

Stories of Faithfulness

The Egg Endowment

Let me tell you about a big egg business. Coming out of the military service at the close of the Korean war, Randall decided to put his agriculture degree to work, so he went into the chicken business. Randall and his wife, Janet, put it all on the line. For several years they struggled to make ends meet and finally, during one real desperate business cycle, they decided to turn their chicken business over to God. Janet said they prayed, "Lord, this is your business, do what you will with it."

God heard their prayers. Over the years, He prospered their labor. They eventually built a very large chicken business with over 16 million chickens housed in various states. They continued to honor God's faithfulness by becoming generous givers and teaching the principles of generous giving to their four children. In 2007, Randall, Janet and some of their family established a substantial endowment fund with the Church of the Nazarene Foundation. This endowment fund will generate income to the local Church of the Nazarene for use in family and children's ministries. The pastor says, "This gift will enable our church to reach into the homes and lives of countless people without negatively impacting our daily operational needs."

The eggs they gathered over a lifetime will produce far more than a wonderful breakfast.

A Legacy of Giving

Heroes of generosity don't always have big bank accounts. For years, John Pierson drove a milk route and worked long hours. But he and his wife, Orlene, found time and energy to maintain their church facilities, call on those who were sick and homebound, and make a bold lead pledge in the capital campaign to build a new church facility.

It is as if the spirit of generosity was ingrained in the Piersons. One holiday morning their pastor, after bringing his wife home from the hospital to recuperate after major surgery, found John and Orlene waiting at his home with dinner. What a moving and appropriate gift of love for that clergy family.

John and Orlene were Nazarene Legacy Partners, modern day heroes who made a difference in advancing God's Kingdom. In the later stages of their lives, a member of the Nazarene Foundation staff visited the Piersons in their assisted living facility and was moved to tears as John tenderly cared for his wife who was in the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. Just a few weeks later, Orlene died.

Not long after this at 95 years old, John was playing his violin, sharing beautiful music with other senior adults. As he concluded the last chorus of "To God Be the Glory" where the lyrics state: "O come to the Father, thro' Jesus, the Son," this dear saint slumped over with a heart attack and died. One of his caregivers, who often tried to keep up with John on his afternoon strolls, said, "This was John's good-bye party."

Through the Piersons' Charitable Trust and Charitable Gift Annuities, the Church of the Nazarene Foundation was privileged to make significant distributions to the local church John and Orlene attended as well as to other Nazarene ministries that were near to the hearts of the Piersons.

Faithful people, such as the Piersons, who have modeled generous living and Christlike service, give us cause to offer thanks as Paul did when he wrote his letter to the Romans.

The Dairy Farm Produced More Than Milk

"For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills" (Psalm 50:10).

Late in October, as the leaves were in their amber and crimson prime, I made my way deep into the heart of Maine. I would soon set foot on the Cold Brook Farm. Herman and Clarice Dunlop, faithful members of the Skowhegan, Maine First Church of the Nazarene welcomed me to their home.

I had met Herman and Clarice at a Prime Time retreat and was now having the opportunity to once again spend time with them. What a blessing! Though diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer, Herman retains his humor and uncompromising reliance on our Lord and Savior. He has numbered our days and Herman is at total peace with whatever God's plan is for his life, be it measured in days or in years. He has a peace that the world cannot give, but only envy.

As I sat at their dining room table the story of the Cold Brook Farm began to unfold. Herman's grandfather in the early years of the twentieth century moved his family and cattle from Canada, south into Maine and established the Cold

Brook Farm, a dairy farm situated about two miles north of the town center of Skowhegan. Within a short time, his grandfather began meeting with other Christians in a tent. These tent meetings gave birth to the First Church of the Nazarene in Skowhegan. Herman's parents and then Herman and Clarice continued to operate the dairy farm and help build the Skowhegan church. In the words of Herman, "this farm has produced a lot more than milk". Truer words have never been spoken.

Perhaps as many as a dozen preachers have come off that dairy farm, including Herman's brother, Roland, who served as the District Superintendent in Maine, and Herman and Clarice's daughter. Countless unsuspecting young men have worked at the dairy farm only to have a personal encounter with Jesus prompted by the faithful witness of the Dunlop family.

Today, a brand new First Church of the Nazarene sits on six acres of land that once was the site of the old farmhouse on the Cold Brook Farm. Only an apple tree stands at the drive to the Church to conjure up the memories of the farm of long ago for Herman.

The farm no longer exists. Much of the property has been sold. There are no dairy cows; no more milk production; only the countless lives that have been transformed by the faithfulness of those who lived and worked on the farm. For nearly one hundred years the farm has been a tool for ministry. Now, Herman and Clarice have written the last chapter of Cold Brook Farm. They have placed the remaining parcels of the farm in two Charitable Remainder Unitrusts to perpetuate its legacy. Herman and Clarice will receive lifetime income from the trusts based on the sale of the farm property. At some point in the future, in God's timing, the trusts will be used to establish two endowments to fund ministries of the Church of the Nazarene.

Until that day, when time shall be no more, Cold Brook Farm will continue to produce "more than milk."

For more stories of faithfulness, visit www.NazareneFoundation.org and click on "Donor Stories."