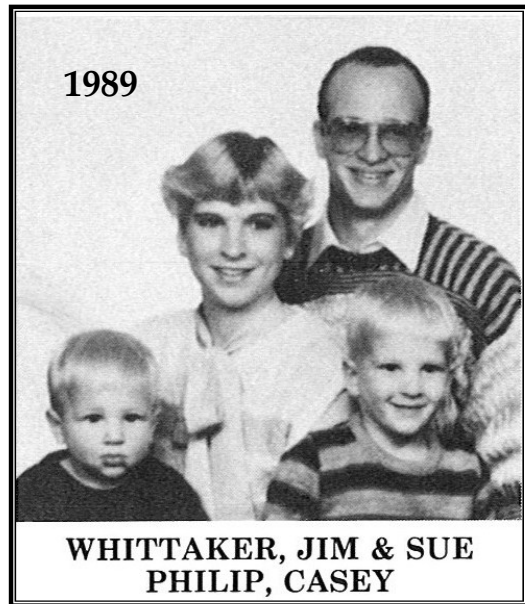


Jim and Sue Whittaker - Memories of SABC

The ministry of SABC played a very instrumental role in our lives. I (Sue) grew up at SABC, it was my home church and where I learned all my foundational truths about God and his love for me. The ministry of the Pioneer Girls program, and the influence of the leaders who devoted their time and energy to that program helped shape me into the person I am today. I also recall going to Sunday School and VBS during my childhood. As a teenager there were a number of people who believed in me and that God could use me, even then, for His kingdom and encouraged and allowed me to serve as a Sunday School teacher to younger children!



During high school I met Jim, when we were both working at El Rancho de Paz. His home church was Calvary Baptist Tabernacle. We dated, off and on, for four years. I had graduated from OFA and attended the one year Bible program at Practical Bible Training School, now Davis College by that time. We got married at SABC in July of 1983. After we got married, we felt that God was leading us into full-time ministry. Jim had already graduated from Sullivan County Community College with a degree in Commercial Art. We knew at this point it was his turn to go to PBTS and so he started attending while I worked to help support us through this time. The following year, we both attended PBTS and graduated together in 1986. During our time at Practical, SABC always supported us financially and helped us to get the foundational training we needed to prepare us for full-time ministry.

After graduating from PBTS, while Jim worked in a print shop and we started our family, we both served in the AWANA program at SABC. Jim served as the Commander for several years while I served in several different roles. This was a time of learning and preparation for us as God prepared us for future ministry.

In the fall of 1988 God called us to our first full time ministry to inner city youth in New Castle, PA. It was a very fast transition for us - we were home one week and gone the next. We came back home often that first year, as it was our first time living away from home. The support we received from people back home was so important to us as we adjusted to the difficult and challenging ministry we found ourselves in. We served in New Castle for 7 ½ years and during that time there were several occasions where the

body of SABC came alongside us in a financial way and helped meet some very significant needs for us. God proved His faithfulness to us through the generosity and obedience of so many others on our behalf. We have been able to look back at those times as stones of remembrance that God is faithful to meet our needs, those were indeed times of spiritual formation and growth in our lives.

After we left New Castle, God called us to South Carolina and then North Carolina to serve in two different camp ministries. We then moved to Fairmont, WV to serve as the directors of Mission Farms Christian Camp. We served there for 5 ½ years and during that time SABC continued to be involved in our ministry by sending work teams to help us with work projects to improve the camp, as well as youth teams who helped us with summer programming and projects. It was always such a blessing to reconnect with those who came and to serve alongside each of them. The improvements made to the camp during these trips helped to make Mission Farms (which was changed to Hickory Ridge Christian Camp) a better facility to reach young people for Christ. Up until this time in 2003, the people of SABC were very invested in the ministry that God called us to and we are so grateful for the love and support we always felt.

In 2003 God shifted our ministry focus from camp ministry to church ministry when He called Jim as the Children's Pastor at Chestnut Ridge Community Church where we had been attending for several years. This was a major shift for us but one that we know God directed us to make (but that's a story for another day). We served at CRC for 7 ½ years when God called us, in January of 2011, to our current ministry at CrossCurrent Ministries in Ashburn, VA where Jim serves as the Children's and Family Ministry Pastor and I serve as the administrator. With the shift in ministry focus, we are rarely able to get away on a weekend so we don't have the opportunity to get back to SABC very often. But we will always be grateful for the important role that the church, made up of the wonderful people who attend there, has played in our lives.