

DON & FLO DEARDORFF

Members since 1981

Don Deardorff

Birth Date:

November 25, 1941

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Military Service:

National Guard

Flo Deardorff

Birth Date:

July 16, 1941

Place of Birth:

Blairs Mills, PA

Did You Know?

Flo first talked to Don while on the job as a telephone operator.

Don immediately asked her out on a date, which turned out to be the hay ride that Flo organized for the youth group she started in her childhood church, Nossville Methodist Church.

Favorite Hymns:

Living for Jesus

Just As I Am



Don says that you have only two choices in life when bad things happen. You can turn toward God or away from Him. And if you turn away, you make a big mistake.

Don and Flo have experienced these pivotal moments several times in their lives. Especially the day that their younger son, Kevin, was diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma at the age of 26. Don recalls that he and Flo were crying together and that they prayed these words,

“God, here’s our son. If you want to cure him and give him back, that’s okay with us. If you want to keep our son and not give him back, that’s okay with us. But the one thing we can’t do, is take this journey on our own. You are going to have to carry us.”

Because the cancer had begun to eat through Kevin’s spinal column, he had to undergo an intense experimental treatment of surgery and chemotherapy. Flo remembers meeting Kevin in Frederick for his treatments and then driving him back to his home in Washington, D.C. She says that it was a very difficult time, both because she was uncomfortable driving in the city, which she was now doing on a regular basis, and because they made and lost so many friends among the other patients. The initial plan was to have a celebration at the end of treatment for all of the patients that were in the research trial. The party never happened, because only Kevin and one other young woman survived.

Don and Flo remember being in church for the first time, after finding out that their son was in remission. Singing “What a Friend We Have In Jesus” and “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” they both broke down. They knew that through all of the struggle and heartache, God had never left them. And with the clarity of hindsight, they could see the many ways that He had carried them through.

They had been surrounded by prayer. They remember Kevin saying at one point that he had so many people praying for him, in so many places, that God was going to be overwhelmed and have no choice but to heal him.

Interestingly, one of the greatest answers to prayer on Kevin’s behalf had already been years in the making. The very fact that Kevin was living in Washington, D.C. at the time of his diagnosis positioned him to have access to the best treatment available. He was only in D.C. because he had attended graduate school at Georgetown. And he only attended Georgetown because one of his undergrad professors saw his potential and used her connections to get him into the demography program there. Don and Flo are convinced that Kevin would not have survived if he had not been properly positioned to receive the experimental treatment that he did.

And through it all, Don and Flo had each other. They functioned as the team that they had already been for so many years. Don had always encouraged Flo to stay home to raise their boys, rather than giving away that opportunity to a babysitter. Don was the provider outside of the home, while Flo cared for the family. Her parenting often extended beyond their own two boys to several of the neighborhood children as well. It was nothing unusual to have six or seven kids in the Deardorff’s yard or around their dinner table. And if they stayed until dark, Flo would drive them home.

After her children, Flo feels that her next most purposeful work was leading the Caring Circle at FUMC. This group ministered to the shut-ins of the congregation through phone calls and visits. Flo worked tirelessly to ensure that people knew they were not forgotten and they were not alone.

And Don shares a special story, in which God uniquely positioned them in just the perfect place at just the perfect time, in order to meet someone’s need. They were at Camden Yards for a baseball game on a Sunday afternoon. After purchasing their lunch, they were unable to find an empty table. At this point, Don struck up a conversation with a random couple that happened to have two available seats at their table. Flo picks up the story at this point, explaining how mortified she was when Don boldly asked to share the table and then went on to pour out his life story and faith journey to this other couple over lunch.

Then they came to find out that this couple was struggling with the news of a cancer diagnosis.

That Sunday two of our people carried the love of God outside the walls of the church building and into a place of great need. And they were able to offer healing words because of their own experience of the very same pain.

Flo offers that she read Psalm 55 & 56 on a daily basis during Kevin’s treatments. The words of these Psalms can provide comfort to all of us when we face struggles in life:

*“As for me, I call to God and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning, and noon,
I cry out in my distress and He hears my voice.”*