

Next Steps Day 1: Participants Bio

Donnell was born in Los Angeles. He's 32. During his childhood, he spent a lot of time involved in athletic activities. He met Jesus at a young age and was baptized in his youth. He was led to MX when he was walking past the building and noticed it was a place of worship. He made a decision to visit MX shortly thereafter.

David Upton was born in South Dakota and was raised on a farm by his grandmother and great grandmother. His grandmother didn't attend church. She was a believer, and he learned about Christianity from her.

Farming wasn't his passion, so he joined the Navy. He was discharged from the Navy in 1970. After being discharged he worked various jobs. He connected with his father who lived in StL, and he decided to move with his father. He didn't have a car, so he rode his bike from South Dakota to StL. It took 10 days to make the trip to StL. His first job in StL was as a security officer with Wells Fargo.

He met his future wife in StL but lost connection with her until 2002. Shortly after reconnecting, they got married. David was baptized in 2013. His wife unfortunately passed sometime around 2021/22.

Sandra Lumpkins grew up in the Ville neighborhood in StL. Her and 2 brothers were raised by a single mother. She is a proud graduate of Sumner high school. At the age of 8 years old, she decided to walk to the neighborhood Baptist church and place membership. She was baptized at 12 years old. She has two sons from her first marriage. One of her sons recently retired from the military. She has 8 grandchildren. Her current husband has a chronic illness. She retired from a career as a Registered Nurse to start training for a Sign Language Interpreter. She recently completed a Grief Share session after the death of her 96 year old mother. She came to MX during Church in the Park in 2024.

Josie Smith is the daughter of Velma Buie. She is one of 11 children. She had a twin brother who was killed in a fatal car accident in the spring of 2024. She lost her son Corey in 2019. She has two remaining children, Chris and Carmen. She left StL after divorcing her husband. After leaving StL she moved to a number of different cities. She moved back to StL after her 90-year-old mother had a stroke.

She has five grandchildren. Two have attended MX Children Worship. When one of her grandchildren could not attend church one Sunday, she asked grandma Josie to make a contribution into the children's treasure chest on her behalf.