

Congregational Profiles

Throughout 2006 we will get to know each other better as members of New Song Community Church as we profile various members of our congregation in our Sunday morning bulletin. This week's subject is Mark Lange.

Mark Lange

Sometime around 1973 Mark Lange read an article by John Perkins in Campus Life Magazine in which Dr. Perkins shared how he had been beaten nearly to death and jailed by white Mississippi policemen who saw him as an agitator. Although suffering such grave injustice, Perkins forgave the men rather than hating them; Mark said "That broke my heart, and I cried and promised God that if I could ever do anything to further justice as John Perkins had, I would do so." A little more than 30 years later, Mark moved into Sandtown along with his wife Betty "out of repentance, knowing that loving my neighbor meant reaching across the lines of race and class."

Born in the Brooklyn community of Baltimore in 1955, Mark's family moved to Woodlawn when he was seven. He graduated from Woodlawn Senior High School in 1973 and in subsequent years volunteered in the ministry of Youth for Christ, worked as a janitor, worked at Acme Markets where he met his wife Betty in 1976, and ran numerous parking operations for Edison Parking and then Broadway Services at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Today he runs his own information technology business and provides computer services. He plans on living in Sandtown the rest of his life, "impacting and being impacted by the community" and perhaps being involved in economic development. The first time he ever attended New Song, "I felt like I'd come home." He and Betty, now married for nearly 29 years, separated for awhile in 2001; following a powerful reconciliation, they ended up moving to Sandtown and both have become members of New Song.

Mark's desire in life is to "be accepted into the kingdom of God" and to see at least one person come to know Christ because of his influence. His favorite verse is Micah 6:8 - "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."

Mark loves "films that make me think and feel," music "that's art, that transcends," reading (especially theology and philosophy), hiking and backpacking, conversation "that's deep and meaningful and makes me think and challenges me," and "the hustle and stress of city life; it's invigorating!" He enjoys sharing the household chores (he was vacuuming when I called). He also likes crab cakes, shrimp, Caesar salad, and "I love Sonia's macaroni and cheese!" He does not like Brussels sprouts, shoddy work/quick fixes, pop culture, the "American dream" and classism and racism.

All of this and more can be found on Mark's personal website, <http://www.mslange.net>, where you will learn for example that Mark and Betty once owned a horse named Peaches...

January 22, 2006