

MEMORIES OF OUR TIME AT ST. JOHN, KRAMER

1. Living in that great big house – We were a family of 3 in a 5 bedroom house! Aaron being born while we were there made us 4. The kitchen was large, the dining area even bigger! Micah and Aaron played in the fenced back yard. Colleen enjoyed having a large garden. Melvin Mundt asked her if she wrapped her potatoes in paper. When she asked why, he told her “so they don’t get dirt in their eyes.” Melvin also introduced us to milo, a crop unfamiliar to us.

2. The generosity of the people – various members dropped off meat to us since a lot of them butchered their own livestock. We definitely ate well! We recall the neighborhood party at Arlen & Judy Wohl’s place; great food, good friends from around the area.

3. Going to our first Nebraska football with Melvin & Gladys Schlichtemeier: Talk about a sea of red!!!

Of course, it was an Iowa state game... Our first fall at Kramer, the Cornhuskers lost to Iowa 10-7. That Saturday night, Melvin Mundt called to ask if we Iowa folks would be in church tomorrow. When I stammered, “Yes” Melvin said he

wondered if we would be too proud to be there with Nebraska folks.

The next fall when Iowa lost to Nebraska by the usual big score, I called Melvin to ask if he planned on being at church the next day...

4. My first Board of Elders: Willard Henning, Melvin Mundt, and Bob Nitzel. Those 3 men taught this rookie pastor so much about dealing with people. I learned from them how valuable to any congregation a caring group of Elders could be.

5. Leading Bible studies with the LWML/Ladies Aid – those women shaped my abilities as a Bible class teacher. Colleen is still active in LWML today. I also enjoyed Sunday morning Bible class with the dedicated souls who attended.

6. Special memories built around special people: Singing songs for worship with Cami Dittmer, Olga Kattau as Micah's first Sunday School teacher, Art & Viola Wieting, Edwin & Agnes Eggert, Donna Nitzel's cakes, Elvin & Gloria Pospisil trying to teach Colleen & I how to polka, fishing at the creek at Mel & Gladys Schlichtemeier's place, the young couples our age raising children like us...

7. Youth group activities: We arranged to kidnap the recently confirmed (with their parent's help), drive them around blindfolded & tied up, and drop them off in the ditch in front of the old parsonage so they didn't know for sure where they were. The rest of us were on the porch watching to see how long it would take them to get untied. The haunted house at the Church classrooms (yes those Elders gave us permission!) – the ingenuity of the Nitzel kids at creating scenes. The next year we held it at the old Sprague-Martell gym and invited the Beatrice circuit Youth groups to attend – over 100 came!

WHAT WE ARE UP TO NOW...

1. Our kids & grandkids:

- Micah & Nick and their daughter Jordan (a junior in high school) live in Vestavia Hills, Al. Micah became a dietician. She manages a WIC clinic in Birmingham, Alabama. We enjoy going to Jordan's volleyball and basketball games as she is a varsity starter in both. We watch her online when we can't be there.

- Aaron and Katie live in Clinton Iowa with their daughter Kenzie. Aaron served as a DCE for over 12 years and is now house remodeling and door-dashing. Kenzie went to state archery

competition in Des Moines and shot her best score for the season. She will graduate from high school this spring.

- Charity and Will Bass and their kids William (kindergarten) and Skylin (preschool) live in Ft. Dodge, IA. Charity works as an ER nurse at Ft. Dodge hospital.

2. Colleen worked as a pre-school teacher aide while we lived in Ft. Dodge, IA. She has made blue-jean quilts for every niece, nephew, and child when they graduated from high school (12). She has continued to make blue-jean quilts for the grandkids as they graduate (3 so far). She is still active in LWML. She works with her chickens and her multiple raised-bed gardens. She cans and freezes a lot of her garden produce. She also is an e-mail specialist for Mission Central in Mapleton, IA.

3. I still do guest preaching for other pastors who need a weekend off. I am an official member of the Fiddle Club of Iowa, as one of their guitarists. I like to build model cars and drive to car shows in my 1966 Pontiac Tempest.