

A Letter to the Congregation

Because of a lack of time to personally talk with each of you, the elders thought it best to share information by this insertion.

From the time brother Gieseke resigned to go into full time work, we have been looking for a man to take his place. We received leads from various sources. They were followed up on by letters and calls, but in most all cases, they wanted full time work, which at this time we are unable to offer.

Brother Ben Sherfield, preacher from the Coldwater, Michigan congregation mentioned about Norman Herron, a missionary in Norway for 5 years, who was returning to the states in August. He knew brother and sister Herron well, because they were workers together in the congregation at Garden City, Michigan in the early 1960's. From this suggestion we also communicated with brother Herron, and have since that time.

Upon searching further into the Herron's we found them to carry high recommendations among everyone who knew them. We spoke to several who knew them personally and to the elders at Garden City under whom they worked. Their background, commitment and experience were among the deciding factors in their favor. They possessed, by far, the best qualifications of any lead that we had, and seemed to be the best suited for the expanding work of the Lord in LaGrange.

It was on July 22 when brother Gieseke informed us that he would be moving the next Wednesday. It was his recommendation, and our judgment based on the average size of preacher's families, that we should add on to the preacher's house. At a business meeting with the men on Sunday evening, July 23, we talked about this expansion, its cost and repayment for most of the expense, under our present loan without increased payment. We started this work as soon as the house was vacated on July 26th.

In regard to the congregation getting to visit with the Herrons and hearing him preach, presented a problem of time. They returned home on the 16th of August. The next Tuesday the family came down and we talked with them and to brother Herron personally at length. From our talks and previous information we had on them, we felt that they would be a great asset to the work here. They expressed a cordial view of the LaGrange area and for the progressive work of the church here. School begins the 29th of August and time was short. He was committed to preach at home the next Sunday and also committed for a gospel meeting on September 10-17. It seemed that a Thursday evening preaching service was the only occasion the congregation could hear him before getting the children enrolled in school.

We are sorry that the usual time given for the selection of a preacher could not be given. The decision had to be made and based upon our judgment we believe we have a good choice in the Herron family. They have 5 children, Jeffery 16, Steven 14, Kimberly 12, Melissa 9, and Heidi 20 months. Of course four of the children will be in school and the Herrons are anxious to get them started at the very beginning, to adjust to the local schools, quite a change from the Norwegian school system.

The Herrons plan to come early Tuesday morning in time for the morning classes at school. They will be bringing only necessary things as they await the arrival of their furniture by boat, which will probably be another 3 weeks.

As the Herron family attempts to readjust to living in the states and more particularly in our area, we should do whatever we can to help them and merge our interests and concerns with theirs as we anticipate a fruitful labor together in the Lord's church at LaGrange.

The Elders,
Dean Hoggatt

Devon Hostetler