



FCC Membership Biography



Jo Nelson

When I was 8 years old my father divorced my mother. At that time my mother, my sister and I moved from Mora, Minnesota to St. Paul. My mother was a Japanese immigrant. She did not know anyone in St. Paul, did not have a job, did not have a car (could not drive) and had two grade school age daughters to care for. She was a war bride. During the ten plus years she lived in Mora (following World War II), she often encountered discrimination due to her race; however, there were some wonderful caring people as well. One Christian woman named Anita helped mom in many ways. Anita often shared the gospel with mom and I know she prayed for our family. Mom and Anita became life long friends.

When we moved to St. Paul, it was Anita who connected mom with Pastor Warren Magnuson of Central Baptist Church. The church helped furnish the beds for the one bedroom duplex where we lived, as well as many other household items. Pastor Magnuson helped my mother find a job at a prominent Minnesota company owned by a Christian man. The school we attended did not have a lunchroom. So, various church families took turns providing lunch for my sister and I. Teenage girls from one church family that lived a block away came every morning to wake us up and take us to their house for breakfast before school. Mom became a US citizen, learned how to drive, and saved enough money to purchase a car with the help of another church member. Most importantly, mom accepted Christ and was baptized. She stayed faithful to God and the church her entire life.

It was at Central Baptist Church where I learned about the Bible, God and how Jesus loves me. I believed everything I learned about Jesus. When I was nine years old, at Trout Lake Bible Camp in northern Minnesota, I asked Jesus into my life. When I returned home, I told mom that I had become a Christian. I gave my testimony before a small group of church members and was baptized by Pastor Magnuson. Only as an adult did I come to realize the impact of Central Baptist Church and how God was at work in my life from an early age.