

New Members Answered God's Call

My husband and I have been avid campers and hikers for years. For our honeymoon we even hiked across the Grand Canyon (3 days and over 20 miles!). Over the years we often traveled into the mountains of NC and Virginia from our home in Charlotte to enjoy the beauty and serenity the Blue Ridge Mountains offer. We discovered Carroll County on a trip to bike the New River Bike Trail. We were drawn back time and time again. I dreamt of one day actually living in the mountains, though Cary had his heart set on the beach!

One weekend we decided to drive the Parkway for a while before getting back on the interstate to head home. We were actually looking for the Lambsburg Rd (to take us back to the interstate) when we took a wrong turn and ended up in a little neighborhood. As we rounded a corner the view just suddenly opened up and we were awestruck. Among a short row of houses was one vacant lot. After that day I could not get that property out of my mind. We certainly weren't in the market to buy anything, and we were years away from retiring somewhere, but that didn't seem to stop how I felt about the place.

Over the next year anytime we were back in the area at either Doughton Park or the New River, we would drive by and look at that little piece of property, which by the way, was not even for sale! I kept telling myself it was ridiculous to get so attached to something like this, it just made no sense. Finally, one weekend when Cary was with our church youth group on a retreat, I decided to come to Carroll County by myself and by riding around to see many properties would convince myself that there were many special places, not just that one I couldn't seem to stop thinking about. I rode around all that day and did indeed see many lovely spots. I was feeling pretty confident that "one day" when we were in the financial position to be serious buyers that we would find a place just as good as the one I had grown attached to. But on my way back to the interstate I decided just to detour "one last time" to see that spot.

Well, I drove up, got out of my car and unexpectedly just burst into tears. I had such a strong feeling come over me that THIS was where I was supposed to be. THIS was my home. I said out loud to God - "okay God, if this is where you are calling us to be, you will have to make it happen. There are too many obstacles, too many things I see no way of overcoming to make this place our home. But I know through you ALL things are possible, so I'm leaving this in your hands. Either make it happen or please take away the feelings I'm having about this place."

Well folks, all I can say is, watch what can happen when you get out of God's way and turn your hopes, dreams, wishes or problems over to Him. Through a series of amazing events, property that was not even for sale, property we had no money to buy, was ours in less than a year! We were so excited that again "one day" we could live our dream of being in such a special place.

That dream seemed to be dashed in [June 2008](#) when Cary very suddenly lost his job. He was unemployed for a solid year, other than the odd jobs he picked up to help keep us going. After a year, we sold our home in Charlotte and were prepared to go wherever a new job would lead us. It was a sad, scary time in many ways, but our faith in God's bigger picture never wavered.

All I can say is... God again stunned us with His goodness and grace. Through another series of events that can only be attributed to Him, we were blessed to actually begin building our little house in spring 2010! We comforted ourselves by saying, even if we can't live in it all the time because we have to live elsewhere for a job, we will have it as our "home base" and come to it for vacations, holidays and special events until we retire (in about 15 more years!). But God had other plans :)

Just as our home was nearing completion, Cary was offered a new job, one he hadn't even applied for. What a happy surprise it was to learn on his first day at the job that the company would allow him to work from home! We could actually live in our new house! We know without a doubt that God himself worked it all out.

Once we knew we would live here fulltime our top priority was finding a church home. We spent the summer and fall visiting many churches throughout Carroll County. All were special in one way or another. All made us feel welcome. Still, none felt like "home" or the place we were being called to, until the day we attended Hillsville United Methodist for the first time. On that day, we had barely been seated, and Pastor Ty hadn't even preached the first word, but I just knew this was it :) Cary and I looked at each other and said this place feels like family. We visited a few more times, just to be sure of what God might be calling us to do. We have concluded that we are indeed very blessed to have been led to the right home(s), both physically and spiritually.

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