

A fiftieth Wedding Anniversary is a to
express a deep sense of gratitude. After
having lived together for half a century
we can reflect over the past years and
~~state~~ ^{state} our testimony to our sense of
gratitude to each other, to God from whom
all blessings flow and to our children and
friends who have shared our lives and
contributed so much to them. That is what
we wish to do in the following pages as we
remember some of the highlights of our
life together.

God in His providence permitted both
of us to be born ~~to~~ to parents who were
committed to God and to the church. I
mention this first of all because we both
consider it the greatest boon of our early
years.

Both Rachel's parents and mine were
immigrants from ^{Sweden} "the old country" as they always
called it. My mother, Jennie Charlotte Anderson
was born June 15, 1881. She and a sister
~~in~~ had a farewell to her mother and three other
sisters to) My parents spent their
early years in the Illinois area where
they met and were married in 1905.
Rachel's father's parents came to the

heirvesta area (Milaca) were they met
and were married in 1892. Rachel's
parents became charter members of the
E.P.C. of Milaca. My earliest recollections
were of worshipping in the F.S.B. Church of
Kenosha, Wis. where my parents were
members.

I was born in La Grange, Ill. 1/29/07.
Mother told me of how ill the weather was
on the day of my birth - a snow storm
blowing from the N.W. She also informed me
that my father paid the doctor for his
assistance on the delivery with a \$20
gold piece, which he had saved for the
blessed event. So I began life on the gold
standard.

Rachel was born Aug 5 - 09 in
St. Paul, MN. Somehow it seemed that no
name had yet been chosen for the
expected child, so she was listed in the
city register of birth as "baby Ostlund". After
we were married and at the time of so
much household confusion (kitchen size + work in the
offing) when we all wanted to have
our record correct, we did secure
Rachel's birth certificate. Her mother was
still living at the time and was able

to affirm her identity and her birth.

into Rachel's ^{family} grew up with a family of five sisters and two brothers. ~~she~~ were born. Both of her brothers are now deceased, — in infancy and Leon who suffered ill health after his term of service in the South Pacific during W. W. II. Each of R. sisters are living at this ~~time~~ time of writing (Ester, Judith DeLeon and Mae), each of them married. Helen, Leon's wife, still lives in St. Paul and shares in all the family gatherings.

There were two of us children on my side of the family — I and my sister Ester who was born five years after my birth, 3/12/12. Ester attended MBS following her high school years, ~~and~~ married E. N. who when she was ~~in~~ in the Conf. Rep. denomination. Ester became ill with M.S. ~~in~~ in the early adult life and lived as an invalid until her release in ~~1977~~ Dec. 1980. Some of the happiest hours of ~~her~~ childhood and youth for me were the hours we spent indulging in our common love of music, she playing the piano and I the violin.

We had met at 1485

It was in 1871, ^{when} ~~the~~ The so-called "Great Depression" had settled down on our country, the I and a colleague of mine, Alfred Bjurkin, went up into the Leech Lake area of MN. to ~~do~~ do hospital work in a very neglected spiritual community of Abipsoht. The work prospered and we were able to establish a church in Whiplott and in Walker - the a town 13 miles to the west. We were affiliated with C.T.C.

It was while attending a church conference in the A.B. K.T.C. that Rachel and I first met. I was attracted to her as I saw her singing in the church choir. It was obviously love at first sight. We made contact with each other, carried on a courtship by correspondence ^{over} the year and were married 9/14/38 - the beginning of our life together which has now stretched into 50 yrs. The honeymoon trip took us to Niagara Falls, a traditional honeymoon trip in those days.

We were scheduled to be married on Friday with the first week in August. Two events intervened and we lost a

whole month of married life. The first event took place on the Wednesday of that week when M. took ill, ~~was~~ taken to M. P. Hospital where she underwent an appendectomy, when I came down from the North for what was to be our wedding, I found her in the hospital.

The second event was the long going of my Father. It was in the previous January that Father had visited Mayo Clinic in Rochester MN. He was suffering from cancer and it was hoped that he might find help here. Following the doctor's examinations of him I was called into one of the doctor's offices and told that he had terminal cancer and had about eight months to live. They said that they knew enough about cancers to be definite in their diagnosis, that surgery was not warranted. Father and I drove home and Mother ministered to him so faithfully for the next eight months. He passed away on the day we should have been married.

My Father was a godly man, I never knew him to do an unchristian

Year of Ministry

or unpaid act. He worked very hard
in the auto factory in Kenosha and most
literally laid down his life for his family.
We were never very close, to the end. There
was no play together, no sharing of ideas,
no warm companionship in any social event
year after year. But his consistent
Christian life led me to know that there was
such a thing as a true Christian. It
made me want to be one, too. To that
was 63 when the Lord called him home.

A new wedding date was set
so on Sept. 14, 1938, we were ^{united in marriage} ~~married~~
not in a church wedding as we first
planned but in Rachel's parental home
with Rev. C. W. Nelson as officiating pastor,
a faithful ministry. The church building
is still in use and has been very well
maintained.

One bright summer morning in 1940
we received a call from the F.D.C. of
Oakland Cal. asking us to come and
pastor their church. We had never visited
California or the Church, nor did they ask
us to come to visit them before extending
the call. It seems we had been recommended
to them and they called us on that

Years of Ministry

We began both our life and ministry together in ~~the~~ Minnesota (W/P area). I had been working in the Twin areas for some five or six years before. I remember coming home from our honeymoon to find the Church in Walker had begun building a church building - excavating the basement. I was tolding at the time of a call to another Minnesota Church in the Will. Falls area. ~~The~~ To have accepted the call would have improved our living conditions. But when ~~we~~ we found the Walker folk had the faith to begin building, we could not have them. We stayed two years ^{before} and were able to dedicate the new building and to see the Church well on its way to a fruitful ministry. The church building is still in use and has been very well maintained.

One bright summer morning in 1940 we received a call from the E.P.C. of East Oakland Cal. asking us to come and pastor their church. We had never visited California or the Church, nor did they ask us to come to visit them before extending the call. It seems we had been recommended to them and they called us on that

recommendation. We prayed for guidance as we had been taught to do and felt led to accept the call, at a salary of \$200 per mo.

In the two years in which we labored in Wyo we were blessed with so many precious experiences. For our first Thanksgiving we had wild duck and visitors. Mom did a superb job of cooking and entertaining. We had a host of visitors those two years - fellow pastors and wives, friends from points further south, and congregation members, friends, neighbors from the area. Fishing was one attraction, but friendship was primary.

David was born to us while we lived in Wyo. He was a choice child, so pleasant and so active. Paul and Betty and Tom were born to us in Oakland, Calif. - four children within the calendar date of five years and a short month. It may be that the folk in the Oakland church became a bit sceptical of our family increasing so fast. But we thanked God over & over again for the children. They have been a strength

to us, and then the years to this present time. Most of the couples in the Oakland Church did not seem to desire more than one, or at the most two children. They seemed to be happy with life as it was.

We were to take up the work in December of 1840 in the Oakland area. Rachel and I were set to leave the early part of November. I had purchased a trailer and we loaded all we had on the trailer to start on our way on Monday, November 11th. We didn't have too much to take. November 11th was the day of the now famous Veterans Day snowstorm. It was ~~one~~ of the nation's worse — many perished. We were held up till mid week to start. When we ~~g~~ did get under way, we straggled on the road about three miles from our starting point, and turned over the trailer over. Another delay. We went back to Walker, packed & shipped some of our possessions by freight, repacked both car and trailer and started off over again for California.

We crossed the country, snow ice
everywhere. We shall never forget crossing
Downer Pass and slowly driving down into
the Sacramento Valley. Roses were blooming,
the air was balmy, it was a new world. We
called one of Oakland homes when we
arrived in Berkeley and informed them of our
coming - arriving as we did a whole day
sooner than we had planned. At the Victor
Nelson home we were greeted by a host of
young couples from the church. It was
every time and we were to be guests
of the Nelsons until the passage was
ready for us.

The Oakland Church was not large, but
the majority of the members were young
couples with whom we soon felt united
at home. It was the first Sunday in
December when we began our ministry.
Several of the couples saw to it that
the Christmas season was not a lonely
time for us. On New Year Day we were
taken on a tour of The Bay Area, visiting
among other places, Fisherman's Wharf, The
Cliff House, The ~~Titotango~~, and
Hill. We crossed the Bay Bridge, and

engineering project which always filled us with awe as we crossed it.

We served the church in Oakland for ten years, five of which were W.W.II years. The war was in progress in Europe but the U.S.A had maintained neutrality until December 7th 1941. I had preached that Sunday morning. ~~As we were~~ Home after service, we turned on the radio to receive the news that Pearl Harbor had been bombed by Japanese planes. The U.S. immediately declared war on Japan - and the Axis of which Japan was then a partner. As the U.S. was at war and was to remain so until 1945 - when the first atom bomb was dropped.

The war years were filled with excitement. I remember contemplating joining the armed forces as a captain. I was approaching my mid-thirties, we had two children, and I felt responsible for my mother's care and well being. So I did not enter the armed forces. We did have a good ministry to service men & women, lots & so many of whom visited our church and our home.

In many of them
yours was the last home they visited before
"shipping out". It's fun to meet some of
these men and women now after these
many years, and recall the friendship
times we shared. Our Oakland church
was most hospitable to the servicemen
who visited us. It now seems providential
for us to have been there during the war
years.

Three of our children were born to us
in Oakland: Paul and Betty and Tom.
We lived in the passage which seemed to
us to be quite adequate at the time.
Its five rooms consisted of a kitchen,
dinning room, living room and two
bedrooms. The living room chestfield
opened ~~was~~ for use as a bed and
was used by many an over-night guest.
Toward the end of our ministry the
house became crowded with our family
of six, and my mother often staying
with us.

My mother was a member of our
household for many years until her
homegoing in 1978. She did spend some
time with my sister, Esther. But mostly
I felt her to be my responsibility. She

the years we must confess to some moments of tension. But on the whole we lived together with love and patience for each other. God appeared to hear our prayers for each other. Mother, I think, feared the day she might have to enter a nursing home. She never did. She maintained good health until her homegoing, spending only one week in the hospital. She lies buried beside my father in Greenwood Cemetery in Kenosha.

It is difficult to evaluate the Oakland years as to their success or failure. How does one evaluate a ministry? The Oakland Church did not grow very much in numbers. But while we were there as pastor, the congregation knew ten years of spiritual growth without any of what we know of as church squabbles or significant divisions in the congregation. We left a healthy church behind us when we travelled back to the mid-west to take up the pastorate of the Beesford S.D. Church in 1950.

There can be no greater difference between churches than the difference

between Oxbow and Beresford. Beresford
was a farming town of about 1500 people.
The church we were called to serve was
called the Brooklyn F.T.C., Brooklyn being
the name of the township. The church
itself was a typical brick country church,
seating about 200 people, a mile and
a half S.W. of town. Our parsonage was
in town, an adequate home for us
with five rooms on the main floor,
kitchen, dining, living room and two
bedrooms with two bedrooms upstairs.
The children appropriated the upstairs
rooms, Betty occupying a room and
the three boys together in a larger bedroom.

It is easy to grow nostalgic over the
Beresford years. The rural atmosphere
pleased all of us. The congregation was
wholly committed to the church and their
life together. The congregation filled the
church nicely for each worship service -
Sunday morning and evening. The
congregation was warm, lovable and
generous to us - so much produce
constantly came our way. The salary
was not large, but adequate when
supplemented by eggs, meat, etc.

Our four children attended the public schools in Bressford and seemed to prosper there. ^{The daughter} A very large group of young people and they all won our hearts. We conducted V.H.S., Catechism Classes and released this class during the years we were pastoring the church. Where are they all today?

Rural folk are usually conservative and surely our Bressford Church was conservative in every way: church government, farming methods, dress, social customs etc. The church cemetery lay adjacent to the church. A funeral usually meant a short service at the mortuary in town. The funeral par. then proceeded to the church where a full length service took place with hymns, special numbers in song and a full length sermon. The casket was then carried to the open grave where another short service was held, often accompanied by the singing of hymns by memory. I was deeply impressed by the reverence with which the community held things religious. Men working in the

fields would stop their tractors, descend, and stand at attention with hat in hand until the procession past. So also, any traffic on the road would halt till the procession passed. Somehow rural life, aided by tradition, made for a more spiritual life and God seemed so often very near.

In our third or fourth year in Bereford we received a call from Trinity Seminary to come and teach there. I had finished sewing work in Berkeley Calif. while serving the church in Oakland, earning the B.D. and H.Th. degrees. My ^{studies} thesis for the H.Th. was worthy in the area of church history and my thesis was The History of the Brooklyn Church which was subsequently published by the church. So it was assumed I was qualified to teach Seminary students. I pondered, considered, vacillated and agonized over the decision for the whole summer, finally giving a negative reply to the school board. ~~Subsequently~~ Our next pastorate was to be in O. T. while serving that church I did some teaching at Trinity on a part-time basis.

One spring day in 1957 I received a phone call followed by a letter which asked us to come and candidate at the Elm Fire in Oak Lawn. The congregation had ~~the Sunday before I came~~ ^{met} The congregation has sold this church property at 78th + Indiana on Chicago's south side and had bought some seven acres of land in O.L. at the corner of 100th St. & K.

The congregation met for S.S. and the morning worship service in the McDonald schoolhouse on the corner of 99th & Koster in Oak Lawn, a community of about 17,000 people at that time. There was a strong spirit of unity in the church and a wholehearted commitment to survive. We carried everything needed for S.S. and worship into the schoolhouse Sunday a.m. and carried it out after the morning activities. After a few months the street gymnasium was available to us and we used it for Sunday a.m. worship. I ~~do not~~ remember, coming home from the candidate Sunday quite sure I would not hear from them, and not being sure I wanted to go there.

But the call did come and we did go. Rachel & I talked much about the call, but I knew eventually the decision to go or not to go would have to be my own. I would now that the possibility of going to O.L. had been more openly discussed in the family circle. I would no doubt have made the move a little less ~~smooth~~ traumatic. It was a hard move for the children in their mid-teen age years. Yet, what might have been had we remained longer in Bensford, we will never know. For myself, I was spiritually and emotionally spent and intellectually stagnant the last year or two in Bensford. O.L. ~~proved~~ provided a much needed challenge. We left for O.L. in the fall of 1957. Our furniture was to follow us by Van a little later.

The O.L. years were exciting in many ways. The new church building took two years to build ~~and~~ was finally dedicated June 18, 1957. The early years in the new building were years of growth, both in numbers and in faith and love. Many in the community came to make

it their church home and responded to the message of the Gospel, making their commitment to Christ as Lord. The Sunday evening of dedication Sunday 75 followed their Lord in baptism.

For our family it was a time of ~~making~~ ^{making} new growing pains - of making new friends in a new school environment - the church furnished passage was adequate and was made more so when the ^{on the south side} of the church added another room, which became Wanny's room. ~~From~~ Upon graduation from O.L.R.S. each of the children went on to graduate work, and each ~~doing~~ ^{giving} us a deep sense of gratitude to God for them and their attainments since graduation.

It was a joy for us to see the spiritual growth within the congregation. Not everyone, but so many did grow. Preaching was never difficult in Ellen. Business meetings were free from argument and acrimony. Often, if a decision was made, without an all but unanimous vote, implementation of the matter would wait until a more

united conviction appeared within the church. We held special meetings during the years, but not on these occasions did the Lord's presence settle down upon us. It was in the usual work of the church that we were blessed. Foreign missions were a special interest.

~~When we had~~ In the tenth year of our ministry the church gave us a most gracious gift — a trip to visit all the mission fields of the F.F.C. except the S.A. field. It was a 7 week trip — taking us first to Africa. It was a thrill to visit a few days with Paul who was then in the Peace Corps in Shona the Congo, as it was then called, was in the throes of revolution — a tense time for all who were then in the country. Denmark was next on our trip followed by a week's visit to the Holy Land. Singapore, the Philippines, Japan and Hong Kong followed. We were guests of our missionaries in each place. The whole trip deserves a good travelogue. We were given a few days in Hawaii on our home board trip —