I am living proof that God has a sense of humor. The hospital where I was born is less than 3 miles to LAX.  In my 30’s we moved to San Luis Obispo County. It seemed so rural. Then at 60 I moved to Berkeley to begin studying at PLTS to be a pastor. Gulp. My internship was in Minnesota—I had never driven on snow and ice. In the “draft” I was assigned to Region 1 and then to Montana Synod, and on April 1, 2011 Bp. Crist suggested Harlem, Hogeland, and Turner as a possible call. I had a phone interview and accepted the call sight unseen.  In July of 2011 I arrived in Harlem and began my ministry in Montana. My home in California had been in a county of 250,000 people—Blaine County had 6000, and Harlem about 800.

Every Sunday I drove a 69 mile circuit to the three churches. My first year the only service I missed was Good Friday, 2012. Every year I missed a service due to weather conditions—until Lent,  2018, when the pastors on the Hi-Line joked that we had to give up Lent for Lent—the road conditions  were that bad.

There were so many blessings about my call. I was warmly welcomed, although I know people wondered how this urban Californian would adjust to “rural remote”or  “frontier” country.

People were so helpful, not just to “their pastor” —if someone was in trouble their first instinct was to help. All three of my congregations had women willing to play the piano —thank you, Kathy Zellmer, Valerie Van Voast, Carla Becker. Ann Kuntz, Teresa Cornell. The children were a delight, helpful and cheerful. In Hogeland and in Turner  there were usually children ready to speak the dismissal, “Go in peace. Serve the Lord.”I hope they keep that sense of joy in worship.

The synod was also a blessing—the always helpful staff: “the Susans” and then Susan and Colter, Bp. Jessica, and the others. Jen Kunka at NRIT made sure we  had opportunities for continuing education.The Pastor’s Conference at Chico  was always a delight—great speakers, and  chance for rest and renewed friendships.

God’s sense of humor blessed me with many joys.