

# Karen Mayberry

*Submitted in 2016 by: Karen Mayberry*

I feel very blessed and thankful in how God has led in my life. He allowed me to grow up in a good family on a farm in Iowa, as the youngest of 6 children, or should I say “the baby” of the family. My father, a farmer, had been raised Catholic and my mother Lutheran. We kids were raised in the Lutheran church but despite my fairly regular church attendance growing up, and 3 years of confirmation classes and Luther League, I never had a genuine spiritual conversion and eventually other things captured my interest and I wandered away from church life by the time I left home.



Pastor Ken and Karen Mayberry - 2015

Some years later, at a low time in my life when I felt pretty empty and unhappy, the Lord chose to woo me to Himself. It's in the valleys of life where He can best get our attention. I was at a place where I really needed and desired more in life than what I had, for myself as well as for my 2 year old daughter, Aubrey, who I felt a responsibility for spiritually. He awakened a desire in me for a deeper relationship with Him. I began praying again and I began watching television evangelists on Sunday mornings and felt convicted of my need for Him. In those early days I began to see God guiding me through some very difficult times in my life.

I attended an Assemblies of God church for a very brief time and found I enjoyed their simpler worship style from what I'd grown up with, but because their speaking in tongues left me confused and seemed to separate me from them, I stopped attending. By this time my pastor from the Lutheran church back home called me to see where I wanted my membership transferred to. I remember my mom not being very happy with the pastor for doing that but it would serve to be a pivotal point in



Ken and Karen enjoying their first grandbaby at Minnesota camp meeting

my journey. I decided to attend membership classes with my sister in a different Lutheran church in order to renew my faith. I was still searching for answers and I really had a desire to find a church to call home. But as I attended the classes I just did not feel peace, which held me back from joining. I received no firm, satisfactory answers for the many questions I had. Then I learned of changes coming about in the denomination that I realized did not line up with my core values so I chose not to go back.

Then one day I saw a poster at the grocery store advertising an upcoming class on Creation vs Evolution with some emphasis on Revelation which peaked my interest as I wanted to know what was going to happen in the end times and how to prepare for it. I attended these classes that were held at a public school and led by Pastor Kent Knight from the Fairmont Seventh-day Adventist church. Each class was very informative and I learned so much. Then after the series ended we continued with weekly home Bible studies which led to my eventual baptism into the Fairmont SDA Church on May 7, 1988. I remember how Pastor Knight always went to scripture to answer my questions. By that I developed trust in the Bible as the source for answers. I finally felt the peace in my heart that I had longed for. I knew God was guiding me to where He wanted me to be. I had finally found a church to call home! Pastor Kent would also leave me an Amazing Facts Joe Crews video to watch each week, which I loved! I found his messages to be such a blessing in my journey to God! I felt so privileged to one day meet Joe Crews just months before he went to sleep in the Lord.



Pastor Kent and Billie Jean Knight

My mother also was happy I had found a church family and imagine my surprise when one day she showed me an old black binder she had. In it was a set of the "20th Century Bible Course" Bible studies. She had completed this home study course 41 years earlier, in 1947, as a high school student in northern Minnesota. Each answer sheet was carefully written out in her beautiful handwriting and a grade of "perfect" written in red at the top of each one. Another indicator from God that I was home.



Wedding day with daughter Aubrey and the Knights as attendants

Pastor Knight and his wife, Billie Jean, transferred to the Park Rapids district shortly after my baptism but we continued to keep in touch by card or letter over the coming years. In 1994, God once again used Pastor Knight on my behalf when at a workers' meeting, he shared about me with one of his colleagues, Ken Mayberry, about a potential relationship. Well, that's another story ... but, I'm happy and blessed to tell you that Ken and I will be celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary on June 30th, 2016. Ken has been pastor in the Bemidji

district over the past 8 years, which includes Park Rapids. It is clear to me, as I write of this journey I have taken, that God has led, and He continues to bless my life with each passing year!