

Meet the Member

Shawn and Tonya Robinson

Shawn grew up in Augusta, GA and Tonya in Pensacola, FL, but it wasn't until after their military service that they met. Shawn spent eight years in the Army as a military satellite communications specialist having been stationed in Fort Bragg, Fort Gordon and in Korea. Tonya spent 10 years in the Air Force as an Aerospace Medicine Technician and EMT. Shawn and Tonya met at a New Year's Eve party in the Atlanta area in 1998 and found out they were both living in the Fayetteville area. The relationship continued to grow, and they were married in December of 2000. They moved to the Charlotte area that same year after Tonya finished her college degree from Campbell University and left the military.



Shawn has spent the last 29 years in information technology. From 2000 to 2013 he worked for Windstream communication as a computer engineer. He worked for Bank of America as a systems resiliency engineer before moving over to his present position as the cybersecurity program manager at Brighthouse Financial. For the past 20 years, Tonya has worked for Premier Inc, a health care improvement company on the supply chain side of the business. Covid has made her job challenging, but she is grateful to be able to work from home these days, especially over the last few Covid years.

Both Shawn and Tonya grew up in the church, but like many stories, Shawn didn't come to understand his faith until after he and Tonya were married and then separated because of marital issues. During that time, Shawn continued to attend church and the Lord started to work on his heart. There was a domino effect. Through the separation, he learned about the considerable pride that he had. That led to a personal salvation experience that unleashed the Holy Spirit to work on reconciliation in their marriage. Shawn became an active teacher and preacher of the Bible and was ordained as a minister in his local congregation in 2010.

Tonya saw the change in Shawn, but it took a little more time for her to come to grips with his spiritual renewal. She wanted to know that it was real and when she saw it lived out in his life, it brought her into a right relationship with God. They have been married for 21 years now and their marriage is strong as the Lord has given them new life together through Christ.

Last year the Lord brought Kensley, their 10-year-old nephew, into their lives. He is a permanent member of the family and through their parenting and love, is thriving in school especially in math and hopes to play soccer on a neighborhood team soon. Their 8-year-old niece Skye is also an established part time member of their household. Skye loves dancing and listening to music.

Shawn loves to read non-fiction whether it be on technology, church history or leadership. He likes to run but has been sidelined by plantar fasciitis. Tonya enjoys listening to fictional audio books. She loves arts and crafts and has acquired a skill in making decorative pillows. They love the beach and frequently travel to Hilton Head or Destin, Florida just to sit and admire God's amazing handiwork in creation.

Shawn is an Elder and both Shawn and Tonya are active in Community Groups at Eternal. A special time for Tonya is when she can have Bible study with her mom and her sister-in-law. You may see Shawn, Tonya, Skye and Kensley greeting worshipers as they enter the YMCA before worship services. They have been attending Eternal since 2017.

Their favorite verse in Philippians 4:6-7 *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

They have a cat named Jerry and live in Indian Land. One little known fact about Shawn and Tonya that creates much jealousy in this writer, is that they attended the Master's Golf Tournament in 2017 in which they saw Sergio Garcia play a round with Tiger Woods. Sergio went on to win the tournament that year. Shawn says he can't get tickets so don't ask. I tried already.

When you see Shawn, Tonya, Skye and Kensley greeting folks at church, say "hi" to them. Eternal is blessed to have them in our congregation.

Written by Paul Veerman