

HOPE STARTS HERE!

Stewardship 2020/2021

Giving Sunday is November 15, 2020

www.myesperanza.org



Church Journeys by Beth & John Fisher

The two of us were lucky/fortunate that we both grew up in active church families. When we were first married, we lived in New Jersey, while John fulfilled his military service. We attended several churches but didn't join one. After the army we moved back to Arizona. Beth's parents had moved here a few years earlier and had joined a new Lutheran church in Tempe. We joined the same church. Especially because it was a new congregation there were many new families and many new friendships were formed. Beth's father was the choir director; her mother sang in the choir and had joined several committees. We quickly became active members also and were there for over ten years.

Then in 1986 John was offered a job transfer to Austin, Texas. A new adventure began again. We quickly found a church, and we joined on the day it dedicated a new sanctuary. Again we, and our three kids, made an effort to get involved. Beth joined the choir and met Brad Somero (small world). We had met a family at the new member class who had just moved into a new home in the same neighborhood as ours. Our young boys were in the preschool together. We carpoled to events and became long-lasting friends. Their older son and our second daughter were confirmed on the same day, and both families said good-bye to Austin at the same time. Our Texas pastor had told us of a church in Illinois we should try. We did and became involved: choir, committees, bible studies, and we had found another church family—including getting to know Jim and Jane Gisselquist.

After moving back to Arizona for our son to start high school, we went back to our first church, but found we had changed. After a chance meeting with a former pastor and chatting with him, he told us about Esperanza. That was more than twenty years ago. And you know the rest of the story...

Everywhere we went we became a part of our church and the church became a part of our lives. And we have been thankful for all it has given us.

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This reminds us of a story John's father used to tell about a young pastor and his son who wandered about the rural Midwest on his vacation. They stopped in a small town as the weekend approached and found a place to stay near a church. The pastor was asked to lead the service on Sunday as the church had no regular pastor. He agreed and was told that the church usually offered a visiting pastor whatever was collected in the donation box. On Sunday morning the pastor and his son saw the donation box near the rear of the church. Before anyone else appeared, the pastor put a quarter in the box as "seed money." After conducting the service and after the congregation had left, the pastor went to the donation box and took out all the money – a quarter. His son said, "It just goes to show you that the more you put into something the more you will get out."

Get involved. Join something. Volunteer. Take advantage of the opportunities.

Beth & John Fisher