

We want to Share Our Story and challenge you

1. To share your story. Because **It's Your Story!**
2. To Know that God continually **Writes His Story** through you. The Bible is History, and History is "His Story"!

- **Psalm 139:16:** "You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed."
- **Ephesians 2:10:** "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to **do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
- **Philippians 1:6:** "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."
- **Philippians 2:13:** "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

Realizing that God is Omniscient and knows all things even before they happen is a mystery.

3. To **Record His Provisions** in good times and bad. This is your legacy!

Our story is about the **Two of Us.**
Growing up physically, mentally and spiritually,
the **Two Become One.**
Our lives together become **We, Not Me!**
Today, I want to share Our We Story

Today I want to share **Our We Story** and how God has led us through the years.

At different times in high school we each committed ourselves to follow the Lord's direction. In 1966, we fell in love during youth activity of 1st Baptist Church here in Titusville. As high school sweethearts, Peter Lord was our Pastor and we were in a vibrant youth group.

After High School I went to Emory University while Phyllis continued here at Brevard Junior College. I was pursuing a career in medicine and Phyllis was planning to teach. For two years, we wrote love letters every night to each other and included a prayer at the end of each letter. We have kept each of our sets of 400 letters in four notebooks.

We both transferred to University of Florida in our junior year and attended a fundamental Baptist Church where we grew in our Christian walk and Scriptural understanding.



After five years of dating, at the end of our third year in college, we eloped and were married in the Oldest Baptist Church in the South located in Charleston, SC. The Pastor who officiated our wedding still contacts us regularly.



We determined as a couple to follow scriptural commands to be **Fruitful and Multiply**

- *Gen 1:22 and 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.***

A back story is, when we were dating in high school, we decided on six names for the children we would have, and as our 5 children came, we ended using two syllable Biblical names for them in order: Michael Joseph, Steven Philip, Daniel Peter, Rachel Leah and Sarah Ester.



We started with humble beginnings: **Living On Love.**

We had a meager budget on a Christian school teacher's salary, but God provided our needs. We recall those days when serving as a teacher and choir director at our church. Our first apartment had no air conditioning, an exposed gas heater and water furnace in the middle of our living room, our suitcases were our chest of drawers, we had one tankless flushing toilet and the roaches crawled everywhere. Our church families would show up at our door and provide us with money, clothing, even a motorcycle, and many additional gifts to help us with our growing family.

God gave us a promise of housing. We felt impressed that "As you continue in this ministry, I will never require you to live in a lesser home than the one in which we were living. And every house we have lived in has become more than we dreamed.

We were always asking questions: "How do you raise your children?"

3 Word Wonder: **Always Ask Questions:** The world belongs to those who ask. If you go to Walmart and search for something, you would be better off to ask where to find it.

When we were asked what we wanted, we would answer: **One Big Happy Family.**



As a principal at PABS for 14 years, I encouraged the student body to memorize together

*1 Peter:3:8-12 (TLB) ⁸ And now this word to all of you: You should be like **One Big Happy Family**, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds. ⁹ Don't repay evil for evil. Don't snap back at those who say unkind things about you. Instead, pray for God's help for them, for we are to be kind to others, and God will bless us for it.*

¹⁰ If you want a happy, good life, keep control of your tongue, and guard your lips from telling lies. ¹¹ Turn away from evil and do good. Try to live in peace even if you must run after it to catch and hold it! ¹² For the Lord is watching his children, listening to their prayers; but the Lord's face is hard against those who do evil.

Upon the suggestion of Peter Lord to our church body, we created a

Family Mission Statement:

"To learn to love as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, and to raise godly children who will do the same."

We tell our children:

"Find God's Will" and "Do It Well"

3 John 1:4 I have no greater joy to know that my children walk in truth!

As we walk into our house from the garage, this mission statement hangs on the wall.

In marriage, we have learned to **Love and Forgive**

Neither of us is perfect and often find myself apologizing for not doing what I said I would do or doing what I said I would not do.

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

Husbands Protect Wives

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Wives honor husbands

Encourage one another

Jeremiah 29:11 for I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Roman 8:28 And know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

God used all our prior experiences to prepare us for the next calling

Phyllis Followed Me
Which eventually caused me to realize how much
I Need Phyllis

Phyllis (and our children) followed me through a series of “callings”, successes, and multiple rejections.

Knowing my family is willing to follow me has been the greatest gift of human love and God’s love a man could hope for.

A History of God’s leading through

I had always felt **Called by God** to study medicine

Graduated with Honors in Chemistry from University of Florida in 1972

Applied to medical college and was rejected for two years in a row.

Then Dr. Craig Lamp, our Sunday School teacher, called me and asked if I would consider becoming a teacher.

“Me, a teacher, no way!” He shared with me the principle of fasting to find God’s direction. That year I Taught chemistry, biology and physics at HCS and was a choir director at our church.

I realized God was calling me to preventative medicine not curative medicine. Rather than prescribing directions and/or medicine to cure a problem that possibly could be the result of an incorrect decision, I was being called to give students some truths that could help them avoid the consequences of making a wrong choice.

Then I received a call from one of my previous choir members asking me to come and teach sciences in Ocala Christian School and become a choir director at Central Baptist Church. While I was enjoying 2 years of success and a conducting a wonderful cantata, I began to understand rejection from my pastor. When I had Phyllis stay home because she was near exhaustion, the Pastor said she was expected to be in every service like his wife. He said if I had known this I would never had hired you.

Then, a call came from another previous church member to come to Greenville NC and become a principal at GCA and a choir director at the church.

Had a great year until I felt that I could not get in the pulpit to lead music knowing the differences that we were having, he said, “you’re fired.

Then a call came from a friend asking us to return to Gainesville and for me to be his construction show room manager. This is where I learned to install carpet, tile and vinyl flooring and hang wallpaper.

Then one morning a church friend knocked on our door and said he had a message from the Lord. I was in a T-shirt and cutoff jeans and he asked me to come out to the front yard, have us sit facing each other in Indian fashion, with our right hand in the air, and in prayer he said’ Lord I know Joe will be the principal at Heritage Christian School where I previously taught and our children were now enrolled. One month later I was the principal of HCS. After three years of success we were told the parsonage we lived in would be ours if we stayed.

Then Peter Lord came to my office and asked me to consider coming home to be the principal of PABS

Elmer Rund, my mentor, said, "Don't say no until you check it out." He had me turn to several scriptures: *Romans 15:23-24*, "*Having no more place in these parts I took my journey.*" *Mark 5:19* "*Go home to thy friends (our High School friends had children in PABS) and tell them all the great things that have happened to you.*"

We enjoyed much academic and sports success at PABS, Phyllis taught preschool and our children graduated from PABS and attended Titusville HS. A lot of fun times!

After 14 years as the principal of PABS, the elders felt it was time for a change, and ultimately I was fired. In a Sunday morning service, it was said "There is no know sin in Joe Ferguson.

Then a call from Hutch Roberts to work for Abundant Funds Ministry and travel across the lower half of Florida for 6yrs as a fundraising consultant to 50 Christian schools administrators.

Realizing I didn't like to travel, God used Phyllis' suggestion to call me to teach in the public school.

Both of us became certified, I taught High school math and Phyllis substituted at Bayside HS

After 8 years of teaching, received a call from Boyd and Crystal Wessinger to consider coming back to Titusville High School to teach.

Then after 10 years at THS, I have retired to be with my Sweetheart.

So, Here I Stand, after 51 years in education

God has been faithful, every step along our journey. He has given us more than we deserve. Our hope is that you can also see His faithfulness in your lives as well!

We want to Share Our Story to challenge you

1. To **Share Your Story**. Because **It's Your Story!**
2. To Know that God continually writes His Story through you. The Bible is our written history, and **History: His Story!**
3. To **Record His Provisions** in good times and bad.
The Bible is an example for each of us to write our story of His work through us.

We want you to have a Story of Hope!