

BEING FOURTH ISN'T SO BAD

According to Jim McDonald's records, he joined All Saints 31 years ago in 1989. That makes him the fourth oldest in membership in the church. Already members of All Saints were Anne Lee, Marie Benz, and Sheryl SeEVERS, who were part of the charter group. Jim and his wife, Karen, came from Abiding Savior Church, and when that pastor, whom Jim greatly admired for his sermons, left for another assignment, Jim and Karen decided to find a church closer to their home. At the time, All Saints was meeting in a storefront, but when in 1998 they moved to their present location, it was but a "stone's throw from the McDonald's house." That coincidence has made it handy for Jim during the "sheltering period" of the COVID pandemic. He is able to keep an eye on the church and pick up the mail and newspaper on the days the secretary is absent.

Jim is a recent retiree from the IRS, having said goodbye to his position as an auditor in 2018. He fills his spare time mostly with writing. Currently he is writing a series of remembrances from his boyhood, but he also has written his first play. He is hoping his play will be selected for presentation. The play is set in the '40s and '50s and is "dark" in its story. That's all Jim will tell about his play. We will have to wait for the curtain to rise to find out. He has had extensive experience with plays, directing and acting in them.

As to his other contributions at All Saints, Jim has filled in by conducting services when the pastor is absent. He can do everything except serve communion, so we are fortunate to have Jim around. He also serves as a reader, sings in the choir, and has taught both adult and children's Sunday School classes.

Jim and Karen were married in 1968, but at present she is in ill health in a nursing home. Due to the restrictions placed by the virus, Jim and other visitors are allowed little or no contact with her. Jim says that Karen misses the support she had from church members. Even though their two daughters, Shannon and Megan, and the two teenage grandsons try to keep Jim company, the situation is hard on him. So he keeps busy. He remembers a trip on their 25th wedding anniversary to California and parts of the west as one of the best times in his life.

Another difficult time occurred in 2001 when his mother passed away. At that time, Jim began taking classes in classroom training and learning more about ELCA. When asked how he wants to be remembered, Jim responded, "I have never hated anyone. I always saw something good in every person I have met." He can not say how he does this, it is just part of Jim's personality. He takes inspiration from seeing what other people have done, and soon before you know it, he is able to replicate in his own fashion what he has seen. One of his plans is to write a book. In the meantime,

"Keep on looking for good in people, Jim. We need more people with that attitude."