



Married in 1970 and ordained to full-time ministry shortly thereafter, Bill and Joyce Parks have dedicated their lives to fulfilling the Great Commission of going into all the world and sharing the gospel. Bible and ministry-major graduates, they have served as Bible institute teachers, in youth ministry, in a senior pastorate, and for the past 25 years as itinerant evangelists with a focus on short-term missions. Always, the major thrust of their ministry has been outreach evangelism.

Born and raised in Baltimore, as a teenager, Bill ran the streets and walked the wild side until he met with tragedy and a powerful personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Overnight it seemed, the burning intensity of his life was to know God and to point the way to others. Joyce grew up nearby, but a world away, in the sheltered community of Lancaster, PA. As a teenager, she too experienced the life-changing work of the Holy Spirit, and the calling of God brought the two together as they studied and prepared for life-long ministry.

In the early 1970s, in association with the Board of Education of the State of Maine, Bill and Joyce led a team that traveled throughout the state presenting public school assemblies that addressed the 'drug abuse epidemic,' and introduced a personal relationship with Christ as the answer. Directing student ministries on the staff of Faith School of Theology, they also led student ministry teams into churches, nursing homes, prisons, coffeehouses and street outreaches. In 1973, when invited to join the staff of the faith-based drug recovery ministry of Teen Challenge of Washington, D.C., the Parks moved to the inner city of the nation's capitol to serve as Resident Supervisors/Assistant Director of the program.

The next adventure was serving as youth ministry and evangelism leaders on a church staff near Houston, Texas, followed by nearly ten years as senior pastors in southwestern Pennsylvania. In 1987, responding to invitations to minister in other churches besides their own, Bill and Joyce felt God was leading them to launch into a ministry as itinerant evangelists. Initially traveling with their two sons, they ministered as a family team in churches throughout the United States and Canada.

In 1990, after praying for a wider evangelistic outreach beyond the four walls of the church, an unexpected door of ministry opened into Mexico. Taking a step of faith, and again responding to the leading of the Lord, they invited others to accompany them on short-term mission outreaches into the border squatter camps of Mexico. In the ensuing years, the response of team members wanting to go, and the response of the Mexican people to the Gospel was so great they returned again and again. About 5,000 team members traveled with the Parks into Mexico and Cuba, and to many other countries throughout Central and South America, and thousands responded to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

In 2008, church leaders in the Baltimore region came to a consensus to support the restoration of the ministry of Teen Challenge, which had been closed for nearly five years in Baltimore City, and Bill and Joyce were asked to lead the ministry. In 2009, a former church building was renovated and a new center opened at 101 North Potomac Street, through the labor and financial support of many individuals, churches and businesses. From a humble beginning of no staff or students, the new Teen Challenge of Baltimore has grown to three full-time staff, three part-time staff, many volunteers, usually a full house of up to eleven students, and there is generally a waiting list to get in. Students are regularly completing the four-month induction phase of the Baltimore program and are going on to Phase 2 of the advanced discipleship training in Pennsylvania. The Board of Directors and the leadership of Teen Challenge of Baltimore are currently looking for property to expand the ministry training facilities. They are praying and believing God to provide.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for Me? Then said I, "Here am I, LORD, send me!"

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