

## God Our Provider

On January 1, 1961, my late wife and I began ministry in Kildeer, Saskatchewan, a hamlet located about six miles north of the Montana boarder. It was a ranch and farming community. The Sunday congregation of the Full Gospel Church was made up of about twenty people. On Fridays ten to fifteen youth gathered at our house. This was the place God led us to to get us started on the road to over fifty years of pastoral and overseas ministry. What an adventure it's been following the leading of the Lord. During those years God has been our provider and encourager.

The Kildeer congregation didn't have a board. Neither did it have a salary for the pastor. We learned to live on the Sunday offerings of \$3 to \$5 and change, plus food stuff people gave us. We also received a few donations from family and friends. But during our six months in Killdeer our income from all sources amounted to just over \$300 — yet we made it. Here's a couple of incidents that took place during our initiation into ministry.

One Sunday it looked like there was going to be a real good offering. The man who took up the offering always placed the collection basket on the pulpit right in front of me. I couldn't help but see the basket contained 'four one-dollar bills' plus coins. Then he pulled out his wallet to find his offering. He proceeded to thumb through the wad of bills and the smallest he could find was a \$5.00 bill. I quickly calculated: 'This is going to be a large \$9 offering today.' Wow! Then my heart flipped backwards; he dropped the \$5 bill into the basket and scooped up the four ones, and with a silly grin on his face returned to his seat. The offering quickly dropped back to \$5.00 and change. What a let down! I almost stopped breathing and singing for a second or two. But didn't. This incident is humourous now. But then.....

Thankfully God had other ways of blessing us and showing us He hadn't forgotten us. A rancher couple west of Killdeer, who were Seventh Day Adventists, also came to our Sunday services. Having no children they adopted us and called us 'Our kids.' Their home was always open to us, and what a blessing they were in so many ways. Andy was Norwegian, Dorothy was Russian. They often gave us meat and vegetables. On one particular occasion Lilian had been wishing she had \$20 to go grocery shopping. We didn't have it! And she didn't tell anyone. But a short time later while visiting the ranch, Dorothy gave her a partial [green] can of moth balls so she could pack away her woolen sweaters and skirts for the summer. When we got home she opened the can and saw Queen Elizabeth smiling up at her from a \$20 bill on top of the moth balls. A lot of money in those days! Now she had it! Guess what? We drove to Rocklén, about 25 miles to the north and went grocery shopping.

I'm often reminded of Paul's encouraging promise: "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." [Philippians 4:19 nkj] Then with king David I can truly say: "I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants [children] begging bread." [Psalm 37:25 nkj] When God called us into ministry, He did whatever it took to help us pay all the bills and even gave us a little extra for retirement. Now that's a bonus of His bountiful grace. God has been so good.

George Shaw

Vernon, BC.