

Lana VanMetre's Spiritual Journey

An Elder since the mid 80's, Lana moved to Harrison from Youngstown, Ohio in 1980 but her hometown is Mooresville, IN. Lana and husband, Bill, have been married for 38 years and have a daughter, Cindy, and a son, Rob along with 2 grandchildren, Matthew and Brooklyn. She returned to the work force in 2000 after being a stay at home mom for 27 years and works for FACS Group in Mason, Ohio. During those stay at home years Lana volunteered in the community and the schools serving as President of the Whitewater Valley Elementary PTA & the Hamilton County Council of PTAs. Lana also served several terms on the Southwest Local School Board. She began attending FCC in 1980 and has served in many capacities including Chairman of the Board, Membership, Christian Education, Worship, Fellowship, Administration Ministry committee member and leader. She is currently a Life Group leader, Service Ministry leader, Worship Greeter and leads the Class 301 offering. She has attended ALPHA and been on the Walk to Emmaus and enjoys reading, sewing, and playing with the grandchildren.

Favorite Scripture: Psalms 94:19



From my earliest recollection I attended Sunday school and church. My mother was my first Sunday school teacher. I attended the Mooresville Christian Church in Mooresville, Indiana. The minister during my childhood was Rev. John Sutenfield. He was well liked and really helped the church grow. He gave notice that he was leaving and my mother wanted me to be baptized by him. So at the young age of eight I was baptized. I remember thinking, what does this mean? I didn't get the answer until many years later. I did continue to attend church and Sunday school regularly.

Bill and I went to church as a "date" before we were married. As young marrieds we did not attend regularly. After moving from Mooresville we did not attend at all.

One day, our seven-year-old daughter announced that she wanted to go to Sunday school. Bill and I decided we needed to start attending and located the closest Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Youngstown, Ohio. We made many friends, including the minister, but still had no personal relationship with Christ.

Then we moved to Miamitown, and decided to attend First Christian Church in Harrison. Again, we found many friends, and one day one of them invited me to a Bible group. It was in this group that I learned to pray out loud, to lead a Bible study and started my walk with God.

After studying a book by and about Brother Lawrence, I learned more about the presence of God. I realized that no matter where I was or what I was doing, God was present and knew what I needed and would help me.

One of the biggest points of change in my life happened when Mark Kendrick died. This was a devastating event for all who knew Mark and his family. As we all searched for answers about why God would let this happen, I realized that I would never know how or why bad things and even good things happen to some people and not to others. I did learn that God would always be there for me to give me strength, courage, peace, and to guide and direct me, no matter what was going on in my life. I just needed to trust him, confide in him and ask for his help. And I have done that through many difficult times.

When Dr. McConnell came to First Christian Church, the next biggest change occurred in my spiritual journey. I began to really worship God, to give Him praise, honor, and glory. I knew that all I had was because of Him. I just needed to let God know I knew.

I also began to pray with others. It was a gift to be able to pray with my best friend before she died and to give my Dad encouragement as he lay dying of lung cancer.

I really have accepted Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. It has been a wonderful journey filled with many peaks and valleys. I am now confident that no matter where I go, or how high the mountain tops or how deep the valleys God is always beside me to help me. It is an exciting journey, and I'm so glad for the influences that helped me along. Thank God for them. Amen.