

## 1998 TO 2013

The pastoral search committee was reviewing possible candidates the summer of 1997 when the Wilson's came for a visit to Norway, Kathy's "home". God had already been preparing Lonnie that it was time for a change from his pastorate in Iowa. They learned of our need for a pastor and by late fall of '97 had accepted our call, had found a big house in the 3<sup>rd</sup> ward of Norway, and Lonnie would officially step into the pulpit January 1, 1998.

Lonnie came to us with a love for God's Word and church history. His gift for teaching would be exercised well in the pulpit Sunday mornings, for Sunday evening Bible study, with the Rock Solid youth, and eventually the adult Sunday school class for many of his years with us. His kind spirit and steady routine ways brought a much slower pace but also a safe secure stability. He weathered years of the constant need for more elders and deacons; he lost dear co-workers on the board to death or leaving.

During these years a strong youth work called "Rock Solid" would develop with the key involvement of Lonnie & Kathy, Mike & Kim Barker and other couples. Weekly meetings either at the gym, in a home for fellowship or at the Chapel for Bible study along with Bible memorization were the prerequisite to the various summer mission trips—Sunshine Cove with Chicago's Sunshine Gospel Mission, Trail's End Ranch in Montana twice, the Creation Museum. Trish (Martin) Gustafson faithfully led the Wednesday Kids Club, which usually reached more outside children than those from CBC. Adults also had some solid small groups whether the weekly ladies Bible study or Mom's Group, the Nault's couples Bible study, or in recent years a men's Bible study.

And when we got Lonnie----we got Kathy who was the amazing force behind Christmas musicals and plays, wonderful Vacation Bible School weeks each summer, and church floats in the local Christmas and 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades.

Always a church with a deep heart for missions, this era found us busy in being part of shuffling God's resources where needed—the New Tribes Kodiak Plan Project/ Lois McAllister's church in Chile/ a blanket collection for Voice of the Martyrs/ Lois Olive's Ukrainian orphans/ a hospital in Haiti/ victims of hurricane Katrina/ Frank Drown's radio work in Ontario/ Angel Tree and Operation Christmas Child many Christmas's. This was an active time for supporting mission trips—Wayne Funderburg to Poland, Lyle Hulce to Africa and then again to South Africa with Mike Barker, Kaminski's to the Ukraine, a whole team to Copper Island off the coast of British Columbia in 2005, and two college students to Mexico twice. In 2001 a group of community churches collaborated to distribute the JESUS video to every household. This

pushed us to hit the streets and knock on doors. Our missions committee also had the joy of adding missionaries to our list of those supported monthly and increasing the support of others.

The transformation of the building ever continued. The overflow room was completed in 2000, air conditioning installed, a motorized screen and projector installed, a new well and pump, better lighting for the driveway, and most recently in 2010-11 a much needed facelift came through new carpeting, a new paint job, new lighting in the auditorium, and the replacement of pews with chairs. Property line issues with the property to the east were finally resolved with a land swap.

In 2006 a church secretary position was created to help ease Lonnie's work load and keep things running smoothly. We also established a website and began to publish a quarterly newsletter.

The Wilson's came to us in 1998 with four children and by the time they left in 2013 had added three. We have been shepherded and fed well by Lonnie's ministry.