Tara Daas (formerly Tara Parker) grew up on their family farm in Nash County, North Carolina. She attended the little church that her grandparents helped to found in the 1800s and was baptised at the age of 12 in a local creek. She had excellent models of faith; both of her parents were deacons at that church. She later attended Meredith College for 2 years and then transferred to East Carolina to pursue a career in education. She came to Emerald Isle in her early 20s after the family bought a real estate business, and here she has stayed. She worked as an elementary school teacher in Onslow County for 32 years before retiring. Tara attributes her approach to elementary education to her faith. It helped her discern how to handle difficult situations and manage relationships with colleagues.

Tara is one of the original members of Emerald Isle Baptist Church; she began attending in the Spring of '93. A friend of hers, Christian singer Sharon Oakley, was singing on Sundays, and that was her initial motivation for attending. At that time, EIBC was meeting at the Beach Club and averaged 25-30 members. Soon after that initial visit, she united with the church, and her daughter, Grayson, became the first baby in the congregation. She began to help out in the nursery. She enjoyed Pastor Curt's leadership. She remarks that he was easygoing, well-spoken, and well-educated. He offered narrative-style sermons with a blend of humor as well as references to books and scholarly resources.

Eventually, she was asked by Pastor Curt to be on the very first ministry council, and they met in Pastor Curt's book store. The church was later moved to the town hall which was a challenge in and of itself. Each Sunday, they had to set up and take down chairs, and they walked the children across the parking lot and down to the rec center for children's church. Eventually, Pastor Curt posed a question to the council: "Do you all want to consider buying some property?" They knew that if the church were to sustain itself, they must do it, and so they decided to buy the property and building in which we meet today.

Tara witnessed the continued growth of EIBC. She served on the ministry council several times, has continued to help in the nursery, and plugged in with the Coastal Carolina Center for Women's Ministries where she served as a peer-to-peer counselor. It was an impactful experience for her as she counseled a young single mom, able to share wisdom from her own experiences.

Tara's faith remains strong. Beyond regular church attendance, she regularly attends the Wednesday morning Community Bible Study and continues to help out in the nursery.

When asked about her thoughts concerning EIBC today, she says, “God has been good to this church.” Tara anticipates continued growth, and she would very much like to see a surge in our children and youth ministries. These days, she keeps her grandchildren, Parker and Brooks, three times a week. Some days she pushes Brooks in his stroller, looks to the sky, and feels “generationally blessed.” Tara remarked that she hopes to continue to be grateful and always try to be better. One of her greatest blessings in recent years has been meeting her husband, Reilly. They were married on December 23rd, 2020, when Reilly’s son who was in the army made a surprise visit from home. Pastor Freddie married them in front of the Christmas tree at EIBC with only their children in attendance, and it was perfect.

“EIBC has helped raise me and my daughter. It has given me a purpose and brought me closer to God.”

We thank you, Tara, for your faithful attendance and contributions over all these years, and look forward to a future alongside you!