

Primeline

Spring 2025

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

PLUS
DEBORAH &
DON TUCKER:
LOVE THE PEOPLE

—
DON & JAN
JACQUES

*God Put Us
Together*

AGWM
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Want to Live Longer?

A recent study published in the *Journals of Gerontology* from the University of Texas states that senior adults with active social lives live longer. One of the authors of the study said, “Adults often grow less physically active and more sedentary as they age, and these behaviors pose a risk factor for disease and death. It’s difficult to convince some seniors to go to the gym or commit to work out regularly, but what about simply reaching out to acquaintances, attending an organized group event at church, or engaging the cashier at the store or coffee shop?”

Another study suggests that “seniors who interact with friends and family regularly live longer with fewer chronic illnesses. This doesn’t only apply to face-to-face interactions. Even digital communication has been found to have benefits for longevity if it facilitates genuine connection and support. Gardening, housework, and walking to neighbors’ houses help seniors to stay fit and vital, with less dementia.”

Seniors, resist the temptation to sit in front of the TV or spend hours on your iPads or phones. Get out of the house if you can, engage others in conversation, and allow God’s Spirit to direct you, empower you, and use

you during your senior years. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill you and model that Spirit-filled life by staying active among His people.

I love Proverbs 11:25 (NIV) that says, “whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”

We can be renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16); let’s stay as active as possible and let God use us.

The articles in *Primeline* illustrate how people in their senior years or at least approaching them can be used of God in powerful ways to touch people for His kingdom. As you read these articles, ask God to use you, wherever you may be.

We are grateful that more than 800 senior adults attended our national Senior Adult Conference in Branson, Mo. in September of last year. Everyone went away strengthened in their faith because God’s Spirit moved powerfully among us.

Save the Date: Our next national AG Senior Adult Conference will be September 21-23, 2026. More information will be available in the fall edition of *Primeline*.

BOB COOK
Senior Adult Ministries director



When Jan's parents, Hollis and Rachel Lawson, retired and moved from Southern California to Missouri, Jan moved with them. The church they attended had an active missionary program. Although she knew it was God's will to move, she thought, *I'll move back there and I'll lose touch with missionaries.*

When asked about accepting Christ as Savior, Jan laughs. "Before I came out of the hospital, my grandmother made sure I gave my heart to Jesus. She was Pentecostal. I am third-generation Pentecostal. I don't ever remember not being saved."

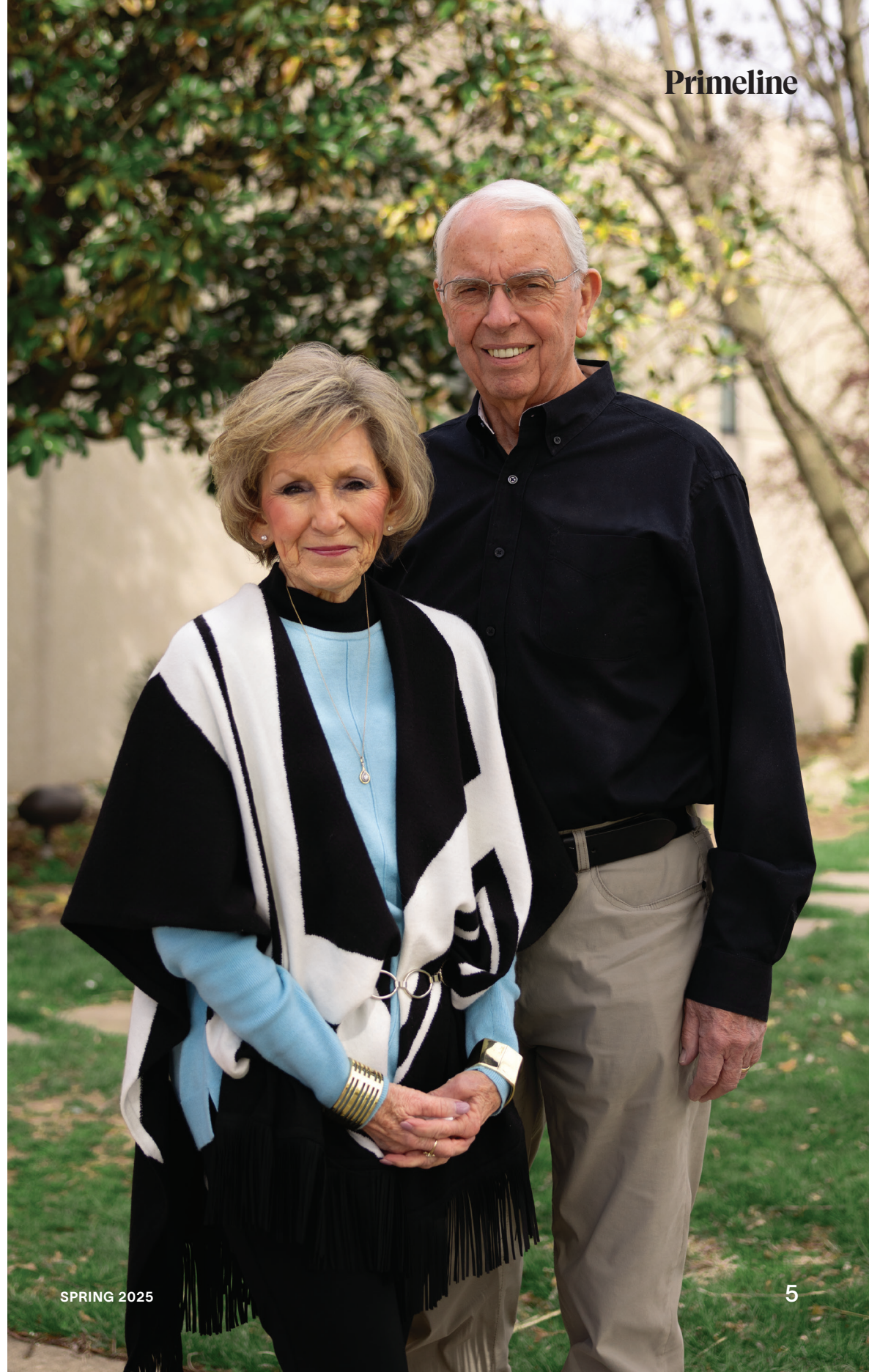
Don was raised in Monet, Missouri. His parents and grandparents were members of the Methodist Church. They came into Pentecost in 1950 and helped establish the Monet Assembly of God. His dad was on the board until a year or two before he died in 1987.

Don says, "I got saved several times — every time an evangelist came." After high school he attended college for a year and a half, and then dropped out. "I just wasn't getting along in school. I also got away from the Lord and moved to Wichita to work at Beach Aircraft."

God Put Us Together

BY

Richard L. Schoonover



Primeline

In 1968, a lady from his home church wrote and told him he needed to come home. There was a new family, and they had a daughter he needed to meet. “The next weekend I came home, went to church with my folks, and met Jan.” Don and Jan began to correspond, and Don would come home some weekends.

Don soon moved back to Monett so he could spend more time with Jan. “I knew we were going to get married. When we first talked about marriage, which was right away, I told Jan we would have to wait to set a date after I get things squared up with the Lord.”

One Wednesday night, after coming home from work, Don went to his bedroom. “After spending three and a half hours with the Lord we had it settled. The next day at lunch, I said, ‘Okay, let’s set a date. I’m ready.’”

Don and Jan got married in November 1968 and moved to Springfield. They started attending a local AG church. Within six months Don became Christ Ambassadors (AG youth ministry) president. They had some young couples helping them. He and Jan challenged the CAs to raise money for Speed the Light, the

Missions and missionaries were part of Don and Jan’s DNA. Don remembers that “many times his home church didn’t have the money to pay its missionary pledges and his dad paid them.”

AG ministry to purchase vehicles and other equipment for missionaries. One year the teens raised enough money to buy a car for a missionary. In fact, a revival started in the CA group because of their heart for missions. Don believes that every generation needs their Pentecost.

Missions and missionaries were part of Don and Jan’s DNA. Don remembers that “many times his home church didn’t have the money to pay its missionary pledges and his dad paid them.” Jan remembers the night her dad was at the altar with Sam Cochran and some other men way past 10 p.m. “Sam shared his vision for what would become Light for the Lost, an AG ministry to purchase literature for missionaries. My dad was one of the founding members who supported that vision.”

In 1973, Don started in the insurance business. Jan was pregnant with their second baby, Janeé. He told the pastor they needed to resign from leading the CAs. He could not keep up with his business, a growing family, and his involvement in CAs.

Jan’s parents attended the Light for the Lost convention in early 1973. That summer they told Don and Jan what was happening with LFTL. Don immediately wanted to become a LFTL councilman. Rachel was concerned about his ability to pay the \$15 a month dues with two kids. Jan says, “I guess I was concerned too, actually.” But Don did sign up. Don attended the 1974



Light for the Lost (LFTL) smokers in southern Missouri

LFTL national convention held in Springfield, Mo.

Hollis spoke in any church that would invite him to explain LFTL. Don began traveling with Hollis. In 1977 Don, and Harold Walls, the Assemblies of God national LFTL director, attended the Southern California LFTL tour. Don travelled with their cook team. They were cooking steak and raising money for LFTL.

Don came back and built a smoker in a pickup bed trailer and started cooking steaks. He travelled to sectional fellowship meetings, cooking steaks, and representing LFTL. As the events began to grow, other men joined his team. Today there are four smokers and cook teams in the district.

Don left the insurance business and was working as a sales representative. He and Jan had purchased a house in Strafford, Mo. One day a man knocked on their door. He wanted to buy their house. He heard it might be for sale.

Don said, “We haven’t talked about

selling. I don’t think so.”

Two months later this man returned. He had looked at other houses and Don’s was the only one that would meet his needs. Would they think about selling? Don said he and Jan would talk about it.

Don had a friend who had been encouraging him

to get into real estate. Don had been hesitant to do this. By selling their house, he and Jan thought this was a chance to get into real estate. They could live off the money they made on the sale of their house while Don got established in real estate. In 1976 they sold their house, moved into a duplex, and Don earned his real estate and broker’s license.

Don began working for his friend, but eventually felt he needed to leave the company. Some friends told him, “You need to start a company, because we need a company with Christian values. That’s how you operate.”

Don says, “I prayed about it, and it just seemed like it’s either the stupidest thing I could have done or the best. But it seemed like that was the way to go.” As they developed their business, Jan began working in real estate as well.

Throughout the years Don and Jan have weathered the ups and downs in the economy and the real estate market. But one thing has set Jacques Realty apart from other realtors — their

Will they inherit your generosity?



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Legacy of Faith

AGWM

Larry Hall
Legacy Initiative Coordinator
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heart for missions and missionaries. Early on, a missionary approached and asked if Don would manage his house when he went overseas, so Don and Jan began to manage rental properties plus sales. This began a ministry that continues. Don and Jan currently manage around 150 missionary rental homes. They have a world map on



their office wall with pins that show the location of every missionary they have helped. Some Assemblies of God national leaders from various parts of the world have come to Springfield to further their education. Don has been able to help them find housing.

Having his own company gave Don the flexibility to be more involved in LFTL. Don remarks, “Real estate supports our missions and our Light for the Lost habit. Our real estate business kept us involved in missions. Many of Jan’s sales are working with missionaries.”

Don served as the national LFTL president for 12 years on three different terms and served on the board in other positions. Don also became the Southern Missouri District of the Assemblies of God Men’s Ministries director. Under his leadership the

district began holding their annual men’s retreat.

Don and Jan’s three children have been an integral part of their real estate ministry, and LFTL. Don says, “We just lived our life and raised our kids doing it, and they all grew up with Light for the Lost being a big part of their lives.” Michael is involved in the sales side of their company. Their daughter, Janeé, is director of property management. After 16 years working for the company as maintenance director, Jason felt God’s call and was appointed the first 360Man Missionary serving the Southern Missouri Ministry Network of the Assemblies of God.

Don and Jan are active in Central AG. Don was on the board for two six-year terms. Jan taught fourth grade for several years. They currently serve on the greeting team and welcome those coming to Central.

Don remarks, “At our age we can look back and say that God just put us together. Without any doubt in our minds, we see that God guided everything we did. It’s been a great life with God giving us the business of helping missionaries. There was no big master plan in place. We just served God.”

When reflecting on her concern that she would lose touch with missionaries, Jan responds, “What was I thinking. What a joy we’ve had here, having missionaries in our home and in our churches.”

RICHARD L. SCHOONOVER
AGWM Communications



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AG
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

LOVE THE PEOPLE

BY
Joy Myers

“Just go and love the Africans.” Sitting around their apartment table in Albertville, France, Midwesterners Don and Deborah Tucker heard this piece of advice from a seasoned missionary. After language training in France, the Tuckers and their two young boys left for northern Burkina Faso, following God’s call into the unknown.

Deborah grew up in Seneca, Mo., a town of 1,900 people. During a church revival, she felt a heavy sense that God was calling her to Africa. “It wasn’t an audible voice,” Deborah explains. “When you know, you know.” She was 13 years old, and that call never left her.

Don, however, was not inclined toward Africa. Don grew up in a Christian family and was exposed to missionary culture from a young age. He assumed the Lord would call him to preach, but while seeking God in an empty church, he experienced the same quiet call to Africa that Deborah had. He initially resisted this call.

Don shares, “I just prayed, ‘God, if you have any intention for me to ever be in Africa, take me from where I am in my mind and in my heart today and completely transform the way I think and feel about Africa, and I’ll do what you ask me to do.’”

Don and Deborah met at Southwestern University (now Nelson University) and began dating. They graduated, married, and began pastoring a church in Cleveland, Mississippi. One evening, while driving home through dark cotton fields, Don felt overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit. He again felt the call to Africa. With tears on his face, he prayed, “God, if you want me in Africa, I’ll go to Africa.” He explains, “That was the end of it. There was never a question again.”

In 1976, after seven years pastoring in the U.S., the Tuckers left for Africa.

The Tuckers were assigned to direct famine relief and development in



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northern Burkina Faso. Unlike other parts of Africa known for safaris or tourist sights, north Burkina Faso was mostly desert. They describe their work there as “typical missionary endeavors, with an occasional government overthrow thrown in.”

African culture took some adjustment. The pure African worship style, which could appear “clanky, loud, and boisterous,” was initially difficult to enter into and embrace. However, the country’s rich culture and wonderful people impacted them.

Don and Deborah both agree: “The asset that attracted us most and does still to this day was the incredible people — incredible people that we loved with all of our hearts.”

While Don’s work focused on famine relief, Deborah oversaw the women and children ministries. She led Sunday school classes under trees, sometimes during dust storms, and often used a flannel graph. Additionally, she educated their two sons — both of whom currently have doctoral degrees. Throughout their time in Africa, both Don and Deborah’s work highlighted their tremendous love for the people around them.

Africa bought into that one hundred percent and began to experience exponential growth that has not stopped.

Something that quickly struck the Tuckers was how the people expected God’s power. Many people believed that, “If God doesn’t do this, it’s not going to be done.” This reliance on God facilitated many physical healings and miracles, one of which involved the Tuckers’ own family.

One of the Tuckers’ sons, Brad, fell deathly ill with malaria. On learning this, a pastor simply laid hands on him and uttered a short prayer. A few hours later, Brad was perfectly healthy with no signs of sickness.

In the late 1980s, the Tuckers began to hear of the “Decade of Harvest,” and tremendous excitement grew in the African Church. Don explains, “That was a 10-year period — 1990 to 2000 — designed to usher in the new millennium with the greatest evangelism we had ever seen through the Assemblies of God. Africa bought into that one hundred percent and began to experience exponential growth that has not stopped.”

To facilitate this new phase of growth and launch Decade of Harvest activities, in 1989 AGWM Africa asked the Tuckers to move to Springfield, Missouri. In collaboration with the Africa leadership team, they led

and worked with Africa Tabernacle Evangelism, Harvest Intercessors, Africa Literature Assistance, and more. They also founded and oversaw Africa’s Children, which was the second largest Assemblies of God childcare ministry after Latin American ChildCare.

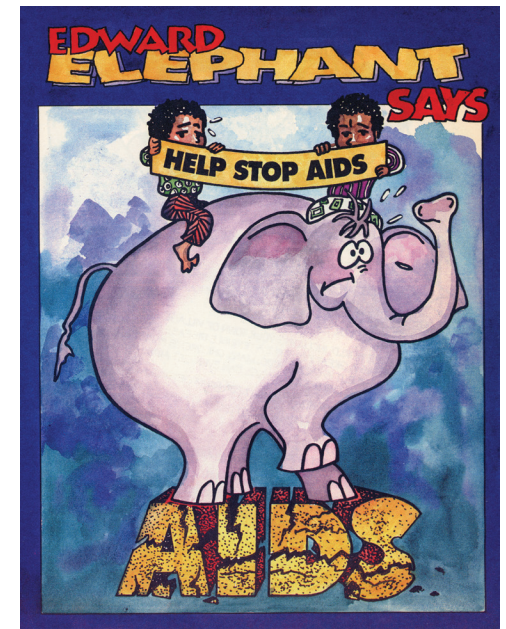
In the 1980s, the worldwide AIDS/HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) pandemic began. This virus impacted Africa extremely hard. In response, the Tuckers developed a comic book to teach “prevention, caution, and morals.” *Edward the Elephant*, a book with a cartoon elephant, taught God’s Word hand-in-hand with practical prevention. More than 16 million copies in 13 languages were printed. Popularity rose outside of Africa, and *Edward* was adapted to fit different countries. Millions of people around the world heard the gospel and practical help through this booklet.

Thinking back, Don shares, “It’s amazing what God can do on your journey. From saying, ‘Missionary? Not me,’ to ‘Lord, if that’s what You’re asking for, that’s what I’ll do.’ That simple act of surrender opens so many doors. I was not qualified as an artist, or qualified as a children’s educator, or qualified to do much other than preach, but whatever the Lord gave us to do, Deborah and I decided we’d give it a try. It’s amazing how the Lord takes those things and blesses them.”

After almost four decades of faithful service as AGWM workers, the Tuckers officially retired in 2014. However, they did not stop working. Don began serving as senior adults pastor and missions pastor at Central Assembly of God in Springfield, Missouri.

Now, fully retired, the Tuckers focus on ministering to family and discipling young missions workers. They tell new global workers to be authentic and love people you serve.

“The African can read straight through that which is not authentic.



Edward the Elephant comic book

They can see to your core. They have extreme insight,” explains Don. “They have said to us, ‘It’s been amazing how some missionaries could love Africa so much without loving Africans.’”

Throughout their missions careers, the Tuckers followed God’s call wholeheartedly. Their faithfulness to God’s plan allowed them to successfully share the gospel and make a lasting global impact, even when they didn’t feel fully prepared.

At the core of their ministry lies their deep love for the people of Africa. “If you don’t love the people,” asks Deborah, “how are you going to ever reach them for Jesus?” It is this God-given love that allowed the Tuckers to make an immense difference in the people around them and exponentially expand the kingdom of God.

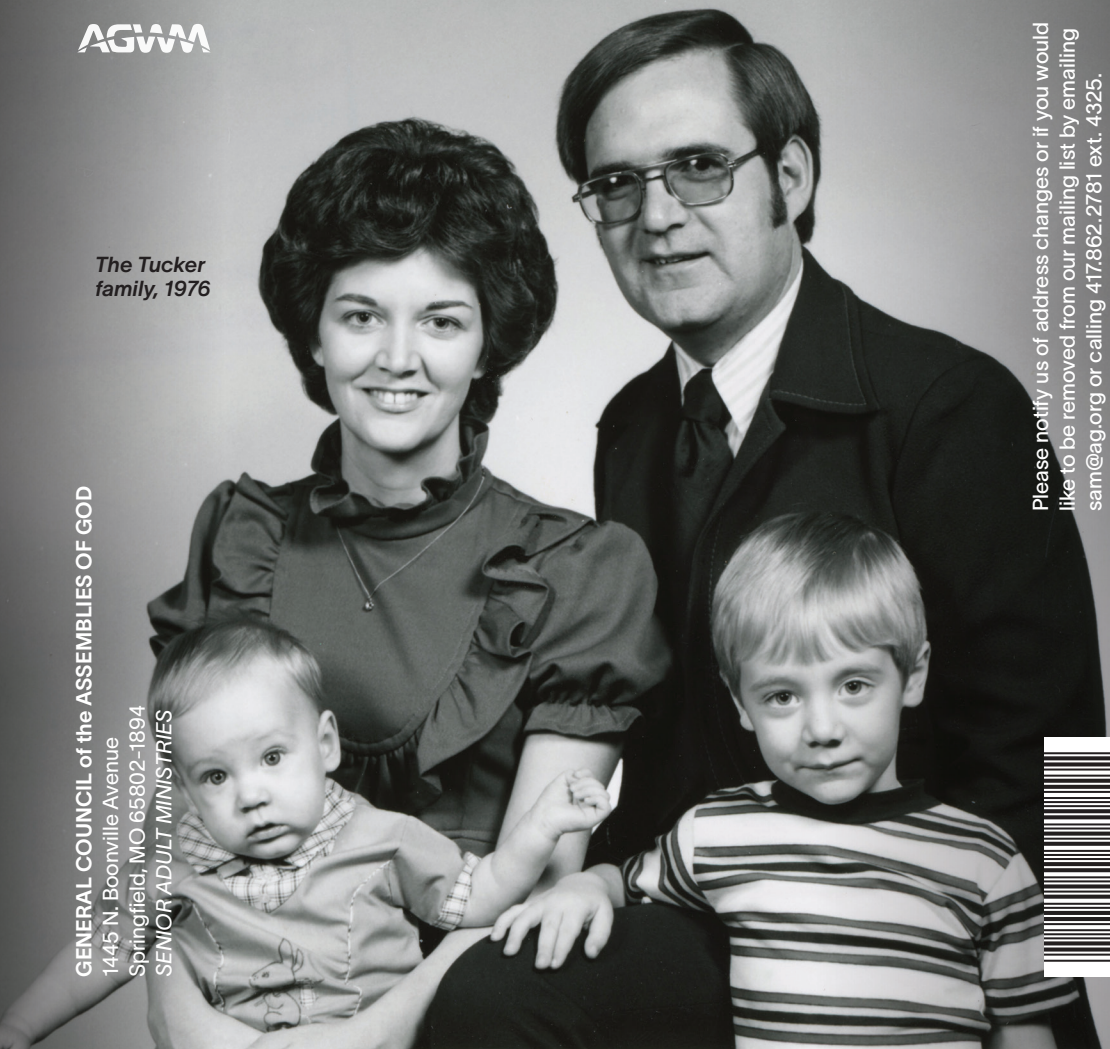
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*The Tucker
family, 1976*

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