

TED & DENISE LUCAS

Members since 1980

Ted Lucas

Birth Date:

October 27, 1945

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Denise Lucas

Birth Date:

October 3, 1945

Place of Birth:

Adams County, PA

Did You Know?

Ted ran the Gettysburg Marathon in 1980 and realized his lifelong dream of learning to fly airplanes at the age of 72.

Denise is a Penn State Master Gardener.

Favorite Hymns

In the Garden

Amazing Grace



Ted and Denise were born three weeks apart, just after the end of WWII. Ted was one of four children, born to music teacher parents. His mom traveled between the elementary schools in Greene Township, and his dad taught at CASHS, where he became the first director of the Glee Club in 1942.

Ted remembers his dad being an excellent musician and much-sought-after pianist. Between professional gigs, public school teaching, serving as the church choir director, and giving private lessons, Ted says that his dad was constantly working. Because of that, Ted often helped with the work around the house. And for this he remembers his dad being very grateful: "Dad liked to call me his right-hand man."

Ted inherited a love of both music and teaching from his parents. Growing up, he played the violin, French horn, and trumpet. And he has always loved to sing. A vivid childhood memory is of his very first solo, "How Great Thou Art," which he sang at his grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary at a Lutheran church in Davidsville, PA. In tenth grade, Ted began singing in the bass section of his church choir, something he has continued to do at FUMC for many years.

Denise grew up on an orchard in Adams County. Her dad was the manager of the orchard and her mother stayed home to care for the three children. While both Ted and Denise remember their families having Victory Gardens, Denise says her home's gardens included both extensive perennials and vegetables. There was far more work to be done than there were hours in the day. So, many of the planting, weeding, and harvesting tasks fell to Denise and her siblings. While she learned many of her horticultural skills from her dad, Denise inherited her love of flowers from her maternal grandmother. She says that there was never a time that they left her grandmother's house after a summer visit, without a quart jar filled with flowers.

When Denise was in 9th grade, her family moved to the Edenville area because her father began managing Mountain Brook Orchards. She remembers it being a difficult transition because it was a rough age and she was happy in her old home and school. She finished her high school years at St. Thomas H.S. and later attended Elizabethtown College in order to pursue a teaching degree.

During her senior year of college, Denise's cousin introduced her to Ted, who was attending Shippensburg University to become a chemistry teacher. When Denise graduated a semester early and began teaching English at James Buchanan High School, Ted began student-teaching there at the same time. After teaching for one year in another district, Ted was able to return to James Buchanan H.S. And he and Denise worked there together until Denise stopped teaching to stay at home during their children's formative years.

Denise remembers her pregnancies as being some of the most difficult periods of her life. She faced complications that required her to be on bedrest for several months. Ted and Denise remember the compassionate care they received from their share group at Central Presbyterian Church, who faithfully supplied meals and messages of encouragement to carry them through. One of the couples from this group was our very own Dave and Carel Fish.

Ted and Denise talk about many other people who have positively influenced their lives. Ted credits his teaching style to his high school physics teacher, Glenn Weeks. He remembers Mr. Weeks being so good at pulling information out of students through his engaging, conversational style. Ted says he always aspired to do the same. Denise talks about her parents, along with the many other people who have influenced her in small, but meaningful ways. She remembers just such a time in her introductory history class at Elizabethtown College. She had gotten bogged down with her work and scored a lower grade than usual on one of her tests. The professor wrote the following words across the bottom of the page, "I don't ever expect to see this from you again. You are capable of much more." His belief in her ability provided Denise with some much-needed encouragement, helping her to be better. And Ted and Denise are both grateful for the influence that the church has had on their sons, Brent and Brad—that they were able to be involved in Sunday School classes, youth group, and mission trips, led by so many devoted and inspiring members of the faith community, including Pastor Tom Webb and Pastor Don and Deanna Nolder.

Denise had grown up in a small Evangelical United Brethren Church in Ortanna, before joining Central Presbyterian when she and Ted were married. They moved to FUMC in 1980, invited by Ted's sister-in-law, Mary Louise. Since then, Ted and Denise have been involved in many ways at First Church. Ted has filled administrative roles such as Staff Parish but has most enjoyed being a member of the Chancel Choir. Denise has helped with VBS, teaching Junior Church and substituting in the Chumms class over the summer, as well as playing in the bell choir, assisting with compiling and editing church devotionals, and doing flower arrangements for various church functions.

When asked what advice or wisdom they would pass on to younger generations, Ted says, "Be patient with yourself and don't be discouraged if things don't work out right away." It seems like solid advice coming from someone who persevered toward his life goal of flying airplanes, until he finally accomplished it at the age of 72! And Denise testifies to the impact that even our smallest words or actions can have in the lives of other people. She says, "We often think that the little things aren't significant, but we never know how much they can touch another person's life. We should live each day knowing that even the smallest thing we say or do can have a profound impact on other people."

It's hard to imagine the countless small, but potentially significant interactions that Ted and Denise have had with younger generations within our community. And now, they continue to use their gifts to add beauty to the world—Denise through her plants and Ted through his music. Denise's favorite hymn, "In the Garden," is a perfect combination of the two:

*"He speaks and the sound of His voice, is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that he gave to me, within my heart is ringing.
And He walks with me, and He talks with me, And He tells me I am His own.
And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known."*