

Chapter 22

Surrey, BC

(September 1978 – August 1986)

The first thing to get used to in Surrey and surroundings were the busy highways and volume of traffic compared to Mayerthorpe and area. Gravel road driving was over. Corrie gave up her driving rather than taking a new road test in busy city driving to keep hers. Actually, already in Mayerthorpe and surroundings she drove very little. So this was little loss of freedom or independence for her.

We were blessed with having Murray give the Charge to the Pastor at the Installation Service, while our longtime friend, John Opmeer, brought the Charge to the Congregation. It was a moving service, as you can gather from the message Murray delivered as given below:

"I feel a little strange to give this "Charge" at the Installation of my Dad. Tables are turned, for two years ago, Dad, you gave the "Charge" to me when I was Installed as Pastor of New Life Community Church in Burnaby. The reason I find it strange is that it is from you, Dad, that I have learned much, most of what I know about the Christian life. And also of what it means to be a Pastor. It is you that I hold as a model in my own life.

So I would simply like to remind you of what I have known you to be. Above all, Dad, I have known you to be faithful. Faithful in Bible reading when we were sitting around the table with the whole family. No emergency couldn't wait while reading the Bible and praying. Faithful In church duties. Even some of the church duties that were not always appreciated or even seen. But through it all I have seen a lot of growing in this Pastor's home. You have been faithful.

Secondly, Dad, I know you to be deeply spiritual. When I was home, and still, I'd love to hear you pray. The depth and wisdom I had seen in you and notably the glory of God and the awesome experiences of God's presence I have when you pray, is something I'll be thankful for forever.

Thirdly, Dad, I know you to be hard working. And here I have a word of caution. I know you can work too many hours a week. I have seen you do it. I know you can swing an ax and garden two acres. I have seen you do it. I know that you can do a lot of other things like that, for I have seen you do it. But Dad, I would say to you, take care of yourself so that you may have many happy and productive years in this new Charge to which God has called you.

I know you have the ability to make a new start. I think of your coming to Canada, your immigration. I think of your starting to study for the ministry later in life. I think about the new start in Alberta a couple of years ago because of illness.

Dad, “In the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this Charge: preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction.

Dad, you will need to be a preacher.

Dad, you will need to stir hearts with the living Word of God.

Dad, you will need to be a reconciler of people.

Dad, you will need to be gentle.

Dad, you will need to be bold.

Mom, continue to stand with Dad.

Mom, continue to set the example you all along have been.

Mom, continue to be the mother and wife you all along have been.

You know how to raise a model family.

Dad, the verse with which you left me with at my Installation was the word the Greeks raised with Phillip, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” I can find no greater challenge. Dad, I speak for this congregation:

“Sir, we would see Jesus”	in your life.
“Sir, we would see Jesus”	in your ministry.
“Sir, we would see Jesus”	in your preaching.
“Sir, we would see Jesus”	in your relationships.
“Sir, we would see Jesus”	in the way you lead your family.

“Sir, we would see Jesus.”

I thank God that I have had you as a Father.

I thank God that I have seen Jesus in you.

I trust that will continue as you minister here.

Pastor John Opmeer stressed congregational cooperation, unity, commitment, faithfulness and support. It was all called for and well placed whereas most of it had been absent during the last 3-

4 years. The church was at a very low point in its now 22 years of existence. Classis Cascades had not even been convinced for a while whether to proceed with another Call. There was one teenager when we came and one child in Sunday School. Moreover, from the start it was a puzzle why some of the Consistory members had been chosen as leaders, other than filling vacancies.

One of the first things I felt that should be done with our Consistory members was to determine what were the Biblical standards for church leadership of Elders and Deacons. I approached it from the standpoint of spiritual unity, looking at both old as well as New Testament passages. I proposed that we would spend one hour studying the Scriptures on this subject and two hours on other Consistory business. Some of the Deacons especially objected strongly to this, stating that Bible study was not Consistory business.

We were half an hour in the outline of our study and discussion on the first evening when three Deacons were ready to throw in the towel stating, "If this is what is required of us we better all resign." They meant business for the rest of the hour they refused to further participate. Actually it was all the more proof how necessary it was to look at the Biblical qualifications for church leadership. We did not get back to the study until a year later when more than half of Consistory had stepped out. The simple problem was that a number of Consistory members had no idea what it meant to be born from above.

I had gone to Surrey with great confidence that there would be no problem for me to handle the situation. How wrong I was. Within three months I heard myself saying out loud to God: "Lord, I do not have what it takes to get this dead church to move." Looking back, I still smile about this, not knowing that God already was at work to equip me with what was needed!

Classis Cascades was a special Classis in that there were several Pastors who had experienced the Baptism in/with the Holy Spirit, among them Murray, John Opmeer, and Eugene van der Well. They had been able to persuade Classis to hold a Conference on the "Baptism with the Holy Spirit" since they could obtain speakers from the RCA itself. Remembering the letter we had received of Murray back in Monarch, excitedly Corrie and I both enrolled in the event. And what a Conference this was! Up to this point in my life and never having done a thing like this, I found myself walking up to be prayed over to receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit. In spite of the fact that I strongly believed in it, I could not believe what I as a long time and supposedly experienced Pastor, was doing up front there.

I was disappointed that I did not feel anything of this power of the Holy Spirit which was supposedly so readily available. The men who prayed over me had me search my heart no end. Yet, I could not say that nothing had happened, for those of us from the Surrey congregation who had come here for the event, were all fired up Biblically and emotionally. So much so, that I

cautioned the ladies to not overdo it the following Sunday when we were going to give our testimony to the congregation. I did not want a good thing to be undone.

Prior to our leaving on Saturday evening one of the speakers gave me a small book on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, by Don Bashan. I was assured that reading it and following up on the instructions in it, I would not be disappointed. It would take place. I felt great on Sunday and so did the two ladies who had come along. The very first thing after breakfast on my day off, I began reading several Bible passages and this book. There was nothing that was going to stop me from receiving what God wanted to give me. I do not think I have ever read more eagerly any book than this one. When nearly getting to the end, I skipped the rest since I wanted to know what the last chapter had to say. It spoke of the fact that we should not fear when beginning to talk in tongues. At this point I laid the book aside, went into our bedroom and closed the door. I fell on my knees before the bed and poured out my heart to God confessing any and every sin I could think of. And then it happened!!

I was electrified from head to chest and began to speak in tongues. Thereafter, I cried for joy until Corrie came to see where I was. Well, she did not have to ask what had happened. It was as I read a year thereafter in a book which had a chapter entitled, "Help, a charismatic in the bedroom." After weeping together for a while the first thing I did was call Murray and Carol. We wanted them to rejoice with us. With praise and thanksgiving to God I will have to write that I have never been the same anymore. God had empowered me for something new. The problems in the congregation would not blow away with the wind of the Spirit, but God would grant me the grace and power to deal with them. Hallelujah the Lamb!

In Holland we had heard many sermons on the Holy Spirit. Church tradition called for a "First Day of Pentecost" with two church services and a "Second Day of Pentecost" with one church service. But that God still filled His people in the same way as then was unknown. Simply put: no one can give what he/she hasn't got. The Ministers would not speak about it because it was unknown and unheard of. It was the same in Canada for the first 29 years. Also, while at College and Seminary I never heard about it either.

The same Classis Committee had also received approval to hold a Conference and Workshop on Healing the following year. It was the natural, i.e., supernatural outcome of what many had experienced with their Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Miracles of healing were also still taking place here and there. "Laying on of Hands" wasn't out of order either in a New Testament Church today. And together with this, a whole new area of "Inner Healing" began to open up. During these years I joined the "Order of St. Luke the Physician", which was basically an Anglican organization. Also I was approved for membership in "The Association of Christian Therapists", which basically was a Charismatic Roman Catholic organization and only limited to professional people such as

Priests, Physicians, Nurses and Ministers from other Christian churches. But of the latter there were very few. During this time too Corrie received her healing of stomach and gastritis problems. (see her writing)

Because of this new Christian healing ministry, I was lead to write an Overture for General Synod to prepare an "Order of Healing" for RCA. churches. The purpose was not so much the Order of Healing itself. Personally, I felt no need for it: the Holy Spirit used His own "agenda". It was more that I wanted the RCA to acknowledge that Christ still healed people today! By way of Consistory and Classis, the Overture was accepted as written and the following year the RCA had an Order of Healing!

A few weeks before the Classis Conference and Workshop on Healing, a mother who was a Nurse was recommended to see me about her inner struggles. By this time I was spending considerable time with "outsiders" as far as our church was concerned. She also shared that their youngest son had a strange and severe problem. The parents were at the end of the rope. They had gone with their son to many professional people and specialists of all sorts as well. All she told me was that he had a strange illness that no one could help cure. I invited her to bring him together with her husband to the Classis Healing Conference. She did not think her husband would be willing but she would try. During the prayers in our house she herself received healing.

Two weeks later with their son they were at the Healing Service. But no sooner had Jim and I began to pray than a strange cold chill came over me. I heard the 2-3 year old mention the name of "Jesus" in various ways. Together we prayed some more, including in tongues, but it was of no avail. We were not prepared for what was going on here. And since there was a line up, I asked them to go to their place and wait for me to talk with them afterwards. While waiting for another to come forward, Jim whispered his feelings to me: we were thinking identically. And talking with the parents afterwards gave me the conviction that I should see them in their own home as soon as possible about this major problem with their son.

It was during this visit when the parents shared their real experiences with him and I saw the boy in his own setting that it was all confirmed, though I needed more direction from the Lord as to how to proceed further. I was informed he could touch fire without feeling it. He had put his hand on the fire place and the glass splintered in all directions. When he walked passed me and I looked him in his eyes, I would get a cold chill. He swore uncontrollably. When I asked his parents when this had started and where he had learned it, they thought he might have picked it up playing with neighborhood kids. It now had become clear to me that the boy was plagued by a demon. But my Seminary training had never touched anything like this. The emphasis had always been: "When there are strange and difficult cases, be sure to refer them to a professional." However, shortly

after dealing with this boy's problem and others following, people who for a considerable time had been receiving treatment from such “professional people” began coming to the church for help.

Before leaving the home we prayed together for direction. After the prayer, I told the parents to call me first thing in the morning for the answer how to proceed. I assured them that God would provide me with the answer as He had done several times, at night, when I needed special direction. And so it was. After a deep sleep, around two o'clock God woke me up and revealed that the demon's name was “destruction”. Also that prior to t casting him out in the Name of Jesus, the Christ, we were to celebrate Holy Communion with the parents and us who would be going there in the evening. It was conveyed to the parents. The mother expressed her fear again like the evening before. She wondered what she could do in the meantime so her son would not hurt himself. I advised that she should go through every room and name and claim Jesus' presence there with uplifted arms.

With gratitude, excitement and joy I even think back to our drive down there! The Reverend John Grant and I were sitting in front while Jim was in the back seat. I should mention here that Jim had recently received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit by the prayer and laying on of hands of his brother Murray after a youth gathering in their home. Early on Monday morning following the Sunday evening when this had taken place, I walked into our kitchen as he had just stepped in as well. I took one look into his eyes and knew what had taken place. He confirmed it with one of the greatest arm embraces we had ever experienced! Therefore since there was no Elder who was Baptized in the Holy Spirit, I had invited Jim to take the place of such an Elder, as well as this elderly minister who had been one of the speakers at the last Conference. Half way during our drive down there, I looked back at Jim who was jumping around in the back seat. I asked him what he was doing. His reply was, “Oh Dad, when I go to a ball game I never know who will win, but here we know already!” How right he was!

Upon entering, I read Ephesians 6:10-18 and 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and we prayed together. The Mother had made ready for the celebration of Holy Communion. We found the Father very nervous. We encouraged and urged him to invite Jesus into his heart and confess Him as his Savior and Lord or otherwise refrain from partaking Communion. Following the celebration and thanksgiving, we invited the parents to get their son. I took him in my arms and in the mighty Name of Christ our Lord to whom all authority had been given commanded the evil spirit to depart. There was no doubt it took place right at that moment. Where before he cursed and swore and used God's Name in vain, this time he reached out to the small cross I had around my neck and took it in his hand while sweetly mentioning the name of Jesus. I asked him whether he would like to have it. The way he took it in his hands said the rest. It was the last time he swore and used the name of Christ in vain. This was confirmed still 4-5 years later.

During follow-up visits, I learned the Father was a Christian Scientist. I also found out why the Father had been so nervous. The Mother had followed up on my suggestion to go into every room, raise her hand and claim the wonderful presence of Christ there. He had tagged along while she did this. When beginning to feel more comfortable with what she was doing he suggested that he should do the same in the garage. But as soon as he raised his hand and claimed the presence of Jesus in that part of the house an invisible force threw him against the garage door where he fell on the floor bruising himself and ripping his shirt in the process. As a result of that experience he had been shaking the rest of the day.

Since our church was not into "Praise and Worship" chorus singing and yet personally we had a great longing to do so, we joined a large Christian Reformed charismatic group in their Saturday evening Praise and worship Service. These were very uplifting and inspiring gatherings when about 100-200 people gathered together. And something else, we needed it. It was in December, 1979 when I had given a testimony about the power of God in casting demons out of peoples' lives that an unknown lady walked up to me just before I was leaving the platform, laid her hand on my head and proceeded to speak the following:

"I have set before you an open door and no one is able to shut it. The Lord says, You have kept my charge, all the things I have given you; all the things you did not know you have received from me, taking it in your heart and soul and used it. And there shall be many walls, openings filled with barbed wires. There shall be gates that are closed. But the Lord says, Where ever you put your foot it shall open up before you, and walls shall recede; but you shall have trouble with the barbed wire because you can look through it and think you can easily reach it because of what you see on the other side but all this barbed wire is in the way, and it can hurt you. I shall give you from now on special wisdom and special knowledge, and I shall anoint you with a double portion. You shall have the birth right of the first born. I shall lead you to people in high places because there is a great, great need. And I shall lead you on, step by step, in those things I desire. Just trust Me and don't get alarmed thereby depending on your own understanding. Do not look at the things that are temporal but look at the things that are eternal. It is different from what your natural mind comprehends. Just follow Me, follow Me."

This mother did not know I was thoroughly familiar with barbed wire troubles but God knew and through her He spoke to me in a personal and special way. During the coming years these words proved to be prophetic words indeed.

I had never asked the Lord to allow me to cast out demons. And had God asked me to volunteer, I do not know what my response would have been. It turned out that this one experience was followed by a number of others. Even with deliverance of people who were practicing

homosexuals there were times that demonic strongholds had first to be broken and crushed. One such session lasted 3 hours, but in the end the victory was won.

1 John 3:8b, Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and other such passages opened up revealing new (old!) perspectives. At this time the church had begun to grow. Those who were added to the numbers that were being saved (Acts 2:47b) came mainly from non-church background and others who had fallen away; few of them from our ethnic background. A young couple who were deeply involved in the things of the world (1 John 2:15-16), I was giving Bible instruction in their home. When I had been there 4-5 times, the Lord laid on my heart that the next time I would have “to press the claims of Christ upon them.” As I began doing this during the teaching the young Father began to be very restless: his eyes started rolling, his breathing became heavy, and a hollow laugh was heard. It really scared his wife. I told her to be quiet and not be afraid. The more I kept on claiming the presence of Christ upon him the worse the condition grew. He now was sweating and laughing and violently shaking. I began casting out demons in the mighty name of Christ. When several had come out by way of some sort of vomiting, I asked him whether these were all that been inside of him. He screamed at the top of his voice, “No! There is one more. Get him out too!” After a half an hour or so, the peace of Christ came upon him.

One of the wonderful ways of reaching out into the community was our Dial-a-Prayer line. The church had this already when we arrived. We found that the more often we changed the prayer, the more often people called. Some were steady callers. Appointments for counseling and prayer often resulted. This prayer ministry eventually resulted in the printing of a prayer that I used numerous times during my 6 years of part time chaplain ministry in the Surrey Memorial Hospital, even as still now.

Having more and more “outsiders” coming to church and confessing their faith in Jesus Christ called for a change in our Order of Service. This was being vigorously opposed by a few people. In their view the Order of Service was sacred, i.e., an unchangeable tradition. I was of the conviction that the Spirit ought to have freedom to break in when and where ever He chose.

This already had taken place a few times. By now we did not have many Consistory members left. In fact, for a whole year I only had one Elder. I put out a challenge to all church worshippers to attend a number of meetings discussing “HOW TO PREPARE FOR GREATER THINGS.” Under this theme was one topic that asked the question, “WHAT TYPE OF FELLOWSHIP DOES GOD WANT THIS CHURCH TO BE?” There we considered “What made you choose this fellowship as your home church?” The overwhelming majority were of the conviction that God wanted us to keep on moving in the direction we had been going. It was sad to see, though, that a number left the last meeting complaining it wasn't right that new Christians were given the same voice and vote as those who had been worshipping and serving here for many years already. It was a time of

polarization that could not be avoided if we wanted to keep in step with what the Lord had laid on our hearts and what we saw take place before our eyes. The purpose of this study was to write down goals and objectives for a Philosophy of Ministry which the church had never had before. (I could not help thinking at times how different our lives had become in comparison with working in the bush, driving gravel roads, raising pigs, milking cows, digging holes, pounding poles and putting up barb wire fences, etc.)

Some Punjabi people started attending our worship services too. Every week we held Bible studies in one of their homes. These were special times. Here our hearts were opened to a culture that was foreign to all of us. These people knew there were threatening dark powers and evil spirits that could invade their lives, homes and society. They had not been brainwashed by Western rationalism as the infallible and highest human faculty to be employed, and with which Christian theology and church programs were dominated for centuries. These people did not hesitate to call me when one of their daughters were foaming at the mouth and screaming being under attack by demons. Also, one of the most meaningful adult Baptisms I ever have experienced occurred in their home. Two of the women had accepted Christ as Savior and Lord and wanted to be baptized but were not allowed by their husbands to attend our Church service. They requested to be baptized in the bathtub in this home. We crowded in the small room with 17 people and right in that bathroom we sang the high praises of God.

Some of these happenings reminded me of what I read at one time in “The Spirit of Christ”, by Andrew Murray. He was writing about John Robinson, Pastor of a congregation of refugee Puritans at Leiden, Holland, who was bidding farewell to the party of exiles who were leaving on the “Mayflower” for England and who were to become known by the name, “Pilgrim Fathers”. He spoke these memorable parting words:

“I charge you, that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth to break forth out of His Holy Word. I cannot sufficiently mourn the condition of the Reformed Churches, which are come to a period in religion, and will go, at present, no farther than the instruments of their Reformation. Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times. Yet they did not penetrate into the whole council of God. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; and the Calvinists remain where they were left by that great man of God. I plead with you to remember it is an article of your church-covenant that you be ready to receive whatever truth is made known to you from God’s Word.”

By this time Jim had become a great help in the work of the congregation. Yes, we had some very difficult times. We had some congregational meetings that required a lot of wisdom, sensitivity, and discernment. Prayer and perseverance had become the watch-words. But we experienced the

saying, "God's grace keeps pace with the problems we face." Also, Jim's musical giftedness compensated greatly for my complete absence of it. Also, Jim was much closer in years to the children and young people that now had begun attending our worship services. We had come a long way from next to no children or young people, to now many of them. Mom and I had been asking and encouraging Jim several times to play the piano during our worship service. However, he did not feel at ease doing so until a music teacher in our church had him play with him after the service. This encouragement and assurance that he was an excellent player did it. And from there on we had a good pianist playing with the organist.

The young people approached me with the request whether drums could be used during the worship service. I asked whether they had the money to purchase them. They said they had some and could raise the rest quite easily. So one day they called and informed me that they had purchased drums. They asked what they should do now. I informed them to just put them on the platform in the church for people to get used seeing them there. During a congregational meeting some three months later a ninety year old member asked, "Pastor, what about these drums in the church? When are the young people going to use them at our church worship services?" How thankful I was for this question! My reply was, next Sunday. The church has been using them ever since. During this time Andy began playing his guitar as well.

From the start of our ministry I became part of the municipal Evangelical Fellowship, serving 4 years alternatively as secretary and president. It was extra work but I loved to participate in its work of Hospital Ministry and presenting briefs to City Hall. I had proposed to the congregation to give half of my free time to Hospital Chaplaincy and requested them to provide the other half. It proved to be a kind of outreach ministry as well. Of course, only in eternity God will show us the fruitfulness of it but at the same time personally I found it to be a very rewarding ministry. I had occasion to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ at many funerals of non-churched people. Often 99% of those who attended were people with little if any faith in Jesus Christ. Some of them began to attend our worship services; one lady the Sunday following her husband's funeral. We are grateful to say that she still is involved even to the time of this writing.

Among the many to whom I was able to minister in the Name of our blessed Redeemer was a young native lady. Her name was Debbie. Because of her life style she had become a paraplegic. She could not speak any longer either. At last the hospital placed her in the Extended Care unit together with elderly, dying people. On a winter day in the evening walking past the place, through the window, I could see that Nurses were having a hard time getting some food in her mouth. I went in and suggested to let me try to feed her. Surprisingly Debbie allowed me to do so. I was invited to come back again. I did this for quite some time. After praying with her many times she slowly began to regain some of her speech. I shared with her that at our Sunday evening fellowship we prayed for the sick and that some of the people had experienced healing. When

asked whether she would want to come and have us pray for her there was no doubt that this is what she wanted.

Whereas the Surrey Memorial Hospital administrator was a strong Christian I dared to ask her for the use of the Hospital van to pick her up and bring her back. On the first evening when a number of us gathered around her for the anointing with oil, laying on hands and prayer, I found myself praying a prayer which the others were expressing in tongues. After a number of weeks, we began to see considerable improvement. Then one Sunday evening about three months later, SHE WALKED UP THE STEPS with raised hands, shouting "HALLELUAH"!

How I wish to God that I could end here, but I cannot. After being released from Hospital as a healed person she slowly slipped back into her immoral life style and was no longer open to ministry. She only wanted her old "friends" to see her and thereafter we lost track of her. In the light of this experience, I often thought of the saying, "If you have friends like this, who needs enemies?" It was sad.

1983 was a year of anniversaries and celebrations. On March 10, we celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary with most of our family and all of the congregation. And on May 1, 1981 we celebrated the 23rd anniversary of the organization of our church. It was a most wonderful event. I believe a major spiritual break through occurred during the preaching of that Sunday. The morning's sermon was based on Psalm 116: 12-14 and the evening's sermon on 2 Peter 1:3-11. A few days ago we listened again to the tapes of these services. How we thank God for His Word and Spirit at work that Sunday. We sensed the Presence of God that day in a special way. The singing of praise was so genuine. Then, on June 11, it was the anniversary of the 25th year of my ordination. The congregation too wanted to be celebrating this with us. However, Corrie had arranged with the children without my knowledge that they all would be present on Friday evening prior to the Sunday celebration. We had a congregational meeting that evening and when we came home they had all gathered together in the big living room. Like always I dropped off my file in the study while Corrie had already gone upstairs. Everything was quiet there, but what a surprise to find the whole room full with children and grandchildren. Unforgettable.

It was so good to see a vibrant young people's group again. As in former churches, our own teenagers had a lot to do with it. When in Edmonton, it was Murray and Jack; in Monarch it was Anne and John and now here in Surrey it was Jim and Andy. It also began to look more and more that God was gifting Jim to do even more than that. How wonderful. Thank You, Lord.

Home Fellowship Groups had begun to play a major role in renewal, growth and outreach. People realized that the traditional once a year home visitation could not stand in the shadow of these weekly and/or biweekly gatherings. Now we had fellowship with one another; sharing, prayer,

Bible studies, songs of praise and worship. Indeed, this was far more beneficial and uplifting than the best of any annual “huis bezoek”. It also was a wonderful way to come to know new worshippers and minister Christ to one another. Yet, a dozen families continued to show strong opposition to the new direction. Sometime later we discovered that behind the scenes, they were working hard to get rid of their Minister.

Among the new people that were coming in was an intellectual woman from Holland who had lived with her parents in Indonesia and later as a married person in Italy but now was divorced. She showed deep spiritual needs. One day during another prayer and counseling session, the Lord revealed to me that she needed to be baptized. When I conveyed this to her she expressed surprise. She replied, “Pastor, I have already been baptized as a baby and as an adult.” I answered, “That may be so, but this is what God revealed to me.” Discussing further her life-style in Indonesia and Italy brought to light that her infant baptism had taken place in a setting of occult practices by her Minister father. Also, that her adult baptism was followed by her own occult involvement. I emphasized that she should fervently pray about it to God, the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Also I would seek for the confirmation by way of the Elders and their prayers. We set two weeks for all of us to pray about it. At the Elders meeting it was unanimously confirmed that this Baptism was called for by God. The Baptism took place the following Sunday by way of pouring water over her from a large tub. After the Baptism she arose and said to everyone present, “Hallelujah! I am set free. Thank you, Jesus.” She has gone back to Holland but now 13 years later, we still write one another at Christmas time.

Such things were too much and went too far for our strongly conservative and traditional friends. One month later, I was called by the Chairman of a special Classis committee that they had received a petition signed by 19 people of our church requesting I should be removed from office. I was accused of being un-Reformed. I failed to make use of the approved Reformed Order of Service and Reformed Liturgy. I had re-baptized people, which was a Pentecostal practice. In all, I was more Pentecostal than Reformed. The committee Chairman asked how to go about a hearing on their reasons for my removal from office. I replied, “You decide and I will be glad to answer any and all questions and accusations.” I was to call a Consistory meeting to be followed by a meeting with the signers of the petition. Consistory eagerly accepted but the signers of the petition refused to meet with them in the church building. The only time they agreed to meet was with the Classis Committee but without my presence and at one of their homes. At our meeting in church, we found that most of the signers were people who attended only a few times a year and some were inactive altogether. By various ways and means of prayer and visitation, I sought reconciliation, including requesting forgiveness for the hurt our new direction had caused them but it was of no avail. Within a few months the active members left for the greener pastures of a more traditionally conservative church. A strange foreboding came upon me in that they would now stagnate further growth there as well.

By now Jim had become a good part-time Youth Pastor and had also assumed educational responsibilities. Moreover, his unique music ministry enabled people to worship God in more meaningful ways. Sometime before this other musical instruments had been introduced and become well accepted. We had begun to experience a freedom in worship that had not been part of traditional Reformed worship. We had come to learn that worship was more than the singing of three traditional hymns. Andy too had joined the music team. There now was no comparison with the congregation we had when we came in 1978. Also, the percentage of ethnic people was much higher. The Holy Spirit had broken through in our church life. He had been “allowed” to freely move, touch, minister and heal. His hands were no longer “tied” with the ropes of mere manmade traditions. We had become a united, worshipping, witnessing and growing fellowship in Christ.

We ourselves had been part of such safe ways of doing things. But, Hallelujah, the Spirit had set us free and the catapulting breakthrough was the effusion, infilling and/or Baptism with the Holy Spirit in November 1979. By the grace and power of God, we had come to learn that we do not come together to worship the church, Reformed Liturgy or one’s particular tradition.

Some people told us of a glow above and around me which I never saw myself. It is necessary to keep before us that the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives and labor long before we realize it and begin to experience His power more fully than ever. In talking with people who questioned the reality and need of the infilling, effusion, and/or Baptism with the Holy Spirit, I often have put it this way:

If Jesus Christ, who was supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, did not venture upon His mission and ministry to which the Father had called Him until He was baptized with the Holy Spirit; if Christ instructed His disciples to not go out into the world as His witnesses until they were clothed in the same way with this Power from on high and their infusion with the Holy Spirit was followed by various repetitions and evidences of the same in the lives of other Christians who had become followers and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ; if the same is “for all flesh” - shall we today as followers, servants and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ ignore or reject the absolute need and necessity to be in-filled, effused or baptized with the Holy Spirit and there by empowered with gifts for worship, witness, service and ministry for Jesus Christ? You and I must be eager to receive whatever the Holy Spirit has available in order to be more effective servants of Christ. God baptizes His people with His Spirit not for salvation but for empowering in witness, worship and service.

Then came 1986, when telephone calls began to arrive from Edmonton concerning difficulties there. Soon it became clear the church desired us to come back, helping them out to get on their feet again. We were almost ready to retire but where we were not sure. Was this the time to accept another challenge? Jim and Babette talked about marriage perhaps sometime in the summer. Stacy and Russ did not look forward to moving away from Surrey. Furthermore, it meant Andy would be forced to find his own home. Jim expressed his feelings somewhat like this, "Dad, my mind says that you're crazy if you go there but my heart seems to say something else." Staying surely would be far less complicated.

Yet, in the end it became clear that this is where God was leading us. Again, it was as it had been most of the times before; if not sure what direction to go or decision to make, accept the more difficult one. And so another chapter closed off our ministry in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I should mention yet that when leaving for Monarch in 1970 some people asked how many house visitations I had made during the years we been with them? I could not answer them. I had no idea. Therefore upon our arrival in Surrey, I decided to keep track. It came to an average of 288 such visits annually.

Before our leaving the church in Surrey, by a vote of 100% Jim was voted in to be the new Pastor. Jim and Babette married on June 28 at New Life Community Church in Burnaby where her family were members. Another great day in the life of our big family! Thank You, Lord. They decided to purchase their own home rather than live in the parsonage. This in turn meant Andy could purchase the house, belonging to the church, where he had been living for 8 years. "God moved in a mysterious way His wonders to perform". This also stood out by way of the miraculous confirmation Jim received one night about taking over his Father's ministry. By way of a vision, "seeing" from his bed in the dark twice over Psalm 6:9 on the back of his Bible, he was assured that God had heard his prayers to step into his Father's shoes at his age.

It was son John, with a trucking business in Lethbridge, who was the lowest bidder to move our family to the parsonage in Edmonton which we had left 16 years ago.