

Confirmation

I remember the spring of 1936. The girls were getting new dresses, some home sewed and some bought off the rack. The boys were getting suits with their first long pants. Parties were planned. It was going to be a great festive occasion.

Confirmation. We were looking forward to the Sunday before Palm Sunday as we were examined in front of the church. The church would be full of people. The next Sunday would be Palm Sunday and our confirmation. But wait. It was discovered that there were four people in the confirmation class that would not be twelve years old until after confirmation. The rules of Trinity said you must be twelve years to be confirmed, so a special meeting of the voters was called. Of course the voters made a variance for the four. They were Wally Heldt, Norm Kraft and Caroline Miller and myself.

At confirmation we would receive our own personal hymn book, usually in black imitation leather. Our name and the year we were confirmed would be printed in gold. We could hardly wait to use it. The following Sunday was really the big one. Our service then was a little different than confirmations now. The women with their small unconfirmed daughters and babies always sat on the left side and the men with their unconfirmed sons sat on the right side of church.

The school children always sat in the front pews, girls on the left and boys on the right. On each side of the church toward the front was a alcove. There were short benches and all the confirmed boys and girls sat there until they were married. Girls were on the left and boys were on the right. Now, on the boys side you were getting big if you could put your knee on the back of the bench in front of you. The shorter guys would put their hymn book on the book rack in front of them and put their knee on the book. Then they were big. But I was a small guy and when I tried to put my knee on the hymn book I almost slid off the bench on to the floor. The guys all laughed, the men gave us a stern look and I had to wait two years until I grew tall enough to put my knee on the book rack.