

JOYCE HORST

Member Since 1970

Background

Birth Date:

April 15, 1943

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Did You Know?

Joyce's grandmother, Martha Hege Horst, was living in Chambersburg when the Confederate Army marched through the area heading toward Gettysburg and the decisive battle that was fought there July 1st-3rd, 1863.

Joyce is well-traveled, having visited the Holy Land, Athens, Rome, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, & Netherlands, in addition to missions trips to Prague, Honduras, & Mexico.

Favorite Hymn:

To God Be the Glory



"Like branches on a tree, our lives may grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one."

Joyce's family tree has deep roots in Franklin County. She and her siblings have lived their entire lives within a 3 mile radius of their childhood home, located on a farm between Marion and New Franklin that was purchased by Joyce's great, great, great grandfather in 1804.

The youngest of six children, Joyce had the good fortune of growing up with many siblings as well as nieces and nephews who were close in age. She remembers the family working hard to keep the farm running. She herself began raising chickens in 7th grade, with nearly three hundred birds spread out between three different buildings, from which she was able to sell eggs and fryers.

But the family also had plenty of opportunity to enjoy each other's company, which set the foundation for a close-knit family. One of Joyce's nephews lived across the road for many years, and Joyce recalls his children coming to visit. Her little great-nephew, Keith, would come to the edge of the lane, "Can we come down this night?" She, of course, had a special stash of candy in the cupboard just for these visits from her great-nieces and great-nephews. And she had a front-row seat from which to watch them grow into adulthood.

Joyce still has many nieces and nephews living nearby, and a few scattered throughout central Pennsylvania. The family continues to stay in touch with one another. One of the ways they do this is through the Horst Family Epistle, a yearly update from each branch of the family tree, a tradition that has been in existence for the last 25 years. Each year there is a prompt to guide the writing—topics such as how spouses met, favorite childhood games, and early grade school memories. This year’s prompt is “My Bucket List,” in which each family member is supposed to talk about all of the things they hope to do in their lives.

Joyce and I didn’t discuss what will be on the Bucket List she plans to submit. But after our conversation, I would venture to guess that her list will be shorter than most. Because it seems that Joyce has led a contented, authentic, and purposeful life, doing the things she loves the most and bettering the lives of those around her in the process.

At one point Joyce summarized her life with the statement, “I’ve enjoyed the ride!” It was almost as if I could see God smiling down at his beautiful daughter with a “Well done, good and faithful servant” in response.

He could certainly be talking about all of the good and faithful work that Joyce has done throughout her lifetime. There isn’t space to record it all. She has done missions in Prague, built rebar cages and man-chained concrete block up a hill in Honduras, and worked with the Give Ye Them To Eat UMC project in Mexico, which she recalls as being a test of faith because the group had to fly internationally shortly after the 9/11 attacks.

Closer to home, Joyce is a much-sought-after volunteer for a variety of organizations, including the Franklin County Historical Society, Capitol Theater, and Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter Thrift Store. She also organizes bus trips and is working with the archives of FUMC in preparation for our bicentennial celebration. Previously, Joyce even willingly served on the finance committee during the church’s transition from a paper ledger to computerized accounting, a task reserved for only the most dedicated among us!

And I personally remember being amazed by Joyce’s response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Early on, some of the younger people from the congregation attempted to take over the in-person roles within Hungry Hearts, in order to keep the vulnerable populations off the front lines. But Joyce and others simply weren’t having it. I remember her telling me that serving is who she is. She was willing to take her chances with the virus because she was not willing to sit at home and do nothing to help. And she didn’t. Joyce was there each Thursday for the food distribution, often with a new project—repurposing costume jewelry, painting the shelving at the thrift store, etc. When asked what she most loves doing, Joyce replied, “Making things better.” It is something she has done countless times and in countless ways—bringing good to the world and pleasure to God.

I can’t help but imagine a huge smile on the Father’s face, as He watches Joyce live the life for which He created her. At times, I imagine it required her to bravely chart her own path forward, rather than succumb to a pre-existing mold.

But Joyce has been nourished and strengthened by her roots, firmly planted in the love of God and family. And her branch has grown straight and true.