

by Jackie Perrone



# Deborah Rogers

Some careers are planned; others emerge from circumstance. See a need, look for a way to fulfill it – presto! Life’s journey has turned an unexpected corner.

In a nutshell, that’s the story told by Deborah and Gil Rogers, who found themselves establishing a school after planning their lives in entirely different professions.

Deborah started life in Indiana and Michigan and arrived in Irmo as a high school student when her father changed jobs. She graduated from The University of South Carolina with a degree in business administration and worked in the insurance industry in Columbia. She met Gil Rogers when he was a medical student in Charleston. After their marriage, they moved to Nashville, Tennessee, for his residency at Vanderbilt then moved to Valdosta, Georgia, where they spent four years while he served in the Air Force.

When they moved to Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, they had two children with a third on the way. Schooling loomed large upon their horizon, and, as Deborah tells it, “Even though the Charleston area had a large variety of school choices, none seemed to offer the kind of education we wanted for our kids. We briefly considered homeschooling, but they were not near the homeschool resources at that time as they are today. Our fourth child came along, and the logistics of educating four at home appeared to be impossible.

“We met several other families at our church who shared our desire for an academically excellent, classical Christian education for their children. We started meeting regularly to pray about starting a school at East Cooper Baptist Church. We spent a couple of years researching classical curricula and even visited

schools in Charlotte, Atlanta, and Dallas. In 1992, we helped found Palmetto Christian Academy, which was modeled after Providence Christian School in Dallas, Texas.” The new academy met with enthusiasm from day one.

Three short years later, Dr. Gil Rogers accepted a new position as a physician with Lexington Medical Center. The Rogers were moving again and leaving the school they had worked so hard to establish. They met Alex and Kay Weatherly here, who also desired a classical Christian education for their three young sons. So quickly did events move that, by the following year, they were opening another Christian school at Lexington Presbyterian Church. This new enterprise, Heritage Christian Church, moved to its own campus on Barr Road in 2001.

Deborah Rogers served as the first head of schools at Heritage for several years. “During those years, we pulled together an academically challenging curriculum that was taught from a Christian worldview. We were able to offer a lot of teacher training in this rediscovered classical philosophy through our model school in Dallas and through books by educators Charlotte Mason and Dorothy Sayers. I came back as head of schools for six years but recently retired. I am now a stay-at-home grandmother.”

The four Rogers children, whose arrival got this whole enterprise started, are now successful professionals with families of their own. Deborah and Gil Rogers attribute much of their success to the strong educational foundation they received at Heritage. “We feel blessed that God used us to help establish Heritage Christian Academy, and we are delighted that it has continued to be an educational option in Lexington.” ■