

## **“Member Profile”**

***This Week’s Feature : Mary Lasky***  
**(Pictured with her mom Marie Witt)**



Mary was born in Brookpark, Ohio and grew up on Cedar Point Road between the MetroPark and NASA. The family included one younger brother and two older sisters. She attended Berea Public Schools, then Ohio State (Agricultural Technical Institute), University of Wyoming, and West Virginia University. She started with an Associates Degree in Laboratory Science and then completed a BS in Chemistry and did graduate work towards a Masters in Quality Engineering.

She met her future husband, Steve, at the University of Wyoming. He was a PhD candidate and worked in the lab next to her. It was destiny that a person from Chicago meets a person from Cleveland in a science building in Laramie, Wyoming! They both moved to Wyoming for the very low college tuition. Mary was priced out of Ohio State and Steve was priced out of Western Illinois.

Mary began her professional career as a cancer researcher for a non-profit in Denver. Later, she took positions as an environmental chemist, working for large engineering firms analyzing soil and water samples for various

pollutants. After ten years or so she started her own environmental consulting business designing sampling and analysis plans and reviewing data to formulate cleanup procedures. Mary took a few years off to relocate and be a full-time mom and then worked as a quality assurance specialist for a biotech company her husband started with three other partners. Ames, Iowa became their new home. They sold the company after 20 years and returned to NE Ohio.

They have raised a family that includes son AJ who is 25, and son Danny age 23. Both are working and pursuing graduate degrees and live out of state. After moving back to the area five years ago, they began looking for an ELCA Lutheran Church that focused on outreach and helping the underprivileged. Their search ended after two years when they found Prince of Peace online during COVID and became members as soon as the orientation classes were offered this past spring!

Mary has added her name to the list of volunteers available to assist with the work at Scranton School and is also available to help church families navigate higher education plans and financial aid applications, using her training as a certified financial aid preparer. She enjoys travel, vegetable gardening, cooking, learning about other cultures and anything outdoors, especially hiking. Her bucket list includes visiting every National Park (she is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way there) and has already visited every continent. Mary was fortunate to live and work in Yellowstone in her 20's. She is a mentor for 7th and 8th grade students at the Cleveland Municipal School District through the True2U program and is active with Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a non-profit providing internships, college visits and job training. Her Boys and Girls Club involvement works toward Violence prevention measures and youth enrichment.

You will see Mary attending with her mom, Marie Witt. Her husband, Steve, is very supportive and generous but is still committed to the Catholic Faith. He has a PhD in Analytical Chemistry and his company developed and manufactured lab instrumentation. Their first instrument was used for microbial detection and had all kinds of applications from beachwater to

personal care products to food products to meat. Their second instrument line was for RNA and DNA analysis, a technique many people became familiar with when various COVID strains were analyzed for DNA structure and vaccines were developed. He is now active in philanthropy and education and likes to share his story about a kid from the South Side of Chicago who attended Purdue, flunked out, became a truck driver, and eventually became a PhD chemist and successful entrepreneur.

Mary attends the 11 am service. Her hard work and following her dreams have now allowed her to contribute to many important missions. God has been her guide along the way. Please offer a warm greeting to Mary and Marie!

*By Tom Robinholt : Profile Reporter*