

8. BACK TO FAMILIAR TERRITORY

Since we took three weeks to move from Ogden to St. Mark's, Manawa (Symco), Wis for installation on May 12, 1949, our furniture arrived before we did. But we were pleased to find that those in charge of unloading the van had done a pretty good job of placing our things into the various rooms in the old brick house that had been remodeled several years before. Besides we had a two-car garage plus extra storage space in it that had once served as a woodshed or coal bin. One thing the children enjoyed was the two stairways; they could chase each other up one and down the other. There was one off the large "farm-type" kitchen and the other went directly up from the front entrance. When we came, the front door led at once into a small open hallway that led up stairs or to the right into the study or left into the living room, and this left blasts of cold air in during cold weather. So the trustees arranged to build an enclosure in their country style without considering aesthetic appearance to provide a protected hall- or entry way. The house was heated with a coal furnace and stoker, quite a convenience at that time.

The church building was about 60 years old. It had a raised pulpit which you reached via a stairway from a small sacristy. Those who sat in the front pews got tired looking up at the tall preacher, so they decided to lower the pulpit and provide access to it from the small chancel. Of course, this did not help those who chose to sit in the balcony which ran all the way around the two sides and the organ end of the church (over the entryway.) Unless they sat in the front row and could lean over the railing they couldn't see the preacher at all.

Also the church had no basement or cellar of any type. It was heated by means of two wood-burning stoves. In cold weather the janitor started the fires about four hours before the services and could get the air reasonably warm, even on real cold days but it wasn't comfortable sitting too near the big stoves. Besides, the floor could not be heated in that short span of time. One time I had to keep on my overshoes

to keep my feet reasonably warm. The janitor usually fired up once again during the hymn before the sermon to keep the place reasonably comfortable for that period and maybe to the close of the service. The front entrance was narrow, maybe 6-8 feet wide, as it passed under the tower and the balcony. A stairway to each side led from it as well, forming quite a congested spot at the close of the service. This also severely limited fellowship after services during the colder season. On either side of the free standing altar, in whose high back and center was a statue of Hoffman's "Christ", there was a beautiful stained glass window. It was the custom to receive the bread in the Sacrament on one side of the altar platform and then pass around the back of the altar and receive the wine on the other side but to leave a Communion offering on the edge of the altar as you passed by. This Communion offering was given to the pastor to furnish the Communion materials and to somewhat supplement his smaller salary, begun perhaps during the Depression. Obviously this practice sort of put the pastor on the spot if he wanted to increase the opportunities for Communion or to encourage more frequent attendance on the part of the members.

Speaking of salary, my remuneration for services rendered at Symco and Big Falls was 50% higher than I had received in Ogden. This made it considerably easier to provide our family's needs. Of course, there was no car allowance then and the distances to area hospitals for sick calls and for travel to town for shopping increased the cost of owning and operating a car. But the increase still allowed for greater flexibility.

When we came, the Sunday school was held in the church with classes grouped in the pews throughout the church. There were no classes below first grade level. It seemed to be the general philosophy that since children didn't start school until age 6 that they didn't start Sunday School before that either. The superintendent, I was told on the first Sunday,

was appointed by the pastor. So immediately I was asked to make an appointment. What could I do but ask the incumbent to continue as he had? His devotions were very stereotyped with a hymn, a Scripture reading and a prayer geared to about the 12-year-old. By the end of the year I had arranged to have the congregation elect a Sunday School superintendent of their choice. It so happened that the incumbent refused to be a candidate, so I had to seek out one or two others who I felt could serve, perhaps with some coaching on my part.

Near the church was also a 60-year-old one-room school. This was used once a month for the Ladies Society meeting and once a week for confirmation classes. It also was heated with a wood stove. It too wasn't too comfortable in the colder seasons., However, we felt that the outreach of the Sunday School should be expanded. So we arranged to have the 1st and 2nd graders plus kindergarten ages meet in the school so that they could be seated more comfortably and could have devotions geared more to their level of participation. To get this started, my wife, Edna, provided leadership despite her lack of experience. Gradually the enrollment of the younger children increased to put a strain on the space in that small building. From then on the building was also used for choir rehearsals and other meetings during the week besides those mentioned before. Since the study in the parsonage was quite spacious, this was used for adult classes, committee meetings and other smaller groups.

For Vacation Bible School we usually had 60-75 children enrolled. Since the two-level public school across the street from the church property was available, we used that as well as our own buildings for the four classes. Since at the time VBS ran for 3 weeks the board felt it was asking too much to have farm wives volunteer their services for that length of time in the busy month of June. So they actually hired capable women to teach the classes at a level of pay comparable to what public school teachers were paid at the time for a similar period. I think it was \$60 per week. In this way they felt the children would be able to advance better in their knowledge in this shorter period of time. Also there was more meaningful use of

the time usually allotted to handicraft projects. Group devotions were held each morning in the church before the classes proceeded to their assigned locations.

One interesting feature at Symco was the ringing of the church bells on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and on Sundays half an hour before services and for the beginning of each service. They had two bells, one smaller than the other. The janitor we had at first was quite adept at synchronizing these two, where one rope was longer than the other. But when a new janitor was hired he had difficulty getting the knack of it. In our last year they gave Roger the job of cleaning the church and ringing the bells and he became quite adept at this task within a few weeks. It took some coordination to achieve it, as I well knew, having tried it a few times myself.

The pipe organ in the church was of the old tracker-action type. It had a rich sound but it had not received regular maintenance service. As a result at times a stop wouldn't work or a note wouldn't shut off when it should. When it was examined it needed considerable repair, so it was given at least a limited repair for the time being. If the organist was familiar with its weaknesses and limitations, one could switch to a different registration to eliminate the unwanted sound.

Somehow a family of bats had gotten into the bigger organ pipes. One evening during a voter's meeting one of these bats began to fly around in the church to distract the attention. So a couple of the elders and I got brooms for each and then used them as "bats" while we used the flying bat as a "ball" until we had outsmarted the bat's built-in radar and disposed of it. Then the meeting could go on without a disturbance or distraction.

One requirement in the call to Symco was to conduct one German service per month. When we arrived, this service was held at the usual forenoon hour on Sundays on the last Sunday of each month and an English service was held in the evening. Since this necessitated that the Sunday School children go home after each session on such days and in most cases did not

return for the evening service, I proposed that the English service on those Sundays be held at the usual hour and then followed by the German service, since it was attended by only about 25-30 persons out of a communicant membership of 480. Most people who were affected by this change understood and accepted the reason as being meant for the good of the church's future. Then at each annual meeting the open question was raised, "What shall we do about German?" The normal response was a quick motion by someone, perhaps even by one who never attended the German service, that we continue them as before. This worked the first year. The next year I had discussed the situation with the elders, who by the way were expected to attend and take up the offering also at the German services, and we came up with the proposal that we felt would supply the need for German services. Since two traditional times for German Communion was on New Year's Day and on Good Friday, we proposed a schedule of four or five German Communion services per year, the actual number to be determined by whether Good Friday fell early or late in the calendar. This schedule was adopted without any opposition and interestingly continued to supply the need for it for at least another 15 years. Not having used my limited German for about 15 years, it wasn't easy to get back to it again. But the order of service was very simple and the people were satisfied to have me read the sermon with reasonable fluency. As a result we managed to supply the need in an acceptable fashion.

One of the Board of Education members had a strong desire to have the parochial school reopened after it had been closed for about 20 years. So at his urging, the matter was proposed to the congregation. The idea of upgrading the old school building, especially with a quite modern public school just across the street, as well as the distances involved for pupils of the church to get to school on a daily basis together with the cost of supplying new books and other upgraded equipment, seemingly did not appeal to the majority of members. As a result the proposal failed to win a majority vote. Then to demonstrate his displeasure over this decision the concerned board member transferred his membership to

the church in Manawa and traveled past our church each Sunday to worship 5 miles away where his children could attend a parochial school. Following this decision we urged the board and congregation to make every effort to make our educational program via Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and confirmation instruction as meaningful and effective as we could make it with our limited facilities.

Soon after we arrived at Symco, there was conversation about upgrading their physical facilities. Several alternatives were discussed. This led to the selection of a Study Committee. An architect was called in to evaluate and discuss the proposal to put a basement under the old structure. When the cost and limitations of this proposal were evaluated, the committee began to look at other alternatives by visiting churches that had faced similar problems and hear a report of their solutions. When all of the if's of their proposals had been studied the committee unanimously returned with the recommendation to "work toward building a new church." This recommendation was accepted by an overwhelming vote, something like 78 to 5. The committee had estimated that a new structure would cost \$100,000 or more. This may have suggested to another member to move that \$50,000 be raised before construction could begin. This was adopted with almost no discussion. Since there was only about \$7,000 in the "Building Fund" at the time, this meant a fund raising effort to reach the amount stipulated. Gradually the fund was increased. After about 3 years the goal of \$50,000 was in sight within another year. Members with a readiness to contribute larger sums held back until there were definite plans for a building. This made it take longer to reach the stipulated sum. But when it was in sight, a Building Committee was selected to begin planning for a new structure in hopes of being ready with detailed plans when the \$50,000 mark was attained. This goal was reached about the time the Lord saw fit to challenge me with a call to Redeemer congregation in Green Bay. At the time the plans for the new church were in the hands of the architect who was to have detailed drawings and specifications ready for bids early in the year following.

One thing we missed at Symco was any type of choir. A small nucleus of members was interested in organizing one but we had no one to direct the group. With my limited knowledge of music I tried to direct a fairly balanced group of 15-18 to add some special music to our worship services. With their faithful support we even sang a few times over the Shawano radio station where I as well as other pastors in the surrounding area periodically was in charge of a service for shutins. We even got ambitious enough to plan and prepare a special evening program of music built around the theme, "Events in the Life of a Christian." We still have a tape recording of that service and it would be interesting to listen to it once again after these 35 or more years.

We also sympathized with the children of the congregation so far as music was concerned. In most public schools at that time there was almost no music or singing because the teachers had no musical training. Consequently, we concluded that the only way children could learn to sing was by singing. So we invited interested parents to give us their children for a Junior Choir, made up of children in grades 5-8. Gradually we built confidence in the 15 or so participants to enable them to sing in two-part harmony for some simple numbers. This group was also able to add some extra color to the traditional Christmas Eve services.

Speaking about Christmas Eve services reminds me of an incident at one of them. Since it was the custom for the Sunday School teachers to give their pupils a small gift at Christmas time or the pupils a gift for the teacher, all of these were placed under the tree in church and were distributed one by one together with a bag of goodies to all the children at the close of the service. Since we had no indoor plumbing at that time, occasionally a youngster ran into difficulty before the service and the distribution of gifts was completed. On one occasion a boy came to me to inform me that he had to go to the bathroom. I was able to stall him off with the suggestion that we'd be finished in just a few minutes. However, a year later a little girl came to me and I was prepared to respond similarly, only to have her ask me, "Will you tie my bow?" since the bow on her dress had

become untied. The solution for that problem was much simpler.

Soon after we came several men approached me with the question about organizing a Men's Club. In response we did some further inquiries to establish the extent of interest. Finding a goodly amount of it, we arranged for an organizing committee. From the outset we established the rule that whatever starting time we selected had to be rigidly observed, believing that later starts and drawnout meetings would soon kill the interest. Thus, a generally-acceptable starting hour was chosen, any business meeting was limited to a half hour and a short educational topic no longer than half an hour was included, followed by some kind of entertainment for about half an hour and ending with a light lunch, all to be concluded within two hours. Then those who wanted to remain and visit longer could do so, while those who chose to get home fairly early had that opportunity. It was interesting to observe that this format kept the attendance at a level of about 75% of the members of about 40-50 men. This group met once a month in the former school building.

Since there was no TV as yet and other entertainment in the community was limited, the congregation purchased a movie projector and a large screen. This was used for some educational and at the same time entertaining movies for the youth group as well as the Men's Club. Also both of these groups used this equipment to offer some fellowship opportunities during the summer by scheduling movies in the outdoors in summer in connection with ice cream socials or similar events.

One annual project of the Men's Club was the fish fry. Members of the club would go to the Wolf River area farther down stream to catch a good supply of white bass in the spring spawning season. These were then filleted and deep fryers were rented to put on a fish fry in the public school across the road. For several years this was quite successful until they encountered poor fishing one season and had to purchase some fish to satisfy the appetites of their usual customers. This was their primary annual fund raiser, although we tried to get

them to place the emphasis on the fellowship such an occasion provided.

The Ladies Society had a similar annual affair, usually in the early fall when tables could be set up outdoors while food tables were set up on the old school house. This was their annual dinner. In case of bad weather they could move the operation to the public school across the road. Here too, we tried to have them place the emphasis on providing opportunities for fellowship rather than on the raising of funds.

One problem the ladies had was getting volunteers for committees in charge of their few special events. Since this often ended up with a smaller number doing most of the work and planning and also with time consumed at their business meetings as they planned the details of such activities, we proposed that they set up first a planning committee, which proposed a program of activities for the year together with the assignment of all members to one or the other committee for each proposed activity. Their report was presented to the full membership for approval or revision as they chose. Once the activities for a year had been adopted and committees for each had been named, all committees could begin their planning and organization for the activity for which they were responsible. Then usually the only things that came before any business meeting was some major decision in which the full membership should have an opportunity to participate, such as "Do we serve ham or chicken?" This procedure was happily accepted and proved to be very successful. It involved all members in one way or another and took the burden off the shoulders of a few as "the willing minority."

One challenge in the Ladies Society was to incorporate the interest of a small number in the activity of the developing LWML. At first the small group that wanted to participate in the LWML met separately once each quarter and faithfully used their mite boxes. After a year or so they felt that the topic studies offered on a monthly basis by the LWML should be shared with all the ladies. So they were successful in making this part of the regular Ladies Society meeting. The next step was to invite all ladies

to participate in the use of the mite boxes for the support of LWML projects on a voluntary basis, with the gathering of these on a quarterly basis by a separate LWML treasurer. In due time the Ladies Society as a group became affiliated with the LWML as was the case in many other churches in this part of the District. This transition could not be forced but came about gradually and involved a shifting of the emphasis of a Ladies Society's chief objective being to help the local congregation to a broader view of the whole church's mission.

My call to Symco included the assignment to provide a ministry to the small congregation of about 50 communicants in the village of Big Falls. Thus each Sunday I traveled the 15 miles to Big Falls for an 8:30 a.m. service before returning to Symco for the 10 a.m. service. For holidays a similar arrangement was followed. Lenten services were held on separate evenings. At Big Falls the local leadership was accustomed to managing their own affairs quite well, so that besides the weekly services there was only the monthly Ladies Society meeting and, as needed, a weekly confirmation class during the school year.

During my first year there this congregation wanted to celebrate its 50th anniversary and wanted to prepare an historical booklet. This task became mine and necessitated the reading of their meeting records through that period. Since there was also a small ALC congregation in that village of about 150 persons, their histories were somewhat intertwined, especially in the earlier years. This proved to be quite an interesting task and enabled me to become acquainted with the history of Lutheranism in that area during that half century.

At Big Falls one of the older members showed me an historical item. It was what he called a "penny collector." It was a small offering bag, obviously made out of a bit of velvet, the opening to which was about 3 inches in diameter and attached to about a 3-4 foot handle. Of course, this had been replaced by the customary offering plate.

For our family, life in Symco proved to be quite different from living in a city the size of Ogden,

Utah. For one thing, we had the Little Wolf River flowing through the town. However, for fishing we had several lakes to choose from within a half dozen miles from home. There we could go fishing occasionally with the boys. In spring we could travel about 20 miles to the Wolf River for walleye pike and white bass fishing. One afternoon Edna and I went to the river for white bass fishing. But I had to put the bait on the hook and cast out on the river for her to gradually reel it back to shore. Before I could prepare my own pole and line she had already pulled in three white bass for me to remove from the hook and to attach new bait for the next cast. This kind of activity lasted for a short while longer for a catch sufficient for our needs.

On another occasion the five of us had traveled to Fremont where a generous lady invited us to fish from her large dock or to use one of her boats. While the boys and I were out in the boat Edna and Gloria stayed on the dock to fish from there. But Gloria got tired of waiting for something to happen on her line, so she began to jiggle her line up and down in the water. Suddenly she hooked something which she was not able to pull up. So the lady, who sat at the other end of the dock, quickly came to her rescue and helped her pull up what she had on the line. What happened was that in her jiggling she had hooked a 17-inch northern pike in the belly and he was fighting to get off. But they did succeed in landing it.

At another time we had rented a cabin for a few days from a couple in our area, but it was located on Post Lake some 60 miles to the north. One day while the boys and I were out fishing on the lake Gloria was supposed to take a nap with her mother. But when Mother fell asleep Gloria left the cabin and began digging for worms so that she could fish too. How she found a few in the sandy soil, when we had tried without success, we never knew. But when her mother awoke she found Gloria at the boat dock with a fish pole and she had managed to get a worm on the hook so that she could fish too. Not bad for one just aged 6. And she managed to hook a small bluegill or perch.

The churchyard was large, covering a fair-sized acreage. So there was room for a large garden. We raised quite a few vegetables and even developed quite a bed of black raspberries. One summer the boys were anxious to make some spending money, so we planted a patch of cucumbers. When they began to produce they had to pick them and we took them to a place in Manawa where they were purchased for the pickling factory. After a couple of weeks of this kind of activity the novelty had worn off and the profits weren't too lucrative. Weather conditions weren't too favorable either so the picking season was shortened to put an end to this project.

One activity which the whole family enjoyed was the annual week that we spent at Camp Luther, the District-owned camp near Three Lakes. Since I was invited to serve as dean or as Bible study leader, or as topic study leader for a week, and the boys were of an age where they could participate in the camp program, the whole family accepted an invitation to free meals and lodging as remuneration for the staff services each week. This meant that Gloria had free going at the camp and Mother could sleep in each morning and not be concerned about any meals for the week. For her this was the best vacation while the rest of the family was busy and had supervised activity. This was the experience for at least 3 and possibly four summers.

Since the churchyard had a little hill on it and the parsonage was located above the level of the church, this made winter sledding and some skiing possible. Otherwise the boys could walk about a quarter mile out of town where there was an open field with quite a slope for this kind of winter fun. I recall that one afternoon I tried using their skis without a pole. Suddenly I got started but my upper body was not ready to go along. As a result I landed on one of my thumbs and had an oversized digit for a time. I couldn't eliminate the "middle track."

Symco was about 6 miles from Edna's childhood home where her parents were still living. This made it possible for the children and grandparents to enjoy each other's company quite frequently. Since the churchyard was

quite large and this could be viewed from the living room window, we often saw a rabbit or two hopping around the outhouses below the church. On one of Grandpa's visits he saw one of these rabbits so he suggested to the boys how they might catch one of them. He suggested that they go around with a handful of salt and try to get near enough to a rabbit to shake it on its tail. Then the rabbit would stop and could easily be caught. You can imagine his amusement when one day he saw the boys stealthily walking around the buildings below in the hopes of getting near a rabbit with a handful of salt. When they came in without success he had the last laugh.

Although we moved to Symco during the 3-week period from Easter to mid-May the boys had no more school that year because the Symco school year ended about the time we came. In fall we enrolled them in the public school across the street, since Gloria was not yet of school age. However, during the school year we observed the kind of discipline, etc. provided by the male teacher in charge, who also had no music to offer. This encouraged us to enroll all three children in St. Paul's Lutheran School in Manawa, 4-5 miles away, when the next school year began. There both Jim and Roger completed the 8th grade, while Gloria continued until we moved to Green Bay. This meant transporting the children to Manawa each morning, while another member of the church brought them home at day's end, since we had worked out an arrangement to cooperate with them in transporting their two children as well as our three.

One morning during the winter I had to go into church to get some item I was to take along into town before we left and as I walked down the slope I hit an icy spot and fell rather abruptly, hitting the back of my head quite a jolt. While I was unaware of any deficiency in sight or thinking, the boys became somewhat apprehensive about me getting back home since they had to keep telling me what corners to turn and other moves to make as I drove them to school in town. But I made it OK and through the day the wooziness had worn off without any ill effects.

When we moved from Ogden we traded in our old piano there for a new piano to be delivered at Symco at some later date. After this arrived Edna began to brush up on her limited playing ability and soon we also had Jim and Roger taking lessons, from a man who would travel from place to place. As Edna became more confident and it was difficult to get an organist for church services, especially the infrequent German services, she tried her hand at playing for the latter services. Since her knowledge of German was very limited and there were only a couple of responses by the congregation with an Amen after a prayer, this involved primarily playing for the three hymns. The only problem was knowing when to play for the Amens. So we worked out a way of intoning the closing words of the prayer so that she could play for the Amen at the right time. Fortunately she understood enough German to recognize the regular words at the close of the prayer, which were "durch Jesus Christum."

After Easter in 1952 the pastor of the neighboring church at Bear Creek accepted a call to Illinois and I was asked to serve the vacancy. Since the parish he served also included two congregations, this meant that I had four services per Sunday. Following my usual schedule I served one of them 4 miles away at 11:15 and then other at 2:00 p.m. The additional income from this vacancy solved a problem for us. Since Jim had graduated from the 8th grade he wanted to begin his studies for the ministry at Concordia, Milwaukee that fall. But with the lower salaries in effect at that time we wondered how we could afford the extra expense, especially the expense of providing the extra bedding, etc. needed for dormitory living. The vacancy lasted for about 6 months and provided the solution to our problem. So that fall Jim began his studies in the high school department at Milwaukee's Concordia. There Jim also continued his studies in music under a very capable teacher who introduced him to organ playing.

Both of the boys had continued their piano lessons until the teacher who came to our home was no longer able to do this. So the summer before Jim left for Concordia we took him to Clintonville where a very capable instructor

accepted him as a pupil. She had a way of challenging him so that he made excellent progress during that short period, even having him play in some kind of competition at Green Bay near the end of the season. This gave him the confidence for the future that he needed. So while at Milwaukee he was able to build on this foundation with a private instructor. After two years there he had advanced enough that he could take a job as organist and choir leader at a small church within walking distance from Concordia. From then on he was able to earn his spending money.

Roger must have continued with piano lessons in some way because in his 8th grade year we had him play a number for a special program his class members at St. Paul's School were presenting. He had been shy about his ability and actually amazed his class members when he performed so well. While he did not pursue music further, he still likes to sit down at their piano and keep his fingers limber.

Since we had a larger garage and a large yard to roam in, the children could have a dog as a pet. The very first summer one of the members gave us a pup that was part collie. However, as he grew up he took to chasing all the cars that drove up our street in front of the house. This annoyed people who drove by as well as us and there seemed to be no way that we could break him of this inclination. So we had to give him away to someone who could use him and did not have a road so convenient.

Having become accustomed to having a dog, we were looking for a replacement. The following summer, while we visited my parents in Nebraska, we saw an ad in a farm magazine selling fox terrier pups. Since this was on the way to my brother's where we were to spend the day before we started for home, we stopped at the location and ended up buying a pretty female fox terrier pup. So we brought it to Wisconsin with us. On our way home we spent an afternoon and evening at the Wisconsin Dells. For the enjoyment of the whole family we took the two boat trips to the upper and lower dells. The latter was a sunset trip with an Indian singer on board. The boys made friends with him since they had become especially

interested in Indians on our travels through New Mexico two years before. At the end of the boat trip we returned to our car in the parking lot and as the boys were letting the pup out for relief, the Indian singer came by. He offered to buy the dog from the boys. Their response was that she was not for sale but that they would sell him one of her pups in time. We took special pains to train this dog and were quite successful. The children never took the dog off the churchyard. Even when they went to the grocery store for their mother, the dog was trained to stay behind on the edge of our property and wait for their return. Even when they went to school the dog either stood at the living room window watching for them at the proper time or on warmer days she would sit on the steps in front of the church waiting for them to arrive.

About a year later we had her mated and she produced four little ones. This provided quite an enjoyment for the children. As these pups grew to appropriate size we gave them away or sold them. However, the mother remained our faithful companion. In fact, when Jim started school at Milwaukee, the dog obviously missed him. The first morning at breakfast she saw that someone was missing. So she went up the back stairway and we could hear her footsteps on the floor of their bedroom above us looking for him but coming back down disappointed. When he mailed his laundry home every couple weeks, she had to renew acquaintance with the familiar odor of his clothes.

Then when I accepted the call to Green Bay, we wondered whether we should bother with a dog in the city. Although a neighbor had offered to take her we had not made a decision even when the van came to load our furniture. While I conducted a final funeral that day and Edna supervised the loading of the van, Gloria walked around all day carrying her beloved "Trix". When the van was loaded and we were ready to get into our car, Gloria was already in the back seat holding the dog. We decided to say nothing and just start out, feeling that Gloria's action had made the decision for us. It did turn out to be a wise decision, since the faithful dog became a source of security for us and Gloria in the city, even though she did not

have the freedom she had in Symco. She stayed with us for at least 5 more years until she became owly at times and would not respond to our call. One night she must have sneaked out without our being aware of it when putting out the garbage. We never knew what happened to her since she wasn't around the next morning and was never heard from again. During her 9-10 years she had served us well.

Before I conclude this chapter I should mention the approach agreed upon by a larger committee assigned the task to seek contributions for the new church "Building Fund" mention earlier. When the group met, no one seemed to have an idea how to approach their fellow members. One reason they were hesitant was that milk support prices had just been cut and they wondered how they and other farmers would be able to meet their expenses. After about an hour of no progress, I shared with them what had come to my mind in a dream the night before. The suggestion was that they as mostly farmers consider contributing one day's milk income per month. In case of an otherwise employed person, of which there were only a few, it would be suggested that such contribute one day's pay per month. After some discussion they agreed that they could offer no more equitable suggestion than this and with that approach solicited the support of the fund from their fellow members. It's interesting to note that quite a number of younger farmers contributed according to the suggested approach.

As I considered the call to Green Bay, the Lord led me to the conclusion that I should move there to "build the kingdom" rather than stay where I was to just "build a church". So the move was arranged.