

Darren Dodge - Memories of SABC

From the earliest memories, people from the church have always been a part of my life; supportive, caring, loving, patient, and friendly. One of the things I fondly remember is growing up with a good group of friends. I believe I stayed out of a lot of trouble as a teen because I spent time with Christian friends. I now encourage the teens to do the same. Christian friends were very important to me. I also remember how people in the church welcomed Colleen when she started visiting while we were dating. She was baptized at SABC and that welcome is a big reason we attend here and are raising our family at SABC.

I attended AWANA from Kindergarten to 8th grade. Leaders included Mr. Smith, Mr. Drost, Mr. Lillie, Mr. Carl Andreasen, Mr. and Mrs. Radke, and Mr. and Mrs. Todd. Youth Group was Pastor Dan and Pastor Stan [Baker]. Some of the best times I had at SABC were on the old yellow school bus driven by Dennis Corson going Christmas Caroling, trips to Darien Lake, and other church activities.

I also remember Paul and Bonnie Wilkinson teaching Junior Church for most of my childhood years. Bonnie Lillie also helped sometimes. I also helped Mrs. Stone in the Honeybees. Such a sweet lady!

SABC is central to many of the best memories I have. I have made life-long friendships with people who I grew up with or who worked (tolerated!!) me for all those years. Working side by side with some of these men as adults is so special because I respected them so much as a child. I truly LOVE SABC.

It is such an honor to serve the people of SABC in any way I can. I've attended SABC my entire life. I played boys basketball, men's basketball and softball. I served as a Sunday School teacher, Sunday School Superintendent, Youth Group leader, worked in VBS, and been a deacon and usher. There are so many stories I could tell: playing basketball as a boy with coaches like my Dad Jim Dodge and Uncle Ron, Mark Root, and Doug Wilkins (Dick and Glenys Curran's son in law); cutting wood for the church as a 15 year old and marveling at how someone 50 years older than me (Art Andreasen) could so badly outwork me, watching him still do it at 86 years old; Bill Hall and his burning handkerchief trick during AWANA; playing basketball with Rodney Valentine after JVs; winning the three-legged race with Chris Lillie at the AWANA Olympics; playing basketball for countless hours in the gym; H-O-R-S-E games with Pastor Walter and his crazy shot from the door; and Elmer Storozow sitting in his chair at the end of the hall during men's basketball league games keeping us kids out of trouble.

As an adult my memories also include leading Youth Group with Colleen, Kelly Strobe, Jeremiah and Nicole Fearnley, Brita and Donny Terry, Paul and Becky DePriest, Morgan Sickler and all the kids we've had the pleasure of working with. We did camping trips, Creative Ministries, etc.

One of the best things about SABC is the men there who have been an influence on me, whether they KNOW IT OR NOT!