

**Biographical Sketch:**

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I was born on April 21, 1946, in Chicago, IL, where my dad was in seminary. I was raised in the Belgian Congo, where my folks served as missionaries with African Inter-Mennonite Mission. In 1968, I graduated from Grace Bible Institute, in Omaha, Nebraska. It seemed like a logical place to go to college, because my girlfriend attended there, her dad was a professor there, and my dad had become the school's president. I married Karen Ann Regier after graduation; Karen is the sister of Don Regier at DTS.

Following graduation from DTS in 1972, we accepted a call to pastor two small rural churches in central Nebraska. We went with the goal of becoming a genuine part of the community, which was a lofty ideal for a city girl from Omaha and a guy from the Congo.

I have loved being a pastor for 42 years, but I also loved the abandoned farm that the churches called the "parsonage." All of our church families were involved in agriculture, in one way or another, and so we did the same to become part of the community. Soon after our arrival, we began raising newborn calves, and then switched to raising hogs. It only took a few years for me to realize that if I was going to scoop pig poop, I might as well scoop *purebred* pig poop. So in 1976, we bought some purebred Durocs, a particular breed.

In 1978, we bought the 250-acre farm where we were living. We eventually built a sale barn on our farmstead, where we would sell Duroc boars and gilts at auction twice a year. "Harder Durocs" gained a reputation in Nebraska and the surrounding states as a source of quality breeding stock. In the past ten years, with my son Jonathan and his wife, Anna, as partners, we have gradually switched from selling breeding stock to selling show pigs for kids to use as 4-H projects at county fairs.

We retired from pastoring the two rural churches in 2014, and we are thoroughly enjoying retired life. We have three children. Joe and his wife, Lisa, are with the missions agency Global Scholars and live in Lithuania, where Joe is a professor at LCC International University; they have three children. Our daughter, Susan, with her husband, Jerry, and their three children are wheat farmers in Montana. Jonathan and Anna have four children. We have been to Lithuania twice in recent years, and on our second trip our entire family gathered there to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. God has blessed us with a family that loves Jesus, and we humbly acknowledge that this comes from His grace.

The farm continues to keep us busy. We just finished breeding thirty sows that will farrow show pigs for the 2021 fairs. If you ever find yourself in central Nebraska, after the pandemic, stop by for a visit. We'll have a picnic on the bank of our fish pond and reminisce about old times.