

Sarah and Marv Peterson

First we saw Sarah in the choir and leading the prayers, and then we noticed Marv sitting up front leaning against the south wall. And twice a year we don't see them at all. So what's the story?

It turns out they are both from Illinois, but from very different backgrounds. How they got together is interesting too. The story is so absorbing we're dividing it up into a three-part serial for our weekly church e-newsletter. Part I will be Marv's growing up, Part II Sarah's, and Part III their life together.

PART I: Growing up Marv

The first seven years of Marv's life were spent in the small town of Geneseo in Northwestern Illinois. His father's parents were Swedish immigrants who died early in his first years. But his mother's father, Grandpa Little, played a big role in Marv's life. As a toddler, he would ride with Grandpa in his pickup truck to the countryside and collect chickens he would ship to Chicago, or distribute to local stores.

Marv's father worked at the John Deere factory some thirty miles away, so Marv spent long days with his mom and his dog Teddy until his sisters were born to keep him company.

“We were regular church goers from as long as I can remember. We belonged to the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) church, a fairly conservative denomination. I recall walking down the alley to Sunday School like a grown-up miniature man wearing my suit and hat.

He attended first grade in a school that housed eight grades each in a separate room with about twenty kids in his own class. Big for his age, he easily attached himself to older kids who were good students and adventuresome. “They were good role models and taught me how to ride a bike.”

Then, when he was seven, with two younger sisters, the family moved to a farm owned by his Grandpa, eight miles east of Geneseo. He attended a one-room schoolhouse with one teacher for all eight grades. He was the only student in his class for the next seven years. The others sat at fifteen desks arranged in rows. His teacher combined him with the upper classes, and later had him teaching the younger ones reading and arithmetic.

A downstairs basement room offered enough space for everyone to play dodge ball when the weather prevented playing outside. If it snowed, they sometimes got to go to a field with a hill to sled.

“Grand View school provided exactly that -- if you liked looking at farm fields.”

His family farm was too far to see -- one and a half miles from the school. It had 160 acres, two large barns, one with an attached silo, a sizable pig barn, and various other buildings.

“The house was not nearly as big or nice as the ones in Geneseo.” There was no drinking water, heat came from two small stoves inside. Outside a “two-holer” was there to visit as needed. The only entry was through the kitchen at the rear of the house. A covered walkway linked it to a shed containing a larger wood stove for the primary cooking and for hot baths taken in a large metal tub.

“Right from the start I had farm chores every morning and evening that were easy enough for a seven year old: feeding chickens and collecting eggs, pumping drinking water for the house, getting our four or five cows in for Dad to milk.

“As I would soon learn, our farm was designed for feeding and fattening livestock as a source of our livelihood. On the acreage we would plant, grow and harvest fields of corn, oats and hay, each rotated annually. One or two times a year my father and grandfather would go to Kansas City and buy young feeder cattle bred out west and bring them back to our farm where we would feed and fatten them, then ship them to Chicago -- hopefully at a profit so we could start the cycle again.

“We also bred, fed and sold a few pigs. Our few cows provided milk to sell to supplement the family income. My mom raised the chickens for our table, and the eggs for our pocket money. She also grew a large vegetable garden for our own eating and canning.”

Every Saturday they would go back to Geneseo for socializing and shopping. His grandparents still lived there and his parents had lots of friends there. Once a month there would be the huge family gathering in the home of one the five Peterson brothers, all of whom had married Swedish women except for his Dad.

In the nearby town of Atkinson, movies were projected on the large, flat side of a grain elevator while his parents socialized across the street at a bar, where they had a Friday Fish Fry for the predominantly Catholic population. But in Geneso there were Saturday movie matinees, mostly Westerns, along with short episodes of Tarzan or the Lone Ranger, serials that kept them coming back for more.

On Sundays they again went to Geneseo for the EUB church where his parents were still active, and Marv got to see his old friends. But the farm became the center of his life. One day his dad and Grandpa Little returned from Kansas City with four large trucks of feeder cattle and a surprise.

“The last animal to unload was not a steer to be fattened, but a large brown quarter horse with a white stripe down his nose – for me from my Grandpa! I managed to find an old bridle in the barn and climbed a fence to get on him and ride bareback.” His horse became a fun part of his life for the next few years. He would ride to visit his friends on other farms, worked as water boy for the threshing crews, and even got to ride in local small town parades.

“When I reached twelve, I was six foot two, surpassing my dad in height. Since I had grown so fast, they were afraid I would become clumsy.” In an attempt to get him to play a sport that might help his dexterity, his Dad drove him each night to Atkinson, for an all-school basketball team, which included the district’s public and Catholic schools. Basketball became a focal part of his sport life.

Meanwhile, his workload at the farm was increasing and making him stronger and teaching him to operate farm machinery and drive a tractor. He also enjoyed the rotating camaraderie on other farms during threshing and baling hay time.

To earn extra money that he typically spent on clothes he got a job mowing the Grandview schoolyard. Summers he hired out as a farmhand. “I had no thought about my future, and grew up assuming that one day I would be a farmer too.” He joined Future Farmers of America and entered a pig in a contest at the county fair.

High School

For some reason he didn’t understand, the family moved back to Geneso. Both parents got jobs, and they were no longer short of money. They had arrived in town just as high school football season was gearing up, so Marv went out for the team.

“During practice a teammate asked me what I was planning as a career, and said that he planned to be a cardiac surgeon. I mumbled something about not being a farmer. It started me thinking that maybe I’d go to college and become a teacher or coach, or even an engineer. That meant I needed to enroll in the college preparation courses.”

Still, sports became his primary focus – basketball, football and track. “I played end in football where I was able to use my basketball moves to get open and had good hands for catching passes.” He quickly gained a reputation as a basketball athlete, breaking all school records his junior year. He began getting recruitment letters from colleges, including the Big Ten. He planned to have a good senior year and get a basketball scholarship. But late that summer in a pick-up basketball game, he severely twisted his left ankle. The injury did not heal and he wore a cast and used crutches for most of the year. The scholarship letters did not come.

He turned to dramatics and got the lead role in the senior class play. He got recruited into the choir and a boys’ octet in which his old football buddy was singing. “He had a very good voice and some music talent. My role was to follow his voice. When he went up, I went up. When he went down, I went down.”

Having only one car in the family, limited social life with girls. “I liked girls who were smart, didn’t smoke, tolerated my teasing and were easy to talk to.”

Summer jobs like working with a pipeline construction crew gave him something besides farm work and it paid more -- but not enough to pay for college.

Then one day as he was sitting in Study Hall, the principal tapped him on the shoulder saying a college recruiter had showed up wanting to talk to seniors. The recruiter was from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. They had a scholarship program for residents of Illinois but most applicants came from fast track schools in Chicago and they were looking for more diversity.

Marv the farm boy wound up with a full four-year scholarship at Trinity as an “Illinois scholar.”

College days

In the early 60s Trinity College was still all male and also a part of Association of Episcopal Colleges. “I’d never heard of it, and had no idea of what to expect.” He went to a clothes store in Genesee whose owner suggested he wait until he got to Hartford to buy new clothes.

In their first long trip, his parents drove him from western Illinois to Hartford. Indeed, the guys there dressed completely different from the guys back home. His dorm was spartan and his roommate was dark-haired with a strong Boston accent. But they both came from a family of meager means, and they hit it off fine, but pledged different fraternities the next year. Socializing with girls rarely happened as freshmen were not allowed to have cars.

However, one important occasion when he met a young woman bears mentioning. An engineering professor invited Marv to his house for dinner, where a young woman who attended Mount Holyoke sat at the table. It was Sarah.

“Not exactly a date but a most enjoyable evening.” The next morning, she attended services at Trinity Chapel and there he was as the crucifer, carrying the cross down the aisle in the opening procession. “I thought she was impressed, but each time I called her the next year, her social schedule was filled.”

Besides, Mount Holyoke was fifty miles north of Harvard. Meanwhile he joined a fraternity with a diverse membership and a serious scholarly focus. They studied hard and partied on the week-ends.

He tried friendly games of basketball, but his ankle was still a problem and he had to give up team sports. He took up tennis and skiing.

He earned \$400-600 each term as a student tutor, and more when he joined another Illinois scholar selling football programs, and then taking over as manager. “This became money for my clothing and my very limited social expenses.” He went skiing with his fraternity brothers in Stowe, Vermont, where to keep down expenses they lodged in a barn on a farm with a dormitory upstairs and a game room below.

He was active in student government, becoming president of the Student Senate in his senior year. He was tapped for Phi Beta Kappa, and Who’s Who in American Colleges. and MEDUSA, responsible for maintaining behavior among their fellow students.

Late one night a fellow Medusa member, an African American, invited Marv to go with him to a place he knew in East Hartford, that was still open. “The all-black crowd welcomed me heartily, and before I knew it, my church choirboy friend was on stage singing Harry Belafonte songs. That was my first exposure to segregated life in a big city.”

His senior year his mother died, and in shock he flew back to the funeral – his first airplane flight. And that year he and Sarah began dating regularly.

Part II: Growing Up Sarah

Sarah was born in 1938, the same year as Marv, and raised in Park Ridge, a suburb of Chicago. “Hillary Clinton lived on the same block,” Sarah says, “but since she’s ten years younger than I am, our paths didn’t cross.”

She grew up playing with the neighborhood kids, and walked with them to and from her elementary school, a mile away. Her brother Ted was six years older so they were not very close when she was small.

She joined Girl Scouts and loved the songs they sang, and its ideals to live by – the promise along with the “laws” were an inspiration to her. *A Girl Scout is ... courteous ... cheerful ... and friend to all.* (Those of us who know Sarah, know those words still apply.)

“But I didn’t have a good leader, and I only earned one badge – table setting. (Actually, table setting was one requirement for the Tenderfoot rank.) “I loved going to Girl Scout camp, but when they told us we had to make bedrolls out of a sheets and blankets (no sleeping bags in those days) and go sleep in a field of cow poop, that was the end of it.”

Her parents had a business together. Her father was in real estate, and her mother went back to work when Sarah was in sixth grade to run the insurance side of the business.

“I worked hard and did well in school, but I wasn’t brilliant like my brother. As a daughter, I was very compliant. But once the boy next door talked me into smoking. ‘Your mother smokes, so you get the cigarettes, and I’ll get the matches.’ We sat in the space between our two houses. My brother Ted looked out the window and saw us, and when our parents came home from work, he told on us!”

Each summer, the family took a trip by car to places like the Smoky Mountains or the Rockies. “In the sixth grade we went to Washington, D. C. and stayed in the Mayflower hotel. That was a big deal.”

Sarah took piano and ballet lessons. “I never practiced piano, but I loved ballet. In the sixth grade we put on a variety show with a theme and a story, and in one scene I did a solo. That was the highlight of my best year in school. I loved having an audience, and was proud of doing a good job dancing *on point*.”

“I also had a wonderful teacher that year, who, in retrospect, I think inspired me to become a teacher.”

“My family rarely took advantage of Chicago’s cultural life. When I got to go to the opera on junior high school field trips, I was thrilled. We saw Aida and Carmen.”

Junior high proved to be a “bumpy road” from the get go. One girl formed a club called SOS (Sick of Sarah.) She told her gang not to sit with Sarah on the bus or in the cafeteria. But a couple of her friends defied the tormentor and sat with Sarah at lunchtime. “They were my Sunday school friends.”

Her father was an Episcopalian and her mom joined the Episcopal Church when they married. That’s where they went as a family every Sunday until in one sermon, the priest spoke against President Roosevelt, and her mother walked out of the church, never coming back. “She adored FDR.”

“I still wanted to go to church, so my Dad drove me every Sunday.” She sang in the junior choir and belonged to the junior altar guild.

Meanwhile, in school she finally scored. In the eighth grade she got to be a cheerleader. “I loved it – jumping around and getting all that attention.” But though she tried out for the cheerleading squad every year in high school she never got selected. “I don’t know why. I never had the courage to ask what I needed to improve.”

“I was never part of the super popular click but I had plenty of friends.” She applied herself to her studies and joined the water ballet team. In her junior and senior year, her boyfriend was a swimmer, so she went to all the swim meets and cheered him on. He was a “nice guy who came from lovely parents.” In turn, he came to see her water ballet performances. But when it was time for college, they went their separate ways.

Her brother was a Princeton graduate so when she decided to go to one of the “seven sister colleges” she asked him which one could he see her going to? He replied, “Mount Holyoke. You’d fit in well there where the students are regular people.”

College days for Sarah

While filling out the application for admission to Mount Holyoke, Sarah was asked about her career plans. “An attorney or a flight attendant,” I wrote. “How the admissions officer must have laughed at that. But they let me in.”

“I had no ‘college prep’ courses in high school, and that scared me a bit so I really had to apply myself. I got my lowest grade in geology, I didn’t know why. Again a lack of self-confidence kept me from approaching my professors. But by the end of her freshman year, I was on more stable academic ground. I spent four glorious years at Mount Holyoke.” She worked summers at her parents real estate and insurance business.

She majored in world religions, inspired again by a great teacher who stimulated good discussion in class. She minored in political science for which she had a passion, and volunteered for Adlai Stevenson during the 1956 Democratic Convention in Chicago.

At the end of one day of volunteering, she was wearing a big Stevenson sash and a hat with Adlai’s name on it, and waiting at the bus stop on Michigan Avenue, when a green Cadillac convertible pulled up next to her. She recognized Senator John Kennedy in the front seat.

“May I ask you a question?” She nodded. “Are you people working for Stevenson volunteers or paid employees?

“Well, I can’t speak for the others, but I’m a volunteer.”

The next day while standing in line with her parents at a reception held for Eleanor Roosevelt. Kennedy walked up to Sarah and said, “Oh, so nice to see you again.” Her parents were flabbergasted.

While at Mount Holyoke, social life and academic work kept Sarah pretty busy. Everyone had to attend chapel once a week but by her junior year the college had seen the light and got rid of the chapel requirement. Sarah was relieved to not have to get up and attend chapel at eight in the morning. She joined an *a capella* choir of women that sang at many different places, a group of eight girls doubling four-part songs. They called the group the “V-8s” after a popular breakfast drink of that time.

“There was no Episcopal Church in town, so common practice had it that if you dressed for church and stood in a certain block on the street going to the next town, someone would stop and offer you a ride.

One week-end she was invited to stay at the home of a friend of her Dad's who was a professor at Trinity College in Hartford. They also had invited Marv over for dinner on Saturday. "That's where the two kids from Illinois first met each other," Sarah says.

The next morning they went to church at the Trinity Chapel. In anticipation of this, Sarah brought along a mantilla she wanted to wear on her head. "Oh no, that won't do," her hostess said, and went upstairs bringing down a little pill-box hat, in vogue at the time.

So there she was in the chapel in her borrowed pill hat. When the procession started, she turned and saw Mary, leading the processional wearing that long, flowing white robe and carrying the big cross. "He looked incredible."

"Sealing" their relationship

On weekends Marv would often pile into a car with his fraternity brothers and drive to Mt. Holyoke to see the girls. They went to a local pub for beer, food, and music. At these gatherings, Marv and Sarah often found each other.

"Aside from finding her attractive," Marv says, "neither of us enjoyed smoky rooms or beer, so one time we walked down the street to where we discovered a chocolate shake to die for. That just about sealed our relationship."

"We always hit it off, but we took it slow." Sarah says. "I think because I had gone steady in high school for two years, I wanted to feel free to date around."

At the end of their senior year, Marv invited her to his fraternity's annual charity ball, To their surprise, by members' secret ballot, Sarah was elected queen of the ball. Sarah thought: What a nice compliment to know that they like me. Marv thought: Wow, if the other guys think that much of her, I should take her more seriously. That summer, Marv began writing weekly letters to Sarah. "That's what finally won me over," she says.

Their senior year they managed to get together two or three times a month. After graduation, they went back to their respective homes in Chicago and Geneso for the summer, but saw each other virtually every weekend, and met each other's families.

That fall they both started working on master's degrees – MEd at Goucher College in Maryland for Sarah and an MBA at Harvard in Boston for Marv. Despite the distance, they traded visits twice a semester. In the second semester, after going out for dinner one evening, they wandered around town window shopping.

“By this time we were talking about a long-term relationship,” Sarah says. “I pointed to a ring in a jewelry store window, saying: That’s the ring I want. It was a simple Tiffany-cut diamond.”

On April’s Fools Day 1961 after another dinner, Marv presented her with a small box. When she opened it, she saw a small stuffed animal. Sarah remembers it being a kitten. Marv says it was Easter time and he got her a rabbit. “I needed another stuffed animal like I need three more holes in my head,” Sarah says. “Then I looked more closely and noticed a diamond ring tied around its neck -- just the one I wanted. He had a friend whose father was a jeweler, and got it for a good price.”

So they became engaged but decided not to get married until Sarah got her M Ed and a teaching job. They waited until they couldn’t wait any longer and that summer reserved Sarah’s home Episcopal church for Aug. 26.

“We threw the wedding together in six weeks. It was a mad rush to find a reception place, flowers, some bridesmaids, and dresses for them – powder blue and just below the knee. Thankfully, my brother’s wife offered me her wedding dress. But I bought my own veil.” It’s one with that mantilla look, which she still keeps.

Miraculously, on Aug. 24, 1961, Sarah got a job offer teaching 6th grade in Sudbury, MA adding more excitement to the big day. After the wedding, their honeymoon was two nights in a hotel at Illinois Dunes State Park on Lake Michigan. Then it was on to Massachusetts.

Part III: Merging their lives

The Newlyweds, Sarah and Marv arrived in Cambridge with a half tank of gas, no apartment rented, and only two dollars in our pockets (this was before credit cards)! They finally found an apartment, but the landlord was unwilling to rent until he found out that Sarah had graduated from Mt. Holyoke. So had his daughter. “All of a sudden we were in!”

They made a few new friends in nearby apartments, but mostly kept busy, Marv with his studies and Sarah with her school work. “I discovered I did have a talent for teaching,” Sarah says. “I’m not great, but I’m pretty good. It’s fun, and I got paid for doing something I love.”

They managed to go skiing a few times that winter on quick trips to Vermont. They would get up early and drive 3+ hours on Saturday morning, ski all day and then drive back in the evening.

Marv’s career

After completing his MBA, Marv considered many job offers, including a tempting one in Palo Alto for a startup that later became HP. Somehow none of the offers suited. Then a Dean of the Harvard MBA program, having reviewed his record of student leadership activities at Trinity, offered him a position as an assistant Dean in the Business school. This made Marv realize he wasn’t interested in companies

making inanimate products, like in the Palo Alto start-up where he witnessed a production area of mostly women wiring small machines. Maybe university administration would be more interesting.

With both of their jobs they were now financially secure enough to expand their skiing in Vermont to two nights on a weekend, and then three. After their third year in Boston, they decided to take a real honeymoon, purchased a VW delivered in Paris and drove through several European countries, taking pot luck on rooms wherever they went.

Back in Boston for their last year, Marv became responsible for business school recruitment, and coordinated the admission of the first women to Harvard's MBA program.

After four years at Harvard, and with Sarah six months pregnant, Marv obtained a grant to pursue his interests in higher education administration in a PhD program at Michigan University, focusing on an emerging interdisciplinary study of organizational behavior in higher education -- exciting and innovative. By 1968 he had answered Bill Colby's old question "What are you going to do for a career?" He abandoned administration and accepted a position in a U of M Center for the Study of Higher Education, doing research and teaching graduate seminars. He spent forty years at the Center, and served as its director for twenty when it consistently ranked No. 1 in the country. He also helped reorganize higher education systems in Russia, as well as in nine developing countries.

Looking back, Marv says the most fulfilling aspect of his career was advising Ph.D students who went on to hold a variety of academic and administrative positions -- even presidencies of their institutions. After forty years at U of M, he retired, came to California, and held a three-year appointment as a visiting professor at Stanford University.

Sarah's career

While in Ann Arbor Sarah enjoyed teaching in a middle school. They had a progressive school system, with lots of international students whose parents were at the university. "I chose to teach at Northside school because it had significant Black population and I wanted to see if I could connect with Black kids." The community had long-standing African American roots because it was historically on the underground railroad system, and many formerly enslaved people settled there.

One of Sarah's black students was a trouble-maker, but lovable boy, whom she made stay after school one day, and then drove him home. She got scolded by another teacher but she felt he'd served his time and hoped a ride home on a cold snowy day might help build a bond with him. One year she had groups of five students over to her house for dinner.

Their daughters Julie and Jessica attended the middle school where their mom taught. Sarah asked them if they had any problems with that and was pleased to hear them say, "No, because the kids like you."

Despite the demands of her teaching, Sarah was also politically active, demonstrating for one cause or the other. She belonged to the teacher's union, and when the school secretaries went on strike and she had a break from classes, she went out and joined them on the picket line. Her picture got in the papers for that.

Second Home in Montana

Sarah and Marv were big Chet Huntley fans, and heard him on his nightly newscast talking about growing up in Montana and a new ski area he and others were building. In 1973 they decided to investigate, and hit the road with their two daughters.

“You drive into Big Sky and there’s Lone Peak, and you fall in love,” Sarah recalls.

At the resort they delighted in actually meeting Huntley and having a chat with him. They then became one of the first families to own a new condo being built at the base of the ski resort. They spent Christmas skiing at Big Sky the following year, and continued going twice a year, skiing in the winter and taking long hikes in the summer. When they were not there, they rented out the condo.

While the girls were small, they could leave them with their grandparents in Illinois, or at the resort, enroll them in day care then ski classes, until finally they joined them on the slopes and on the trails. Sarah loved back-packing and overnight camping in the sleeping bag she didn’t get to have in Girl Scouts.

Now that they are living in California, they still make the bi-annual trip to Big Sky, though they think they may soon have to give that up. We at Calvary sure will be glad to have them full-time.

Santa Cruz

Sarah came to California on her own in 1996, staying first with daughter Julie, who was teaching in Felton. She liked it so much, she decided to make it permanent, but she wasn’t ready to retire. She saw an ad in the SC Sentinel for a position at Mount Madonna School (MMS). She contacted them and asked how she could apply. They said, “Just send us your resume.” She did and the next week they called to set up an interview.

The Madonna name made her think it was a Roman Catholic school, and had picked something conservative to wear for the interview. “Oh no,” a friend said, “Go casual, and be sure to not have holes in your socks.

“What? Why? “

“A yoga spiritual community runs the school and it’s sort of hippy. You take off your shoes when you go inside buildings.”

So Sarah wore a mid-calf flowing skirt and socks without holes to the interview. She got the job and taught at MMS for ten years until she finally retired for good.

First she had an apartment, then she bought a condo. She and Marv began to meet up at the condos in Montana and Santa Cruz. When Marv retired and was ready to move to California, he didn't like the condo, "The ceilings were too low." So they bought their first house on a ridge in Aptos, with a protected forest area on each side that feels like living in the mountains.

Since settling in California, they have had more than her share of challenges. Their daughter Julie gave birth to two severely disabled girls with a rare genetic disease -- Isabella & Daniella Salido, who we keep in our prayers each Sunday at church. Their younger daughter Jessica, living in Colorado, had a daughter who died suddenly when she was only twelve years old.

On the joyful side, on Sundays Sarah often brought along Julie and Pancho's son Miguel, albeit dragging his heels and telling us about going with his dad to Monster Jams and to Mexico. We adored him. To reward him after church she took him to the boardwalk to see the train.

Marv, having pain in his back for many years, recently had his entire lumbar region fused together. "You don't lift 100-pound bales of hay and 60-pound backpacks, do sports and skiing with a bad back, without paying the price." He also had the bones from his highschool ankle injury fused. He walks now with two walking poles to help keep his back upright.

More recently Sarah, always the picture of health and energy, has had a series of medical set-backs: an arthritic shoulder, a broken hip and replacement, "atypical" pneumonia and anemia. But she soldiers on, and is slowly making a comeback.

The role of church and religion

"It is fair to say," admits Marv, "I was never seriously involved in the pursuit of questions on the meaning of life and the role of God or religion in my life. Instead, it was a constant and continuous involvement that probably shaped my outlook and many of my choices indirectly.

"I recall wondering as a twelve year old during my year of catechism at the EUB church in Geneseo: how do I know the answers I'm being taught are true? Perhaps a bit of agnosticism was emerging - but I never shared it with others.

"When we did become serious, it was clear that her interest in religion was deeper than mine - both in her religious commitments and her church activity. In Cambridge, we went to a historic old Episcopalian Church (it had holes in the walls remaining from the Revolutionary War). She taught Sunday School while I served as the assistant -- in charge of discipline.

“When we moved to Ann Arbor, we ended up at St. Aidan’s, a newly established Episcopal church that shared a building and programming with a Presbyterian congregation. It was a small but active congregation and Sarah became quite involved in a variety of social action and outreach programs (hunger, homelessness, nuclear disarmament) as well as altar guild, junior and senior warden, and youth group leader. I dutifully attended and became the treasurer, a fund raiser and eventually served on their Vestry.

“This pattern would repeat itself later when we later settled in the Santa Cruz area together. She had already become deeply involved in outreach activities, altar guild, worship and choir at Calvary Episcopal Church. I would attend regularly and take on roles related to Stewardship and 150th Anniversary Capital campaigns. In our other half year at Big Sky we were active at All Saints church, another joint congregation of Episcopalians and ELCA Lutherans.

“So to varying degrees religion and church activities have been a constant in both of our lives. Sarah has been more involved in the worship and religious activities; with me more in the finance and management of the enterprise. But both of us have understood and shared the importance of religion and of the church in our lives.”

-