

JERRY & BARB WALTER

Members since 1996

Jerry Walter

Birth Date:

March 16, 1948

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA

Barb Walter

Birth Date:

August 3, 1949

Place of Birth:

Chambersburg, PA



Did You Know?

Jerry was the last male baby to be born in the original Chambersburg Hospital.

Barb's childhood home was in a building that had formerly been used as a church for Lemaster's Radical United Brethren.

Favorite Hymns

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Old Rugged Cross

Jerry and Barb both trace their roots back to hard-working farm families, who have influenced both their work ethic and early faith. Jerry's dad was from a plain background, and Barb's dad grew up River Brethren. They both remember attending church as young children. And although their dads both left the farming life to take jobs elsewhere, Jerry and Barb's families both continued to be involved in farming. Jerry especially remembers butchering day, when they would arrive at his grandparent's farm at 4:00 a.m. to fire up the pots and get started with a long days' work. Jerry says everyone had a job to do. His was helping to cut lard into hunks that could be melted down and preserved as cooking oil. Barb also remembers butchering day at her home—especially the horrible smell associated with the process.

Jerry was born into a family of four children. His dad became a distributor for Pepsi and Cloverdale Beverages, after sustaining an injury to his ears at a job in a steel mill. Jerry views his dad with a degree of amazement, for having built such a good life for their family, despite having only ever completed 5th grade. Jerry attributes his dad's success to hard work and an uncanny ability to work with his hands—traits that he passed on to Jerry. By the age of five, Jerry was helping his dad to load trucks, and by the age of seven he was helping to drive them around the property. Jerry says that the first time he drove a pick-up truck, it was straight into a wall. But that his driving skills rapidly improved after that. Soon his dad was turning to him when he needed someone to operate a dump truck. Jerry remembers that the training his dad gave him consisted of a short talk through the basics and a test drive around the block, before he was declared "Ready." Jerry spent most of his evenings and Saturdays working with his dad and brothers—a partnership that would eventually grow into the Walter Brothers trucking business, a joint-venture between Jerry, his dad, his uncle, and his brothers.

In his free time, Jerry remembers tagging along with his older brothers and their friends, one of whom happened to be Barb's cousin. Jerry remembers the day he met Barb: "My brother and I were picking Barb's cousin up to play basketball. Barb walked out with him, he introduced us, and that was it."

Barb had grown up as the youngest of three children. Her dad was a veteran of WWII, where he had served in Italy as a medic. After the war, he held a number of different jobs—everything from plumbing and heating to TV repair. Barb says that he was able to do just about anything, including maintaining a large garden where the family raised most of their food. Each of the children was assigned a certain number of rows that they were responsible for tending. And she remembers riding on her dad's lap when they went to borrow her grandparent's tractor, helping him to steer it on the drive back to their house in the town of Lemasters.

Barb's family moved to Chambersburg when she was in 5th grade. While attending CASHS, Barb enrolled in the secretarial program and joined the cheerleading squad. She was chosen to be the girls treasurer for her high school class as well as an attendant on the CASHS Color Day Court. Barb interviewed for a job at the Chambersburg Trust Company the morning after her graduation, securing a position in their book-keeping department where she managed accounts for customers with last names Ko-O for the next several years. Later, Barb worked in the front, assisting customers with lockboxes and operating the switchboard. Barb says that she always enjoyed her job, but she decided to give it up in order to raise their children, Tiffany and Jeremy.

Jerry and Barb first started attending FUMC when Jeremy wanted to join the youth group. They had previously been members of Park Avenue UMC, the church that Barb had been attending since she moved to Chambersburg as a child. Barb says that it was around the time that they started attending FUMC that she first began to understand the idea of having a personal relationship with the Lord, although it is the direction God had been leading her entire life. As a child, Barb remembers her mother and aunts gathering to play the guitar and sing hymns together. She also remembers a revival that she attended, where the speaker did a beautiful chalk drawing of three crosses on a hill, that made a big impression on her. In 1998, Barb had the life-changing opportunity to visit the Holy Land with Pastor Jones from King Street Church. She remembers feeling a deep longing to walk where Jesus had walked. Some of her favorite experiences from the trip were sitting and reading the Bible in the place where they believe Jesus taught the Beatitudes, going out on a boat in the Sea of Galilee, being present for the baptism of three people from their group, and taking communion together. Barb says, "Even though I was nervous about it, I'm so glad I went. It was the trip of a lifetime."

The following Lent, instead of fasting from something, Barb decided to commit to setting aside time every morning to do devotions. As she spent more time with God, she remembers feeling her relationship with Him grow. She says it felt like Jesus was right there in the room with her.

Barb talks about the impact that her relationship with Jesus has had on her life, especially during some of the more difficult experiences. Recently, when Jerry was sick and had to be in the hospital in Philadelphia for three months, they experienced God's care through many different people. One of the hospital employees, a man who came into the room each day to take out the hazardous waste, started to talk to Barb about faith. And soon he was praying with her. This man, in addition to Rev. Cathy and Mike Boileau who came to visit and comfort them, and Dianne Salter who was always only a phone call away, helped Barb to get through a very challenging time. And she found it especially comforting that the hospital was near to her kids' homes. Barb was able to spend the night with either Tiffany or Jeremy, and they would often come along to be an extra set of ears during the meetings with the doctors. Barb's conclusion after these experiences: "God provides people when you need them the most."

When asked about the advice they would like to give others based on their experiences, Jerry says, "Things always have a way of working out in life." And Barb encourages people not to be anxious. She says, "Some things are going to be very difficult in life, but you just have to keep praying. And don't worry so much about what other people think. God knows who you are."