

Friday - April 4

Craig Askins' story continued from April 3rd

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:6 (KJV)

In the early nineties, Craig would invite everyone to his farm for annual church picnics on a summer Sunday following worship service. We would spread our quilts on his large front lawn and share food and good time together. During one of these outings, Pastor Ed noticed large planks of timber protruding from the end of Craig's barn. When asked, Craig said they were cut from cherry trees on his farm and he was curing them to build some furniture someday. We also remember hay rides in late October. Craig would invite the church members to come. Families with children would enjoy riding in his farm wagon sitting on bales of hay pulled by his team of Belgian horses north thru the harvested fields as darkness fell.

I spent a Sunday afternoon with Mr. Askins. He had a large metal building built behind his home where he had accumulated and restored old farm equipment and various wagons and carriages. He explained how each piece worked and their purpose. He was all smiles as he showed me a fully restored, black, horse drawn hearse from the late 1800s. Craig had traveled to various parts of the country to buy vintage items and restore them. It was his retirement work hobby.

In 1997, Craig wanted to provide a large cross which would hang above the chancel area in the Sanctuary. His carpenter made it from Craig's cherry. It was delivered and hung the week before Easter. Mr. Askins came to the church on Saturday and sat on a pew chair to see the cross that had been built. The next morning, as Pastor Lou was giving announcements, our church secretary came quickly thru the Sanctuary and handed her a note. With sad emotion, we learned Mr. Askins had passed that morning. He was 86.

That Easter morning, Sue Moore had prepared to provide the "Children's Moments." As kids covered the Sanctuary steps, she highlighted the new cross Mr. Askins donated explaining it was a symbol of God's love for us and the love Mr. Askins has for his Church. As tears continued, she passed out miniature crosses. After the service, adults were asking her if they too could have a cross. The beautiful wood cross currently hangs in the Sanctuary entrance inside the red doors.

Alan Moore

Prayer: Gracious God, we give thanks for those who are faithful and generous to the church, growing families and building community with productive lives, willing to work and make a difference. Amen