



# Newman Sweethearts 2023

## David and Tori Badger

### How did you meet?

Tori and I both graduated from the same small town high school in Hampton, Iowa. Her in '87 and me in '84. It was late winter, early spring of 1987 when I was back in Hampton for the weekend. It was a Saturday night, and I was out with an old high school friend cruising the loop around town. We had stopped at the Git n' Go convenience store when Tori and her friends pulled up and rolled out of Smokie's conversion van. They were going to head out for some "gravel jamin". I knew who Tori was through friends of friends. She had a great smile, fun loving personality, long brown hair and brown eyes. Knowing Tori was in the van, I finagled my way into the van so I could hang out with her and as they say, the rest is history. The short story is, I couldn't find a girlfriend in college, so I had to go back to my old high school.



David is accurate in the story above and it is a great memory. I have said that I knew who David was long before that night and couldn't help notice when he was around. I had moved to Hampton the summer before my 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and was friends with David's then high school sweetheart. I knew he came from a large and very fun family, I knew that he had strong values and I knew that I was very interested in him as soon as he paid attention to me!

### Do you have any special Newman memories that you experienced as a couple?

Our best Newman memory experienced as a couple was Tori's RCIA experience and her initiation with parents, siblings and relatives in attendance. We also did our marriage prep through the Newman Center. We have fond memories of Mass with Fr. Ed, no kneelers and fabulous music. In fact, the music was so inspiring we hired Joe Mattingly and his band to play for both our wedding ceremony and reception dance. It was awesome!

David's commitment to his Catholic faith was very impressive to me. I grew up in church and have always had a strong faith in God but I never really found a church that felt like it was a place I belonged. Attending church at the Newman Center regularly helped me discover the church family I had been missing. One of my favorite take aways from RCIA was a poem given to the candidates by Fr. Ed, along with a bottle of wine: "Wherever the Catholic sun doeth shine, there will be friends, laughter and good red wine!"

### Any advice that you have for Newman couples as they are dating/starting out as newlyweds?

Our advice to young couples? Find the strength and the courage to talk about your faith as a couple. Pay close attention to your friend group. Pray that faith is a central part of their lives. The saying is you become the average of the 5 people you spend the most time with. Finally, act on your faith. Go to church. We like to end our meal prayer by raising our hands high and saying loudly, "Love Everybody", a reminder to put our faith and love into action.

### Things that you do together to keep your faith and God a priority in your marriage vocation.

Reflecting on 32 years of marriage-it has been a journey. We have always belonged to a church no matter where we lived. We have been blessed to have wonderful priests in our lives, many of whom we call friend. We are firm believers in stewardship giving of our time, talent and treasure to every parish we've belonged to. We have found great strength from the fellowship and friendships that have developed because of our faith, our involvement, our stewardship.



Engagement Photo (left) and the Newman Singers/Band (above) at the wedding!

In the last five years, through the loss of our son Kyle to the disease of drug addiction, our faith has grown stronger. We find ourselves studying the bible together, journaling, listening to Bible in a Year in 2021 and now Catechism in a Year, both with Fr. Mike. We give thanks to God and all who have touched us and helped shape our faith. Especially, the Newman Center on the Campus of The University of Iowa. **Go Hawks!**