

Walter Wall

I have never been involved in a formal mentoring program, either as a mentor or as one being mentored.

But looking back, I can see that I was the beneficiary of mentoring when I was already in my late teens.

I was taking up my first Teaching position at Fort San, Sask. in the fall of 1957. I knew no one in the area. I was teaching 36 students in 8 grades. I had no car. That first month was tough. Then I met Bob Dill.

Bob had felt called to be a United Church minister, but came down with tuberculosis in his first year at University. He was forced to go for a year to the sanatorium at Fort San for treatment. After a return to University and another relapse into tuberculosis, he saw it as a sign that he was not meant to be a minister. After the second round of treatment he got a job organizing TB surveys for the Anti Tuberculosis League. He spent his summers on the road meeting with municipal officials and community leaders organizing the surveys and the winters doing the related office work at Fort San. I met him at the end of September when he returned from his summer on the road. He introduced himself to me and we quickly became friends.

In spite of his health problems, ~~he~~ Bob ^{and disappointment} had a strong faith in God and was doing his best to be a good follower of Jesus. He invited me to go with him to the United Church in Fort Qu'Appelle and I did. I was baptized there. He got me involved in singing in the choir (don't worry, I had the good sense not to sing too loudly). Bob also introduced me to friends of his who worked at The Sun, including a married couple with 2 students enrolled at my school. All of these people were firmly anchored in their Christian faith and all of them welcomed me and became my friends, too.

Bob found me at a time in my life where I was somewhat adrift spiritually. I'm not at all sure my life would have followed the same path had we not met. As it was, when I went to the U. of S. the next year to continue my education, I attended St. Thomas Wesley Church regularly. I sang in the choir there. I joined and regularly attended a young adults group there. At the University I became involved in the Student Christian Movement on campus and attended a work camp in Toronto in the summer of 1959 that was organized by the SCM. Likely none of these things would have happened if Bob had not entered my life. He may not have thought of it as mentoring, but it was

and I will always feel hugely
indebted to him for the important
role he played in my faith journey