

## GET UP AND GO!

We first worshipped at PMLC in 1994 while visiting our best friends from Zion Lutheran Church in Stockton, CA who had moved to Plano. This was an uncertain time for our family because the company I had worked for had been sold and there was no guarantee I'd continue to have a job. I was torn as to what I should do. Sometimes God speaks to you quietly and sometimes God speaks loudly. The title of the sermon at PMLC that Sunday was "Get Up and Go". I knew the Pastor was speaking directly to me. Within a year we moved to Plano and joined PMLC!

There were at least 20 PMLC members waiting at our new house when we drove-up to help us unload. This one gracious act touched our hearts. While I was welcomed into the choir, I wasn't sure how quickly Sallie and the kids would acclimate moving from Zion which was half the size of PMLC and was still growing. I didn't need to worry. PMLC members demonstrated to us then, and to all who now come through our doors, that we are open, generous, and accepting. This isn't a requirement for membership; it's a calling to live out God's Love. We are blessed to be a blessing!

We have always believed in giving back to God what he has given us, but I was not initially ready to tithe (Sallie has always tithed). I've always willingly given my time and talents, but with a young family I just wasn't ready to make that commitment. However, a common Biblical theme which resonated with me that was often preached during this time was "you can't outgive God". God has blessed me throughout my life, and it was time for me to give back more than just my time and talent. I became a tither. I expected it to be difficult and a financial burden. In truth, it was a blessing. You really can't outgive God!

As a result, Sallie and I also increased the amount of time and gifts we gave to the church by chaperoning many youth trips and sponsoring several Haitian women through the Haitian Timoun Foundation. None of the time that we have given back has felt like work. It has been a blessing beyond our expectations.

It's been 28 years since we joined PMLC. Our kids have grown and have families of their own. We see the lessons learned from our life with PMLC continue through them. They bless others not because they must, but because they are blessed.

The constant thread that has connected PMLC for our 28 years is that we are blessed and will be a blessing to others. It is our fondest hope that as young people come into our church, that they find the blessings we have received and that they too bless others.

Jeff Fortney