

April 27, 2008

Thanks, Parkview.

It's been an amazing 7 years and 7 months. When Maggie and I drove away from our home in Asheville, North Carolina, on that muggy August morning, we had no idea what we were getting into. We may have been a bit nervous as we drove north, out of the Appalachian Mountains and into the midwestern cornfields. OK, we were a lot nervous.

I vividly remember walking into the Parkview building a week after we arrived. Ray wasn't preaching that Sunday, so we figured we should come back the next week to make sure he was all right. I'm glad we did. Ray was more than "all right," and before we knew what had happened we were teaching a group of kids in the basement every Sunday.

What was supposed to be a one-year graduate school layover on the way to somewhere else turned into ... home. How did that happen? I'll tell you how it happened. We got involved with you. Pretty soon we were having lunch at Wendy's with our Children's Ministry friends after Sunday services. Our small group talked and prayed and watched films and cooked some amazing meals together.

Somewhere along the way something shifted in me. I moved from, "No WAY will I work at a church" to "This is what I want to give my life to." How did that happen? At Parkview I caught my first glimpse of what church could be. A people who are formed by the Scriptures and their love for God. A people who have begun to represent the diversity of our communities. A people who would never tell a young pastor, "We don't do things that way."

Thanks.

It's strange to say goodbye to folks who have become our family. I'm thankful we're only moving to Chicago. I hope you'll come visit. We'll make the drive to the 'burbs occasionally to check in on the family.

With our love and appreciation,
David and Maggie Swanson



PS Feel free to keep up with our ongoing adventures in the city at <http://davidswanson.wordpress.com>.

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