

Letter from Pastor Greenfield

Our time with the Midland and Mount Pleasant churches began in April of 2004 and ended in December of 2007. The culture of the city of Midland city along with that of the church was unique, delightful and challenging. There are some memories that stand out from our time there that I will share briefly, realizing that by mentioning some names there will be many not mentioned who also played significant roles both in the functions of the church and in our personal lives. Please forgive me for not making mention of everyone, but please know that I deeply appreciate all those who actively and joyfully served our Savior along with us during those years.

My first memory of contact with the church was with Norman Moll as the head elder, who was eager to get acquainted and be helpful in any way he could. We were still moving into our home and Ireneia was finishing up her job at Oak Haven so I was picking her up Fridays and dropping her off on Sundays for a few weeks. It was quite a trip there and back, and on the return from dropping her off one of those Sundays, I fell asleep while driving and had a head on collision with a trailer, which easily could have ended my life. The car was totaled and I was in shock and not wanting to have the expensive taxi ride to the hospital in the ambulance, I called Norman and he was there quickly and picked me up. Thank you, Norman, for your compassion and friendship shown and for the fun time tapping maple trees and making maple syrup.

I'll never forget Reid and Ardith Tait, who enthusiastically and energetically served both the church and community. Along with a number of others at the Community Service Center they gave out clothing to the needy and spiritual literature seeking to bless all who they could. Reid also exercised great tact and wisdom as the head elder for several years. His love for everyone was evident and he, also, was much loved. Thank you, Reid, for your loving leadership and positive influence in the church.

David Moll, quietly, skillfully and with strength, guided our elementary school board as chairman all of our years there. His wisdom and sacrifice kept the school going strong through challenging times as enrollment declined and economic hardship effected many families. Thank you, David, for the countless hours and effort you gave to Jesus and His precious children in this way.

Don Ervick served the whole time as head deacon. So dedicated was he to the upkeep of the church, he put in countless hours keeping everything in pristine condition. Always cheerful and eager to meet the physical needs of the church property, Don was an exceptional head deacon. Thank you, Don, for showing your love for Jesus in this way.

Bea Green, behind the scene, took care of the financial records of the church. She poured out her love for Jesus through meticulously keeping accurate records and seeing that all church expenses were met and paid for in a timely fashion. Thank you, Bea, for strengthening the cause of Jesus through the cheerful exercise of your gift.

Becky Nelson served as head deaconess through those years. She also was dedicated, cheerful and totally dependable. Thank you, Becky. Your service for Jesus was a blessing to all.

Those mentioned were some of the pillars of the church who lead and enabled it to function in the mission of reaching the community with the three angels' messages and preparing a people to meet our Lord when He comes. I have fond memories of going out door to door with some of our youth of that time, of being part of a team who followed up bible study interest cards that were sent to us after a mass mailing. The It Is Written series by Shawn Boonstra that we hosted in the activity center was well attended and instrumental in impacting Harmen Aerts, whose enthusiasm for the truth drew some friends and family to attend. Anneriet, his mother, even before becoming a member, eagerly jumped in and helped with potlucks, community service and many other needs. I could mention many other similar experiences especially the amazing potluck lunches and fellowship, but for the sake of brevity I would say that all who lovingly contributed to the Lord's work in this time mentioned carried out the apostle Paul's instruction to the Ephesian church as recorded in Eph 5:2 "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma."

They also carried out the words of Ellen White written in the book Education p. 268. "Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church – He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.

The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties. This is an important part of one's training; and in a church imbued with the Master's life, it will lead directly to effort for the world without."

May God bless the finishing of His work in Midland and all the world, there is no greater joy than serving our Lord Jesus, working with Him, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God.

Maranatha friends!

Pastor Darren Greenfield