

senior adult connect

A Monthly Newsletter for Senior Adults at Calvary Church

JANUARY 2022

Spotlight on Dan & Karen Larson

BORN, RAISED & FAITH

STORIES Dan was born and raised in Ashland, WI, a small city on the shores of Lake Superior. Dan said, "I was blessed to be born in a family of committed believers that were a significant part of shaping who I am". Most of his childhood memories are centered on family activities that included a small cabin on a lake where summer days were filled with fishing, swimming, and "great family times together".

Karen was born in Minnesota but moved with her family to the Philippines when she was 15 months old. Her mom and dad were Baptist General Conference (now Converge) missionaries. Most of her childhood memories center on living on the island of Cebu. The family came "home to the US for furlough 3 times" during her childhood and teens. She went to a boarding school for 5th grade; then moved to Faith Academy in 7th grade. She enjoyed the friendships she made with schoolmates. Karen fondly remembers Christmas as a day the family would spend together and go swimming in the Pacific Ocean.

As a teen, Dan was "extremely active" in his youth group and sports at his high school. Ask him sometime to tell you the story about Salem's "Pool Hall". Outside of church, Dan was heavily involved in sports. Early on he played baseball, basketball, and tennis but during his later years he focused on basketball and tennis, where he had "successful junior and senior years".

Karen's teenage memories are largely about her years at Faith Academy. Living in the dorm, chapel services, and Bible studies played a big role in shaping her faith. Karen said, "Being in a Christian school was a very positive experience, as I learned about God's love in so many ways—from teachers, dorm parents, and friends". The friends she made at Faith continue to be very important to her. She said that "growing up in a 'foreign' country influenced my worldview, and I appreciated how it impacted me in many ways". Fellow missionaries were very important to her and they became her "aunts and uncles". Returning to the US for furloughs "was always an adjustment" and she "felt like a foreigner even though I was an American". She learned at an early age that "it takes time to learn to live in a different culture".

LOVE STORY & WORK LIFE

Dan and Karen were led to Bethel College after graduation. Both of their families had strong ties to Bethel. Dan almost went to a different school but when Bethel's athletic director and two coaches reached out to him he enrolled. Dan says, "to this day it is one of the best decisions I ever made". Karen says that she was blessed during her college years at Bethel "to be 'adopted' by two different adult MK's (missionary kids) who attended Central Baptist Church". During her sophomore year, she lived with C. Howard and Dorthea Smith. Dorthea was an MK. This was a big blessing to Karen since she couldn't afford to live in the dorm another year. Peter (an MK) and Elaine Holm offered her a place to live during her junior year. She learned "SO much" about being a mother and homemaker in the US from Elaine.

Both Dan and Karen became Christ-followers as children. Karen was 4 when she put her faith in Christ as a fellow MK shared the Good News. Dan was attending Wood Lake Bible Camp as a 12 year-old when he "accepted Christ" as his "personal Lord and Savior".



For both of them, their godly parents, extended family, and Christian friends were part of their spiritual journey.

CALVARY CONNECTION Dan and Karen met in 1976 as part of the "Roaring Twenties" group at Calvary. Dan was one of two "new guys" attending a potluck that caught Karen's eye. Their first official date was going to a Gophers basketball game. They were married at Calvary in 1976. They have two sons, Bret and Bryan. Bret is married to Sarah and they have two children who Dan and Karen enjoy babysitting for three days a week. It's their exercise program those day!

Calvary has been part of their lives for nearly five decades. They are thankful for many godly pastors, teachers, and friends who have been "a strong part of their faith journey". Their prayer for Calvary is that our church would continue to "stay centered on God's teachings and look outside the walls of the church to see how we can grow and share Christ with our neighbors, as well as, other mission's projects".

Written By Ralph Gustafson

Volunteer?

Do you have a knack for editing and writing? We are seeking a volunteer to help with the spotlight story on this newsletter. Reach out to Pastor Ralph for more information! ralph.gustafson@calvarychurch.us

From Pastor Ralph

As seniors, we need to remember that our effectiveness in leading our families, living victoriously, pointing people to Jesus, and helping others grow in their faith is totally dependent on prioritizing and nurturing our relationship with Jesus Christ. If we want to be models of faith, hope, and love, we need to fix our eyes, hearts, and minds on our Savior. Here are four simple and challenging disciplines to help you in that pursuit in 2022.

Allow God to be God. Show that you believe nothing happens without God knowing about it. "Trust the Lord with ALL your heart." As a Christ-follower, you will inspire and bless others as you model and declare your faith in our almighty, sovereign, and loving God. Let your life and words proclaim that, "God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. He is my refuge, my savior" (2 Samuel 22:3).

Love God, Love People. No matter their background, circumstances, or situation, love people as you love God. It's what the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit expect of us. It's the heart of the Gospel, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Pray in the Spirit. Make meaningful conversation with God a high priority. Don't allow the busyness of life to squeeze out time talking to the Lord. Prayer needs to be as much a part of your daily routine as eating a meal or talking with a friend. God declares, "Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Read, Apply, and Share the

Word. The strength of your faith, the consistency of your walk, the evidence of joy in your life will be directly linked to your time invested in the Word of God. There is no substitute for the wisdom, insight, and understanding that comes from diving into the Bible. "Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15b)

May your 2022 be a life-changing year empowered by the Spirit and marked by a deep faith, love for God and people, prayer, and quality time in the Word!

Ralph Gustafson

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SENIOR ADULT LUNCH

Thursday / January 13

12-2pm / Roseville Campus

Lunch followed by an interview with Calvary Church Senior Pastor Shawn Winters and his wife Becky. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR LUNCHES** so we can plan for the meal. Call the church office by Tuesday, January 11, to sign up or register online. Cost \$11 651.487.2855

calvarychurch.us/connect/events

GONE HOME

Heaven welcomed home a few more of our Senior Adults.

Norm Asplund on December 3
Marian Mayer on December 4

MEN & WOMEN'S EVENTS

NO REGRETS MEN'S CONFERENCE

Saturday / February 5

8:30am-1:30pm

White Bear Campus

Cost \$25 if you sign up by January 14, regular price \$30

Lunch Provided

IF GATHERING WOMEN'S EVENT

Friday 6-9pm & Saturday 9am-4pm / March 4-5

Roseville Campus

Cost \$35

Lunch Provided on Saturday

calvarychurch.us/connect/events

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

The main items of business include Senior Pastor and Elder Board reports, election of a new Elder Board member, and a financial update. If you're a member, pick up an absentee ballot at the Welcome Center or find it online.

calvarychurch.us/annual-meeting
Website password: **Acts2:42**

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, January 24 / 6-7pm

White Bear Campus

Newsletter Credits

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