



# JEFFREY PARK

## JAARS

**Director of Church and Community Relations**

Jeff grew up on a poor former pig farm in northwest New Jersey, learning a strong work ethic and experiencing socio-economic prejudice. This produced a strong humanistic consciousness for the oppressed and underserved (was totally without Gospel). His college experience involved much searching for meaning and experimentation with all kinds of rebellion, etc.

He graduated from the University of Virginia in 1968 with a BS in Chem. Eng. and immediately started working with Shell in Southern CA. It was there in late '68 that he first heard the Gospel which had an immediate life-changing effect on his heart. Eight months later as a youth camp counselor, he experienced a godly call to ministry and immediately began to prepare himself.

In late '71, his church ordained him and sent him and his wife, Dianna, to start a campus ministry back at UVA. After 5 ½ years and establishing a fruitful ministry (still today) and church, he came to the Charlotte area to do all publications (and later all home missions) for Christian Television. During that time, Jeff authored/co-authored a dozen ministry/testimony books. He also co-founded the Coalition of Prison Evangelists, a professional service/networking organization for those in criminal justice ministry. Jeff became its first executive director and built the organization to 600 member ministries with missions in some 24 countries. He spent many months both living and developing/equipping national ministers to serve as the first prison chaplaincy in many former Soviet Union countries in the Baltics, Balkans, and Central Asia.

Burdened that discipleship must happen within the Church, at the end of the 90's Jeff accepted the position as Pastor of Serve/Missions of Forest Hill Church. His focus soon became building networks of church planting locally and globally with nationals in seven countries (most with unreached people groups). In 2007, he partnered with another minister to plant NeXus Church, a center city church focused on bringing holistic discipleship to the broken. He soon discovered in order to break generational poverty, one must focus on equipping the next generation to stay in school and succeed in all areas of life. Therefore in 2012, he founded the Learning Help Centers of Charlotte, placing resident chaplains in low income apartment complexes to do holistic ministry of tutoring, sports and summer programs, family stabilization and spiritual enrichment. Jeff served as President but has developed staff leadership to serve a half dozen complexes in the most underserved neighborhoods of Charlotte (focusing on immigrant/refugees). Jeff now serves as Dir. Of Church/Community Relations for JAARS, engaging JAARS to be a valuable global missions partner to faith communities.

Jeff and his wife, Dianna, have been married 46 years, have two children and three grandchildren. For three years, they have continually hosted international students from around the world in their Fort Mill home. His life verses are Matt. 9:37-8 and Matt. 24:14.