



CHS Bio

Anita White & Dale Thorne

1955



After graduation from CHS and getting engaged (we bought Anita's rings using our graduation gift certificates from Peacock's Jewelers) Anita stayed at home and entered Tulsa University on a band scholarship, while Dale moved to Shawnee and entered Oklahoma Baptist University. Finding that this long distance relationship had much to be desired, we married on August 3, 1957, to cut the cost of travel and separate housing.

We both graduated from OBU in 1960 with a BS Degree in Secondary Education, Anita in Business Education and Dale in Social Studies. After graduation we accepted an offer to serve as volunteer teachers and house parents for an orphanage near Tel Aviv, Israel. This international experience set the course of our lives for the next 35 years. We returned home with a two-month old son, John, and a new worldview.

In the fall of 1961, Dale enrolled in the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, TX, in pursuit of a Masters in Divinity Degree. Shortly after enrollment he became pastor of the Seventh Street Baptist Church in Wewoka, Oklahoma. The family moved to Wewoka and Dale commuted weekly to Ft. Worth with other pastors. After Dale received his M. Div. degree in the summer of 1964, they were appointed as missionaries to the Middle East in April of 1965.

Our first assignment was in Netanya, Israel, where we did Hebrew language study for 9 months. We then moved to Nazareth, Israel, where Dale became Director of the Nazareth Baptist School, a Christian day school for Arab children. Our daughter, Karen, was born shortly after our move and getting settled into the new house that we would call home for 17 years. Anita led study groups for girls and women while serving as a full-time hostess in our home. We were both also active in teaching and leading in the local Arabic church.

John & Karen studied in the Arabic school and then in a multi-grade classroom, before completing their high school grades in the American International School near Tel Aviv. They both went on to graduate from The University of Kentucky, and marry and settle in Lexington. They each have three children. John is the Chief Design Architect with a major design/build construction company and Karen is Director of Advancement for the College of Health Science at UK.

In 1983 we moved to Haifa, Israel, where we joined with a group of Arab friends in starting a new Arab-language church. We also had the privilege of hosting a college student group in our home. We had anticipated that we would live in Haifa for a lengthy period as we had in Nazareth, but it was not to be. In 1984 we were asked to move to the island of Cyprus where we would become Director of Baptist Ministries in the Middle East & North Africa.

From 1984 until 1997 from our base in Cyprus we traveled across the area from Morocco in the West to Kuwait in the East and from Turkey in the North to Yemen in the South. Throughout our years in Israel and Cyprus we were privileged to work with wonderful people from literally across the world. We had more than our share of wars and rumors of war, but overall, we count ourselves extremely privileged for having the opportunity to live in this exciting part of our world.

In 1997 we returned to the States for "early retirement". We moved into the home that we had built with our own hands in a retreat center in Kentucky in 1975. This change of pace and the opportunity to work with our hands was a special gift. But retirement was short lived. In 1999, we were asked to travel to Cincinnati to assist in the leadership of a young congregation, SonRise Community Church. We fell in love with Cincinnati, bought a house in an idyllic village and became pastor of the church. The church has grown in size and in the development of new, younger leadership. In 2004, a young pastor took over the leadership and Dale became an associate. This year we moved to Milford, another small town in the area, as we continue with the church in a number of unique ministries.

See ya at the 50th!

Anita White (right)
Queen's Attendant

