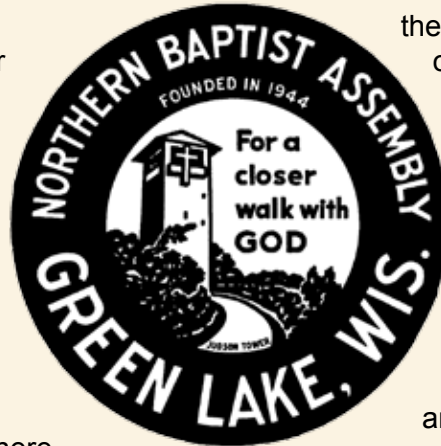


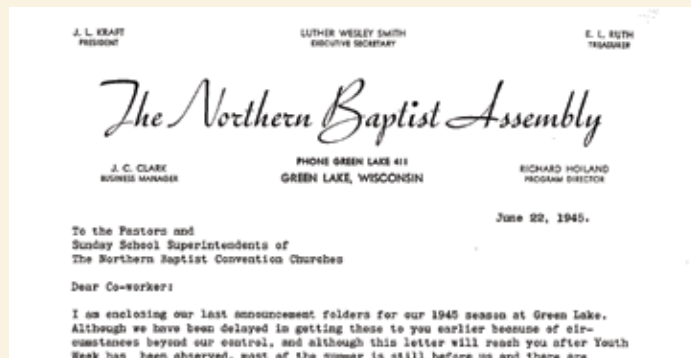
# My Green Lake Story: Julia Cormack Paulsen

Green Lake has always held a special place in my mind and heart for a major portion of my life. When I think of Green Lake I recall the theme “For a Closer Walk with God” and how my life has been influenced by a wide variety of experiences while on those sacred grounds.



My father, Dr. F. Lowell Cormack, had the privilege of attending the first conference held at Green Lake. He traveled by train from Chanute, KS (where he served as pastor of the First Baptist Church) through Chicago and on to Fond du Lac. Bus transportation was provided from the train station to Green Lake.

Stationery with “Northern Baptist Assembly” printed was available and my father wrote glowing letters about the beauty and spiritual enrichment that he was experiencing while there. He was thrilled to be able to meet James L. Kraft, Luther Wesley Smith and a whole “who’s who” of Northern Baptist life in the mid 1940s.



Green Lake became a regular destination for family vacations during my childhood and early teen years. There were uplifting conferences for adults and a children’s center with activities for all ages in the morning as well as during evening sessions. The children’s center was a lab school providing Christian Education leaders opportunities for gaining skills. I looked forward to a variety of activities and to making friends with children and young people from across the United States as well as missionary families from many places in the world.

When I was in college at William Jewell I served on

the student staff during the summer of 1959. This was an experience of a lifetime. There were 63 of us college students from across the country. We worked as waitresses and busboys in the main dining room and, at times, in the Abbey area. The girls stayed in Shepherds Lodge and the boys lived in the farmhouse. A bus picked us up every morning and took us to Roger Williams Inn. Mid-morning we had classes taught by



1959 Student Staff: Julia Cormack in row 4, 2nd from right

Marcus Barth using his book “The Broken Wall.” We would often hear from conference leaders including Clarence Jordan of Koinonia Farms. These experiences raised our social consciences and deepened our faith experience. During that summer we had the opportunity of participating in music or drama activities. The choir was led by the Dvoraks from Illinois. The choir often sang for worship services. The drama group was led by Mrs.

Enterline, a drama teacher from PA. I enjoyed having a role in "Cry the Beloved Country" (about South Africa) and in "The Wise and Foolish Virgins." Both plays were performed for conferences. We planned many parties and social events. In three months we made lifelong friendships. Several of us enjoyed a 50th anniversary reunion at Green Lake in 2009.

A memorable experience for me took place one day when several of us were asked to serve a group that was meeting in the Abbey area. We were introduced as college students. The speaker for the event came to each of us and inquired about where we were in college and our major. Then he asked "What are you going to do with the rest of your life?" I knew very little about the man but was very impressed by him. He spoke in a way that made you want to listen. That person was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



In 1961 I enjoyed being a part of the young adult staff at Green Lake for the summer.

In the fall of 1965, my husband and I attended the Seminary Seniors Conference which featured many of our American Baptist leaders at the regional and national levels. We were impressed with Dr. Jitsuo Morikawa as he shared his testimony.

Educational Ministries planned many great conferences during the late 1960s and into the 1970s. My husband and I attended two conferences in the late 1960s when he served as Director of Christian Education at First Baptist Church of Wichita, KS. We had the opportunity of sharing in a small group with several African-American conferees during the time of the Detroit riots. We shared in several powerful prayer meetings during those days. We remember one evening meeting in particular that was led by "Daddy" King (Rev. Martin Luther King Sr.). "We Shall Overcome" was never sung any better nor more powerfully.

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One church where my husband served as pastor took a youth group to a youth conference in 1970 and another church took a youth work group in the early 1980s. Both experiences were meaningful and life-changing for the participants.

In more recent years my husband and I have attended all of the World Mission Conferences held at Green Lake since 1998. The inspiration and encouragement that comes from just being on the conference grounds has strengthened in our spiritual journey the significance of that motto defined 75 years ago. We have continued to experience that "closer walk with God." Green Lake continues to be a special place for us after all of these years.

