

“Woodbury UMC Shining the Light”

Dennis Yates - Member Spotlight



Quick Facts

Name: Dennis Yates

Family: Barbara – Spouse: Kids – David, Christopher and Jennifer – all on their own; two grandsons – Duncan and Benjamin

Occupation: Trained as an analytical chemist, works at PerkinElmer

Interests: We like to travel, I enjoy photography

Location: Woodbury

Hey Dennis, where are you from?

I was born and raised in Greensburg Pa. I have one sister who still lives there. My parents met in World War II and moved to my mother’s home town where they are buried. I attended Thiel College which is a small college affiliated with the Lutheran Church. In 1971 I attended Ohio State University graduate school and graduated in 1976. In 1982 I took a job with PerkinElmer Instruments where I have worked for 30 years.

What do you do?

I am by training an analytical chemist. I have spent my time at PerkinElmer in product development and management. We provide scientific instruments used in determination of metals (lead and mercury for example in addition to other things) in the environment and health sciences.

Tell us about your family.

I met Barbara in High school as a fellow band member (I played the clarinet and she the flute). We were married in 1969 and had three children. David was born in Greensburg, Christopher in Columbus Ohio and Jennifer in Columbia Missouri. All the children have spouses and careers. David and Terry live in Syracuse NY and have a son, Duncan who is 5. Christopher and Jennifer live in Saratoga Springs NY. Jennifer and Andy live in Bethlehem PA, have a son, Benjamin who is 2, and expect their second son in April.

What do you truly love?

One of the greatest treats I have experiences is our grandchildren – they are priceless – an unanticipated reward for the all the work and trials and tribulations of living while raising a family. Having our family “home” is also a special event for us that occur occasionally. Having ten people (soon to be eleven) at home is a special event for us and one we look forward to – they are good kids and we are quite proud of them all. As couple with no kids at home now I do enjoy the time with my spouse when we go of together and visit those out-of-the-way towns in our country that have faced challenges and reinvented themselves. Those who know me also know that I have a passion for the craft of photography.

Tells us a time when you’ve been overwhelmed by God’s grace or work in your life.

I find it hard to find a single time to cite specifically about God’s grace in my life. In ways beyond what I could have ever dreamed in my 62 years, there are numerous times that I feel that Gods’ presence has helped me through those times of challenge. The only certainty is that it was always present.

I do find that I am called to do things that surprise me. I have had friends – sometimes not close- who have faced illness and perhaps death and I was called to visit them and do what I could to provide them comfort. Some passed this crisis and are with us today. Some did not and I am comforted by the thought that some small thing I did may have helped them in their passage to life eternal. To those who are still with us, I hope that those visits were comforting and thank you for allowing me to be a part of your life.

What do you enjoy or value about Woodbury United Methodist Church?

I find the heart of WUMC is for its people and people in need. It’s not unusual for a church to focus on its members but it is unusual for a church to be so people centric. I value this --Its rumored that is you ever are traveling and need help, stop and the nearest Methodist church – they will help you. I think this is true at WUMC.