

CHUCK & DIANNE SALTER

Members since 1952

Chuck Salter

Birth Date:

July 10, 1943

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Dianne Salter

Birth Date:

February 15, 1942

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Did You Know?

Chuck's first job was working as a store boy for Worths in downtown Chambersburg.

Dianne responded to God's call to full-time ministry at Camp Penn, around the age of 12.



Music is a large part of Chuck and Dianne's story. Dianne recalls the transformational experience of directing Joyful Noise, a youth singing group that grew out of Young Life. It was composed of up to 47 teens from twenty-one churches, spanning all faith traditions from Roman Catholic to German Baptist. This was a faith-stretching experience for her because Dianne had very little formal training for the position and often felt unqualified for the work. The group faced opposition when they introduced the use of drums and guitars into the FUMC sanctuary for the first time. And as they were invited to share their songs and testimonies in churches throughout the community, they encountered a wide range of worship traditions and theology. From the speaking of tongues in charismatic churches to the drinking of Communion wine in Lutheran churches, the group was exposed to many different styles of worship, along with differing views of the Reformation, salvation, and other theological issues. Dianne remembers one specifically challenging moment, when the group first approached her with the idea of performing the folk musical, "Tell It Like It Is." She felt intimidated by the idea, but agreed to meet with them to talk about it. Dianne remembers praying very hard about the decision, finally making a deal with God. She would know He wanted her to lead the musical if twelve teens showed up to the meeting. When the meeting began with only eleven in attendance, Dianne began to explain her reservations. But when the 12th participant walked in late, Dianne had her confirmation.

Chuck talks fondly about his participation in Chancel Choir and of his favorite song being "The Lord's Prayer," specifically when he's singing it with his daughter, Beth. At one point, Chuck begins to sing the chorus of "Pass It On," a song originally written as part of the musical Dianne had so agonized over. The words perfectly frame the story they tell of their lives.

“It only takes a spark to get a fire going. Then all those around can warm up in its glowing.”

Even the tiniest of actions can have enormous impact when they spread love into the lives of the people around us. Chuck remembers this with his parents. His dad was a teacher (and teaser), someone who enjoyed figuring out how to engineer things (like track hurdles from metal headboards). His mother was someone who took time for others. One of Chuck’s vivid childhood memories is of accompanying his mom on weekly visits to her stepfather, who was bed-ridden in a nursing home. In addition to his parents, Chuck also talks about the positive influence of two of his bosses at Mack Truck, John Crow and Pete Brosius. He remembers them being important mentors, especially in the earlier years of his career, when they patiently guided him through the transition from book learning into real-life application.

Dianne also says her family taught and gave her so much growing up. And she recalls the loving gift she received one day through a perfect stranger. Knowing she wanted to go into full-time ministry and assuming that meant international missions or nursing, Dianne applied to a nursing program in Philadelphia. However, the woman who interviewed her asked for an explanation, confused because the results of Dianne’s aptitude test did not match well with the lifestyle of a nurse. The woman’s genuine concern helped to guide Dianne away from healthcare and into education. She remembers leaving the interview feeling lighter than she had in a long time. Through the interviewer, God had given her permission to live into her gifts and passions.

Dianne’s advice to younger generations is to spend intimate time alone with God on a daily basis, so that you can draw on Him throughout the day. Chuck shares his own wisdom: family is important, our words and deeds are significant, and we should never stop learning. His advice: “You can learn so much from others. You don’t have to create it all yourself. Those who have gone before you have already figured 90% of things out. Seek out those who are older or who have had different experiences than you. And listen to them.” He gives similar advice about marriage, “We get in too big of a hurry, you have to listen.”

Then he chuckles as he goes on to talk about how different he and Dianne are—she as a people-person and author and he an introvert who likes to work with his hands. Dianne later gives Chuck a beautiful compliment, referring to him as a gentle husband. She says that over the years he has loved and supported her in ways she would never have imagined when they first got married. Just as it could not have been easy for Dianne to become the first ordained Deacon in our conference, it could not have been easy to be the husband supporting her through the process. Throughout so many of the FUMC Living History interviews, Dianne’s ministry and influence have been a consistent theme. But, in truth, it is through the Chuck and Dianne team that Christ’s love has been shared with so many.

“That’s how it is with God’s love, once you’ve experienced it. You spread the love to everyone, you want to pass it on.”

Dianne remembers Chuck’s family tradition of walking home from Christmas Eve candlelight service with their candles still burning. Since those early days in their relationship, the Salter Family has greatly expanded, but that early Christmas Eve tradition continues on symbolically. As a team, Chuck and Dianne have raised children and influenced grandchildren who, on a weekly basis leave the church building, carrying Light with them into the world—Each a tiny spark with enormous potential to warm.