

## **Retirement reflections**

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**B.D. 1953**

My retirement from twenty-nine years of teaching at Bluffton College came about this way. In September 1992, I told President Elmer Neufeld that I planned to retire at the end of the school year (May 1993) after my sixty-fifth birthday anniversary. That way the college had opportunity to find a replacement, and I had time to wind down and adjust emotionally to the end of my teaching career. However, I had to undergo bypass surgery in April, the result of several years of arterial heart disease and procedures. The Lord was saying to me that “you no longer have the heart for it.” So I made the decision, and then it also was made for me. There was no question about the right thing to do, and I was ready to do it. My official connection to the college was cut off, but I tried to maintain a non-interfering, supportive relationship with my successors. We have maintained our residence in Bluffton near the college and are active in campus events.

After retirement, I served as interim pastor for one and a half years and then, a few years later, again served in that position for four months. This was a good shift for me. I could continue my calling of a teaching/preaching ministry at a reduced level of stress and responsibility within a familiar setting. My career had begun as a pastor, and ended in the same role. My teaching opportunities since retirement included two AMBS extension courses, quite a few courses in the Learning in Retirement Institute at Bluffton, and teaching Sunday School. I have appreciated and enjoyed these challenges.

During my seminary years I struggled with what God was calling me to do—should it be the pastorate, missions or teaching. During my years of teaching, my wife and I were given three short-term overseas mission opportunities. That was the way that “my calling” was fulfilled: I was a pastor, a teacher and a missions partner.

I am a person who works best with definite schedules, deadlines and assignments. Therefore, aside from the clear responsibilities cited above, I feel that I could have used my retirement years more productively than I have. However, I still greatly enjoy reading and studying the Bible and trying to keep up with current biblical studies and world church news. Presently, Elnore and I are sorting through all the memorabilia that we have accumulated in order to get ready for the next transition.

The Lord has been good to us, and we have tried to be faithful.

Burton and Elnore Yost live in Bluffton, Ohio.