

Member Spotlight: Rich & Rose Little

Interviewed By: Art Holden

As Rose Little likes to tell the story, she knew at age 14 that she would marry Rich Little one day.

It was love at first sight, but it really didn't come to fruition until four years later after a chance meeting outside a bank.

"He said that he had just got paid, so I told him 'Then you're going to take me out to eat.' He showed up at 6 o'clock, and we've been together ever since."

You might say that a similar karma led the pair to Emanuel, but first a little background is necessary.

Rich, now 69, grew up in Winesburg in eastern Holmes County, and Rose, 63, was from Holmesville on the other side of the county.

"I was a Jack of all trades and the master of none," said Rich, noting he worked jobs as a welder, mechanic and electrician to name a few.

"I was basically a housewife and childcare and now I work in retail," said Rose.

The Littles raised two children, Richie, now 41, and Ranee, 40, who are both married with families of their own, and both, ironically, live on Wall Road, just a few miles from High Church. Together, the Littles have four grandchildren.

"Our daughter's husband got critically injured when a tree fell on him, and now he's in a wheelchair," said Rich. "That's why we moved to Barberton to help them out."

In Holmes County, the Littles attended Fredericksburg United Church of Christ, and as it worked out, they found the perfect UCC congregation close to their new home.

"I was always driving past Emanuel when I went to see my daughter," said Rich. "I stopped in one Sunday, and the people were so pleasant and friendly, so I stayed. They treated us like we were one of their own."

And that's a feeling that Rose shares as well.

"Everyone came up to me and said, 'glad to see you,'" she said.

The Littles also fell in love with the adult Sunday School class that convenes before church and is led by Ernie Lyons.

"It's one of the best classes I've been in," said Rich. "I've learned more there than I've ever learned. Everyone in the class I learn from."

"The best thing is that you can go in and speak your mind and no one judges you."

While Rose and Rich are active members, what they have really found rewarding is the opportunity to support the Blessing Box micro pantry ministry. And, for a good reason.

You see, times weren't always easy for the family, and one special Christmas stands out.

"One Thanksgiving, Rich's appendix burst, and that Christmas we couldn't afford presents for the kids," Rose said. "But somehow, everyone got what they wished for. To this day, I don't know who bought the presents, but ever since then, if I can help someone else, then I am going to do it until the day I die."

"It will happen because God will provide for me."

