

Meet the Member!

Joe & Joy Jenkins Family

In the summer months you will often find Joy and Joe working in their large vegetable garden and Ziva, their mixed Spaniel and Black Labrador, bounding through the garden looking for rabbits. As you read, you will become aware that faith, family, and health are very important to the Jenkins.



Joe and Joy met in 1990 when Joy was the Minister of Youth and Education for Stevens Memorial Baptist Church in Newport News, VA and where Joe was active as youth Sunday school teacher and “Royal Ambassador” leader. Joe was a single father with a 6-year-old son at the time and two years later, they were married on February 29, 1992, and as Joe would say, “Thank you, Jesus”. They have been married 29 years.

They did not come by having a family in the conventional way. Joe, who had been married previously, had a daughter, son and two stepdaughters. In 1999, Joe and Joy adopted Victor from Russia, giving them one teenager and one toddler at home. Then, in 2008, with only 10-year-old Victor left at home, Joe’s daughter, Jennifer, died suddenly, leaving behind three young sons. Because her husband was not able to take care of the boys, Grayson (age 8), Logan (age 7), and Conner (age 4) came to live with Joe and Joy and were eventually adopted by them. As gardeners, you might say that Joe and Joy have had two “crops” of children.

Today, the kids from the first “crop” - two stepdaughters and a son – all live in the Newport News, VA area and have given Joe and Joy five grandchildren. Of the second group, their oldest son Victor, 23, remains at home and has worked in various jobs including a stint in 2020 traveling with a commercial painting team. He is still trying to determine his career path. Grayson, 21, recently joined the Air Force and is stationed at Elmendorf Air Force base in Anchorage, AK. Logan, 20, with a degree from York Tech, is now enrolled at the University of South Carolina at Lancaster. Conner, 17, currently is living at home, but will attend Clemson in the fall (2021). He plans to major in chemical engineering and play saxophone in the marching band.

Before his recent retirement, Joe worked for 26 years in electrical and mechanical maintenance, working up to the position of Maintenance and Reliability Manager. He then shifted his focus and worked 19 years in IT, implementing and managing SAP software with a specialty in procurement, inventory, and plant maintenance. In earlier years, Joe worked in global exporting for Royal Dutch Shell. The latter part of his career was spent in the wood/pulp/paper industry. Joe retired in 2019 from Domtar, Inc in Fort Mill.

Besides working in the church, Joy has held several positions in the workplace: Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Coordinator, tax preparer for Jackson-Hewitt Tax Services and US Census Bureau Enumerator. In 2014 she started and runs a business as a natural wellness advocate and brand partner for Young Living Essential Oils. However, she considers helping raise boys to men as her most important work.

Joy, a three-sport athlete in high school, attended and graduated with a BS in Horticulture from Virginia Tech where she played competitive volleyball. After college, she worked for an orchard and nursery in Piney River, VA. During that time, she volunteered as a youth director and Sunday school teacher in a small local Baptist church and felt the Holy Spirit nudging her to attend seminary to learn more about her faith and to be a better witness to those kids she was ministering to. She graduated with a Master of Divinity in Christian Education from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY and went into full time ministry becoming a licensed minister in the church in 1987. That eventually led her to work for a Baptist church in Newport News, VA where she met Joe, and that changed the course of both of their lives. One of the high points of her life was to marry a man who “seriously seeks to follow God’s direction and lead their family in doing the same”. It is a daily source of strength and encouragement to her.

Joe’s spiritual journey was a little different. As a child he grew up in the church, made a profession of faith and was baptized. But not until his 30s did the “Holy Spirit really convict him, and he truly realized he was a sinner”. It was not until after this spiritual awakening that he met Joy. They enjoy reading scripture together daily and have made it a habit throughout their marriage to pray together at night even on the telephone when Joe was traveling.

Joe and Joy have lived in Fort Mill for over 12 years. About five years ago they decided to make Eternal Church their home. Joe has been a Deacon at Eternal for over a year now.

A favorite verse for Joe is 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. *“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”*

Joy’s favorite verses are Proverbs 3:5-6. *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths.”*

With Joe’s recent retirement, they plan on traveling in their RV visiting family and freshwater or saltwater fishing. Of course, they will continue canning vegetables and jellies and raising Ziva, their pampered dog whom they refer to as “Ziva the Diva”. Not to let grass grow under their feet, they look forward to wherever God may lead them in the future and are currently praying about possibly starting a “pay as you can” restaurant to serve those in need in York County.