



FCC Membership Biography



Ron Urhammer

I was in the fifth grade when a good friend asked me to go to Sunday School with him. I accepted. My mother and father did not have a church home at this time. Sunday school was at the Zion Lutheran Church. I liked it and attended for almost a year and a half. Then, I met Reverend Lorne Outcalt. Reverend Outcalt was the pastor at the local Evangelical United Brethren Church. (Methodist) He also owned an old abandoned farm and my father rented 40 acres of farmland from him.

That summer Pastor Outcalt worked with my dad and I to bale and store 3 crops of hay taken from the 40 acres. I worked closely with Pastor Outcalt that summer and we became good friends. At first, I felt strange having a good friend that was 40 years older than I was and especially being friends with the Pastor of a church. That is just not normal.

At the end of that summer, my mother and father joined the Evangelical United Brethren Church and became members. At the prodding of Pastor Outcalt, I started my first-year confirmation that fall at the same

church. As was the tradition, the teacher for first year confirmation was a layperson from the church. I enjoyed it and graduated the next spring. The next fall I started 2nd year confirmation and was surprised to find out Pastor Outcalt would be teaching the class. He was a great teacher, he was a humble man that you could joke with and still he had the ability to accept the awkwardness and smart remarks from a bunch of know it all 14 year olds and still teach us the Bible.

I finished my 2nd year confirmation in the spring and found myself confronted with the biggest decision of my life to this point. It was tradition at our church when you finished 2nd year confirmation you were to make the decision to accept Christ into your life or not. If you choose to accept Christ into your life, you would be part of a formal graduation ceremony in front of the congregation on Sunday where you proclaimed your faith in God and was verbally accepted by the congregation, into the church as a new member. We had two weeks to make our decision. After a week, I remember Pastor Outcalt asking if I was ready for next Sunday. What he really said is, have you made your decision. I said let's talk about this. I had already made my decision but I wanted to keep him guessing for awhile.

The Bible says, God created heaven and earth and everything in it. He created man and woman. The Bible also says if I accept Christ in my life, he will always be with me and watch over me, even when I am sleeping. Pastor Outcalt looked directly at me and said he will be with you in your darkest hour. Hear me, He will be with you in your darkest hour. I said "wow" a man with that kind of power, I would be a fool not to have him for a friend. Count me in.

That decision has made all the difference in my life. Since that day I have never felt like I was walking thru life alone. God has always been my personal friend. I did not realize until later in life, how much Pastor Outcalt had taken me under his wing in confirmation class to see that I would succeed. I believe he truly wanted me to be one of Gods children and he knew I would need direction and help later in life.

My father had hopes that one of his sons would take over the family farm someday and continue the way of life that he had chosen. After high school graduation my oldest brother was "out of here" he had a job and would start college in the fall. Farming was not for him. My second oldest brother graduated from high School and was "out of here" he had a job and was off to the big city, Minneapolis and St. Paul to start a new life. Farming was not for him. By now, I was 15 years old and my father clearly knew his last son had no desire to be a farmer.

That spring my father applied for and received a job with the U.S. Government. He had made a decision to end his farming career. Two months later, we had an auction and everything was sold. There is a disease, that affects most teenagers, for a short period. The symptoms are, illusions that you know it all, have all the answers and your parents have become outdated and ancient. I caught that disease earlier in life than most and it lasted longer than most.

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In July of that summer, my father informed me that his new job would require that they relocate 60 some miles away to be available early in the morning for his new job and that I would be transferring to a new school and starting in the fall. I had a steady girl friend, my response was, I am not changing schools I want to finish my last 2 years of school with my friends. The argument lasted for 3-4 days. I was stubborn and refused to give in. I found a job at a large dairy operation across town where I could get room and board and a decent wage and the school bus would pick me up every day. I would be turning 16 in August and be getting my driver's license. I could attend my own school the last two years and be in control of my own life. I had it all figured out. My parents finally agreed and we parted ways in the fall. I had every other weekend off and commuted 60 miles to see my parents. In the spring, my employer evidently liked what I was doing. They offered me a job for the summer at a higher wage. I graduated from high school in May of 1964 and turned 18 years old in August. That fall I had a steady girl friend, a new job, I was saving money to attend a major college and best of all I was running my own show. Life, just don't get any better than that.

In early October, I was told I was going to be a father. One month and a half later, I, was married on November 28th. My first son was delivered on May 27th in Saint Mary's Hospital in Minneapolis. He was delivered six weeks early because of complications. He weighed 3 lbs and 12 ounces. I was told he would have to stay in an incubator until he reached five and a half lbs. It would take 3 weeks to possibly a month. The cost for the room, the incubator and constant care was \$150 per day. I made a crucial mistake during the pregnancy. I changed to a better job, but forgot about the insurance coverage. My insurance from my last job would not cover because I had left. My new job required that I work 6 months before the insurance would cover. I would have to pay for all the hospital charges. The forth day after delivery I went to pick up my wife from the hospital. I was told, there were complications and she would have to stay an additional week. I knew the charges were adding up quickly. I estimated the charges at a little over \$6000. I was devastated. That night I went home alone and cried most of the night.

On the next night I went home and wanted to cry but could not. I lay awake trying to decide what to do. Then I remembered Pastor Outcalt said God, will be with you in your darkest hour. I prayed long and hard that night. I am 18 and scared I don't know what to do. I need help. In 1964, my brother bought a new galaxy 500 full size car with all the bells and whistles for \$3900.00. The hospital charges today would be equivalent to two cars or \$40,000 – \$50,000. My son stayed 28 days in the incubator, my wife was released after 10 days in the hospital. I went to the hospital to see my son every day for 28 days. I usually stopped after work.

One day I had to take off work early to do something and I decided to stop at the hospital about 12:00pm so I would not have to stop after work. When I got there, I watched through the window while the nurse was feeding the babies. I had never seen this nurse before. I noticed she was handling the babies very rough. She struggled to walk straight and her actions were not normal. She finished feeding one baby and went back into the nurse's station. While she was in the nurse's station, I watched her pour something from a bottle into a glass and drink it. I could not see what she drank. I watched her put the bottle back into a lower cabinet again and then return to start feeding the next baby. Again, she handled the babies poorly. She was on something.

I was getting excited and went to the closest administration office to ask for help. Two sisters followed me to the nurse's station next to the feeding room. I pointed to the cabinet where the bottle was that I saw the nurse drink from. There was a bottle of alcohol in the cabinet.

Things happened quickly after that. The nurse was removed from the room. The sisters led me to the closest office and apologized again, and again and said the nurse would not be returning to the feeding station ever again and likely not to the hospital again. The sisters asked me to return the next day to the administration office. The next day in the administration office the head sisters of the hospital explained they were in a position to pay for all of my hospital bills (\$6800) for my wife and son if I would sign a release of liability not holding them responsible for the nurses actions. I signed the release quickly. I could not believe what I had just heard.

As I left the hospital that day, I could not believe, the turn of events, everything had happened so quickly. I walked down the first flight of stairs feeling how fortune and lucky I was. Then I stopped and I realized all this, did not just happen, I always stopped to see my son after, work. This particular day God had me stop at the hospital at noon for a reason. God found a way to answer my prayers in my darkest hour.

My testimony: God is a proven product in my life.