

M: Daisy Allen. Anyway tell me about what you do, your ministry and being around here and Africa, or whatever you want to say.

Daisy: I'm a farm girl I was born at the top of this road, Edwards Hill Road, from a big family. We always had to work, we helped in the gardens and we helped with the chores and we helped with everything that everybody else did as well as in the house. And I never moved very far away, but I did get into church work, my family were church people. And I went to the church down at the end of the Edwards Hill Road and was a member there and was in missionaries society when I was a very small girl. I guess maybe it's always followed along with me.

M: You studied or were interested in missionary work?

Daisy: I was--we had a little missionary--individual missionary society and probably because I wanted to they just let me be a member on it when I was young. And it was the Pentecost Holiness Association. And I have worked with 'em for years and was ordained with 'em and became a leader in the church.

M: How old were you when you were ordained?

Daisy: I don't know. I was married. I'll tell about the school in Pennsylvania. But I felt the need to have a church inside, our church was just outside of Baker's Mills because they had no pastor there and the church was all

going down and they just didn't have anyone there. So I went there like--that was 43 years ago. And my attendance has never become big except holidays, things like that. But it is a country church and we have some lovely people and we have Sunday schools and and church services, deification bible school in the summer and prayer services, and we give Christmas presents to all the children. Everybody comes to the Sunday school Christmas program. And fact that's what some of that came from, was one of the boxes that we have, the candy boxes. It is a country church, it stayed a country church and looks like one. But some would like to modernize it and we haven't very much. We do now have a rug and that makes a little updated I suppose, carpet. But with my work with the Pentecost Holiness Association I think--I had of course worked with them and they put me in as the president in 82 and the offer came, you better come over and visit us here in Africa. And the other ministers hadn't felt that they should, I felt I should. And though I was a woman and had done nothing very important outside of my own community, I thought well even if I'm a woman I'm going to try.

M: What's only being a woman.

Daisy: Well you know a lot of people didn't always think a woman could do these things and I didn't think I could. For the reason that--I gave the _____ a lot of

reasons why I wouldn't. But then I went.

M: They chose you so--?

Daisy: Chose me, and the bank was willing to give me a loan on my own say so, 'cause I'm not a salaried preacher. It's just whatever people give. And it's been tough sometimes but the Lord has always meant to me.

M: Do you have to repaid that loan out of your own pocket later?

Daisy: Yes.

M: From earnings elsewhere and so forth?

Daisy: Fer well just what the Lord supplies to work-- as a minister, whatever.

M: So you paid your own way to Africa to help these people and--you're terrific.

Daisy: And so of course, as I say, I had never flown, and I was married and I didn't think I could go. My husband okayed it. I had children and grandchildren and my mother was gettin' kind of old and I didn't think I could leave her and here it is almost four years later and she's livin'. And well I had a very good time.

M: Tell me about some of your African experiences. About like that tree situation. How long you stayed and--

Daisy: Well one time in Azua, in Tanzania we were having a church convention Pentecost Sunday weekend, and while we were there I thought--I can't miss anything even if

I don't know Swahili. But I decided that I was going to listen to every word I could and get the feel of it because you know, if they're sincere you'll feel it. So felt-- heard somethin' goin' on down the side of my chair where the ministers were sitting a little separate from the rest and I looked. A man had a stick and he was boring a hole in the ground. And I said well I guess I--this is none of my business--and I went on ta listenin' to the work at hand. And when I-- A little bit later, after they were singing and one thing--I looked up over me with a little rustle, there was a tree over me and all the leaves hanging down over me. I looked back then, I said I guess it was my business and I noticed what these people had done. They had planted a tree right there during the church service among all those people to cover up the one white woman from America and made sure she didn't get sunburned. Well they went on with the service, never bothered them each were doin' the best that they could. And they showed me a blessin' all over Africa. Course they figure Americans are rich, and you get lots of pleas that you can't answer. We do many of this Earl and I've paid for send clothin' to Africa. Being the Pentecost Holiness Association doesn't have a lot of money like some denominations, we're small denomination so we don't always have a lot of extra money, but we're always glad when we hear a package has gone

thought, whether it be clothes or whether be writin' paper and things. And they say it feels so much better coming from America. It's smooth, and they just love the feel.

M: The clothes and things that you send over, they come right from the community here?

Daisy: Yes. Yeah, usually my porch is full of boxes of clothing waitin' to get to Africa. I had to unload it for Christmas time because we wanted to set it up for a Tiny Tim Christmas 'cause this is my 22nd year in the 4-H and--

M: Tell me about the Tiny Tim Christmas.

Daisy: We--rather it was an idea Clee put on, the boy next door, John J. Cleveland, he very generously works with me 4-H. He said I'd like to do a 4-H thing with the children. And I said, Well if the 4-H sponsons it maybe you'll get more help. So he made posters and put up boxes and stores and one of the Chamber of Commerce ladies, secretary, she put in press releases for us. And different ones gave us boxes of gifts that they thought that we could use that they've had. A lot of stuffed toys and some dolls and some games and puzzles and things. And a few people like a little bit of money, enough so we could wrap the-- get stuff to wrap the presents with. And so that we could wrap 'em and we didn't know how we were going to to do and I said, well if you want to John J. we'll set a tree up out here. Earl got a second tree he set it up, came up and

decorated up there and we decided then we would have a special night and that's the 4-H, start with their own 4-H children first then any of the other poor children in the area that we could get ahold of and give it an open invitation for 'em to come and we'd furnish the cookies and the punch for them.

M: How many kids came to your house for this Christmas?

Daisy: Well we had 27 workers and children. I think there probably was 21 children anyway that came then. When you have a party get lots of children if you live in town. And I got a big table so I can put quite a few around it. But we--I enjoy working with children, I limited a little bit being different things--from being able to do all we'd like to. Well then our daughter, she took some of the things and delivered 'em and I did some and we still got some that we didn't deliver, I guess we just got to wait over to another year unless we see somebody with a birthday. We do all kinds of projects for the children, the community. We feel that it is a very needy area for helpin' children. Course years ago when we had more productive farms every farm had its own garden, so the garden was part of the family situation, the children out in the gardens. Now its just helping the chores, bringin' the wood and learnin' to milk the cow, feed the calves and the pigs and help bring

'em in from the--the sheep in from the pastures and that was interesting but it was also quite frustratin' 'cause sometimes I could keep the sheep from goin' through a hole in the fence. But a--

M: You used to do farm work as a girl? Before you got married?

Daisy: Oh yes, we lived on a farm. Yeah, had married a farmer, my father told, he said that I should marry sugar maker too, and I did that. I've think he's done a lot of the same things my father use to do so--

M: How long have you been married?

Daisy: Be 30--wait a minute--be 40 years in September 3rd.

M: Oh, fantastic. So what's it like being a minister in a small country church, I mean that might be a stupid question but I guess you get to know everybody.

Daisy: You get to know everybody and you're busier, maybe, then you would be in a city church because you have to sort of almost do everything. I mean, you have your Sunday school teachers, but you're expected to be the resource person and everything. And you don't have secretaries and helpers and workers to do these kinds of--

M: Do a lot of people come to you with personal problems? Or if they're sad about something or just to have somebody to talk to?

Daisy: Sometimes.

M: 'Cause the big city, I don't know if people have access to a priest or a minister that way. But out here, if everybody knows you it might be different, I don't know.

Daisy: Well I'm called at different times if people've got nervous problems, emotional problems, marriage conflicts. And you just to be ready whenever they call. And I try to tell 'em day or night too. Of course they're considerate, they don't expect to call probably in the middle of the night unless you have to. But I've called up, go to the hospital at midnight, or 2:30 and that 38 miles. And I've gone if that was sick, sit with them--

M: Those cases were pretty necessary? They thought of you first.

Daisy: Yeah, well I've had different ones that have asked me to have funerals for 'em. Said well you're the first one I could think of. 'Cause sometimes I'm surprised that some of 'em--funerals that I'd asked to have when there's other people that they could ask from their own church or their own family who are ministers but appreciate it anyway.

M: But have you--you've been around long enough to probably be marrying the people you baptised 20 ago or something.

Daisy: Well that's it, you become a family. You

becoming the--part of the family. You're invited to the showers and parties.

M: I mean how many generations of let's say any particular family have you done things for?

Daisy: Well I'm thinkin' about like in our own church now we have--well we use to have a woman who helped buy the bell for that church years ago. 'Course she's dead now, Celia Robbins and her daughter Lelia Nevens comes to church and her daughter is a piano and organ player and also teaches Sunday school and takes care of the children. And now she's got children, some who are in college already, two of 'em, and so she's workin' here. So you got four generations right there. We've had several four generation families from our church. But we have a small congregation, it never gets very big. Most of 'em get up and find a job and move out. You don't have that many that are always--

M: Really getting smaller with young people going elsewhere for jobs?

Daisy: I would say basically yes. About also, too, I think the car situation, they can pick and choose a church they don't have to just walk to a church. And there's a lot of churches in this area.

M: How long ago would people have walked to that church from the community, I mean cars have been around for a long time now.

Daisy: Yeah, but in the area people used to come there to church, they would walk, a lot of the children right in close in the areas. But maybe to go somewheres else they would have--you know, if they want to go somewheres they would take a car to go. Now they can.

M: People who would walk 5 miles to go to church?

Daisy: Not anymore.

M: In the olden days would they?

Daisy: Oh yeah. I've seen people--

M: Or even during the war years, would they have done that?

Daisy: That I don't know. Course there was a tendency to kind of go to church maybe during that but I wasn't there yet then. I missed that by a country mile. But Earl and I we do a lot of things together. When I could we've hunted and camped together and I've helped in the sugar camp. I've even helped boiler all night, we'd take turns, 'cause he had to keep going all day and I could go back and go to sleep. And one or two nights I did. In fact I even got lost comin' home with gas lanterns and the sugar house. I've helped him in hay field and sometimes I tell him it's awful hard with church work and farm work together and he doesn't see why, but sometimes I do.