgive her for and I said I didn't know, just forgive me. Let me inject, the truth about Jesus coming is still true, and thou He has not come yet as He said, He is that much closer than when I was a kid in my home church. Acts 1:7-9 “...*He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. <sup>11</sup> *"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."* (NIV)

Back to the classroom. Mr. Buhler our Biology teacher would tell us “...don't stare at me like a cow stares at a newly painted barn!” One day he asked me a question and I didn't know the answer but I told him “ don't stare at me like a cow stares at a newly painted barn.” His reply to me was “...Mr. Marshall if you would learn your lessons like you learned that you would do alright.” And...there was “study hall” rightfully name but not seriously taken advantage of by most students. However, I did do mine and seldom took any home but probably should have...my grades would have been a whole lot better. Band, Shop and Gym were my strongest subjects and made the best grades...wonder why? One thing I did forget to mention was that starting in my sophomore year I decided I wanted to learn to play the accordion. I took lessons for three years from Mrs. Gudge (sp) and did learn a little and I played one time at some sort of talent show at school. Once was enough!

My friend Carl and I decided we wanted to go to a basketball game in Sterling, Kansas. The Sterling Bears was a rival of the Lyons Lions and I am not sure how we got out of school early but we decided to ride our bikes to the game. Going was fine, and the game was half over when we got there. On the way back to Lyons, we had to pedal into a strong North wind. To make matters worse a pedal broke off on my bike and trying to pedal was very difficult. So we decided to try and get a ride. We flagged down an old farm truck and the driver was Mr. Hershel Hutchins who lived about 3 miles south of Lyons. He put our bikes in the back and let us ride but we still had to manage to make it

back to Lyons and home. It was late by the time we made it, tired and worn out and did not make that trip again. But there were others...pushing our bikes along the railroad tracks coming from Little River a town 12 miles east of Lyons...and there was the skinny dipping at the sand pits just south of town, out west of Lyons below a railroad trestle...where the water was supposed to be too deep to touch bottom...I guess it was, never tried it. In my earlier days it was in “Stink Creek” crossing a cow pasture and muddy...I do not remember what I told my Mom about why my under ware was so dirty from the muddy water...guess she never ask.

High school friends sometimes get into heated discussions and some people call them fights. Well I had one such occasion when one of my class mates and I got into a fight behind Crawford’s Mortuary. I have no idea what the fight was about but I did swing at him and missed him and hit the brick wall and broke my right hand. When I went to Doctor Leonard he used two tongue depressors and taped them to my hand and extended index finger. One on the top side and one on the bottom side. Consequently the bone did not heal correctly resulting in a crooked joint. I do believe that was my only serious fight during my high school years.

Graduation day finally arrived and we had almost 50 graduating from the Class of 1950. And upon graduation we parted going our separate ways. A number of us enlisted in the military services. There were those who left home to attend college and then some just stayed in Lyons to find employment and to make it their home. Following my trip to Valley Forge and the National Boy Scout Jamboree my desire was to enlist in the U.S. Navy.

## Chapter Eleven

### **Korean Conflict**

**July 2, 1950 Spy planes shot down over Korea not near as drastic as December 7,**

**1941!**

When our scout train arrived in Hutchinson, Kansas and the scout troop from Stafford, Kansas were leaving, I called to one of my friends, Jim Gardner, "...I'll see you in the Navy" and he wave back to me that is the last I saw of him until....well as soon as I got home and learned about the Korean Conflict and the possibility of being drafted, I decided to enlist in the U.S. Navy. I hitched hiked to Salina, Kansas enlisted and was told that I would receive train tickets to Kansas City in about 3 weeks or around July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1950. When they arrived I had a few days to get ready to leave. On the final night before leaving I drove to Sterling, Kansas to see Joan Powers, the girl I was dating at the time. I took back my class ring as I did not want to have a girl friend and being away from home not knowing when I would return. We parted and I got home about 15 minutes before the train was to leave close to midnight.

Upon my arrival in Kansas City I was escorted to the recruiting office, completed the paper work, took my physical spent the night at the President's Hotel there in Kansas City and a group of us were on our way to San Diego, California to begin boot camp training for 10 weeks. My actual date for being sworn in was July 27, 1950. I do not recall very much about that trip only that we were a bunch of potential sailors scared not knowing what all would be taking place during the processing procedure. I had not been farther west than Larned, Kansas before leaving the California. So the wonders of California began to unfold when leaving Los Angles to San Diego. Our bus ride from the train station to the Naval Training Center Boot Camp was the beginning of a new life.

We were "marched" off the bus onto what could be called a parking lot but it in Navy terms was called the "grinder" which we learned later why it was called that. We lost our identity upon arrival and all "looked just alike," after our trip to the barber shop, being stripped of our civilian clothing and standing stark naked waiting in line to get our shots. Yes and there were those who passed out after getting their shots, on to the clothing store for outfitting and packing our civvies to ship back home along with a card informing our parents how to make contact with us if in an emergency. They were

instructed NOT to try and come and visit as there would be no visitors until our first parade, which came several weeks into our training. We were assigned our military service number and mine was 345-29-71 and my company number was first Company 270 and for some reason our Company Commander was re-assigned and 270 was disbanded and we were renumbered Company 345. We did everything together, I mean everything. Our barracks with double deck racks and foot lockers, laundry, showers. We learned to prepared our bunks exactly the same way, hang towels to dry on the end of our bunks the same way, had 5 minutes to shave and shower, revelry came early 5:00 a.m. and lights out were at 10:00 and quiet. We marched to chow 3 times a day, we marched to classes, we marched to workouts on the “grinder”. Remember the parking lot? The grinder is just what it indicates...we grind out parade routines, the marching for review, exercises, and the scout I waved at? My third week in Boot Camp going into the chow hall on a Sunday for our noon meal I saw him. He was about 3 weeks behind me in training and our paths crossed during our Navy days but I never saw him again. I would see his name in the guest books in Hawaii, in Japan, in San Diego, but just never met him again.

Early in my boot camp training our company commander would call for our company to be “at ease” and the smoking lamp is lit. I did know what that meant and it was a long time before I connected the sailors who were smoking and those who were not. But we all took a break for a smoke break and that was called a “smoking lamp”. Sailors were not allowed to smoke in the barracks building, the chow halls, or the classrooms. We had what was called the Navy Bible but the real name of was the Blue Jackets Manual, which contained the rules in how to conduct ourselves and how to walk our post in a military manner. We learned how to challenge to someone approaching, who did not identify themselves. It showed pictures of enemy planes and ships and how to identify them. Instructions on the proper care for and wear our Navy uniforms. I believe it also showed the advancement rates and the insignias of each. In other words we had to learn much of it during boot camp.

On Sunday morning, my third week in San Diego and in Boot Camp our

Commanding Officer called for those wanting to attend chapel to fall out in front. No one fell out but me and he said there were not enough so we didn't go. That was the first time in my life that I wanted to go to church and didn't get to go. I spent the next week feeling homesick and wanting to go home but knew that was impossible. The following Sunday I did get to go and each Sunday after that. Chapel was different than the church back home but it was church. I picked up a Gideon Bible my first Sunday in Chapel. I decided since I had never read the Bible through, I would start it and did start reading in the Book of Genesis. This was hardly a place to begin reading for someone who is away from the Lord. The Lord was preparing me for my journey back to Him.

The weeks progressed what we thought rather slowly but looking back on them they went fast. The final 6 weeks or so we marched every Saturday morning in the grand parade, when the graduating Company would be honored and parents would be invited to view the parade. It is very impressive and enjoyable to participate in and to view. My Sister, Marcille and her husband, Melvin and their son, Burton came out I believe for one of them, but not the final one. I was able to go on liberty and spend time with them which was great. My memory fails me in recalling just how many weeks prior to graduation that we were allowed 12 hour liberty passes. It seems like 4 weeks. Two on Saturday and two on Sunday.

One of the funniest things happened one Saturday morning when we were having inspection of our barrack building. We were all in place at attention. One of the sailors noticed his tube of tooth paste had fallen from his bunk and he hurriedly tried to retrieve it and replace it but when he did, he stepped on it and the tooth paste shot out kind of squiggly like across the deck. It was not funny to the inspectors who were our Commanding Office and at times some of the Boot Camp Commanding Officers themselves. We had our weapons, rifles (which were wooden) we would carry when we were marching from one activity to another. We attended lectures regarding war stories of WWII and pictures demonstrating procedures for rescue, for firefighting using gas masks and , trained for swimming and had to pass the swimming test, we did our own laundry and had to use little ties to tie everything on the lines. These were inspected to

be sure we used the square knot and tied exactly the same way. Clothes were folded and some were rolled and tied to conserve space in preparation for being stationed aboard ships.

Our week of training included the final testing, getting our physicals and following our final dress parade we were given our next assignments. Some to various schools but most were assigned to a ship.

## Chapter Twelve

### **First Liberty**

One of the last things my Mom told me when I left home for the Navy was "...son, please don't get a tattoo." Three of us left the base together and headed for "town". We had never been in San Diego before and there were literally thousands of sailors and marines roaming the downtown area of San Diego. Once off base a bus ride takes you right to the YMCA. In it everything is provided to make service personnel feel at home...game rooms, swimming pools, free food, library and even a dormitory for week end liberties. Across the street was a tattoo parlor. The three of us decided we wanted to get tattooed and I conveniently forgot about my Mom's appeal and got my left arm tattooed. I didn't get one that was too drastic...just my initials "HWM". Upon getting mine done, I was feeling light headed and before putting my jumper on I went outside and passed out. I know people thought I was drunk but I was not. The other guys got a real charge out of me can't taking it. Only one of the other guys got tattooed.

One of the things we were taught when meeting or passing any Military officer was to salute and say "...by your leave, Sir!" These buddies and I were walking down the street in front a hotel and I saw this man in dress uniform and I saluted and did what I was supposed to do only to find out he was a "bell boy" for the hotel. We got a good

laugh out of it though it did make me feel silly but better be safe than sorry. Right?

We were then ready to find something to eat. One of the sailors was from St. Joseph, Missouri and he said "...let's get a pizza." I am from the middle of Kansas and I had never heard of pizza. We found a pizza parlor that was down stairs there on Broadway. We each ordered a large pizza, remember I had never seen one, and a side order of spaghetti, and I think garlic bread, which I had never had before. I could not believe my eyes when the food came out. The other two sailors knew what they were getting and had a good laugh at me for they knew we could not eat all of that food. We didn't either!

Following our meal, we did not know what to do. This was Sunday afternoon, so I decided I would look up a Nazarene Church since that is the church I grew up in. I found phone book and located the First Church of the Nazarene located farther out on Broadway. I took a bus and went to church. I had no idea where the other two went. I do not know what Pastor Joseph Morgan preached about that night, but what I do know is I wanted to make things right with the Lord and made my way to the altar. After I "got through" and a sailor who had been praying with me ask me where I was from and I told him I was from Lyons, Kansas and he told me he was from Hutchinson, Kansas. His name was Lavern Darling and he proceeded to tell me about a place I might would like to visit. I believe he gave me a card of the Mother Layne's Hospitality Home for servicemen. I do not recall when I made my first visit but remember well Mom Rattan and her enthusiastic greeting and smile.

The Church had provision to get me back to the Naval Station by the time my liberty was to end. I went back a different person than when I left. I was "marked" for life with the external tattoo but "changed" for what Jesus did in my heart that night, my first liberty in San Diego. That tattoo gave me many opportunities to share what happened in my life when there were those who ask "...I didn't think Christians were supposed to get a tattoo?" My reply was that I still had the bandage on my arm when I got things right with the Lord and rededicated my life to Him. I did attend the youth services at the church while I was being transferred. My Mom? She was disappointed but

still let me come home!

## Chapter Thirteen

### **My Life at Sea**

The Korean Conflict had been going on by now about 3 months and sailors were being stationed aboard ships as fast as they could get them ready to go, or re-commissioned. Many had been put into the “moth ball” fleet, meaning they were out of commission following WWII. Obviously when assignments were being given out we were all anxious to know which ship we would be assigned to.

When I received my orders, along with several others, we had been assigned to the USS Henry W. Tucker DDR 875 a destroyer radar ship. **(Let’s insert a picture of it here)**. I do not recall how many officers and enlisted crew members were stationed on board. We were taken by bus to the Naval Receiving Station where ships were brought in and tied up to the dock and supplies were loaded on. Ammunition was loaded as well. Having never been on a ship before and totally a new experience I was apprehensive as to what was about to take place. I reported for duty, giving my naval documents that were sealed with a wax Navy seal to the Officer of the Day and was assigned to the “deck force” and was escorted to the deck division, where I was assigned my bunk and storage locker. The bunks were 5 high with the two bottom bunks held up out of the way with two supporting chains so sailors would have a place to sit while preparing for bed, or dressing for duty or just to relax.

On board a ship as small as the Tucker, a person soon loses their privacy very soon. As the showers are open in the ‘head’ (toilet or restrooms). The urinal is a long trough with water running all the time for flushing and there were no toilet “stools” but simply a bench type with water running for flushing as well. There were no dividers so you were in the open all the time. Like I said you lose all sense of privacy.

Being assigned to the Deck force, one of the duties was to stand guard down on the dock to observe and protect as the supplies were being loaded and the ammo loaded as well. It was a 4 hour period in which we walk our post in a military manner with a “live” weapon and were to challenge anybody who approached asking for their identification and their seeking approval to board the ship.

On one particular day, I walked mine while I had a fever. I did not know why so I went to sick bay after completing my watch. The corpsman checked my temperature and decided I needed to be sent to the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego. They had me pack all of my gear in my duffle bag and took me to the hospital. I do not recall how I got there, who took me there, and even checking into the hospital. Following the exam it was determined that I had a case of the Measles and would be confined for at least 10 days.

Well, during that ten days, the USS Tucker completed loading supplies and departed for Korea, with the first stop being in Honolulu, Hawaii. All of my medical records, my pay records and some of my navy clothes were in the laundry. I never saw my clothes again. And remained at the hospital for 6 weeks on temporary duty doing very little. It was during this time that I made my way to the Mother Layne’s Hospitality Home located on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in San Diego. One thing that is outstanding in my mind is that I had the sum of \$.52 cents to my name, which I put \$.50 in church offering and \$.02 to weigh myself on pay scales, and no pay records. I did not know what to do and it took them over 2 months to for my pay records to “catch up” with me at my new duty station so I could get paid.

I believe God worked in His mysterious ways to perform His way in my life. He choose to use Measles to get the job done and onto another ship. The Tucker was hit by enemy fire at least twice that I know of. During the few weeks I was on the Tucker, we did our sea trials off the coast of San Diego, which means we went to sea for check out everything to be ready for war. We were escorting an aircraft carrier, which I do not recall its name but witnessed planes taking off and landing and on my occasion I saw one

plane that apparently over shot its landing and went off into the ocean. I believe the pilot was rescued. My battle station was one of the anti aircraft gun turrets. These were stations that were on both the Port and Starboard sides of the ship and front and aft. It was God that had me transferred from the Tucker to the Naval Hospital and then to the Piedmont.

**(Insert picture of the Piedmont)**

I was assigned to the USS Piedmont, a destroyer tender that had San Diego as its home base, again on the deck force. By this time I had gotten back to the Lord before leaving Boot Camp and one afternoon I was chipping paint and had my testament in one hand and a chipping tool in the other trying to witness, when the deck force petty officer came by and chewed me out and made me put the testament away and get to work. I knew I did not want to stay on the deck force for 4 years in the Navy so I applied for a Class "A" Personnel School, which was held in San Diego. We departed San Diego for Sasebo, Japan via Honolulu, Hawaii, where we spent a few days before sailing on to Japan. This trip took us 30 days, not counting the time spent in Hawaii. We had just arrived in Yokohama, Japan before sailing to Sasebo, my orders were there to return to San Diego and go to school. My method of travel was to be my first airplane ride ever.

I left Tokyo on a MATS (Military Air Transport Service) plane, a prop plane not a jet, these were the days before jets! It was quite exciting when flying I saw the shadows on the water and could not figure out what they were when it dawned on me it was the shadows of the clouds. The Navy ships in the water below look like toys. Our first stop was Wake Island, then Honolulu, Hawaii and finally landing in San Diego after 32 hours of flying to begin a 12 week Personnel School. This was a school to train for keeping personnel records rather than a Yeoman's School, which was more correspondence.

School was never one of my favorite places in life and it did not really come easy in the Navy either. I did finish but not at the top nor at the bottom. I'll just say "...somewhere in between" and leave it at that. Upon graduation, I was re-assigned to the USS Piedmont and it was stationed in Sasebo, Japan with Navy destroyers tied up

alongside receiving supplies before returning to Korean Waters. I told the transportation officer that the Piedmont was due back in several months but that did not seem to matter so they shipped me to San Francisco where I boarded the General Anderson, a troop ship. It was loaded with Army soldiers and very few sailors. It seems to me I worked in one of the offices aboard the Anderson during my 30 day trip to Japan to meet up with the Piedmont. This troop ship's sleeping quarters were 6 bunks high with a small passageway in between them, which did not make for an enjoyable trip. Many of these soldiers were headed to Korea and perhaps never make it back home.

When I reported to the Naval Station in Yokohama and got my orders to travel to Sasebo, I discovered it would be train. I do not remember how many days it took, what kind of meals we had, that trip was simply a blur. I did meet up with a young sailor who was assigned to the Piedmont as well and he was from St. Louis, Missouri. Glen Rickerman was a clown of clowns and it did make the trip seem to go faster. When we arrived in Sasebo we did not go directly to the Piedmont, which we could see from the temporary assignment aboard a scroungy ship, which was meant for a "holding station" I think. It was on this ship that I nearly got myself in trouble for refusing an order and I don't even remember what it was, but the officer in charge made a believer out of me. I think we were there several days before finally being transferred to our permanent duty station, the USS Piedmont, AD 17.

## Chapter Fourteen

### **The Chaplains Office**

I was well pleased with my next duty station on the ship because it was to be the Chaplains assistant. I will never know just how this all came about because I thought I would be working in the Personnel Office aboard ship. Now, the Chaplains assistant was supposed to be able to play a piano or organ, which I could not do but the Chaplain could. So on Sunday mornings I would set up the dining hall with curtains, placing the

organ, putting out hymn books and putting up the backdrops that help create a church setting and the Chaplain would do the rest. I did do the bulletins for the service each Sunday. My office was in the ships library, which became my responsibility as well. So, for the next 3 years my job was to work for the Chaplain, keep the library open after working hours, so sailors could check come in, brose and check book in and out, whichever the case may be.

There were about five of us who would meet once a week on Wednesday evenings for a Bible study. We had a Lt JG Officer, a Chief Petty Officer and 3 of us enlisted men who would meet have devotions, pray, read scripture and just support each other. Occasionally we would have a visitor who would drop in to see what was going on. The office is where my I made my “sleeping quarters”. I had a cot I folded up and my bed roll up out of the way, so there was no sleeping in.

According to some, I had a “pud” job. No duty station, no watches to stand, weekend liberties, except for Sunday mornings, when I would report back to the ship early enough to get to worship area set-up for the Catholic Service with the Protestant Service to follow. This would take me about 30 minutes for each. So, I would be on my way back to the Hospitality Home by 1300 hours. I must admit I enjoyed working in the Chaplain’s Office for a little over 3 years.

I suppose many of you have not forgotten the old Underwood typewriters that were not electric. Also this was before correction tape or correction fluid, and for multi copies we used carbon paper. When doing correspondence for the Chaplain it was an original and 5 copies. Chaplain Simon wanted letter-perfect correspondence sent out with his signature on them. While in Pusan Bay, Korea we had foreign ships that tied up alongside of us and one of them had a memorial service for crewmembers that we killed when their ship was hit. On one occasion we had service for 13 men who were killed and it was my duty to type the letters to the parents of these men killed. Not a pleasant task but one that did take me quite a while to do because, again he wanted letter perfect typing done. It was a real pain to erase all carbon copies when a mistake was made. I was not a

perfectionist at typing and had to really concentrate to complete the job.

One of the more enjoyable responsibilities was at Christmas time aboard the Piedmont, we would have a Christmas party for Japanese American orphans. We had 85 of the children, boys and girls. Our ship had appointed a “committee” to buy toys for these 85 children as well as new clothing for each. They had the sizes for the boys and girls and made purchases and brought them back to the ship. So, for a number of weeks before the party it was my job to gift wrap these toys and I believe the clothing marked for the age of the child and for either a boy or a girl.

In our chow hall it was converted to a large Christmas Party area with a Christmas tree and all the gifts under it. But...before the Christmas dinner, each child was taken to the “head” for a shower and their new clothes, then came for dinner followed by Santa Claus coming to present the gifts. It was an afternoon that was well spent and the children went back to the orphanage fed, newly dressed and happy with their new toys. I need to tell you about the 6 year old boy I had for the day. His name was Joey Chan and by the time we parted, I was ready to adopt him. He and I got along quite well. I ignited an almost fire when I wrote home telling them I would like to adopt him. Marge and I had been married 6 months and it just was not meant to be. These children were the product of the American service men who took advantage of Japanese women and produced children the Japanese people did not want. There has never been a Christmas like that one in Sasebo Harbor, Sasebo, Japan.

One of my responsibilities was to arrange tours to the cities where the Americans had bombed with the A-Bomb. Every Saturday for several months I would take reservations for the men who wanted to go and visit, take pictures and have time off of the ship. There were tours of Nagasaki, Japan. The guys always came back with excitement and also mixed emotions as to what had taken place only 5 or 6 years prior to their visit. Do you know that I never made one of those tours...it was always I’ll go on the next one. Well, that next open never did take place. I simply neglected to book myself on one of them.

I must tell you about one telephone call I made one Sunday afternoon from aboard the Piedmont. I knew Carl Seaton was stationed Sendai, at the far north end of Japan at an Army base there. So I called information and got that number and dialed it. I let it ring and ring and was about to give up when a voice pick it up and I asked to speak to Cpl Carl E. Seaton, and the voice said "...this is Carl Seaton and when I identified myself we were both somewhat shocked that I was calling for him and he answers the phone. I do not know how many miles are between this two Japanese cities, but he was on base and I was aboard the Piedmont in Sasebo Harbor. I have no idea how long we talked but a female Japanese voice came on the line saying "...(sorry) soddy please, soddy please and we keep on talking, when I guess we both felt soddy for her and bid our goodbyes. I would say that was quite a coincidence, to say the least.

## Chapter Fifteen

### **Thanksgiving Day**

There had been many things happen my first 16 months in the U.S. Navy. From the time I enlisted, to be inducted, going through boot camp, getting back on track for the Lord. Graduating from basic training and being assigned to the USS Henry W. Tucker, DDR 875. I spent time recuperating from the Measles at the Balboa Naval Hospital getting a 20 day leave (furlough) before going back to the U.S.S. Piedmont that was now in Sasebo, Japan. After Completing "A" Personnel School in San Diego, and following my leave (furlough) I reported in at Treasure Island in San Francisco, California and was ordered to board the U.S.S. General Anderson, a troop ship for Tokyo, Japan. The Piedmont was returning in just 30 days back to San Diego. My transportation was a Japanese train from Tokyo to Sasebo, Japan. I remember very few things about that train ride. I don't even remember how long it took, what we ate, sleeping arrangements, nothing!

**(Insert picture of the MLHM)**

At some point I began going to the Mother Layne's Hospitality Home located on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in San Diego. It was a good place to spend weekends and didn't cost nothing, meals were provided and had a dormitory with bunks for guys to spend the nights. It help earn our keep we would help with "field" day every Saturday morning, cleaning up the living quarters, mowing the grass, buffing the rumpus room tile floor, to spending time in the prayer room for the 24 hour prayer time for the Saturday night and Sunday afternoon vesper services. The "Home" several cars in which we would transport service personnel up from downtown near the YMCA to the "Home" for games, refreshments and a vesper service with a short message one of the sailors would give or Dad Rattan would give. After an altar call and praying with the fellas and gals who came forward for salvation, we would go down for refreshments before taking them back downtown.

On Sunday mornings the guys would all load into the cars and head out to one of the area Assemblies of God Churches for Sunday school and morning worship. In the afternoon, a visiting church would come with its young people (many girls) and they would conduct the afternoon vesper service followed by refreshments, mostly home baked cakes and cookies and cool drinks. Those who needed get back downtown and return to their duty stations would be taken back and the remaining people would then go out to the church who conducted the afternoon service for an evening service. Dad Rattan would always preach and give and altar call and most generally we had sailors who would respond and give their hearts to the lord.

To help get acquainted we would sing a little chorus to the tune of Red River Valley and go around and shake hands with everyone in the service. It goes something like this:

Oh I care not what church you belong too,

Just as long as for Calvary it stands.

So, tonight if your heart is as my heart]

You're my brother so give me your hand."

You must remember, I was a Nazarene sailor and not an Assembly of God one. The churches we went to were Assemblies of God. I knew I did not believe in the Baptism in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. There was one Sunday night in La Jolla Assembly of God in La Jolla, California during the altar time, sailors gathered around me and were praying for me to be filled and I did not believe in it so I just got up and went back to my seat. I did not go to the altar to seek the baptism.

Months passed and we had returned from overseas and winter had set in...such as winter was in Southern California. Many Saturdays and days when the Rattan's and the workers wanted to take time off, they would go to the beach for a cookout and to swim, even though the water was getting much cooler.

Thanksgiving Day, 1951 was one of those days when almost everyone was gone from the "Home". My Thanksgiving Dinner was a Peanut Butter & Jelly sandwich while I was in the rumpus room listening to records of gospel music and there were a couple of guys in the prayer room right below the where I was at. Del Hal and Don Baker were down there having a time of prayer and one of them came up and invited me to come down and join them. Well, I thought there is nothing wrong with spending some time in prayer so I went down and joined them for prayer.

There was a hunger in my heart to draw closer to the Lord and made that my prayer. Part of the prayer was simply "...Lord if this Holy Ghost is for me, then I want it" and opened my heart to him as I knelt, hands raised in worship. We didn't do that in the Nazarene Church at home but it felt ok. My praise turned to a time when the Holy Spirit moved into my life and began to speak through me in a language that I had not learned and wow, what a feeling and a wonderful time in the presence of the Lord.

When Del and Don heard the people upstairs one of them went up and told Mom Rattan "...Howard is speaking in tongues.." and her reply was "...he can't he doesn't believe in them." That was my personal induction into the experience of receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

I wrote home and told my Mom that all I had for Thanksgiving Dinner was a Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwich she felt so sorry for me. But when I explained what had happened that did not really make her that happy either. She always prayed for me I know while I was growing up and when I enlisted in the Navy and she continued to pray for me even though I did not return to the church I pretty much grew up in.

Hopefully, as you read the happenings in my life, you will be able to relate some of these experiences that will encourage you to allow the Lord to use you regardless of your early beginnings. "...can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

## Chapter Sixteen

### **Ditto**

I got to go home on leave for Christmas in 1951 which was a surprise because I had already had leave after completing Personnel School. It was on this leave that I spent some time with the sister of my best friend, Carl. I had been home several days when I went to the Seaton's to see her and we spent the evening look at and reading gospel tracks, which is somewhat of an unusual date, if you can call it that. I didn't even try to kiss her good night when I went home. Marge says "...she would've smacked me if I had tried!" Knowing her now, I believe she would have!

After leaving Sterling, Kansas on the train for San Francisco, I got to thinking, I like her more than I really thought. The more I thought about her the more I felt I would like to ask her to marry me. Remember I knew her as a skinny, freckled faced sister of my best friend but she had a smile and a infectious laugh that was attractive to me. The closer I got to California the more I knew I wanted to ask her to marry me. So, I wrote her a letter and told her I was gonna call her and ask her a question. That I did, and when I told her I love her, all she would say was "...Ditto". I found out later the reason she

said that was her younger brothers were listening in on the conversation and she didn't have nerve to tell me she loved me where they could hear her. I ask her to marry me and she said yes! I don't guess I knew I was supposed to ask her Dad if I could have the hand of his daughter in marriage 'cause I didn't!

However, I learned later when she read my letter about receiving the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, she had some of her friends read the letter as well to be sure because she wasn't going to marry someone who didn't believe in speaking in tongues. If you ask her she will have some memories that I do not have, like she remembers the exact day I called her and ask her to marry me. All I know it was in January, 1952.

The way I knew what size of a ring she wore was when I was home, she was doing dishes and was drying them. Her Mom put her class ring on a string and hung it around my neck. I tried the ring on my little finger and saw where it came to, so when I went to buy her an engagement ring and wedding ring I put them on to fit like her class ring. I visited a jewelry shop in San Diego and found a set that I liked and mailed her, her engagement ring. Ya gotta remember, I have not even kissed this girl I am gonna marry. I am not sure we even held hands and she accepted my proposal.

Along toward the end of May, 1952 when we received our departure date to go back overseas, I applied for another leave and got a 20 day leave. So I called her and ask how soon she could be ready to get married. Probably not a good idea as she had not graduated yet from Lyons High School so this came as a real shocker to her. I told her I would be home around the middle of June so we set a day of June 23<sup>rd</sup>. I believe I arrived in Lyons June 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Chapter Seventeen

### **Hitching Home**

I do know I started my leave at 4:00 p.m. on a Wednesday. I had taken some masking tape and put KANSAS on the side of my suit case and would set I down beside me after I had taken a bus out toward the east part of San Diego and the highway heading east. My first ride took me about 40 miles east of San Diego and a Navy Petty Chief Officer had just gotten discharged and he bought a brand new Buick. He was “hot to trot” so to speak and was headed home to Norman, Oklahoma. He stopped and picked me up and we headed out. He put the pedal to the metal and did not pay attention to the speed limits. He did get stopped once and ticketed but that didn’t slow him down. To help pay my way, I paid for every other tank of gas. I am not sure when we arrived in Norman but he let me out and I was headed north on highway 81. My suitcase still said KANSAS on it. My next ride took me to Wichita, Kansas. I then changed the lettering to read LYONS.

Then I got a ride to Hutchinson, Kansas and finally a ride into Lyons, arriving at my folks at about 6:30 a.m. Friday morning. I called Marge she asked where I was at and I told her I was out at the folks and she didn’t believe me. I had made the trip faster than the bus or train could have made it. From 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday to 6:30 a.m. on Friday. That probably was somewhat of a record time for hitch hiking across the country. Love makes a fella do strange things, even wanting to marry a girl he has never kissed but had known for many years.

I stayed in my Sailor uniform all the way because during the Korean Conflict people were eager to help those who were serving their country. In my high school days we would hitchhike to Hutch many times and I had hitched hiked to Salina to enlist in the U.S. Navy so it was not new nor was I afraid of what might happen.

It was the most economical way for a sailor to travel, who was preparing to get married in a few days to the one he loved!

## Chapter Eighteen

## The Wedding

(Let's insert picture of melting candles)

With the news of me coming on leave reached her and we decided we had the time to get married plans were set in motion fast. I mean fast. The twenty day leave include the travel time to get home and then return to San Diego. Travel time would take about 5 days and we figured we be ready in 10 days and have about 5 days home before leaving

We had to buy our wedding license, make arrangements to talk with our Pastor and set the date. Marge had to find a wedding dress to borrow and her attendants needed to find dresses they felt would be adequate for a wedding. All I had was my Navy uniforms and for some reason I did not want to get married in my "dress blues", it would have been ok, but I still did not want to wear it. So, I went shopping for a suit to wear.

I had bought only one other suit in my whole life and it was for graduation and I had given it to my brother-in-law. I looked at suits at Lantz Clothing Store in Lyons, which by the way was the only store that carried suits for men. For whatever reason I bought a light gray flannel suit, white shirt and a red tie for my wedding day. Marge did find a wedding dress she could borrow and all seemed to be going well UNTIL we ask Pop Seaton to escort her down the aisle, something that he was not about to do and almost didn't but finally did agree but not without some intense begging.

Our pastor had already talked with Marge about marriage and he needed to talk with us both and did but I don't recall to much of what he had to say. He was about 8 years older than the both of us. The lesson about the "birds and the bees" came to me just before our wedding. My brother n law, Elmer took me for a short ride to discuss some of the birth control methods. I am glad because I had no idea about how to approach the

sexual issue in our upcoming marriage. Much later, I mean years later, Marge told me that her Mom had written her a letter after we had returned to San Diego and apparently talked about sex and Marge was too embarrassed to have me read it so she hid one page from the letter and never told me about it. I still do not know what her Mom put in that letter that she was embarrassed to show me. But apparently we gained enough knowledge to make through our early years of together, however that is still questionable!

Now back to the wedding. Since the Assembly of God Church had only a basement for its sanctuary and would not be adequate to hold the people we had invited we asked the Pastor of the Church of the Nazarene if we could have the wedding in their church and he agreed. However, Saturday or Sunday did not seem to be good dates because of the clean up time required to get the church ready for Sunday services. So, we decided on a Monday wedding. Someone said they had never heard of anyone getting married on a Monday...well we did and glad we did because we did have time to clean up the church the day following our wedding. Believe it or not, I do not believe we even had a rehearsal! Plus there was no pastoral counseling session for the two of us??

In Kansas the weather in June can be extremely hot. It is harvest time there which brings hot winds and with many homes and the churches not having air conditioning, large fans placed in front of the congregation in the churches and window fans for home to keep the hot air moving, which was better than no air at all. In the Church that night the temperature was nearing 110 degrees as the people started gathering. We had set 7:00 p.m. for the time and were ready. As the service progressed, the heat continued to rise to the extent that before the ceremony was finished and while our Pastor was praying someone put the candles out because they were melting and bending over because it was so hot.

I was sweating and I think everyone in the wedding party were as well. After Pastor Carr pronounced us as husband and wife, when we turned to face the audience and started to leave, someone stepped on the train of Marge's wedding dress and ripped the back hem out, so she spent part of her time at the reception getting her gown sewed back

up. Since, my best friend was in the Army and in Japan I could not ask him to be my best man, so I had asked my brother-in-law, who gave the pre-marital talk, to be my best man. Marge had her best friends as her attendants in the wedding and for the reception that was held in the basement of the church. It was somewhat cooler down there but was still hot.

While we were down there, someone had taken the candles out of the candelabras, tried to straighten them out and put them in the refrigerator at the parsonage so they would be straight when we went back up stairs to have pictures taken. That was ok because it worked. Someone years later said when they saw how the candles had bowed over due to the heat, that they were bowing in obeisance.

Please do not ask too many questions about our wedding night because I was “green as a gourd” and no one suggested I should plan to take my bride to a hotel or motel for the night to “get acquainted” so when my sister invited us to stay at their house I accepted because it would save us money, which it did but caused us some embarrassment as well because they had 5 children and they were all curious why their Mom and Dad were not sleeping in their own room. And...it did not provide us with the privacy that we really should have had but it was for one night only because I had to get the car back to Lyons so Dad could have it to go to work. Romantic, huh? One night, I am not sure just which one it was, a group from the church had planned a reception party for us, which we went to inspecting of anything that might happen to us during or following it. On our way out, Marge was “captured” by some of her friends and I was by some of the guys from the church, my friends, we either in college or in the military because it was during the Korean Crisis, when we got married.

Have you ever heard of what is called a “shivered”? Well we experienced one because what they did they took us in separate cars to the next town west of Lyons. Chase, Kansas is what you could call a “one-horse” town, with just one main street and it was down this street that they made me push Marge in a wheel barrow with them all cheering as we went. We ended up at a little restaurant on the south edge of the little town and the plan was for every to order what they wanted and we would get to pay the

bill. It backfired on them because they had to pay for their and the owner gave Marge and me ours because it was in celebration of our wedding.

During time we were gone, someone who was in on the mischievousness went up to the Seaton's and went into the bedroom where we were to spend the night and had removed all the gifts that we piled on it, took the covers off and filled the bed with dry cereal, like corn flakes maybe bran flakes but it was re-made and when we unloaded the bed and got ready to go to bed turning the covers back discovered what had been done, we then had a cleanup job to do before we could even go to bed. All in the name of fun!

The next few days were filled with packing the gifts so we could take some of them with us on the train so we could move into an apartment when we arrived in San Diego. This was exciting to Marge because she had never been on a train before. Since there were no trains leaving from Lyons, we left from Sterling, Kansas on a Friday and arriving in San Diego on Sunday afternoon. I must ask again, does this seem very romantic to you? Only you can answer that question. Marge has her opinion of it. Me too, as far as that goes!

## Chapter Nineteen

### **San Diego Here We Come**

Here comes the new bride and her Sailor husband on what was to be her first train ride and what a ride it was to be. The train was loaded to capacity with service men and women besides the general public who were riding the train to some destination headed west. We both had to stand until we got to Dodge City when some seats became available.

One of the stops along the way was in Albuquerque, New Mexico where we found a small Mexican restaurant where we had something to eat and Marge was afraid

the train would leave without us. Years later we tried to find that same little restaurant but couldn't.

Upon our arrival in San Diego we checked into a hotel, and I do not even remember the name of it. But we were both tired from the long trip and I left the room to go get my suit pressed, I think and when I returned I could not get any response for her to open the door. It scared me not knowing what had happened. So, I went down to the desk and had them ring the room and still no answer. I did go back up and keep knocking and it finally woke Marge up, she had gone to sleep, so sound she did not hear me knocking on the door. That was really our first night alone since we had gotten married. I could say "nothing happened" but it was just great to be with my wife.

We did go to church that Sunday evening with the folks from the Hospitality Home and then moved there on Monday. We had to go to the train depot and pick up our boxes of things we had packed. We stayed in one of the guest rooms, really it was just a setting room that had been changed into a small guest room for people who were passing through and needed a place to stay...again not very private. It was not until we rented a small upstairs apartment on "C" street that we were finally home. It had the kitchen, living room and bedroom and bath. We lived there about 6 weeks before I had to leave to go overseas.

Marge left in early August after "her vacation" to return to Lyons to live in an upstairs apartment at her parents' home while I was overseas for 9 months. It was during this time that the people at home keep waiting to see if Marge was going to have a baby and when nothing began to show they realized she wasn't pregnant. While I was gone she worked in a drug store behind the soda fountain to make a little extra money. My military pay was not all that much but was sufficient for us to live on when I got back to San Diego and she would join me there. Still does this seem at all romantic?

## Chapter Twenty

## Typhoon

After we arrived back in Sasebo Harbor, in Sasebo, Japan our days were spent refueling, re-supplying destroyers that were tied up alongside of us with food, all the provision needed for their return to Korean waters. Working in the Chaplains Office, I had to do whatever the Chaplain needed when he was working with the officers and crewmen of these other ships as needed. Again, it was a job that I could never have chosen, other than the Lord providing for me during my time aboard ship.

We would have to go to “sea” ourselves about every 30 to 60 days to keep our own preparedness and readiness for duty should the time ever come. The Piedmont, fondly known as “Doc Piedmont” and its sister ships were called “sitting ducks” because we anchored off shore and provided the services required to maintain their efficiency. On one of these times at sea we were in the Sea of Japan and ran into a typhoon. Our ship was one of the bigger ones. It was 596 feet long and about 40 feet wide and rose 80’ above the water line. And...in this storm we were taking water on our bow and when we did the whole ship would shudder when the “screws” were out of the water and then when the bow would rise up out of the water you could feel the “screws” taking hold.

During this storm all meals were suspended and the chow halls only provided sandwiches and nothing to drink because food trays could not stay on the tables and the table supplies would not stay on either. Sea sickness was hitting most everyone. There was never a time when we were underway that I got sea sick or even near seasick. We had one sailor who would start getting seasick as soon as the “plan of the day” would come out the night before announcing we would weigh anchor at 0600. He was finally transferred to shore duty because he was unable to overcome his seasickness. Fortunately we were not in the typhoon for much more than a day until it passed. Waves that are 30 or 40 feet high can create a real problem for even the larger ships. In the Book of James in the New Testament the writer talks about three things that are difficult to control. James 3:3 “...bits in Horses mouths”, vs. 4 “... *Or take ships as an example. Although they are*

*so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. **The tongue,***” (NIV) and vs. 5 “...the tongue”. And without the rudder the Piedmont or any other ship could not navigate the oceans of the world.

There was one sailor on a destroyer that was in the same storm that had to be transferred to our ship via a cable between the two ships. The destroyer would go bow first into the waves and would be totally submerged and come up out of the wave and it was in this condition that one sailor that needed to be brought on board and put in sick bay. That was quite interesting to watch and to observe the dangerousness of it for both ships and for the sailor being moved.

There were times when we were underway that men who were working on deck, chipping paint, or painting that when one of them would “puke” he would use his hat and just throw it overboard. They also kept saltine crackers nearby to eat to help settle their stomachs. From what I am told it is not a pleasant feeling, that seasickness. For most it does not get over until their ship is in port. In Japan it was Sasebo Harbor and in San Diego it was the San Diego Harbor.

## Chapter Twenty One

### USS Dixie

#### **(Insert Picture of the Dixie)**

While we were overseas several of my friends were announcing they were going to have a baby. One of the sailors was a little guy, not much more than 5’4” and maybe 150 pounds announced his wife was going to have a baby. And...I thought IF that little guy can have a baby how come I can’t or my wife can’t. Arriving home in April of 1953 I was jealous of the fact that his wife was having a baby and mine wasn’t. From the time the Piedmont was welcomed back to San Diego and we were tying up to the dock where a group of sailors and Mom and Dad Rattan were waiting to welcome me home. I don’t recall why but they had me down for duty the weekend of our arrival back and I got

another sailor to trade duty with me so I could be with my wife.

It was not until later on in the fall of 1953 that Marge announced she was pregnant! Wow, it made me feel like a man! If he could do it, I could do it and did it! Why having a baby makes a man feel like a man I'll never know why but it does. During the early months of her having a baby she was quite sick with morning sickness and here was nothing I could do to help her. Time was nearing when the Piedmont was due to return to Japan and anyone with 6 months or less to do in the service were being transferred to a new duty station to complete their time in the Navy. So, with the Korean Conflict about over sailors were being discharged 60 days early and that made my discharge to be May 27, 1954 which made is less than 6 months and I was transferred to the USS Dixie, a sister ship to the Piedmont.

My duty station there was different than what I had had on the Piedmont and I was assigned to the Personnel Office and pulled regular duty there meaning that I had to stand watch in whatever rotation my time came up. That meant someone had to be on duty in the PO 24 hours a day, because of the work preparing discharge papers for sailors who were getting out of the Navy. These papers were process and then sent with the member to the Naval Receiving Station for their formal discharge. Very few were re-enlisting and were eager to get out. Including me!

On both ships there were those of us who were Christians and most of the people we worked with knew it. One night I was on duty and was reading my Bible and I do not recall what or where I was reading but apparently I had a look on my face that one of the other sailors on duty ask me what I was reading and why I was looking so depressed, I think were his words. I did not realize it at the time but from his perspective I was not enjoying my Bible reading. So, it is true, people do watch us a Christians.

That reminds me of an occasion on the Piedmont. We had a Machinist Mate First Classman named Wentzel. I was trying to witness to him and he was not interested and declared himself to have been raised a Methodist but he now did not believe in God and

was an Atheist. I tried and tried to witness to him and he would refuse anything I had to say because he did not believe it. I felt very depressed because I was planning on entering Bible school to become a minister and I could not win this guy to the Lord. I failed to realize that it was the Lord's responsibility to save him and mine to love him.

About a week before my discharge, I was transferred to the Naval Receiving Station to be processed out of the Navy. Remember by this time, my wife was quite large with "baby" and was due in the middle of June. And...in the Navy our medical expenses were covered for 30 days after my discharge. Our baby was due around mid June and would push the 30 day period. When I was finally out of the Navy I proceeded to make plans to move to Santa Ana, California to prepare to start Bible College in late August and would go back to San Diego for the weekend and wait for Marge to have our baby. When the baby finally decided it was time for its entrance into the world, it, being a boy, was born on June 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:40 p.m. in the evening and Marge was in the hospital and was dismissed on the last day of our medical coverage. Our baby boy we named Larry Wayne Marshall cost us little over \$8.00.

## Chapter Twenty Two

### **My Credentials**

Mother Layne's Hospitality Home for Servicemen was established in 1941. As a matter a fact the first service was on the Sunday Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese. Mrs. Layne and her husband had a burden for service personnel and purchased a home on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street in San Diego and located Rev. and Mrs. Irvin L. Rattan and invited them to be the directors of the "Home". And...their motto was "*Your Home Away from Home*" and it truly was for literally 100,000's of men and women who passed through the doors of the "Home".

The Rattan's soon became known to many as Mom and Dad to the regulars who attended and became a part of the ministry to our nation's young men and women who

were in the armed forces. One of the employee's was the cook. Her name was Margaret Hall and this dear lady never did get married and was always being kidded about finding her man. She and volunteer helps provided meals for the workers who stayed there providing help to the Rattan's. Dad Rattan was ordained with the Assemblies of God and it was through his godly living and his consistent teaching that many of the "fellas" felt the call into the ministry.

Dad Rattan conducted a Wednesday night Bible study at which he required us to memorize scriptures that would help us in witnessing and winning souls for the Lord. Dad help mentor so many and lead them, teaching them and it was Mom Rattan who taught many of us how to conduct a song service and lead in worship. We were required to spend time in the prayer room every weekend when we would have our 24 hours of prayer for the services that were to be held. We were rewarded with many coming to know the Lord Jesus as their personal Savior.

Over the years, beginning with the WWII years, the people from the "Home" would go to area churches for weekend services. Dad Rattan would preach the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services, but it was the guys who would do the preaching at the youth services on Saturday nights. We took weekend trips to Los Angeles, Long Beach, Santa Ana, El Centro, El Cajon, Chino out in the desert. It was on these trips that as young preachers we were able to "try our wings" so to speak at preaching. I sensed the Lord was leading me into the ministry and in February 1954 I went with the Rattan's and the other guys who were applying for the Exhorter's Papers to I believe one of the District Councils. We filled out our applications and upon the recommendation of Dad Rattan we were issued our first papers to preach. Then they were called Exhorter's License.

One Sunday night I decided to visit a church that was not an Assemblies of God Church and was some Tabernacle located in East San Diego. I went by myself and had my Thompson Chain Bible with me when I went in. The service was in progress and one of the men came back to me and ask if I was a minister. I swallowed and told him yes and he proceeded to invite me to the platform and suggested I preach, which I agreed to.

As the service progressed, they sang, they prayed, the band played, they sang some more and the man leaned over to me and told me I could preach whenever I wanted too. I told him “No, you tell me when you want me to preach.” which he did a short while later. I do remember the text I used was Proverbs 29:1 “...***He, that being often reprovved hardened his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.***” (KJV) I have no idea how long I preached, if we call it that, but I preached about people who are stiff necked and rebellious how they would be destroyed without any remedy if they did not repent. Following the service, one of the people told me “...we believe here that we can stop the preacher anytime and anywhere in his message if we disagree and have a question.” There was a sudden burst of thankfulness went through my mind because no one took that privilege that night. That, my friends, was my introduction into the ministry away from the “Home” and out from under the tutorage of Dad Rattan! I shall ever be thankful for that man who had such a love for people and their spiritual well fare and the example that he and his wife, Bertha Mae Leeds Haven Rattan made on my life!

To my knowledge there is no record as to how many pastors, evangelists, missionaries, Bible school professors, entered the ministry as a result of being mentored at the “Home Away from Home” for men and women in the military. I hesitate to mention names but during the era Marge and I were involved there, we know of a Bible College professor; a Navy Chaplain who has written several books along with his wife. Many pastors who have retired and some still pasturing, along with many who have gone on to their eternal reward and grand reunion with the Rattans. It gives us an incentive to “Earnestly contend for the faith” which was the motto to gain entrance into the locker room for members only at the “Home”. That will be a grand reunion day for all of the former men and women who were a part of the Hospitality Home in San Diego. Following the death of Mom Rattan, the “Home” was officially closed in about 1975 or there about. Continuously open for almost 35 years.

## Chapter Twenty Three

## Bible College

It seems like most of the guys and gals who left the Home following their discharges were led to the Southern California Bible College located in Costa Mesa, California. I enrolled for the fall semester of 1954 and moved Marge and my new son into a small apartment in Santa Ana, which is very close to the college and I found a job as a shoe salesman for Barber's Shoe store. I worked there through Christmas of 1954 and as the first semester was nearing a close I was informed that my boss's son was being discharged from the Navy and would be returning to work in the store which relieved me of a job. When I learned of this taking place I went home and ask Marge what she thought about us moving to Springfield, Missouri for me to transfer to Central Bible Institute there? I am not sure of what her reaction was but we agreed that we would make the move.

We were leaving some wonderful friends behind. I enjoyed the classes I was taking and was looking forward to the spring semester but that all changed. I need to share about one couple who befriended all of us college students and families. Ollie Harden and his wife Flora lived in the area as well. Ollie would visit the city market and periodically would buy produce in bulk form and then proceed to distribute items to his college friends. I remember he bought a 100 pounds of potatoes and gave us all as much as we needed. Another time he bought a "lug" of grapes and did the same with them. It was Ollie that said before he ever got married "...If I can find a woman who will love me like I love me I will marry her." Well he found such a lady and she not only loved him but she loved the Lord and Ollie ended up becoming a professor. He is one example of the kind of people the Hospitality Home produced under the leadership of the Holy Spirit! There is nothing more important than an example of righteous and holy living!

After Christmas Marge and I made our plans to move to Springfield without telling our parents what we were planning. We loaded our few belongings into our 1948 Plymouth, that I had just washed and had nice and clean for the move. The day we left Costa Mesa it was raining and it rained all the way on us until we were out of

California...so much for a clean car. We were traveling with a small baby less than a year old, with the trunk and back seat full and only the front seat for the three of us. But...we were young, carefree so to speak and adventurous knowing the Lord would provide for us.

We did make a stop in Phoenix, Arizona to spend the night with an Aunt and Uncle of mine. Aunt Pauline and Uncle Robert. We enjoyed stopping there on a number of occasions. When we were ready to leave there the weather forecast was for snow in the mountains the route we were planning to take. When we got to Globe, Arizona, we were advised to take the southern route which would be a little farther but I guess I decided I knew best and took the mountain highway. We made good progress until we got to Salt River Canyon and started up the eastern side climbing at the time when it finally began to snow. Snow was nothing unusual for us Kansans, so we traveled on until I had to stop to put chains on the car. I had never put chains on before but I thought I knew how to do it. I laid the chains out and had Marge to let the car roll forward just a little bit but instead it kept rolling and scared her and me so she hurriedly laid Larry in the seat and she moved to the driver's side where she could put on the brakes and cried out "Jesus" and the car stopped. Well, I proceeded to get the chains on the car and while driving I kept hearing something hitting the back side of the car. We stopped in Springerville for gas. By now it was about 2:00 a.m. and we were tired. I was pumping gas and the gas was going onto the ground. The noise I heard was the tire chain hitting the gas tank spout and knocked it loose.

We decided to try and find a room which we did and I have forgotten just how much it was but the next morning I had the service station worker "rig" up a hose so we could continue to put gas in the tank without loosing any on the ground. With that we were on our way again not experiencing any difficulty until we arrived in Great Bend, Kansas and were out of money. We only had 30 miles to go to get to Lyons. Now what? This is where another miracle took place.

One of the last things I did when loading trailer in Costa Mesa was pour some small change we had been collecting in a ceramic “bull” we had purchased in Tijuana, Old Mexico that had gotten broken so I rinsed out a gallon root beer jug and poured the money into the jug and had pushed it up under the tarp that covered our things in the trailer we had rented.

The miracle was that when we arrived in Great Bend, the weather was freezing, as well as it had been enroute across Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. I went back to the trailer to get the jug out and get some money to pay for a couple of gallons of gas to get us home. The jug had slipped out from under the tarp and had caught the neck of the jug in the “V” shape of the rope I had used to tie down the tarp. The lid had come off of the jug and the money was still in the jug. Frozen in place because there was moisture from when I washed it out. I took the jug inside and let it thaw out enough to shake out money enough to buy two gallons of gas at \$.16 cents a gallon! Now, was that a miracle of God taking of two reckless kids and a small baby. What was the reaction of our parents when we arrived? Shock! They had no idea we were moving and on our way to Springfield, Missouri.

We did have another problem. We ran out of money and did not want to ask our parents to borrow some. When we moved from San Diego to Santa Ana the couple who rented our little apartment in San Diego agreed to pay the balance of rent for the month which was about \$45.00. We had written them and requested if they could possibly pay us to send it to us in Lyons. Time was running out and the day before or the day we were to leave their check came and it provided us with enough to make it to CBI, locate an apartment on campus and buy a small amount of food. We were able to make it until my government check arrived. We found the Lord faithful in providing for us throughout that transition. I have not mentioned that we had \$50.00 cash to make that move with after renting the trailer, washing the car and buying gas as we left, senseless I know, but we needed a clean car to start our long trip home in the middle of winter!

I enrolled at CBI and began classes. Found a job at another shoe store making

\$.75 cents an hour, but this one was a shoe warehouse. Hugh Williams Shoe Store and I worked in the afternoons, studied in the evenings attended class in the mornings. Our apartment did not have a refrigerator but it was winter so we could keep our things cold by putting them in the window. But...we knew we need to have one so went looking. We were too broke to buy a used one because they wanted the full amount, so we went to Sears, Roebuck and Company and bought a new one with no money down and made monthly payments to pay for it, which did take a number of years. We had a new frig and nothing to put in it. We did buy a few groceries and 3 pounds of hamburger meat that Marge would divide up on smaller packages which we froze in our new frig. She would add a little meat to whatever main dish we had. If it was potatoes, she added meat. If corn, she added meat. And...we bought milk to keep in it as well until we had my government checks coming and my check from the company I worked for. Every little bit did help. Marge was very patient and understanding to live with me in such meager surroundings. It was several months before my GI bill checks started arriving.

I took a pretty heavy load and as a result my grades were not the best and when the semester ended, I went looking for a church to pastor. After all, Jesus was coming soon and I needed to get to work pasturing. I contacted the Kansas District Council and our superintendent, Bro. Claude Utley directed me to a church in Harper, Kansas who was in need of a pastor. I do not recall whether I went there appointed or if I did indeed try out and the congregation voted. The group was small and met in a store building in downtown, Harper. We did driver down look over the “situation” and I believe “tried out” in the services and felt this is what the Lord would have us do so I called our superintendent and gave him our decision. Believe me “it was truly an opportunity!”

## Chapter Twenty Four

### **Pastoral Ministry begins...**

(Insert picture of Store– Front Church) **Harper, Kansas**

If you were to take out your map, you will find Harper is located in South central Kansas about 30 miles north of the Oklahoma boarder. Highway 14 runs north and south on the west edge of town and highway 160 runs east and west on the south edge of Harper. Until our District Superintendent, Rev. Claude J. Utley told me about the opportunity that existed there, I had never heard of the town and had no idea what the church was like before my wife and our son, Larry moved there.

When we moved from California to Missouri to finish my freshman year in Bible College we had no intention of beginning our pasturing experience when the semester was over. It would seem that due to the work load at the shoe warehouse/shipping company, the 18 hours I was carrying and we were working with the youth at North side Assembly of God and my grades were not all the best plus there was a sense in the urgency of Jesus coming back and I needed to get to pasturing.

What we discovered when we arrived in Harper was that the church was meeting in a vacant store building downtown and had been without a pastor and had become what was called then a “burnt over field”. Marge and I did not know very much about pasturing but we moved our little family into their two bedroom parsonage, furnished with hand-me-down furniture, except remember we did have a new Sears Roebuck refrigerator. I do not believe there was a level place anywhere in the “mason” I moved my family into. It was all the church had and was in desperate need of repairs and little or no money to do them.

Our “sanctuary” had a few old wooden benches, a platform that had a railing type banister around the platform. Lights hung down from the ceiling and curtains were on the large plate glass windows. There was an old upright piano that Marge played for us during our worship services. And...I suppose we had about 30 people, with several young people who loved the Lord. Sunday school space was divided by a sheet type material stretched on a wire from wall to wall.

Larry, our son, was at the crawling and toddler stage in his young life and the kids

(young people) enjoyed taking care of him. One Sunday during the service he crawled away from them and made his way to the platform but trying to crawl through the spaces on the railing he got his head stuck. Well, that caused a little excitement in trying to get his head turned to get him out and when we did we continued with the service.

I do not recall just how long we had been pasturing there, when we got a letter informing us that the building had been sold and we need to find another place to worship. When I contacted the Kansas District of the Assemblies of God, I was informed that there was a portable tabernacle at the camp grounds that we could have if we would come and get it.

Remember, we didn't have any money so when we began to make plans to erect the building on the church property next to the parsonage, by faith! We measured out the size of the building and some men, I have no idea who all, came and helped us for the forms and footings and ready the floor area for concrete. God was good in that the concrete company donated the concrete for the forms and the floor and even provided the anchor bolts to be put in when the foundation was poured. No plans were to included any plumbing for restrooms, or running water in the building, as we thought people could go over to the parsonage and used the bathroom there and/or get drinks of water.

We did get help in moving the 4X8X8 sections for the walls and I do not believe there were any rafters or decking for the roof, no windows or doors, no electrical fixtures so we had to make arrangements as we went to take care of each of these items. As the time drew near to when we had to move, we had the building enclosed but not painted on the outside. It was simply a "one room" church. We announced dedication services and our Supt. Utley came to preach the dedication message and dedicate the building we had painted white and had block lettering on the front "Assembly of God".

We did have a couple of revival services. One with Avis Reynolds an evangelist from Wichita and one with Bro. John Davis, who was pastor of the Assembly in Larned, Kansas and he preached a 3 week revival on the tabernacle. I have no records concerning

attendance, people who were saved or baptized with the Holy Spirit but we did enjoy the presence of the Lord.

By this time Larry was getting around pretty good. He wanted to be daddy's little helper and one day Marge found him at the top of the ladder that was leaning against the church. He had a hammer in one hand ready to go to work. It wasn't long until he found himself on a "leash" to keep him from running off. Some people thought it was cruel but it worked.

During our 11 months pasturing the church our income averaged about \$18.00 a week. Not too much but with a couple of ladies who came to our aide were mightily used of he Lord to help meet our needs. Sis. Ethel Yoder, owned and operated the local laundry and she would pay her bills each week and then buy groceries for the pastor and her family. On occasion she would stop at the bakery and buy us pineapple Danish rolls, which were always thoroughly enjoyed. I do not recall the lady, but she would store watermelons in her storm cellar and during the winter would make watermelon preserves, which she shared with us. For some reason, during this time my wife became pregnant with our second child. We were anxious and looked forward to another baby in our household.

It was nearing the end of time in Harper, as I had resigned. The final service was a funeral for one of our little S.S. girls, who came when one of our families. This family lived across from the city park, this little 3 year old, who was following her older brothers and sisters. She darted into the street and was hit by a car and killed instantly. When the news came to us, we had already made our move and had come back to conduct the funeral, which was to be my very first one, as a pastor. God was faithful to help us through that difficult time and for the family.

When I had announced to my wife, Marjorie, that I was going to resign the church, she said she wanted to pray about it. So she went to the church and spent some time in prayer and came back to the parsonage and said "ok". She just wanted to be sure

we were doing what the Lord wanted us to do. Thus plans led us back to Mother Layne's Hospitality Home for servicemen to work with them. I felt strongly this is what the Lord would have us do and did. This was to be another move "by faith" as we had to job to go to or a place to live but we did know that our God would provide.

We experienced another miracle on the way out there. We had traveled through the mountains and I was tired driving and we decided it was time for a driver change and Marge would take over the driving. As I pulled over and started to slow down, I looked back and I saw the trailer had come loose but the chains held it to the car. After I stopped, I discovered the nut and washer came loose and fallen off, causing the trailer tongue with the ball still in it to drop down. The miracle was...I went back and picked up the washer and the nut and with the help of a passing motorist, we pulled the trailer back down in place, and put the ball and screwed the washer and nut back on. I had no tools but the driver of the other car did. We had just come over the mountains and it could have happened any place along the way. Again, "our God" provided Himself as our "protector"!

Nearing the end of our trip, the car started giving us problems and I said to myself and maybe to Marge IF we can just make it to the Home we'll be alright. When we pulled up in front of the Hospitality Home the car died and would not start again. Thus ending another experience in knowing that God will take of His own, even when they are making changes that affect their way of living.

### **San Diego, California** – pic of mhh

It was great getting back and meeting Mom and Dad Rattan and the "gang", which had changed in the 2 years we had been away. During that change, we found there was no way in which we would be paid to work there so I set out to find a job, not only a job but a place to live. We were expecting our second baby later in the year so it was important that things happened rather quickly. All the while we were working with the Home during the Saturday and Sunday services, which was always a real joy in seeing

sailors and marines come to know the Lord. I did preach most of the Saturday vesper services and Marge played the piano for the singing.

I did find a job with a new and used furniture company that had just started a local moving company as well. My new bosses were two brothers Bill and Russ Kobush. Nether of them had ever been in the local moving business but Bill would be the manger of the moving portion and Russ would manage the new and used furniture part of their business. I was hired on as a helper and the driver I worked with was a guy by the name of Jim Carr who had experience in the moving business. So for the next year that is how I made our living is helping people move and then deliver furniture purchased after a day of moving.

We moved into a small apartment soon after our arrival in San Diego from people who attended one of the Assembly churches I think. However with a new baby coming we needed something larger. So we found a little bungalow that had 1 bedroom, a living and dining combination and small kitchen and a back porch. It was while living here that I had my first experience of building anything...I built a little picket fence across the front part of our yard to keep Larry at home. The back had a fenced in area to keep him out of the alley. It was comfortable but crowded.

Our daughter, Janet Marie, arrived at our house shortly after her joining our family November 10, 1956 and my Mom came to San Diego from Lyons, Kansas to help Marge with the new baby for about 10 days. It was a pleasure to have her with us. Mom was a woman of routine and she had for years always had my Dad's meal on the table at 5:00 p.m. because he would get off of work at 4:30 and be home to eat. Well, Mom would have a meal ready and Marge would tell her "...Mom we don't know when Howard will be home because he never knows how long a job will be or what his boss will have to do after a local move" which was true. I would most generally have food to warm up after I got home...BMO (before microwave ovens).

We were told that my boss, Bill Kobush had been in the Army and when he was

discharged he supposedly sold his duffel bag with contents and started buying things to resell. This led him to buying used furniture. Eventually this led him to rent space to open a used furniture store on University Ave., followed by renting space across the street and opening a new furniture store. I have no idea how he got the idea to begin a local moving company but he did, which many years later became Kobush-Mayflower Moving Company, finally locating in Lemon Grove, California, in the old Lemon Grove Packing Company building. That is another whole story that I will not get into.

One Sunday night during a service, I believe at Eastside Assembly of God, I was leading song service and Marge was at the piano, when the service was interrupted by a policeman carrying our son, Larry, entered the building. He was little over 2 years of age and had walked out of the church and away from the ones who were taking of him. He was made his way to one of the busiest boulevards in San Diego and may have crossed it when the policeman found him. He was asked his name and all he could say was "...church, church". So the officer started looking for a church that was having a service. The nearest one was the church we were at. So, when he brought him in we were shocked to begin with and then so thankful that the Lord had kept His hand upon him in his wondering.

Whoever was taking care of him did not even miss him. Sounds like the Bible story about Jesus remaining behind in the temple, doesn't it? The difference? Jesus was 12 years old and Larry was just 2 years old.

The spring of 1957, I was beginning to feel I wanted to get back to pasturing but not in California. So, Marge and I made the decision to move back to Kansas and see what church would be open for us to pastor. Leon Seaton, Marge's middle brother decided he wanted to drive to California by himself and help us make the move. This he did. He pulled a rented trailer and I pulled a trailer that her dad and a man in the church in Lyons had built for us to make the initial move a year earlier. Leon not only made the drive but he loan us money to travel on and to make the move. He was to be a senior in high school the next year so it became quite an adventure for him and tremendous help to us.

This move closed the door for any further ministry in California, mainly because we did not want to live and pastor there. Good bye California, hello Kansas!

**(Insert picture of McCracken Church)**

**McCracken, Kansas**

- Ya ever been to McCracken? I often told people you don't find it accidentally, you have to go there on purpose. As a matter a fact it is so small that both "city limit" signs are on the same post! Naw, just kidding. It is a farming community in North central part of the state. After our arrival in Lyons, we stayed in an apartment above Marge's parents. Pop Seaton had remodeled it and had it available for the kids whenever any of them came home. I had made contact with the Kansas District Council Office in Wichita once again about churches that were opened and were in need of a pastor. Once again, our Superintendent spoke of an opportunity that was in the small community. We made contact with the church there, went for a try-out and were voted in as their new pastor.

This congregation was made up of mostly farming families, and the families were related. The Melvin Browns, the Walter Browns, the George Browns all living in and around even a small farming community called Brownell. Over the years the church had once been one of the better churches when it came to supporting its pastor. A large government project in building a dam brought in people who were Christians and who were Assemblies of God people and the church thrived financially and spiritually. However, when the project came to an end many of these folks moved away. Pastors tended to stay there about 2 years and would move on. It was here that I completed my studies for my License to Preach. As well as got my introduction to working in children and youth camps at Woodston Camp, Woodston, Kansas and Wheat State Camp near Augusta, Kansas. These camps generally took place late June and early July.

A number of things took place during our time living and pasturing in McCracken. One afternoon I was mowing grass and a man in a Scout uniform stopped

by just to talk and find out a little about me. My perception was not keen enough to know what he was endeavoring to find out. He was one of the Scout Executives of the Kanza Council of the Boy Scouts of America and he was looking for someone who would work with establishing a scout troop in McCracken. When I told him of my scouting experiences and being an Eagle Scout he took immediate interest and wondered if I would be interested in helping develop a scout troop if he got additional help. After some further conversations and committee was formed to organize a Boy Scout troop for the town. This happened and an excellent group of men and boys went to work and strange as it may seem I do not even recall the number of the troop. I was involved with it for about 18 months until we left town to assume another pastorate.

“member our son, Larry? He thought he owned McCracken at all of age 4 years old. We had a visiting missionary and one afternoon we heard the Catholic Church bell ringing and knew there was no reason it should have been. Except Larry had a friend who lived across the street from the Catholic Church and Larry made his way into the church and found the rope tied to the bell and proceeded to ring it. Embarrassed? We sure were, the Assembly of God pastors son in the Catholic Church ringing their bell.

Another place we don't talk about too much is he was a frequent visitor of the neighborhood bar that was just across the alley from the church. I never went in so I only hope...Larry may be able to finish that line.

Fire! Fire! Fire! We had been to a sectional rally in the southern part of our section, which was about 180 miles away and we had gotten home in the early hours and was all sleeping when we heard a banging on the front door. The postman was on his way to work when he saw the smoke and flames. He was calling...“...if there is anyone in there get out your house is on fire!” I jumped out of bed, in my red and white stripped pajamas woke the sleeping children up and Marge grabbed her housecoat and we went out side to discover that the garage next to the house was on fire and it had caught the kitchen area on fire...

For whatever reason, I went into the kitchen and the glass was popping out from the heat and I pushed the refrigerator out to the front porch while I was still in my p.j.'s. So everyone knew what the preacher's pajamas looked like. Someone did give me a top coat to put on. This was early in January 1958. There was a vacant house in town so folks helped us move our things that were not damaged into it and we lived there while the parsonage was being repaired.

Tornados! Bad and severe weather were natural occurrences for Kansas. To help with our living expenses I applied for a job constructing a new grain elevator. I had never worked as a carpenter or in cement before in my life. I had not built so much as a dog house. The contractor came to me on the first day on the job and the men had built a small building that was to be the construction office. He said "...preacher I want you to hang the door on the building. Well I did and would you believe the door wouldn't close? I think someone else came and finished up what I couldn't finish but I didn't lose my job. I did work with them from the very first day before the ground was even cleared and helped mark off the site for the elevator, helped with the 'slipping' forms that would simply slip up as cement was poured and moved up about 4 feet every 8 hours by hydrolytic pressure. It was an amazing process.

One afternoon one of the summer thunder storms came up producing a tornado. I joined a number of the other workers watching it move along and our boss finally came and sent us home. When I got to the parsonage, I told Marge about there being a tornado west of town so we drove out to see it, as well as watching them overhead as they would form in the clouds but never came down. That storm did do some damage but not in McCracken.

I know people are supposed to "take cover" whenever tornado warnings are given...but we were curious!

The church had been there so long and people had their usual sitting places and we knew by the worn places on the floor who sat where. Bro and Sis Gilbert, a dear elderly couple who were such a blessing to my family. These dear retired folks would

put in a quarter into every offering in addition to their regular tithes. Bro. Gilbert had a crooked finger that he told the kids that an Indian had shot him and would hold it up and show them. Every Saturday morning he would come knocking on the door with fresh baked rolls or a pastry his wife had made. Oh, aroma of fresh baked goodies!

I must tell about my “trumpet playing days”. Years before, I had bought a Silver tone trumpet and was teaching myself how to play it. I knew the fingering so I would go to the church and after my studies and sermon preparation I would go in the sanctuary and practice. I do not remember what song but the day arrived that I was ready for my first performance. Marge was at the grand piano, I was at the pulpit. After she played an introduction, I put the trumpet to my lips and blew...and nothing came out but wind...Marge was in hysterics at the keyboard and I thought was going to fall off of the piano bench. Folks, that was my one and only time I ever tried to play that trumpet in public! I know you are disappointed but true!

My final service in McCracken was a funeral service of a lady who had come in from doing her shopping, put her groceries on the counter, laid down on her sofa, had her glasses in her hands folded across her chest and died. We had resigned to assume the pastorate of Crescent Park Assembly of God in Great Bend, Kansas. This was the only funeral I had during the two years residing there.

**(Insert picture of CPA/G Church)**

**Great Bend, Kansas** –

When our friends who were pasturing Crescent Park Assembly of God resigned to take a position in a much larger church in Kansas City, we looked into the possibility of becoming pastor there. We talked with our Sectional Presbyter concerning the church and then made contact with the Official Board and arrangements were made for us to “try out” to become their pastor. It seems to me to be a strange term when a change of a pastorate takes place but that is what the Assemblies of God call it. This we did and we elected in to become their new pastor following my resignation as pastor of

the church in McCracken. Our children were not too happy about making the move because they were leaving their friends there and particularly the George Brown family where they had spent many nights on the farm. George and Dora were almost like a second set of parents for Larry and Janet. Larry was all set to marry their daughter, Ann. He was heart broken when Ann married another “man” from McCracken.

Back to our move from that little farming community to the “city” and into a much smaller house. It was until we found more suitable housing which we did. The church was a building that had been moved in from a farm somewhere near Great Bend and just a large room with a smaller back room that had the rest rooms and a small office or storage area.

It wasn’t long before we realized that I would need to find a job to help supplement our income. The only experience I had was with the local moving company in California and there was a moving company not too far from where we lived. I went down and applied for a job and was hired, as I didn’t really desire to have a full time job but one that would allow me to work a schedule around pastoring. The Company was Davis Van & Storage Company that was an agent for Mayflower Moving Company. That job was ideal for what I needed and did provide me with additional income and exercise as well. I worked as a helper to begin with and then finally became their warehouseman.

Our little one room church had some growth and we felt like we needed to somehow make arrangements for a larger church. It was at this time that we were introduced to a very young contractor who lived in Wichita, Kansas and was barely out of high school. He had started in the construction business as a 14 year old helping an uncle set forms for new housing. He decided “...I can do that” so went into business for himself. As a Christian and attending one of the large churches in Wichita we made contact with him and he agreed to meet with our Board and me to discuss the possibility of building a new church.

The size of church we would need was no big problem as he had added the 3<sup>rd</sup>

floor to the church he was attending and had built the new district office for the Kansas District Council of the Assemblies of God. To finance the building he recommended we meet with the AB Culbertson Bonding Company out of Texas. They would issue bonds in increments of \$500.00 and \$1,000.00 and we were to sell these bonds that would mature in 10 years at the going rate or a little above the going rate of interest. Our goal was to sell \$45,000.00 worth of these bonds.

We did not have too many men or women who had any experience of selling anything, little alone selling people on the idea of buying these investment bonds to help us build our new church. We did fairly well for the first several months and construction was to begin soon. We put our building up for sale and had difficulty of getting it sold, the land cleared and ready for construction.

After the building was sold and moved we needed somewhere to hold our services. We checked into several options and finally ended up renting rooms at the high school until the new building was near enough completed that we could move in, which was delayed due to the fact that we had “bogged“ down in marketing the bonds. Almost out of desperation, our contractor purchased the balance of bonds himself in order for the project to be completed.

What was amazing throughout the whole ordeal was we had to be make payments which totaled \$45.00 a week. Along with the present bills and obligations we had, that became a difficult thing to do, it was at this point that I went to work full time.

A new Marshall joined our household. One of the hazards in the moving business is working with people in their homes packing their very personal possessions at times. I was on a pack job one time when I was packing in the baby’s room and accidentally knocked over a baby powder can and spilled powder...that smelled so good. I went home to told my wife about it...well soon after we found out were going to have another baby to the much delight of our two children, Larry and Janet.

Marge had told them now don’t tell anyone yet about the new baby. Janet could

not contain her excitement so she bounded into the church and announced "...my momma's going to have a baby!" That was ok, the folks were excited along with us. David Wesley Marshall came to become our new resident all because of a can of baby powder that Dad spilled over. He became quite an attraction to the people at Crescent Park Assembly and to his grand parents. So, watch out for things that might inspire you to add to your family!

Not only did we acquire a new baby but sometime during those months we acquired a little black puppy, which we named "Pixie". He was to be a part of our family for many years to the delight and enjoyed of all of us. Pixie was not a large dog but was very gentle with the kids and a joy to have around. One of the semi-retired men who worked for Davis Van Lines built him a dog house, with regular shingles on it. When we made moves later on his house was attached to the tongue of the trailer so it became his "trailer house" and did quite well in it.

Ok, back to the church and some of its activities. Our Sunday School Superintendent, Sis. Hamilton was an extraordinary person. She had such a burden for children and between she had developed quite a puppet ministry. She had "Lambie Pie" and a picket fence she used in telling stories to the children. Not only that, Sis. Hamilton could bake the most wonderful cinnamon rolls you ever put into your mouth.

I believe Marge wrote some of our Christmas programs and Easter productions that the children and young people would present. My wife is a lady of many talents including puppetry. She had quite a "cast" of individuals whom she would develop stories, have skits for the children and we even conducted a number of "Kids Crusades" in the area. Due to our working conditions it limited us in "going on the road" in conducting "Kids Crusades" very far from our home. With her abilities in changing her voice and have fun with the kids (and adults) this went on for a number of years.

It was during my employment with Davis that he was in need of a manager for his Hutchinson, Kansas branch office. My brother-in-law was working in Hutch and I

suggested he contact Mr. Davis and he did and was employed in that office. He worked for about 18 months and parted ways to become an agent for United Van Lines in Ottawa, Kansas. He had learned enough about the moving business that he wanted to get into it. He obtained enough money to rent a house for 3 months, purchase his first moving van and equipment and make a down payment on a small moving company that was for sale. You will hear more about it later in this “An Incredible Journey”.

A few months following our formal dedication of the new church, I resigned and moved to a small community and lived there for several months, all the while working in Great Bend and endeavoring to determine just what the Lord would have us do. Chase, Kansas is just 8 miles west of Lyons so we were able to spend more time with our families who both lived there. It was here that one of our pastor friends in Great Bend learned from his son who was pastoring in the Cincinnati, Ohio area that they were in search for a pastor of a church in Newtown, Ohio a suburb along the Miami River. After making a trip there to visit two different congregations, we felt the Lord would have us accept Newtown Christian Assembly of God and made arrangements to move there.

**(Insert picture of Newtown A/G)**

**Newtown, Ohio -**

After working for Davis Van Lines in Great Bend and needing to get our things moved to Ohio, we had our first commercial move take place. The Ohio District Council of the Assemblies of God had agreed to pay for a portion of the move and we used our trusty little homemade trailer to move there. Upon our arrival we had no place to live or to place our things...and within hours we located a house and had the driver deliver the furniture to it. We felt this was an answer to prayer because to place it in commercial storage would have been more money and we didn't have any of it to spare.

The next 20 months are somewhat a blur, as we began to pastor and become acquainted with the people and learn some of the history of the church we learned their previous pastor had left the church and his family with the organist and trust was hard to

restore in their pastor. The folks were discouraged, disheartened and distraught by it all and we spent our time trying to rebuild what had been destroyed.

Our income was again in need of help. So, I went looking for work. Having experience in the moving business I located a job with a Mayflower agent in an older part Cincinnati, as a helper. It wasn't long until they needed a warehouseman and I was brought in to manage their two warehouses and did so for little over a year. This made it difficult to pastor and do it effectively due to the lack of time working with the people.

One of the things Marge would do, is that she would go down to the church on Saturday afternoons and practice on the organ. She would have the kids all week and needed to get out of the house and she found this to be a time of refreshing for her, as well as developing her skills on the organ. We had some difficult times there due to the strain and pressure of being in a different state and not seeing family. One of the most extreme situations came when her Dad lost his hand in an accident at the Salt Plant there in Lyons. She made a trip home to be with him, though he came through the accident in a miraculous way. Pop Seaton had his own story to tell of God's Amazing Grace to help not only him but for his wife during the traumatic time.

Pop Seaton always worked the night shift so he wouldn't have to get up in the mornings so he could go to bed instead. The night he was injured, and realizing he had lost his hand he directed the people and told them what to do and when to do it. When the ambulance crew came they wanted him to ride in back but he wouldn't. After arriving at the hospital, he was met by his wife, and as they went down the hospital corridor singing "I Don't Know About Tomorrow but I know who hold my hand".(No pun intended) They also were singing "Amazing Grace" together. Pop Seaton signed himself into the hospital and the wonderful miracle is that he did not have to have a blood transfusion at any time. He did not suffer post traumatic pain due to the loss of a limb. Something the doctors could not explain. My father-in-law was a very adaptable person. He devised methods to use a saw, hold a hammer, and the loss of his hand was an inconvenience to him more than a disablement.

Things were not going well at the church and I was becoming more despondent and hard to live with and my family suffered for it. It caused pressure on my whole family and our children suffered for it. What was happening was beyond my control and things deteriorating in the church to the point that I had better make a decision and make it rather quickly.

Preachers kids never have it easy! Who ever said they should be role models to other kids in the church? Both of our older children had some difficult times where we lived in Summerset, an area of the eastern part of Cincinnati. I did not learn until years later that my daughter felt so alone and lonely that she would go hide out in the woods near by just wanting someone to come and find her. As a pastor, I found myself so limited on having time to spend with my kids. I loved each one of them and as a result of my decision to make these moves, these kids were lonesome. For my wife, it was lonesome for her as well. For me? Yes, I was lonesome too, but I had activities to keep me busy? Yes too busy for my wife and for my children. To any parent who may read these words...this is a crime!

You remember my brother-in-law in the moving business in Ottawa, Kansas? Well, I made a call to him and I know it put more pressure on his new moving company but I made decision to return to Kansas and just work for a while and not look for a church to pastor.

Our move took place much before he was ready to hire any additional help but making the move, finding a place to live and going to work for him was another transition that was difficult for my family. It was the grace of our Lord and our God that He brought all of us through it. I did go to work for him and it caused us to "tighten" our belts but our needs were met and we found a good church to become involved in besides being close to my wife's brother and his family. His moving company continued to grow and we all grew emotionally and spiritually through it all. Until...the urge to pastor soon found its way back into my life. I believe we all knew it would happen eventually but we

did not know just when.

One of the funniest things happened when we did find our place to move. Mrs. Williams walked us through the house. Starting in the living room, she told us this is the living room, and continued throughout the whole house, really it was an apartment on one floor. When we were in and company arrived, David took them on a tour of the house and told them what each room was...just like he had heard Mrs. Williams do. So, “little pictures do have big ears!”

**(Insert picture of church)**

**Concordia, Kansas - Bethel (House of God) Assembly of God.**

I do not ever remember having been to or through Concordia before but had been on time on a trip to South Dakota, so really I knew nothing about the city itself. Compared to the towns surrounding it, it was a city located in the North central part of state only 20 miles from the Nebraska border.

When I made my desires known to our District Superintendent, he gave me some information on the church and who I should contact and their telephone number. I followed through with it and agreed on bringing my family and “trying out” to become their new pastor. I don’t know whether it was them who needed a pastor so bad or were we the ones desperate for something to do because we became their next pastor. Once again, we found ourselves in a situation where we needed additional income. So I went looking.

The school district were hiring bus drivers, as do most all school districts every year go through the same routine, filling positions for drivers for their busses. I was hired and for the next 4 ½ years drove the same bus route. It was not always a pleasure but most of the time the children were well behaved. I endeavored to make the route and their time on the bus interesting for them. Each month I let them change seats and I learned later that many of the drivers required them to keep their same seats the whole school year. Boring!

For me it was more interesting because I was able to know the students a little

better. I kept a student who knew how to drive up near the front for an emergency should it ever develop. It never did for what I am thankful. Those were years of watching children grow and mature and for the junior and senior high school students to watch them and listen to them talk about their achievements I found helped pass the time on their ride to and from school.

Our God did continue to make provision for me and my family. Often in ways that we were unaware of. One of our ladies in the church had mailed in a coupon for a \$1.00 bill to be mailed to my wife. When it came in the mail Marge didn't have any idea where it came from...simply sticking it in her purse...and a few days later we were attending a Youth Rally in Beloit, Kansas and when it came time for the offering she put it in not thinking any more about it. It was quite a while later that we received a check from the Kansas District Council for \$100.00 and a note "...no strings attached". God had multiplied that \$1.00 to \$100.00. Romans 8:28 always true!

There were twin boys who rode my bus and my daughter was interested in one of them but never had nerve to talk with him but I think always had a crush on him. I had one of the boys in his shop class make me a paddle that I hung from the opening arm for the door of the bus. One Dad told me I had his permission to use it on Ronnie if he did not obey me. Of course I never had to use it but still have that paddle these 40 years later.

Not only did I drive a school bus but I thought to help Larry make some extra money we would obtain a paper route with the Wichita Eagle. I did this and we had several delivery boys who worked for us. It did not take long before it became my job, as getting up in the morning at 4:30 to pick up the papers and deliver them to the carriers plus caring a route ourselves grew old to him, so for almost a year, I did the paper route, ran the school bus route morning and evening and took some college courses at the Cloud County Community College to work towards an AA degree.

After working these hours everyday, I came in after my bus route one day and

made the suggestion to Marge that I go back to school full time and get a degree to enable me to get a better paying job. Not much was said at that time but sometime later she came in from her job as deputy to the County Clerk and suggested that she enroll in college and work towards her a college degree...what an excellent idea, we agreed and within the week she quit her job, enrolled in college and had the funding from the bank and she was on her way. Her resignation surprised her boss and wondered how long she had been planning on starting back to school. To which Marge responded, this week.

The church was holding its' own and we saw some growth but not too much for another farming community. A few years after arriving in Concordia, I got wind of a group of Christians who were meeting weekly in private homes and having a Bible study and a time of prayer. When I heard about it I thought to myself, "...wait a minute, how come I am not involved in it?" I proceeded to inquire and found out there were Baptists, Wesleyan, Catholic, and a few other believers who had experienced the infilling of the Holy Spirit. When I went the first time, they felt like it was an answer to their prayers and for several years the group met to pray together and worship together. This was all taking place during the Charismatic movement, when leaders and people from all denominations were receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave utterance!

During our Sunday evening services at Bethel Assembly, we would have Sis. Louis Marie, a Catholic nun, who would wear her habit and join us for service. She enjoyed singing and it was not long until she was singing in a trio, she one of our deacons and myself, singing trios during the services. Rather a shocking scene but a wonderful one because was doing great things throughout many major denominations, Believers being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

It was while we were in Concordia and our "Pixie" was getting little older and feeling his age and had slowed down. He was crossing the street and didn't quite make it, and was killed instantly. Janet came running to tell me and we had to bury him and he became only a memory.

Before Marge started to work for the County, she worked as a night waitress at an all night restaurant north of town and across the river. It became quite a strain on her, as we were also caring for foster children at the time. I do not remember just which ones we had but she would try and work all night and then be Mom during the day, while trying to get some sleep as well. She talks about the night she had to assume her Daddy's role of settling things down between some men who had been drinking. Apparently she had had enough and slammed her hand down on the counter and demanded it be quiet. She said they quieted down and no one said a word. That's my Marge!

It was in Concordia that we were introduced to foster care for children. Next door lived a lady who had two children. One was about the age of David, maybe a year older and a small baby less than a year old. We ended up caring for these boys until the little boy was placed in an adoptive home and the older of the two went to live with his Dad in California. One of the babies was a new born. It was Larry who nicknamed her "Charlie Sue". Jennifer was a sweetheart of a baby and we had her almost 6 months and it was very difficult to see her go to her new home. She even took a trip to Six Flags over Texas on one of our vacations. And...we had Chick and Charla, twins for about 6 weeks while their mother recuperated from surgery. Those were the days...

Marge finished her freshman year at CCCC and was ready to continue there but another move was coming up. I announced I was going to resign as pastor and she asked me how come it took me so long 'cause she was ready two years ago. Slow me! We had an auction of most of our things because we had purchased a new mobile home to be moved to the Kansas City, Kansas area since I had gone back to work for Carl, my brother-in-law who had now relocated his moving company to Olathe, Kansas.

**Pasturing on Hold** - Desoto, Kansas became our home for the next few years. It was here that our oldest son decided he had had enough school and joined the U.S. Navy, and took his basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Chicago, Ill. He spent a number of months there graduating from boot camp and entering a Fireman school to

become a fireman apprentice. Details I will not go into but he received his honorable discharge before he was 18 and could have graduated with his class in Concordia had he desired.

Why are we parents so “unbelieving” when it comes to our kids and their injuries? David and one of our neighborhood boys, Tommy were jumping back and forth over some concrete culverts that were being stored across from us. David came in limping and said his ankle hurt. It “looked” ok so for 2 or 3 days he limped around and finally we took him to the doctor and it was cracked...no wonder it hurt...David, I am sorry!!

Janet entered her high school years at Desoto High School and graduated from there, she and her mother graduated the same year. Marge from college and she from high school. David, well he was a grade school student and added to his misfortunes by running into a boat parked on the street where we lived in Edwardsville, split open his forehead and required stitches...again, sorry David! Marge had gone to work for the City of Kansas City, Kansas with the Urban Renewal Department. Me? I was working as a driver for Seaton Van Lines, headquartered out of Olathe, Kansas and Victory Assembly of God in Bonner Spring, Kansas had become our home church.

David had is cornet experience while in grade school. He decided he wanted to learn how to play the cornet. He must have heard about his dad’s experience with the trumpet...reckon? The school had its band and offered lessons and this is what he was gonna do. It was fine for awhile until he got bored with it and continued to carry his trumpet to school for another 6 months but not taking lessons or band. Marge was finishing her college and I was on the road driving a furniture van across country. Life continued at this pace for a number of years.

Being a cross country driver is not the best job for a family man. I believe my family suffered because of it. While I was on one trip and was heading home, I thought to myself, if Carl has another other job besides this one, I will take it. We talked about it and he was in need of a warehouseman as the business was growing and the truck I was

buying he made arrangements to take it back and relieve me of it and I got to stay home instead of traveling across country. We were living in Edwardsville, Kansas which was in the Kansas City, Kansas proper and Marge had to live in the county in which she was employed. We had our mobile home moved there, David transferred to the grade school or middle school near where we lived.

For over 4 ½ years, I would get to preach occasionally in area churches and the “hankering” returned to pastor again. I called our District Superintendent about a church in Kansas City, Kansas and he was not too enthusiastic about it but did give me information about it for me to pursue, which I did. More about that coming up later.

**(Insert Picture of OCA/G)**

### **Oak Cliff Assembly of God Church -**

When we “tried out” to become pastor, it appeared to be my “dream” church. After the business meeting and I was elected as their new pastor, some of the board members and their wives and my family all went to one of the pizza restaurant in the neighboring community of Shawnee. During that time with those folks, I discovered they were folks who enjoyed eating out often and the clothes were just a little “finer” than Marge and I were used to. But...we made the move into a 3 bedroom red brick parsonage, double car garage which was adjacent to the church, which was located on what some called a “cliff” but others would just call it a hill where a part of it was cut away to make room for the double lane traveling up 55<sup>th</sup> Street.

Oak Cliff was the largest church, attendance wise that Marge and I had ever been associated with as pastor. There were people! People who were talented and felt they knew what they would like the church to become and worked with me as their pastor until their children were growing up and our youth group was not growing like they wanted so over a period of several years, one by one they would come to me and tell me they were going to change churches because they wanted their teens in a larger youth group. I was never one to beg or try to entice people to stay IF they sincerely felt they

should move on. It was never easy for me when this took place. We enjoyed the newer facilities that had been constructed a number of years earlier and one of our men who had worked for a Nursery where trees could be purchased, so with his help, we purchased 5 Oak trees and planted them to enhance the name “Oak” Cliff.

The church being situated on the hill and had an incline into the graveled parking lot was difficult to drive onto because going uphill and slowing down to make the turn into the drive with ice and snow on the street created rather dangerous situations for people to negotiate their turning in. To help solve this problem one of our first projects was to asphalt the drive and parking lot as soon as possible. We discovered that we still had the hill to deal with and learned to live with it. More than one Sunday morning several of the men would come early with their snow shovels and we would clear the parking lot of the snow for people to be able to park.

Adult basketball was one of the activities our men and younger guys would play. Our team was called the Oak Cliff Kings, with black and gold uniforms, which did look rather classy. The Kings was a good basketball team, won lots of games and were hard to beat. We had the Bates brothers and a couple of high school all stars who played on the, what I would call a very aggressive bunch of players. These guys played for several years and finally disbanded. I am sure whether it was age or time schedules but they had had their day on the court. I even had a uniform and played briefly in one game, I think, and didn’t even take a shot at the basket. Kinda like playing the trumpet years before!

It was at Oak Cliff that I experienced what I called the “death” of a dream. We labored there for 5 ½ years and wanted nothing more than for this to be my final location to pastor. When on journeys of life we often have things that take place that we cannot explain or find a just cause or reason for it to happen. Over the years the Lord did do some wonderful things. We did see people make their way to the altars, some would stay and then some would go back to the church they grew up in, which is fine. The Lord, according to the scripture added to the church those who were being saved. See Acts 2:47b *“...And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”* We had just wished

more would have stayed with us.

I do not remember us when or what this took place and I do not know whether to call it a vision or just a mental picture, but as I was standing in the foyer and looking out the double glass doors, over the trees below that lined our property, I envisioned the Missouri River Bridge and with the pillars supporting it successfully just what it was designed to do. I saw Oak Cliff Assembly as a bridge and gradually the supports were being removed when people would come to me and say, "...Pastor you are the best pastor we have ever had but...we believe the Lord wants us to move to another church. This eventually led to our attendance sagging and our finances in deep trouble, so I went looking for outside employment to help with our income as I was taking a reduction in salary to help meet the obligations of our church. I did not do this grudgingly but did of necessity.

At one point I did begin driving a school bus again because I felt I could contribute more to the church to help with the financial difficulties that took place resulting from the loss of tithing membership. One of our Board members told me "...Pastor you should not have to do this" (and I didn't disagree) and I believe it was during this time that we applied to the Kansas District for financial assistance. Perhaps I'll share some the details a little later.

During these years at Oak Cliff we had a couple of weddings. Our oldest son married a high school sweetheart he had dated while we lived in Concordia. Then our daughter, Janet married one of the young men she had met while we attended Victory Assembly of God in Bonner Springs, Kansas. Both of these couples moved on with their lives. Larry and his wife moved to Wichita, where he enrolled in a Computer School and his wife worked as a Dental Technician to help support them while he was in school. Janet and her husband made a move to Lakeland, Florida where her husband enrolled in Southeastern Bible College to prepare for the ministry. Janet, having received her Medical Assistant Certificate worked in one of the Blood Plasma Centers in Lakeland to help with their income. David finished high school while I was pasturing there and

Marge was excelling her work with the City of Kansas City, Kansas working with first the Urban Renewal Projects and then in the Personnel Department where she completed her years of employment for the city.

Our foster parent years weren't quite over...as one of David's friends, who was having difficulty living at home and was preparing to "run away". When I learned of this I ask him what his plans were and he told me he was going to move to Joplin, Missouri and work for a former boss when he worked for Pizza Hut in Shawnee during his Senior year in high school. This disturbed me and I suggested IF he was really determined of leave home, then we would open our home for him to live while he finished high school, which he did. He married one of the young ladies in the church at Oak Cliff. He and his bride moved into an apartment in Shawnee and gave us "...two foster grand children" a girl and a boy. During this time with us, he had somewhat of a strained relationship with his parents and younger brother who was still at home. When he left my wife told me "...honey please don't get any more foster kids" and we haven't.

Following of events that transpired, it was necessary for me to resign as Pastor of Oak Cliff. This I did reluctantly, as did our associate pastor who was working with us without pay, he tendered his resignation when I did. Obviously, this meant we would have to move. We looked at purchasing a home in the Kansas City area and found that it was difficult for us to qualify for a housing loan and opted to look into purchasing another manufactured home. When we moved from Concordia, Kansas we did this and found it was "live-able" so went looking and found a company who assisted us in purchasing another new house and a location for us to have it placed. The Lord provided us with the needed finances to make the down payment, so we moved, which also meant that I needed to find a job! Wonder why?

Remember, my years in working for moving companies in California, Ohio, Kansas gave me the confidence to place my applications with several of them and deciding to enter the sales force with Allen's - Mayflower Moving Company located in

Lenexa, Kansas, and once again working for two brothers. Ross and Wayne Allen, had inherited the business from their father. There will be more about the moving business later. I had never been in direct sales before and this provided an opportunity for to learn how to present the services to people who were going to be making a move, whether locally or long distance. This proved to be a challenging experience and particularly since my brother-in-law was now a competitor. I began work for these two men in early 1981 and worked for them until the fall of 1985 when I was approached about becoming children's pastor at the church we were attending.

At this point in this journey, I was not getting any younger and the thought of becoming a children's pastor alarmed somewhat. I'll return to this idea a little later. However, before I leave this matter of pasturing I want to leave a word of encouragement to anyone who may read this, God did not promise us there would be no "pot holes" or "pit falls" on this life's highway of experience, but He did tell us He would never leave us or forsake us. There were some very disheartening things took place in the lives of our children, who had become victims of my idea of successfully becoming a pastor. They suffered from neglect, from a Dad who was "too busy" caring for his flock to notice that the "lambs" in his own fold needed much care and needed him. I must apologize to my children and ask them for forgiveness for "not being there" when they needed me. Not only my children, but for my wife as well. I know she suffered from my neglect but she never complained and to her I must ask her to forgive me for not fulfilling duties as a husband.

Possibly emergency trips such as to Ohio and to Texas could have been avoided had I been there for you. Our youngest son entered the U.S. Navy and was stationed in Orlando, Florida for his basic training but before enlisting he found some rough water in his personal life. Our heavenly Father truly does watch over every one of us, as he did David, that is our David when he made his way back to the Father. Remember me and my busy schedule...I failed to notice his "slippage" in his walk with the Lord but the Lord didn't...because through drawing of the power of the Holy Spirit, David recommitted his life to the Lord and got involved in the activities of our church.

Consequently, throughout much of his Navy days he knew the touch of the Lord's hand upon his life.

During some of the traumatic years my wife wrote an article which appeared in one of the monthly periodicals of the General Council of the Assemblies of God which explains the need of taking caution when children in the pastor's home. I have included the complete article for help anyone to "slow" down and take care your kids!

**(Attach - "Caution, PK ....."**

What I call the "trust factor" not only applies to children in the home but it applies to the parents who must regain the trust of their children offended over the years. When our children have been "betrayed" by their parents, then that trust must be earned back, it should be that way but it is. You may have to lay this book down and go to your kids or to your wife or husband and ask for forgiveness to continue on this trip I am calling "...the Incredible Journey". It happens within the confines of the church as well, whenever trust is lost. Oh, what a job to rebuild that trust and confidence that was lost for whatever reason. A while back I quote the "Scouts Law" and the very first Law is simply "A Scout IS Trustworthy!" Are you? Are we? Am I?

What about the Children's Pastor job being offered? Our pastor, one Sunday night after service asked his wife "...have you ask him yet?" My response was "...ask him what?" To which he replied "...my wife thinks you should be our next children's pastor." So, we made a dinner appointment to meet and discuss the possibility. We discussed some of what would be involved and finally he got to how much my salary would be. I hesitated because it was considerably less than what I had worked up to as a sales representative for Allen's-Mayflower Van Lines. I simply waited to respond and he after a few minutes, he said they would increase that by \$500.00 a year. I told them I would make a decision and let them know on the following Sunday.

After considerable prayer, I tendered my resignation with the moving company and agreed to accept the position of Children's Minister at Northland Cathedral

Assemblies of God Church in Kansas City, Missouri. What I didn't know was the awesomeness of the responsibilities in ministering in a large church. I had not pastored any church larger than 125. Suddenly just staffing the 3 nurseries required over 135 different people to rotate every 3 months, to provide staffing for the pre-school, the elementary school levels with a teacher and an assistant, as well as substitutes for each. The Rainbows, for pre-schoolers, the Missionette Royal Ranger ministries, conduct Children's Church weekly. Plan and conduct teacher's monthly planning and training sessions, attend weekly Staff meetings, plan for the annual children's program in the spring and the children's Christmas program each year. In addition planning and leading a children's revival, a fall family festival, an out door activity for the whole family.

I did this to the best of my ability and to the expense of not spending time with my wife because of the hours needed to provide leadership for the children's department. I did this for almost 2 years and finally coming to the realization that this was a job for a younger minister and not for someone nearing 60 years of age. I was facing possible surgery, we had purchased land to move our house to and it just became to over whelming for me and I resigned, had surgery and waited during my re-cooperating to look for a job again. I did get pretty good at filling out job applications and re-doing my resume'. All the while Marge keeps her job and doing well at it but getting tired. I haven't said anything about her surgeries, her needs to re-cooperate and regain her strength so she could go back to work, have I?

I checked with my former employer, Mr. Ross Allen and he did not have any opening for a sales person, and I was getting to "old" to work loading and unloading trucks, as well as going on pack jobs, so I gave Mr. Carl Seaton with Seaton United Van Lines my resume' and application and was eventually hired on in his sales department, and then worked in marketing and research and did so for almost two years when he had a "cut back" and was required to relieve me of my job. Now what? I applied for unemployment and got it for about 4 months until I found employment once again. And...would you believe it would be with Allen's - Mayflower Van Lines, in the sales department but not in outside sales. I became their Marketing Manager and worked on

securing business, local, long distance, international moving and office and industrial moves. It did keep me as busy as I wanted...until...early retirement became a topic at our house.

(Insert story of Dena, our Angel)

I didn't know what a vacation was because working on a commission related job, if I didn't work then there wasn't any income. When our youngest son was transferred from his duty station in St. Joseph, Missouri, where he, his wife and two children had lived for 3 years, to Charleston, South Carolina, my wife decided she would take 3 weeks of her vacation time and travel with them. I didn't begrudge her for it, 'cause she had earned it! Off they went on their move. I "got" to stay home and work.

However, in less than six months he was offered early retirement and took it. The Navy would pay for their move to where ever they wanted to settle. Guess where? Since his wife, Shannon, spent much of her life in Ketchikan, Alaska, that is where they wanted to move to. My wife? Again, took another 3 weeks and traveled with them to "help" take care of the kids. So, she's gone again on vacation! That is ok, I am still home working while she is off enjoying a fascinating trip to Alaska!

By this time I had semi-retired and working little over 20 hours a week. Her trips were in 1993 and this was now spring of 1995, I went home and told her "...you have had 6 weeks vacation and I have had to stay home. I am going to take 6 weeks and go to Ketchikan, Alaska and then you come up for 2 weeks and we'll fly home together." She agreed and I told my boss what I going to do and retired, bought tickets to Ketchikan, Alaska for a 2 month period and for Marge to return home with me. Her trip in 1993 and mine in 1995 is the beginning of the most "Incredible Journey" we have ever been a part of. All of the events I have written about just led up to this wonderful experience. The Bible lets us know there are things beyond our imagination at times, even here on earth...and an opportunity to "check out" Alaska was just around the corner! Paul, the Apostle wrote to the Corinthian Church these words "...*but just as it is written, "THINGS which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, AND which HAVE not*

*entered the heart of man, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."* I Corinthians 2:9 (NASB)

## Chapter 25

### **The Last Frontier**

**(Insert Picture of Alaska Map or flag)**

Our families are the most important segments in society. Society itself seems to be doing everything possible to “break” it down by fragmentizing what we do. When our children grow up and move out to develop their own lives and life styles it leaves Mom and Dad with the empty nest! Now what? Where do we turn now? Let me tell you something, hopefully we will always have our children and their children and their children around us.

When our youngest son joined the U.S. Navy (to see the world), which he not only did, but found himself a wife in the wonderful Hawaiian Islands. It was during this time that he met up with a gorgeous young lady from Ketchikan, Alaska who “just happened” to be there looking for work because her cousin had invited her to come over. Until David started dating her, writing home about her, and calling about her, his Mom and I realized what was happening in his life and the association or connection with that far away state called Alaska, I am not sure I even knew there was Alaska, didn’t know a whole lot about it, only that it was the newest state added to the United States of America.

Shannon is a beautiful and pretty sharp lady and she filled in one of the “gaps” in her life that we didn’t know about when she went to Hawaii. Shannon relates that at the time she met David she was actually engaged to another guy. The first Sunday she went to church she knew God had told her she was going to marry David, consequently Dave was eager to meet her as well. The Holy Spirit works in ways that astound us. Pastor Yosida whom she had just met that morning came to her after the service and told her that when she shook David’s hand, that God told him that David and she were going to get married. Shannon says that is when God told her too. When she went outside and

told her cousin “God just told me I was going to marry that David guy.” And...her cousin said “I know and it’s going to be in less than a year.” And it was...just 10 months later. You know she broke up with the other guy immediately! How strange it is that beautiful women seem to fall in love with the spotless white Navy uniform and the guy in it! My wife did the same thing!!

The military has a way of relocating its personnel at different times to allow challenging experiences for them. The submarine that David was stationed on was to have a new home port located in Bremerton, Washington. Their second child was born while they were living there. The scenery in the northwest is very much like South East Alaska where Shannon had lived, after a couple of years, we got a surprise call from Dave, asking if we would like to have them move closer to us...of course we agreed and waited for his next duty station...to be somewhere in the Kansas City area! He was to be one of the Navy recruiters for our area...and St. Joseph, Missouri is where he was assigned!

This was a time for us to get better acquainted with our daughter-in-law and having our grand children just 50 miles from us seemed surreal to us. At times it could have been 500 or 5,000 miles because of his busy schedule, as well as ours kept us from seeing each other as much as we had desired. It recruiting duty is a job of “selling” young men and women to enlist in the U.S. Navy, proving more challenging than expected. David was very successful and was honored in his abilities and decided to re-enlist, maybe talking himself into it.

He and Shannon were hoping to be transferred to the Northeast area, like Seattle but instead of heading towards Alaska their next move took them to Charlotte, South Carolina via side trips Florida to have fun at Disney World and guess who went with them? Grandma Marshall! She was to supposedly “help” with the grandchildren. I guess she did but found it a good way to “travel” around there in a wheel chair with the kiddies catching a ride as Sailor Dad pushed them along. This was a fun time for the whole family, as Grandma Snider got to come along to do this fun stuff with her grand kids and

daughter and son-in-law. Remember Marge is on “vacation” and Howard is home working. How sad?? Not really because his day was coming.

In the military there are 3 ways of doing things: The right way, the wrong way and then there is the Navy way! After arriving at the Submarine base in South Carolina and the U.S. Navy making some adjustments which included changing assignments and responsibilities, they began offering honorable discharges for personnel who met certain criteria, which I do not know anything about, so after prayer by our son and his family, his folks and her folks, he made the decision to be discharged from the U.S. Navy, which he loved in a special way. Upon which they (the government) would pay for his relocation to where ever he desired. With no desire to return to Kansas or Missouri it was without a doubt to Ketchikan, Alaska is where they felt they would prefer to settle down.

Oh, another vacation?? Yep, another 3 week vacation to travel along to help “care for the grandchildren”? You got it...grandma had her bags packed so when the discharged Navy family came through Kansas City she would be ready to travel. It was to be relaxed trip of almost 4,000 miles but when they check on the ferry schedule their travel time was greatly reduced and it was hurried trip but a first time Alaska Marine Line ferry ride for them all as a family. Oh, without any mishaps they did make it to Bellingham, Washington and boarded the ferry! What a trip, crossing the United States, driving through British Columbia, Canada and arriving in Ketchikan, Alaska anticipating just what the Lord would do next?

When I purchased my tickets for my “long waited” vacation I was excited because my kids were excited about living in Alaska! I had flown before but this was to be different, leaving Kansas City, Missouri, flying to Nashville, Tennessee then to Seattle, Washington, seemed a bit unusual. I am was so thrilled to be flying in the daylight hours over the western coast lines of Canada, over the snow covered mountains, not a cloudless sky but the sun shining, that I later learned was quite unusual for Southeast Alaska but the approach to the air terminal on the island across from Ketchikan, was wonderful with the tall evergreen trees, lakes situated in the tops of the

mountains, nothing like it in Kansas!

I was fascinated by all of the small single engine float planes coming and going at all hours of the day, rain or sunshine, low hanging clouds or fog, it really didn't matter. The huge, sparkling cruise ships moored, towering high above the wooden docks, dwarfing souvenir and gift shops and the tourists from all over the world traveling to see the "first" city in Alaska. From the living room window where our children lived I could watch the ships approaching, listening to their announcing "noise" whether it a "horn", certainly not a "bell" but the blast of their, let me call it their "fog horn" and then watch people scurrying like a bunch of ants into their hole, not wanting to miss the "boat"!

Over the years, I have worked in the moving business and soon learned of the things all movers try to avoid are stair steps. Houses were built on the sides of the hills, attached to one side of a cliff or mountain and then have "stilts" with their deck built out over nothing but space! I climbed the steps to one such residence and it was 102 steps just to the porch and then I didn't climb the steps up the porch and into the house. That my friend is a mover's worst night mare! I cannot even imagine snowfall, or the ice that collects on them during the winter and how slippery they must be when it rains, as it does almost every day in Ketchikan and in Southeast Alaska!

In Kansas we could give directions by the number of "blocks" to travel to make a turn and to find what you were looking for. In Southeast Alaska that would be impossible because at series of steps with platforms may continue to the street and at the top or bottom you may or may not find the extension of that street. Very confusing and unusual plus fascinating that people found a way to construct their houses, as difficult as it may have been! A portion of the "city Streets" are built over water, not bridges but extended out and built on pylons.

Nature has a way of providing awe inspiring sights. Eagles can be seen soaring, some fighting over salmon! Others high on a perch watching for their next meal, Ravens raid garbage cans for food. In Craig, Alaska one of our friends had put their groceries in

the back of their pickup and had gone into another store. While there the ravens had pecked a whole in a gallon of milk and were busy drinking fresh milk! Foggy conditions did not seem to slow down the float planes flying up and down the bay area, as well as in the rain. It weather didn't seem to stop the planes from flying...oh there were times when it was too bad for them to fly! Hummingbirds were plentiful around where David's family lived. It was fun to watch them "dive bomb" people, or anything that was moving.

My grandson and grand daughter enjoyed walking with me to the plaza where their dad worked. We would walk the mall, and at times would get a treat waiting for him to close down the store and ready to leave for home. Treats were never very big because of the high cost of things there. However, we had fun just watching the many fishing boats, all sizes, all colors and all names. Even one with the name of our grand daughter "Morning Star"! While waiting for their dad to get off work, we would like to beach comb. Not really much beach but most large boulders to create a sea wall but still fun to see what we could find. No bottles with messages from distant places though! It was enjoyable and amazing to watch eagles soaring high above the water and suddenly swoop down to catch a salmon, fly up to a branch in one of the forest trees.

Missionary surprise! Oh, yes I missed my wife and she missed being at the church when our missionary friends from Peru was there. She missed the wonderful fellowship following the service, because Shannon had prepared several different pies, a special cake, and even some chocolate covered peanut butter and Hi Ho crackers that tasted like Reece's Peanut Butter cups! Marge and I have been friends with Lloyd and Rosella Marsh for many years, as they pastured near us when we lived in Concordia, Kansas. Now where was I? Oh, I was talking about my vacation. I did not know there was a place as beautiful as Southeast Alaska. It simply does not compare with the beauty of Kansas! Which simply means the term "beauty" is totally relative to the occasion or the situation! Of recent years Kansas has developed a motto. "Kansas Bigger Than You think" and Kansas does not compare with the size of Alaska!

When Marge arrived we were able to do some sight seeing (all 26 miles of road) in and around Ketchikan. One of the trips we did take was to the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest island in the United States of America and we didn't drive. Prince of Wales Island is located about 45 miles northwest of Ketchikan! We traveled over on one of the Alaska Marine Highway ships to meet Shannon's Mom and her step father-in-law, Gene Merrill and to stay with them for a week. What an enjoyable time we had with them in the village of Klawock! One of the things I found most interesting was beach combing and hiking around the small island where a portion of Klawock is located and was home to the City Hall, the Salvation Army Church and the Klawock Assembly of God which was later named Prince of Peace Assembly of God, the Post Office, the public schools, the city park, the veteran's ball field, the first fish processing plant in Alaska. Among the things I stumbled upon was an abandoned small cabin boat rotting and rusting away. Imagination could take the mind all directions thinking about what adventures and who had taken fishing trips on that boat!

David and Shannon both took time off from their jobs to go with us on the ferry, so we took 2 vehicles, one of them would be for Shannon to leave and be back at work on Monday. David and the children, Marge and I stayed and did the tourist thing. Shannon's Dad, Stan Snider founded the church there in Klawock, and he had led them in a building program to construct a new church. He gave many hours of labor and led them in this project. He had won the hearts of the Tlingt Indian Natives in the village and the city council and they agreed on a 20 year lease of the property. Stan and his crew had almost completed the church and did move in for one service, when he had a heart attack, was flown to Seattle but did not recover and he was ushered into the presence of the Lord! Marge and I never had the privilege of meeting him but did enjoy listening to stories and the local Natives talking about their pastor Stan.

During his ministry there he gained the fame as Stan the garbage man! This was said in honor of the man who ministered to the whole village he had a burden for, for so many years. The City of Klawock honored him by naming the City Park "Stan's Park". It was indeed a tribute to a man who loved the Tlingt and the Haida way of life!

The memorial service was held in the school gym and was filled to capacity by Natives from the neighboring villages and Klawock. David and his brothers-in-law were all in their military uniforms and served as some of the pallbearers. The Native culture there is quite different than in the lower 48...generous in providing for a memorial dinner and memorial monetary gifts.

God knew what He was doing when He created this part of the world and it was very easy to fall in love with and the time, came all too soon to say good bye to our kids and grand kids in Ketchikan! My 6 week trip was up and our two weeks over and Marge had to get back to work. Me? I had already started wondering IF there would be any church that might need to have some help for the summer of 1996. In preparing to leave Klawock, Pastor Smart asked me if I would be available to fill in for him when he would be on vacation in June of 1996. We agreed it would be possible IF I had some assistance with the finances, he assured me their church would help with that, which they did, and our home church in Kansas City assisted as well. When our God puts things into motion, sometimes things move very quickly and soon after getting home and most of our unpacking finished...well...I would have headed back immediately. Knowing how easy it is to get ahead of God, I did slow down and let things happen at His good pleasure, in other words "...let go and let God..." as our daughter keeps saying!

We arrived back in Kansas City, the summer had passed and we had not missed the "heat" at all. Oh, we missed it but not like you think! The coolness of SE Alaska was grandeur, the Tongass Forest, the wild life, including many black bears and the deer that roamed seemingly everywhere. Among the many things our God created was the eagle...almost any time you could look up and see not one but many eagles soaring gently and keeping an "eagle eye" on what food was available for them. We thoroughly enjoyed the beauty, the "smog-less skies", the crystal blue Pacific waters surrounding POWI and were looking forward to making our plans the summer of 1996...IF the Lord would just say "yes"!

## Chapter 26

### Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska

In May 1996, Marge and I had retired and were ready to do some traveling. We have taken many trips around the country and started making plans to drive north to visit our younger son, David, who were living in southeast Alaska. We got out the Road Atlas and began plotting the course, but first we had a granddaughter, Kari Marshall, who was preparing to graduate from high school and we wanted to be present for that occasion, since she was our oldest grandchild. As a matter a fact we left that celebration on the most extended trip we had every taken by car. We traveled in our loaded-down Honda Wagon, with what we thought we'd need for 3-4 months.

The Road Atlas helped more that we thought it would – we took the long way from Kansas to Alaska: the only schedule we had to keep was our reservation for the ferry trip from Prince Rupert, British Colombia, Canada to Ketchikan, Alaska. We had many miles to travel, places and people to visit and were excited about what we felt the Lord had in store for the two of us.

Freedom seems so free! Traveling without limitations, without having to prove who we are or where we were from or where we were going. America truly is the land of the free! However, we did have to show documents when passing through the border between the United States of America and Canada. With most of our travels in the plains of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California, the scenery in most of British Colombia was awesome! What a wonderful privilege that was ours to be able to enjoy the handiwork of our Heavenly Father!

We arrived in Klawock and stayed with David, Shannon, Branin and Halee for a month or so and soon learned of the high cost of living in Alaska, where everything costs more than in Kansas City because of transportation costs, land, sea and air. Then we moved to Hydaburg. Our son was concerned about us going there to live for the summer because of the violence, such as shooting in the streets. In reality it was not too much

different than any other city across the country. We weren't afraid because the Bible says  
“... *And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
Romans 5:20-21 (NASB)

Hydaburg is a Native village of 350 Haida Indians. It's not a reservation, so the Haida Corporation handles things, somewhat similar to a county in Kansas.

The village sits on the southwest end of Prince of Wales Island and about 35 miles from Klawock, with 21 miles of it on a logging road that was mostly pot holes and rocks. It took us about an hour and half to travel that forest road, which we did about once a week. Depending on the weather it could be enjoyable or it could be almost unbearable. Our stay in Hydaburg was very similar to going to a foreign mission field. (Since then the Hydaburg Road has been paved.)

Our arrival there was the day before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and the local residents were in the process of setting up for and getting ready for their celebration. It would include games for the children, the youth and the adults. Their games were very much like those that might be played in the lower 48. Grilled fish of all kinds were served. Deep fried halibut was of our favorite. Marge enjoyed their crab cakes or patties as some were called.

Children were running everywhere. I had taken a gross of skinny balloons and a pump with me and decided I would make “animal” balloons for the children. It was not long until I had some of the older kids making them and we entertained the children while their parents were getting ready for the activities. The highlight of the day was the rubber duck race, benefitting the local EMS group. Hundreds of yellow ducks with numbers on them were held behind a net up the Hydaburg River. People bought numbers and the winning numbers received money prizes. I must admit it was exciting to watch

the ducks float downstream, under the bridge and to the mouth of the river where another net was set to catch the ducks.

I learned many things about living among the Haida Indians. One afternoon, Sandy came to the parsonage door and asked me if I thought \$20.00 was too much for 12 Coho salmon and I told her I had no idea but it seemed like a fair price to me. So, we bought the twelve salmon from Joseph, one of the teenagers who lived nearby, the grandson of one of the elders who attended our church on Sunday nights. But...I told him I do not know anything about cleaning salmon as I had never as much as caught a fish before. Joe proceeded to show me how to cut the head off, cut them open on the bottom side of their bodies, and clean the guts out. (Marge is squeamish so she disappeared into the parsonage to work on the laptop computer she “gave” herself as a retirement gift.)

That afternoon, Sandy and I went down behind the church to the bank of the Hydaburg River, started to clean the salmon. I did the “dirty” work and she washed them down and put them in trash bags to keep in the refrigerator in the church. (Sandy’s husband was an accountant for the Haida Corporation; they were from the Seattle area.)

The following day, we started to prepare them for “jarring” (canning). I had never learned to filet a fish and when I got through with the first one you would never guess that it had been a fish! But... by the 12<sup>th</sup> one I had gotten pretty good about it.

You may be asking how I knew what to do next. Well, when we arrived in Hydaburg it was just after one of the Haida Elders had died. Attending Mr. Peele’s funeral was one of the things we learned about building relationships with the Native people on Prince of Wales Island: whenever possible get involved in the local community. We discovered it opened many doors to the future.

We didn’t have Sunday school and Morning Worship in the way we did in Kansas. We realized that the two churches, Presbyterian and Assembly of God, were not

in competition, so we went to Morning Worship with the Presbyterians. Children's Church was in the afternoon at the Assembly, for any of the children who wanted to come. (We made a flag to display when it was time to come in; of course none of the children had watches, so we would start when they got there) The evening service was at the Assembly and some of the Presbyterians came. I only preached during the evening service; the Presbyterian elders were in charge of the morning service. Marge played their electronic piano and everyone brought a covered dish so we lunched together, because the only café in the village had closed.]

The next Sunday, following the morning service, I asked one of Mr. Peele's daughters how they "jarred" fish. About 3:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon I got a call from her and she said "Pastor, we are putting up fish this afternoon." I asked her what time? She said "3:00 o'clock." I told her as soon as children's church was over I would be up. They showed me how to cut it up into the right size of pieces and how to put the fish in the jar. I was doing it and one of the women stopped me and said "Dad always did it this way" and she showed me, "because he wanted the fish to look good in the jars." I told her, "If your Dad did it that way, I will do it that way." And...that is how I learned to "jar" fish.

Sandy and I borrowed a "pressure cooker." I cut the fish and helped put it in the jars, put the lids on and into the cooker. Believe it or not we did follow the cooking directions and the jars came out wonderful! I think we got her 6 cases of ½ pint jars and we got 5 or 6 cases of pint jars. At a later time while living in Klawock I was jarring I decided to can some halibut fish. When I did, one our Haida friends told me that she didn't know you could do halibut and I told her I didn't know you couldn't. Anyway over the years while living in Alaska I "jarred" salmon, halibut and deer meat. If moose had come our way, I would have done it too!

Wildlife in SE Alaska is abundant! On one occasion we decided to go out to the City Dump," some of the local people call it the Hydaburg "Mall." Halee and Branin were visiting us and wanted to go too, so before we went Halee had to go change clothes.

Grandma told her, “Halee, we’re just going to see the bears!”...well we did go and we did see the bears. One time we went we counted 13 black bears!! I kept our car headed in the right direction for a quick “get-a-way” if needed...black bears are unpredictable!

The Hydaburg Assembly of God Church was right beside the River and the bridge that crosses it. What an exciting place to be when the Salmon began their annual run upriver! Our first experience in seeing this process was right up close. We could watch thousands of them fighting their way up stream. There was a small waterfall adjunct to our yard and seeing the salmon jumping up against the current to the next level is an awesome sight.

The Haida children have played in the River for many years and it was interesting to watch them catch salmon with dip nets, and one little gal could scoop them out with her hand faster than they could catch them with nets. They seemed to delight in killing them on the bridge by stomping them with their feet and then throwing them into our yard. So, every evening or early morning I would take my shovel and scoop them up and throw them back in the river to float into the bay and become food for the eagles.

At that time Pastor Roy and Belinda Smart were pasturing the Assembly in Klawock. Just before we left to drive home to Kansas, Pastor Roy asked if we could return in June 1997 to fill in while they went on vacation. We said yes, if the Lord met our need for funds, which HE DID! Upon our arrival back in Klawock and were welcomed by Pastor & Mrs. Smart and family, as well as the folks in the church, we settled in for the next 6 weeks of doing what Pastors do in any community and church. It is called “getting involved.” One of the unexpected events that took place was that David and his family were in the process of making a move back to Ketchikan. He had taken a job on the Alaska Marine Highway ferry system. Living in Ketchikan made it much easier for him and his family. So, part of my time was spent in helping them prepare for their move. When the Smarts returned, we went back to Hydaburg for another month or so... it seemed like home again.

It was not easy to tell the people of Hydaburg “goodbye.” One of the Native elders who was a businesswoman told me as we were preparing to leave, “...just when we get to know you and love you, you leave.”

The Blue Church, as the Assembly was known, has been in the village almost 35 years and currently has only one Native couple who attend if it were open but with the decline in numbers and the rise in insurance and utility costs it has had to be closed. Hydaburg remains a village that needs Jesus and perhaps someday, should Jesus tarry His return, someone will be called there to become their missionary pastor. Our God knows!

## Chapter 27

### Expanding our Alaska Boundaries

When our time in SE Alaska came to an end in the fall of 1997, I thought I was to be home to stay. My wife and I had been gone for the summers of 1996 and 1997. I was ready to stay home and she reminded me that I had committed the summer of 1998 to Jim Schulz, who was director of the Home missions in the Alaska District Council and the director the Camp Agaiutim Nune meaning “The Place of God” or called Camp AN for short, located up the Yukon River approximately 17 miles and reached only by boat. So, I made contact with him shortly after the first of January 1998 and did make ourselves available to him and the ADC.

Bro. Jim wrote back and told me there were 3 areas needing help and for me to choose one of them. I wrote back and told him since they (the Alaska District Council leadership) knew the needs better than we did and we would go wherever they felt we could best be used. It was decided that we could be interim pastor at the Yukon Delta Assembly of God Church located in Emmonak, Alaska and assist with the camping activities. This included unloading and storing the camp supplies in the sanctuary of the church and then moving these food items, construction gear, and the workers supplies as soon as they arrived to the campsite.

When Pastor Jim Schulz and his construction crew arrived on two of the Grant Aviation Airline planes, they immediately began preparing the 22' camp boat for transporting the camp construction supplies, food, all kitchen equipment, including stove, refrigerators, washer and dryer, compressors for power, water in 5 gallon jugs, tables, chairs, sound equipment. In other words everything needed for people to live for 4 ½ weeks. These were workers, counselors, speakers, campers and adults for family camp. What a busy time for Marge and me in the parsonage. Marge “manned” the camp radio and relayed messages from camp to Anchorage to Linda Schulz, who did the running around doing errands, picking up emergency supplies as needed. . . me? I kept the oven busy baking cookies for workers and campers who passed through the parsonage on the way to and from camp. Cooking up a pot of moose stew on a number of occasions and sharing with workers who passed through, headed home!

The property for the camp was donated by one of the Yu'pik men who inherited the land gave about 8 acres to develop for the Yu'pik children in the western part of Alaska. This included the villages of Alakanuk, Sheldon's Point (now \_\_\_\_\_), Emmonak, Kotlik, Saint Michaels, even Kotzebue and Nome. I remind you these people all had to fly in on small planes, as there are no roads to and from these villages. During the winter months the rivers and sloughs become their “highways” for their snow machines, cars if they own one. The Alaska State troopers have cars so they travel on the rivers. Cargo planes land on the rivers to deliver food supplies, building materials or anything else that needs to be delivered to these remote villages.

Upon our arrival in Emmonak and settling in at the parsonage, which is located above the sanctuary of the church, we ventured out on a walking tour of Emmo as the locals call it. The Yukon River had not started its annual breakup as yet and we were excited about seeing what would happen when it did. Since all structures were built up off the ground to prevent flooding we wondered. . . well that year it was a very mild breakup with no flooding. For us “flatlanders” it was still quite a sight to see this taking place for the first time.

One of the things we were apprehensive about was whether or not the Eskimos would accept us. As in Hydaburg one of the first things that took place was one of their elder ladies was at the point of death and one of her daughters attended an Assembly in Arizona and she was there to interpret for me as the little lady could not speak English. I ask her if she wanted me to pray for her and I did...the presence of the Lord filled that little home and a few days later she past into eternity. Marge and I attended the funeral and the dinner that followed. Accepted? Yes we felt accepted by the village. Their burial process is very different and I will share some thoughts about this later.

When Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, if you are not familiar with this passage, now would be a good time to stop and read it. *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:18-20 (NASB)

When He said “go” He was not talking about just foreign countries but I believe Alaska was included. And when we respond to taking this gospel to people who are lost, we are not to try and “change” them but to “love” them. By doing this Marge and I felt compelled to become involved in the Native activities and partake in their culture, whenever it did not violate the Word of God.

The church in Emmonak had been without a full time pastor for many years and its ministry had been sustained by a young man and his wife who were residents there. Phil grew up on the Delta. His parents were early pioneer missionaries in Alaska and helped pioneer a number of churches, so Phil knew the Native ways and choosing to make Emmonak their home following a time in Alakanuk where his wife was a school teacher and still teaches after almost 25 years. Some of the locals told us “...Phillip is more Yu’pik than the Yu’pik’s themselves! This couple led the church along with other young man who would come to the village to “pastor” the church during the winter

months. God is so good to have provided a Shepherd for His people. The Yu'pik Eskimos are His too and it does take time to build up trust!

Our introduction to the Yukon Delta area was somewhat of a surprise. The plane we came in on from Anchorage made a stop in Alakanuk. We did not know it was going to do that so when it landed, we got off and there no were buildings, and only a board walk with ATV's and some Natives waiting and the pilot asked "...aren't you going to Emmonak?" our response was we thought this was Emmonak so we got back on the plane, in less time that it took us to get on and off we were landing in Emmonak., a 9 mile flight, as the crow flies, I should say as the Raven flies.

Waiting to greet and welcome us to the Yukon Delta area or Eskimo country were Phil and Lynn Covlasky. This couple has been the main stay for the church for many years. They are most generous and pleasant people to be around and certainly know about the customs and culture of the Yu'pik Eskimo.

One of the projects Pastor Dan was leading the folks in was to "repaint" their church and all of the surrounding "out buildings". He had purchased paint, but did not get the job started before his leaving. Other than keeping the grass cut (weeds) there was not too much else to keep one busy, so I took it on to paint the church while there. Over 3 months and 25 gallons of paint later, several large paint brushes the painting was completed.

The church was a two story structure with very high gables, which required me to "create" and extension on the extension ladder to reach the highest points. Strangely enough I couldn't get any 'help' to paint these, wonder why? It did make me nervous but not afraid. The fall wouldn't do all that much but it would be the sudden stop that would do the damage!

The fuel tanks were at one end of the church and were in the way of my ladder, so to enable me to reach the top I had to put the ladder on one of the tanks and make my

way up a number of times to fill my paint bucket. Marge would look out of the kitchen window and see me and refused to look any further. At one point the magistrate judge who worked in the municipal building right next door come out on their back deck and told me "...I am a trained EMC!" That was real encouraging, ya know!

On more than one occasion I would invite Native men to help but no one took me up on it. However I did have one Native friend who would come and paint where he could reach without getting on a ladder, 'cause he was afraid of heights. Jack would come by often and have coffee with me.

Maybe I should add, the Yukon Delta Assembly of God Church and buildings were of the very few in the whole village that paint on them. So to cover the faded gold colored paint with a gray-blue color, with the doors and windows all trimmed in white made a big difference! I was very thankful the Lord did keep me safe, though at times when up on the make-shift extension ladder was stupid and maybe a little bit careless and dangerous but the "paint job" looked great!

Another experience that Marge and I both enjoyed was when I was baking I would open the kitchen window and you could a whiff of something baking. One of our neighbor girls, Dawn Redfox, would knock on our door and come up the stairs and would ask "...watch a cooking Pastor Ho?" She enjoyed the benefits of the fresh cookies out of the oven.

When the Native children would come to "visit" it would be to play games and get a snack. Generally cool aid and cookies. We were glad to have them, as they felt the warmth of love and care. A place of security! Isn't this what God's place should be for people who are starving for love and care? And...when our camp workers would come through to provide for them and show them their work was appreciated. The church really did become a place of helps rather than a place for just saints.

Adjustment is a big word for those from the lower 48! We adjust to the long days

and short night! We adjust to no automobiles, no paved streets, no McDonalds, no church on every corner, no banks, but to the local residents life style. They work late and sleep late. Children still playing outside at 2:00 a.m. because it is not dark, so when they do go to bed they sleep until the wake up, even though it may be noon or after!

Soon after our arrival, the Yukon River was still froze up, ice on the ground, however there were areas when the thaw had begun. One day Marge and I were walking to the AC Store and there were four little Eskimo children playing in the water with no coats on and the little cheeks red with cold and I asked them "...aren't you kids cold?" Their reply "...No, we are Eskimos!"

It is fun to watch them practice throwing spears! Some of the weeds have a strong stem and they will strip it and use it for a spear. When their parents go seal hunting they use spears with a thrower. Many of the Native young men, their dads and grand dads are very proficient in using them when it comes to hunting seals from their boats! It is exciting to watch 20 to 25 boats chasing a seal. They have the driver in the rear of the boat and the spear thrower in the bow of the boat hanging on to a rope with one hand the spear and thrower in the other waiting to sight the seal and then try and hit it.

When they do, the spears that hit and kill the seal are identified by the color, as well as the feathers attached and they share in the kill! Eskimo people are people who look out for each other and share. The Elders are taken care of, like when the salmon begin the annual run and the fish are prepared for drying, smoking and freezing, the elders are cared for first!

The mode of travel is by small plane, by small boats in the summer and snow machines in the winter. It was during the summer months that we got a call from a Prayer Missionary from Florida who felt he wanted to come and hold some prayer conferences. I corresponded with him and we agreed on dates and he came. I told him he would find this different than any of the 24 countries he had traveled in the ministry

that took him literally around the world.

For our evening services several boat loads of the folks from Alakanuk would bundle up and travel the 9 miles to Emmonak for these services, which were to be from Sunday to Wednesday. They came Sunday, Monday and Tuesday and then invited us to come down to their church for the Wednesday service. So we agreed! However the weather turned bad and I told Phil to be the judge since he knew the river and the condition it would be in. He didn't feel it would be too rough make the trip. So (Missionary Karl Malz from Florida) and I got into warm clothes and put on rain gear. The trip going down was a little rough but coming was something else. The swells on the Yukon River seemed like ocean swells. Bro. Phil was "driving" the boat, bouncing back and forth, water spraying all directions and "baptizing" the missionary and me and Phil laughing at us and telling us "...I'm sorry fellas," and I told him "...you are not you are enjoying every minute of it!" He did not deny it either! That was just one of a number of trips going to the Yu'pik Assembly of God Church in Alakanuk!

Marge and I spent 3 weeks in Kotlik. I was a village with NO roads only board walks, wide enough for the 4X4 ATV's to travel on them. Sis. Harriet Brown was missionary pastor of that church and had been for a many years. This was another Yu'pik village of about 300 residents. Their church and parsonage were in one building and the church a single room with folding chairs and benches. At their altars they kept pillows to kneel on as they spent much time at them. These folks were prayer warriors and knew the source of this power!

We had to fly into Kotlik on a 4 placer, meaning 4 people including pilot could ride. It was extremely difficult for Marge to get into them so we did not take many trips in one of them. On one such trip, we had to "split" up as they had too many flying and on their way back to Emmonak, either Marge or the pilot spotted a moose. The pilot make a sharp turn and they went back to look and Marge said "...I didn't know you made 'U-turns' to see a moose!" I went back on a later flight. After all it was all of 45 miles and about a 20 minute flight.

Strange things happen at least we thought they were strange and funny. When we were loaded and ready to leave Emmonak to fly to Kotlik the plane was “stuck” in a pot hole. In a little bit here came a couple of workers and pushed us out and away we went! Only out on the Yukon Delta and in Alaska!

So, our first summer on the Delta began with snow still on the ground and the river frozen and when we left the winter snows had just started but not collecting much on the ground but it was time for us to leave. What a wonderful time of ministry it was and time for us to head home for the cold Kansas winter months, to keep our daughter company, who had held down the “fort” while we were gone. Janet is a real trooper, a wonderful daughter and mother!

## Chapter 28

### The Call, the Change

After spending the summers of 1996, 1997 and 1998 in Alaska Marge and I thought we were ready to settle down into retirement! Not! Our Heavenly Father had different plans for us that we were unaware of. However, I had committed to spending the summer of 1999 working with Bro. Jim Schulz and his crew at Camp AN, the camp under construction for the Yu’pik Eskimo children and teens of the Yukon Delta River area, and was being extended to include a 3 days adult family camp. No tickets had been bought or immediate plans made but all were tentative UNTIL that call came from Klawock. Bro. Jim did excuse me, nice of him, huh? WHAT CALL?

The Church in Klawock had a pastoral change due to a series of events that had taken place including a fire in the parsonage just after Christmas. Their pastor and his family had gone south for the holidays and after the fire and some health problems felt like they were not to return as pastor and resigned. During the weeks that followed the Deacons took turns in conducting the services and doing the speaking, with an occasional speaker coming over from Ketchikan. Apparently it came up in some of their discussions of the possibility that I could come and be their “interim pastor” until they were able to

locate their next pastor or “consider” becoming their pastor. That Call came in February and by the end of March I was there “filling” in as pastor and Marge remained in Kansas.

The Secretary of the Board for Prince of Peace Assembly of God met me at the Hollis Ferry Terminal for the 10:00 p.m. ferry arrival, it was snowing, I mean great big fluffy flakes falling so gently, no wind blowing, just beautiful and peaceful. Bro. Rob Steward took me to where I would be living, an upstairs one-room combination of living, sleeping and eating area, with a shower. Bro. Rob had to make a trip out to their place to get some bedding and some linens for me to use in making my bed and have towels for a shower. The next day was spent getting ready for the Sunday services and I was excited about renewing acquaintances with the folks we had spent some time with during our previous trips to POWI. Our God is so great and awesome and His plans are far beyond what we can make that is why when we...

***“...Delight yourself (ourselves) in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.”*** Psalm 47:4-5 (NASB)

For the next several weeks, I spent my time getting to know the people in the village, preparing for the services throughout the week. After about two weeks, one Sunday morning while standing in the shower I decided I didn't want to get back into pasturing again and when I talked with Marge later in the day and told her what I had been thinking, her reply was “...why don't you let the Lord decide?” meaning letting the people vote and make that determination. So, I agreed and when approached by the Board, and interviewed by the pulpit committee (I think about half of the church was on it) and following their desires to place my name before the congregation for acceptance or rejection, their vote was strongly in favor and only 1 opposed. So based upon their vote of confidence, the following Sunday I read a letter of acceptance.

***So, officially on April 28, 1999 I became their new pastor.***

Now it became necessary for me to inform Bro. Jim Schulz of what had taken place and requested that he “excuse” me from my commitment for the summer of 1999,

this he did with some reluctance. With that taken care of we (the Board and I) began to study what would be done about the housing for the preacher. We looked at properties for sale, such as a manufactured home on the side of a hill, \$90,000.00, a small 3-bed room house with an adjacent small building for \$140,000.00. Our options were not too many, as property was often kept in families and not made available.

Remember I talked about God's plans and the future? Some years before one of the church members had been injured in a logging accident and being unable to work and receiving a sizeable settlement from the logging company, wanted to do something for the church. They went into an undeveloped area that was being set up for buyers. Skip and his wife purchased a lot in an addition that was undeveloped and donated it to the church. With the value of the lot and the financial settle for the parsonage fire, plans were drawn up, a builder approached to develop the land and build a new 3 bedroom, 2 bath parsonage. With a 20 year note for \$45,000.00 from the Alaska District Council, it was a congregational decision to move ahead and build. It was exciting and fund to watch the guys with their chain saws get to work clearing the property, cutting down and burning trees, the digging down to a solid base begin to fill in with boulders, rocks and then cover with small gravel to make the area stable enough to build a house on.

Erik and his crew, working from a computer plans for the house, started to work and in 4 ½ months from the time they started, we moved in just after Christmas in 1999, just a year following the devastating fire. Truly from ashes God had something better in mind for the pastor and the congregation.

Wild life is plentiful on Prince of Wales Island. One morning when Eric and his crew arrived to start their days work, putting in the foundation forms required lots of pea gravel and there was a pile of it and on top of it was a young buck deer. It stayed there watching them prepare for work and for Eric to take its picture. I will share more about our bears who came for a visit, including eating Charlie Sue's food from her dog dish!

Where ever we went...rounding a curve or topping the next hill we could always expect a surprise...such a Momma bear and her 3 cubs, or eagles and ravens enjoying

“road kill”.

## Chapter 29

### Goodbye Kansas City, Hello Klawock!

Now, it was time to make plans for moving from Kansas City, Kansas where we had lived since 1971 and we were blest to have our daughter, Janet available to live in our house for however long we would be gone. I had believed it would be at least 3 to 5 years, we would need for someone to live in our 14' X 76' manufactured house to take care of things while we were gone. Not only was our time spent in packing, arranging for a 20' container scheduled to arrive in a few days, getting volunteers from church and our Sunday School class at Northland Cathedral but we purchased a 1993 Subaru, knowing that we would need another vehicle in Klawock. It turned out to be a very busy time for us in moving to Klawock, Alaska, a small village on Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska!

How do we get it from Kansas to Seattle, Washington? Not only a vehicle but we had “Charlie Sue” our border collie who needed a ride as well. We had tickets purchased to fly back and time was not on our side so after putting our thinking caps on, we decided Janet could drive the car and let “Charlie Sue” be her company for the trip. David and Shannon were living in Ferndale, Washington and he would make arrangements to have the car shipped from Bellingham to Ketchikan and we flew down and our dog flew back with us on the same plane. Janet spent a week there and she returned to Kansas City. Her help was so much appreciated. Her experience traveling with “that” dog was adventuresome.

One of the things she showed me and shared the story about it was a rock in the shape of a heart. Not so unusual but when she was letting the stretch her legs and do her business, she found a rock that was broken almost in half. Apparently some road grading had been done and a short distance away she found a second stone that looked similar

picked it up and the two fit together. She felt like the Lord spoke to her that He can mend and repair broken hearts, even when two pieces need to be but together. This heart shaped rock, though broken and separated she found them and still has them to this day.

The song comes to mind that speaks to this issue of brokenness goes something like this “heart ache broken pieces, ruined lives are why He died on Calvary, Your touch is what I longed for, He has given life for me.” (we’ll need to find the words of this song).

After our shipping container was packed, loaded and on its’ way, Marge and I left a few days later in our 1993 Toyota Pickup, that was loaded to the “gills” so to speak. We stopped in Mitchell, South Dakota to visit with my Sister and her husband, Marcille and Jack Hubbard but spent the night in Rapid City, South Dakota. If you have traveled the highways across Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota you know how flat the country side is. The weather was hot and dry, harvest was in full swing, combines and trucks harvesting fields of corn. Occasionally a pheasant would be spotted along the cut fields, other than that there is very little wild life to look for.

Look there’s deer! Marge and I had stopped for breakfast in Gillette, Wyoming and gassed up, used the rest rooms, filled our coffee cups and headed west! Beautiful day, clouds drifting overhead, it was not long until we would begin to see deer feeding not far from the four-lane highway. I was driving, picking up speed, our CB was turned on and we were set for a long ride towards Seattle, but were planning an overnight along the way, at that time we did not know just where.

Marge had commented about a deer running along the fence line and I look as well, but suddenly it decided to cross the highway and ran into the path of our loaded pick’em up truck, as a friend of ours from New Zealand called them. Without any warning to brake we broad-sided the deer, with it coming up over the hood and sliding off the hood onto the left side of the truck and immediately everything went “dead” (no pun intended) and we rolled to a stop on the right shoulder of Interstate 90, about 20 miles west of Gillette. We were both ok, little shook up but no injuries but a truck that

was shut down and a dead deer in the median strip about 150 feet behind us.

Now what? I got on the CB and announced that we had just hit a deer and the pickup was damage and a voice on the other end of the call ask IF anyone was injured, and I said no but we needed help. A highway patrol officer heard the call and was there within 15 minutes, a tow truck was called and we were towed back to Gillette for repairs. The tow truck was from “Hap’s Towing Service” and I really questioned IF it had the power to even get us back to town but it did. We were very thankful how quickly people responded to our emergency in Wyoming.

The Auto Repair shop just “happened” to finish all jobs and had swept down the work area and the repairman was able to get on it immediately. Damage was assessed, estimate was given on repairs and I called our insurance company and they wanted 3 estimates and I told there that would be impossible as we had less than 72 hours to make Seattle and catch the Alaska Marine Ferry to Ketchikan, Alaska. New parts were ordered and flown out of Denver, Colorado, some parts were straightened out, some new parts did not fit, wrong parts were shipped so they re-ordered and to make this saga shorter, we were on our way and lost 1½ days of travel time. Days Inn Motel (or Motel 6??) folks were excellent to work with. They were within walking distance of the Repair Shop.

One of other interesting thing happened while waiting. I was talking with the owner and told him we were from Kansas City and he said his brother played football for the Kansas City Chiefs. I asked him what his name was and it was Steve Deberg and I had worked with the Deberg’s on their move either to or from Kansas City. This didn’t win us any points as to a lesser repair bill but it did make it more friendly. By the way the immediate repairs (put on our credit card) were almost \$1,000.00 and the final repair bill was just over \$4,000.00. And...we didn’t get to have any “deer steak” either! Did we make Seattle? Yep, with the Toyota wired and “duck” taped together, Marge and I drove straight through, stayed with David and family. They had moved to Ferndale, Washington by this time and Janet made it with Charlie Sue, stayed a few days and then she and Marge flew back to Kansas City. Me? I flew out on time and David handled all

the arrangements with a Toyota Dealership in Seattle to get the pickup repaired and repainted, then arrangements with the Alaska Marine Line for shipping it to Ketchikan.

Several months later when the “Toy” was shipped, I “ferried” over to Ketchikan to receive it from the freight company, drove it onto the ferry and headed “home” to Klawock. Wow, what a trip! All because of one careless deer (or driver)!

Our shipping container? It arrived on schedule, several men from the community and church helped unload the contents into one of the rooms at the church, to save us money on storage costs. And just after Christmas we moved into the new parsonage with the help of our daughter, Janet and her son, Tasso. For his graduation gift we flew them up for a 2 weeks vacation over the Christmas holidays.

Now how is that for our introduction to living on Prince of Wales Island, in SE Alaska?

## Chapter 30

### Look Out When You Volunteer!

By now you will remember how this all began, our going to Alaska for our first visit, and then traveling back to do supply pasturing, as well as interim pastoral work. To serve as a reminder: David had met Shannon in Hawaii at one of the churches he visited. She eyed him and knew she was going to marry him. It happened! He was in the Navy, pulling submarine duty and she was in Hawaii working. He from Kansas and she from Alaska! Let me insert a little of her history. Shannon had graduated from Ketchikan High School early in December 1981, moved into an apartment with one of her friends and being only 17 when her parents moved to Prince of Wales Island. According to one of her brothers, Darin tells people her folks moved away to a house too small for the whole family, so she couldn't move with them. So, her folks kept only the family members they wanted! (Ha, ha, very funny Darin!) We live in a very small world!

Shannon's parents moved to Prince of Wales Island in about 1982. Her dad was a

logger and he had been burdened for the Natives who lived on POWI. He moved his family to Craig and finally to Klawock, where he pioneered a new church, Klawock Assembly of God, later renamed Prince of Peace Assembly of God Church. Pastor Stan led the congregation into a building program, after first negotiating a 20 year lease with the City of Klawock for the location of the new church. Some materials were donated and some had to be purchased and with a young congregation a new building was begun.

Progress was slow because all of the men and women working on it all worked on their day jobs as well. The view from the new location was grandeur looking down over the inlet waters. The Snider family became involved in the community. Pastor Stan became, the garbage man, working on the city trash hauling truck and he had served as their Harbormaster as well. He made friends wherever he went. His wife, Sharon worked in the bank and then at the school, the children were schooled in Klawock.

Excitement was increasing as the new building was nearing completion and plans were made for their first service, which was near Easter. They had their first service in an enclosed, yet unfinished building and enjoyed the blessings of the Lord. You have heard about wearing your heart out? Well this is apparently what Pastor Stan did, as he had heart problems and the next week was flown to Ketchikan and then to Seattle. Pastor Stan went to meet his Master there in the hospital in Seattle. His death was a shock to the whole island and community of Klawock, his church family and his own family.

A miracle begins to unfold in getting his family home for the funeral. Such as: Sherri and a friend were in Europe on vacation, which included visiting her two brothers who were in the Air Force, however they both were at different military bases. Shannon had just arrived in Durango, Mexico on a missions trip with folks from their church in St. Joseph, Missouri. When they all received the news about their dad, plans were set in motion to fly to Seattle. Sherri and her friend left immediately, Shannon left flying into Mexico City, and into Dallas, where she was weathered in, Paul and Darrin flew separately from Germany but left New York on the same plane not knowing the other was on that plane until one sat in front of the other. All of the children arrived in Seattle within a 24 hour period. David and his two little ones flew in from Kansas City. The

Bible does say “all things work together...” in the Book of Romans Chapter 8 and verse 28. *“...And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”* (Romans 8:28 NASB)

Sharon, Stan’s widow has remarried and she and her husband still live in Klawock and are involved with the church there. The Haida and Tlinqt Natives highly respected Pastor Stan. As a matter a fact, they named the city park after him. It is now Stan Snider Park, a beautiful location situated on the waters edge and tall spruce and cedar trees providing a great place for picnics and an area for water baptisms for the church. With snow covered trees and grounds created such a picturesque place!

When our Shannon, our daughter-in-law learned that I had been elected as pastor of Prince of Peace Assembly David said she cried and said “...who would ever have believed that your Dad would pastor the church my Dad started?” Our heavenly Father does work in mysterious ways and His many wonders to perform. PTL!

## Chapter 31

### Out on the Yukon Delta

Ok, get your map out. Got it? Find Anchorage and then find the coastline of the Bering Sea about 600 miles by air from Anchorage and locate the village of Emmonak, this is where our Alaska District Officials felt we should be for the summer of 1998. When I committed to returning for the summer Missionary Jim Schulz told me they had 3 locations they would like for me to consider. Kotzebue, Emmonak or Unalakleet, Alaska and I told him, I knew nothing about these villages and Marge and I would go wherever the District felt we could best serve. With the 1998 Camp AN camping season coming up fast it was decided that Emmonak would be where we would be of most help.

When I announced where we would be going Pastor Lowell Harrup, our pastor had us to share about 10 minutes about what was taking place. This we did and God

provided the funds necessary to fly to Anchorage where we spent a week buying food supplies since we did not know what was available there, packaged it all with the help of Missionary Jim Schulz and took the boxes to the Post Office for mailing. What a process but we were so busy that we did not get to do any tourist things at that time. By the way, that grocery bill came to \$515.00 plus shipping costs to Emmo! This was our introduction to the bulk purchasing at COSTCO!

Upon our arrival at Grant Aviation located about a mile from the village of Emmonak we were met by Phil and Lynn Covlasky and taken to the church and parsonage, which was located above the sanctuary.

It didn't take long for us to get out into the village, walking was the "mode" of transportation and we walked to the post office, to the Native stores (two of them), to visit folks in the church. For the first few days we had the company of the young man who came out to Emmonak every winter to pastor and then leave for his summer work in Nome, Alaska. Bro. Dan was a great blessing in helping us become acquainted with the "locals".

He had also arranged and planned a project that he didn't get too involved with as he was leaving. He had ordered 15 gallons of paint for the church and buildings on the property. He did try and use a sprayer to remove the old paint, which was not very effective but he tried. After he left and the Yukon River had its annual breakup, which was very mild, and Camp AN got under way, I started one of my summer's projects of repainting the exterior of the church. Question? How do you eat an elephant? A bit at a time! Well, how do you paint a very large 2 story church building and the buildings around it? One brush stroke at a time!

Emmo is a village of about 600 Natives, who some still hunt as they did centuries ago. Their methods have not changed in preparing salmon to dry on drying racks shielded by a tarp, from the rains to come at times daily, creating muddy "streets" and within a few hours will turn to dust by the 4X4 ATV's, and a few cars and trucks, very

few and people walking...amazing! The village had one taxi and the charge was always the same wherever you went, we never used it but I think the cost was \$2.00 for a ride and \$6.00 if you had groceries. After all a mile or two would be about as far as you could go unless to the airport.

## Chapter 32

### The Next 5 Years

Remember this all started with a phone call from the secretary of the church board “just to see” if I was available to come and fill in for them until they could find a new pastor! But...I do believe it was all in God’s own timing for not only Marge and me but for the congregation there in Klawock.

During this transition period there were many decisions to be made, most were pretty much customary to church related activities, and a few were not so easily to deal with. As well as getting acquainted with the congregation and folks in the village, the Lord helped working with the official board to determine how the needs for a parsonage replacement would take place. Not how but when and where? Living on a remote island, isolated by water and only method of traveling to and from was by the AMF (Alaska Marine line Ferry) or by air. All building supplies would be brought in on the barge and transported to the local businesses, which we discovered were quite costly but necessary.

Christmas 1998 was not a good time for the pastor or the congregation. During Christmas week, their pastor and his wife were visiting with family in the lower 48 there was a fire that destroyed the parsonage and most of the contents belonging to the pastor. Upon receiving the news and making the decision that he should not return as pastor he tendered his resignation in early 1999. Since Marge and I had been to the church on two different occasions, the Board felt like they would like to have me to come and supply as interim pastor for a while. We made it a matter of prayer and determined it would be the mind of the Lord that we at least help them out during this time of need.

I have felt and preached over the years that, “...if you see a need and have the

ability to fill it, it is a sin not too". Upon my arrival at the end of March 1999 and enjoying the renewed fellowship with people in the community and on POW Island, and following several weeks of pasturing the congregation I was invited to consider becoming pastor.

Talking with my wife long distance on the phone and being in prayer concerning the decision, we agreed to allow them to present our name to the congregation for approval. Based upon their almost unanimous vote I presented a letter of acceptance to the Official Board and then read to the whole congregation.

Remember the fire? Often times our lives are altered by circumstances that we have no control over. No one would have ever thought about how a fire would change so many...the pastor and his wife, the congregation, and for Marge and me. We have stood on Romans 8:28 for so many things and this is one occasion when we once again trusted God to work everything out for His glory. This "Alaska thing" started out with our son being discharged from the U.S. Navy and choosing to settle in Ketchikan, Alaska. Located on Prince of Wales Island was a Native village called Klawock, where Shannon's parents had moved to in the early 1980's to start a Bible study with loggers, which led them to have Sunday school in their home in Klawock and ultimately becoming the Klawock Assemblies of God church, Pastor Stan pastured until his fatal heart attack in 1992??

The entire POW Island looked to Pastor Stan as their pastor and at the funeral service the Klawock High School gym was packed with the local people as well as people who traveled in from villages like Hydaburg, Hollis, Coffman Cove, Thorn Bay, Naukati and Whale Pass. Also there were those from other parts of SE Alaska who came for this "farewell" to their pastor friend, Rev. Stanley Snider. One very impressive sight was his three sons and son-in-law in their military uniforms taking part in the service.

Following several pastors later, surprisingly to us but not to God, we became pastor of Prince of Peace Assembly of God, which by the way our daughter-in-law suggested as a new name for the church, and were privileged to serve the people there for

5 years! See God does work in His own ways and at His own pleasure. This brings to mind the scripture as found in Jeremiah 29:11-14 (NASB)

*“...For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. ‘Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. ‘And I will be found by you,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’*

God does know the plans for our lives even when we do not. As a matter of fact we cannot even make plans from day to day. Oh, we can say what we will do or will not do but the final analysis is up to our Heavenly Father. The Bible does speak of “not boasting about tomorrow for we do not know what will be tomorrow” *“...Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that." But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.”*

James 4:14-17 (NASB)

Prior to our ventures to Alaska, I had not paid any attention to it. While pasturing in Concordia, Kansas we did have a young man in the church who had earned his private pilots license to fly small planes and he did finally moved to and I believe he homesteaded his own place somewhere in Alaska. Living first in a tent, then constructed a cabin. Years before that, we had a pastor friend who moved his family up “there somewhere”. Remember Alaska is a big state! Some years later we met his sister and her husband who were living in Anchorage at the time. They had followed him to Alaska and had worked with him on a commercial fishing boat for a number of seasons.

Perhaps after making our move back to Kansas City, we just thought our trips would be over. NOT! Alaska is the most beautiful and intriguing place to be in comparison to the many places we have been over the years of our marriage. Well not quite as beautiful as Hawaii just almost! The state has so many different aspects of it, one hardly seems to be in the same state. From SE Alaska with its Tongas National

Forrest, many smaller islands and “smaller mountains” compared to the Rocky Mountains or the mountains surrounding Anchorage, the Matanuska Valley, with the road systems taking you north to Prudoe Bay and south to the Canadian border. It is one of the marvels of the world in which God created and has allowed us to live in and enjoy. Rounding every curve and never knowing what might be seen. Grizzly bears, black bears, Sitka deer, eagles soaring, ravens in pursuit, fire weed in full bloom, and the annual run of salmon returning to spawn. Absolutely amazing to watch this God given ritual! Man does not have the ability to create such a scene leading from the ocean, up rivers and streams.

Leaving the Anchorage Bowl traveling west and north you leave the road system and travel by air across thousands of miles of frozen tundra to villages reached only by air or by boat. Marge and I were introduced to this when we flew from Anchorage to Bethel and by smaller plane to the village of Emmonak where we lived 5 months ministering to the Yu’pik Eskimos. What a God given privilege for which we are forever thankful. And...following to 5 years on POW Island, early part of 2005 I was invited to return to Anchorage and assist the Pastor of Crossroads Assembly of God for 6 weeks, while Pastor and Mrs. Schulz were preparing for and conducting Camp AN, a camp for the Yu’piks living along the lower Yukon River, and finalizing my stay in Emmonak for another 6 weeks before returning to Kansas City!

For many of the Eskimo children they have never been out of their village, for that matter for some of the elders in these villages still speak their Native language, live and hunt the same way their ancestors did. One of the lingering fears is that their culture is being lost, as the children are not learning to speak their Native language, or hunt as their parents and grandparents did before them. Example: I was in one Native home and the wife was butchering a moose right in the middle of the “living room” floor. She cut a big piece of meat for a roast and sent it home for us to enjoy. Many Natives were always willing to share with others.

It is easy to get the times and dates of our experiences and the many places the Lord allowed us to visit and then to be involved with. When Evangelist Jim and Nancy Mercer moved to Kotzebue, Alaska located beyond the Arctic Circle we never imagined that we would visit and preach for them there. The Annual Alaska District Council would convene in either Anchorage or Fairbanks for most sessions. During our stay in Fairbanks we were privileged to visit with Pastor Roy Smart and wife in Nenana, where he was pasturing. As well as meeting some friends living in North Pole, who were friends with friends of ours in Kansas City. The Sniders??

On our trip to Fairbanks for District Council, Marge and I were checking into the Hotel, there was a basketball team checking in as well for the Alaska Shootout. I heard someone say Rockhurst and I asked if they were from Kansas City and they were. We visited with several of the parents and discovered some of their interests on their first trip to Alaska and particularly Fairbanks. A number of students from Prince of Wales Island attended college there which made our visit more interesting as we toured the campus. It is Christmas in North Pole the year around with the decorations in stores and on the trees is a constant reminder. Lots of mail is mailed from North Pole, Alaska.

In Fairbanks we were able to “check out” the Alaska pipeline. One evening we had dinner with the new friends we had just met and following our meal, they took us for a short ride, after dark, and we did see (forms only) of several moose. Folks those animals we huge! Ya don’t want a hit one with your car!!

Anchorage is another story. There is so much to see and do there and places to see. We enjoyed the trips we made there for AKC sessions and to visit with friends who moved from POWI to Anchorage. Ken and Brenda Weimer and children opened their home to us on a number of occasions. After the Mercers moved there and always Jim and Linda Schulz were stopovers. It seems their home was a common place to meet whenever missionaries were passing through.

Most people vision Alaska as a place where it is cold and snowy the year around. Not so! Some of the most beautiful flowers I have ever seen are in Anchorage. The summer season is very short but with the long summer sunshine it does make it possible for the growing of seasonal flowers and gardens people plant. It makes for pleasant grazing for the moose the wonder wherever desired. They tell us the winters are colder there than in SE Alaska. We found this to be very true and surprisingly, at times winter was colder in Kansas City than in Klawock.

Gary and Margie are some of my Native friends who have chosen the “homeless” way of life. They live on the street, panhandle for money for food. Sleep where ever they can find. For one winter they slept in the lower part of the stairwell at Crossroads Assembly. They carried everything with them every where they went. Staying near the church, Pastor Schulz befriended them and allowed them to come in and use the restroom facilities to wash up and freshen up.

Margie would come and open the door and asked “if she could use the outhouse”. Pastor Jim would tell her needed to pay \$2.00 of course he wouldn’t take it and she didn’t have it most of the time. Margie was almost totally deaf, depended upon the booze she and Gary would beg for. I had the privilege of praying the sinners pray with both of them, as they had done on many occasions I had learned. On my trip in 2005 I made it a point to take them to lunch so I could talk with them very pointedly about their need to getting jobs and quit living on the street like they were doing. But...that was too much work and they made more money panhandling. Then I wanted to know about their spiritual conditions as well. They let me pray with them and that was the last time I saw them. The two of them were very pleasant to visit with and they would attend church occasionally but were not willing to give up that lifestyle. Do you know God still loves them and so do I?

## Chapter 33

### There is nothing to Do

“...there is nothing to do...” an expression heard often by the “locals” on the island, and believe me, there is NOTHING to do in many of these villages. It did not take us long to find out there is plenty to do and the problem is finding enough time to get everything done, which we did not make as we ran out of time after 5 years.

I have spent the last couple of hours scanning what has been “remembered” to date and have found that the sequence of events have become somewhat “clouded” in my memory but in reality I don’t suppose that really matters much. However, during our 5 year stay on Prince of Wales Island and living in the village of Klawock, there are certainly many fond memories and it is to these I will share throughout finalizing this “Incredible Journey”. Many native traditions are being “reclaimed” because of the past 100 years throughout Alaska denominational missionaries felt it was their responsibility to condemn the natives for using their native languages, their native arts, including the destruction of their totems, relating native story telling. One of our dear friends in Klawock is one of the last natives who is encouraging the younger people to get involved in carving. Master Carver, Jonathan Rowan is working on a project of rebuilding many totems. He is the art instructor at the Klawock High School.

Our friends will remain forever in our hearts and in our memories. From our first time on POWI and visiting the remote villages of Hydaburg, Coffman Cove, Naukati, Whale Pass, Hollis and Thorne Bay, to name of few and then making our home in Klawock. For me, learning to “jar” salmon and perhaps learning how to “clean” a salmon and get it ready to “jar” was one of my major accomplishments. Visiting the Haida lady who was preparing fish heads for fish head soup and for bait to fish with; discovering the cooking of the bones to make “bone soup” and realizing there is very little that is not used when harvesting fish. She spread out seaweed to dry and would use it in salads later.

One Sunday afternoon receiving a phone call telling me “...Pastor we are

canning salmon this afternoon” and I asked her when and she said around 3 o’clock. I had to delay going until after Sunday school at 3:00. I made it by 4:00 and was taught how to cut and place the salmon in jars for canning. I was taught by one of the daughters of an elder who had passed and was instructed “...Pastor, my dad always wanted the red meat to show and no skin.” I replied “...IF that is what your dad did then that is what I will do.!” Beautiful workmanship made the product look great! A special thanks to Christie Peele.

They used a 50 gallon barrel set over the fire, heat the water with as many jars of salmon they could put in it. Then cook for I believe 110 minutes. Of course when I learned to can salmon we used a canner. When we moved to POW Island, I finally bought one for under a \$100.00 and used it a couple of seasons. I even jarred some venison. This is not our favorite but does work well when mixing with hamburger meat for chili. Ya wanta try some? Really it is pretty good.

The Elders in the Native culture have a special place in the lives of the Alaska Natives. They are looked to for their wisdom and leadership. On the lighter side, when ever there are memorial dinners, celebrations of any kind, the elders are always served first. One experience I had was at our first Native dinner in Hydaburg, I was preparing to eat something and I asked one of the Native elder women, what I was about to eat and she would not tell. So, from then on I wanted to fill my own plate at all dinners. The Natives are very good cooks.

The passing of a family member is a village wide event. From preparing all meals, preparing for the funeral itself and in a few of the villages, when the body is prepared for burial, at times the minister, or the priest would assist in preparing the body. I did not have that experience however did have the honor and privilege of conducting a number of funerals. The Hydaburg cemetery is located about an hours ride by boat to an island they call cemetery island. This was quite an experience. Beautiful in the summer and I expect cold in the winter. After the service, the natives would then prepare a concrete cover. They brought the cement

with them and mixed it right at the grave site, when it was completed we all returned to the boats and back to the village for the memorial dinner that followed.

I mentioned the memorial dinners and most will always have Native dancing to help celebrate. The dancers are in their beautiful regalia and feel it an honor to be a part of the event. Memorial dinners and celebrations will have audience participation like group singing, relating experiences and humorous events surround the departed loved one or friend. Years ago these times were called a “potlash” where personal items will given to honored guests. Now everyone receives gifts that are given in honor of the deceased.

It was also my privilege to conduct several weddings. These are quite the celebrations as well. It presents an opportunity of ministering to the families involved. They don’t “sneak” off of the island because it is either by plane or by boat. I did not do any weddings while I was in Emmonak or the other villages on the Yukon Delta. One wedding I did, there were two little children involved and I “married” them to their new dad and their new dad to his new children.

However, I did have the opportunity of conducting and baptizing quite a few while in Klawock and in Emmonak and Alakanuk. One of the baptism services in Klawock was in the bay, not far from the church. There were 8 baptized at this service. I had one of our men read appropriate scriptures and we sang several songs in between each being baptized. When I entered the water, it very was cold! The folks could not see my face so I didn’t really tell them how cold it was and the first little guy, a 6 year old almost “walked on water” but the whole event was great and soon people forgot how cold it was. In Emmonak and Alakanak they have a tank they have built and water is brought in either by buckets from the river (in Alakanak) and by garden hose in Emmonak, so it was somewhat warmer. What a blessing to see those who have accepted Jesus want to follow Him in water baptism. Wow!

The baptism service we had in Alakanak was quite unusual. It began with just a couple and then others wanted to be baptized. The church had a room attached to the main building which they used for a used clothing give away program. One of the ladies went back and changed clothes and came out with a “Santa Claus” sweat shirt on. I dubbed at the night I baptized Santa Claus”!  
Remember, there’s no indoor plumbing, or sewer systems, in many of the homes in the village. So drinking water was brought by individuals who wanted it and “honey buckets” were in every home and at the church is a little room, with only a curtain for a door at the back of the sanctuary. Interesting!

Whenever any of us depart on a journey, some call it a “trip” and at times it is a trip but much planning goes into it. As a boy growing up in the middle of Kansas, the Bread Basket of the World, and going into the U.S. Navy, pasturing churches over Kansas, Ohio and Alaska, I never would have dreamed the journey would be so fulfilling. I do not know who may have made it to their heavenly home or who are on their way, as I did not keep count, but God KNOWS! It is because of His faithfulness, His provision over the years Marge and I have been living together (married of course) 57 years at this juncture in life and the 55 years in serving Him in some phase of ministry, completing 50 years as an ordained minister with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, I thank Him from the depths of my heart.

My wife and family have lived in places that I should not have had them living but the housing was what the Lord provided though we did pay rent. From our first little 2 bedroom house in Costa Mesa, California, or the “mansion” in Concordia, A shotgun apartment in Chase, Kansas, and housing over a former bakery in Ohio...well really, a tent or a cottage, why should I care, the Lord is building a mansion for each of us over other there. Amen?

One story I remember was when Jeremiah D, his pregnant girl friend and I were traveling back to Klawock from Hydaburg, he asked me “...Pastor Ho,

have you ever picked up a baby cub bear?" I replied "No". He said "...I don't see how they can be so cute and stink so bad at the same time." My response to him was "...Jeremiah, when your baby is born you are going to wonder how your baby can be so cute and stink so bad at the same time." He and his wife to be had a little boy and now a handsome young man. This leads me to share about the baby dedications. I did have quite a few of them. One of the last ones was Jack and Teresa Lamont's little boy. That little Eskimo baby was the sweetest little guy...His name? Jordan John Albert Arnold Jack Emmanuel Lamont, Jr. How about his older sister? Her name is Sabrina Ann Lori Marie Agnes Lamont!

The time has come to say goodbye. Sounds like Mickey Mouse Club sign off years ago. Early In the fall of 2003 I had decided it was time to start making plans to retire due to some physical difficulties we were experiencing. So, early in 2004 I submitted a letter to the Official Board of Prince of Peace Assembly advising them and giving them 3 months notice after I made the decision to resign and retire back to Kansas. During this time Marge made a trip back to Kansas in late March, as her mother was not doing well at all. Marge did make it to Lyons and was able to see her mother just prior to her passing. We were thankful that the decision had been made to make the announcement.

Our folks at PoP Assembly were very understanding and worked with us. Some of the things I desired to do before leaving POWI was to visit Hydaburg Presbyterian Church on a Sunday morning for a farewell with our friends there, this we did on April 18<sup>th</sup>. The gathering was rather small due to some misunderstanding as to who was to come but a great day. Hydaburg is a small village dating back almost 100 years and has a vibrant history and reputation!

Then I had requested that the dancers from Hydaburg and Klawock join us for an all island dinner and celebration. Nearly 300 attended and dinner was provided by folks bringing in their favorite dishes, and large cake. Following a number of "farewell" speeches, we all enjoyed a great farewell dinner (breaking of the bread together) with friends from Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove, Hydaburg, Hollis

and Klawock. We then were entertained with Native dancing by the \_\_\_\_\_ Dancers, lead by Jon Rowan. To bring our time together to a close, the Bluegrass Gospel Band played and sang. Great fellowship! Marge and my hearts were blessed and encouraged by the show of friendship by the “locals.”

In my many years of pasturing, I never found an easy way to tell people “goodbye.” This has certainly been true during the years the Lord has allowed me to pastor. Especially true in the 11 years I ministered to the Haida and Tlingit Indians and the Yu’pik Eskimos.

## **Chapter 34**

### **2004 Move back to Kansas**

May 2<sup>nd</sup> was our final service and farewell at our church. The congregation surprised us with a “money” tree as a farewell gift. This did help us very much on our move back to Kansas. Now, just take a deep breath and get ready for our trip home. However it is the first time I had seen money “grow” on a tree. Truly backing up the idea of “keeping up with the Green issue” our political leaders have determined to have.

When we move to Klawock, we “rented” a 20’ shipping container to load our “stuff” into with the help of a bunch of guys from Northland Cathedral, the Assembly of Church that had been our church home since 1981. We found it cost less to load and unload ourselves and ship by rail to and then by barge from Seattle, Washington to Ketchikan, Alaska. This we did when returning. The folks at Prince of Peace Assembly were wonderful in assisting. Marge and Shannon would not let me do all of the work but “supervise” only. It kind a worked! As it turned out I really should have put more into the container, as the pickup and car were loaded to capacity.

Remember, I have spent many years in the commercial moving business. Experience in everything from a beginner at the trade, while living in San Diego,

California. Not only was I new, but the owner and his brother were totally new as well. So much I could share about how to destroy “trade in furniture”; to local moving; transforming an old lemon packing company into a moving and storage facility. What an experience! My boss had us laying a cinder block fire wall after dark, working with spot lights and having bats flying around our heads while we “earned” a few extra dollars.

Some of you may be wondering what happened to “Charlie Sue” our border collie. Well that is the sad part of this journey; we had to leave her behind. However, she did find a wonderful home and cared for by wonderful people. The Templin family had moved to Craig from Whale Pass (about 80 miles), as he had taken a job with the City of Craig. Their youngest son, Donald, already wanted her, so his dad loaded up Charlie Sue’s dog house and she jumped in all ready to go. We were sad but glad she would be well cared for. PTL!

On making our plans to drive home, I knew it would be too much for Marge to drive the car by herself and me the pick’em up truck. So I talked with David and Shannon and upon our invitation, invited Shannon and Halee to fly up, spend a week or so and then help us drive to the lower 48, namely Alpine, Texas. We know they enjoyed spending time with Shannon’s Mom and step dad, Gene Merrill.

Besides being such a big help in finalizing the packing, the cleanup of the parsonage and the driving home, the two of them were so much fun to travel with and be with. Lots of experiences touring together, me following her in the snow covered highway from Jasper, Canada to Banff, collecting a few rocks in one of the rivers. Halee got to put her feet in the icy cold water. Speaking of icy water, Shannon and I in separate vehicles both saw a sign that said “Icy Spots” and we both were laughing about not seeing any “icy spots”?! They were such a blessing to be able to travel with us Shannon doing most of the driving Sub. Marge did do some driving but not much. I never ask and was not told, but am sure Halee didn’t

do any driving. However knowing her she would have if given the opportunity.  
**Right Halee, Right!**

On our trips to POWI in 1996 and 1997 we met and spent time with a family that were such a blessing to so many in the SE Alaska area, and on POWI, who had made a move to upper Montana. We made plans to stop by and spend a day or two with Clint and Lawana McGuffey and family who were living near Superior, Montana. Wow! What a great time we had with these dear people and their children. Their farm is such a beautiful place nestled in a valley, a small stream nearby, so many places to explore and go hiking, well just so much fun! Their animals and even the humming birds took a liking to me and would land on my thumb while feeding. As a matter a fact, when we were driving in, Clint who was on duty spotted us and led us to their place and then he went back to work. That is what I called "...the Lord directing us and allowing us to meet before we ever got to their house." Just like Him, huh?!

Driving east on I-90 through the gorgeous beauty of our God's creation and enjoying changing of the country side. And...Shannon really got a shock when she saw how "flat" and barren...no trees? Just desert shrubs! I believe it is amazing that we did not get "lost" or separated from each other throughout the whole trip. We did part ways in Cheyenne, WY because I was ready to leave before the "girls" were ready and we were parting ways in Denver, CO anyway.

Marge, Shannon and Halee made it to Colorado Springs to visit with Val Steward's mother, on to Albuquerque, NM where they overnighted with Larry, Renee and Miranda Marshall before heading on south and east to Alpine, Texas.

For those of you who have traveled I-70 really know lonesome of a highway it really is. My pick'em up truck and me made it to Kansas City without any problems. I did overnight in Hays, Kansas (I think) passed through Lyons to visit with Pat and Gary Crawford. Janet, Molly (the cat) and Buddy (the dog) were

waiting for me. Joy, Joy, Joy! What a joy to be home...ne'er to roam again!  
Really?

You all know that we moved “back in” with our daughter, Janet. Among our plans were to upgrade in our housing. It had been my desire to trade our 14X80 manufactured home for a double wide. The Lord did have other plans for us. During our 5 years in Alaska, we were able to utilize the MBA for some savings and we purchased a 16X80 home, which is adequate. This we did before Marge made her way to Kansas City in mid-summer. Janet was such a big help in making the transition. Our granddaughters, Kari and Jami were as well.

Marge’s brother, Carl, and his crew, from Seaton Van Lines assisted when we moved from the storage unit in Kansas City, Kansas to here was such a big help. I remember his daughter, Lori. I had been wandering around trying to help and doing my part in sweating and she finally got a chair and sat it out on the front porch and said “...Uncle Howard sit down!” You know what? I did! So, to Carl, Marla and Lori and the crew of 3 and the use of their equipment, Marge, Janet and I say “thank you!”

In reviewing much of what I have written there doesn’t seem to a lot of “fun” things happening during these last 10 years and perhaps over that last 78 years but there must have been some along this journey somewhere. Oh, there are some isolated cases such as when Carl and I went “skinny dipping” at the sand pit and he was having trouble getting back to the bank, not that he was near drowning just tired. Our skipping an afternoon class to ride to Sterling, Kansas (9 miles) to a basketball game and then “hitching” a ride in back of a Mr. Hutchins truck; pranks at Halloween, climbing the water tower, not just once but a number of times.

My little brother, Paul, who shut down a “baseball game” before it was over. For some reason he got mad and headed for home, taking his ball bat with him.

Marge, David and I had been somewhere in southern Missouri on 4<sup>th</sup> of July. David insisted that we shoot off fire works. I picked out place out in the country along the high way. David did his thing and would you believe that one of bottle rockets, or Roman candle I don't know what or if either, but something hit a bird and killed, a direct hit I guess. He was in either Junior High or Senior High, I just do not remember.

And then there was the time when Mom, Paul and I went to St. Louis for vacation. I am not sure if we went to Forest Park for a picnic or to the zoo and amusement park. All I remember the roller coaster was the coolest thing in the park. I had \$5.25 and at \$.25 a ride I spent the money on the roller coaster. 26 times riding it, now that was fun and cool!

As a kid growing up in Kansas, taking vacation trips with Mom, Marcille and Paul to Sallisaw, Oklahoma and to St. Louis via the train on passes that Dad would get for us, he never got to go as he had to keep working. Uncle Andy and Aunt Sally would meet us at the train depot with a horse drawn wagon with iron wheels. My sister, Marcille, said "I'm not riding in that and Uncle Andy told her you'll have to walk then...she is not here to defend herself so I do not know what she ended up doing.

Upon graduating from Lyons High School in 1950 and being selected as one of the Boy Scouts in Lyons to attend the National Scout Jamboree in Valley Forge, PA, enjoying the tours to Washington, DC, New York City, NY, Detroit, MI, and Chicago, Il before enlisting in the U.S. Navy. After getting home from the Jamboree and the Korean War having started, I told Mom and Dad I was going to enlist in the Navy. I hitched hiked to Saline, Kansas, enlisted, hitched hiked back home and 3 weeks later left Lyons on the midnight train for Kansas City for my physical and induction into the U.S. Navy, that was on July 27 1950!

I wish I could tell you many stories about preparing for joining the U.S.

NAVY, as I had said earlier, I didn't know what "fun" was or really how to have fun. I was a "tee-totaler" (sp), as if that would have been "fun". We didn't have our own vehicles, except our bikes and you really can't go too far on them, no mountains to climb, no rivers to cross, no oceans to swim in, just Kansas dust, heat, sunflowers and the summer storms that took place...really not too many tornadoes...so leaving Kansas for California was a big adventure for me, even though having just returned from the Jamboree Scout trip just weeks before and the Korean War just starting. There was never a question in my mind that I should join...it was just the patriotic thing to do! So, it was home for the next 3 years and 10 months.

## Chapter 35

### 2005 summer in Alaska

When Marge and I had "thought" our trips to Alaska were over, at least I had thought that, she reminded me that I had promised Missionary Jim Schulz, that if we were needed for the summer of 1998 we could be available.

Following my corresponding with him, he indicated there were at least three locations where we would be needed and for me to select or choose where we should go, but I felt he knew much better than I did of the villages. Emmonak, Unacleet (sp) I think and I have forgotten the 3<sup>rd</sup> one. So we ended up ministering in Emmonak, in western Alaska from early May until October. People had asked me if western Alaska was beautiful, not really but in its own way it was. Very flat tundra and wet, even though very little rain. No mountains in sight, no roads into the villages out in the remote "bush" country of Alaska. So different from the SE and Central area of this huge state!

When Marge and I flew to Emmo the first time on one of the small two engine plane we were surprised but the bareness of the country. When, we flew out of Anchorage to Bethel, then into the vastness of the lower Yukon River it was still cold, with snow on the ground, even though it was mid May! We were met by a missionary “kid” and his wife, I call him “kid” because he grew up in the villages of remote bush. His parents had been missionaries for many years before retiring and settling in “Anchorage”.

Phil and his wife Lynn were excellent host and hostess and leaders in the Yukon Delta Assembly of God Church. Words do fail me in trying to describe how and the way the Yu’pik Eskomes life. This is and has been their way of life for 100’s of years and to think the Lord had allowed us to be a part of their lives! Since there are less than 3 miles of gravel roads here, there are very few vehicles, some cars, a few pickup trucks, bicycles and walking and of course the boats and snow machines are their modes of transportation.

After a few weeks as the weather warmed up and the Yukon River began to thaw, the people started preparing for the annual flooding of the river upon “breakup”. One morning Marge was looking out of the kitchen window and could see the river and said it was moving, and sure enough the breakup had started, but no flooding!

The flooding period is what produces the fire wood for the natives for the coming winter. Logs float down and the men go out in their boats and pull them in to be cut up later. It is interesting to see how them will make log teepees for them to dry out during their short summers. So, we did get to minister to the locals, though many a fearful of people who are not of the Catholic faith.

Of the many experiences I had was watching the women butcher moose meat in the living room and kitchen area on a large piece of cardboard. I watched one of our friends cut a large piece which she handed to me. It was a roast and we cooked

it just like a beef roast and enjoyed it, ever though our first time. Fresh salmon is amazing is all I can say. The first one was about 35 pounder and after some instruction I had gotten in Hydaburg in 1996, I cut large salmon steaks and just writing about it makes my mouth water! Oh, the memories the Lord blest us with, I do praise Him for allowing us include Alaska in our years of ministry!

<sup>30</sup> "And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one. <sup>31</sup> "Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord GOD. Eze. 22:30-31 (NASB)

To my friends in each area of Alaska the Lord allowed Marge and me in 1996 & 97, 98 and me in 2005 and 2007 to be the "man to stand in the gap..." and to answer His call and be obedient to it. To each of you who are reading this "journey" will just obey Him as well and my even feel "...I wish I could do that! " Perhaps, just perhaps IF you will keep listening to God, who still speaks in a small still voice!

## Chapter 36

### North of the Arctic Circle

Alaska! What a beautiful portion of God's creation! Gleaming mountain covered with snow, shining and glistening from the sun. And...did you know IF Alaska were to be divided, Texas would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest state in these United States of America!

Marge and I soon learned...it cost money, extra money, lots of money and at times scarce money! Anytime we left POWI (Prince of Wales Island) not "...prisoner of war..." as someone might think. Expenses included the ferry from POWI to Ketchikan. Cost of air fare to any part of Alaska. When the Alaska Assemblies of God had their annual district council it would be in Anchorage or Fairbanks. Car rental, hotel and meal costs, however it was all worth it.

Earlier you about two couples, whom the Lord spoke to about ministry in Alaska after reading about our experiences of coming out of retirement and ministering in a number of locations, as well as assuming a pastorate! One of these couples had become

pastors of the A/G church in Kotzebue. Following the first council for all three of the couples, we sort of or kind of invited ourselves to visit there, we did and ministered to their congregation over the two weekends.

The Arctic Circle is the dividing line between the North and South. We were there in late May and early June of 2000 and the Arctic Ocean was still almost frozen over and we were able to experience watching the ice jams and learn how at some “breakups” the ice will be pushed on the main street doing severe damage to homes and businesses.

We talk about the costs of living here in the lower 48. I bought 3 large potatoes for \$11.00. Milk almost \$6.00 a gallon. In Emmonak I bought strawberries. A small container had 9 berries for \$13.00. These are only a few of the examples of how expensive it is to live in the “last frontier!” Pastor Mercier explained, “...Howard IF you want eat, you gotta pay no choice! Oh, what were the potatoes for? Jim and Nancy had never eaten “hamburger hash” so I proceeded to make us “hash” for an evening meal. Since Nancy worked at the City offices and Bro. Jim not a cook, I almost made a “batch” of cookies for our dessert!

There are dangers living that far north. Pastor Jim shared an experience he had his first winter there and with his first snow machine. Fresh snow had fallen and some blowing so he decided to take a run out on the runway at the airport. Sped down to near the end of it and turning around he slid off the edge of the asphalt and struggled to dig it out or push it out now avail. He thought he might freeze to death and started walking back to town...when one the men in his church “...just happened...” to ride out into the area and found Pastor Jim walking. He helped Pastor get his machine out of the drift and back to town. He believes and I believe God provided his help and it didn’t “...just happen!”

Jim and Nancy lived in Kotzebue 6 years before his health started failing, and the cost of the air fare they resigned and moved to Anchorage. They purchased a condo and

the Lord provided them with furniture. Again, "...just happened..." to give them what they needed! Wow, isn't our God great and good?

During our trips to Alaska, Marge and I have had many "first time experiences". Such as it was while we were with the Mercer's that I had my first ATV ride. The natives ride these vehicles like they would ride a Harley! In the western part of this huge state, they are their major source of travel!

The Eskimos use them to drag logs, haul fire wood on sleds, transport their families on them, and even a taxi...as they might charge you if they gave you lift!

Now a sad note but Pastor Jim was promoted to his heavenly home and he started living that new life! Folks this is what we all are living for. I tell people, when, not if, you hear I died, don't believe them, 'cause I just started living!

Many of you know that over the years I have worked with the Boy Scouts and the Royal Rangers. When preparing to return to KC from our first trip there, I wondered what type of a souvenir I could take to them. Beach combing was one of the things I enjoyed doing on Prince of Wales Island. On the beach in Hydaburg were sea shells of all sizes, so I collected about a hundred of them, washed them and painted an ocean scene on them. Another time I collected rocks that had barnacles attached, of course not living ones, I don't think. One of the Royal Rangers Mother came to me and ask what the things attached were because her son had told her they were "chronicles". She just needed to know that the things were and what the "gift" was.

The day of two before leaving Kotzebue one of the native ladies came carrying a plastic bag with a number of bone fragments, fossils and ask me if I wanted them. Thinking it over I decided to take them and give them to my Rangers. The kids seemed to be happy with them...you gotta love them Rangers!

Let me reverse the "memory tape" a little. You remember me telling Marge that

I just wanted to stay home after our 1997 trip? Well...after pasturing in Klawock for 5 years and getting home to “stay”. You just gotta be kidding because in decided IF they could use me for the summer of 2005 I would make myself available. Contacting Missionary Jim Schulz he felt I could be of better help in Emmo and be of assistance for the CAMP AN season. The next 6 weeks were extremely busy receiving camping supplies; workers at the small airport, keeping workers and campers at the parsonage before and after the camp. What a wonderful privilege to work with the folks I loved to much. 2005 season came to a close following about 3 months in Emmo once more.

One more Alaska trip. In 2007 Missionary Pastor Schulz contacted me and see IF I could come and be his intern pastor for 6 weeks. During this time doing what ever pastor does during his daily activities, including his duties Sunday and Wednesday services, as well as meeting camp workers at the Anchorage airport, housing them at the church, and having some food ready for them, as the church had a freezer full of food, just needed be unfrozen and the workers could prepare for themselves.

It was a real surprise to have three ladies come as volunteers at Beaver Camp for 3 weeks and have them in the morning service at Crossroads Assembly. Someone kidded me about being in Alaska without my wife and them having dinner with 3 women from our church in Kansas City! I did make a trip out to the camp grounds and even had a meal with them. Beaver Camp is a very woodsy camp. Beautiful evergreen trees, rocky roads...logging roads!

Every couple of weeks I would change where I would be staying, some call it “house sitting” but whatever...I had 4 different beds. Each better than sleeping on the ground. When Camp AN was completed, Pastor Jim and Linda returned to find everything still in place. Lawn cut and trimmed and even Linda’s flowers made it through this warm time in Alaska. Some say their summer is 2 days in July...that is little off as they do have some days where the temp does get around 90 plus.

We even had a Pinewood Derby race while I there. The section their Outpost

was in had maybe 10 cars racing. I had 6 in Kansas City, so I had my wife send me copy of one of them and I cut it out and entered it but sad to say it didn't win anything.

One afternoon I stopped by First Assembly. Pastor Morton was not in, but their custodian was there. Terry Hull, a former Kansan from Medicine Lodge, Kansas. We had fun reflecting on Kansas. Before leaving another young man came in and I was introduced to him, his name, Jerry Morgan. It struck a cord and I ask his wife's name was Henrietta, and she was not but his mother's name was. Later, we went into the office and the secretary pulled out his file and his dad was Jerry Morgan and his wife, Henrietta and had lived in Concordia, Kansas. Long story short, I had married them in late 1960's and had moved top Anchorage when her brother had moved there and as a homesteader. He was a true woodsman, living in a tent, during the time he cleared the land of the tall stately evergreen trees. Built his cabin, made a living off of the land and finally becoming a commercial fisherman, later he married a native lady. His brother Frankie, as his friends and family called him and was no longer living when we visited his sister and her family, but I did meet his wife and several of the children. We live in a very small world.

Talking about camp works, we had a group of about 10 come up from down south. One of them things they wanted to do was take a sight seeing trip. One of the other pastors used their church van and I drove the Speed-the-Light van and we headed for Seward, which was about a hundred mile drive. Beautiful drive along the Turn Again arm, coastal area where the tide comes in twice a day and there are times the waves a sufficient enough to water sky in or in, which ever it is.

I wish I could adequately describe the sights to see along the way to Seaward. The Whittier Glacier surrounded by snow covered mountains, crystal clear water parcels frozen, eagles soaring, mountain goats or sheep, and people repealing the steep mountains cliffs bordering the Seward highway. Traveling highways, gravel roads, as well as logging truck trails, some call them roads but reminded me of some of the back country roads in Southern Missouri.

In and around Seward are some remnants of the devastating earth quake in 1964, eagles abounding! Soaring, eating salmon, or just keeping an “eagle eye” on things. The group lunched in a converted school bus! Wonderful hamburgers and French fries! Only competitor around is Dave’s Dinner in Klawock, a school bus with the kitchen in the seating of the bus and a series of attachments. There were rest rooms, a dining room, a smoking and gathering room. Dave and his sisters hale from England and were very delightful people and took lots of ribbing from folks down south! Dave, the master cook did put together a mighty fine stack of pancakes!

06.12.12

For all who are reading these many experiences of our adventures to, in and from Alaska can only imagine the difficulty in trying to include some many but let me try to wrap up some of them out in the western part of Alaska and just miles from the Bering Sea. The natives, adults and children captured my heart in that having spent their entire lives in a small village.

One day while visiting with a young boy, maybe 10 years old having never been to his grandparents home just 9 miles down river from Emmo. His parents did not own a boat or snow machine and either couldn’t or wouldn’t as 36k for someone to take them. Many of these children in realty have no future. Schools are native corporation owned, some have a basketball court made out of wood for kids to play on, the school does have a gym and basketball is their one and only sport. However, on the road system some schools do have cross-country racing.

Many have no churches, and many do have a Catholic Church, maybe another denomination, such as a Baptist, Presbyterian, Salvation Army and n Assembly of God Church. Summer outreach programs are conducted on the main land. Work teams come up from down south to help build on projects sponsored by a local congregation. An example is of the Blue Water Camp. 8 acre island was donated for developing a camp for

family, kids and whatever group would desire to use it.

Land had to be cleared, logs cut from the trees that were harvested by and cabins built by all donated labor and transported to the island by small boats from the docks in Coffman Cove, located on the Prince of Wales Island. These projects call for dedication and commitment by volunteers who paid their own air and ferry fares over and back from Ketchikan. There are many comforting facts: working where you will be sleeping on the floor of the church or in tents depending on where you are working. Many bring their own food supplies and do not depend on the locals.

Recalling the Apostle Paul when did not wanting to be a burden on the new churches he visited. He was an example as found in II Corinthians 11:6-9 (NASB) "... But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not *so* in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made *this* evident to you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you without charge? I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to serve you; and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a **burden** to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a **burden** to you, and will continue to do so..."

Let me shift locations and go back to near the Bering Sea. Marge and I spend 3 weeks in the village of Kotlik, about 20 minutes from Emmonak. Missionaries had built a nice 3 bedroom parsonage/church right on the bank of a slough. The Corp of Army engineers built rock walls to re-enforce the banks that were eroding and putting the church at risk. There were no roads into or in this village. We walked to the store, to the post office, the city offices and to the school.

It was in this village that we were introduced to the "honey buck" experience. Interesting, to say the least. In their bathrooms, they would built the toilet stool with a lid, and inside a 5 gallon bucket with a plastic bag liner. This required taking the honey bucket bag out to a collection location daily. Each location would then be emptied by city employees and taken to the "land fill" some distance from the village. The water system was being installed when we were there. All water pipes were above ground, insulated and encased in metal pipes.

I said we walked everywhere. We did on board walks and “ramps” were built over the large water pipes so their ATV’s and snow machines could go over them. So, what about showers? Bath tubs? Every home had “water tank” located on an enclosure attached to the house and filled up by running a garden hose from the City office community laundry mat. This created a need to ration water usage and not waste water! The answer to a long hot shower! Not! The same with a hot bubble bath! Not! It was my understanding they had a community shower facility at the laundry! This village had no café, no library, two churches: The Catholic and the Assembly!

There was not too much play time as the summer was about 3 months long, no gardens, no theatre, people did rent movies from the AC store (Alaska Corporation) in almost all villages.

Some excitement included a trip to the “mall” to see what good things people had thrown away. The “Mall” was or is the city dump. So, dumpster diving is not new in the lower 48 as it has been going on for many, many years with the natives. In the larger villages where there might be a clothing store or hardware store, people would search the “mall” for good things thrown out.

Well are you ready for some excitement? Shortly before my time was coming to a close in Emmonak, I was standing with some of the Eskimos on the deck, or porch, the entry to the AC store, watching a “seal hunt”. There were about a dozen boats with at least two people in them..The one at the controls and one standing in the bow with his arrow thrower ready to put into action when a seal would show its head. They would charge like a front line of a football team...the seal? Winner by escaping! Hunters were losers! Because they were too slow! Made for the days excitement!

On my final Sunday in Emmo. A good crowd, maybe 35 and a fellowship meal following. However before the fellowship time we had a baptismal service. I had baptized 4 and dedicated 6 children of two families children. With summer coming to a close and school about to begin and the new pastor and family arriving later on in the

week I left.

Pastor Austin Jones and his wife, Jennifer had been workers some years before at one of the Camp AN sessions and it was there that God called them to State of Alaska. Pastor AJ, at the writing of this book, has just returned to Emmo after itinerating to raise their support and excited about what God is going to do through them and by the Holy Spirit!

The date arrived for my returning to Kansas via a week's stay in Anchorage with Pastor Jim and Nancy Mercer. They are the most gracious people a person would ever want to have as friends. Their home has become a "stopping point" for many missionary families either going or returning...what a blessing! My week with them went fast and let me say "...I was ready to get home"! Even leaving such a beautiful state and city, looking at mountains covered with snow, and gorgeous flowers, oh yea they have annual flowers and one of the high light are the flowers in front of the Alaska News building.

So, it is so long Alaska and hello Kansas! Pastor Jim took me to the Ted Stevens International Airport, along with 2 large boxes of frozen salmon and some halibut fish. It was an emotional time as I knew that in all probability this would be my last trip to this great state leaving many native friends and ministry friends...that final goodbye was for a short time only, as we are all expecting to make that great Reunion! As a matter a fact, Bro Jim Mercer has already beaten us and we look forward to meeting him again! Amen? Amen!

Excitement and anxiousness to be heading home! I have always enjoyed flying and looking forward to it this trip. On the other side of the excitement was the sadness in knowing that my trips to Alaska were over! So my Boarding the Alaskan Airlines plane and heading for Kansas via Chicago O'hara airport was finalizing what I felt the Lord had directed me to do. Arriving in Chicago my layover for about 45 minutes waiting time ended up being about 4 hours, but it was worth it because I had my wife, and Janet my daughter and one of my grand daughters with her children waiting for me at Kansas City International airport! Wow! What a sight to see them, standing holding a

“Welcome Home Grandpa” sign! Folks how much better could this have been?

Getting settled in was something I reluctantly did, knowing no more packing for Alaska! If you ever visit us here in Kansas City and take a tour of our house, you’ll come to what we now call “Our Alaska Wall! Mementos, pictures, some souvenirs from Southeast and western AK! And...many stops in between.

The theme song for Kansas is “Home, Home on the Range” is a little outdated as there are very few buffalo, deer or antelope roam. In some of our wild life reservations scattered over Kansas you’ll find buffalo, deer, and yes, even a few camels in central Kansas. Maybe a black bear in eastern Kansas wanders over from Missouri. Nothing absolutely nothing even faintly resembling Alaska!

How does one begin bring “things” to a close on writing ones life history? I’ve talked about life before our “calling” to Alaska and now gearing down from active ministry to a 2<sup>nd</sup> time retiring!

I’ve had people ask if I do any preaching anymore. My response has been, not really and I do not ask either. God is still working on me in these closing years of my life. It is a privilege to have as much time as I desire to delve into God’s never changing and always something new to discover.

I enjoy reading about Abraham being a “jerk” when being fearful of his beautiful wife being taken from him and he asks her to tell the people you are my sister! Again I say “...what a Jerk” He didn’t just once but twice! A slow learner, he was!

I recall our home pastor, Rev. Owen Carr who years ago was on his 40<sup>th</sup> time reading and studying the Word of God. I am no where near that but I am approaching 35 times...having read threw the King James translation, as well as the NIV, (New International translation), the NASB (New American Standard Bible) The Living Bible; and even the New King James Chronological Study Bible. I have not read the Message

through yet but will my next time through. I really should have it pretty well memorized by now but do not! However so many times when a text being read I am able to quote much of it as it is read. Praise God for His eternal, everlasting, never failing, ever building, peace giving, life's calling and directing Word! His Word IS final! Amen? Amen!

Of the many joys in my retirement years are being able to be near many of my grandchildren and their children! My two sons and one daughter are a source of pure joy for me! Their love for me is evident and appreciated! There is no love like it, with exception of the love of my Heavenly Father!

For 60 years, at the time of this "...An Incredible Journey" writing, my wife and I will have been married 60 years and holding! God has been and is very good to us. Our many blessings have and do include our children and their children and their children.

During these 60 years I wish I could say "...we have had the picture perfect marriage for all to pattern their marriages after, but I cannot. For there have been ups (whatever they are) and downs (whatever they are)! Over the years our health has been relatively pretty good. Our marriage has been maintained by a "commitment" on my part and I assume on my wife's part. The "trust" factor has always been and is a stabilizing factor for us. However there have been bumps? Oh, yes, many of them! Debates or arguments have had their share! And...misunderstandings? Lots of them. Anger? Yep, that too. An example: On one of our moves back to Kansas, Marge's middle brother, Leon drove out and pulled a trailer loaded with our "junk" and I pulled another one filled with the same!

The trip became sort of a sight seeing trip as well. We had stopped at the Sunset "crater" in Flagstaff, AZ. Leon and I decided to hike up to the rim without discussing with my wife. Marge remained in the car with our first born, Larry and our infant daughter, Janet. Hot, sweaty, and angry! She had a right to be. One other time worth mentioning, or again maybe not since I think it is still a sore spot. When we moved back from Ohio we got separated. She's driving the car, with the kids, our dog, Pixie and a

trailer. I am in the rented the u-haul truck.

We had lost contact with each other and missing our meeting point, confused as to what exit at least on my part. Leaving I-35 to get out of traffic and in doing so she got onto a dead end street without any room to turn around and she with great difficulty managed to get turned around and made it to Ottawa, Kansas. Angry, you bet! Result of me making connection with each her. Sorry dear! Now, that is one of the “emotions” on my part as well. You’ll have to ask Marge about hers IF there are more. I know there have been just not acknowledged!

Let me say, “...the majority of my anger deals with management or lack of management of our own homes, more times than I can name or count when coming home from a road trip, as I was a driver for Seaton United Van Lines, and spending time cleaning up and/or washing dishes. Then, along the way, praying for and preparing messages to preach in the coming services. I know that raising 3 children without their daddy is not an easy task, but other women have done it and do it and I just couldn’t understand why my wife couldn’t, wouldn’t or just didn’t.

One of the things that “shook me up” was a short time after we were marriage we had moved to San Diego and into our first apartment for about 6 weeks, coming home from duty on the Piedmont and finding dishes in the sink and wondering why. When I ask her “...I am on vacation!” My thought was “...really!” I would have thought a new bride would do that but would want to impress her new husband...there’s not a married woman with thinking that would go along with that? I don’t believe I said anything but should have! I guess my expectation was to have a tidy, well kept place to live. Oh, well!

It should have been a “red” flag as to how our marriage would be, but didn’t.

Like most Christian married couples when talking about their marriage perhaps would say “... divorce never, murder yes, many times!” For me, my marriage has been an endurance test. By simply not receiving the emotional and intimate support from my wife as I would like to have had. It was just never talked about for whatever reason but

should have, so I must absorb much of the blame for allowing it to go on.

Was I ever tempted to “quit”? Tempted to “leave”? Yes, there have been times. One time around our 17<sup>th</sup> year of marriage, I felt I had had enough. However, I did try to make amends after we had some “letter writing”. We made plans for a “honeymoon” we had never had and spend a weekend in Nebraska. Nice and romantic! And... now, over the past 20 years, we have been married but have not marriage! Probably because of my prostate surgery going wrong. Leaving me, impotent or ED as we know it today has created a living together like a brother and sister. Yes, we are completing 60 years as two people living together but not really as husband and wife!

I must say this. I appreciate how Marge has been a willing supporter of the places we have moved to believing this is what God wanted for us. Marge is an excellent pianist and organist. Holy Spirit led in her playing worship music and her sense of His leading. She displayed her ability in writing and producing many of our Christmas and Easter programs. Sunday school lessons for our churches in Alaska. In Hydaburg and in Emmonak, Alaska she wrote SS material for the children.

In each of the churches I was pastor of she was a blessing to the people there and was led of the Holy Spirit in ministering. Again, I say, I did and do appreciate what she has done. God does give me the ability to “cope”, to “get along”, sort a like “...holding on till the end!” I did take my wedding vows seriously and believe in the elements of togetherness, including the “...until death do we part.”

There are those who would ask me “...of what do you want people to remember of you?” If I put it in one word, it would be “...Steadfast!” Put in 10 words or less. “...doing and being all that my Heavenly Father expects.”

Perhaps these comments regarding my marriage are too personal. I believe my “journey” would have been lest honest IF I painted a picture perfect marriage. I am well aware how people around us today look at couples married 50 years and longer and many

of them imply “perfection” and we know they were not or are not.

Hollywood has portrayed marriage of two people as “...IF it works out ok, and IF it doesn’t that is ok too!” They enter marriage with this idea in mind. Marge and I did not have this attitude when we got married! It was “...until death do us part!” and we meant it not knowing the future and all that it would bring. Good, bad, wonderful, ugly, happy, sad, joyful, exciting, boring, are some of the emotions that could and would and do define how people are when married! Maybe all of the above!

Just think...from the wheat fields of central the Sunflower State and all the way from Lyons, Kansas to the great State of Alaska, the largest state of these United States of America and the last frontier where people still go to visit, to live and some to desire to minister to the Alaska natives! There have been many stops in between...from just being a bare footed kid wading in the ditch filled with runoff water after a rain storm to being co- captain of the Lyons High School football team. Enlisting in the U.S. Navy, upon my discharge and attending Bible School, answering the “Call” of the Lord to the ministry.

The summer of 1952 I married the sister of my best friend, Carl. Over the years following I have pastured in Harper, McCracken, Great Bend, Kansas, and in Newtown, Ohio, Concordia and Kansas City, Kansas. I guess the Lord was not finished with me yet because after retiring the first time, came out of retirement to pastor a native church in Klawock. 3 summers in western Alaska and back to Kansas City, Kansas until the day the Lord decides “enough is enough” and calls me Home to be with Him, for a reunion with family and friends who just “beat me” home!

*“..IN MY FATHER’S HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS AND I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU...” John 14:1-6*

I do want to thank you for taking time to make this journey with me. Perhaps you have learned what makes up Howard Marshall, realizing that PBPWMFGINFWMY. (Please be patient with me for God is not finished with me yet)! My friends and family are important and vital to me and I need every one of you. My desire is for you to have God’s very best in your life.

PS:

Thank you, Pastor Jim and Linda Schultz for your kindnesses over the years and giving me such a warm welcome and the opportunity to serve as your “substitute”, during Camp AN season. Especially, thanks to your staff and their help, during my time in ministry at Crossroads Assembly and in Anchorage.

To:

Sis. Doris Fellows one of Alaska’s long time missionaries who refused to say “No” to the call of God! The effects of her life will go on. She has been promoted to her heavenly home.

Special Thanks To:

**The congregations of:**

Northland Cathedral Assembly for their generous supporting of us with their prayers and financial support on our trips to Alaska!  
General Council of the Assemblies of God Home Missions Department  
For their approval and support to be Ambassadors in Mission  
Kansas District Council for publishing an article on our “Retirement” And the support of the District Superintendent and Staff  
Alaska District of the Assemblies of God for their support while ministering in Western Alaska, Central (Anchorage area), and Southeastern Alaska  
Klawock Prince of Peace Assembly of God, for calling me to be their pastor and allowing me to serve them for 5 years

PS To Missionaries Jim and Linda Schulz in assisting us in locating places of need. Their love and devotion to the work among the natives of Alaska is unsurpassed by anyone and anytime. God using them in developing a dream and a calling to provide camping experiences for the Yu’pik Eskimos along the lower Yukon River. Camp AN is now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year ministering to the children, youth and adults.

Jim and Linda provide assistance to all workers, coming and going to Camp AN

by picking them up at the airport, housing them before and after camp and transporting them back to the airport for their trip home.

And...Pastor Jim allowed me to minister at Crossroads Assembly during his absence while supervising all Camp AN activities. Your congregation was a blessing to me and again, a big THANK YOU for your love and dedication to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! To God be the Glory both now and to years to come!

And...to my Heavenly Father, who in His providence called and then providing the way for my wife and I to serve Him in various ways throughout our years of married life. Dating way back to the beginning at the Mother Layne's Hospitality Home for Servicemen in San Diego, in working there as a volunteer in doing whatever needed to be done. Our Saturday "field day"; working on the street corner inviting fellow servicemen to the services throughout the week. This was done mainly on Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon, for services conducted by neighboring Assemblies of God Churches. Only our God knows how many of these men and women gave their hearts to the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit, called into the ministry and attending Bible School to become professors, missionaries, evangelists, pastors and faithful laymen in churches all over.

For me personally early ministry starting in 1955 in Harper, Kansas and my last pastorate in Klawock, Alaska in 2004!

This journey would not be complete if I did not provide you, the reader, with the plan of Salvation as I have included it in my ministry with the children and youth in the churches pastored and especially in "Kidsville" the elementary children's church at Northland Cathedral located in Kansas City, Missouri while I was their children's pastor.

## *The ABCs of Salvation*

A simple plan of Salvation appears each week in the [Pentecostal Evangel](#) magazine, and I want those who read these comments to know that this plan is for them too! Although it is simple, it is effective if you sincerely follow each step.

**"A" - Admit YOU are a sinner.**

Romans 3:23 "... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 10:13 "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD will be saved."

You must ask God for forgiveness -- no one can do it for you.

Romans 5:8 "God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

#### **"B" - Believe in Jesus**

It is not enough just to believe, you must accept Him into your life by putting your trust in Him as your only hope for salvation.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me' "

You become a child of God when you receive Jesus into your life.

John 1:12 "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name."

Revelation 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me."

#### **"C" - Confess - that Jesus is your Lord and Savior.**

Romans 10:9-10 "...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

This means you should tell someone that you have asked Jesus into your life. Share what has happened to you.

**Pray this prayer:** "Lord Jesus, I admit I am a sinner. I want You to forgive me of all my sin, and I believe that you died for me. Now I accept you as my personal Savior and do confess with my mouth that I am born again and I am a new creation by His precious blood that was shed for me. Amen."

**Note:** If you prayed and asked Jesus into your heart, or you need help, please give me a call at (913) 788-8637 in Kansas City, Kansas. God bless you!

For my closing remarks I want to answer the question "...Why did I go after retirement? Isaiah said it well:

Read Isaiah 6:8 "...then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US? AND I SAID, "HERE AM I SEND ME." Isaiah submitted himself entirely to God's service. No matter how difficult his task would be, he said, "here am I. Send me!" Guys, the or clearly he saw God, the more aware he became of his own powerlessness and inadequacy to do anything of lasting value without God. BUT he was willing to be God's spokesman. ARE YOU?

Let me suggest to you, WHEN God calls, will you also say, "...HERE AND I. SEND ME!"?

No Conclusion...to be continued...

at our Heavenly Reunion!

***TO GOD BE, THE GLORY  
FOR NOW AND FOREVER!***