

## THE BRITISH COLUMBIA YEARS

### Surrey, BC

When we arrived in the Surrey area we were at a loss to locate our house. We had the address but no directions had been given. I remember that when we were on the Fraser Highway Dad said, "Let us pray that God will show us the way soon for we have not much time left." Then we came to a stoplight on 96<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 140<sup>th</sup> street and to our joy we saw our Moving Van standing to the right of us. Now all we had to do was follow them. We had not seen the Van since it had left our yard in Mayerthorpe. Coincidence? Thousand times, NO! It was all God's doing. They brought us to our new place at 8:00 pm sharp. (Dad's wish to arrive on time came true!) In one hour everything was unloaded with all the help that was there. It made one of our parishioners ask in my hearing, "Is this all the furniture they have?" It made me smile. I felt so rich with what we had and especially that we had arrived safely with our family and everything we needed. Coffee and doughnuts were waiting for us and later when everyone was gone, supper was delivered! As soon as the beds were made we hit the sack. We all were so ready for it. The next day Jim and Andy were off to enroll in their schools. Stacy and Russell stayed home the first day.

During the trip Donald had asked to be called Russel (his middle name) in Surrey just as Jack changed his name from Cornie to Jack when we were moving to Edmonton. He did not want to be called Donald Duck anymore. It sounded good to us.

I loved our house at first sight and as always enjoyed the days after we first moved. It feels like kind of an adventure to me to put everything in it's place and make it "home sweet home" again.

It was a difficult start in the Church at first; not that we were not well received. It was that Dad's preaching was a stumbling block to some. We discovered that there were only a few leaders of prayer, faith and commitment. It became apparent that when Dad was preaching the "whole council of God," as he always did, that some dead bones began to rattle and came to life again but others complained and threatened to leave the Church. It was tough going, so much so, that Dad admitted it to the Lord and those who were left of the Consistory. He used these words in his prayer for our small flock; "Lord, I do not have what it takes to move this dead congregation." It was during that time that we were being made ready for the

great things God had in store for us. Our eyes were being opened to the fact that the power of the Holy Spirit was still available and not only during Bible times, as we had been taught. It was this spiritual power we needed desperately and we began to seek it for ourselves; attending seminars, conferences, prayer and praise meetings whenever there were opportunities. I went also to Women Aglow meetings to learn more about these realities. We had not learned about this earlier in life. Murray had received the gift of the Spirit already in 1970 while attending college in Orange City, Iowa. We had been moved to tears when we read about it. We were so grateful and said at that time that in God's time we would receive this as well. Dad received this precious gift earlier than I. For me it took a few months longer. I was apprehensive and fearful at first not seeing or understanding where I could use this gift. I was ready to surrender all and to receive whatever the Lord had for me. As I kept going to these Women Aglow meetings I began to see and learn more about it. It was a beautiful experience as a lady prayed for me and I was slain in the Spirit as it was called. It simply means that you are not aware of anything or anyone else around you; only you and Jesus are together. I began to be more hungry for God's Word than ever before. I also loved people as never before and I could hug the whole world as I have put it many times. It was not long thereafter than Jim experienced the Baptism in the Holy Spirit as well.

Since 1973 I was often plagued with stomach troubles. At first I took it as "my mother had this for years too" type of thing. But as it increased it began to be "daily prayer material" as our Elder Bruce called it. I was often on the couch because of severe pain during the day not able to continue doing my work. It was diagnosed as gastritis and something one must learn to live with I was told. On one of these days Dec.14, 1979, I did not know what to do with myself and cried again to the Lord, saying: "Whatever is going to happen to me, do not take your Holy Spirit from me." I was desperate yet I wanted to surrender all to Him. The next morning when I woke up, it was still dark, yet I saw something written on our bedroom wall. In big letters it said, "PSALM 138 verse 3." Then the room was dark again. I told Dad what the Lord had made me see and we right away read the verse together. In the Dutch Bible it says, "Dan riep ik U aan, en Gij hebt mij geantwoord, en Gij hebt my bemoedigd met kracht in mijn ziel." Translated it says: "On the day I called, Thou answered me, my strength of my soul Thou did increase." (RSV) The pain was not gone but I was greatly encouraged. We kept on praying for healing.

On September 20, 1981, one year and nine months later, I was completely healed from this ailment at a healing Conference in Spokane, Washington. Dad had made arrangements to go to this Conference but when he told me that it was an 8 hour drive I was doubting that I could make this long trip. Triple shame on me! The Lord took care of that as well. Immediately I began to enjoy the meeting. All we did that evening was sharing God's Word and singing praises to His Holy Name. We also had three periods of prayer during that weekend. We were approximately with 50 people and a large majority were charismatic Roman Catholic. Once we all went to the chapel for one hour of silent prayer. In the evening we had another hour of prayer together, praying with two of the people sitting next to us. On Sunday after the morning Worship Service, one of the leaders prayed with everyone individually. When she prayed with me I did not feel healed but went home greatly encouraged. I did not tell the lady what was ailing me yet in her prayer she mentioned every thing that I was struggling with. It just was a wonderful experience in every way.

The next morning, like always, I made breakfast and lunches for the children. As soon as they were gone to school, it all at once dawned on me, that the pain had not been there like always. I ran down to the study to tell Dad and you guessed it, I started crying non stop for a long time. But this time for JOY; I cannot find words to adequately express how I felt and how thankful we were and still are for this miracle of healing. The first thing I did was eat an apple and also a salad which I had not been able to do for a long, long time. I must have been testing it, whether it was real. But yes, it was real! Our sovereign God used Roman Catholic brothers and sisters for my healing.

In that year we had another intervention from the Lord but in a different way. One Saturday evening Dad had been struggling to conclude his sermon for Sunday morning. I was not aware of this at all except that his door was locked and that always meant prayer. When he too had gone to bed, I saw in my sleep a piece of paper in my hand and that something was written on it. It looked like a shopping list but when I looked closer I saw that it said "Isaiah 29:13 and 14." I then woke up and said to Dad, who was sound asleep, "Did you ask for something special this week?" "I sure did," was his answer. Could this verse be the answer for your sermon?

Dad was very anxious that night about his flock and we quickly got our Bible to see what the answer was. It said "Because these people draw near with

their mouths and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me. And the fear of Me is a commandment of men, made up only of rules taught by men.” This was exactly the text Dad needed. He had been struggling a long time how to bring to the people what was wrong. Now he could say it from God’s Word. Dad used the next verse as well for his conclusion:

“Therefore, behold, I will again do marvelous things with these people, wonderful and marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hid.”

This promise was truly fulfilled during our stay in this congregation. Soon there after some of the former leaders left their post.

Another special event was our trip to Holland. This was the second time that we went home, in 1973, to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This was my first trip by plane. We only went for three weeks so that Dad could have one more week vacation at home before he began his work again. We visited all our brothers and sisters for one full day each, sleeping at my mother's apartment each night. On Sundays we went together to our Church in Schipluiden and the rest of the day we spent time with our families and who ever came to my Mom's home that day. Someone close by had us over for lunch and supper so that we could be the whole day together. It was pure joy to be spoiled, a feast of three weeks long!

The day before we went home, Uncle Frank planned to go for a day to Zeelanrl with us. This was to show us how they rebuilt the dykes after the terrible flood in February.1953, when several thousands of people had drowned. We saw the film which showed the enormous work step by step. It was very interesting and awesome as well. What an enjoyable day that was, with Oma and my sister and husband. We were surprised that Oma was able to make such a long day, being 80 years old. This was the end of our wonderful second visit to Holland. The trip home was much better than when we went to Holland. It was good to be with our family again

While in Surrey I made three times a trip by bus to Alberta. The first time was in Oct. 1982, with the birth of Jonathan. The second time was in Sept. 1983, when Jack and Grace were married twelve and a half years. The third time was in Oct.1984 when Bethany was born in Pincher Creek. It was very

enjoyable for me and I was glad that I could do this. They were pleasant mini vacations. In 1979 Andy graduated from High School and began his electrical apprenticeship. After several years of hard work and study, he started his own business. In 1986 he bought the manse when we were called to Edmonton. Jim graduated from Simon Fraser University in 1981 and thereafter he was for four years at Regent College. In 1985 he was ready to start his work as part time teacher, (on call) in the public school system. He did youth work in Church and gave leadership in worship. He also taught Andy to play his bass guitar so they together could play in Church as well as at many other occasions. The Grace Community Church in Surrey had changed radically and all for the good. Dad would say: Glory, Glory, Hallelujah! It was not the same Church anymore from when we came in 1978.