

ACORN NEWSLETTER

Association of Canadian Ordained Retired Nazarenes

Spring 2020

Welcome to the Covid-19 edition of the ACORN newsletter. Many of the responses this time are telling us how we and our churches are coping with the pandemic. The good news is that none of our members who responded seem to have been infected by the virus. Hopefully all of this will be over by the time the Fall edition comes around.

GREETINGS FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR

I pray that in this strange season you are keeping well. I pray that you are taking this time to draw closer to the Lord, to claim all of His wonderful promises and to “rest” in His comfort. This is certainly a time of great challenge for all of society, but indeed for the Church. After all, we are a social bunch; we thrive on fellowship, we long to be with one another. We hold dear our weekly (and sometimes more than weekly) gatherings. Yet, in all of the changes and restrictions, we are finding ways to be together while being apart. That speaks volumes to me because it underscores the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I am drawn to the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians, chapter 2 verses 12 -13...”Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.”

Now these words come right after that great “self-emptying” section of the letter where the Apostle reminds us that our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, and then he goes on to describe what Jesus actually did by pouring himself out for humankind.

He goes on to connect that great and powerful section with the one I referenced by using the word...”therefore” or “so” or “for that reason”and now my paraphrase....

“we can live just like Jesus, whether or not Paul is with us, or the pastor is with us or the missionary is with us, because it is God who does His work in us and even though we may not be in fellowship with each other, we are always in fellowship with Him and for us, He will act according to His good purpose.”.....Hallelujah and Amen.

There is no doubt about the fact that this is an extremely difficult time. However, we will get through this and when we do; we will emerge tried and tested, faithful and true.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Roy and Judy Austin, Annapolis Valley, NS.

Judy and I are keeping well, and enjoying our retirement in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia. Our honeybees survived the winter, and today (April 7) I observed them bringing pollen into the hives, so the season has officially begun. Much of the winter was spent cleaning up trees that had blown down when Dorian passed by. We were 6 days without power. We had expected to be in Alberta and BC this spring but the Corona Virus put those plans on hold. Thankfully all of our family are keeping well, and they keep tabs on us. We continue to attend the Annapolis Valley Church of the Nazarene. Our church has welcomed several new members over the past couple of years. Our pastor, Dianne Elliot is giving good leadership. Judy and I enjoy leading the Adult Sunday School Class.

So far, we have been busy enough with spring activities on our 10 acres of the “South Mountain” that we haven’t felt house-bound. The biggest problem I have had is trying to figure what day it is. Without church services on Sundays, I seem to have lost the point of reference from which to orient the rest of the week! Of course, the memory thing could be a sign of something else.

Glenn and Zelma Boyce, Innisfail, AB.

We traveled to Medicine Hat for Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings with Zelma’s family. Also we were at the farm (Lyle & Kathy’s) for Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations with family. In November Zelma visited her granddaughter, Nikki, in Revelstoke. Nikki was expecting her first child. Baby Clara arrived in March, 2020, to everyone’s delight. Jordan and Jenn, Kathy’s second daughter, are building a house on the farm, and expect to move in later this spring.

I still lead our seniors gathering each Tuesday afternoon. We have a short devotional and enjoy a couple of hours of fellowship with coffee, goodies and games. In December a Christmas supper was prepared for our seniors by the youth group. Both Zelma and I attend weekly Bible studies at the church. However, these activities have all gone by the board since the virus shut us down. Life has been rather different since the middle of March. There are no “get-to-gethers,” and Sundays just aren’t the same. We do keep quite well occupied at home with reading, jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, games, etc. Family and private devotions have ample time. On Sunday we get our pastor’s service by iPad, and get some services on T.V. Zelma does a fair amount of baking – homemade bread is great! The Lord is still sovereign, and He does not forsake His own.

Warren Boyd, Abbotsford, BC.

I am in “lock down” here in Abbotsford at Tabor Court. To the present time our seniors home has not had the virus that has plagued many such places. No family or visitors are allowed to enter and we are under the “distance contact and wash your hands rule”. A designated family member can bring groceries to the entry and a staff member will meet outside the entry to bring them in where the groceries wait 24 hours before we pick them up. Dining has been rearranged to 3 sittings with one per table, spaced about 8 feet apart. This week we could go out doors escorted a few yards apart “tandem”. I am one of the fortunate ones as I can have “face time” with my family here in Abbotsford, and David in San Diego. I celebrated my 97th birthday with my family on “face time” so we were together, thanks to “technology”. I am thankful for the Lord’s care and hopefully may get to the “new normal,” whatever it may be.

Christine Collins, Oxford, NS.

I had 2 grandsons get married this year and a granddaughter, otherwise not much happening. “OH, YES,” my children won’t let me go out to the store, post office or anywhere that there would be danger of contacting the corona virus. They say it’s the “old people” who are most in danger from it! What are they implying? I have continued to teach a weekly ‘ladies Bible study.’ With the advent of the corona virus, however, I have to do the weekly lessons on paper and they have come to pick them up from my front porch. Also I continue to lead the seniors ‘once a month’ get together and I also visit seniors who are shut in – not because of the virus , but because of age. These days I keep in touch by a phone call. Because of the virus I am staying home – my family are doing my grocery shopping and mail and other pick ups.

Riley and Karen Coulter, Calgary, AB.

In early October I was diagnosed with Lymphoplasmacytic lymphoma, an indolent (slow moving) blood disorder, also known as Waldenstrom Macroglobulinemia. After four of six chemotherapy treatments, the diagnosis is that the cancer is “under control” and “very quiet.” Karen and I are grateful for God’s continuing faithfulness, mercy and grace during this time. I continue to serve as Director of Stewardship Services for the Church of the Nazarene Canada, doing most of my work online during these days of quarantine. I serve as Nazarene representative on the interfaith Chaplaincy Committee of Corrections Canada, chair of the Siloam Mission board of directors in Winnipeg, as well as our church board (Stuart Williams is our pastor).

Our church is doing well during this unusual time of COVID-19, offering online services each Sunday and prayer meetings and other ministries through the online platforms available. Karen and I are enjoying participating in our services, as well as a couple of other churches on a regular basis.

Karen and I will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary in June; time certainly flies by!

John and Miar Davidson, Calgary, AB.

With health challenges abounding we have not gone anywhere these days. The biggest highlight to come our way was the visit of our son Dan and his son Ian, in January to help celebrate my birthday. We had a great few days with them.

As to our activities during these isolation days, we are coping very well. Just staying home and enjoying our new accomplishments with the computer. The big lesson learned was how to “SKYPE” with family. One Sunday we were on the computer for sometime with our daughter and family in Tennessee, our grandson, Ben and his wife Sydney, in Houston, TX and our grandson, Caleb and his wife Makayla, in San Marcos, TX. That was a wonderful blessing. We continue to attend Calgary First Nazarene and pray for one and all

We have stayed home, wash our hands and read. We enjoy the computer – watch and listen to services on-line.

Ken and Dalene Fach, Calgary, AB

Thanksgiving 2019 we had 13 of 21 possible family members at our table. In November we left for Mazatlan MX where we spent most of the winter. In March, when the virus hit and the gov’t wanted us home, we were able to get a seat on the second last scheduled flight. We are now visiting family by video, phone and distancing on the front step or the deck. Our daughter Sandra, Derek and family were to move to NY early April where Derek has accepted the position at the energy desk for the Financial Times. Borders were closed and fortunately they were able to cancel the sale of their UK home and remain there, both working from home. Other family are in Calgary with grandkids scattered across Canada and UK. They thankfully, keep in touch with us. Easter was at a distance however tulips and lilies arrived on our doorstep.

Our church at a distance includes:

Skyview services on line

Ambrose chapels led by our son Terry who is the Chaplain

Cliff College (UK) morning prayers where our daughter is a professor.

We also listen to the magnificent pipe organ music from the downtown cathedral.

We are spending corona time isolated even though our quarantine is over.

An occasional grocery shop, doing a puzzle, playing games, watching TV, and yes at times still shoveling snow. When weather permits we sit on the deck.

Also a major purge has seen us going through old C.N.C. Portals from the 50’s and 60’s and years of photo albums. Lots of memories.

If possible we will put our home on the market and move to a condo

Glenn and Hertha Follis, Victoria, BC.

Hertha has been dealing with an eye problem affecting her left eye. Unfortunately the surgical procedure she was to have in April at Vancouver General Hospital, was postponed indefinitely pending how the virus plays out. This has been one of several delays Hertha has experienced with this issue. However, Hertha is in good spirit and doing well. We are both feeling well and looking forward to a great spring and summer season, regardless of the virus intrusion. We are pleased to share that our son Steve and family, are back in their renovated house after a 15 month restoration, renovation project, as a consequence of an electrical short caused a fire in the attic of their home. We are so happy they were able to get back home prior to the virus outbreak. It appears that BC has been very well served by our provincial health authorities. Our extended family are weathering the outbreak well.

Our primary involvement in church is focused on participating in the SHARPS ministry to seniors here at the church. I take my turn in leading the group Bible study. Bill Bahan, soon to be aged 90, continues to give active leadership in the ministry. Also our temporary supply pastor is Dr. David Neale, former academic dean at Ambrose University. Dr. Neale is an outstanding preacher/teacher and the church is prospering under his ministry. The duly appointed pastoral search team continues it's work. So be on the alert, they may be after your pastor. Very effective church services are being held online for which we are very appreciative.

We are comfortably located here in Victoria with great walking paths available to us. So taking leisurely walks is a great outlet for us. One does not need to worry about icy walking paths or sidewalks, just walking between the drops, downpours is a challenge. Son Steve lives nearby and he and Heather are helping us with shopping and other needs as they arise.

Danny and Bonnie Gales, Medicine Hat, AB.

We are now living in Medicine Hat, Alberta and have moved into a condominium – so I no longer have to cut the lawn or shovel the snow!! All of our children have moved to the USA because that is where they found good jobs. Bonnie and I are healthy and feeling blessed. We thank God that we have avoided the virus. I work in the church as a volunteer staff person. My responsibilities include: the ministry of prayer, hospital visitation, coordinating the altar prayer ministry. I am very grateful that the church took me on in this position. My wife, Bonnie, serves as the NMI President, and coordinates the church decorating committee. We are self-isolating and only go out once a week for groceries and/or necessary errands. So far, our building is virus free from covid-19, for which we are very grateful.

Dale and Marlene Hanson, Rocky Mountain House, AB.

Marlene and I enjoyed a wonderful thanksgiving Sunday with our son Mike and his two kids, Daisy and Davis who also happened to be two of our four grandchildren. Normally, I spend Thanksgiving Monday golfing as that is the day our local course shuts down for winter, but winter came early this year so there was no golfing. Once again, this year I joined a community choir, which presented a Christmas concert in mid-Dec. We sang a variety of music most of which, was really fun to sing. The last half of our concert consisted of a thought provoking cantata that was built around a song entitled “Bring Me Back to Bethlehem”... very inspirational.

In January, Marlene and I were able to tick off another bucket list item with a three-week adventure in Belize. The first week was spent in the jungle, which was just amazing... The scenery was incredible. While in the jungle locations we were able to visit three separate Mayan ruins, but our most adventurous excursion was a visit to the Actun Tunichil Muknal cave also known as the Cave of the Crystal Maiden. This cave was a place where the ancient Mayans held religious celebrations every 20 years. It was fascinating to see, but physically challenging. We had to swim into the cave and then waded, climbed, swam, etc. inside the cave for two hours until we arrived at the site of the “Crystal Maiden.” The Crystal Maiden” is the perfectly preserved skeletal remains of a young teenaged girl who they believed was the victim of human sacrifice. Then we had to hike, swim, descend, wade, for two more hours in order to exit the cave. It was a challenging excursion, but we survived! The Mayan ruins were fascinating to see, but also sobering as we observed a people trapped in a Christ-less culture. Our second week was spent on the coast in central Belize at a place called Placencia, a beautiful relaxing place. While here we went on two excursions... a fishing trip on the ocean and a river float (on inner tubes) through the jungle. We both voted for the river float as our favorite excursion! Our last week was spent on an Island just off the coast in Northern Belize called Ambergris. Our excursions while on Ambergris were a Sunset Cruise; a day at a place called The Secret Beach; and a day of snorkeling at the Hol Chan Marine Reserve where we saw tons of tropical fish and coral.

Prior to the lockdown, our main church involvement was to lead one of our local church’s worship teams. We have three Worship Teams so we’d be “on” every third week. Marlene plays one of the keyboard instruments and Dale conducts the service and leads the singing. Our church activities since the lockdown are mentioned below. We made it back home from Belize before the lockdowns began so didn’t have to quarantine or anything, but we haven’t done much other than trying to stay safe. We’re trying to be good and “just stay home” as much as possible. On Sunday’s we have joined the online Worship Service of our own church plus have joined other church services as well. On the 2nd Sunday of the lockdown, we presented an online Sunday school class and the week prior to Easter, we volunteered to help deliver Easter kits to church families. To overcome the boredom we read; Marlene spends lots of time quilting and

Dale putters on his model railroad. For exercise we go for walks whenever the weather allows which hasn't been as often as we'd like as winter has had a difficult time "letting go" this year.

Russell Hart, Salmon Arm, BC.

Let's thank the Lord for the telephone. We keep in touch and informed by phone. Our going and coming is very limited. So we have little family meetings, but by phone. The big thing is "the Lord has kept us well and free from the virus. The only church activity is keeping in touch and praying for each other by phone. I keep busy in my room reading, puzzling, crocheting lap covers, writing – and the time flies by.

Debbe Hinchey, Borden, PEI.

Hi everybody, I am not at school these days....Corvid 19 has all public schools branch employees working from home...my job doesn't require too much school-related work that I have to do from home...mainly keeping up with e-mails etc. I have been studying for an on-line course from New Brunswick department of Education. And doing lots of cleaning in between. There is a big yard here so I had plenty of raking to do, which is enjoyable when weather is nice. I have also been helping out at the "Crossings Café" here in Borden, packing lunches for the truck drivers who are going and coming over the Confederation Bridge. The café has received a lot of donations – money and food items for the lunches. They buy food to cook, like hamburgers/sausages and barbeque them over at the weigh scales and pass them to the drivers while they are waiting. The drivers really appreciate the kindness and we get so many thank-yous!

I guess we are all watching church services on line. We miss our church families and a good reminder that we not take each other for granted. I don't know what I will be doing this summer, it will depend if the Emporium, where I usually work (in Gateway Village) can open. My family is well and everyone is staying safe. MY dad (Winfred Bridge s) was 90 last fall and he is just fine. I am well and healthy and thank God for all His blessings.

Harold Hoffman, Calgary, AB.

On December 6, after many years of poor health, Joyce passed quietly and peacefully into the arms of Jesus. I want to thank everyone who supported me with your prayers, your kind words, your cards and e-mails. I am overwhelmed by all the love shown me from pastors and friends all across Canada. Joyce and I had over 68 wonderful years together. I thank God for His grace and presence which continues to sustain me through this time.

I live in a 16 story senior community where about 130 people reside. All recreational activities have been cancelled and any gatherings at all are only at meal time where the tables are far apart and only two people to a table. We are discouraged from leaving the

building and only one visitor is allowed if that visit is essential. Except for meal time I am in isolation. I am claiming the promises of God as found in Psalm 91 for my safety.

Arnold and Laura Johnson, Merritt, BC.

Greetings from Beautiful Nicola valley in Merritt, BC. I trust you are all well in these historic days. Last summer, Laura and I made the big move into a senior's residence called Nicola Meadows. The move went OK but the big part was getting rid of a lot of stuff and memories. This is the same residence where we helped out with a Sunday night "hymn sing" for the past 14 years. Since the "outside folks" can't come in now, the "inside folks" have carried on. My part is the devotional and prayer.

Laura tripped on a curb and broke her upper right arm which has been a challenge, but it seems to be O.K. now. About the same time I turned in my drivers licence due to my vision. Stores, Doc's office, etc. are mostly within walking distance. So I don't need a car except to get out of town. The view from our 3rd story apartment looks out over the Nicola river and the surrounding meadows with its wildlife. Two deer wandered by today and a pair of Canada geese patrol the lawn every day. God's creation is so wonderful.

Allan and Goldie MacMillan, Ottawa, ON.

We are thankful our family are all staying relatively healthy during these challenging times. Allan's Parkinson's is still manageable, and his elliptical machine provides exercise though he misses nature-walks from the past. Christmas had all our family together here for a blessed time, also the previous Thanksgiving celebration, with our sons and families home here from Toronto. In total we enjoy 3 grandsons and 3 granddaughters. Our Trinity Church of the Nazarene is now providing a Zoom Sunday service, bringing pastor Frank and Cindy and our music director, Matthew into our homes as we are blessed to worship, sing and pray together by computers in all our individual homes, while still keeping a sense of church community together.

Though we are all remaining well, we missed having Scott and Cam and their wives and wee ones home from Toronto for Easter because of the lock down rules and travel advisories. But we are blessed to have our own 4 room apartment, with a separate entrance on one side of the main floor of our large home, while our daughter, son-in-law and 4 children live in the main part. So we are happily blessed, to be safely isolated together. God is good and we are blessed.

Clair and Donna MacMillan, Moncton, NB.

We join with virtually all humanity in having a season of forced rest. While there have been a number of inconveniences and disappointments, we in New Brunswick have remained somewhat isolated from the brunt of the effect of the medical crisis. Canada is leading the way among nations in responding to the financial and social impact that

continues to change the way people see the world; in New Brunswick we have had no deaths that could be traced to the virus and only 118 people who have fallen ill from it. Nevertheless, we feel a particular kinship with friends and family in other places who continue to struggle with the day to day realities of the circumstances.

I was saddened by the death of my uncle, Dr. Lorne MacMillan; in normal times I would have travelled to Indiana for a funeral and celebration of his life and ministry; ; in these times there was no funeral, just the promise of a memorial service at some future date. In this we recognize that a pandemic is always a “great equalizer” as we feel a deeper affinity with millions of other people around the world who face this situation alone.

Donna and I have chosen to view this time as a gift from God by recognizing this as a “year of jubilee” (see Leviticus 25:13, Leviticus 25:28, Numbers 36:4); a time of rest, of reflection and worship, of restoring balance in the communities of God’s people. We have lived so long in the “virtual community” of our local church that we have scarcely been part of the people who live nearby, but have remained strangers because we haven’t walked in the same circles until now. We remain connected with friends and family through telephone and internet but we are meeting neighbours and making new friends simply because our patterns of activity have been disrupted. I am reminded of Thomas Carlyle’s observation that “as Christians our task is not to see what lies dimly in the future but rather to do what lies clearly at hand.”

We remain fully involved in Moncton First church where we have served for the past 35 years. For the 18 years, while I was the pastor, my main focus was evangelism through public services, hospital work and home visitation. Now as “pastor emeritus” my main opportunity to serve is by being supportive of our pastor, Pattie Rossiter. Pastor Pattie has responded very creatively to the current situation. She has assigned board members to stay in touch with the congregation by telephone, assuring that everyone has a proactive contact with the church every week. She also provides an “online” worship service each week available through “You Tube.” This weekly 47 minute service allows her to continue her preaching and teaching ministry to all who connect. We are able to give our tithes and offerings by direct deposit from our bank.

David Parker, Rochester, NY.

Last fall my family managed to get together and celebrate both Canadian and US Thanksgiving. We have been doing that for years. We are happy to be thankful (and enjoy pumpkin pie) as often as possible. During Advent Kathy and I went downtown to hear Handel’s Messiah performed by the Rochester Philharmonic and Choir. My family spent Christmas together at Karen and John’s in Georgetown Ontario. Grandson Gregory is finishing up his 3rd year at the Royal Military College in Kingston, doing courses online at home because of the virus. My other grandson Lucas will graduate from high

school this year (but without a graduation ceremony). Next year he will start at Rochester Institute of Technology with a major in engineering.

I am still involved at Rochester Calvary Church of the Nazarene, especially in the senior adult small group. I do some supply preaching on the district as needed and still assist with funerals and an occasional wedding.

The virus has hit pretty hard in this area. I only go out to get groceries and to walk in parks. I just made a mask from a linen dinner napkin ... it looks cool. Of course, church services are online. I am trying to keep in contact with folks through email and phone, just as others are checking up on me.

Margaret Rossiter, Surrey, BC.

In February and March I was not well enough to be out. My foot and ankle continue to bother me. I was all set to go to church towards the end of March and then the virus restricted all of our movements. My kids have me in isolation in my room. They continue to go to work. Beth and Bethany work with 3 women's safe houses. Liam has been laid off but works some with his dad and brother in the renovations business. They come as far as my door to say hello. They are trying their best to keep me from the virus. The full extent of this virus hasn't really hit BC YET. Several people in hospital and a few have died from it. The Lord knows where we are and we are keeping safe in His hands. Our church has a live stream service on Sundays, and its interesting to visit Moncton First and Summerside, PEI and see my family leading these Churches. My granddaughter Rebecca Gilbertson lost her husband in a car accident. A tire blew and he lost control and both he and his passenger were killed. Rebecca is 31. Continue to keep her in prayer, and also her husbands family. Rev. Gilbertson is ordained in the CMA Church in Calgary. I miss going to church but enjoy the computer services. I am catching up on some of the technicalities.

Norman Sheets, Trenton, ON.

I am still supply pastor at Quinte West (Trenton) church and enjoying it here. I was able to attend the Pastor's retreat in November and really appreciated it. It is a long time since I was able to attend one. Miss contacts with people and regular church activities. But this too shall pass. Looking ahead.

Bill and Rita Stewart, Moncton, NB.

Rita and I are keeping well and free from Covid-19. We are going to be celebrating our 60th wedding anniversary this coming June. Because of the corona virus we have hopefully delayed the celebration to August 1st, when, we hope, most of the extended family will be able to travel and attend.

Mel & Lorna Tucker, Victoria, BC.

This has been a difficult winter for us, but we are grateful for God's presence always! Mel entered hospital on December 5th with severe chest pains and when there, discovered a bad case of pneumonia. The next 2 months he spent in hospital as the doctors treated him for various ailments. He was given some medications that caused his blood pressure to drop. He fainted and had a couple of falls injuring his back. They fixed the fracture and stopped the medications. He came home at the end of January, but has an on-going blood condition – making him very tired and needing a blood transfusion every 3 weeks. With our children's and church family's support and prayers, we are doing well now.

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

JOYCE HOFFMAN: The wife of Harold Hoffman, passed away, in Calgary, on the evening of Friday, December 6th. Joyce and her husband pastored churches across Western Canada.

REV. ROBERT MCLELLAN: Pastor Bob passed away on December 10th. He worked and ministered many years in Shelburne, Ontario. Pastor Bob and his wife Maxine pastored churches in the Canada Central district.

MARY ENNS: Passed away in Prince Albert, Sask. On January 6th. She was 92 years of age. Mary and her husband Benjamin served faithfully in the Province of Saskatchewan.

PHYILLIS SPENCE: Wife of Raymond and mother of Pat Fitzpatrick wife of Ian Fitzpatrick National Director for the Canadian Church died in Ireland on January 22nd. Phyllis and Raymond pastored churches in Scotland, England, Ireland and Canada.

REV. HARRY JOHNSON: age 85, passed away in Rocky View, Alberta. He and his wife Carolyn pastored churches in Alberta.

REV. LESLIE PORTER: age 84, passed away in Calgary, Alberta on February 11th. Leslie and his wife who had predeceased him pastored in England, Ontario and Alberta.

AGNES FALK: age 99. Agnes and her husband Norman were Nazarene pastors for many years. Their ministry was in Alberta and British Columbia.

WALTER MACPHERSON: age 94. Information about Walter is featured in the "Snapshot" column of this edition of ACORN.

LORNE MACMILLAN: age 92, passed away on April 5th. Lorne and his wife Joyce pastored churches in Indiana until Lorne became the district superintendent of the Canada Central district. He served in this capacity until his retirement in 1992.

CHARLES GRANT: Charles passed away on Sunday, May 3rd after a long and painful illness. He and his wife Gayle pastored churches in Ontario, New Brunswick, British Columbia and retired to Calgary Alberta.

SNAPSHOT

Rev. Walter S. Macpherson Jr.

(Note: I had planned to feature Walter in the last edition of ACORN but the material arrived too late to be included. It was agreed between Walter and I that we would include it in this spring edition. In the meantime, however, Walter has passed away. This account of his ministry is a good memorial for a worthy man.)

I was born on July 5th, 1925 in Vineland, New Jersey, the home of my grandparents. Mother always went home to have her five babies.

I was converted in a New Years eve watch night service in Lowville, NY where my father was pastoring and felt a call to pastoral ministry during my last year of high school.

Irene and I both went to Eastern Nazarene College in 1943 and graduated in 1948. I with a B.A. in Philosophy and Theology and Irene with a B.A. in Philosophy and also a BA in Theology.

We were married on August 14, 1948 and, while on our honeymoon, I was called to pastor the Watertown, NY Church of the Nazarene. This was a congregation of about 40, meeting in a house church with our apartment upstairs.

Following our ministry in Watertown, we went to Utica, NY, then to a church plant in Florida, and then to North Carolina for three pastorates. It was from Kinston, NC, that Rev. Robert Woods called us to take the pastorate in Mt Pearl, Newfoundland. After serving in Mr. Pearl and Bay Roberts, we moved to Corner Brook to try to start a church there. We began a ministry with children and young people, but our great regret is that we could not persuade enough adults to make a viable church there possible. Thankfully, some of those young people are still serving the Lord.

While in Corner Brook, I earned a B Ed. So I could do substitute teaching and MLS which led to employment as librarian in the regional hospital. After serving 20 years in Newfoundland, Canadian Nazarene College, (now Ambrose University), needed a librarian and called me to fill that need.

We retired and built our retirement home on the site of Irene's birth. We therefore were back where we started, by attending the Watertown, NY church, now a congregation of about 250. Spending more than we had, I worked as librarian at a Roman Catholic junior college and paid off the mortgage in five years. We then volunteered for overseas work and were assigned to our college in Australia for two years and then to our Trinidad college for four years. While in each place, I computerized the card catalog and converted from the Dewey System to the Library of Congress System.

After returning from Trinidad, Irene had a stroke. Her mind retrained its sharpness, but her mobility was impaired so she required a walker and a wheelchair. I cared for her for 12 years after which she had another stroke, which required a nursing home care with her death occurring after seven months.

The deacon in Watertown church who had done hospital and nursing home and shut-in visitation got sick during the interim between pastorates and I said "I can do that" and I've been doing it ever since. It is interesting to be on staff (voluntary) in the church I pastored 71 years ago.

We had four children who all married. Lois has three children, Esther had two, Sarah has five, and Scott has 3. There are 22 great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren.

COVID 19 PRAYER

As individuals and as a church we have all been called upon to make significant adjustments to our lives and daily schedules. The following prayer was received from Debbe Hinchey in P.E.I. and seems an appropriate way for us to deal with this pandemic. Thank you Debbe for forwarding this to us:

When we aren't sure, God, help us to be calm;

When information comes from all sides, correct and not, help us to discern;

When fear makes it hard to breathe, and anxiety seems to be the order of the day, slow us down, God; help us to reach out with our hearts, when we can't with our hands;

help us to be socially connected, when we have to be socially distant

help us to love as perfectly as we can, knowing that "perfect love casts out all fear."

For doctors, we pray; for nurses, we pray for technicians and the janitors and the aids and the caregivers, we pray; for the researchers and theorists, we pray. Especially for our leaders and decision makers, we pray.

For those who are sick and those who are grieving, we pray. For all who are affected, all around the world, we pray.

For safety, for health, for wholeness we pray.

May we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and house those without homes; may we walk with those who feel they are alone, and may we do all we can to heal the sick.

In spite of the epidemic, in spite of the fear, help us, O God, that we might help each other. In the love of the Creator, in the name of the Healer, in the life of the Holy Spirit who is in all and with all, we pray. May it be so. Amen.

Until the next time - keep safe.
Bill and Rita Stewart.