

I remember when I first came to Grand Rapids, and found the Church meeting here. It was in the year of 1943 and the Church met at Quigley Blvd. It was an old store building, we had two rooms there. One was used for worship services, the second one was used during the Sunday School. We were divided into four classes for Bible Study. It was not an especially comfortable place to meet, but we thought very little of that. We were happy to have a place to assemble. Members came from all directions and some came as far away as twenty five miles. It was here that I met C.L. and June Puryear, who have always had a special place in my heart, as they have in everyone they met. C.L. was teaching the young peoples Sunday School class at this time. The minister was Bro. Muriel Moody. The last part of the year 1946 Bro. Moody decided to move on to another work in the south. Now C.L. took over the duties of the minister again. He worked an eight hour shift at American Seating every day, to support his family, June (his wife) and Polly (his daughter). C.L. always had a good lesson to present on Sunday mornings, and led an interesting Bible Study Class, with another good lesson Sunday night. During the week there was hospital visits to make, people to study with and visits to make. On Sunday Afternoons he spent much of his time helping Christians in the neighboring cities. He often Preached a sermon on Sunday afternoons to the group that now meets at Evenstan Congregation in Muskegon.

The Puryears always had a happy warm home open to all. When a place was needed for a service or a place for someone to stay they were always there. Many of the young people coming to Grand Rapids for futher schooling, after high school, stayed with the Puryears until they found other acommodations. They always made one feel like one of their family.

In 1947 the meeting place was changed to Amosy Hall, located on So. Divison. The building was used as a tavern on Saturday nights. This made it necessary to clean up beer bottles and spills before we could hold services, but the smells would often linger.

Grand Rapids - Church of Christ - 1947 - 1994

We, (Bill, myself and Rich), he was 17 months old when we came to Grand Rapids in the spring of 1946. Bill just discharged from the Army. No one had a record in Texas of there being a church in Grand Rapids but Bill had been born and raised in Grand Rapids and he had a job waiting for him here so this is where we came.

My Mother was very concerned about my coming here as she was afraid there wouldn't be a church. At first I went to different churches and any that said Church of Christ, but they were different. Some had music and choirs and some ministers wore robes. To me they were not the church I belonged to. I still have a problem with robes even yet.

Anyway I didn't go any place after a while and then I began to really be concerned about not taking the Lord's Supper and meeting with fellow Christians. I just wanted to go back to Texas but Bill didn't want to move to Texas. He said "Oh! there must be one here, I'll watch the Adds in the paper." Also in the phone book. Finally one day in the summer of 1947 he saw an add in the Grand Rapids Press. Church of Christ, Meeting in Amosy Hall on south Division. He said "Come on I'll take you," so we drove out there. Bill sat in the car and I went in by myself.

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I found a small group of christians meeting there with  
C.L.Puryear doing the preaching. There must have been about 30  
or 35 people present. There was no music, everyone sang, it was  
just as I was used to. I felt at home. Everyone was very  
friendly. I came back to the car with my face all lite-up. I  
had found my church family. I was so happy. Bill was impressed.