

Mark, Here's my "statement" for the 40th anniversary service. My prayers and everlasting gratitude go out to the community, their witness, and your ministry. Blessings on your future, and new baby. Tim Cooper

Crossroads—those trails leading to or from horizons and journeys at specific times and places in our lives. And thus I look back at my time in fellowship at Hyde Park—freshly ordained, seeking a service in ministry opportunity in a trendy setting in a cool city amidst semi-counter culture types around my age.

With a raw spiritual hunger, learning to practice discipleship-leadership in an Anabaptist context, I led a pastor's life for a small handful of years during a crossroads of my life. And with inspired patience and kindness, the fellowship taught me lessons and memories I cherish to this day.

Almost two decades later, I look back as if I were almost simply passing through: from California where I went to seminary, married, had children, my first pastorate, to the present place in New York, serving now as educator, but still the wandering pilgrim.

But back in Boise, I left something and found something other. Preaching for four years in your midst, I recognized a further calling to bring to life the messages I was sharing from up front. And I knew I had to leave one thing, before I could begin that something other.

Thankfully, and with memories that are among my most tender, you blessed me as I left your fellowship, the pastorate, and Anabaptism itself to seek what God wanted done amongst the homeless and broken of your streets.

Corpus Christi was birthed through the grace and encouragement, support and inspiration of so many members of Hyde Park Mennonite. In the Catholic Worker setting, the Roman Catholic parishes of the city hopped right on board: "Dorothy Day? Count us in," they said. And indeed I was to use my cache as "former pastor of Hyde Park Mennonite" as a calling card of my "credibility."

But the true credibility came in the ministry and mission itself. Mahlon Janzen, the baker, made sure I had all the bread and pastries I needed each morning. Rick and Russ were quick to offer guidance and support in more ways than can be listed

here. Several others—you know who you are—gave in most timely, loving and compassionate manners.

So there you continue to stand. Beloved members bound together over pressing contemporary issues: I remember Reed assailing me about dams, before, during and after dear Angeline's passing. And my blessed brother Gard, guiding me to Idaho's Death Row where my friendship with Paul Rhode's was to end in his execution. (Brief aside: I talked to Paul on the phone just a couple hours before they killed him, saying that since I couldn't make him Mennonite in years past, how about becoming Catholic now? We laughed and laughed amid our tears knowing how near Christ's throne was and trusting that to our Savior such distinctions matter not).

Rory and Aidan (now 26 and 27) have grown to become fine young men. And Rosemary has distinguished herself in the library field: as Director, she built Warwick, New York, a brand new library, and five years later, it was chosen as America's best small library! And just this year, she will be honored as one of America's Top Ten librarians!

So as I occasionally check up on you through your website, I watch as you continue to question and survey who you are and what you sense God's leading to be. May I offer my heartfelt prayers and holy gratitude for all you gave me. And sharing my past in this company of Catholics I still field questions: "Mennonites? Are they Christian?" And "Idaho? Isn't that by Kansas?"

Well, I know what you believe, and I know where you are. With Christ in the center of your community; and the same Christ who binds us together in time and distance. His is the Cross we learn to love and carry no matter where the roads originate or where they lead...Bless your community for years and years to come.

Tim Cooper